

AVOIDING SPOTLIGHTS AT GROUND LEVEL

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Compiler's note:

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To the operative who has no experience in the subject, nothing is more disheartening than having your first spotlight shine towards you. Your instinct will tell you to run away as fast as possible, but knowing what techniques to utilize can save you a lot of trouble.

The first rule to keep in mind is to keep a low silhouette at all times. If you see a spotlight and it is not shining directly on you, drop into the prone position immediately. Make sure your body points towards the light source with your head leading, presenting the smallest image possible, and look through the cracks of your hands so that you can keep an eye on the spotter while ensuring no shine from your eyes emerges. Keeping this position will also ensure you cast no shadows or create a human image, which are indicators that you are in fact a human for the spotters.

The second general rule is to move when the spotlight holds still, and hold still when the spotlight moves. Do the opposite of what the spotlight does. A moving object attracts all kinds of attention, so if you are spotted while running, this will only confirm your location. If you are still prone and the light hits you however, it is much more difficult to judge what you are, especially at 100 yards or so.

This said, when prone make sure you are constantly observing the spotters patterns and looking for low areas and cover to escape to. You can also look back and try to see where the beams of light are hitting. When the light is scanning farther away, haul ass to cover immediately using a high crawl. Don't even think about standing up at any point in a spotlight evasion scenario, unless there is a solid physical barrier between you and the spotters.

If you've got a backpack that blends in well, by all means take it off and place it in front of you for additional concealment. You can use it to low crawl towards the light without detection.

Let's say the spotlight hits you while you are prone. Think logically, if you are 100 yards out and they have the light sitting on you, do you really think they can see you? Probably not, but you might contrast enough that they think they see you. What they hoping for here is that they scare you out of the prone so you will run, confirming their suspicions. Don't fall into that trap. Remain calm and watch the spotter. In all likelihood, they will resume scanning. If after 20 seconds the light does not move, or someone starts running in your direction, conduct escape and evasion maneuvers. Prepare for the possibility that a dog may pursue you.

If you reach any area you can travel while being invisible to the spotter, use it to get farther away. Move along it as far as you can and wait there while checking for your next point of cover. Using these routes saves energy. Remember that you never know who else is in an area, so while you may be able to burn all of your energy to escape one guy, another might be waiting around the corner. Conserve as much energy as possible while still moving swiftly. In the open you'll be low crawling, maybe some high crawling if it's dark enough, from point A to point B. Keep a constant watch on the light and freeze when it gets near you. After it leaves, resume crawling.

Travel as fast as possible, but choose your times to move wisely and move quickly when the chance arises because it is likely backup may arrive if you hang around the area too long.

Quick review of the points covered:

- Keep a low silhouette
- Always observe the light
- Move when the light stops
- Stop when the light moves
- Wait for a period of time if hit by light while prone
- Move from cover to cover
- Use available concealment to move faster
- Conserve energy, but move as fast as possible while doing so
- Run only if no other option is available

Low crawling at high speeds is exhausting, so be prepared for it, and do not to panic. Your first encounter with a spotlight will get your adrenaline pumping hard, don't let it cloud your judgment. Use it to crawl better instead. Get out of the area as fast as possible but be cautious and move wisely. Assume K-9 units are inevitable and haul ass when you get out of their line of site, while keeping an eye out for other unfriendlies in the area. You don't want to get in such a hurry to get away from one person that you practically run over another.