

You are reporting on an important story with wide ranging personal and national impacts. It is important you understand and prepare for what are likely to be testing circumstances. Do not underestimate these multi-faceted challenges. Pay attention to your physical safety and take safety precautions when needed.

Covering civil unrest and protests

- Location
 - Make yourself familiar with where the protests are to be held
 - Make mental notes of alternate routes to and from the location
 - Be aware of participants, organisations taking part and possible outcomes
 - Don't get trapped between protestors and police/military units
 - Given the possibility of use of force and weapons take appropriate action and preparation, as much as possible make sure you have some kind of cover in front of you when reporting on site
 - If lethal weapons are used, make sure you move away and into safe areas immediately
 - Be prepared for teargas, water canons and baton charges - a water bottle is always handy, a thick, wet clothe can be used as a makeshift deterrent against teargas
- Transport
 - Make sure you have transport to and back from the protests
 - If you are using your own transport, pay attention to fuel, batteries and safe parking
 - If using public transport be mindful of delays and crowds
- Equipment/Attire
 - Make sure you have adequate bags to carry your equipment and do so safely amidst possible use of water cannons, teargas and large crowds
 - Batteries
 - Storage units
 - Dress appropriately, sometimes it is important to understand colours associated with protests and protestors so you can avoid them if necessary
- Communication
 - Make sure you have phone connections, if they are likely to be unstable, make sure that you have alternate communication modes
 - Keep family, trusted colleagues and news managers informed of your movements, do this regularly

More details on How to Safely Cover Riots and Civil Unrest - <https://dartcenter.org/resources/how-safely-cover-riots-and-civil-unrest>

- Reporting from/within a hostile environment
 - Be vigilant when you interact in public and with new, unknown sources
 - Secure workspace and family spaces, don't leave anything unattended
 - Be mindful of where you travel, the times you travel and the mode of transportation
 - Pay attention to digital safety – passwords, equipment storage, sharing of digital equipment and data
 - Make sure you don't leave equipment unattended or without trusted supervision
 - Establish alternate communication channels

It is advisable to work in a trusted group or at least in pairs. It can help working on the ground and on delicate reporting projects. However, you need to be extra vigilant on those who you share information with.

When covering protests consider you may be arrested.

Prepare for this possibility - have a plan - before going in the field –

- Find out beforehand where arrested journalists are being sent
- Whether you are freelance or a staff reporter - have a check-in time with someone - editor or friend
- You **MUST** make every effort to check-in at the specified time if you have not been arrested - this is very important
- If you don't check in at the given time this is a signal you have been arrested
- Have your contact person inform your family and news organization

If arrested -

- Do not resist arrest
- It is important that you do as you are asked
- Keep breathing deeply to stay calm
- Do not make sudden or fast movements or try to run away once arrested
- Tell yourself you are resilient and can get through this.
- Keep breathing deeply to calm your heart rate
- If you are in jail for longer than a day keep focussed on your loved ones and picture them in your mind
- Speak to them in your heart - have conversations with them
- Keep focussing on your mission of journalism and how important it is
- Keep your attitude positive

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