

This re-edition contains a wealth of information to help anarchists and other rebels analyze their security needs, plan and carry out direct actions, and detect or evade physical surveillance. We hope it will help you defeat the State and achieve your goals. Good luck!



No Trace Project / No trace, no case. A collection of tools to help anarchists and other rebels **understand** the capabilities of their enemies, **undermine** surveillance efforts, and ultimately **act** without getting caught.

Depending on your context, possession of certain documents may be criminalized or attract unwanted attention—be careful about what zines you print and where you store them.

# A Practical Security Handbook

## No Trace Project edition

Part 2/2



**A Practical Security Handbook: No Trace Project edition**  
**Part 2/2**

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No Trace Project  
[notrace.how/resources/#security-handbook-2](https://notrace.how/resources/#security-handbook-2)

- Improved forensics catching traces that would have previously been missed on materials, etc.
- Improved data exchange between police organizations and between the police and various other holders of personal information such as banks. This also includes improved processing and cross-referencing of information (see also the risk of compulsory ID cards).
- Increasing sophistication of listening and tracking devices, in particular in transmission range and in miniaturization.

However, there is hope—and it comes in the form of budgets. The promise of high-tech equipment and techniques is as much about saving costs as it is about effectiveness. As security agencies come to rely on them, they will rely less on low-tech and manpower intensive techniques (such as active surveillance).

The result is that low-tech security precautions can actually become more effective—bugs only work if they can be placed somewhere you are going to be talking; using ATM machines and credit cards to tag you cease to work if you pay only in cash. This is why we are confident that activists will continue to be a thorn in the side of the status quo despite constant repression from the State and corporations.

# Future developments

As technology develops, there will be advancements in methods of forensics, of biometric identification of people, and also in tracking devices. These are the three main worries activists have in terms of security. However, there are pros and cons here, and don't believe the hype.

Biometric recognition techniques—such as face recognition technology—are proving not to be as good as claimed. With face recognition, the problem is that there are too many false positives, that is, too many people are being picked out as possible suspects compared to the actual number of suspects there is. This somewhat contradictory situation means that not as much is gained from this technology as hoped as users of it have to spend as much time dealing with the false positives as following up on the genuine leads.<sup>1</sup>

Saying that, CCTV is improving widely in quality and also in distribution, and now beginning to include microphones.

The police do not have all the technology they make out to have. In the United Kingdom, technology comes through a non-public body called the PITO (Police Information Technology Organisation), which evaluates and buys in new technology for the police to use. So when it is trumpeted that the police have a new technology, what it really means is that the PITO have got it, and not necessarily individual police forces. They have budgets to adhere to, and thus try to buy the stuff they really need, meaning a lot of the fancy high-tech stuff is actually not used by the majority of forces.

The main changes of relevance to activists are:

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<sup>1</sup>*N.T.P. note:* Unfortunately, as of 2025, facial recognition technologies are becoming quite good and are not turning up as many false positives as 20 years ago.

# Physical surveillance

## Glossary

The following glossary lists terms used in the rest of this section.

**Target:** The person or vehicle under surveillance. Also referred to as the “Principal.”

**Surveillance team:** The group of people carrying out the surveillance on the target.

**Command:** The member of the surveillance team who has the target in sight and is doing the active tailing.

**Stakeout box:** Where a stationary target is surrounded by the surveillance team to be ready for when they move off or to monitor their activities.

**Trigger:** A member of the surveillance team watching a house or a stationary target, waiting for them to move. They initiate the actual tailing though they do not necessarily do tailing themselves.

**Pick-up:** The point at which a surveillance team member or vehicle begins to follow the target, normally becoming the command at that point.

**Counter-surveillance:** The use of a second team to locate and identify those putting the target under surveillance.

**Anti-surveillance:** Taking action to lose a surveillance team.

**Passive detection:** Taking measures to identify surveillance without changing your routine or patterns; avoids alerting the surveillance team.

**Active detection:** Taking measures to identify surveillance by taking evasive measures. Can be overt or covert depending on whether you want to avoid alerting the surveillance team.

- Take the person aside and explain your concerns, explaining that you feel uncomfortable and why. In particular, say that it is you who feels at risk. If they do not sympathize with you they are less likely to pay heed to your request that they improve their security so let them know that you will have problems with working with them in the future. You can also ask others whom they may have higher respect for to also approach them.
- Don't boast about your own security precautions. Security by obscurity is not a sensible approach; however, using obscure ideas to improve on your security is a useful technique, but only works as long as it remains obscure. Beware of your own ego on this one. You can suggest techniques in general, but the actual bit of cleverness, keep that to yourself. For example, if you use Finnish words for your password, you can maybe say that you use a foreign language; just don't say which one.
- Don't give bad advice, or make things up rather than appear ignorant. Security can change quite rapidly, especially with scary developments like RFID chips, improved biometric techniques, etc., so if you don't know the answer then it is better to say so than to lead someone into a false sense of security.
- Watch out for people who are not acting as securely as they claim to be; the question then is if they are prepared to lie over one bit of security, then what else are they maybe lying about. Give them a chance to change, but if they don't, then take precautions to ensure that they do not end up compromising you.

All this aside, just because someone is not at your level of security does not mean you should never trust them. They may not know all the ins and outs yet. An action, especially a low-level one, can be an ideal time to teach by example up and coming activists what they need to be doing, while at the same time actually doing something to justify it all.

# Talking to others about security

It is important to discuss security in your group. You need to make sure that your affinity group or organization can be trusted to look after itself, and that weaknesses are minimized according to the threat you are likely to face. However, there are several pitfalls here you need to watch out for.

- If you go over the top, then you risk putting people off, scaring them or otherwise disempowering them. Encourage people in your group, especially those less experienced than yourself, to think about their security needs, and how lapses in security can affect other people but don't enforce without explanation. Be wary of letting a "more-secure-than-thou" competitive attitude develop as in a group as that is very off-putting; likewise with installing a paranoid mindset rather than an active one. As you develop the security mindset, it is easy to lose understanding about how people who are new to the scene think. Do not oppress them for getting things wrong, but do suggest where they can make changes. Explain to them why you carry out certain processes, and encourage them to ask questions—otherwise they'll never learn and you could be jeopardising yourself. Don't panic if new people start asking about security and other issues; it's how people learn and develop. If you are not going to provide an answer, explain why without being condescending.
- If you see a security lapse in someone else, there are several ways of dealing with it:
  - Bring it up as a general point at a meeting in a sensitive manner without particularly naming and shaming. This has the advantage of reminding others of their responsibilities as well. Shouting and ranting is not beneficial to anyone.

**Target pattern analysis:** A study of the target identifying their habits and other routines, allowing for easier surveillance.

**Exposed:** If a surveillance team member or vehicle is visible to the target, then it is said to be exposed. The target may not be aware of their presence.

**Burnt:** A surveillance team member or vehicle that has been positively identified as a tail by the target is said to be burnt.

## Introduction

Being put under physical surveillance is a fact of life for the political activist. It is actually a sign that you are being taken seriously so it is not always something to be concerned about. It is certainly not being paranoid to think that it could happen. It does, and much more regularly than is supposed, though not often in a systematic manner. There is no basic right that stops you from being put under surveillance, so relying on the law or the fact "you are not doing anything wrong" are no protections.

In the following we deal with how to detect and evade surveillance when you are on foot or in a vehicle, that is, physical surveillance. We will not go into technical approaches here, though they are often an integral part of a surveillance operation as well.

There are several different reasons to be followed. The main two are intelligence gathering and to intimidate. The latter is dealt with at the end. The third reason is because you are suspected to be involved in criminal behavior and the police or intelligence services anticipate stopping an action. Depending on which situation you consider yourself to be in, then that should influence how you react.

All activists, and even individuals only connected on the periphery of a group or project, will be watched at some stage, including active surveillance of their lives. The main purpose in doing this is to build up a profile on people so there is at least a basic file on you (e.g. name and up-to-date address to go with a photograph) and so

they have a good idea how you fit into the organization or group they are targeting. And also whether you are worth a closer look (a reason would be hanging out with other activists who are known to be involved in covert actions or organizing). High profile activists, especially outspoken ones, can be under regular surveillance as a matter of routine. Most others can have periodic surveillance as the State seeks to update its intelligence and profiles. The mistake is to think that surveillance only happens prior to actions or arrests.

Of the people who are likely to follow you, there are two approximate categories:

- The professional with money and resources behind them. These can be either private investigator working for a very big corporation, or skilled State operatives from the intelligence services.
- Everyone else, which includes your standard private investigators or police officer who has had minimal training with limited resources and time.

The latter is generally easy to spot once you are looking out for them. Tailing someone is much harder than you would expect, especially if the person being tailed is taking measures to spot or lose any surveillance. Many police now simply follow openly as they are too visible to get away with it, and their aim is often to deter rather than arrest.

If you are the target of a major operation then they will throw far more resources your way which makes detection far more difficult. For instance, it is rare for just one car to be used. In one operation 14 different vehicles were involved in following an activist's car along a highway. For the professional, surveillance is just as much about not being detected as it is about following the target. Being followed by professionals is very hard to detect. It can be done, but it does require effort and planning to be successful. Professional surveillance teams are ready for counter-measures so if you are in a situation where losing them is important then it is not going to be a trivial exercise. The problem is that as you lose one tail, another

- The security around the setup needs to be very tight—if you are meeting up to plan it, the meeting needs to be tight so that the surveillance team doesn't get wind of the idea and expect it.
- The counter-surveillance team needs to be able to move swiftly and discretely; this may include hand signals that are not too quick so others can pick them up (e.g., outstretched hands as opposed to a quick scratch of the chin).

However, it is important that this should not be done in a way that alerts the surveillance team that there is a second team also working. If the surveillance team thinks that it is under surveillance the chances are that they will discretely withdraw and come back another day instead.

In theory there will be no contact between the target and the counter-surveillance team.

## Blatant surveillance

Much of what has been said also applies to being chased, that is, being followed by someone rather obviously primarily to intimidate or make actions difficult as in mass public actions. In this case you simply have to lose them. Be unpredictable, use public transport and sometimes just run (that is not illegal in the United Kingdom so it is not grounds to stop you, though that may not bother them). It depends on the situation, whether you publicly burn them to people around you, or discretely lose them.

The other approach is to be completely innocuous and ignore the surveillance: have a coffee or a beer or simply shop around.

- Flattened grass and depressions; also vehicle tracks where they shouldn't be.
- Identify potential observation points from your location and regularly check them—it may discourage the surveillance team from using them or getting too close.
- Walk in an ever widening circle, looking for places of concealment focusing on places such as tree-lines, copses, thick bushes/hedges that have a view of the target area.

Having dogs around the place is particularly effective, and to a lesser degree motion-detector lights, though this depends on how covert the operation is.

## Counter-surveillance

This is a phrase often used in the wrong context. It actually means using another team to monitor a target with the aim of detecting whether there is a surveillance team on them or not. A second group of people is much more effective than the target at spotting surveillance teams as they will have better lines of vision.

The trick to this is to set up a *check route*, also known as a *surveillance detection route*. In this the target and the counter-surveillance team plan out a route which gives the counter-surveillance team opportunities to watch for the surveillance team following the target. It is best done on foot routes as there are better opportunities for monitoring.

It is a simple idea but it requires considerable planning to be properly effective as there are a number of pitfalls for the activist:

- The surveillance team may be aware of who your friends are so will be able to recognize their faces; if engaging in this sort of operation, consider some sort of change of your normal appearance or disguise.

coming from a different direction can pick up where the first one left off—which is even easier where you are following a pattern that has been established by the surveillance team.

However, our experience of surveillance on activists indicates that those doing the tailing have fewer resources available than is ideal so can be spotted with many of the techniques we discuss below.

The main question the activist needs to ask themselves is how they want to deal with surveillance. This may have significant consequences both for the reaction of the surveillance team and the activist's actions. If you are not particularly engaged at the moment in activities you would rather the State did not know about, or they are simply doing routine surveillance to update their files, then we suggest, as a rule of thumb, that you do not let them know that you are aware. Instead, avoid drawing further attention on yourself and focus on confirming whether you are actually under surveillance or not. Save active anti-surveillance activities for those moments when you need to confirm that you are indeed not being followed before potentially compromising yourself or an action.

If you are dealing with relatively amateurish tails it can be quite empowering and fun to run rings around them to the point that they give up.

This depends on what you are doing and what sort of activism you are engaged in. If you are the sort of activist who is well known to the State this is more appropriate behavior to engage in, than if you want to keep a relatively low profile. Often, surveillance during demonstrations is for intelligence gathering purposes; that is, to identify people on the action and where they live for future surveillance. In this case, losing the tail makes their job much harder—why give them intelligence on your group on a plate?

In some cases police openly follow activists to disrupt an event so losing them becomes useful; some of the techniques we discuss below on anti-surveillance are also applicable to dealing with this

sort of problem (though it is also useful to be a decoy if you have the appropriate profile).

One advantage of confirming a tail is when you force a tail to expose themselves or make them realize they've been spotted (known as "burnt"), then you destroy their usefulness as a tail thus taking them out of the picture and stretching the limited resources devoted to you even further. Undercover police will get quite freaked out at attempts to photograph them, as when their pictures are published it destroys their ability to continue as an undercover operative. Though be careful as the police have been known to raid houses and seize equipment solely because of this.

Using anti-surveillance techniques on a non-professional tail can encourage them to learn from their mistakes and become more cautious in future. They will be better prepared to handle other counter-measures you use in the future as well. Thus, if you are planning to burn a tail then it is best to do it properly to make sure they do not come back. This is always a problem with anti-surveillance. It also encourages the more amateurish surveillance to brush up their techniques so it is harder to spot them in the future, and it brings attention to yourself so encourages the use of more sophisticated methods.

Like most things relating to security, awareness of surveillance should be part of daily life for a political activist. Developing your skills and instinct is very important here. You can develop your observational skills without being under actual surveillance or without having to act evasively. With personal security, your instinct can help you detect if there is something out of place in your environment which you need to pay closer attention to, the same goes when you are moving around. What starts as something unnatural and awkward eventually becomes second nature and you barely notice the fact that you are scanning an area for vehicles and people who are out of place. It also means you appear more natural when doing it, and less shifty.

- You have more opportunities to conceal yourself and watch the reactions of suspect tails as they realize that you are not in sight. Remember that if you confront someone then if they are innocent they will pretty much react in the same startled way, thinking you are a mugger. However, you can get up close and ask for directions, a cigarette light, etc. which will put the suspect tail on the spot and give you a good chance to look at them, something they will really not like.
- Taking blind turns at night forces the surveillance team to react more aggressively, so again forcing their hand if you are ready for it. However, given the darkness there is a possibility they will react more confidently if they think they have the upper hand.

**Tip:** Because it is much quieter at night you become far more aware of sounds that occur naturally and it is easy to suspect every sound. In this sort of situation wait until you have actual visual confirmation rather than suspecting just noises.

## *Rural*

This is significantly harder to detect as the surveillance team will in general be further away and there is much greater scope to hide, especially if there are thick woods nearby. A surveillance team may:

- Wear adaptive camouflage.
- Be prepared for a long stay if necessary.
- Use infra-red and long range binoculars and scopes.
- Put motion-detector cameras in junk, trees and nearby structures.
- Take measures to hide the fact they were there such as dealing with bent grass and depressions.

Things to check for are:

- Repeated glints off binoculars from woods or copses.
- Abandoned buildings they are using to hide vehicles.



## Night surveillance while on foot

This is a much different situation from day time foot surveillance. A professional team will be ready for it. Amateurs will not. At night when out and about, you are more likely to encounter a greater use of technology, for example night-sights. The fact that it is darker and quieter works in your favour since they need to get closer to keep you in sight and you can use your hearing more effectively. At night they are far more likely to use vehicles, especially when the weather is cold—loitering around outside when it is freezing is much more obvious to spot.

The best way to spot surveillance at night is to monitor for vehicles showing some of the following traits:

- Driving without lights.
- Lights going on and off in stationary cars.
- The sound of radio transmissions.
- Doors slamming shut as you approach.
- Vehicles parked in unusual locations.
- Couples sitting in cars, staring straight ahead rather than engaging with each other.
- Sitting for prolonged times with the engine running.

Surveillance teams have been known to use taxis and police cars in this situation. If you know your area well then you can spot them by being parked in places not normally used by them. For instance, police cars do not normally hang out in wealthy areas. Taxis do not wait on poor and out-of-the-way areas. People waiting on friends at nearby houses tend to park in the light and on the main road and not in out-of-the way places offering concealment.

Some tactics that work better at night are as follows:

- If you think that someone is following you, listen out carefully for the sound of their pace. It will be done to match yours, such that as you speed up and slow down, it changes to match. This is something you can actively hear.

Also, like other matters in security, it is not the sort of thing that you can stop and start at whim. By the time you have noticed surveillance, the chances are that if they are at least semi-professional about their job, they have already been at it for several days and you are behind in the stakes. It will not be hard for them to move up to more sophisticated methods while you are still trying to identify the surveillance team. Surveillance will take place over many days so it is useful to keep what you've noticed in mind (or make a note to remind yourself) in case the same face or vehicle does appear again at a later stage.

Similarly, you need to beware of being unnecessarily paranoid when it comes to detecting surveillance. A suspicion that you have seen a face or car before is not evidence enough that you are under surveillance. To be sure you have to wait until evidence builds up for it to be conclusive. This requires you to be constantly observant and pro-active in singling out faces and vehicles to pay closer attention to. Or to take active anti-surveillance measures to force their hand.

Another situation to be aware of is where you are preparing for an action. Suddenly looking over your shoulder and acting erratically may give them the impression that you are up to something and therefore deserve further attention. This is why surveillance detection techniques should be employed regularly so even if they are monitoring you they will see it as being part of your life, and not sudden changes. Plus, the more you practice the more discrete you are able to make it, and the more you develop that important instinct.

When you do undertake anti-surveillance techniques, have it planned out in advance. Make sure you think it through, and you know what exactly it is you are looking for—"anything suspicious" is not good enough. Furthermore, have it ready so that they are not expecting you to take that sort of action. For example, traveling down an obscure road the night before an action is too late as if they are watching you then you are just giving them time to prepare for when you do it again. Such anti-surveillance routes should be

planned well in advance, and created as what appears to be part of otherwise natural behavior (e.g. visiting a friend or going for a hike), and it is best to have several ready.

Our final point is that surveillance is also static. Houses near you can have people who will let cameras and men be positioned in their front rooms so they can monitor your comings and goings. If there is an empty flat, it may well have a motion-sensitive camera taking a photo of everyone entering or leaving your house. This has been known to happen. Stationary vehicles are also used, though more obvious.

Given the variation in experience of surveillance teams and of local geography, there are no absolute rules when it comes to dealing with the issue. Everything offered is guidelines and there will be times when they do not apply or you need to think in different ways. Thus the following sections are divided primarily into vehicle, foot, and static surveillance. These are further divided into urban and rural situations. Sub-headings in these are passive, active and anti-surveillance techniques, that is in each given situation we start with passive detection techniques, move on to more active approaches for confirming that you have correctly picked up your tail, then tactics on how to lose them if you so wish.

## Preparation for detecting surveillance

The core of surveillance is target pattern analysis. That is, the study of the routine and habits of the target, the person being followed. This covers many things, but in particular stuff such as: what are the regular routes they take to and from places, their driving style, who they visit and so on. What the surveillance team seeks to do is to be able to predict your movements to make themselves less noticeable and the surveillance job as a whole easier and less resource consuming. Do not assume that because stuff feels obvious to you, such as how you get to and from work and where you work, that it is obvious to them. They still need to confirm it.

Jumping off at the last moment is a useful anti-surveillance technique as it forces them to lose you or expose themselves by reacting as well.

Beware of chance encounters with strangers, especially those who appear to have something in common with you, where some sort of rapport is attempted. Public transport is quite good for one-off encounters like this which allow them to get to know you better and evaluate your mannerisms. There is nothing to stop you lying about what you do, who you are, etc. If you have “coincidental” meetings again in the future it is worth being suspicious.

As you get off public transport or out of a terminal, are there signs of surveillance vehicles waiting to pick you up?

Regarding buses, if they do get on a bus then they will go as far to the back as possible so you will be kept in sight. A possible active detection technique is to stay on after the last stop and see who else is doing it—will only work if they are not familiar with the route otherwise they will not make this mistake.

Regarding trains:

- Given the nature of trains you are more likely to have a number of surveillance operatives get on and off the train at the same time as you.
- The more you change trains the more it erodes the integrity of the surveillance team. Add to this by going to the barriers as if leaving then turning around and getting back on another train.
- There are a number of exits for stations which you can use to your advantage, depending on crowd density and how well you can push through them.
- A good feature of train stations (though it works well in other areas with a high density of pedestrians) is that there are strong flows of people in one direction. If you move against this flow, watch out for others doing likewise and struggling to keep you in sight. As you have to look as you do this, it is an active detection technique.

- Places where there are security checks can work in your favour, especially where there are multiple exits, as surveillance teams will be reluctant to set off alarms with their communications gear. The delays for stop and search also play into your hands.

At night be prepared for the increased use of technology such as infra-red to monitor you.

**Tip:** Having traveled somewhere and then moved to being on foot, the surveillance team will also have one member watching your vehicle in case you return to it.

Remember, one or two coincidences are not proof you have a tail. You are looking for a whole series of them. Practicing surveillance detection and anti-surveillance techniques and developing your instincts will help considerably.

### Public transport

Public transport offers a variety of opportunities for detecting and evading surveillance and makes life much harder for the surveillance team.

A professional surveillance team will attempt to guess your destination and route, and monitor both as well as having someone on the same bus or train. This means that depending on numbers they will seek to reach possible exit points to watch for you. If it is a public transport route that you use frequently, they will either follow the bus (something you can watch out for) or be waiting to pick you up at your destination.

However, if you use public transport regularly with established getting on and off points, then this can be turned into active detection or anti-surveillance techniques by getting off earlier or later and checking for reactions to make sure you have lost them. If the surveillance team has enough people then they will actually get off at earlier or later stops to avoid arousing suspicion.

Target pattern analysis is of singular importance as it is at the heart of more sophisticated surveillance planning. Target pattern analysis means that as you drive off, it is not the member of the surveillance team watching your front door that follows you, but the vehicle waiting out of sight a few hundred meters away along the route you normally take. It is often the moment you think you have gotten away that you actually get picked up.

Many of the techniques that are used to recognize and deal with surveillance are based on the target being aware of what sort of information any surveillance will have picked up on them. In other words, you work out what they will have learned about you, and you use the fact they are depending on it to defeat them when it becomes necessary. Just as they analyze you, you analyze them. Knowing the standard procedures used for surveillance makes your own analysis of what they are looking for in your daily routine much easier. Knowing what to watch out for makes detecting surveillance a lot more meaningful and easy as well.

This also means that you need to know your area well and identify observation points that could be used for watching your house and vehicle. Where would the trigger be, and where would the pick-up be potentially situated? Mark them on maps of the area, including which direction any vehicles are likely to be parked in. If you know which points to keep an eye out at then picking up suspect tails becomes much easier and second nature.

If you think that you have been under surveillance for a period of time already, you need to consider what patterns of yours they have already picked up and could be using in their surveillance on you.

How you plan your surveillance detection depends greatly on what your intention is. You need to decide if you are going to let on or not; if you are planning to lose them or if you don't really care at this stage. Sometimes this will depend on the day. For example, if you are part of a large public event they may start attempting covert surveillance on you hoping that you will lead them to anything

planned they may not know about; however, if it becomes clear that you have burned them then they are likely to switch objectives to simply keeping tabs on you with the command operative that you have identified. This is to disrupt your activity, as they may assume that you are some sort of crucial organizer.

Draw a map of the buildings around you. Which windows always have blinds drawn and show no sign of activity or lights ever being turned on? Who are the regular visitors to your street and what is their typical appearance? Likewise with vehicles.

Every area will have pros and cons when it comes to surveillance, hence why it is as much an art as a science, and there are only guidelines. However, knowing what to expect and planning out surveillance detection measures will turn your observations from guesswork and paranoia to proper confirmation of whether surveillance is actually taking place or not.

## ***Surveillance team techniques***

Before you get ready to spot for surveillance it is worth knowing the typical behavior of a professional surveillance team in action. Understanding how they work makes it easier to watch out for the giveaway behavior and take appropriate actions to detect or evade.

### **Trigger**

The trigger is the person or vehicle who is watching out for the target to start moving. They can be parked up in vehicles on foot. It is rare that they start following once the target has been spotted, but instead tend to move in a different direction once they have confirmed the target has been sighted and what direction they are moving in.

In less experienced teams, they can get into the car that begins tailing—a dead give-away.

- Don't wear clothes, jewelry or hairstyle that stand out as these simply act as marker for them and means that they can be more discrete in tailing you. Surveillance teams focus a lot on clothing, so make it nondescript and common.
- You can also bring changes of clothing and appearance (e.g. wigs) with you. Wigs are particularly effective, but only if they are cut to look good; badly fitting wigs only draw attention. As well as change of clothes have a second rucksack or bag to carry them in—avoid using the same one with different clothes.
- Some quick ways to loose a tail are:
  - ▶ Dash across a busy road the moment a gap appears. Use the opportunity to disappear down side streets or into any building with alternative entrances.
  - ▶ Have a friend pull in and pick you up from a route where the surveillance team will not be following you in a vehicle. It may be that this can be done discretely with you hiding in the back under a blanket, but tends to work only where they are not expecting it and they are not familiar with the vehicle or the driver.
  - ▶ Get lost in a crowd—a classic, but it does work. Factories and football matches are good for this as well as city centers, which is why it is worth knowing the area if this sort of event is a possibility.
  - ▶ Shops with multiple and/or out-of-the-way exits are good for both active surveillance detection (wait next to an exit and watch for people following you being startled by you waiting for them in turn) and anti-surveillance as it gets you out of sight long enough to get away. This works best with shops you never go into, or if you do, you always use the same entrance and exit.
  - ▶ Elevators that take you to other floors with exits are good; remember though that the surveillance team will leave someone at the ground floor in case you return there.

able to spot them. What you are looking for is the uncertainty that you have just caused them as they decide how to react to your change. A professional will be on the other side of the road rather than right behind you. Rather than just turning around, cross the road and then go back in the direction you came. This is active detection, but it is much better at forcing them to react and you have a good opportunity to gauge reactions. This is much more effective on narrow terrains such as foot bridges where there is not much of a gap between both sides and little traffic so you can get to the other side relatively quickly.

- Waiting in a queue for a bus is a useful method to spot tails and lose them at the same time.
  - To spot the tail let a few buses go by to see who else is waiting (at the bus stop or nearby)—particularly useful if someone gets on a bus with you when one going in the same direction has already passed by.
  - To lose them, you can suddenly “realize” that a bus across the road is the one you want and make a dash for it; it is a good way of losing a tail and potentially exposing them. Alternatively, drop out of the queue as you are about to board.
- A sudden and significant change in your appearance can cause them to give themselves away as they try to check that they still have the right person. For example, a dramatic change in hair style gave away several police tailing one activist as they all did double takes when the activist was picked up at the meeting point they were staking out.

### **Anti-Surveillance**

On foot it is very hard to do this discretely unless you are quite lucky with the geography of an area and crowds. Busy city centers with lots of alleys and bending roads are easiest. Your best chance is to use established patterns to lull the surveillance team into thinking you are conforming, then seize an opportunity to disappear elsewhere.

### **Command**

The command is the person or vehicle which is currently tasked with keeping the target in sight. Their behavior as they attempt to do this is what you need to be looking out for.

Where there is a team of experienced surveillance operatives, then the command will change regularly to avoid giving themselves away. If the command feels that they have been exposed to the target too long or that the target has noticed them, then they will be changed at the next opportunity.

In amateur surveillance or where there are limited resources, then the command often remains unchanged or reappears again. In sophisticated surveillance there will be a number of vehicles or foot operatives located nearby who will be in communication with the command. The preferred technique is traveling parallel to the target and the command. Thus when the target makes a turn, the command simply continues traveling on straight, allaying suspicion against them. They cease to be command and take up position as one of the flanking operatives. Meanwhile, one of the parallel members of the team on the side on which the target has turned will take up position behind them as command, with the target thinking that the vehicle has turned up behind them by accident.

This technique works best in well laid out cities and towns. In places where there are bendy roads, on motorways and on rural roads it becomes much more difficult; thus the opportunities for detecting and evading surveillance increases greatly.

### **Observation points**

An observation point is used to keep a place under surveillance. It is positioned within sight of the place but preferably around a corner or where there is good visibility of possible routes that can be taken. When out and about the observation point is often a side road that gives line of sight and the ability to change direction as needed.

It can be a house, but is more generally a vehicle. If it is a vehicle then is likely to be a van, camper, etc. where the interior can be hidden. Points to look out on them are extra aerials, not seeming to belong to any building in the area, curtains and other materials that stop the back being seen into.

To allay suspicion it will have a separate driver who doesn't remain with the surveillance team, but comes and goes as they need him. Such drivers will have another vehicle stationed nearby, or arrange to be picked up by another member of the team.

Where the observation point is in a house, watch for windows which are kept covered and devoid of activity, e.g. lights never turned on. There may be unusual visitors to the building, generally on foot as they will leave cars out of sight in case they are burned by the target. Shift changes will often happen late at night so they are not noticed, and with modern equipment they do not even need to have people present. Keeping a map of the surrounding buildings and all their windows allows you to try to see where a camera may be placed. It will have good visibility of your doorway. Empty flats are also known to be used. Good relations with neighbors have proven quite good at routing these out.

### **Stakeout box**

Any time a target stops the surveillance team sets up what is known as a stakeout box around the target. The purpose of this is that they are prepared for whatever direction the target decides to move in next.

It makes spotting the command vehicle difficult as this is often the point at which it changes. However, the stakeout box is a pattern, whereby the surveillance team takes up points that give advantages in following you. They will use side streets and park in the direction of the flow of traffic that they expect you to take. Often they will park in directions pointing away from you as these will be the ways you will be traveling should you take these routes. Thus when you set off again, the command will come out of side streets behind you.

route through passageways to nearby buildings or car parks. Other tactics worth mentioning is to use little used exits to draw out who is following you; or enter shops at the last minute when it looks like you are about to leave. Standard procedure for surveillance teams is to cover all exits.

In some cases, though we are not aware of it being a regular practice, the tail will change their own appearance, usually with hats, glasses or coats, in order to allay your suspicions of them. Hence, focusing on these objects is not necessarily a good way to log the person in your memory as someone to keep an eye on.

### **Active detection**

- Drop some paper (make it look like it accidentally falls out of your pocket as you take your hand out of it) and see who stops to pick it up.
- An empty street is a good place to spot or lose a tail. Try doubling back, watching for people walking past slowly and watching, etc.
- The main tool for detecting foot surveillance is the blind corner, which works very well with amateur or incompetent tails. By taking one you are setting up an opportunity to check reactions, by doubling back on yourself which they cannot see so are not prepared for, or by simply stopping and watching. If there is a café or shop with a good window just around the corner then entering that allows you to give them the slip or to observe their reactions. However, a professional tail will actually walk on rather than go round the blind corner, and use their communications gear to get another member of the team pick you up.
- When you go around a blind corner, consider ducking into an office block and concealing yourself there; this is worth doing if you are quick thinking and able to bluff receptionists.
- Double back on yourself, and repeat to see who you keep spotting. Tails will avoid making eye contact however, and will attempt to dress for the area they are in so it may not always be

timetables or properly paying attention to their phones. If purchasing a ticket, etc. watch out for people standing right behind you who may be able to overhear.

- In shops, who is not actually shopping or appears out of place.
- If approaching a place you plan to use as your own observation point, check out who is already there to eliminate them from consideration.
- In areas that are not a city center or are low on pedestrians in general do vehicles at stakeout points pull out and travel slowly behind you? More professional ones will move ahead of you and wait for you to pass.
- Enter a place where an unprepared tail will look out of place, e.g. a punk shop, etc. If this is not an obvious place for you to be in then this becomes an active detection technique and thus hints at the fact you are watching out for surveillance.
- As you cross a street who on the other side slows down to avoid crossing your path? Do they cross to the other side but continue in the same direction as you? At a junction who quickens pace to cross it before you do?
- Given the increasing prevalence of CCTV cameras in cities, and not just in the centers, watch out for those which seem to rotate in your direction. With this, it is good to know where they are in advance and be discrete in your monitoring of them. If they do not think you are being aware of possible surveillance then they are unlikely to be discrete themselves.
- Is there someone hanging around your street with a camera? This has been known to happen with amateur surveillance teams.
- Shopping centers are awash with opportunities to put the surveillance team on their toes, as there are many observation points available as well as exits. Balconies are ideal for watching those coming in behind you, as are see-through elevators. If you can get into an elevator fast enough you may have a get-away

However, if you are aware of your surroundings and can identify where they are likely to be parked, then this can be detected.

If the stakeout box is around regular places such as your house, etc., then they will use target pattern analysis to decide in advance the most likely routes you will take. This means they can park further away. It is worth taking walks to shops or nearby friends, or even dog walks, that will take you through such points you have identified so you can observe them covertly. This is a good technique to build into your everyday life to check if you are being watched.

On foot the situation is more difficult for them, but if you are going into a shopping center then they will try and cover all exits.

### **Lost command routine**

When a surveillance team loses sight of their target they will attempt to find you as opposed to give up. The first thing they do is search down the surrounding side roads or alleyways to see if you have turned down any. If they fail to find you there, they will return to where they lost you and continue in the same direction as you were last known to be traveling, with speed. This is why returning to the area where they lost you is a bad idea, as is parking up nearby once you have lost them, unless your place of concealment is quite good. While you might know one or two of the vehicles following you, you may not have spotted them all and you could simply be picked up by another one of the team.

If evasion is not your goal, then you can use this routine to burn operatives, as it is difficult to relocate you and avoid detection at the same time. For example, parking up and wait for them to come searching. In one case the suspect vehicle drove by and was noticed by the waiting activists; it went on to park up around a corner, aware that its cover was potentially blown. The activists then drove up next to it and engaged them in conversation, making sure everyone had a good look at the surveillance team's faces. They looked very uncomfortable.

## Exposure

Surveillance operatives are desperate to avoid exposure, but it takes a particularly skilled operative to avoid betraying themselves when they are caught off guard. If there is a team working on you they will have only one operative or vehicle exposed to you at any one time (including the trigger).

Eye-contact is the usual issue, and operatives may go out of their way to avoid it, even tripping up in their efforts, depending on how skilled and prepared they are. Less skilled operatives will show their surprise and anger. However, much body language is instinctive and they may not realize they are giving out signals tipping you off.

It is also worth allowing patterns to be established as this lulls them in to complacency and dropping their guard slightly—surveillance is hard to keep up for a prolonged time at the same level of intensity. Thus, when you break the pattern, they are more likely to show their surprise. When you are traveling a route not normally taken, or that is new to you, then they are automatically more alert to your actions.

## *What to watch out for*

### Vehicles

When you pass suspect vehicles, the driver and passengers may go out of their way to not glance in your direction, looking away as they pass you or staring ahead fixedly. Watch how people react normally and then compare it with those you suspect.

Can you see them repeatedly pressing buttons on a radio as they talk? Are they talking repeatedly and peering forward?

While on foot when a suspect vehicle passes you does it speed up as it passes; does it quickly turn down a side street?

- In a café or similar choose the seat which allows you to view as many people as possible, and definitely face the door.
  - Keep an eye out for couples who are not chatting or not acting naturally. It has happened that while a group was relaxing in a bar surveillance team members have come in and sat next to them with bags containing listening devices. They gave themselves by their body language, consuming their beer or food slowly or not at all, and had very poor interaction among themselves, instead watching people from the group going to the bar or toilet, etc.
  - Is there an upstairs seating area with windows overlooking the street? This is a good place to sit and watch if anyone is loitering, waiting for you. Do suspect individuals watch the door to the café, etc., regularly?
- In a bookshop is there anyone looking at the same books that you just browsed through, especially political ones?
- On bridges and the like you can also stop to admire the view, again giving you the chance to look around you. Who does likewise?
- Stairs and escalators in a shop give opportunities to look for tails. Approach them from the opposite direction so when you reach them you have to do a half circle turn, and are thus able to look behind you without appearing to do it deliberately.
- As you leave a shop, stop and ask someone the time or for directions, keep an eye on who might have followed you out, or is waiting nearby.
- Choose a narrow or quiet street to act as a choke point to filter suspects out from the crowd making them easier to identify. Doesn't always work with a professional team as they will be prepared for this. If this is not a place you would go in the normal course of business then it becomes active detection.
- If in a train or bus station, change position regularly and watch those standing still. Keep an eye out for people not reading



reduced unless you spend a lot of your time looking behind you, which is not really recommended.

### Passive detection

- Enter a shop and watch who follows you or who waits to pick up on you again as you go out. Watch for people staring into shop windows. Often their body language will give themselves away as they are not doing it properly. It is useful to practice watching people in the street on how they window shop and such like before doing this so you can pick up the nuances that distinguish between someone doing it genuinely and those whose attention is elsewhere (like trying to spot you). Check where their eyes are looking and whether they are doing more than simply staring ahead.
- If the shop has a back entrance leave through it, and promptly stop around the corner to see if anyone else is looking rather hurried as they try to catch up with you. Look uncertain about the direction you are taking or look at your watch if you want to avoid being obvious that you are waiting to spot them.
- Stop at a cinema or theater and read the boards there. This gives you an excuse to stop and look around.
- If you go into a shop or an alleyway you do not normally go into, is there anyone who crosses from the other side of the road you were on? Depending on what you have entered, what do they do? Do they follow or do they hang out opposite the entrance? If it is a small shop then they are not likely to come in as it would get them too close to you (unless they are interested in your shopping habits). If the shop or café has largish windows then you can use them to watch activity outside to see if anyone is loitering around.
- Professional tails will be ready for you to duck into a shop or to do “window shopping,” so they will simply pass you by. Thus while you are looking for people also keep watch on those who have passed you by and then stopped.

### On foot

It is much easier to spot giveaway body language when being surveilled on foot. Look out for:

- Coughing, tripping and other behaviors of someone who is being distracted when there is no obvious reason for it.
- Signs of tensions such as pacing, focused staring, checking the time repeatedly, twitching.
- Awkward mannerisms in general.
- Speaking into collars or their chin lowered into their chests as they speak.
- Touching their ears repeatedly is instinctive reaction to an ear-piece in use.
  - Is there a wire running down to their collar? Though with the prevalence of personal stereos and MP3 players this is far more common place and harder to detect unless it really looks out of place with the rest of the person's attire.
  - Do they stop and stare into nothing—a feature of someone taking a message.
- Adjusting clothes hiding communication devices or repeatedly putting their hands in their pockets to manipulate a communications or listening device.
- Clothes out of place for the venue (e.g. a suit in a punk venue, etc.)
- Startled look as they encounter you unexpectedly in active detection techniques.
- Bad window-shopping (compare how people usually do it by moving their heads, as opposed to a tail who is trying to see in the reflection or not properly looking at all).
- The same person taking yet another phone call.
- Avoiding making eye-contact at all cost.
- General uncertainty after you break an established pattern.
- Are they carrying a bag with a video camera in it?

- Carrying out repeated scratching of head or checking of watch—possible non-verbal communication signals.

## Appearance

A surveillance team will attempt to blend in. They will not be dressed in sharp suits and sunglasses and look like something out of Hollywood. They will use operatives who are nondescript and who do not draw attention to themselves by having features that stand out. Often they will be the same sex as the target as this helps allay suspicion and attention. The key to successful detection is to put preconceptions aside and watch for people's behavior and not their appearance. Appearances including clothes can easily be changed by someone who knows what they are doing.

Saying that, the amateur is not able to indulge in the techniques of a professional and as a result is much more easily picked up. Also, if the territory is unfamiliar then they may get the dress code wrong and generally show signs of discomfort.

## Night observation

At night the world is a different place; you need to be in tune with how noise and silhouettes change in the dark. Likewise it is worth developing your night vision: this takes about 30 minutes and you need to avoid bright lights or you will ruin it. When looking at things use off-center viewing or scan rather than looking directly.

## Remembering details

For vehicles, things to look out for are:

- Body shape.
- Shape of headlights.
- Dents or scratches or other distinguishing features such as broken lights.
- Silhouette at night.

know the area quite well, it means you can take a route that is hard for them to pick you up again.

- Use the narrow roads to your favor—the chances are that you will have all the surveillance team behind you, so effective use of traffic lights can lose the lot.

Finally, the chances are that if they are very interested in you, a simple GPS bug (possibly also capturing audio) is attached to the underside of your car allowing it to be followed at a distance. This is one reason why using your car to go directly to secure meetings or high-risk covert actions is not a good idea, as the chances are you will not locate the device.

This being said, there are ways of testing to see if you have one, though not necessarily foolproof:

- Use a radio frequencies scanner to detect transmissions from the car.
- Drive into the countryside, park up and wait in an adjoining field to see if anyone comes along to check out why the vehicle has stopped. Tails picking you up when they really should not have is another sign they may be using a bug in this way.
- Stand next to the car with a friend and discuss a fake action to see if it provokes a reaction later on.

## On foot

### Urban

If you are being followed on foot again it is likely to use a team of people rather than an individual. Their dress will be nondescript and have few identifying marks or clothes. Saying that, ordinary policemen are quite easy to spot even in plain clothes by their walk, stance and general ineptness. With a more professional team, it is harder to spot surveillance as your line of sight to them is greatly

## ***Rural***

The rural environment offers far more opportunities to detect surveillance vehicles. The roads are narrower, more winding and have generally less traffic and more traffic hazards (road works, slow tractors) that play into the hand of the person seeking to detect surveillance. There are also opportunities to get off road and conceal much better, though it must be remembered that some of the pitfalls can equally apply to the target, especially when trying to escape surveillance.

On country roads, park up suddenly and watch the behavior of the cars behind you. Ones proving reluctant to pass you are suspicious. It also gives you a good chance to have a look at any which are passing by and their reaction. Most people when stuck behind a slow moving car are keen to speed past and disappear when they get a chance—a tail is not so eager to be out of sight even if it is in front. When they have passed spin around and go back. If you don't go back, keep your eyes out for potential tails being parked up waiting for you to pass again.

Depending on what you are up to, when you turn your car around go a short distance again and park up once more. The tail having realized you have turned will turn and come back, so if one of the cars which passed you when you stopped initially passes you once more, you should be rightfully suspicious of them. This technique works best on roads with bends.

In rural lanes you have several options:

- Get out and walk up to a house or into woods, thus forcing the command to give themselves away by following or abandoning you. Longer paths which allow you to get out of sight and double back are useful for seeing if anyone has pulled up and is waiting.
- Drive into a farm and turn around, giving suspect tails enough time to pass, then drive off in the opposite direction. If you

With individuals you need to focus more on the general appearance, demeanor and the mannerisms rather than on small details. Things to look out for are:

- Facial hair.
- Hair color.
- Unusual features such as scars.
- The shape of the face.

Remember some of this can be changed by the use of wigs or simply changing clothes (dark to light, etc.) Body shape can be hidden by wearing baggy clothes.

## **Vehicles**

If you think you are being tailed use routes and techniques that will make it obvious. The following are some techniques to identify and deal with surveillance. The sort of vehicles can be any type but they will on the whole be nondescript and of generally common models and colors. There will be nothing fancy. There may be some modifications that give them away such as tires too new, the car being too expensive for the area where it is stationed, markings of where it came from removed and signs of prolonged occupations such a coffee cups, fast food containers and scattered maps.

## ***Urban***

### **Passive detection**

- When going to and from your car use the opportunity to look at the surrounding area for people or vehicles that might be acting as triggers for the surveillance. Depending on the area the trigger may be on foot as opposed to in a vehicle. Try not to stop and stare but make it natural. If you've already worked out where in particular you should look it becomes quite easy.

- Are there vehicles near your home, work or places you frequent regularly that have people sitting in them? Often they will have their sun visors down permanently; this is done to stop faces being fully visible. This is surveillance that is poorly resourced or where they want you to know they are watching you.
- License plates:
  - Memorize license plates: if you spot a car you are suspicious of, look at the license plate and turn the last three letters into a word, e.g. BCH becomes BaCkHand. Words are easier to recall than numbers and letters, and if you come up with the same word again you can pick up on it quicker.
  - Watch for license plates that do not have a garage name on them; police tails are often missing these. Note, this is not a guarantee the vehicle is definitely a tail. Some unmarked police cars actually have police written on their tax discs.
- Does the vehicle look out of place for the area you are in? It is harder to identify when out and about unless you know the area quite well. Or does the vehicle look modified? See the section on security at home for more on what to look in a vehicle parked up like this.
- As you pass identified pick-up points, watch the parked vehicles. Often they will park in the same direction as you normally take and on the same side as the flow of the traffic.
  - Can you see maps and signs of people sitting in them for a while, e.g. coffee cups, food packets on the seats?
  - If possible check the exhaust to see if it is running and waiting to go.
  - In cold weather are they getting out to clean the windows regularly?
  - Do they pull out behind you as you pass?
- Vehicles tailing will generally drive two to four cars back. Depending on the nature of the traffic and the road, they need

out a lot more. Planning is still needed as other members of the surveillance team may be waiting at the end of the cycle path for you to reappear.

- How to deal with static observation vehicles, or even individuals?
  - There are several options:
    - Call the police on them with a story of why you suspect the vehicle and observe the reactions of the suspected surveillance. Often the police will not turn up, but the surveillance vehicle, knowing they are now being watched themselves, will move shortly afterwards.
    - If you have a back way out of where you are that is not regularly used and thus unlikely to be watched as closely, sneak out and around to get close to the observation vehicle. At night this can be used for covert surveillance of the vehicle to see if there is anything further to add to your suspicions. The chances are that you will be detected doing this, but it will be enough for the team to assume their cover has been blown.
    - Monitor the driver of the vehicle to see if they are being picked up nearby after leaving it, or have a secondary vehicle stationed nearby.
    - Openly take photographs of the vehicle to scare it off.
  - These options are also useful for vehicles that are stationed further along your usual route and may be part of a stake-out box that is waiting to pick you up once you pass. It allows you to confirm suspicions and possibly burn them depending on how close you get to them.

## Anti-surveillance

- The best way to lose a vehicle from home is to follow an established pattern to start with, then to suddenly break it by taken unexpected turns or traveling at speed down roads, thus forcing them to take a choice of either losing you to avoid exposure, or exposing themselves, so effectively taking themselves out of the surveillance team.
- Both situations are opportunities to be taken to lose them, and move out of sight altogether. Techniques for doing this are extensions of the various active detection methods above, where instead of watching for reactions of possible tails you are using the opportunity to get away from them altogether.
- If you are aware of a blind turn or a sharp hill top which cannot be seen over, either of which has a second turn immediately afterwards, you can use this to get out of sight.
- If you are using vehicles, park up where you have quick access to a foot only route taking you to another road where a colleague is waiting in another vehicle to whisk you out of the area.
- If you know an area well, then consider concealment in little lanes and long driveways, though this is very much dependant on the terrain and how well you can remain concealed while they are searching for you.
- Go for dense traffic, and weave in and out of it. It is much harder to follow someone in these circumstances; use routes they are not likely to have anticipated.
- At night switch off lights and pull into concealed places or even driveways (use unoccupied houses or pretend to be lost to the owners).
- Bikes are much harder to follow than vehicles; especially in places where there are many cycle paths distinct from roads, allowing you to disappear out of sight. It is easier to lose foot surveillance, and easier to detect if anyone is attempting to follow you, as other bikes tailing you and especially cars stand

to keep you in sight, so watch out for vehicles pulling out of the line of traffic (both sides) and then drifting back in. There will be points at which they close up on you, depending on obstacles and other traffic situations, e.g., road works, traffic lights, heavy traffic. This gives you a chance to get a closer look at them. One bit of suspicious behavior is when a vehicle slows down prematurely so as to avoid coming right up behind you, thus upsetting the flow of traffic.

- At junctions, traffic lights, etc, the surveillance vehicle will often get closer to the target vehicle to ensure they can see which direction it is intending to head in. However, if they feel that it has become too exposed it may turn in a different direction to be replaced by another vehicle, though this depends on the resources at hand. If you suspect a vehicle and it does turn off, still keep a note of its details in case it reappears at a later time or day.
- On longer stretches of roads, surveillance vehicles will have a tendency to pace each other in a convoy; that is match each others speed and keep the same distance apart; they are unlikely to overtake each other. This becomes a recognizable pattern that can be spotted. They will be in front and behind the target vehicle, with the ones in front allowing the target to overtake as command is changed around to avoid the target getting suspicious.
- They will also pace themselves to the target vehicle. This allows them to be spotted through careful observation. For instance, depending on how they change speed, they will travel fast to catch up with you. As they get close to you they will slow down and pull back instead of overtaking as you might expect. Do they drop back to the same distance they were previously?
- Adverse weather conditions will cause surveillance vehicles to drive closer than they normally would due to poorer visibility; in particularly bad weather they will drive in front of the target vehicle.

- Keep up observation at traffic lights and other suitable places.
- Driving at night, the tail may wish to ensure they are following the right car, so may briefly turn on their headlights so they can read your license plate, then either pull back or overtake (before falling back later). If you believe you are being tailed, keep an eye on cars that do this.
- Enter a gas station and see who else follows you in. Is there a car that is not refilling or simply parks up? Does anyone follow you to the shop but doesn't buy anything? You can also use car parks for this, but they are harder to use to confirm suspicions given their general geography, though it does allow you to narrow down the set of vehicles to be considered suspect. Likewise with a lay-by on a highway or main road.
- If you are in a service stop or gas station for some time then a stakeout box will be set up around it (or in it, in the case of a service stop). This provides opportunities for you to look for the tell-tale signs as you return to your car or leave the site. As you do so, take one of the nearby side routes as opposed to the main road, if there are such opportunities. This is where you are likely to encounter surveillance team vehicles waiting—they may be parked facing away from the gas station, etc. in case you did take this route, but they still have to pull out and follow you, thus giving themselves away to the person who is watching for it. If you are able to observe on the way into a gas station you may actually witness the surveillance team set up their stakeout box.
- Stopping to eat in service stops gives you an opportunity to monitor faces and vehicles coming in. If you are placed at a window you may spot them checking your car for writings/maps/papers with directions as to where you are heading.
- In a multi-story car park who follows you all the way up to the top floor to park?
- Pull off the road and lift your engine hood as if there is a fault. Does anyone pull up in front or behind you, or stare at you as they go past?

range visibility and low density traffic it may be that they do not need to be as close. Remember though, that if you force the hand of one surveillance vehicle, then it may be replaced by one traveling further behind it.

- Who follows you into a service stop or over a junction and back onto the motorway? This is not typical behavior, but if they want to keep you in sight they may have to commit to it, though if a professional realizes what you are doing in time they will lose you but let a vehicle further back pick you up further down the road. However, you have potentially taken one vehicle out of the operation. This is not a tactic that will work with repetitive attempts as they will soon get wise to it. A more covert method, if you are not ready to let on you've identified the vehicle is at a complex junction to go around in an odd way that takes you back onto your original route, or even in the opposite direction. Which vehicles have had to get close to follow you and also taken this odd path? This may require some prior planning to be successful against an experienced team.
- Slow down to exit onto a service road or junction, but at the last moment pull back out on to the main road—who does likewise?
- Just before an exit from a highway pull into the hard shoulder. Standard procedure is that the command vehicle will leave at that exit so you may be able to identify them.
- At tolls choose the longest queue to go to. Who does likewise? Does anyone go through and pull up or drives slowly until you pass by?
- If you are pretty confident that the vehicle right behind you is keeping you under surveillance, do an emergency stop that forces them to go into the back of you, or come very close. Get out and check their reactions—often they will simply drive off rather than engage with you. If you are a bunch of big men getting out aggressively they may drive off out of pure fear rather than because they are tailing you. If they don't it gives you a chance to confront them.

works on the average investigator or police who don't have much experience tailing people who watch out for surveillance.

- In suburban areas go for streets that are curved as opposed to a grid-like structure. When you think you have got the tail out of sight, swiftly drive down a side street and get around a corner before parking up. In this case the tail will continue to search for you and eventually come back down the side street, thus giving themselves away. In some cases the tail will actually stop. Further up or around the exit point is usual. As by this time it is probable that they realize they've been burned. However, unless it is a heavy-duty operation, they will quite often wait around to see what you will do anyway. In this case we suggest that if they have already been in a position to see the faces of who else was your the car, then you pull along side them to have a good look at their faces, even photograph them (you have a good excuse by saying that you thought they were trouble, though it in turn could be inviting them to harass you further, so balance out the risks), even ask them a question for directions. It allows you to find out what they look like, while at the same time letting them know their cover has been blown.
- Use routes that are not obvious to get to your destination such as taking the long way around an estate or several blocks when there is a blatantly easier way to reach it. Works better for a destination they are not aware you might be heading to. It can be a destination you have picked solely for this purpose.
- Having left your starting point, take a different route back to it. Does anyone follow you back, even to the end of the street?
- Highways and other major roads provide different opportunities for spotting the tail. As the travel on them is faster the command vehicle and their team also need to be able to react faster to keep you in sight. They may have to allow for the fact that if you come off at a junction they need to see which way you have gone. However, at night and on roads with long-

## Active detection

Erratic and sudden changes in driving are among the most useful techniques for detecting surveillance. The idea is that you force a reaction from them. In order to keep you under surveillance they will have to expose themselves with unnatural manoeuvres to match yours, or demonstrate uncertainty. The more professional a team is then harder it becomes as they will have the training and resources to not give themselves and to pick you up with another member or vehicle. You are also letting the surveillance team in on the fact you suspect you are being followed. Many of the techniques described here are equally applied to anti-surveillance, where the aim is to lose tails. In the case of anti-surveillance the surveillance team is seeking to avoid exposure and ends up having to let you get out of sight.

- Erratic driving includes:
  - Running red traffic lights, or attempt to clear them just as they are turning red; often surveillance teams will not follow as it exposes them so this is also an anti-surveillance technique.
  - Cutting down side streets (beware of picking up surveillance vehicles moving parallel) and other shortcuts.
  - Illegal turns.
- When you take turns or side streets there is a possibility that you will encounter one of the other vehicles in the surveillance team, perhaps one that has previously been command and you have already been suspicious of. Thus you should look to see what other traffic is also appearing as opposed to what is behind you.
- Pull into the side of the road at a green light; who else waits behind rather than go through?
- If you are aware of a blind turn or a sharp hill, drive fast into it and once through it slow down immediately. What vehicles are bearing down on you as they attempt to get you back within sight? Do they decrease speed rapidly to stay behind you or do

they realize they have been burned and overtake to get out of the area. A variation is to pull in immediately and look for the reaction of suspect vehicles passing you.

- Do a U-turn.
  - Look out for:
    - Who attempts to follow?
    - What vehicles behind you attempt to park up? Do they turn in your direction in an attempt to pick you up again?
    - What is their reaction as they pass you?
    - A variation is to pull in and wait for any suspect vehicles to pass you before doing the U turn.
  - In light traffic these reactions will be quite obvious, and in heavy traffic they will cause commotion, both effects playing into your hands.
  - Standard practice for the professional is to continue traveling on and not turn until the first opportunity comes along rather than doing their own U-turn. However, in our experience this is a good method for exposing the surveillance tails where there are fewer resources available to them.
- If you are a good driver then you can combine the U-turn with the blind corner / hill crest; this combination is much better at forcing reactions as they are not prepared for you having turned around.
- Take roundabouts several times (though under United Kingdom law three is the maximum number of times that you are allowed to this), though the successfulness of this depends on the size of the roundabout, the heaviness of the traffic and how far back the tail is.
- Signal as if to turn at a junction and then go straight on. Has the suspected tail done likewise? This not particularly effective as tails may not signal at all because of this and being several cars

behind means that they can react to your change without giving themselves away. Works best for where the car you suspect is immediately behind you.

- When parking on a street choose a direction opposite to the one you leave in. Allow enough time for a stakeout box to set up. You are looking for uncertainty in the trigger on the unexpected behavior, or vehicles doing inappropriate U- turns to stay in the same direction as you. It also means that more resources have to be committed to tailing you thus increasing the chance of detection.
- Cul-de-sacs are ideal for picking up on tails, and with amateur tails for losing them. However, your tails are also aware of this. Go down the cul-de-sac and wait a few minutes before leaving again.
  - The tail will do one of two things:
    - Follow you down the cul-de-sac (though you may need to allow them a few minutes to make this decision). In which case you can immediately spot them, especially if it is a car that has been with you for a while. Plan to turn your vehicle as soon as possible though out of site of the road you've come from. On a narrow cul-de-sac you can be gone before they have a chance to turn around.
    - Wait on the road outside the cul-de-sac knowing that you are practicing anti-surveillance techniques. As you stop at the top of the cul-de-sac waiting to rejoin the flow of traffic, watch out for cars parked up with the entrance of the cul-de-sac in sight and that start moving once you leave the cul-de-sac. Driveways may be used as well, but may require high enough housing density to work.
  - If the cul-de-sac is signposted and your tail is professional then they will not be caught out by this, but it still often