

TACTICAL, TACTI-COOL OR TACTI-FOOL?

My guest Steve Allen has created some great tips for authors writing about firearms in their fiction. Here's an excerpt ...

- Give your characters a good weapons load-out and good gear.
- Know the difference between **tactical**, **tacti-cool** and **tacti-fool**.
- Arming your characters reasonably takes some practice and restraint.

TACTICAL

- Tactical learns about guns, gear and shooting on the range.
- Tactical is your character spending hours on ranges practising, attending classes and training to better his or her skills.



TACTI-FOOL

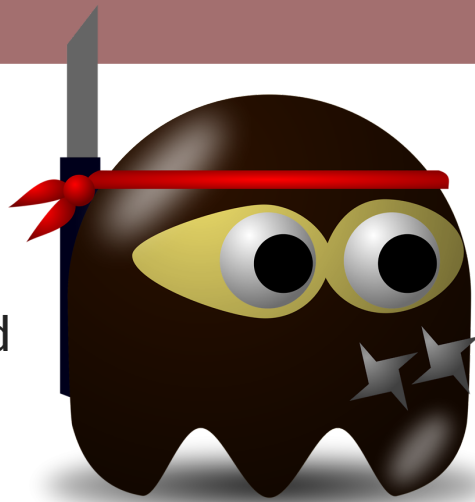
- Tacti-fool reads about guns, gear and shooting on the internet.
- He believes himself (it's usually a trait of men; especially rare in women) to be an expert.



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TACTI-COOL

Unless writing satire, parody, comedy, etc., avoid giving your characters tacti-cool gear. It looks awesome but is of dubious worth.



A good use of tacti-cool stuff is loading a character with it so that he learns the hard way the value of quality gear – just don't overdo it. This is what it looks like:

- Ginormous hollow-handled and heavy survival knives filled with gear of questionable worth. These survival knives usually come with a sheath that's as ridiculous as the knife.
- Gaudy anti-personnel hatchets with ludicrous blades better suited for use as a prop in a cheesy post-apocalyptic movie than survival.
- Altoids- and sardine-can-sized personal survival kits.
- Tactical baby carriers with more MOLLE slots than anyone could ever need.
- Paracord overload. For a while, nearly every piece of tactical gear (especially if it was black) such as knives, axes, folding shovels, etc. had to be wrapped in miles of paracord.
- Ridiculous camouflage patterns and hues. No skulls, dragons, or weird colours.