SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT

BATON MANUAL

RM 580.08

11-04-2026

POLICY STATEMENT

General Order 580.02 (Use of Force) implements this manual and requires personnel to know its contents and follow its guidelines when using the police baton or Expandable Straight Baton (ESB). This manual is for departmental use only and does not apply to the standard of care, in an evidentiary sense, in criminal or civil proceedings. With respect to third-party claims, the techniques, guidelines, and considerations contained in this manual are not intended to create, nor should they be construed as the creation of a legal standard of safety or care beyond that which the law requires.

This manual has been produced to assist officers with establishing and maintaining law enforcement professionalism regarding the use of the police baton. If an officer has determined that the baton should be used, it shall be used properly and in accordance with GO 580.02.

Use of the police baton is proper in situations requiring a degree of force greater than that readily provided by weaponless control techniques, but less than that provided by resorting to deadly force.

This manual illustrates and explains approved police baton techniques that were developed to apply when attempting to detain a violent, hostile, or assaultive individual.

This manual serves as the basic guide and sourcebook when reviewing, developing, or teaching department-approved baton techniques. Officers wishing to develop, maintain, or enhance baton skills should refer to this manual and seek instruction from department-approved baton instructors.

Through the chain of command, to the chief of police (COP), employees shall report any discrepancies of this manual, law, department policies, and acceptable police procedures. Any procedural changes made to those outlined in this manual shall be at the discretion of the COP.

Finally, this manual is intended as a reference for techniques trained and approved by the training division. Officers shall refer to GO 580.02 for use of force guidelines and policy.

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Zachary Bales
Interim Chief of Police

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CHAPTER 1
GENERAL BATON GUIDELINES

A. POLICY GUIDELINES
1. Only those techniques taught within the Department-approved course shall be used, absent extraordinary circumstances defined in GO 580.02.
2. Injured persons shall be treated on scene or taken to any authorized medical facility for examination and treatment required pursuant to General Order 522.02 (Medical Treatment) and GO 580.02.

B. TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS
1. Officers should continually assess the level of force to be applied in a particular situation. Some determining factors in deciding to use, or continuing to use, a baton include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. The size of the subject compared to the size of the officer.
   b. The subject's relative strength, age, and skill level.
   c. The officer's inability to use weaponless control due to injury or level of exhaustion.
   d. The number of officers as compared to the number of subjects.
   e. The number of the subjects.
   f. The violence and aggressiveness of the subject.
   g. Whether the subject possesses weapons, objects which can be used as weapons, or is in close proximity to such objects.
   h. The need for immediate control due to tactical considerations.
2. The number of baton strikes shall be limited to that amount which is reasonably necessary to achieve control of the subject in accordance with GO 580.02.

C. TERMINOLOGY
1. Baton: A smooth wooden staff issued to officers as a department-approved weapon and used as a striking implement to gain control over a violent, aggressive, or hostile subject.
2. Expandable Straight Baton (ESB): A smooth telescoping metal shaft issued to officers as a department-approved weapon and used as a striking implement to gain control over a violent, aggressive, or hostile subject.
3. Butt end: The baton end nearest the grommet or bottom of the ESB handle (end cap). The butt end may be used to deliver a strike or thrust to a subject.
4. Front end: The baton end opposite the grommet or butt end and the smaller tip of the ESB (strike tube cap). The front end may be used to deliver a strike or thrust to a subject.
5. Forward end: The end of the baton which is pointing toward the subject. This could be either the butt end or the front end.
6. Rear end: The end of the baton which is held closest to the officer. This could be either the butt end or the front end.
7. Shaft: The straight and smooth cylindrical portion of the baton between the butt end and forward end. Any portion of the shaft may be used for striking a subject or deflecting an attack.
8. Strike Tube (ESB): The smooth metal end tube portion used primarily in all strikes and measuring approximately ½ inch in diameter. Any part of the shaft, including the tubes, can be used for striking a subject or deflecting an attack.
9. Strike: A blow delivered with the baton in which a portion of the baton shaft impacts a subject. The blow can be delivered with circular or linear movement of the baton. While delivering a strike, an officer may hold the baton with one or two hands.
10. Thrust: A blow delivered with either end of the baton that impacts a subject. This blow is usually delivered with strong, follow-through, linear movements. While delivering a thrust, the officer may hold the baton with one or two hands.

11. Jab: A blow delivered with either end of the baton impacting a subject. This blow is usually delivered with a short, quick, "piston-like" movement in a linear direction. While delivering a jab, the officer may hold the baton with one or two hands.
12. Deflect: A method of using the baton shaft to parry or redirect a blow delivered by a subject. The deflection is usually delivered in a sweeping motion, and the baton can be held with one or two hands.
13. Distraction: A movement or act performed by the officer which disrupts the mental or physical coordination of a subject, thus placing the subject at a disadvantage or preventing a subject from delivering a successful attack. When used in the context of baton tactics, the officer may first feign a strike with their empty hand, misdirecting the subject's attention, so that the officer can deliver an effective blow with the baton.
14. Shuffle step: A balanced, sliding step, used by the officer to move forward or backward, to create the appropriate distance to use the baton.
15. Position of interview: A standing position used by an officer which offers balance, safety, and alertness when confronting one or more individuals.
    a. Normally, this position is obtained by spreading the feet approximately shoulder-width apart and turning the entire body approximately 45 degrees away from the subject. The non-dominant foot is pointed toward a subject and the dominant foot pointed between 45 to 90 degrees away from the subject. Body weight is centered toward the balls of the feet to facilitate quick movement.
    b. Generally, baton grips and carry positions are accompanied by the officer standing in the position of interview.

D. BATON CHARACTERISITICS

1. Two sizes of wooden police batons are authorized for carry and use. The decision as to which baton an officer carries is based on their preference. Specific characteristics of each baton shall be as follows:

a.

Length:	26 inches
Diameter:	1⅛ inches to 1 ¼ inches
Weight:	15 to 17 ounces
Material:	Hardwood, hickory, or oak
Retention:	Rubber grommet, placed approximately 7 inches from the butt end
Finish:	Black satin

b.

Length:	29 inches
Diameter:	1 ¼ inches to 1 ½ inches
Weight:	16 ¾ to 21 ounces
Material:	Hardwood, hickory, or oak
Retention:	Rubber grommet, placed approximately 7 inches from the butt end
Finish:	Black satin

2. Two sizes of police ESB are authorized for carry and use. The decision as to which baton an officer carries is based on their preference. Specific characteristics of each baton shall be as follows:

a.

Length:	26 inches
Diameter:	7/8 inch
Strike tube:	Approximately 8 ¾ inches long and ½ inch diameter

Weight:	Approximately 26 ounces
Material:	Alloy Steel
Retention:	Issued ESB leather holster or optional Perma-lock or nylon holster
Finish:	Black satin

b.

Length:	29 inches
Diameter:	7/8 inch
Strike tube:	Approximately 10 inches long and ½ inch diameter
Weight:	Approximately 29 ounces
Material:	Alloy Steel
Retention:	Issued ESB leather holster or optional Perma-lock or nylon holster
Finish:	Black satin

c. The ESB end cap is a retention piece threaded on the bottom of the ESB handle. There are two authorized end caps for use with the ESB.
d. A standard-issue, straight-cylinder end cap is threaded on to the base of the handle.
e. A “retention” end cap threads on to the base of the handle. The retention end cap has a saucer shape which enhances an officer’s ability to maintain a better grip of the baton when administering strikes. The retention end cap also offers the ability to “ring” the baton in a standard duty belt baton ring (Figure #1 and #2).

Figure #1



Figure #2



CHAPTER 2
BATON STRIKE ZONES

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The effective use of the baton requires knowledge of acceptable areas on the human body which may be struck by a baton.

1. Other factors that may affect a subject's reaction to baton force are:
   a. Variables in anatomy
   b. Physiological response (drug use, pain tolerance, etc.)
   c. Mental and emotional states
   d. Age
   e. Body composition (muscle density, bone density, amount of fatty tissue, etc.)
   f. Physical fitness
   g. Degree of combative resistance
   h. Exact placement of the force generated by the baton strike
2. Use of the baton requires the officer to continually monitor and assess effectiveness of any delivered strikes.
3. Selection of acceptable baton strike areas are based on the situation and circumstances.
4. Strike areas should be chosen because they are effective for quickly subduing a subject while minimizing injury to the subject.
5. Although there are specific areas of the body that are not to be struck with the baton, extraordinary circumstances may occur in which the officer must protect their life or the life of another. As a result, a non-strike area may be intentionally struck in accordance with GO 580.02.
6. Understanding the different baton target zones allows officers to assess the level of risk associated with the circumstances of each incident and the delivery of baton strikes to areas of the body.

B. GREEN ZONE

1. The green zone is comprised of the area from the bottom of the feet to the top of the hip line and both arms from the hand to the shoulder (Figure #3).
   a. Specific areas in the green zone include:
      (1) Upper leg
      (2) Lower leg
      (3) Upper arm
      (4) Lower arm
2. Baton strikes directed to the green zone generally result in minimal levels of trauma, and the injury tends to be temporary rather than permanent. However, exceptions do occur.
   a. The green zone is the preferred baton target area.
   b. The green zone is relatively easy to strike and difficult for a subject to defend from baton strikes.

C. YELLOW ZONE

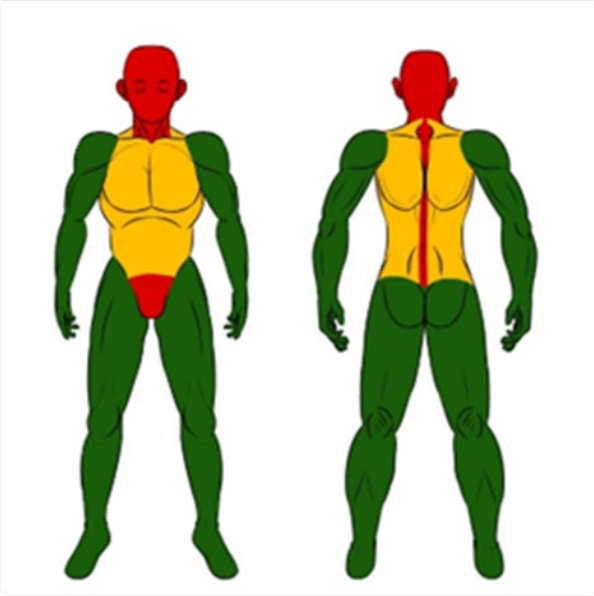
1. The yellow zone is comprised of the torso area between the top of the hip line and top of the shoulder line (Figure #3).
   a. Specific areas in the yellow zone include:
      (1) Chest
      (2) Upper abdomen
      (3) The large area of the back while avoiding the spine
      (4) In the yellow zone, the kidneys and heart should be avoided as baton strike areas.
2. Strikes directed to the yellow zone may result in minimal levels of trauma, but the increased presence of internal organs may increase the potential for more serious injury.

D. RED ZONE

1. The red zone is comprised of (Figure #3):
   a. The area above the shoulder line including the neck and head
   b. The spinal column
   c. The groin or genital area.

2. Baton strikes directed to the red zone have a high potential of inflicting serious bodily injury or death.
3. Due to the likelihood of serious bodily injury or death, this area is not considered a baton strike zone except in exigent circumstances in which the officer must protect their life or the life of another in accordance with GO 580.02.

Figure #3



CHAPTER 3
BATON TECHNIQUES AND TACTICS

A. BATON GRIPS



1. SINGLE HAND LOW GRIP

The baton is grasped near the grommet if using a wooden baton, or the rubber handgrip if using an ESB. The thumb will encircle and close the grip which will aid in the control of the baton and assist with retention.

This grip is primarily chosen when the officer's non-dominant hand is being utilized in some other fashion, such as pushing a violent offender back to create distance and space between the officer and subject.



2. TWO HAND LOW GRIP

The baton is grasped near the grommet if using a wooden baton or the rubber handgrip if using the ESB. The hands of the officer are stacked close in line with each other while the thumb of each hand encircles the baton.



3. TWO HAND LOW/HIGH GRIP

The baton is gripped with an overhand grip near the grommet end of the baton and an underhand grip near the tip end of the baton. There should be 2-3 inches of baton exposed on both ends of the baton with this grip. The thumbs will encircle the baton in both grip positions.

B. BATON STRIKES



1. SINGLE HAND FORWARD STRIKE

The officer will stand with their feet shoulder width apart with their non-dominant foot forward. The non-dominant hand should be placed near the officer's jaw in a closed fist to protect the officer's head from opposing strikes. The officer will then twist their hips and pivot as the baton is moved across the officer's body to strike the target in front of them.



2. SINGLE HAND BACKHAND STRIKE

The officer will stand with their feet shoulder width apart with their dominant foot forward. The non-dominant hand should be placed near the officer's jaw in a closed fist to protect the officer's head from opposing strikes. The officer will twist their hips and pivot as the baton is moved across their body to strike the target with a back hand motion.



3. TWO HAND FORWARD STRIKE

The officer will stand with their feet shoulder width apart with their non-dominant foot forward. Both the officer's hands will be placed near the end of the baton in an opposing overhand and underhand grip. The officer will then twist their hips and pivot as the baton is moved across the officer's body to strike the target in front of them.



4. PUSH STRIKE

The push strike is best utilized in a crowd control setting to move people back. This strike is also advantageous in creating space for the officer to maneuver or transition to a different position. This strike is accomplished by using a two-hand high/low grip. The officer will stand with their feet shoulder-width apart in a bladed stance for stability. The officer will raise the baton level with the ground at chest height and strike forward. The target area for the officer in this case is the upper body of their target.



5. JAB STRIKE

The jab strike is a method that may be used to create distance between the officer and the subject using the tip of the baton in a forward thrusting motion. The officer's dominant hand will maintain a master grip around the base of the baton non-dominant hand will be placed near the tip of the baton using a two-hand high/low grip. The officer will extend their arms in a thrust-like motion with the intended point of impact being the tip of the baton.

CHAPTER 4
CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE EXPANDABLE STRAIGHT BATON (ESB)

Officers are responsible for maintaining their issued ESB in proper working condition through regular inspections and maintenance. Note: Contact the department lead instructors for guidance if the baton must be completely disassembled.

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The amount of force required to open the baton is determined by the end cap retention spring (Figure #5). A slight adjustment of the spring is all that is necessary to customize the release pressure to individual requirements. Over adjustments may damage the spring.
2. If the baton fails to lock in the extended position, it is likely due to debris or oily residue built up within the joints. The baton should be disassembled and cleaned in the same manner as any auto-loading handgun; WD40 or denatured alcohol (solvent) is recommended as the cleaning agent. Do not use oil or gun cleaning oil (Breakfree, etc.). The baton must be carefully dried of all moisture or residue with a clean dry cloth. The baton must be assembled dry.
3. If the baton fails to stay in the closed position, the end cap retention spring may be out of adjustment, bent or broken. Replace, adjust, or tighten as necessary.
4. If the rubber hand grip is damaged or worn over time, a new handgrip should be attached.
5. Periodically inspect the retention spring, anti-rattle ring, retention spring cap screw, and retainer end caps for damage and tightness. Note: The anti-rattle ring is an optional item and is not necessary for the effective function of the baton. The manufacturer recommends replacing it once a year. (Figure #4)
6. After major use, such as a training session, or after using in certain environments (dirty, oily, etc.), inspect the baton to ensure it is in good operating condition.

Figure #4

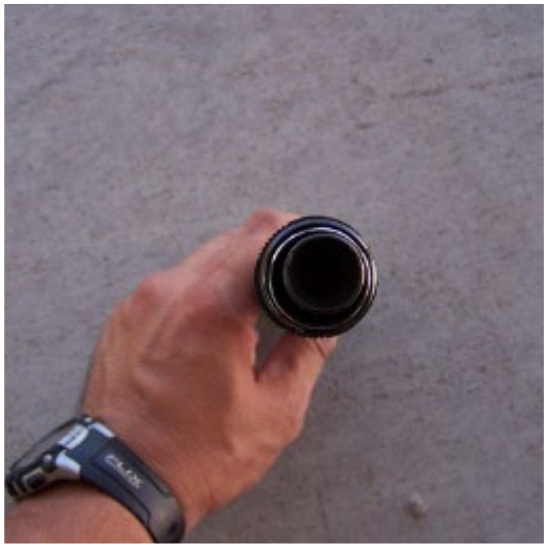


Figure #5



7. There are factors that can contribute to ESB baton extension failure. These factors may include a dirty or oily ESB, improper opening, or other circumstances. Extension failure can be minimized with proper care, maintenance, and proper usage.

CHAPTER 5
OPENING AND CLOSING THE ESB

A. PROPER OPENING METHODS FOR THE ESB:
1. The “downward” method
   a. The officer should be standing in a balanced position of interview. Properly gripping the ESB, the officer will extend the baton open at an approx. 45-degree angle downward to their dominant side. The extension will be with a snap or whip-like motion (centrifugal force) to properly lock the ESB in the open position.
   b. The officer should be aware of their surroundings when opening the ESB as not to cause accidental damage to property or injury to another person.
2. The “upward” method
   a. This method is used when the officer does not have the ability to use centrifugal force downward.
   b. As in the downward method, the officer should be in a position of interview and open the baton at a 45-degree angle upward towards their dominant side.
3. The “manual” method
   a. This method is used when the officer does not have the ability to use the centrifugal force downward or upward to open the baton.
   b. While holding the ESB in a closed position in the dominant hand, the officer will grip the front end with the non-dominant hand and, in a quick strong motion, extend the baton pulling on both sides to the locked open position.
4. The “immediate recovery” method
   a. Immediate recovery means the ESB can be immediately used in the closed position, partially open position, or re-opened using one of the previously mentioned opening methods.
   b. Depending on the circumstances, the officer does not have to disengage from the subject to use the ESB. The ESB can be used to deliver effective strikes or thrusts even partially opened or closed.
   c. If there is an extension failure and the ESB closes, the officer has the option of using the ESB in the closed position with any choice of thrust or jab. Additionally, the officer should assess the situation and may decide to disengage and move to a better tactical position or re-extend the ESB. Once the ESB is extended, the officer should assess the situation to decide whether further use of the baton would be necessary.

B. PROPER CLOSING METHODS FOR THE ESB:
1. The officer should holster the opened baton and go to an appropriate publicly maintained space (street or sidewalk), if feasible, while maintaining situational awareness.
2. Officers should not close the baton in an area which will result in damage to a business or community member’s property, such as wood, tile, or vinyl flooring. Officers should also be aware of a business or community member’s exterior hardscape such as slate, brick, or tile cement.
3. Officers should not close the baton on a business or community member’s interior or exterior wall surfaces.
4. Officers should recognize that improper closing or abusive pounding of the expandable baton is the main cause of damaged batons.
5. Officers should find an appropriate and safe area in which to close the baton.
6. While holding the baton by the grip, approximately 45 degrees to a smooth hard surface, officers should gently tap the end to begin loosening the locked swages (locking points). This is referred to as a “sideways tap.”
7. Officers should then rotate the baton approximately 180 degrees, and again gently tap the baton on the smooth hard surface to further loosen the swages.
8. When the swages have been sufficiently loosened, officers should hold the baton vertically to the surface and quickly tap downward, causing the tubes to collapse and the baton to close.

9. Officers should not pound the baton in a thrust or jab motion on the ground to loosen the locked swages. Abusive pounding will damage the baton. Examples of this damage include bending the tubing or stripping and deforming the end cap threads. Always use the sideways tap method to avoid such damage.
10. Officers should not try to close the baton while holding onto a subject and should place the subject in a secure area before closing the baton.
11. The safest place to close a baton may be near a patrol vehicle and using the street or sidewalk surface to close the baton. If that area still presents a potential hazard, such as the presence of a hostile or upset crowd, officers should holster their open baton and close the baton in another area when safe to do so.