

# 198 Methods of nonviolent action



READ AND REFLECT

Nonviolent movements have used hundreds of different methods (or tactics) to exercise influence. The list of methods below is taken from 'The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part 2 – the methods of nonviolent action', by Gene Sharp, 1973. Are any of the methods relevant for your action plan?

A lot has happened since 1973! Remember to think about how social media and the internet could generate new methods or help you implement the methods below. Missing from Gene Sharp's list are 'Constructive actions' – actions you take to build the alternative society you hope to create – for example by creating parallel systems or institutions that practice justice and peace. Try to think of these too!

## Formal Statement

1. Public Speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

## Public communications

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, displays
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

## Group Representations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

## Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags / symbolic colours
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship.

21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

## Pressures on Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternalization
34. Vigils

## Drama and Music

35. Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

## Processions

38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

### Honouring the Dead

43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

### Public Assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins

### Withdrawal and Renunciation

51. Walk-outs
52. Silence
53. Renouncing honours
54. Turning one's back

### Ostracism of Persons

55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

### Non-cooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

### Withdrawal from the Social System

65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal non-cooperation
67. "Flight" of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration [hijrat]

### Actions by Consumers

71. Consumers' boycott
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
73. Policy of austerity
74. Rent withholding
75. Refusal to rent
76. National consumers' boycott
77. International consumers' boycott

### Action by Workers and Producers

78. Workmen's boycott
79. Producers' boycott

### Action by Middlemen

80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

### Action by Owners and Management

81. Traders' boycott
82. Refusal to let or sell property
83. Lockout
84. Refusal of industrial assistance
85. Merchants' "general strike"

### Action by Holders of Financial Resources

86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
89. Severance of funds and credit
90. Revenue refusal
91. Refusal of a government's money

### Action by Governments

92. Domestic embargo
93. Blacklisting of traders
94. International sellers' embargo
95. International buyers' embargo
96. International trade embargo

### Symbolic Strikes

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

### Agricultural Strikes

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm Workers' strike

### Strikes by Special Groups

- 101. Refusal of impressed labour
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

### Ordinary Industrial Strikes

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathetic strike

### Restricted Strikes

- 108. Detailed strike
- 109. Bumper strike
- 110. Slowdown strike
- 111. Working-to-rule strike
- 112. Reporting "sick" [sick-in]
- 113. Strike by resignation
- 114. Limited strike
- 115. Selective strike

### Multi-industry Strikes

- 116. Generalized strike
- 117. General strike

### Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

- 118. Hartal
- 119. Economic shutdown

### Rejection of Authority

- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

### Citizens' Non-cooperation with Government

- 123. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 124. Boycott of elections
- 125. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 126. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies
- 127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- 128. Boycott of government-supported organizations
- 129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
- 130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
- 131. Refusal to accept appointed officials.
- 132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions
- 133. Reluctant and slow compliance
- 134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
- 135. Popular nonobedience
- 136. Disguised disobedience
- 137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- 138. Sit-down
- 139. Non-cooperation with conscription and deportation
- 140. Hiding, escape, and false identities
- 141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

**Action by Government Personnel**

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
143. Blocking of lines of command and information
144. Stalling and obstruction
145. Administrative non-cooperation
146. Judicial non-cooperation
147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective non-cooperation by enforcement agents
148. Mutiny

**Domestic Governmental Action**

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
150. Non-cooperation by constituent governmental units

**International Governmental Action**

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representations
152. Delay / cancel diplomatic events
153. Withhold diplomatic recognition
154. Severance of diplomatic relations
155. Withdrawal from international organizations
156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
157. Expulsion from international organizations

**Psychological Intervention**

158. Self-exposure to the elements
159. Fasting and hunger strikes
160. Reverse trial
161. Nonviolent harassment

**Physical Intervention**

162. Sit-in
163. Stand-in
164. Ride-in
165. Wade-in
166. Mill-in

167. Pray-in
168. Nonviolent raids
169. Nonviolent air raids
170. Nonviolent invasion
171. Nonviolent interjection
172. Nonviolent obstruction
173. Nonviolent occupation

**Social Intervention**

174. Establishing new social patterns
175. Overloading of facilities
176. Stall-in
177. Speak-in
178. Guerrilla theatre
179. Alternative social institutions
180. Alternative communication systems

**Economic Intervention**

181. Reverse strike
182. Stay-in strike
183. Nonviolent land seizure
184. Defiance of blockades
185. Politically motivated counterfeiting
186. Preclusive purchasing
187. Seizure of assets
188. Dumping
189. Selective patronage
190. Alternative markets
191. Alternative transportation systems
192. Alternative economic institutions

**Political Intervention**

193. Overload administrative systems
194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
195. Seeking imprisonment
196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
197. Work-on without collaboration
198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government