

# By2020WeRiseUp: Offline tactics in times of corona - and beyond!

## A small and inspiring toolkit

### An inspiring pathway to escalate pressure and confrontation

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### 0. What is this toolkit for?

During the 5th by2020 European meeting of By2020WeRiseUp, a working group was created to work around tactics for actions focused on escalating pressure and confrontation in relation with our objectives, narrative, and targets for the spring wave (3rd wave) that By2020 was calling for before the outbreak of COVID19. However, the context changed drastically and with this adjustments were necessary.

This toolkit contains a series of ideas for offline tactics, both well-known and new. It’s not meant as a how-to, but as an inspiration for further research. We hope this can be useful for your group. Most tactics are designed to be done in a short period of time and by few people, or they take into consideration social distancing measures, so that any group can adapt them to their reality. We need to get back on the streets soon with the due precautions so we can take care of people while fighting the system that is killing us.

We are aware that different groups use different approaches and tactics. We need to escalate while still respecting each others’ principles, values and limits. We believe that different actions and different people can complement each other. We are stronger together.

Consider the COVID19 situation in your specific context or country: Is there a lock-down and you might get bothered by police before even doing the action? Does it make sense to do the action at this stage of the crisis? We expect a de-escalation of lock-downs in many European countries along May and June, so check your national situation and think what is more appropriate for you.

**Remember, your security and that of other people first.**

Some general basics to be considered for any kind of tactic/action:

- *Safety first, make sure your activities are safe for everyone involved, the activists, passers by and those people from your target.*
- *Make sure to not endanger any people or living beings.*
- *Make sure that you get legal advice when required in order to be properly prepared for any legal consequences and make sure everyone involved understands the legal advice.*
- *Take into consideration your communications strategy and who is taking the images of your action and how are you going to communicate after.*
- *Make sure to use environmentally friendly materials.*

- *Make sure everybody that will join your activity fully understands what they need to do and that they have any equipment they need.*

## 1. Actions for isolated people

- Banners on the front doors/balconies/windows
- Putting plants in the streets
- Playing revolutionary music from balconies. [Example from Italy](#).
- Hologram, lights & shadows & sound systems march projected from the balcony, e.g. [FFF Spain on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April](#).
- Simple posters that people can print out/do it at home and post on the streets when they go out to get food
- "Caceralazos" (pot banging) from windows and balconies. [Example from Brasil](#).
- Mass donations of surgical masks, [see for example here](#).
- Making masks from home, [see for example here](#).

## 2. Artivism on the streets

### Non-permanent graffiti

We would like to encourage you to use an environmentally friendly method of street art. Unfortunately, that generally means that they can be destroyed or washed away quite easily. The most common ways are paintings with normal street chalk or spray chalk (like graffiti but washable and less chemical, links for further information below).

- Number of people required: 1+
- Planning effort: Low
- Materials & costs: Depends on method. No additional costs – [this website](#) provides links where to buy spray chalk (most normal graffiti stores sell it) and how to make it at home

### Clean graffiti

Clean graffiti is when you make a stencil from metal and then use a high pressure water pressure washer to clean the design onto a dirty side-walk or wall. As you are actually cleaning the side-walk you are not actually damaging anything and yet your message is there for all to see. You can easily find examples online.

- Number of people required: 2-3
- Planning effort: medium
- Materials & costs: hire or borrow a water pressure cleaner (power and water supply needed), make the metal stencil yourself (ideally 0.8mm steel, cut with a jigsaw - use eye protection)

### Oil Spill

Using paint or chalk on the pavement outside - or the lobby of - an AGM or other target with a sign like "be careful the floor is slippery with oil dug up by/financed by (depending on target). A couple of easy recipes for "oil" [can be found here](#) and [here](#) (a cheaper one)

- Number of people required: 1+
- Planning effort: Low to medium
- Materials & costs: Chalk/paint + ingredients for the fake oil

#### Fake oil in ornamental water features

You can make fake oil that floats on water and looks and behaves like real oil for up to 12 hours. To make this fake oil, mix coco powder with olive oil (experiment with your oil and coco powder). Add this to the water fountain outside the fossil fuel company headquarters or meeting.

- Number of people required: 2-3
- Planning effort: Medium
- Materials & costs: ingredients for the fake oil

#### Red hands - Catch them "Red-handed"

A simple protest where the activists paint the insides of their hands red - with at least one banner saying “Caught red-handed” in English, or “Alerte rouge” in French, or “Alerta Roja” in Spanish, etc. [Some pictures for inspiration.](#)

- Number of people required: 3-4 (as a minimum)
- Planning effort: Low to medium
- Materials & costs: Banner material, paint and brushes.

#### Footprints - We leave a trace

Action where people have to step their shoes in paint and then walk around the city or in a specific place whilst maintaining social distance. [Example from Seebrücke \(Germany\).](#)

- Number of people required: 3-4 (as a minimum)
- Planning effort: Low
- Materials & costs: paint and shoes

### **3. Guerilla Interviews**

Do you already know where to find the individuals responsible for climate change in your country? If you do, prepare some difficult questions and a camera (even a smartphone will do) and try to catch them off guard. The aim is to get them to admit to bad policy, refuse to answer or react badly on camera. This is a very aggressive tactic so be prepared for a harsh response and also make sure to get legal advice beforehand. Once you have good footage spread it through your networks and social media channels.

- Number of people required: 2-3
- Planning effort: Medium. Find places and agenda of our targets
- Materials & costs: none

## 4. One person protests

The current circumstances with corona and lock-downs mean that we can't gather together in large groups. However, we can go to protest individually outside our targets buildings and meetings. If we work with others we can make shifts and maintain a vigil over an extended period of time.

- Number of people required: 1-2
- Planning effort: Low
- Materials & costs: Banner material.

## 5. Actions with a group of people

- *Group size dependent on each country's restrictions!*
- Holograms protests (this requires time and budget). [Example from Greenpeace Belgium.](#)
- Coordinated replication of *One Person Protests*: people are spread out in the streets, each holding a sign transporting a message;
- Banner protests, e.g. a [protest done in Berlin on April 24th.](#)
- Rotating protest (small groups in front of any particular space which rotate);
- Running protests and cycling protests
- Car caravan (car rally). E.g. from an [immigrant rights groups in the US.](#)
- Protesting with distancing, creating a line, maybe surrounding the institution or in a big square. [Example from Israel here.](#)
- Homeless families reclaim vacant homes to survive virus outbreak, e.g. [in the US.](#)

## 6. Strikes

- Nurses, doctors walk out, demanding better and safer conditions to work. [Example from a hospital in the US.](#)
- Hunger strike if red line is crossed
- Debt strike/ mortgage strike
- Rent strike, e.g. [in the US](#) or [in Spain.](#)
- [Cooperation Jackson called for a general strike](#) in the US.

## 7. Lock-ons (or glue-ons)

Lock-on is a technique used by peaceful protesters to make it difficult to remove them from their place of protest. It often involves improvised or specially designed and constructed hardware. This is a science of itself, and there's a variety of practical ways to do it. In addition to chains and glue there are several specialized devices, including tripods and tubes or pipes with handholds built in to link a person to an object or to create chains of people. Other common hardware includes padlocks, U-locks, bicycle locks, lockboxes, etc. A possible combination with exposure to great heights like trees or buildings is very effective. The protester can choose between a type that will allow them to willingly remove themselves or a type that requires machinery to remove them. The more different

materials used in layers, the more difficult the technical removal gets. Some Lock-ons can take hours or days to fully be removed. Depending on techniques and where you choose to stage the action, the level of repression can be very high. Activists need to be prepared for and informed of this. If possible have the press present, and at least fellow activists acting as legal observers, filming when necessary.

- Number of people: 2+ to build, 2+ for locking-on to the target (1+ for lock-on, 1 as a legal observer)
- Planning effort: Medium to high, depending on the complexity of your Lock-on. You need a target and an idea of how to best lock on. Good lock-ons can take a week or two to build!
- Materials & costs: Chain, lock, glue, car batteries, bitumen, concrete, cables, steel, cloth or preferred device/material. If you are planning to build a proper one, it can be very useful to wear diapers during the action!

*Warning! Serious considerations with safety around this tactic: when police will remove you, try to be able to unlock yourself. Consider how long you are going to stay, to be able to go to the toilet or wear a diaper and be comfortable, it means to think how you place your body before you lock.*

Further readings for lock-on protests:

- [Wikipedia article](#) on lock-ons.
- [A quite a complex lock-on](#). You can roughly see details in the close-up pictures.
- [7 different standard techniques](#) explained plus experience with police reaction (in the UK!)
- Not exciting to watch through, but [as an example how big the effort can be to remove you](#).
- Close up removal of a [medium complex “sleeping dragon”](#) (lock-on chain)
- Greenpeace [combining a sleeping dragon with a gateway lock-on](#).
- XR Washington DC [using Superglue to block a tunnel](#) beneath the US Capitol.
- Who, what, why: [How do you un-glue a protester?](#)

## 8. More actions!

- If this is not enough and you want to deep into more possibilities, in the following link you can find almost 30 pages of ideas [on our website](#).
- You can find [more than 100 different examples of protests around the globe within the Covid19 situation in this initiative](#) which is still collecting examples. You can submit new examples [in this form](#). You can see all the examples [in this sheet](#).
- On [this webpage from the Gastivists](#) you can also find some resources in times of Covid19.

Contact and further contributions:

*In its current stage, this document is rudimentary at best. If you have practical experience or theoretical background knowledge about actions or want to add more, please don't hesitate to contact us under [2020we@riseup.net](mailto:2020we@riseup.net). If you want to write us an encrypted mail, [you'll find our PGP-key here](#).*