



Use of Force

The Police respond to hundreds of incidents and calls every day, the vast majority of these matters are resolved peacefully. On occasions it will be necessary for the officers to exercise use of force to uphold the law and keep the public or themselves safe from harm.

What is the Use of Force

Use of Force is defined as any physical use of force, except compliant handcuffing. It includes:

- Empty Hand Techniques, where there is no use of a weapon but hands to restrain a subject
- Batons
- Irritant Spray – (both drawing and discharge)
- Leg Restraints
- Taser
- Spit Hoods

Training on Use of Force

To help police officers to judge what force to use, when and how to carry it out, they receive personal safety training and first aid training. Throughout all personal safety training, officers are assessed to ensure that they are suitably qualified and skilled to use a variety of techniques and that they fully understand their legal obligations whenever using force.

Officers are trained in the following areas:

- Holding effective conversation
- Self-defence
- Using handcuffs
- Using a baton
- Using irritant spray (which is an incapacitant spray, similar to pepper spray)
- Using limb restraints.

Legislation governing Use of Force

When using force, officers are governed by the following legislation:

- Section 117 PACE 1984 (when an arrest is made, force may be used)
- Human Rights Act 1998 (force must always be proportionate, legal, officers are accountable, and it must have been necessary)

- Section 3 Criminal Law Act 1967 (officers may use reasonable force in the circumstances to prevent crime).

Your rights if you feel excessive force is used

- If you have experienced use of force, or witnessed someone experiencing use of force, that you feel was excessive, you can tell someone about this.

Your feedback matters

- Being subject to use of force can be an unpleasant experience, no matter the approach of the police officers involved, we always welcome feedback whether positive or negative. You can provide your [feedback](#).
- If it is felt that excessive force was used, you can make a formal complaint [here](#).