

01 | RESTRAINTS

Restraints are items of equipment that are attached to parts of the body to restrict, or in some cases prevent, movement.

Restraints that are frequently used by law enforcement officials include handcuffs, leg cuffs (and combinations of handcuffs and leg cuffs linked by a chain), and belly chains/transport chains. Restraints such as gang chains, thumb cuffs, finger cuffs, neck cuffs, weighted leg cuffs, restraint chairs, restraint beds, and shackle boards are less common but are still available for use in some countries. Improvised, ad-hoc equipment such as shoelaces, rope, and lengths of chain-link could also be used as restraints.

Use

Restraints are applied to the body to restrict movement. Different types of uses might present different risks, both in terms of physical injuries and psychological harm. For instance, handcuffs can be applied with arms to the front or, more harmfully, behind the back. Handcuffs and leg cuffs are used simultaneously in some jurisdictions, often with a chain connecting them, and this type of use causes additional risks. Detained people are sometimes handcuffed to one another (e.g. during prisoner transfers) or to fixed objects, which is an inappropriate restraint technique.

The use of some types of restraints by law enforcement officers should be prohibited. These inherently abusive restraints include bar fetters, gang chains, thumb cuffs, finger cuffs, thumbscrews, neck cuffs, weighted leg cuffs, restraint chairs with metal restraints, cage or net beds, shackle boards or beds, and hoods or blindfolds. Restraint beds or chairs with soft restraints may be used only by medically trained personnel for medical reasons, and any use must comply with human rights standards (see individual entries for further information).

Potential Injuries

Injuries from restraints, which in some cases can be life threatening, include:

- cuts and bruises
- open wounds
- joint dislocation
- nerve damage
- suffocation if used around the neck
- positional asphyxia if a person is restrained face down
- hyperextension of limbs
- secondary injuries sustained as a result of falls while restrained.

1.1 HANDCUFFS

Key Technical Features	<p>Two lockable cuffs, usually made of metal, connected by a short chain-link, rigid bar, or hinge.</p> <p>Some models feature a double locking mechanism (this reduces the risk of cuffs being overtightened) and others are single locking.</p> <p>A ratchet allows for the size of the cuff to be adjusted so it can be used on a range of wrist sizes.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Handcuffs can be over-tightened by prison officers or detainees, which can cause pain, discomfort, and permanent injury.</p> <p>They can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain people in stress positions).</p> <p>Cuffs connected by a rigid bar can be used as a weapon for levering a suspect into submission. This increases the risk of wrist injury.</p> <p>Prolonged use of handcuffs can lead to lacerations, which can lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Detainees are sometimes kept in handcuffs for longer than strictly necessary. Handcuffs should be removed at the earliest opportunity and replaced, if necessary, with safe, soft fabric restraints.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Handcuffs should only be employed when there is an objective reason to believe the offender might escape or is likely to use violence against the law enforcement official or someone else."³⁶</p> <p>Havana Rules: "Instruments of restraint and force can only be used [on juveniles] in exceptional cases, where all other control methods have been exhausted and failed, and only as explicitly authorized and specified by law and regulation."³⁷</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation allows for Member States to control the trade in handcuffs. Spain, for example, has implemented these controls and requires export licences for the export of handcuffs.</p> <p>The UK requires export licences to for handcuffs that have an overall dimension (including chains) exceeding 240mm when locked.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

³⁶ UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p82.

³⁷ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 2 April 1991, A/RES/45/113, para 64*



◀ **Chain link handcuffs**



◀ **Rigid handcuffs**

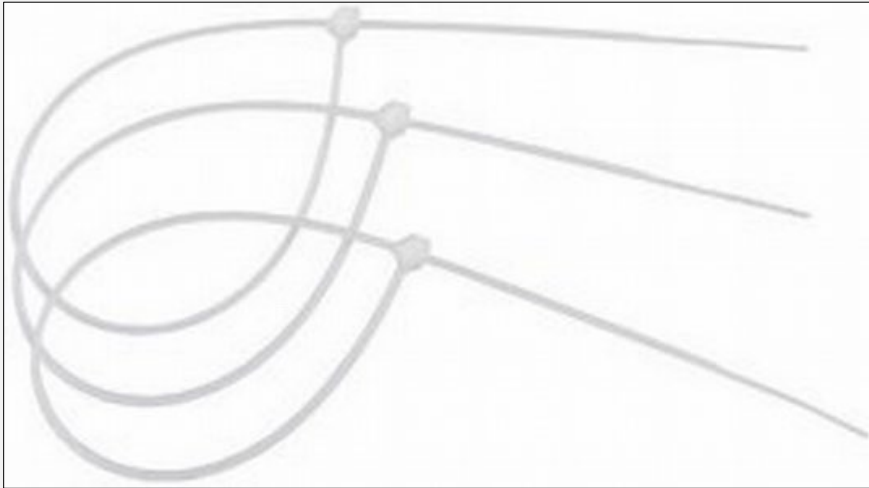


◀ **Hinged handcuffs**

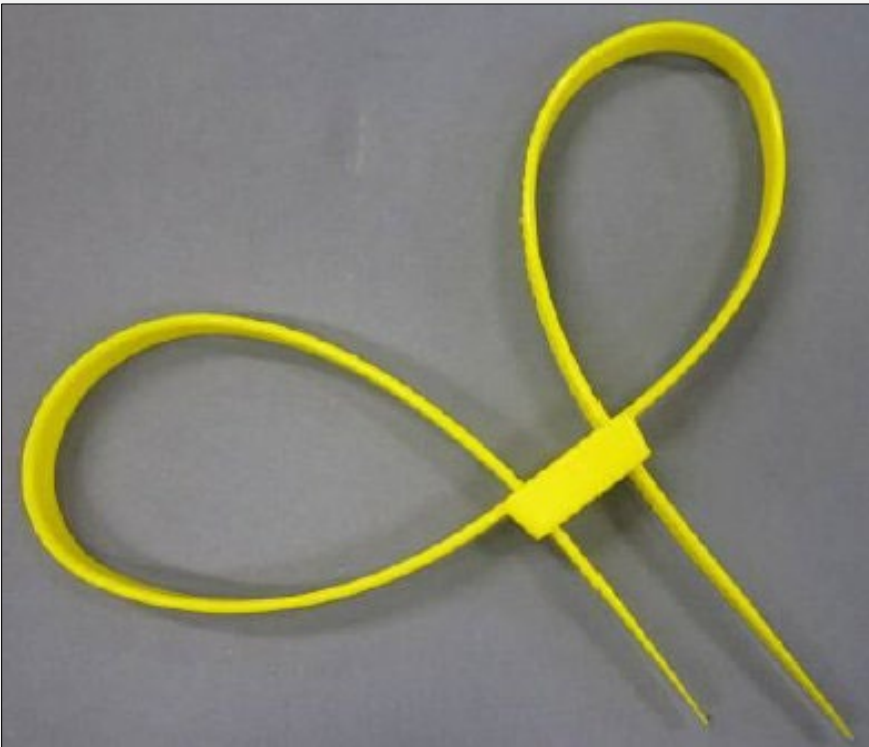
1.2 PLASTIC CUFFS, NYLON CUFFS

Key Technical Features	<p>Resembles a plastic 'cable tie' (cable ties are also used as restraints).</p> <p>Can be either single or double cuffs.</p> <p>Most models are designed to restrain the wrists, but there are also models specifically designed to restrain the legs.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Most designs can only be tightened, and cannot be loosened once applied. Consequently, it is very easy to purposefully or inadvertently cause the detained individual severe pain and discomfort.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>They can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Handcuffs should only be employed when there is an objective reason to believe the offender might escape or is likely to use violence against the law enforcement official or someone else."³⁸</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

³⁸ UNODC and OHCHR, Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement, 2017, p82.



◀ **Single plastic cuff**



◀ **Double plastic cuff**

1.3 FIXED CUFFS

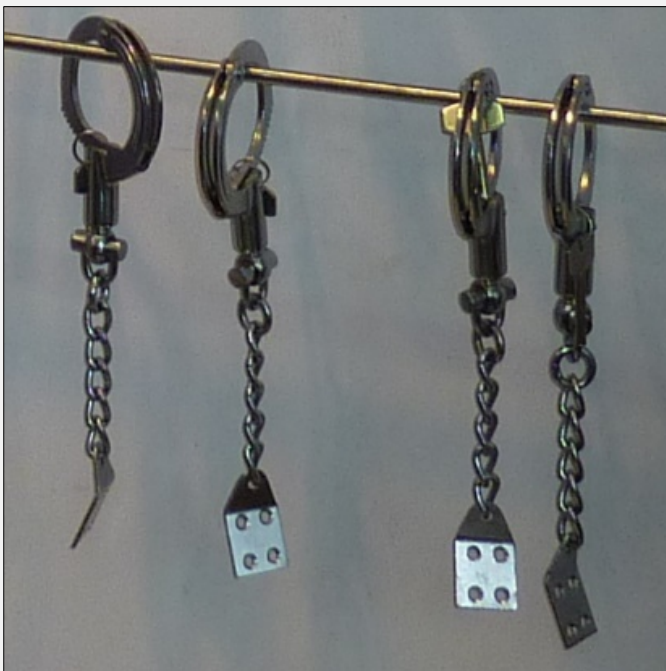
Key Technical Features	Single or double lockable cuffs, usually attached to a metal chain, designed to be bolted or otherwise anchored to the floor, wall, ceiling, or other fixed object.
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Use of fixed cuffs can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used in stress positions).</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful or less degrading means.</p> <p>The use of this equipment can be considered inhuman and degrading treatment.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>CPT: "The practice of handcuffing a person to a fixed object – especially within a secured area (such as a "designated area") – is particularly inappropriate and may be considered as amounting to degrading treatment".³⁹</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁴⁰</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

³⁹ CoE: CPT, *Report to the Government of the Slovak Republic on the visit to the Slovak Republic carried out by the CPT from 19 March to 28 March 2018*, 19 June 2019, CPT/Inf (2019) 20, para 15.

⁴⁰ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47



◀ **Single cuff with anchor**



◀ **Single cuff with screw fixings**

1.4 SOFT, FABRIC RESTRAINTS

Key Technical Features	Adjustable cuffs made from soft fabrics that can be fixed to the wrists or ankles with the primary purpose of restricting movement.
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Although there are fewer risks from their use than from metal restraints, the use of soft/fabric restraints can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used in stress positions).</p> <p>Concerns on the use of restraints generally also apply to soft restraints, including if detainees are placed in restraints for longer than strictly necessary.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	UNODC and OHCHR: "Soft restraints should always be preferred, in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules." ⁴¹
Examples of Existing Controls	To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment.
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

⁴¹ UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p.84.



▲ Fabric leg cuffs

1.5 LEG CUFFS

Key Technical Features	<p>Two metal lockable cuffs, usually made of metal, fastened around the ankles and attached by a chain to allow the detainee some movement.</p> <p>The cuff size is usually larger than those of ordinary handcuffs and is adjustable.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Leg cuffs can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>They severely restrict movement, leading to a risk of secondary injuries should the detainee fall.</p> <p>Prolonged use of leg cuffs can lead to deep vein thrombosis or lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Detainees are sometimes kept in leg cuffs for longer than strictly necessary. Leg cuffs should be removed at the earliest opportunity and replaced, if necessary, with safe, soft fabric restraints.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Limb restraints should only be used for the necessary amount of time, by officers who have received appropriate training."⁴²</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

⁴² UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.



▲ Standard leg cuffs



◀ Standard leg cuffs

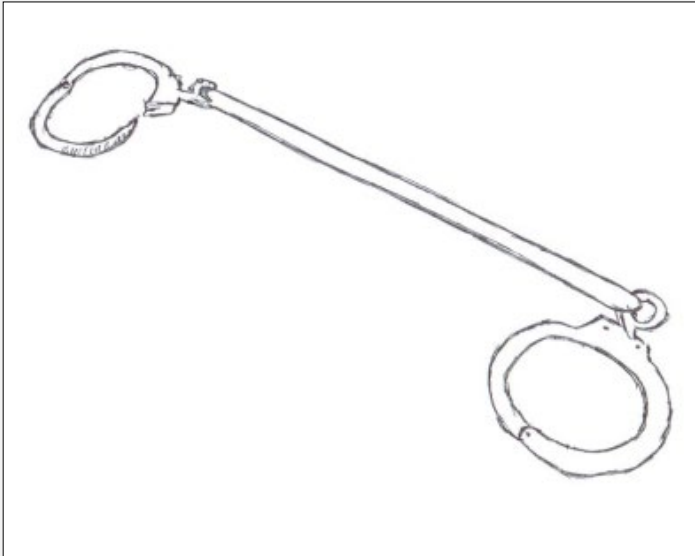
1.6 BAR FETTERS

Key Technical Features	A rigid, typically metal, bar connecting two lockable rings or cuffs.
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Rigid bars significantly restrict movement whilst increasing the risk of ankle injury or falls.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially stress positions).</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: Restraints which have a fixed, rigid bar between cuffs have been described as inherently inhuman and degrading.⁴³</p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR "There should be an absolute prohibition on ... fetters".⁴⁴</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁴⁵</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁴³ UN Commission on Human Rights, *Civil and Political Rights, including the question of torture and detention: Study on the situation of trade in and production of equipment which is specifically designed to inflict torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, its origin, destination and forms*, 13 January 2003, E/CN.4/2003/69, para 9.

⁴⁴ UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.

⁴⁵ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



◀ **Bar fetters with spreader bar**



▲ **Bar fetters with spreader bar** © Amnesty International

1.7 WEIGHTED LEG CUFFS

Key Technical Features	<p>Two metal cuffs, usually larger than those of ordinary handcuffs, attached by a heavy chain to allow the detainee some movement.</p> <p>The cuffs are usually non-adjustable.</p> <p>Models can weigh up to 8 kg (approx. 17.5 lbs.), and they may have additional weights added (for example, on the chain link).</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>The use of weighted leg cuffs constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>These cuffs are heavier than is necessary to adequately restrain an individual, and wearing them is inherently degrading.</p> <p>The weight significantly restricts movement whilst increasing the risk of ankle injury.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture on his 2005 mission to China: the use of weighted leg cuffs on prisoners on death row "is inhuman and degrading and serves only as an additional form of punishment".⁴⁶</p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR: "There should be an absolute prohibition on weighted restraints".⁴⁷</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁴⁸</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁴⁶ UN Commission on Human Rights, *Report on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: Mission to China*, 10 March 2006, E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.6, para 68.

⁴⁷ UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.

⁴⁸ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Weighted leg cuffs



▲ Weighted leg cuffs with additional weights on the chain



▲ Combination hand and weighted leg cuffs

1.8 GANG CHAINS

Key Technical Features	Multiple pairs of leg cuffs, handcuffs, belly chains (chain secured around the waist), or a combination of these, attached to the same chain (often made of metal), allowing for several people to be restrained together.
Human Rights Concerns	<p>The use of gang chains restricts movement, which increases the risk of falls and resulting injuries if those restrained are unable to break their fall. A falling individual can be hazardous for the rest of the group chained together.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can then cause blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>The practice of chaining groups of prisoners together is inherently degrading.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited." ⁴⁹
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to individually prohibit the trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁴⁹ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ ► Gang chains



1.9 HAND AND LEG CUFFS (COMBINATION)

Key Technical Features	<p>Handcuffs and leg cuffs linked together by a long chain. Occasionally the leg cuffs are weighted.</p> <p>Designed to simultaneously restrict movement in more than one part of the body.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>These combination cuffs severely restrict movement, leading to a risk of secondary injuries should the detainee fall.</p> <p>If the chain length is too short in relation to the detainee's height, it could force the detainee to stoop, which may be humiliating or degrading. A too-short chain may also pose additional risks of secondary injuries due to falls.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain people in stress positions such as a hog-tie).</p> <p>If the cuffs include weighted leg cuffs (see p. 23) their use constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Metal limb restraints, such as leg cuffs or chains that connect the limbs with chains to handcuffs and belts, should be avoided ... Hog-tying, that is tying someone's hands and legs together at the back, should not be used given the unnecessary discomfort and suffering it causes, as well as the risk of asphyxiation it poses."⁵⁰</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>As this equipment includes leg cuffs, the EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p> <p>If weighted leg cuffs are included in the design, then the manufacture, trade, and use should be prohibited.</p>

⁵⁰ UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p84.



▲ Combination hand and leg cuffs

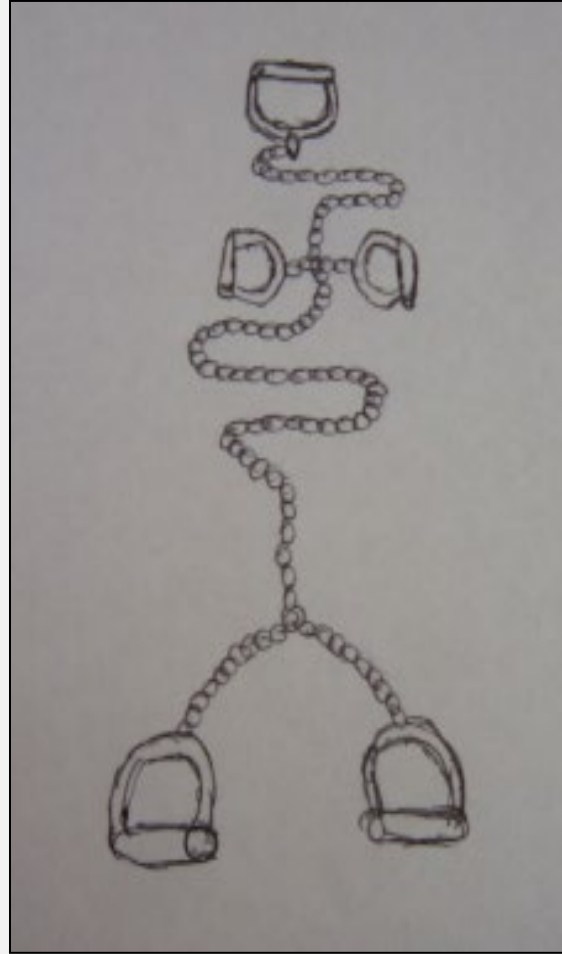
1.10 NECK CUFFS AND OTHER RESTRAINTS (COMBINATION)

Key Technical Features	A metal cuff that fastens around the neck and is linked with a chain to other restraints such as handcuffs or leg cuffs.
Human Rights Concerns	<p>Cuffs designed to be secured around the neck increase the risk of severe neck injuries and asphyxiation.</p> <p>The use of these restraints can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and its use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited." ⁵¹
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁵¹ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Neck cuff with linked handcuffs



▲ Diagram of neck cuff with linked hand and leg cuffs

1.11 THUMB CUFFS AND FINGER CUFFS

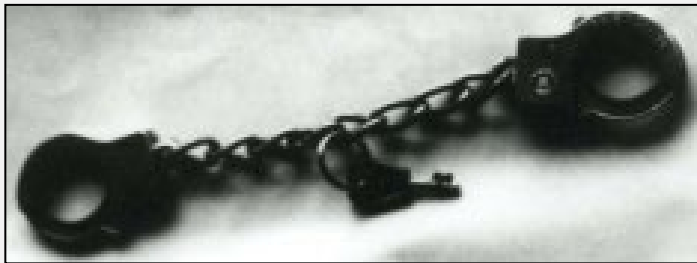
Key Technical Features	<p>Designed to restrict hand movement by holding thumbs or fingers in a fixed position.</p> <p>Some models of thumb cuffs are serrated on the inner edge</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>There is a high risk of injury to thumbs or fingers from excessive pressure, of fracture of delicate bones, and of nerve damage.</p> <p>There is a risk of secondary injury from falls, as the person restrained would be unable to break their fall.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>Thumb and finger cuffs are inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: thumb cuffs are examples of "inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapons".⁵²</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁵³</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁵² UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, Thirty-fourth session 14 February 2017, A/HRC/34/54, para 51.

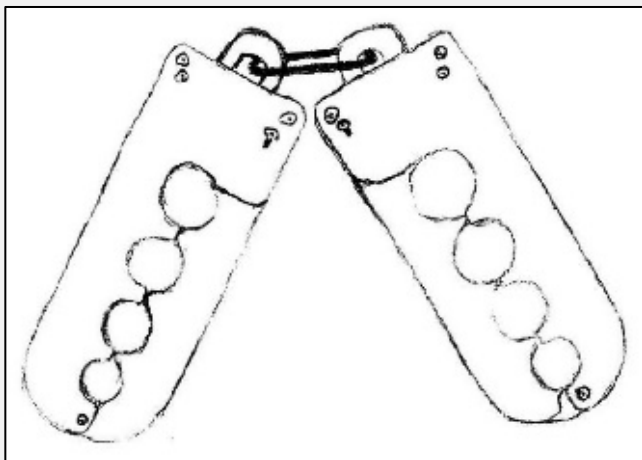
⁵³ *Nelson Mandela Rules, 2016*, Rule 47.



▲ **Standard thumb cuffs**



◀ **Chain thumb**



◀ **Finger cuffs**

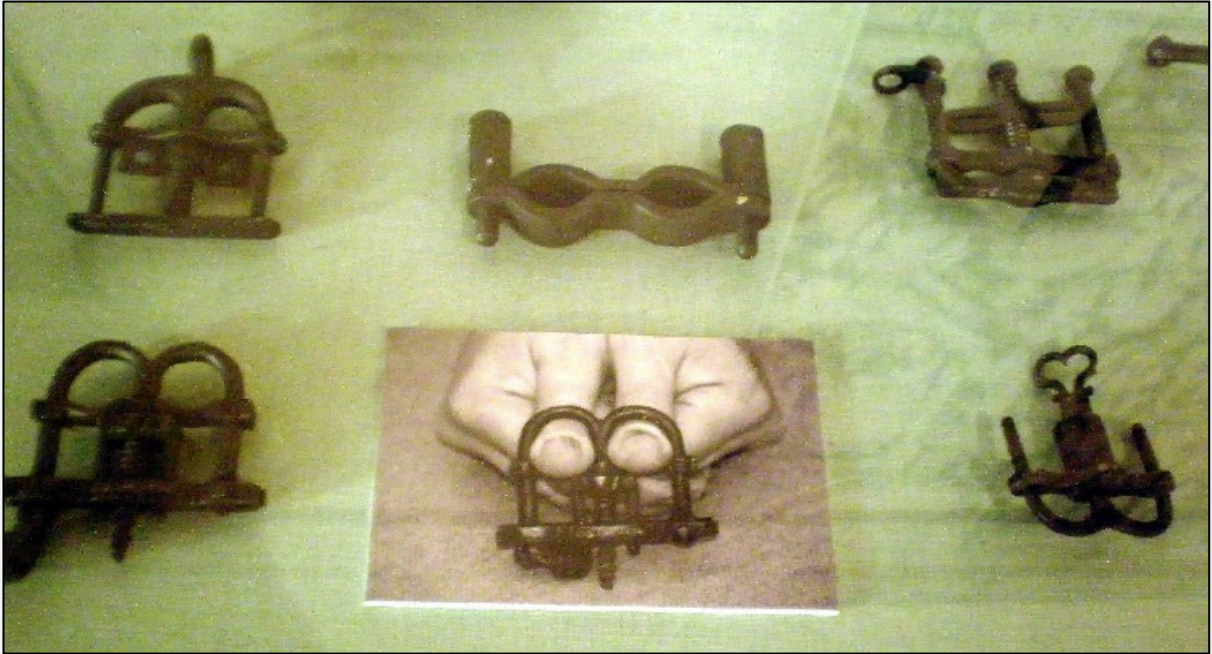
1.12 THUMBSCREWS AND FINGER SCREWS

Key Technical Features	Designed to crush fingers or thumbs by screwing two plates together with the fingers or thumbs trapped between.
Human Rights Concerns	Thumbscrews and finger screws are designed to inflict pain and injury. They have no use other than for torture or other ill-treatment.
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: this equipment is an example of "inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapons".⁵⁴</p> <p>OHCHR: "[Thumbscrews] are inherently degrading or unnecessarily painful and should not be used in law enforcement"⁵⁵</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁵⁶</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment. The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁵⁴ UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment : note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, A/72/178, para 51.

⁵⁵ OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para 5.2.

⁵⁶ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ The above image shows various types of thumbscrews. [CC](#) Cyndy Sims Parr.



▲ The above image shows a thumbscrew. [CC](#) Lichfield District Council.

1.13 RESTRAINT CHAIRS WITH FIXED METAL RESTRAINTS

Key Technical Features	<p>Various models of chair exist with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used, but combinations of restraints vary.</p> <p>Features include metal cuffs to restrain at the wrists and ankles, or fixtures to which restraints (such as handcuffs) can be attached. Some models also have a lockable metal table or tray.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint chair, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>These chairs are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>Their use constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: restraint chairs are "inherently inhuman, degrading or painful".⁵⁷</p> <p>CAT: "restraint chairs as methods of restraining those in custody" should be abolished.⁵⁸</p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁵⁹</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁵⁷ UN HRC, *Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture*, 2013, A/68/295, para 58

⁵⁸ UN CAT, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the CAT: United States of America*, 15 May 2000, CAT/C/24/6, para 180 (e).

⁵⁹ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Metal restraint chair with fixed metal restraints



▲ Wooden restraint chair with fixed metal restraints

1.14 RESTRAINT CHAIRS WITH STRAPS

Key Technical Features	<p>Various models of chair with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used, but combinations of restraints vary.</p> <p>Attached straps or cuffs are made from fabric or leather.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint chair, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>These chairs are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This type of equipment should only be used by medically trained personnel, and only for a specified and legitimate medical reason, in a human rights-compliant manner.</p> <p>The use of these chairs use in any other circumstances is inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited"⁶⁰ [except in cases of legitimate medical use].</p> <p>CAT: "restraint chairs as methods of restraining those in custody" should be abolished.⁶¹</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Used in certain medical situations only and this use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>

⁶⁰ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.

⁶¹ UN CAT, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the CAT: United States of America*, 15 May 2000, A/55/44, p 32.



▲ Two models of restraint chairs with fabric

1.15 CAGE BEDS AND NETS BEDS

Key Technical Features	<p>A bed enclosed by a cage, or a bed with one or more sides fitted with nets. Cage or net may completely enclose the bed on all sides, including the top.</p> <p>The cage may be made of wood, metal, or other material, and nets can be made of soft fabric or other tougher materials.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>The use of cage or net beds constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p> <p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint bed or cage, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>If the net is torn, it could be used for self-harm or suicide.</p> <p>The restrained individual may be unable to be released quickly in an emergency (e.g. in a fire).</p> <p>The use of cage or net beds fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>CPT: "The use of net (or cage) beds should be prohibited under all circumstances."⁶²</p> <p>UN HRC: cage and net beds should not be used in psychiatric institutions, and their use "constitutes inhuman and degrading treatment".⁶³</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁶² CoE: CPT, *Means of restraint in psychiatric establishments for adults (revised CPT standards)*, 21 March 2017, CPT/Inf(2017)6, para. 3.4.

⁶³ UN HRC, *Concluding observations of the HRC Croatia*, 4 November 2009, CCPR/C/HRV/CO/2, para 12.



◀ **Cage bed © Volunteers at Kepep.**



◀ **Net beds**



1.16 SHACKLE BOARDS OR BEDS WITH FIXED METAL RESTRAINTS

Key Technical Features	<p>Various models of bed exist with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used at any one time, but combinations vary.</p> <p>These boards or beds have metal cuffs to restrain at the wrists and ankles, or have fixtures to which restraints can be connected. Some also have straps at the waist, chest, or shoulders.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods on a shackle board, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>Shackle boards and beds are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>The use of these boards and beds constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."⁶⁴</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁶⁴ *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Restraint bed with fixed restraint points. © waterboardingdotorg.

1.17 SHACKLE BOARDS OR BEDS WITH STRAPS

Key Technical Features	<p>Various models exist with a range of restraining points, used for various techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used at one time, but combinations vary.</p> <p>The straps or cuffs are often made from fabric or leather.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods on a shackle board, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>This type of equipment should only be used by medically trained personnel, for a specified and legitimate medical reason, and in a human rights-compliant manner.</p> <p>Their use in any other circumstances is inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>CPT: "In principle, restraint beds should not be used in a non-medical setting."⁶⁵</p> <p>CPT: In psychiatric institutions "patients should only be restrained as a measure of last resort (ultimo ratio) to prevent imminent harm to themselves or others and restraints should always be used for the shortest possible time. When the emergency situation resulting in the application of restraint ceases to exist, the patient should be released immediately"⁶⁶</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Medical use only, and this use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>

⁶⁵ CoE: CPT, *Report to the Swedish Government on the visit to Sweden carried out by the CPT from 18 to 28 May 2015*, 17 February 2016, CPT/Inf (2016) 1, para. 90.

⁶⁶ CoE: CPT, *Means of restraint in psychiatric establishments for adults (revised CPT standards)*, 21 March 2017, CPT/Inf(2017)6, para 1.4.



▲ Shackle bed with plastic

1.18 HOODS AND BLINDFOLDS

Key Technical Features	<p>This equipment consists of a piece of cloth to cover the eyes (blindfold), or the entire head and face (hood).</p> <p>Some models are secured in place with a lock around the neck.</p> <p>Some models are attached to other restraints, such as handcuffs.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>People subjected to hooding or blindfolding are often incapable of identifying their torturers, in these cases the prosecution of torturers is virtually impossible.⁶⁷</p> <p>The use of hoods and blindfolds can lead to disorientation and undue stress.</p> <p>The use of certain designs of hood carries a risk of suffocation or strangulation.</p> <p>The use of this equipment fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>CAT: blindfolding and hooding can constitute torture or other ill-treatment.⁶⁸</p> <p>CPT: "recommends that the blindfolding of persons who are in police custody be expressly prohibited".⁶⁹</p> <p>European Court of Human Rights: blindfolding a prisoner constitutes cruel or inhuman treatment when used in combination with other interrogation or detention methods,⁷⁰ and can constitute torture when used with other techniques.⁷¹</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

⁶⁷ UN Commission on Human Rights, *Civil and political rights, including the questions of torture and detention : report of the Special Rapporteur, Nigel Rodley, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/62*, 27 December 2001, E/CN.4/2002/76, p. 6.

⁶⁸ UN CAT, *Report of the CAT*, 10 September 1997, Supplement No. 44, A/52/44; UN CAT, *Report on Mexico produced by the CAT, and Reply from the Government of Mexico*, 26 May 2003, CAT/C/75.

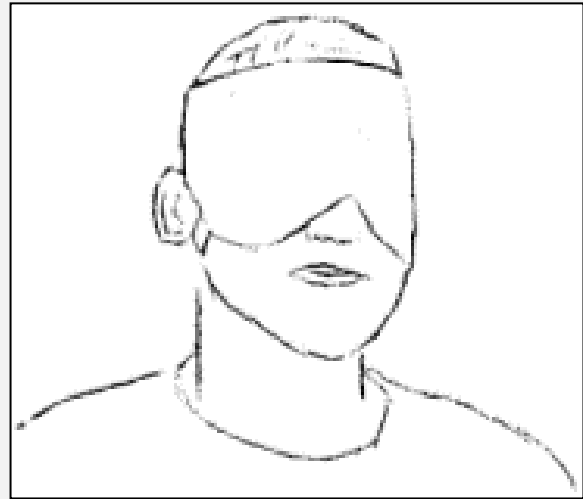
⁶⁹ CoE: CPT, *CPT Standards, "Substantive" sections of the CPT's General Reports*, January 2015, CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 - Rev. 2015, para 38.

⁷⁰ Ireland v. United Kingdom, 25 Eur. H.R. Rep. (ser. A) (1978); Ocalan v. Turkey, 37 Eur. Ct. H.R. 238, 222 (2003) cited in IRCT, Statement on hooding, International Forensic Group, *Torture*, volume 21, 3 November 2011, p. 186.

⁷¹ Aksoy v. Turkey, 1996-VI Eur. Ct. H.R. 2260 (1996); Aydin v. Turkey, 1997-VI Eur. H.R. Rep. 1866 (1997). As cited in IRCT, 2011, op. cit.



▲ Hood

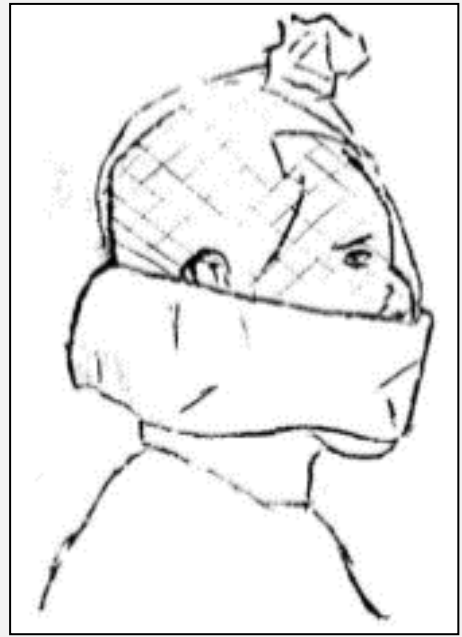


▲ Blindfold

1.19 SPIT MASKS, SPIT GUARDS, SPIT HOODS, SPIT HELMETS

Key Technical Features	<p>This equipment consists of a thick piece of material over the mouth and transparent material over eyes.</p> <p>The material covering the mouth should prevent the detainee spitting.</p> <p>The material covering the eyes should not impair the detainees' vision.</p>
Human Rights Concerns	<p>The use of this equipment carries a risk of suffocation or strangulation if it is used incorrectly, for excessive periods, or if the detainee is left unattended.</p> <p>Risks from this equipment increase if it is used in conjunction with other restraints.</p> <p>If this equipment is used in conjunction with, or following, the use of chemical irritants there is a risk that the irritants may become trapped on or close to the face.</p> <p>There is a lack of research regarding the efficacy of different models in preventing transmission of any disease or infection the detainee may have.</p>
Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies	<p>CPT: "The CPT considers 'spit helmets'... are not appropriate in a secure place of safety, such as police custody" and their use should be reviewed.⁷²</p>
Examples of Existing Controls	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p>
Proposed Control	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Transfer should be controlled</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

⁷² CoE: CPT, *Report to the Government of the United Kingdom on the visit to the United Kingdom carried out by the CPT from 30 March to 12 April 2016*, 19 April 2017, CPT/Inf (2017) 9, para. 15.



▲ Different models of spit hoods