



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Domestic Terrorism Symbols Guide

Anarchist Violent Extremism

(U) SUMMARY

(U//FOUO) The following symbols and phrases are sometimes used by anti-government or anti-authority violent extremists, specifically anarchist violent extremists (AVEs). AVE symbols are often found on online platforms, in propaganda, and as graffiti. Some common themes for AVE symbols include images and stylized rhetoric conveying anti-capitalist, anti-fascist, or anti-government or anti-law enforcement sentiment. Although the majority of criminal activity by AVEs violates state or local laws, some crimes may be investigated and prosecuted at the federal level. **The use or sharing of these symbols or phrases alone should not independently be considered evidence of AVE presence or affiliation or serve as an indicator of illegal activity. Additionally, some individuals use such references for their original, historic meaning, or other non-violent purposes.** The FBI does not investigate, collect, or maintain information solely for the purposes of monitoring activities protected by the First Amendment.

(U) SYMBOLS

(U) The word "anarchy" comes from the Greek anarkhia, meaning "without a ruler." Anarchist theory contends all forms of government are oppressive and undesirable and should be abolished. Anarchists believe anarchy ultimately makes possible the creation of a society ordered by individual freedom and mutual cooperation and without social, political, or economic hierarchies.



(U) **Circled Letter A:** Symbol associated with anarchism worldwide.

(U) Said to represent a French anarchist's maxim "Anarchy is Order," with the letter "A" for anarchy, or "without rulers," and the circle as a symbol of order.

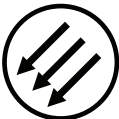


(U) **ACAB** or **1312:** Acronym for "All Cops Are B*stards" or "All Capitalists are B*stards." Instead of letters, sometimes the numbers "1312" are used.



(U) **"ANTIFA"** (short for anti-fascist): refers to individual(s) who oppose fascism.

(U) It is more an ideological concept than a single organization or group, but likeminded individuals may collectively act together or form an anti-fascist group.



(U) **3 Downward Left Arrows Inside a Circle:** Symbol associated with anti-fascist anarchists with the arrows representing unity, activity, and discipline. Originally designed to cover over swastikas.



(U) **Individual Throwing a Molotov cocktail:** Image sometimes depicted on flyers likely to encourage criminal activity.



(U) **Black Cat:** Image often symbolizing sabotage or to encourage criminal actions.

(U) **Colored Flags or Banners:** Anarchists may use different colors, often seen on flags and banners, to convey different anarchist constructs:



(U) The color black may be used to illustrate revolution, opposition to the notion of nation-states, or rejection or defiance of authority.



(U) The colors red and black together often represent anarchist schools of thoughts such as anarcho-communism or anarcho-syndicalism and the notion the working class will not submit to any master.



(U) The colors green and black often illustrate anarcho-primitivism or green anarchy.

(U) For additional information, please contact the Counterterrorism Analysis Section of the FBI Counterterrorism Division via email at FBI_CTAS@fbi.gov.

(U) Sources: Previous FBI products, FBI information, and open source information. This document derives from multiple sources of information collected by the FBI.



(U) AVEs employ a number of tactics, some of which may be criminal and others of which may constitute exercise of rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The FBI may not base any investigative activity solely on the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment.

(U) COMMON PHRASES OFTEN DEPICTED AS GRAFFITI**NO BORDERS****BE UNGOVERNABLE****NAZIS GO HOME****NO GODS NO MASTERS**

NO WAR BUT CLASS WAR

EAT THE RICH

SMASH FASCISM**(U//FOUO) EXAMPLES OF OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AVEs EMPLOYED TO ILLEGALLY DISRUPT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EVENTS, AND EVENTS RELATED TO SOCIAL ISSUES**

(U) Targets	(U) Political and economic events, and events related to social issues; Perceived racists and fascists; Law enforcement; and Property (commercial, government, law enforcement, and personal)
(U) Objectives	(U) Event disruption; Confrontations; Challenging and attempting to undermine law enforcement authority; To cause an economic impact
(U) Tactics 	<p>(U) Black Bloc: tactic often used during mass mobilizations to hide one's identity during criminal activity by dressing in black or dark clothing and covering one's face with bandanas, balaclavas, costume masks, or gas masks.</p> <p>(U) Grey Bloc: a means to blend into a crowd by dressing in or donning street clothing before or after criminal activity. AVEs often break away from the main group to participate in criminal activity.</p> <p>(U) "Be Water" or "Be Like Water:" phrase to encourage others to move quickly and fluidly to evade law enforcement detection.</p> <p>(U) "No Cameras/No Press:" used as a reminder to avoid or limit the chance for photographic or video evidence of criminal activity that may later be used in arrests or for prosecution.</p> <p>(U) Doxing: is the research and public release of personal identifiable information obtained through social media or open sources. (Note: Some doxing may be legal, and may be First Amendment protected-speech, depending on the specific communication and context.)</p>
(U) Weapons 	<p>(U//FOUO) Improvised incendiary devices (IIDs) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) including flares, fireworks (legal and illegal), and Molotov cocktails, etc. Some may carry lawfully owned firearms.</p> <p>(U//FOUO) Improvised or Weapons of Opportunity: Baseball bats, bear or pepper spray, bike racks, brass knuckles, bricks, construction materials, edged weapons or knives, flag poles, frozen water bottles, hammers, makeshift shields with protruding screws, lead pipes, metal chains with locks, rocks, umbrellas, wooden dowels with bolts, wooden sticks, and bottles filled with irritants, such as bleach and urine, etc.</p>
(U) Communication	<p>(U) Encrypted applications, code words, flags, hand held radios, hand signals, in-person meetings, megaphones, private messaging, etc.</p> <p>(U) Monitoring of police radio frequencies to determine areas to avoid or redirect others away from law enforcement.</p>
(U) Criminal Activity	<p>(U) Physical assaults, property damage, vandalism, arson, inciting riot, etc.</p> <p>(U) Some potential applicable federal statutes include: Title 18 USC 33; Title 18 USC 111; Title 18 USC 115; Title 18 USC 231; Title 18 USC 372; Title 18 USC 844; Title 18 USC 1361; Title 18 USC 1951; Title 18 2101; Title 26 USC 5861; Title 26 USC 5845</p>