

Box Types – 18 Standard Boxes

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These are 18 standard Box defense strategies. We use them in their pure form, or hybridize them with two or more strategies blended in various proportions.

1. **Good boy, nice girl:** Our highest purpose is to be recognized as being right and good. We are careful that our actions are justified. We are victims of responsibility, “responsible victims.” We squirm in not-very-hidden resentment of the cost of having to be good rather than being ourselves.
2. **Gangster, black-widow spider woman:** We either own you or we kill you. We trust no one. We use sex to manipulate. We pride ourselves in acting outside the law as if that were an expression of freedom. Our legendary badness keeps us safe. We feel glad when you feel pain. When we are done using you we fling you away like a used napkin. We fill our emptiness with sourceless rage.
3. **Ghoul:** We appear non-threatening because we are not really here. We cannot be responsible because we keep leaving our bodies. We avoid nourishing ourselves. We mix terror and sadness to feel isolated. We call it “cool.” We win by betraying your care for us. You cannot save us.
4. **Thinker:** We live in verbal reality. We pride ourselves in arguing about everything and being right. We cannot be touched. We talk so as not to feel. We are a legend in our own mind.
5. **Believer:** We create a position-based belief system where we are right and special. Through being righteous we avoid the pain of being so alone. We use flexi-speak, talk in circles and conveniently forget what we say. We are self-effacing, but, for us, being proved wrong equals being killed.
6. **Hysterical:** We mix anger with fear. We defend ourselves by attacking everything, especially the opposite sex. This frazzles people’s nerves. We are too crazy to be dangerous. We don’t understand why everyone doesn’t love us and why we are not in charge, because when we are not crazy we are “really nice people.”
7. **Victim:** We endlessly spin an airtight victim story. We can make a persecutor out of anyone. We hate whomever rescues us. We are committed to producing reasons and excuses instead of results. We blame others to avoid taking responsibility ourselves. We must be involved in a Low Drama or we do not have an identity. We are so sad.
8. **Clown:** We cannot stop joking. We do not notice that the jokes kill everyone around us. We joke so as not to admit our terrible insecurity. We keep things

superficial because then “everyone likes us.” We cannot be responsible because for us nothing in the world is serious. We mix sadness with nostalgic joy to feel sentimental. Our heart is broken.

9. **Weirdo:** We can act weirder and tell sicker stories than anyone. We repel you to remain safe as the mysterious outsider, the artist, the science fiction buff. We know all the trivia and can recite it. We are too strange to be a threat. We derive status in our own private circle of friends. We long for recognition.
10. **New age:** We have memorized all the psychobabble. We are workshop junkies. We are not a threat and cannot take responsibility because we see things from a politically or cosmically correct perspective, but we do not do anything about it really. We over-express with movement or voice so you see that we are free. We are really pissed off if you do not agree with us.
11. **Loser:** We send away our dignity. We mix sadness and anger to feel depressed that our dignity is missing. We do not take ourselves or the world seriously. We are bent on self-destruction. We sabotage anything that may become successful in our lives because we are unconsciously dedicated to revenging our parents by being an unhappy failure.
12. **Doormat:** We feel everyone else’s feelings. We have no boundaries and are totally adaptive. Our highest priority is to feel safe. We seek safety by giving our center away. Our personal life is minimized and we believe our brilliant justifications for this. We live in secret rage that sporadically leaks out and accidentally kills people.
13. **Confusion:** We do not answer your questions directly, or else we answer a different question than you ask. If you get too close to us we can confuse you too. We live with repressed rage that comes out sideways and hurts people. We obtain your confidence then fail to keep our commitments thereby entangling you in our dramas where we feel most comfortable. We expertly hook rescuers into action but have no real relationships.
14. **Rich and beautiful:** We do not have to listen to you because we are superior. Appearance is everything. We do not participate or take risks because we could lose status if we made a mistake. Losing status equals death. We are hollow and lonely because of our shallow connections to people. We dare not acknowledge our emptiness or our façade crumbles and we will not know who we are.
15. **Sneak:** We live secret lives. We tell lies and do not know it. We look nice on the outside and hide secrets on the inside. We experience shame and self-loathing. We feel most alive when we mix joy with fear and take risky gambles. We arrange our lives so that we are naïve and get repeatedly betrayed. This justifies our continued distrust of the world and our sneaking.
16. **Power hero:** We are too tough to care. We cannot tolerate being unnoticed. We demand front-stage territory but cannot hold the responsibility. We surround ourselves with followers. We are terrified because if we cannot be

the hero we are worthless. Then we sulk, go away cursing, and plot new ways to get power.

17. **Bomb:** If you touch us you will die. We have a very short fuse. We threaten to blast you with unholy rage if we do not get our way. We lead with a loud mouth although our promises are worthless. We only make promises to stay safely in control, and then break our promises to create a distraction that keeps you angry at us because we cannot have friends. Our hearts are caged in barbed wire.
18. **Actor:** We are always looking for a new identity and will enmesh with you just to try your identity on. We are too self-involved to be threatening. We are sexually ambiguous or homosexual and that keeps uncool people away. We are always looking for the next thing and use Low Drama to terminate anything normal or balanced. We constantly seek approval from others. There is nobody home in us to feel the pain.

These are the 18 standard box defense strategies. We find them in their pure form and we also find them mixed with two or more basic strategies.