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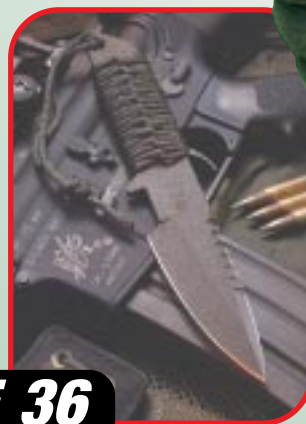
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Thomas von Rosen

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Cameron Hopkins

ART DIRECTOR

Rich Stahlhut

ART ASSISTANT

Lisa Stahlhut

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Jesse Jones

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ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

Rebekah Eveland

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Ichiro Nagata

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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subs@americanhandgunner.com

ed@americanhandgunner.com

hollisgrdina@yahoo.com

class@americanhandgunner.com

production@americanhandgunner.com

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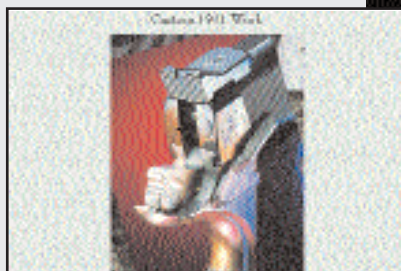
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With an abbreviated barrel and grip frame, the Model 5 falls into the compact category of handguns. It features a polymer frame and redundant safety systems.



Featuring an innovative sight system, the Steyr Model S sports a triangular front sight and matching rear.

**By Dave
Anderson
Photos by
Ichiro Nagata**

STEYR MODEL S

The 1994 Crime Law regulation limiting new autopistol magazine capacity to 10 rounds is a stupid, worthless rule. But let's be honest now, it did some good. It helped arouse and politicize gun owners to organize, donate and work to chuck anti-gun politicians out of office. The NRA grew to over 4 million members. It provided manufacturers with the incentive to make compact, lightweight autos. Rather than housing 10 rounds in a 15-round package, it made more sense to provide the same number of rounds in a smaller package.

The result of the Crime Law was a profusion of significant, new handgun introductions. One might argue that no single impetus has ever resulted in so many excellent new handgun designs as the host of carry-guns brought about by the Crime Law—Kahr, a series of mini-Glocks, Kimber Ultra-Carry, Para-Ordnance P10 and Taurus PT-145, to name but a few.

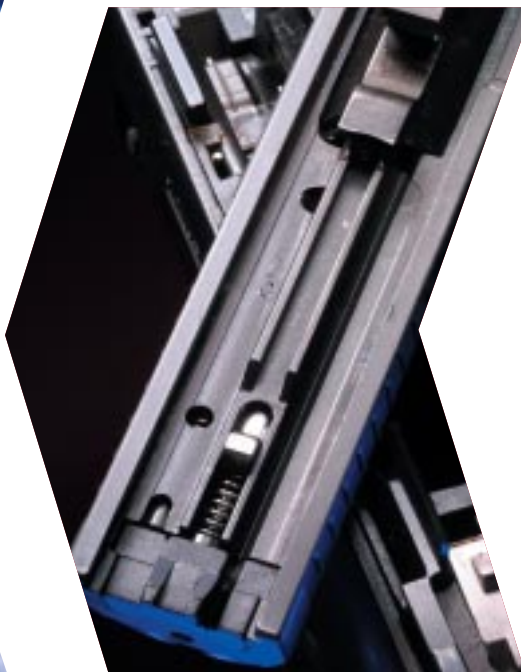
These super-compact autos fit the same tactical role as a snubnose .38 revolver, a backup or deep-cover carry gun.

The autopistols hold more cartridges— from seven to 11, compared to five or six— and the self-loaders have longer barrels to provide better bal-





The little nubbin extending down from in front of the trigger is a "hidden" manual safety that is pressed up to disengage, like an M1 Garand safety, only different.



listics. Autos are much faster to reload and, for most people, are easier to shoot well than revolvers.

The Steyr S is a new entry in the micro-pistol category. Since it is made by Steyr, one of the world's most

respected gunmakers, it hardly needs to be said that quality of materials and workmanship is extremely high. The test pistol was in 9mm Luger, but .40 S&W and .357 SIG versions are offered as well.

Inner Workings

In appearance and function, the Steyr S is similar to the very popular mini-Glock subcompacts. Like the mini-Glocks, it has a polymer frame, a steel slide and barrel, and it operates on the classic Browning tilt-lock design. Lockup is in the modern style, with the square forward face of the breechblock locking into the front of the ejection port. The trigger system, which Steyr calls the "Reset Action System," is similar in function to the Glock "Safe Action." Willie Bubbits, the designer of the Steyr S, formerly worked as an engineer at Glock.

When a cartridge is chambered, the spring-powered striker is partially set. Pressing the trigger completes spring compression and then releases the striker to fire the cartridge. The result is that trigger movement is considerably less than with traditional double-action designs. Should a round misfire— highly unlikely with modern factory ammunition— it's necessary to work the slide manually to chamber a fresh cartridge and reset the trigger for another try.

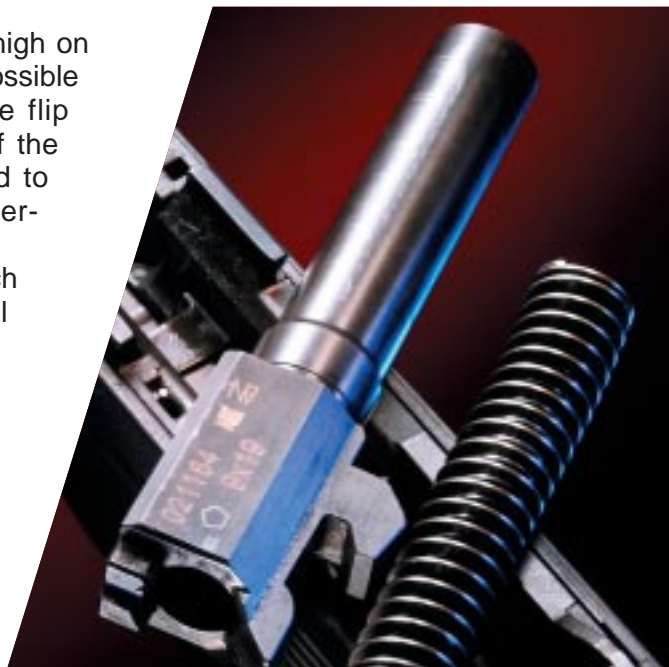
The strong, rigid polymer frame houses a steel insert that contains the trigger mechanism, take-down latch and slide rails. The rails are cut at a 45-degree angle and engage matching angled grooves in the slide. These grooves start at the bottom edge of the slide so the slide is about as close to the frame as it can possibly be.

The frame itself is shaped to get the hand high on the gun. The axis of the barrel is as close as possible to the web of the gun hand, reducing muzzle flip during recoil. Slots on the forward extension of the frame, ahead of the trigger guard, can be used to mount accessories such as a white-light or laser-aiming device.

Two 10-shot magazines are supplied with each model S. The magazines are well-made with steel tubes and synthetic base plates. Both magazines fit; they locked and functioned perfectly and dropped free when the release button was depressed, regardless of how many rounds remained. The magazine-release button is in the standard 1911 position on the left side at the base of the trigger guard.

Unique Features

The model S, along with the full-size model M



The Model S has a shorter barrel than the Model M, which is Steyr's full-size service version. Curiously, the mite-size Model S also sports an integral accessory rail.





The Steyr trigger system is awash with safeties. First, there is the Glockian trigger safety, then the Garand-like manual safety protruding down, and finally there is a key safety that renders the gun totally inert.

version, has some unique features, most notably a plethora of safety devices. Let's begin with "Safety Condition One," to use Steyr's terminology. In this condition, a round is chambered that places the striker in its preloaded position. A positive internal safety locks the sear and striker. A lever in the face of the trigger prevents trigger movement. If the pistol were to be dropped onto a hard surface, the lever prevents the trigger from moving, and the internal lock prevents the striker from contacting the cartridge.

The pistol can only be fired by deliberate pressure, first on the lever which releases the trigger and then on the trigger itself.

Pressing the trigger through then releases the internal striker block, compresses the mainspring fully and finally releases the striker to fire the round. In this condition, the Steyr is similar to the Glock "Safe Action" or double-action autos or revolvers in that the shooter has only to index the gun on target and press the trigger to fire. There are no separate safety levers to disengage.

Hidden Safety Catch

However, the Steyr gives the shooter the option of using a positive manual safety. The activation bar is located just above the point where the front of the trigger guard meets the frame. The serrated tips of this bar extend on both sides of the frame, shielded against accidental movement by recesses in the frame. After chambering a round, the shooter grasps these buttons with thumb and forefinger and pulls straight down. This pulls down a synthetic bar from the top of the trigger guard, which positively locks the trigger from being pulled.

This safety is quite unobtrusive. And to someone unfamiliar with the design, it is hardly noticeable. However, shooters who know their gun can release it and fire the

Steyr S specifications

Length:
6.53"

Height:
4.6"

Width:
1.18"

Weight, empty:
22.5 ozs.

Barrel length:
3.58"

Magazine capacity:
10 rounds

Calibers:
9mm, .40 S&W, .357 SIG.



The muzzle crown of the Steyr pistol is deeply recessed to better protect this important component of accuracy.





We cringe when we see these blocked magazines, a legacy of Clintonian liberalism and the absurd notion that controlling instruments can stop crime.

pistol simply by pressing the trigger finger up and then back. Once this habit is learned, there is very little difference in time to fire a shot whether the safety is used or not.

The advantage of the manual safety is that if an unauthorized person grabs the gun and tries to fire it, there is at least some possibility that the safety will delay them enough for the good guy to take remedial action. At the range, I gave an unloaded gun with the safety engaged to several shooters. I wanted to see how long it would take them to find and release the safety.

One shooter, who it turned out had been shooting a Steyr M, released the safety and pressed the trigger immediately. Every other shooter took 30 seconds to a minute trying to figure out how the gun fired. A few just gave up and handed the gun back to me. Usually they would aim the gun at the backstop and pull futilely on the trigger for a while, then fiddle with the slide release or takedown latch, then finally notice the bar at the top of the trigger guard and release it. These included two police officers, both of whom are highly knowledgeable and skilled shooters.

Whether this safety is needed or not is for the individual to decide. A compact pistol like the model S is normally worn concealed, making it less subject to a gun-grab than a service pistol worn in a duty rig. The safety is no guarantee; it may be that the grabber is familiar with it, has unusually large fingers or releases the safety by chance. Still, there is at least the potential for increased security, and since the safety released quickly and positively every time it was tested, there does not seem to be a significant downside.

Any police officer will tell you that the thought of having their duty gun

grabbed and used against them is enough to bring on nightmares. As one police friend said, even a few seconds of time gained by the safety device would give him the opportunity to... no, I don't think I'll repeat what he would do. Anyone stupid enough to grab a cop's gun deserves to be surprised.

Lockable Pistol

There is still one more level of security. On the right side of the frame, behind the take down latch and flush with the frame, is a built-in lock. A two-prong key (two are supplied with every gun) can be used to depress and turn this lock from Fire to Safe. In the S position, the gun is locked and cannot be fired or disassembled. For law enforcement, both Steyr models can be purchased with a lock that operates with a standard handcuff key.

Circumstances vary, but for my purposes integral locks and trigger locks do not enhance safety. I prefer to keep my firearms in one of two conditions. In use, they are under my immediate control; in hand, in a holster or on a sling. Not in use, they are unloaded and locked, either in a case or gun vault.

The notion that by engaging a lock it becomes OK to leave the gun lying around where unauthorized persons can access it seems wrong to me. However, one can envision situations when the lock's additional security would be worthwhile. The lock is there if you need it and can simply be left in the F position if you don't. Just don't forget to release it when carrying the gun for personal defense.

An additional safety feature is a loaded chamber indicator. Located in the rear of the slide just below the rear sight, the indicator is a pin that extends from the slide when a round is chambered, where it can easily

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Pyramid Sights

Front and rear sights are mounted in dovetail cuts in the slide. The rear sight is nicely streamlined, the front a ramped post, both quite resistant to snagging. The sight picture is unusual. Seen from the shooter's viewpoint, the front sight is pyramid-shaped with a white triangle tapering to a point. The sides of the rear sight are angled to match the angles of the front sight and also have white outlines.

Handling and shooting the Steyr S was a pleasure. The grip, though compact in size, is big enough so that most shooters will be able to get three fingers on the grip. Those with extra-large hands might have to curl the little finger around the bottom of the grip. A deep recess on the back of the grip frame lets the shooting hand get a high grip; a single finger groove on the frontstrap— plus horizontal serrations on the front, sides and rear— provide a secure grip.

Slide-to-frame fit was excellent, with almost no perceptible play vertically or horizontally. Hand cycled, the action felt smooth and positive. I'm old-fashioned enough that polymer frames still don't seem quite right, but the Steyr has a tough, solid feel in the hand. Speaking of hands, mine are more or less permanently adapted to the grip angle of 1911 pistols. So for me, the Steyr pointed just a bit high until I consciously lowered the front sight into the rear sight notch.

The trigger pull was short and quite smooth, breaking consistently at just under 8 lbs. Recoil proved light and muzzle flip minimal, likely due to the low axis of the bore relative to the shooting hand. Of course the 9mm Luger

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cartridge is hardly a wrist-breaker to start with, but +P rounds do have a bit of snap to them in light pistols.

On The Firing Line

The model S was fired with a variety of factory loads from Black Hills, Cor-Bon, Federal, Hornady and Winchester, approximately 400 rounds in total. There were no malfunctions. Best accuracy by a slight margin came with Black Hills 147 gr. JHP subsonic loads. These gave five-shot groups of around 2.5". Most loads averaged from 3" to 3.5", although I don't really think I was shooting up to the gun's potential. The combination of the light weight and the stiff trigger made it a bit tough to achieve consistency, and the unusual sight picture threw me a little.

Frankly, I'm about the worst person to evaluate an unusual sighting system. I've dry fired and live fired so long with standard sights that anything else seems wrong. However, I do try and keep an open mind. I don't believe I was as accurate with the Steyr sights as I would be with standard sights.

For more practical shooting, such as single-shot draws, double taps and multiple targets, the Steyr system worked quite well. I didn't notice any loss of speed compared to standard sights, and I could see that a shooter less habituated to standard sights might find the Steyr system easier to learn.

The model S is new enough that holsters may be difficult to find for a time. A Galco Jak-Slide on hand, originally bought to use with a CZ pistol, worked just fine with the little Steyr. The Jak-Slide holds the gun between the body and belt, tucking it in well for comfort and concealment. Weighing just over 26 oz. loaded, the model S was easy to carry and conceal.

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Takedown for cleaning is fast and simple. With the gun empty and trigger released, depress the lock button and rotate the takedown lever down and forward. Then slip the slide assembly forward and off the frame, lift out the captive recoil spring/guide rod assembly, and remove the barrel from the slide.

The only criticism of the Steyr is the generic one I have with all these mandated 10-round magazines. Manufacturers must be certain that no more than 10 rounds can be loaded, and the result always seems to be that it is very hard to load the last round or two. I suspect that people with small or weak hands just couldn't do it without some kind of loading tool.

Of course, that isn't Steyr's fault. The Steyr S is an excellent, high-quality pistol, totally reliable, easy to shoot well, accurate and durable.



The Steyr frame contains a complex steel insert in the rugged polymer which incorporates all the trigger and safety mechanisms.

At the time of this printing, Steyr was planning to close their factory indefinitely as the ground on which the factory sits has been sold to BMW. In hopes that Steyr can relocate and again produce fine firearms, the importer is maintaining a stock of parts and offering warranty service. For more up to date information on Steyr products, contact GSI Inc., 7661 Commerce Lane, P.O. Box 129, Trussville, AL 35173; phone (205) 655-8299; fax: (205) 655-7078; website: www.GSIfirearms.com.

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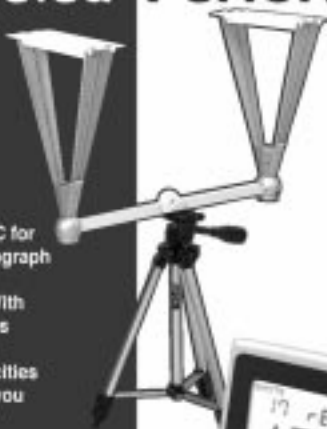
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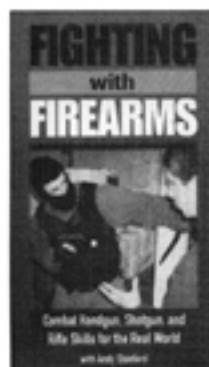
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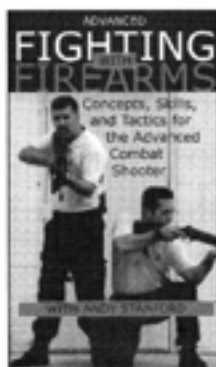


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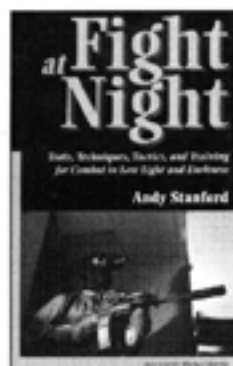


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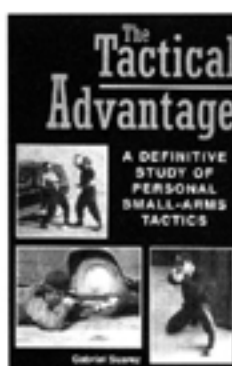


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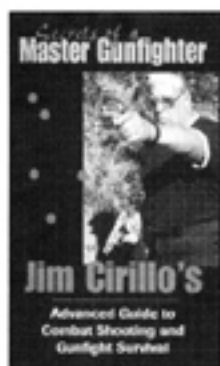


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There are some jurisdictions where private citizens can carry handguns openly, but not concealed. The practice has a cost to it, the author has discovered from experience.

The Perilous Price of "OPEN CARRY"

By Massad Ayoob



Author in public with openly carried .45. Note that with forearm over pistol, badge clipped to belt is much more visible than gun.

Notwithstanding the satisfying enlightenment of the states that now have "shall issue" concealed-handgun carry permits, there are still some jurisdictions that don't allow the practice. There are more places that will give permits to their own citizens, but will neither issue to out of state visitors nor recognize permits from beyond their own borders.

However, a few of these places allow the open carry of loaded handguns. That is, the pistol is holstered in plain sight.

Ours is a 50-state republic with a patchwork quilt of laws, and sometimes a patchwork within the state itself. Consider New York City, which won't recog-

nize carry permits issued elsewhere in the Empire State, though permits issued by the city are recognized by other New York jurisdictions. You have to check each state carefully.

Sixty percent of our states have "shall issue" carry, 36 percent have "discretionary issue," and 14 percent leave you totally helpless. And that's before you get into the iffy question of "open carry."

Thirty one of the states have "shall issue" concealed-carry permit laws, at least for residents. Some states have no provision at all for their citizens to carry loaded and concealed handguns: Illinois, Kansas, Ohio, Missouri, New Mexico

and Wisconsin. The remainder are "discretionary issue" states, meaning it is up to the discretion of the issuing authority whether a resident gets a permit or not.

(While Ohio does not yet have provisions for carry permits, it is the one state to specifically write into its concealed carry law the "affirmative defense" principle that if one can show that a reasonable and prudent person would have gone armed in the same circumstances as the defendant did, the defendant shall be held harmless. This is not the same as a license to carry, though it's certainly better than nothing.)

In some of these states, "discretionary" is a code word meaning that if



Stainless Kimber .45 shows up starkly against blue shirt. However, police shield in front and cuff case immediately behind holster tend to reassure the public. Also visible on belt are spare mag pouch and Surefire flashlight.

you are a wealthy, politically connected white male, you may get a permit. In Hawaii, “discretionary” is a joke: There is one concealed carry permit out in the entire state, issued to the civilian armorer of the Honolulu PD. (There had been two, but when the newspapers found out, the then-chief of Honolulu PD had to take the second permit back from his sister.)

You can stay up to date on these matters— and which states will recognize the permit from your home state or issue you a nonresident license— on an excellent Web site called www.packing.org. But “open carry” is a much more nebulous thing.

The reason is that so many states don’t specifically address the practice at all. It falls under that old catch-all, the difference between American law and German law. “In Germany, if the law doesn’t say you can do it, it means you can’t. In the United States, if the law doesn’t say you can’t do it, it means you can.”

Maybe.

A case in point is Wisconsin. One activist group of gun owners is pushing the theory that since they can’t see where state law prohibits open carry word for word, they presume it’s legal and recommend that others do it. However, some Wisconsin law enforcement officials have flatly stated that they will arrest anyone who does so.

When the *per se* legality of open carry

is not expressly addressed in the law, it becomes an interpretive issue for the law’s enforcers. With a practice that predictably frightens people who don’t understand it, law enforcement has the option of arresting for things like disturbing the peace or— are you ready for this one?— “going armed to the terror of the public.”

We follow journalistic standards at *American Handgunner*, and that includes not being vague when it lies within one’s power to be specific. Unfortunately, in this matter, that does not lie within our power. The law itself is too vague, too interpretive. This is why there is no official list that we can find, in print or on the Web, that conclusively says where open carry is legal, and where it isn’t.

The bottom line is simple. When you carry a lethal weapon exposed in public, you can consider yourself to be walking on ice. In that situation, you at least try to walk where the ice is thick. Unfortunately, in this case, there is no confirmed nationwide guide to the ice thickness.

This is why I mention only three states by name: Arizona, New Hampshire and North Carolina. I’ve been told to my satisfaction by authorities in all three states that the practice is

in fact legal there, and I have personally carried open there without getting in trouble. But, you can still get in trouble carrying a loaded handgun in plain sight in even those states— and that, in the end, is why the practice of open carry is fraught with peril.

I’ve worn openly in Arizona, New Hampshire and North Carolina. If you haven’t yet had the experience, let me tell you what it’s like.

That Creepy Feeling

I was in my early 20s when I first donned a police uniform. It didn’t take long for the self-consciousness to wear off. Eight hours at a time in uniform with a gun hanging off your belt will acclimatize you quickly. However, as soon as people see a police or security uniform, they expect a gun. It does not draw untoward attention.

But without the visible uniform, the exposed handgun most certainly does draw unwanted attention. With open carry in plain clothes, you are made to feel as if, well, as if you had left something else open.

People stare. The stares are generally not complimentary. The general public has been conditioned by their entertainment media, their news media and their politicians to believe that only cops and bad guys carry guns. If you aren’t readily identifiable as the one, some tend to assume that you’re the other.

My older daughter discovered this when she was 19 years old, accompanying me to Arizona to shoot at the National Tactical Invitational. I had been assigned to represent my police department at the event, and thus was



Chair helps to conceal pistol. Badge is actually far more visible. Scene is break-fast nook at a motel in North Carolina. Everyone at the table is “carrying.”



Author's body is edgeways and he is much more likely to see anyone approaching. Better yet would be turning gun side toward wall, but that would have defeated the purpose of the illustration.

legal to carry concealed. However, Arizona at that time did not have even limited reciprocity or a concealed carry option for nonresidents, so the permit Cat, my daughter, had possessed since age 18 was no good there. She decided to try this "open carry" thing that she had heard about so much.

It lasted for half a day. She is a slim and very attractive woman who has always looked younger than her age. Today, at 23, she gets carded every time she orders a drink in a restaurant, and at 19 she looked about 14. With the big Beretta, she also looked like a large gun with a small female attached.

After a few hours of people staring at her, some even pointing and mouthing "That little girl has a gun," she gave me back the Beretta. "Dad," she said, "this is creepy!"

The Eyes Have It

Now, let's put this in perspective. Not everyone will spot the gun. As cops and criminals alike can tell you, the general populace is not what you'd call observant.

A couple of months ago in South Carolina, I had to go through a supermarket for the evening's food. I was in there about 15 minutes. There were hundreds

of people in the aisles. I was acutely aware of people's eyes and the reactions of those around me, because I had a stainless-steel Kimber .45 in an openly worn holster.

Of all those people, the only one who clearly spotted the pistol was a little girl, and I think it's because she was about at eye level with the gun, only a few feet away. I saw her tug her father's sleeve to get his attention and solemnly point at my sidearm. I turned around a little so he could see the shield clipped to my belt in front of the holster.

We made eye contact. I smiled at the dad and nodded. He smiled back, and looked down at his daughter and said, "It's OK, honey. He's po-lice."

However, there will be times when becoming apparent as the good guy won't be that easy. On that day, I was teaching cops and assigned by my department to be there, so I could wear the shield in good

faith. If that wasn't the case, a gun by itself might have caused a different reaction. Long ago, a lady famous for teaching etiquette said, "Don't frighten the horses." This applies to open carry.

The Grab Factor

Some years ago I was in Arizona attending a function at Gunsite. An acquaintance and I stopped for take-out coffee at a convenience store between Prescott and the Training Center. My companion was a civilian from one of those benighted states that have no provision for their citizens to carry guns, and he wasn't going to let his first trip to Arizona pass without experiencing the wonderful freedom of open carry. His custom Colt Government Model was conspicuous on his hip in an open top holster.

He got to the checkout counter a few people ahead of me. I noticed that the man behind him had not only spotted the gun, but also had a negative reaction to it.

That guy looked at his companion and pointed at the .45 as I saw his lips form the words, "He's got a f---in' gun!" This did not look good.

His eyes intently focused on my friend's gun, he began to move forward toward him. So did I. As his hand

started to come up and tenuously reach for the holstered pistol from behind, I abruptly stepped between them, blocking his grasp and winding up nose to nose with the man.

Eye contact was direct. No words were stated. The man backed up. My friend completed his purchase, turned around, and saw me behind him. "Meet you at the car," I said, returning back to my place in line.

What was that guy going to do? I have no reason to believe he was going to snatch the gun and shoot my friend. It was clear, however, that he was going to put his hand on the gun, and I can't imagine him doing that without pulling it.

Was he in the grip of testosterone overdose and thought it would be a macho joke to jerk another man's gun out of its holster? Or did he wrongly presume my friend was the macho showoff and felt a need to take him down a peg? Or was he a Sarah Brady fan who decided on the spur of the moment to make a physical statement about why people shouldn't carry guns? I don't know. I didn't wait to find out.

Situational Awareness

My friend and I talked about it the rest of the way to Gunsite. He had never been a cop, never been allowed to carry in public in his state, and just didn't know. Those of us who are constantly armed—and particularly those of us armed in uniform—become acutely aware of who is within reach of our exposed handguns. We are constantly monitoring the eyes of others to see if they're looking at our guns.

It's not paranoia. In the better police academies, cops learn about "target stare." A person who stares at your chin has just telegraphed where he would like to punch you. In hos-



Seen from body side, Piece-Keeper has an extra securing device attached to the thumb-break paddle. Revolver is S&W 686.



Combat Commander in ARG holster is not visible from clerk's perspective and doesn't frighten him... but the open-carried gun is clearly visible to the man behind him, whose reaction to the sight will be unknown.

tile circumstances, the guy staring at your crotch is probably not a gay man scoping out your package, but instead someone who intends to kick you in the groin.

Similarly, cops are taught to assume that a person who stares at your holstered pistol is thinking about snatching it. Such a mindset would have been helpful to my friend that morning in Arizona.

When I have to carry open, I've learned to not turn my back to people any more than I need to. We don't have eyes in the backs of our heads. At the same time, it's wise to stand edgewise in a queue of people instead of with your back to the person behind you. Guns draw unwarranted attention.

The first time I had to carry open in North Carolina, I hadn't been prepared for it. After arriving, I had consulted with Tim Noe, the man who would be my lawyer if I was involved in a shooting in that state because as an ex-cop and firearms instructor himself, he's a particular gun-wise attorney.

"Sorry, Mas," he said, "but my

reading is, unless you're extraditing a prisoner or something, you can't carry concealed down here. No nonresident permit. No reciprocity. It's open carry or nothing."

I chose open carry. My gun was a revolver, a Colt Python .357 Magnum, and my holster was an open-top Ayoob Rear Guard by Mitch Rosen with no safety strap. There was nothing between the fast hand of a man behind me and my gun. It made me really aware of my surroundings.

My next trip down, I wore a flat black Glock 23 in a Safariland 0701 compact security holster, for some snatch resistance. The combination didn't call attention to itself, although it was spotted several times, and the holster was expressly designed to resist yielding the gun to an unauthorized hand. This improved my comfort factor distinctly.

Good Guys Wear Black

You have to carry a gun unconcealed, but you don't want people to notice? This means the gun has to "hide in plain sight."

The best answer is color matching, and the only effective way to match colors with guns and clothing is black on black.

During that first trip with the blued Python with its black Hogue grips, I discovered that with a black polo shirt, no one noticed the black gun in the black holster against my black shirt. When I wore a blue shirt, however, it looked like, well, like a guy in a blue shirt carrying a .357 Magnum.

The reason I had that particular gun was that after the N.C. class I had to go to Mississippi to compete in the national service revolver championships at Jackson, and that was the most accurate 4" service revolver I had.

From there, I had to go to California on behalf of a sheriff's department that had a deputy who stood falsely accused of wrongful death after a shooting. The same gun went with me.

Part of that final leg of the trip involved a series of photos of me as the bad guy re-enacting the attempt to disarm and murder the police officer. It never occurred to any of us to take my gun off.

I happened to be wearing a black polo shirt in the pictures, which were blown up to enormous size in the courtroom some time later and left in front of the jury on easels for hours at a time. Interestingly, no one seemed to notice that I was wearing a revolver. If you didn't know to look for it, you wouldn't know it was there: black handle and metal blued deeply enough to look black, against a black shirt. It was



Safariland 0701 holster, excellent choice for open carry, here holds custom Glock 23. Regular Tenifer finish will draw less attention than this gun's silvery stainless Caspian slide.



Gray Glock 30 in dark gray Frank Sigmund Kydex holster is still visible against black garb. Flat-black gun finish and flat-black leather holster would blend better.

more reinforcement of why good guys wear black.

On my last open carry trip a few months ago, I had to carry a silver colored stainless pistol. This was for the simple reason that I could only travel with so many guns, and I was running out of time on the deadline for the magazine article on the Kimber in question. I had to take it to work, testing it during class breaks and teaching with it and using it as a personal defense weapon in the meantime.

My only security holster for a 1911 was an SS-III duty rig, which would have required a bulky Sam Browne belt. Instead, I used a G. William Davis thumb-break duty scabbard in black. With black grip panels, the Kimber was outlined, but was not nearly as obvious as it might have been. Meanwhile, with a safety strap and a locked-on manual safety, I had two levels of weapon retention in the hardware, and that was acceptable.

Open Carry Advice

Do yourself a favor and wear your open carry piece in a holster that isn't open, that is, a scabbard that has some retention to it. A safety strap is the absolute minimum I'm reasonably comfortable with.

Safariland popularized a "security level" continuum in which Level I is one

movement required before you can start to draw the gun, like a plain thumb-break strap. Level II requires two movements, such as a thumb-break plus breakfront. Level III requires three movements, as in their state-of-the-art police duty rig, the SS-III designed by Bill Rogers. If the pistol is "on safe," you can consider that a fourth level.

I carry at Level IV on duty, with an on-safe .45 in an SS-III uniform holster. For plainclothes—which means something that will work on a regular dress gunbelt without having to strap on a two and a quarter inch Sam Browne—there are essentially only three really secure holsters out there. All are Level II that, if your pistol is on-safe, will bring you up to three levels of weapon retention security.

Two come from Safariland. I've already mentioned the 0701. It's a trimmed-down version of the SS-III with one less

locking device. I like it because the drawing movement is exactly the same as with the SS-III I wear on duty. The other is the concealable version of Safariland's hugely popular SLS (Self-Locking System).

The third is the Piece-Keeper by Strong Leather of Gloucester, Mass. A rotating security paddle is added to the regular thumb break. The thumb rocks in one direction and pushes in another, and your gun is free. It's a very effective design, and much less expensive than either of the Safarilands.

An added advantage of the Strong Piece-Keeper is that it's available in plain black leather, which will blend better with a black shirt for the "hide in plain sight" thing. The Safariland holsters are made of Safarilaminat, a plastic that's actually a dark gray. It blends very well with the standard Tenifer finish of the Glock pistol, as I discovered.

However, gray does not blend with gray as invisibly as black blends with black.

If I have a blue steel revolver with black Hogue grips, an all-black Beretta 92 or 96, or a Ruger P97 with all-black polymer frame, when they are in Piece-Keeper, everything is a symphony of black. Yes, the design of the Piece-Keeper completely covers the silvery stainless slide of the P97 .45 auto.

I've made a point of gathering enough black shirts so that I can spend a week in "open carry country" before I have to find a laundromat. The black-on-black thing is the best low-profile advice I can give you. This is probably why ninjas didn't wear gray.

There are a handful of private academies that teach proven handgun retention skills. Anyone carrying a handgun openly needs such knowledge as surely as does the uniformed police officer. The cop learns early that his visibly worn handgun has a sign visible only to dirtbags that reads, "grab gun, kill owner." The same will be true of the citizen's "open carry" gun.

If you're a cop, you know that in plainclothes, the badge is clipped to the belt in front of the holster for just this purpose: not to frighten the horses.

If I have to wear the gun in plainclothes without a concealing garment in public for a while, I'll move my plainclothes cuff case to right behind the gun, so it's visible from behind to someone



"Black on black" look of Beretta 92 in Piece-Keeper holster against appropriate clothes minimizes "gun flash," but carry is still completely open.

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*Vermont is the one state that does not criminalize concealed carry of a loaded handgun by any law-abiding citizen, visitor or resident. It merely forbids the practice to those convicted of felonies, adjudicated mentally-incompetent or drug-dependent, or having "malice in their hearts." However, some local communities in Vermont have reportedly passed ordinances against the practice.

who sees the gun but not the badge. Cuffs, like shields, say "cop" and reassure the public.

Keep your gun side to the wall, whether on a sidewalk or in a store aisle or in a restaurant seat. If you can't get a bench seat by a wall, a curving chair will naturally hide the gun: the chair's fault, not yours. Keep your holster-side arm down at your side. It's a natural posture that not only keeps the gun from "flashing," but helps protect it from a snatch. And, to restate the obvious, don't wear the gun in places that are off-limits to those carrying guns.

A note to private citizens: don't wear cuffs, and forget about those "concealed carry permit" and "U.S. taxpayer" badges. In many jurisdictions, possession of handcuffs in public is a crime in itself. And, no matter what you've heard, most cops see that fake badge thing as impersonating an officer. At worst, they'll charge you with that crime. At best, you'll lose any sympathy you might have had from them if they have to respond to a "man with a gun" call that focuses on you.

Deterrence Vs. Hassle

Does a visible gun deter some criminals? No doubt about it. We'll never know how many robberies of gunshops and other high-risk establishments were prevented when potential perpetrators walked in and saw their intended victims openly wearing firearms. However, when the other guy knows what you've got, he can also open the ball by coming in shooting. That's the downside.

On one occasion, I was carrying a compact Glock in an 0701 openly when I exited a store into the parking lot and saw a large gentleman panhandling some passersby in a most intimidating fashion. As I walked toward my car, he approached me.

The head was forward of the shoulders, the shoulders forward of the hips, and the lips coming back from the teeth in the classic body language of the predator. I could see he was looking me up and down, another predatory gesture. I turned to face him so he could get a good look.

He saw the gun. He stopped in his tracks. He raised his hands chest high, palms out, a gesture of "don't hurt me" and "I surrender," and flashed a fake smile that equaled Al Gore's. He then turned and walked quickly away.

Yet, for every such encounter, there will be many more nice people who are alarmed by the unexpected presence of guns. I've spent a lot of time in Ari-



Even stainless S&W 686 with black Hogue grips, let alone black polymer-framed Ruger P97, blend with the black leather of these Piece-Keeper holsters.

zona, although I don't live there. You rarely, if ever, see people actually carrying, and then usually in the more rural areas.

The fact is that in most jurisdictions, if you walk into someplace with a gun on and aren't identifiable as a cop, there is a very real possibility that someone will call the police, who will then come and ask you about it. If you want to give Officer Friendly a lecture on the Second Amendment and tell him implicitly that you know the laws he enforces better than he does, all he has to do is look around and ask, "Does this man carrying this gun frighten anyone here?" If one person says "yes" and agrees to sign a complaint, you can expect to be arrested for disturbing the peace.

This is why, even in jurisdictions where the law technically allows concealed carry, most people don't do it.

Why did I carry open then? Partly for the experience. Mainly because—often speaking as an expert witness for politically incorrect and unpopular defendants in shooting cases—I've received more than my share of death threats and would feel stupid being cut down in public because I didn't have wherewithal to defend myself when I could have. But not too many people fit that threat profile.

My experience has been that open carry in public comes with a large price tag attached. The real answer, of course, is to work within the system to make "shall issue" concealed carry permits available to every competent, law-abiding citizen in the land.





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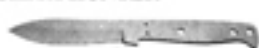
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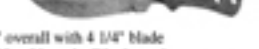


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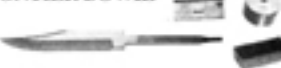


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Surgical Speed Shooting

By Andy Stanford



The “post modern” doctrine of practical pistolcraft with a dynamic shooting stance.

The Modern Isosceles stance is more stable, provides better recoil control and better utilizes the body’s natural biomechanics than the obsolete Weaver stance.

Most trained handgunners would agree that multiple rounds are necessary to take the fight out of a potentially deadly aggressor. But many of these same individuals plan to fire a mere pair of projectiles—the classic double tap—and then pause to verify the results. In reality, a reflexive double-tap response has potentially deadly consequences if the controlled pair is not enough.



An aggressive forward lean, with the shoulders rotated forward, is one of the keys to the modern Isosceles stance.

Given the relatively weak blow struck by any controllable handgun cartridge, you simply must plan to keep shooting until there is no longer a threat visible over your front sight. This may mean one round, two, three, a half dozen, or the expenditure of an entire high-cap magazine. You simply can't know ahead of time. Bullet impacts will probably not be

visible on clothing. And although the assailant's reactions may give a clue to the effectiveness of your gunfire, if he still is on his feet and capable of inflicting grave bodily harm to you, keep firing.

"Failure to stop" procedures such as the classic Mozambique Drill and vertical tracking up and down your oppo-

nent's centerline comprise two possible responses to someone continuing an assault despite solid torso hits. In light of the well-accepted observation about terminal ballistics— that no handgun cartridge is capable of effecting a reliable one-shot-stop with only a torso hit— then the classic debate of magazine capacity versus bore diameter seems to favor the "more bullets is better" camp.

Greater firepower equates to a higher probability of hitting vital organs. The best you can do is select a suitable sidearm and then employ it to maximum effect. Peripheral hits simply will not do the job. Surgical shot placement— as quickly as possible— is the only acceptable answer.

Shooting Techniques

If we need to rapidly fire an undetermined number of shots into a tight area, then we need a proven shooting technique for controlling the recoil of a service handgun. A well-documented method exists for achieving this objective: the modern Isosceles stance. The fastest and most accurate shooters in the world— Rob Leatham, Todd Jarrett and Jerry Barnhart— all use some variation of this stance, as do virtually all of the IPSC grandmasters.

The modern Isosceles is also the



Handgun ammunition (left array of cartridges) is far less potent than typical long gun ammunition like .223, .308 and 12 ga. 00 buck. As one grizzled gunfight veteran said, "The only reason to ever fire a handgun in anger is to fight your way toward your rifle."

The photos at right show the correct manner to form the weak-hand support around the strong hand. Note that the thumbs are parallel and in line with the bore.

favorite stance of the hardcore warriors in DevGroup (SEAL Team 6) and U.S. Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (Delta Force). Lest you doubt the efficiency of this stance, view the “super squad” in action at a major USPSA match. We are no great fans of IPSC as gunfight training, but we must give credit where credit is due. In this case, the sport has produced a major breakthrough in technique, one that definitely has application on the street.

The modern Isoceles manages recoil instead of trying to out-muscle it. The support hand provides approximately two-thirds of the pressure in the two-handed grip, allowing the trigger finger to move without antagonistic muscle tension. The arms are at their natural extension and the body acts as a natural-action stance that provides the appropriate balance of mobility and stability.

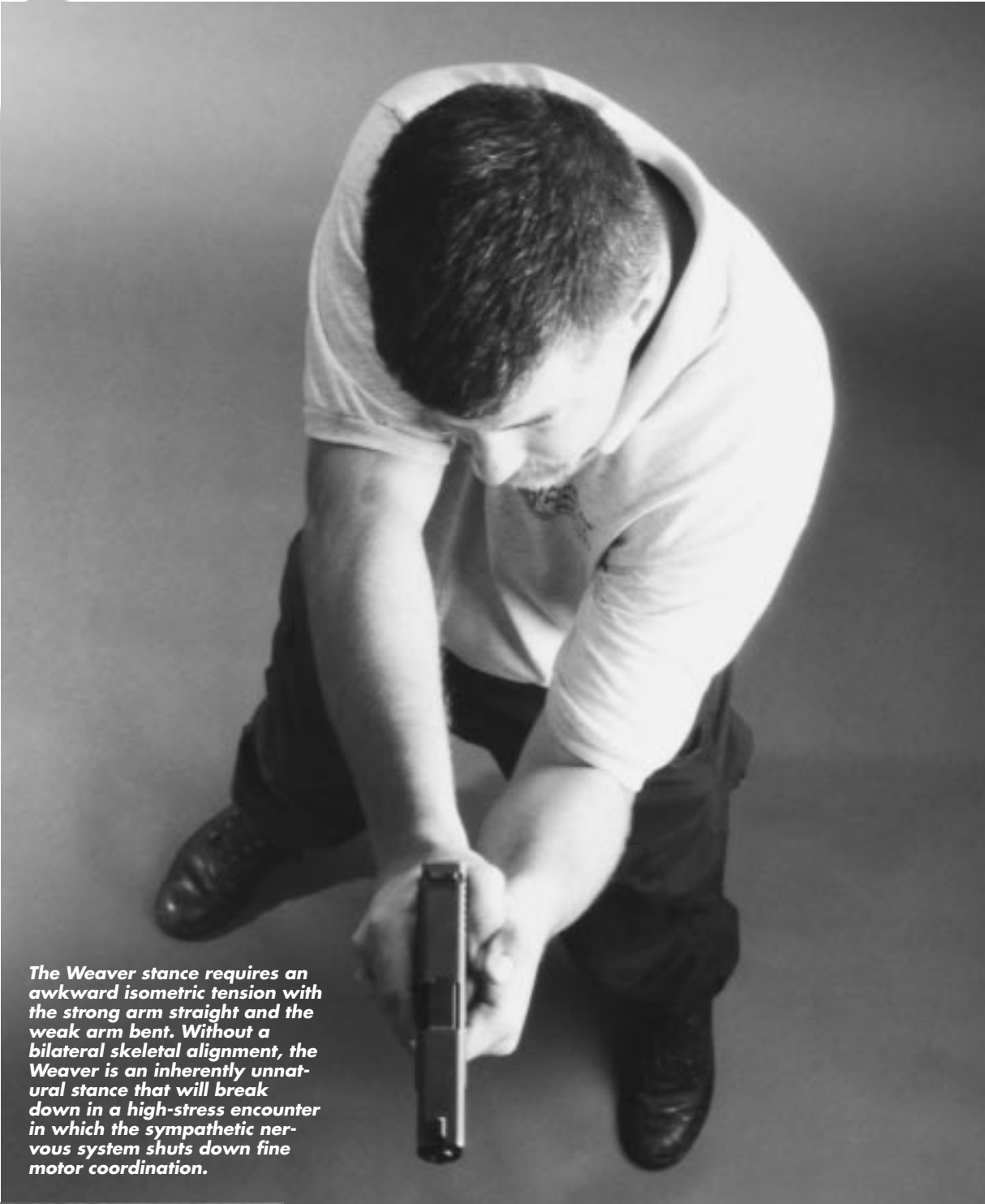
At the upper limits of human performance, the modern Isoceles is the only way to go. Few of us will ever achieve this level of proficiency. But the symmetrical stance has advantages for even the average shooter. The most important of these advantages is that the Isoceles holds up well under the fight-or-flight response, when the heart rate suddenly shoots to about 140-beats per minute and only gross motor skills remain.

Flat Earth Society

Why, then, does the Weaver stance



The beauty of the modern Isoceles stance is that it doesn't require brute strength to yield results. This lady shooter had no trouble keeping all her rounds in the center of mass of an IPSC target.



The Weaver stance requires an awkward isometric tension with the strong arm straight and the weak arm bent. Without a bilateral skeletal alignment, the Weaver is an inherently unnatural stance that will break down in a high-stress encounter in which the sympathetic nervous system shuts down fine motor coordination.





As the cascade of brass shows, the modern Isosceles allows virtually no muzzle flip when performed correctly. Note the forward roll to the shoulders and the head shifted slightly forward of the center of balance.

continue to thrive? There is a very simple answer: Many of today's name-brand shooting instructors got their start at the American Pistol Institute under Col. Jeff Cooper and are thoroughly indoctrinated into his "modern technique." These trainers have declaimed loud and long that the Weaver is best. Many have written books and articles extolling the Weaver, so it would be difficult for them to recant.

Likewise, the Colonel himself is certainly not going to suddenly embrace the Isosceles after spending decades preaching the Weaver. As he handed IPSC grandmaster Ron Avery a prize 1911A1 for winning the Gunsite Alumni Shoot using the Isosceles, Cooper dismissed technique as a factor, commenting, "You just can't beat a man who's naturally fast."

The typical argument against the Isosceles stance states that it only works with wimp ammo or compensated guns, not stock weapons firing full-power defensive loads. This is simply untrue. I've witnessed Avery employing the modern Isosceles to shoot a full magazine— eight rounds of full power 230 gr. hardball from a 5" Colt Government Model— into a fist-sized group at 7 yards in less than a second from the first shot to the last. I've done it myself in under two.

The fact is, the symmetrical Isosceles stance actually allows one to shoot more

rapidly than the off-kilter, tension-based Weaver. The upshot is that the Weaver stance fights recoil and the dynamic Isosceles goes with the flow. The Isosceles also works much better than the Weaver for traversing laterally and for firing while moving.

Likewise, since the Isosceles keeps the gun on target with a natural point of aim instead of sheer muscle tension, it is superior for making good hits should you lose focus on the sights and start pulling

the trigger as fast as possible. Carefully aimed fire may be an ideal solution, but in a close quarters affray, body-alarm reaction can cause you to shift concentration toward your adversary.

We'd all like to think of ourselves as cool, collected Wyatt Earp clones. But the truth is, many people go cyclic when the feces hits the rotating blades. When facing return fire— with time, distance and cover at a minimum— even trained people tend to point-shoot to one degree



Even beginners just learning the modern Isosceles will experience excellent rapid fire control with the natural biomechanics of this stance.



Both shooters in this man-on-man shootoff drill are exhibiting classic form with the modern Isosceles stance. Note the forward roll of the shoulders and the head craned forward.

or another. The Isosceles simply holds up better than the Weaver under this type of extreme stress.

A Fighting Stance

A final misconception is that “The Isosceles is okay for pure shooting, but the Weaver is better for fighting.” Those who make such statements confuse foot placement with shooting stance, the latter of which is defined by the upper body. It is entirely possible to shoot a Weaver stance—with push-pull isometric tension—while squarely facing the threat. It is also possible to fire from an Isosceles position with the feet radically bladed at 45 degrees to the target.

With either stance, you may wish to stand with the dominant foot a half step or so behind the other, maintaining stance integrity to the front with your weapon side back: the classic police “interview stance.” But make no mistake. Once the balloon goes up, such textbook foot placement often goes with it.

In reality, either stance will probably get the job done, as will the frequently dismissed but highly utilitarian one-handed shooting methods. You’ll also need a contact-distance, weapon-retention strategy in your bag of tricks. But that’s another subject entirely.

The modern Isosceles stance is optimal for quick, accurate handgun shooting. But as long as you line up the

weapon with the target and cause it to discharge without disturbing the alignment, a hit will result regardless of how you hold the weapon. Mindset and tactics serve a much greater role in win-

ning confrontations than does skill-at-arms. And your number one option for personal security will always be a firm commitment to avoidance, deterrence and de-escalation.



Other than an ever so slight tilt to the right for this right-eye dominant shooter, the modern Isosceles is a bilaterally balanced stance.



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*Pictured from top to bottom are models: HT, SA, DB and AD.
Opposite page: An active duty Marine working in an
amphibious environment with a Model MTL.*

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“HIGH SPEED TOOLS FOR
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**IT’S NO WONDER CUSTOM
BLADE MAKERS DUANE DWYER
AND MICK STRIDER PRODUCE
THE TOUGHEST FIGHTING
KNIVES ON THE PLANET.**

Strider Knives has earned a well-deserved reputation among elite military operators as one of the finest pieces of gear that is available for their dangerous missions. Until recently, Strider knives were virtually unknown outside of the special-operations community. These knives have also become a highly desirable tool for law enforcement officers in high-risk assignments.

Strider Knives has a unique history that sets the tone for why the blades have become so desirable in the tactical community. Company founder Mick Strider made his first knife during his high school years. In 1984, while serving in the Army, Mick took up building knives for his fellow soldiers. According to



By Darryl Bolke
Photos by
Ichiro Nagata



Pictured above: An Active duty Marine deploying a Model EB.L.T during urban operations. Vest and Holster are by Special Operations Equipment. Below: Model EB.L.T at the ready with a Model DB rigged to the vest. Opposite page: Model WB's shown with Strider Knives Trademark Wrap and in the G10 configuration. Model FS in corner photo.



Mick, he made around 75 knives from 1984 to 1994. In 1994, the up-and-coming business was awarded a government contract to make knives for Naval Special Warfare Group 1. These models are known as the WB and BG.

In order to fulfill this contract, Mick became partners with Duane Dwyer. The two had met in a martial arts class and had become close friends. Mick has a background in Special Operations Command (SOCOM) with the U.S. Army. Nothing else really needs to be said. His partner, Duane, has a very impressive background in the Marine Corps as a sniper. He also has extensive experience as a commercial hardhat diver. Both men have overseas combat experience in various capacities and are well-known within the special operations community.

During this period, Mick and Duane were still regularly









Pictured above: Active Air Force HH-60G PAVEHAWK Gunner, call sign "knifebomber" in full battle gear with folder Model GB in hand and custom model PH on holster rig. Below: Active duty Recon Marine with Model BT.SS. Opposite page: Models WB and MG. Models BT, WB, and WBmod10 in corner photo.

deploying and had to share knife-making duties. I can remember buying my first Strider knives in 1994 when both Mick and Duane were out of the country. My partner and I scooped up every knife we could lay our hands on because we were unsure if these two guys would ever make it back.

Demand from the special operations community became overwhelming, and the business took off. In 1998, Mick and Duane began making knives full-time. Strider Knives and a custom maker of high quality web gear named Special Operations Equipment were both operating out of the same shop in Oceanside, Calif. The shop was strategically located close to a large customer base at Camp Pendleton and the Naval Special Warfare Center in nearby Coronado.

Warrior Central

Rumors that this was one of the true centers of "warriordom" are fairly accurate. You could have walked into the shop and found members of the most elite units of the Marine Corps (Special Operations Training Group, Recon and Scout Snipers), Navy SEALs, Green Berets, Rangers and Air Force PJs. The law enforcement crowd also began to infiltrate this eclectic group.

Due to, increased demand for both companies products, Strider has recently moved into a new shop with some new equipment to help produce a better, more consistent, product. The new shop is still full of interesting characters. The Strider Guys, as they are known among their regular clientele, began hiring fellow operators to help with the overload.

Cormac O'Hanlon, an Irish-born Marine sniper, was on board for quite a





Pictured above: Active duty Marine on patrol with model MT.L. Below: Force Recon Marine in urban warfare scenario with Model EB.L.T. Opposite page: Model HT. Model DB in corner photo.

while along with other notables, like the inimitable "Ranger Dave," who is still an active operator. Steve Newell, another former Marine, has been helping out since 1994, handling all office duties.

Personal Experience

I have been carrying Strider knives as my primary tactical knives since early 1995. My first Strider was a WB model. It has served me well. I used that knife often as a breaching tool during high-risk entries into buildings during narcotics raids. It was also used for breaking into locked foot lockers containing drugs, and was used to slide into the opening between door frames to prevent the door from being closed.

For patrol assignments, I asked Duane to build me a small version of their larger tanto style that could be hidden within the trauma plate pocket of my concealable body armor. This was the birth of the original DB. This knife has proven to be very popular as a smaller knife that has the same thickness and tough qualities of the larger Striders and is, of course, my favorite Strider.

Special Purpose Blades

The Strider Guys are well-known for building specialty tools for specific applications. The HT was originally designed for use by an elite group of Border Patrol agents. The HT is an outstanding design that has become very popular in the special operations community. I carried mine for quite a while in my flight suit on my current assignment in law enforcement aviation. In the







Model PAB. Models FS, PAB, PH, BT.G10, and HT in corner photo from left to right.

aviation community, Striders are one of the most sought-after knives due to their incredible strength.

In the SWAT community, Strider knives have developed quite a reputation as well. The larger Strider knives can be found riding on the tactical belts of many SWAT officers across the United States. These knives can stand up to the harshest abuse a SWAT team member can dish out without failing.

The new CQB series of Striders should set the new standard for what a SWAT knife should be. They are very fast into action, can be used for a variety of cutting and prying chores, and are almost impossible to disarm due to their unique handle design.

Some students of the blade dislike the Strider handles—both their signature para-cord wrap and their G-10 scales—because they are allegedly “not comfortable.” This is the type of issue that sets Strider apart from other makers. Striders handles are very easy to hang on to when an operator’s hands are covered in sweat, blood, chemicals or other types of materials.

The Strider Guys understand, first-hand, what occurs during combat. They build their tools to be used during the most extreme situations imaginable, and this is where they perform the best. I personally do not understand how you can call something tactical—meaning for use in combat—and have it be really comfortable. When the adrenaline spike goes, you need something that you can clutch and it isn’t going to slip. Purchase is far more important than comfort.

If you have never seen the elephant, it’s hard to explain. The buyer of any Strider knife gets a whole lot of “seeing the elephant” built into every one. You cannot put a price on the experience that goes into every blade they make. I really appreciate the unique Strider cord wrap and consider it my favorite handle design.

As far as specialty tools go, the new Strider Axe is a total machine as a breaching tool. We have cut large pieces of wood, destroyed aircraft fuselages, devastated Plexiglas, and don’t even talk about cars. The Strider Axe cuts into automobiles like no one’s business. The Axe is offered with a variety of attachments, including a pry bar and a hammer. It is becoming an item in high demand among aircrews for a crash tool as well as a breaching tool for special operations personnel.

The Axe design is very practical, and the interchangeable accessories are an outstanding innovation. They also make an excellent dive tool for those who are

involved in marine operations.

Strider Knives also provide excellent carrying systems for their tools. Nylon sheathes are currently being built by SOE. This is hardcore gear that is another “secret” of the spec-ops community. Special Kydex rigs are also being done in-house. These systems are designed to allow for numerous carrying styles and provide good security and accessibility for their knives.

Blade Characteristics

The smaller Striders have great cutting ability. Their tip strength allows them to pry objects and to have great penetration as well.

Because of their design and construction, Strider’s knives are suitable for a bodyguard because he can use the same knife as a back-up, or substitute for a firearm. It can be used as a rescue knife, as a breaching tool, or to gain access to a room or building in an emergency. I have even seen them used to break open padlocks. In the private sector, it is important to have one cutting tool that will do almost any chore that you can think of.

The new Strider folding knives are going to have a great impact on the law enforcement

Urban warfare scenario with Model EB.L.T.





Pictured above: Active duty Marine with Model MT.L in amphibious environment. Below: Active Air Force PAVEHAWK Gunner with EB.L.S. Note Strider Knives trademark tigerstripe finish on both these tools.



knife selection. In many law enforcement and military units, fixed blade knives are not allowed. While I don't agree with this policy, it is in place in many units. The guys at Strider have recently released their folding knife. The custom version was designed specifically to be a very large tactical folder that will perform just like a fixed blade when opened.

I have been carrying one on my belt during helicopter flights and during assignments where I need a big performing knife in a concealable package. Several members of my SWAT team have also ordered the new folders. No other folder can match the Strider for strength or performance.

The Buck/Strider collaboration is also seeing a good deal of popularity for officers and emergency response personnel who need a very tough knife that is both economical and can be replaced easily if lost or heavily damaged. I have yet to see one of these folders ever fail or break.

So what makes them so tough? Several critical factors are involved. The Strider Guys begin with an initial design for the knife as a specific problem-solving tool. After the design is chosen, Strider has a three-part process of what makes them so successful.

First is material selection. Strider Knives use the best raw materials available for each blade design, regardless of cost. The larger, thicker blades are usually made of ATS-34 while BG-42 is being utilized in some of the thinner blades. In the pursuit of excellence, other materials are constantly being evaluated.

The second step is the material exploitation process. After the materials are selected, the blades are sent to Paul Bos, the legendary heat treater. You can have the best materials in the world and





destroy them during the manipulation procedure. A proprietary heat-treat process is used that is unique to Strider. The knives are usually finished in a bead blast or "tiger stripe" pattern.

The third part of the process is appropriate blade geometry. Proper geometry application to the blade design is one of those areas in which Strider excels. With the background of both owners, as well as input from some of the most high-speed, low-drag operators in the world, true purpose-built tools are created.

To quote Duane, "It's like a maul and a razor blade. You don't split wood with a razor blade and you don't shave with a splitting maul, so it's critical that you define the purpose for the knife and use the appropriate geometry for the design."

All Strider Knives are hand ground by Mick and Duane personally. When they're both grinding, which is often, the noise coming from the Grinding Room is like the screech of a braking locomotive combined with a runaway chainsaw. They tie old T-shirts around their heads when the sparks are flying, don thick safety glasses and wear heavy-duty respirators to keep out the fine steel dust that blankets the room.

Their hands are calloused and rough, their thumbs thick with scar tissue. Strider Knives are, quite literally, handmade.

The last consideration is naming the knife. A two letter designation is usually picked. Sometimes it is the initials of the person the knife was originally designed for, and other times it has some funny or special meaning to the makers. The other reason for the simple designation is that



***Pictured above: Models MH, MT, BG and GS.
Below: Active Recon Marine with Model BT.SS.
Opposite page: Active duty Army Special Forces
Operator with Model MT.L.***





**Pictured above: EB.L.T in urban scenario.
Below: Active Marine in amphibious scenario
with Model MT.L. Opposite page: Models PH,
KH, JW and MG.**



these knives are built for professionals who actually use them. At some point, they may end up in court defending their use. The last thing you want is to be using a knife with a name like "The Assassinator" while in front of a jury.

Humble Guys

The Strider Guys are probably the most humble, unassuming bladesmiths around. They truly respect and appreciate the artistry created by other knife makers, but they are not interested in competing in that rarified market. I have seen some of their individual works, and these guys could really give the more extravagant makers a run for their money. They simply choose to build very tough tools for real field use. Real field knives are used to pry open containers, dig holes, cut and prepare food, build fire and shelter, breach buildings and occasionally defend or save a life. That is what Striders are for.

Overall, Strider Knives have proven themselves to be some of the toughest knives ever built. They have been tested in the real world, in the hands of professional operators who put themselves in harm's way on a daily basis. A Strider is the best partner anyone could ask for in a crisis situation.



Visit Strider Knives on the web at
www.striderknives.com or write for
a catalog to the Strider Guys,

120 N. Pacific St. Unit L-7
San Marcos, CA 92069
Ph: (760) 471-8275
Fx: (503) 218-7069





***Sophisticated Training
and Rigorous "Muzzle
Awareness" are the Keys
to Training Motorcycle
Cops How to Shoot.***

Motorcycle police officers face unique challenges, not the least of which involve the deployment and use of their issue firearms. "There's a lot more to police training than most people imagine," says Rangemaster Rick Furr of the Scottsdale, Ariz., Police Department (SPD). "The public doesn't think about it very much, unless something goes wrong. That's why training is so important."

By Barrett Tillman
Photos By Nyle Leatham



Motorcycle officers face unique challenges to shooting, not the least of which is balancing 600 lbs. of steel and rubber between their legs while they fire.



Officers are taught to use their bikes for cover. Memo to Kawasaki: how about Kevlar cowlings?



An innovative instructor, Furr convinced his chief to combine semiannual motorcycle qualification with firearms training. Partly because the department's track is within yards of SPD's world-class indoor shooting range, it was an easy "sale."

In fact, Chief Douglas L. Bartosh obliged by participating himself. In 1995, Scottsdale opened its indoor range, which combines conventional shooting lanes for standard qualifications with a tactical simulator permitting live-fire training. All shooting is done with frangible ammo fired from each officer's issue Glock .40 S&W pistol. Huge suction fans dispose of smoke fumes at the rate of 50,000 cubic-feet per minute.

Previously, firearms training for "motor" officers was little more than dismounting and moving to cover. However, Furr regarded that practice as potentially counterproductive. "Drop your bike and move to cover is no big deal in training; it might be the right decision in some conditions, but it might get you killed, too. If we run, we get shot in the back every single time."

Instead, Furr tells the motorcycle officers, "We want you to learn to *use* the vehicle."

Glock Around The Clock

With six Kawasaki choppers on the 5-yard line, Furr activates turning targets

for the drivers to engage from a variety of positions. “You may not have time to get off the bike,” he explains, “so you need to be able to shoot while straddling the seat.”

Toward that end, the officers maneuvered their bikes “around the clock,” with the front wheel variously positioned at 2, 6, 9, 11 and 12 o’clock relative to the target. From a sitting position astride the bike, drawing the pistol poses a potential hazard to the shooter.

Furr demonstrated the preferred method of presentation, sweeping outward from the top of the holster with the muzzle down before bringing the sights on target. In the event of an accidental discharge, the round should go into the ground rather than the officer’s leg. It’s in keeping with SPD’s constant emphasis on muzzle awareness and safe gunhandling.

For example, Furr’s standard command after a firing string is “Trigger finger straight! Holster!” Multiple strings are fired: two-handed, strong hand and support hand, usually followed by tactical reloads.

Shooting to the side and rear poses no special problem, but the forward quadrant immediately presents the motor officer with an obstacle— his windshield. “It does you no good to shoot a hole in your



Below: Firing on an indoor range, motorcycle officers learn how to engage threats from their six.





Given the choice of shooting two-handed or one (below), officers shoot while straddling their bikes. Given a better choice (above) officers would shoot from behind the cover of their bikes.

windscreen,” says Furr. “So you can lean out to one side or the other, clearing the windscreen with your muzzle.”

Every shooting string is preceded by a verbal command, usually “Police! Don’t move!” In fact, Furr has taught his awesomely intelligent African Gray parrot the same phrase, much to the amazement, amusement and occasional discomfiture of visitors.

Moving Cover

When time and conditions permit, dismounting and using the bike as cover makes a lot of sense. Scottsdale uses the Kawasaki Police 1000, a 550 lb. bike that costs the taxpayers almost \$20,000 when fully equipped. “Harleys are faster on the highway,” says Officer Dan Jensen. “But our bikes accelerate better, which is more important in town.”

Regardless of the cost, the Police 1000s afford good cover in a pinch. Having more than a quarter ton of steel, aluminum and rubber between an officer and a criminal is definitely a benefit. “These bikes can stop rifle fire,” Furr explains. “So pistol bullets are no problem.”

In fighting dismounted, Furr advocates staying back two or three feet from the bike. “You need to back off so you have space to maneuver. If you’re too close, more of your head becomes visible, too.”

Motor officers are encouraged to find what works best for them individually. Some trainers advocate speed kneeling—





Motorcycle officers from the Scottsdale (Ariz.) Police Department receive some of the finest firearms training in the country from a savvy and realistic team of instructors.

in some quarters called “the Lewinsky”—with both knees on the ground for fast assumption of a low-profile position. Others prefer conventional kneeling, which permits faster movement, both laterally and forward or backward.

Whatever position is used behind the bike, Furr emphasizes the need for constant muzzle awareness. “Just because your sights are on target doesn’t mean your muzzle is clear,” he says, demonstrating with his Glock aligned on the handlebars.

To emphasize the danger, Furr notes that a department with 200 cycle officers recently had 18 bikes shot during training, a rate of 9 percent.

Ready On The Right

The motor officers practice both left and right dismounts, though one officer estimates that 98 percent of Scottsdale’s cycle drivers mount and dismount equestrian style, from the left. However, nearby Phoenix now requires a right-hand dismount to avoid oncoming traffic.

Furr grins, “You cannot believe how big a deal it is to get 200 guys to change what they’ve been doing for 20 or 30

years.” Scottsdale still leaves the decision to the driver. Being cops as well as motorcyclists, some of the more enthusiastic officers wondered about shooting while driving.

“I wouldn’t try to play cavalry—shooting from a moving cycle— unless I absolutely had to,” says Furr. “That’s not to say you should never-ever do it, but we can’t train for it. And it’s risky.”

Furr has found that many of the techniques for motorcycle officers also apply to the bicycle patrol. Fast dismounts, shooting while mounted at various positions on the clock, one- and two-handed, all apply.

Though some riders tend to sneer at “bikes without motors,” the bicycle officers face a serious challenge. Furr’s wife Barbara rode as a bicycle patrol officer for two years and says, “I’d like to see some of these macho guys lift their 500 lb. cycle over a fence like we do!”

Whatever the vehicle, Lt. Burl Haenel, Scottsdale’s traffic section commander, summarizes the need for diversified training. “There’s no such thing as a routine traffic stop,” he says. The experience

gained in shooting from and around their Kawasakis prepares Scottsdale’s officers for what could become the most unroutine stop of their careers.



MINI-GLOCKS

Expert tips on accessorizing and shooting the ultra-compact Glock pistols!

By Massad Ayoob
Photos By Ichiro Nagata

The low slide mass and fast cycle time of the mini-Glocks necessitate a double-captive recoil spring assembly.



Following the passage of the Crime Law and its unintended consequence of creating a demand for small-capacity handguns, Glock injected a massive dose of epinephrine into a flagging handgun market with the introduction of their tiniest pistols yet, the so-called mini-Glock.

The Austrian pioneer of polymer, Glock chopped and channeled their 9mm and .40 S&W models to create

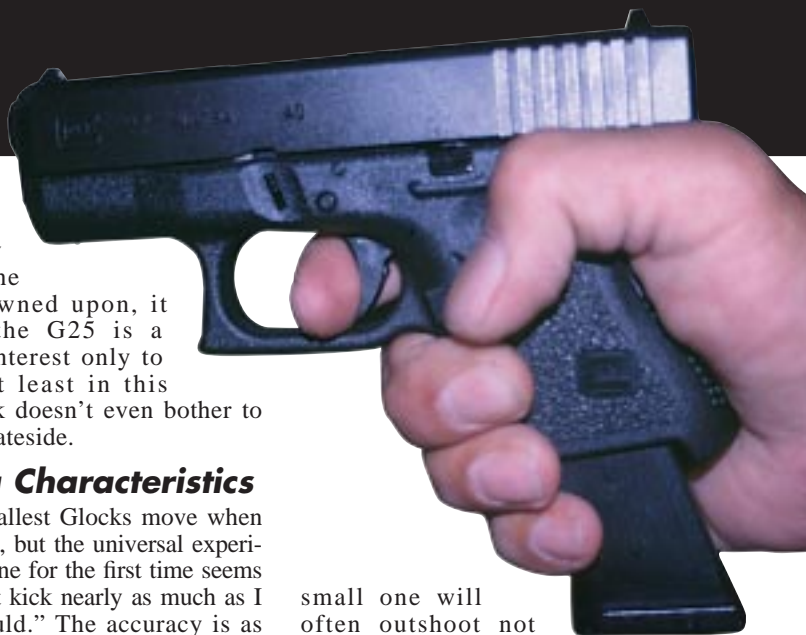
a much more concealable pair of pistols.

The Glock 26 would take 10 Parabellum cartridges in its stubby magazine and an 11th in its chamber, while the Glock 27 held 9+1 of what Jeff Cooper calls the “10mm Short.” Before long would come a third pistol of identical dimensions and the same capacity as the G27—the G33, chambered for the increasingly popular .357 SIG round.

Meanwhile, the police sector was completing its switch from the traditional service revolver to the semiautomatic duty pistol, and Glock had won the lion’s share of the bids. To cops so armed, a smaller version of their duty weapons made enormous sense for plainclothes and backup wear, especially since the little



A G26, left, and a G27 from the business end reveal the radiused nose profiles of the slides



guns would accept the magazines of the larger models.

Mini-Glocks Grow

Some called them “baby-Glocks,” but the term I prefer is “mini-Glocks.” Soon the larger-frame guns—the 10mm G20 and the .45 ACP G21—were also scaled down, resulting in the G29 and G30. Then came the slimmed-down, 7-shot .45—the G36.

Here came the first split in the Glock lovers’ ranks. Some welcomed these new big bores as members of the mini-Glock family, while the purists decried the big frames as, well, big frames. No one would dispute that these new boomers were as easy to carry on the hip as compacts like the G19, G23 and G32, but they weren’t really “pocket” guns like the original small-frame models and therefore weren’t true mini-Glocks.

I tend to side with the latter school. With that said, I have a G29, a G30 and a G36; I like them all, particularly the 30. I just don’t carry them in pocket or ankle holsters as I do my G26 and G27.

There is also a G25, a mini-Glock chambered for .380 ACP. Built for

countries where military rounds like the 9mm are frowned upon, it seems that the G25 is a curiosity of interest only to collectors, at least in this country; Glock doesn’t even bother to import them stateside.

Shooting Characteristics

Yes, the smallest Glocks move when you shoot them, but the universal experience of firing one for the first time seems to be, “It didn’t kick nearly as much as I thought it would.” The accuracy is as pleasantly surprising as the controllability.

The mini-Glock has a Seecamp-inspired, double-captive recoil spring. It is remarkably efficient, and it seems to play a big part in reducing felt “kick” and muzzle jump. It also helps assure that the bullet will be out of the barrel before the gun begins to unlock. Custom gunsmiths like those at the S&W Performance Center have to charge big bucks to alter pistols to work this way, thus enhancing their accuracy; it comes for free with a mini-Glock. This is why the

small one will often outshoot not only its big brother but its still bigger brother, notwithstanding its shorter sight radius and extremely shrunken grip.

Pick Of the Litter

Two of the three mini-Glocks are among the company’s top 10 best-sellers. According to industry insiders, four of Glock’s top 10 selling models are mini-Glocks with the G27 the most popular of the subcompacts.

The newest mini-Glock, the G33 in



A pair of mini-Glocks in a Galco double-shoulder rig makes for twin fistfuls of serious.

.357 SIG, isn't even on the radar screen for the Austrian firm's best-sellers. However, it's the logical backup or off-duty choice for someone using a full size G31 or compact G32 as a primary gun.

One of the best self-defense instructors in the business, John Farnam, is said to have recently gone to the compact Glock 32, appreciating the power and accuracy of its .357 SIG round. John is an advocate of backup guns. I sense a mini-Glock .357 SIG in his future.

The G26 was initially the most popular of the mini-Glocks, by a five to 10 percent margin over the G27. This was, I think, for two reasons. One was the public's initial belief that a gun this small had to kick like hell, so they wanted the one that would kick the least. The other was that the 9mm was much better established than the .40 at that time in the larger size guns, and buyers—especially cops—wanted a small pistol that would take the same mags and ammo as their bigger one.

The G26 remains the favorite of many experts. It is hugely popular as a backup and off-duty gun among cops who go to work with bigger Glock 9mms: NYPD, New York State Police, and Washington DC Metro Police come to mind.

The G27 soon pulled even in sales with its smaller caliber sibling, stayed in that position for a couple of years, and for some time now has been the best-selling mini-Glock by a margin of 15 to 20 percent. The serious shooters discovered that they could indeed handle its recoil. And they didn't mind accepting a one-round capacity reduction in return for more potent per-shot "stopping power."

The .40 S&W cartridge was coming to the forefront in law enforcement, and cops who wore Glock 22s or 23s to work saw the magazine interchangeability as a virtual mandate for the G27 in the same caliber. This is the mini-Glock now carried by legendary gunfighter Jim Cirillo, national police IPSC champ Armando Valdez, and numerous others.

Bench Testing

I had my G27 and four different .40 S&W loads with me recently on the range of the Sandburg Gun Ranch in Rochester, Ind. The pistol was box-stock except for Trijicon night sights and NY-1 trigger with a pull weight of just under 8 lbs.

Detective Dennis Reichard and I sat down with the sandbags at the 25-yard line. Each five-shot group was measured twice, once overall and once for best three shots. The whole group tells the shooter what he can do with the gun from a solid brace in calm conditions. The "best three" measurement factors out human error to a degree I've found





Decisions, decisions—do you prefer 10+1 rounds of 9mm or 9+1 rounds of .40 S&W in otherwise identical guns? Those are your choices with the G26 and G27.



With less than 2" of rifled barrel, the mini-Glocks give up about 100 fps to 150 fps in velocity to their full-size counterparts.



The polymer frame contains a good deal of steel, giving the lie to columnist Jack Anderson's assertion that the Glock is an undetectable plastic "terrorist pistol."

comes very close to a five-shot group from a machine rest.

There are several things to note from the results. First, these guns definitely shoot some loads better than others. Second, the "best three of five" groups are indicative of extraordinary accuracy potential. Third, the .357 SIG cartridge seems to be more inherently accurate than the .40 S&W round from which it was necked down.

I've noticed that accuracy improvement between the two calibers in SIG's pistols and in the S&W Sigma, and wasn't surprised to find the same true in the Glock brand.

Says Glock's Chris Edwards, "You'll be amazed when you see what the G33 can do on steel

plates at 100 yards."

Most of all, though, note the wide disparity between the measurement that minimizes human error and the one that doesn't. The difference graphically shows that these guns are not easy to shoot, even for someone who is familiar with them.

The trick is finding techniques of shooting that harness the inherent accuracy of the mini-Glock and let us shoot it straight, at speed.

Master Tips

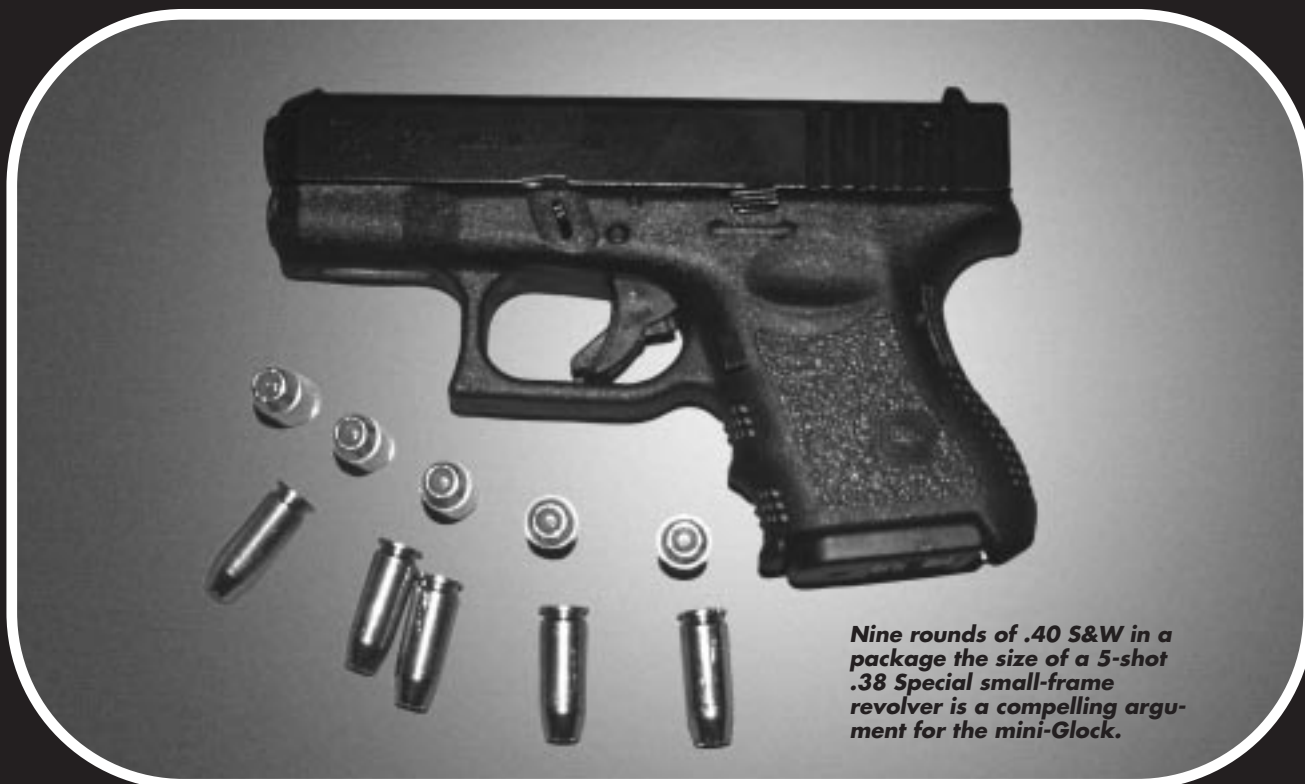
The mini-Glock is desirable because it is little, comparable in most dimensions to a small-frame, .38 snubnose revolver, although squarer at all ends. It is desirable because it is light. The gun is in the weight range of the all steel S&W Chief Special, Taurus Model 85, or the old Colt Detective Special. It also has a longer sight radius than the .38 snubs, 5.4" compared to about 3.85".

Firepower? Mini-Glocks rule. You'll need a six-shot Detective Special and a five-shot Chiefs Special to equal the 11 rounds a Glock G26 carries. The 26's 9mm ammo has more energy, yet less recoil.

Baby magnums? Two five-shot .357 Magnums equal the 9+1 rounds in a Glock G33, but the revolver will kick



Glock operating controls are easy to access: the slide release, take-down latch, trigger safety and magazine release are all ergonomically positioned.



Nine rounds of .40 S&W in a package the size of a 5-shot .38 Special small-frame revolver is a compelling argument for the mini-Glock.

much more than the .357 SIG autoloader. The Glock's 3.5" barrel will run some 125 gr. ".357 Auto" loads to higher velocity and therefore higher energy than will be generated by any factory 125 gr. magnum round in a 2.0" to 2.5" revolver barrel.

Big-bores? A buddy of mine has a weak spot for the Model 296, S&W's titanium-framed .44 Special. He loads it with 165 gr. Cor-Bon rounds, which chronograph an average 1,074 fps from his snubby. Winchester's .40 S&W 155 gr. Silvertip will go faster than that out of my G127, and a full power 165 gr. .40 just a little slower. The G27 has 10 of those comparable rounds, twice what the Smith revolver holds, and delivers more practical accuracy with dramatically less recoil.

Yes, the mini-Glock is easier to shoot than a small revolver, particularly if the small revolver is a high-powered one. However, the mini-Glock still isn't the easiest gun to shoot. I have to work to shoot a perfect qualification score with one. But my average score for the last two years with the G27 has been a perfect 300 out of 300 on the quals. I use the G27 for backup on duty and often as a discreet vacation companion. Here's how you can do the same.

Software Elements

First, you want a high-hand grip. The upper edge of your middle finger should be in firm contact with the bottom surface of the trigger guard. The web of your hand should be pushing firmly up into the

tang of the grip-frame. I like to see a little ripple of flesh there to guarantee I've got it right.

Many things go bad with too low a hold. A straight back pull of the trigger will jerk the muzzle down. The muzzle is now so high over the wrist axis that the gun jerks upward like a whipsaw with every shot. The hand will move so much that the recoil impetus, which should be operating the slide, will now dissipate through the moving frame, resulting in a failure-to-go-into battery or perhaps a stovepipe. A high-hand grasp cures all these bad things and gives you much better control.

Second, you want to grip hard. I'm talking a maximum force, crush-grip. A lighter grasp can work on a gun that kicks less and has more to hang onto. As the mini-Glock comes from the box, there's only room for two fingers on the grip

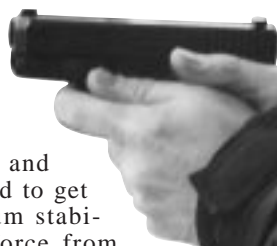
frame, and you need to get maximum stabilizing force from what you have to work with.

Third, you might want to try shooting with your thumb curled down. This strengthens

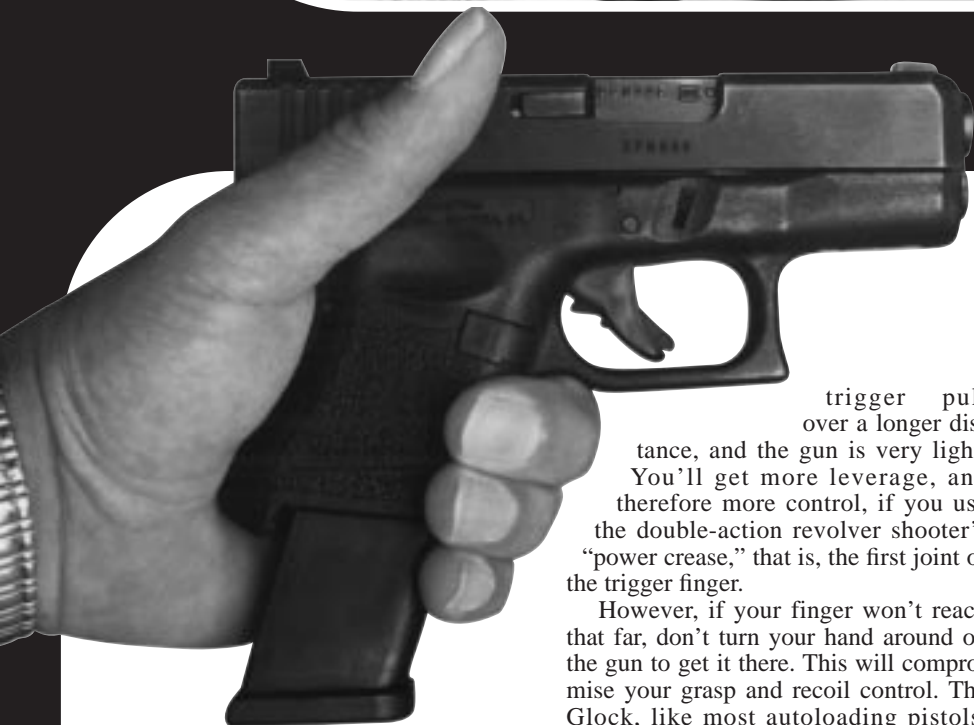
your grasp dramatically. Some people just don't like this technique, but for me and a lot of those I've trained, this enhances control of the mini-Glock.

In two-hand fire, the support hand's thumb curls down over that of the firing hand, both thumbs bent 90 degrees at the median joint with the tip of the thumbs pointing to the ground. It works best for me with the support hand's thumbprint contacting the firing hand's thumbnail. The index finger of the support hand is under the trigger guard; wrapping it around the front doesn't work well for most people.

Fourth, when shooting with the stubby magazines that come with the gun, you want to curl your little finger tightly under the butt of the mini-Glock. The pinkie has to go somewhere. By flexing it tightly closed, you help to sympathetically strengthen your whole hand's grasp on the



Accuracy from the mini-Glock can be outstanding, but the short sight radius requires a good deal of concentration. Below, a full-size Glock magazine works perfectly in a mini-Glock; Ayooob recommends a full-size mag as your secondary spare.



gun. It's not as strong a hold as you'd have on a bigger Glock, or a baby one with a Pearce Grip Extender, but the tight curl gives me about 90 percent of the control I have with the larger guns or extended magazines.

Fifth, if your finger is long enough, you'll get better control if you contact the trigger with the distal joint of your index finger. Many shooters have lost sight of the fact that the target shooter's technique of pulling the trigger with the tip or the pad of the finger has historically presumed a target shooter's gun.

A target pistol is likely to be relatively heavy and have a very light pull with a crisp, clean break. The Glock is a fighting pistol with a firmer

trigger pull over a longer distance, and the gun is very light. You'll get more leverage, and therefore more control, if you use the double-action revolver shooter's "power crease," that is, the first joint of the trigger finger.

However, if your finger won't reach that far, don't turn your hand around on the gun to get it there. This will compromise your grasp and recoil control. The Glock, like most autoloading pistols, can't be counted on to function reliably when held weakly.

Sixth, let your middle finger pull the gun straight back into your palm as you take your grasp. In most hands, this pulls the heel of the mini-Glock's butt right back into the natural hollow of the palm. This creates a solid locking point that helps you control both trigger stroke and recoil.

Magazines & Reloading

A few words on magazines and reloading. One advantage to the mini-Glock is that it takes the bigger mags of your compact or larger models in the same caliber. The one exception to this rule is with the 10mm versions. The big Glock 20 magazine is not reliable in the

little Glock 29 reduced size 10mm.

I carry full-length mags as spares for all my other mini-Glocks. Even a 10-round "Clinton mag" will reload faster and more positively than a little one—you have more to hang on to—and with a lower floorplate will be less likely to pinch your finger. The most obvious advantage of a high capacity spare magazine speaks for itself.

Finally, a pre-ban or law enforcement hi-cap magazine when loaded all the way up seats easily and positively in the mini-Glock. A 10-rounder loaded all the way up often won't because there isn't enough flex in the cartridge stack. The same is true of the mini-Glock's own short magazines on a reload. You have to really slap them in.

If I carried the shortest mags or Clinton mags for spares, I'd download by one to guarantee positive seating during a high stress speed reload.

With the mini-Glocks—as with any other short-gripped auto—you can get a cut or a nasty blood blister if the bottom edge of the little magazine catches the flesh of the gun hand between itself and the magazine well. You'll have to learn to do that "tea with the queen" gesture which real men dread—extending the pinkie finger to get it out of the way.

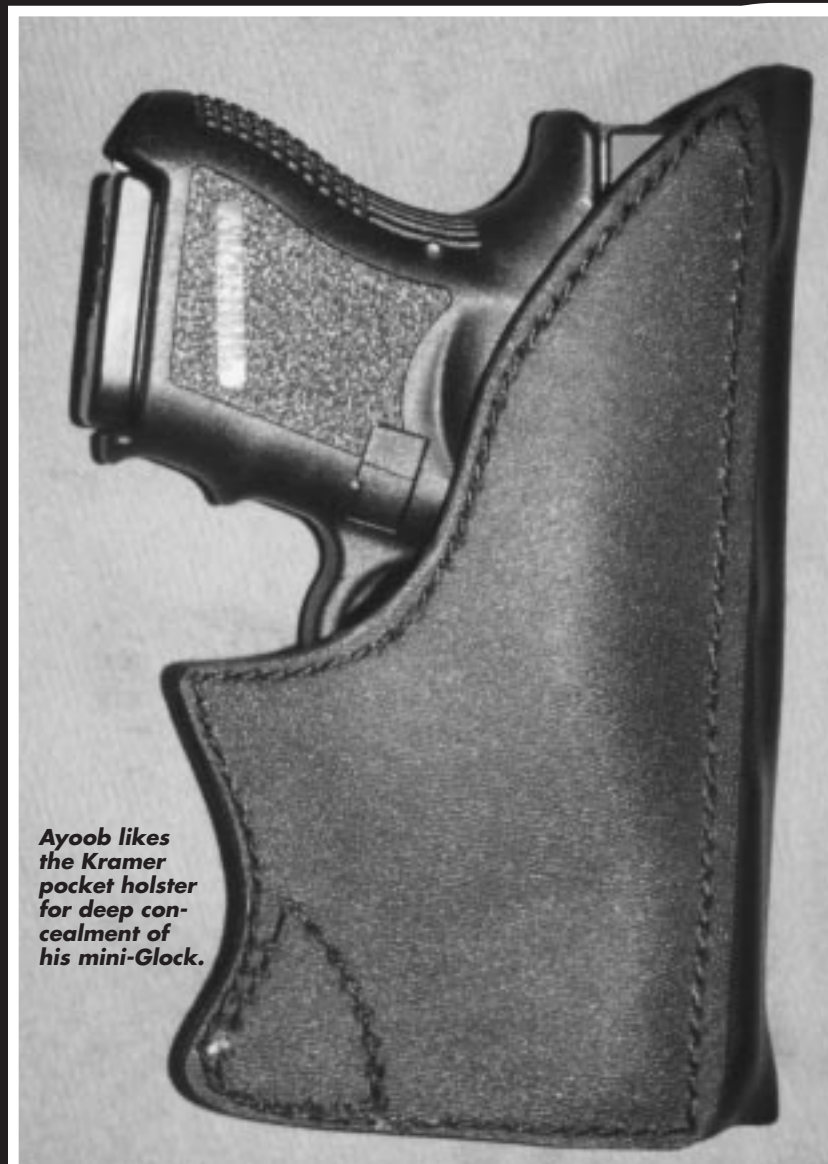
Many Glock shooters find that even their "drop free" magazines don't in fact drop free. This is usually their fault, not the gun's. When you press in from the left on any Glock's magazine release button, the opposite portion of that part protrudes on the other side. If the right-



Ayoob's custom Glock (top) features a Caspian Arms bar stock slide, Bo-Mar sights and double cocking serrations.



A mini-Glock (center) compares favorably in a size battle with other laudable carry guns: a pair of NAA .380s on the flanks, a Kahr to the left and a Smith Model 342 Airlite Ti on the right.



Ayoob likes the Kramer pocket holster for deep concealment of his mini-Glock.

handed shooter's middle finger is still firmly wrapped around the frame, it's probably blocking that part's movement.

Lefties can find their thumb doing the same thing. Southpaws need to lift their thumb a little as their index finger hits the mag release. Righties need to extend their "remember Mas Ayoob" finger at the same time their right thumb is pressing the mag release button. This should cure the problem.

Hardware Elements

I've never much liked Glock's standard plastic sights, particularly the adjustable ones. They just don't give you a good sight picture, and they're not as sturdy as they could be. Night sights are better, and Trijicon or TruDot night sights can be ordered on your Glock from the factory, or retrofitted by the factory or a local armorer or gunsmith.

In aftermarket Glock sights, the fixed Heinie unit is my personal favorite. I don't see too many folks putting aftermarket adjustable sights on mini-Glocks, but if you're so inclined, you won't go wrong with the MMC unit, also available with tritium inserts for night shooting.

Remember, the shorter the sight radius, the more you'll benefit from big, professionally designed sights that give you a sight picture that is stark and clear.

Trigger Talk

Let's talk triggers. I would recommend avoiding the short-cut of installing a 3.5 lb. connector. This is a lighter pull than you want on a defensive handgun. Most gun experts will testify in court that so light a pull is downright dangerous and conducive to accidental dis-

MOST POPULAR SELLING GLOCK MODELS

	Model	Frame	Category	Caliber
1	Glock 22	standard frame	full size	.40 S&W
2	Glock 23	short frame	compact	.40 S&W
3	Glock 17	standard frame	full size	9mm
4	Glock 27	mini frame	subcompact	.40 S&W
5	Glock 19	short frame	compact	9mm
6	Glock 21	large frame	full size	.45 ACP
7	Glock 26	mini frame	subcompact	9mm
8	Glock 36	mini frame	"slimmed compact"	.45 ACP
9	Glock 30	mini frame	compact	.45 ACP
10	Glock 35	standard frame	semi-longslide	.40 S&W

charges. A review of past factory literature from Glock can be seen to support that view.

The standard factory trigger system for the mini-Glock, unless ordered otherwise, has a nominal 5 lb. pull and utilizes the standard S-shaped trigger spring. Many law enforcement agencies, from Illinois State Police to the FBI, have determined this to be adequately safe. It is not hard to control.

Personally, after working with everything out there, I've settled on the New York trigger, specifically the module Glock calls the NY-1, in conjunction with the standard 5 lb. connector. This brings the total pull weight up to about 8 lbs. That's still very manageable. It gives me a cleaner, crisper trigger break instead of that irritating "sproing" at the end of the pull with the standard trigger spring.

The NY-1 module is also, in my experience, much more reliable and breakage-resistant than the standard spring that it replaces. The presumed safety feature of the New York trigger is that it gives a firm resistance to the finger from the beginning of the pull. This is intended to reduce the likelihood of unintentional discharges under stress.

I don't care for the NY-2 module, known colloquially as the "New York Plus," which is mandated by NYPD. This brings the pull up to roughly 12 lbs. I don't think it's particularly safer than the NY-1, and in terms of controllability, it passes the point of diminishing returns.

I don't much care for the "Miami trigger," either. This is an 8 lb. connector with a standard spring. Though it adds up to the same 8 lbs. as an NY-1, it feels heavier to me and seems to require more

force at the end of the pull. It lacks the added reliability, clean break and up-front resistance to an unintentional pull of the NY-1 and 5 lb. connector combination.

Frame Job

Frame modification can make a big difference. Robbie Barrkman at Robar came up with the concept of filling the hollow backstrap of the Glock with epoxy, then grinding the whole thing down, bringing the web of the shooting hand forward. This results in absolutely perfect trigger reach for people with short fingers, or those of us who prefer the distal joint trigger finger placement. Custom Arms Co. in Pennsylvania also does this modification. Small-handed shooters have found this customization to be a godsend.

Somewhere between one in 50 and one in 100 of my Glock-shooting students find that the slide bites their hand. This only happens to folks with really big paws. Robar comes to the rescue again, with a reshaped grip tang that flares out protectively over the web of the hand like a beavertail on a 1911.

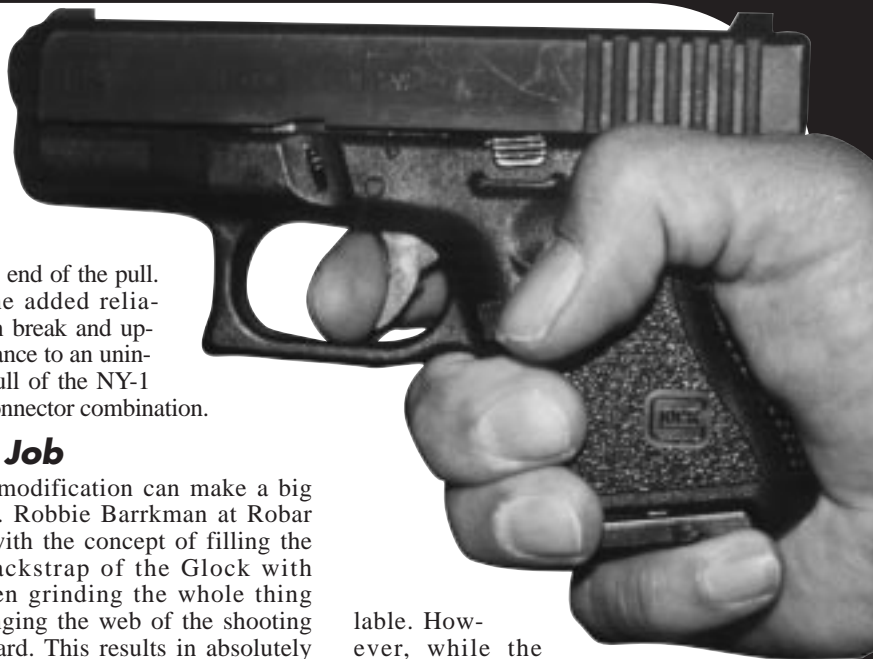
Many who swear by this modification will tell you it's not only more comfortable this way, but also it's more control-

lable. However, while the "grip slimming" will reduce bulging in concealed carry, the flared grip tang extends the gun's profile and may very slightly compromise concealment.

Extension Course

A grip extension improves feel and enhances control somewhat. The Pearce grip extender is the best I've tried. This also extends the gun's profile very slightly. I notice that factor in the places where I usually pack a mini-Glock— an Alessi ankle holster, Sam Brustein's excellent boot holster made by Gould & Goodrich, or a Kramer pocket holster.

For that reason, I generally load



For reasons better left between Ayoob and his therapist, he decided to put a longer barrel in a mini-Glock. Parts from larger Glocks do interchange with the mini-Glock.

up with the flush bottom mag that comes from the gun's maker. However, for hip holster wear or carry in a horizontal shoulder holster, the Pearce grip extender has all upside and no downside. Pearce will sell you a unit that increases the capacity of your G33 or G27 magazine up to a full 10, the maximum limit the law allows, giving you 11 rounds fully loaded like with the 9mm G26. More upside.

However, take care not to install it on your G26 magazine; you'll now have manufactured an illegal, high-capacity magazine, a federal felony thanks to the Crime Law. This is why Pearce offers extenders that don't increase capacity: G26 owners take note.

Wrap-Around Grips

Grip-traction improvement takes at least three forms. Hogue, Pachmayr and Uncle Mike's offer rubbery grip sleeves. Those partial to the polymer pistol call them "Glock socks." Folks either love them or hate them.

If you have one of those deep-dished palms that doesn't make contact with the flat side of the factory Glock grip silhouette, you'll probably love them. They tend to fill that palm and just feel better. However, you must take care that they don't slip down far enough to block insertion of a fresh magazine. The tendency to do that is why some folks hate them.

Skateboard-type tape is available for those flat Glock sides, and they have their adherents, no pun intended. I find that they slow my access of the gun in a fast draw just the tiniest bit. However, particularly on these smallest Glocks, a number of shooters tell me that these grip panel kits made a lot of positive difference for them. Try one. What the hell—they're cheap, and if you don't like them, you can throw them away.

Finally, Barrkman can roughen up

the grip shape to give you more traction. It's a permanent fix, but an effective one, and something to strongly consider if you find your mini-Glock shifting in your hand.

Feeding The Mini-Glock

A lot to controlling the mini-Glock is recoil management, and the shortcut to recoil management has always been a less powerful round that kicks less. If you have to deal with multiple targets, recoil recovery can be the difference between life and death.

Let's assume your first shot has center-punched your first armed assailant and dropped him, and now you've tracked to the second. A good, expanding 9mm hollowpoint from your G26 that goes heart-to-spine will probably solve your immediate problem.

A .357 SIG or .40 S&W bullet from your more powerful mini-Glock that only hits the lung, or arrives too late because you took too long to pull the gun down out of recoil, probably won't.

Any porting-type muzzle jump reduction system will blast hot gases and debris right up toward your eyes if you have to fire from a close-in "protected gun" position, disorienting you at best and blinding you at worst. Anything that extends the length of the gun compromises the mini-Glock's *raison d'être*.

There aren't any light loads for the .357 SIG. I find its recoil manageable, though it has a pretty sharp sound signature. I prefer +P or +P+ loads—115 gr. JHPs in the 1,250 to 1,350 fps range—in my 9mm carry guns. In the G26, the recoil is no more than a standard .40 load in a G27.

However, if that's too much for the shooter you're coaching, dropping to a standard pressure 115 gr. JHP like the street-proven Federal 9BP will get the Glock 26 owner through the night.

The fast stepping .40 loads like the 155 gr. at 1,200 fps or the 135 gr. at 1,250 to 1,325 fps seem to do the most tissue damage, and I prefer them for that reason as defensive loads in the G27, but they do have a little more snap than standard 180 gr. subsonic rounds.

You can get light loads for the .40, like the subsonic 165 gr. Hydra-Shok that Federal developed for the FBI or the same company's Personal Defense load, a 135 gr. Hydra-Shok running at somewhere under 1,100 fps. Both will probably open up, but you won't get the corollary tissue damage along the permanent wound track that the faster 135 gr. loads will deliver. There's no free lunch.

Bottom Line

The mini-Glocks have been enthusiastically accepted by both the law enforcement community and the armed citizens in the United States. They are extremely reliable, and survive poor maintenance unusually well. They are accurate. They are surprisingly shootable.

If you haven't yet tried one, you owe yourself the experience. Whether your choice is the soft-kicking 9mm, the versatile and powerful .40, or the accurate, potent, and flat-shooting .357, the mini-Glock is like a kitten with very sharp claws and a pleasant personality—it has a way of winning you over, but you still want to handle it with care.





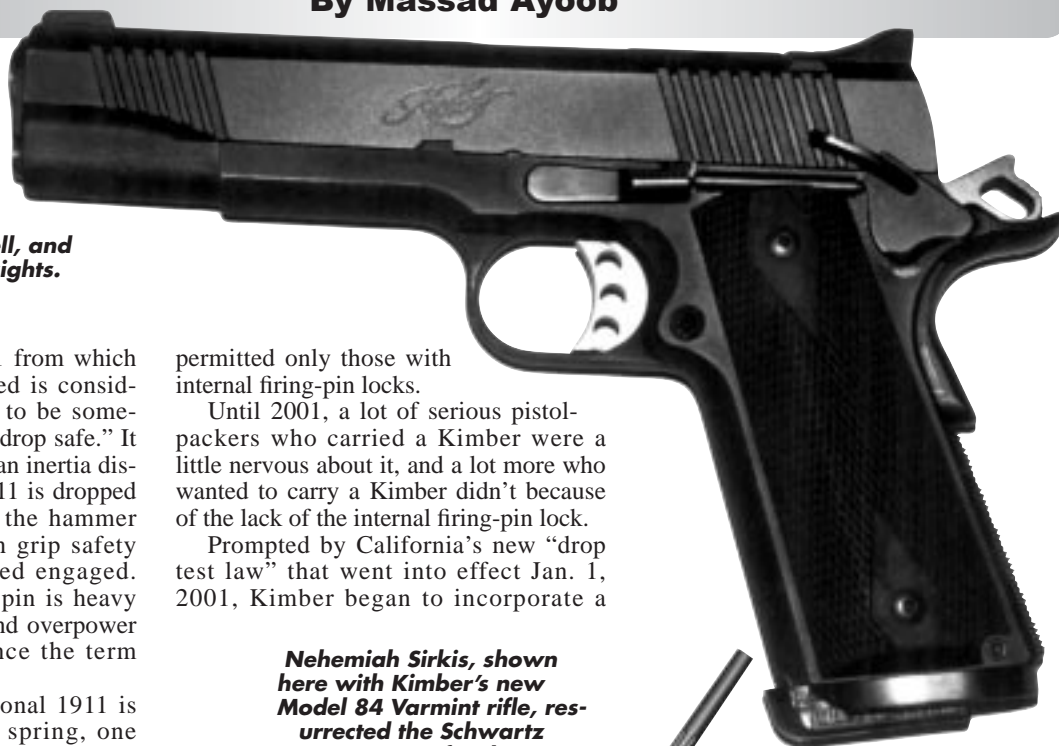
An old piece of inner tube serves just as well as one of the name-brand "Glock socks" that are on the market. The idea is to add a bit more purchase to the stubby grip.

KIMBER SERIES II

A new firing-pin safety renders the Kimber 1911 "drop safe."

By Massad Ayooob

Author's test gun: Kimber Custom II in matte blue, with ambi safety, extended mag well, and Meprolight night sights.



The original Colt 1911 from which the Kimber was based is considered by gun experts to be somewhere on the short side of "drop safe." It is theoretically possible for an inertia discharge to take place if a 1911 is dropped or struck sharply, even if the hammer remained cocked and both grip safety and thumb safety remained engaged. This is because the firing pin is heavy enough to move by itself and overpower the firing-pin spring, hence the term "inertia discharge."

In theory, if a conventional 1911 is factory-new with a fresh spring, one should have to drop the gun onto solid concrete from a height of 10 feet or so for an accidental discharge to occur. However, the more you shoot your pistol, live or dry, the weaker that spring becomes.

Some 1911 fans change the firing-pin spring every 5,000 rounds. Most people don't change it once during their lifetime with the gun. This creates the situation where the gun can discharge when dropped on a hard surface from waist level, as in slipping out of a holster.

Colt experimented with passive safety devices that locked the firing pin internally as early as 1938 with a design that has come to be known as the "Schwartz patent." A more economical design was finalized in the late 1970s and became known as the Series 80 in the early 1980s when it was introduced.

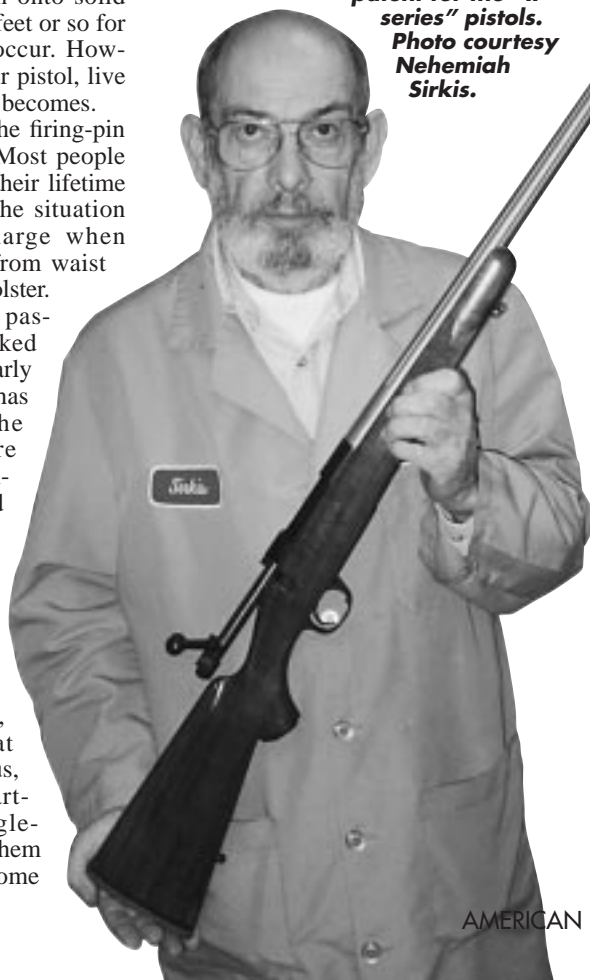
This situation was well-known to police firearms instructors. Many could accept an officer carrying a cocked-and-locked weapon, but didn't care for one that could go off if dropped. Thus, for many years some departments wouldn't allow single-actions at all, some allowed them at officers' discretion, and some

permitted only those with internal firing-pin locks.

Until 2001, a lot of serious pistol-packers who carried a Kimber were a little nervous about it, and a lot more who wanted to carry a Kimber didn't because of the lack of the internal firing-pin lock.

Prompted by California's new "drop test law" that went into effect Jan. 1, 2001, Kimber began to incorporate a

Nehemiah Sirkis, shown here with Kimber's new Model 84 Varmint rifle, resurrected the Schwartz patent for the "II-series" pistols. Photo courtesy Nehemiah Sirkis.



Series II firing-pin lock. By the end of 2001 it will be available in all Kimber 1911 models of all sizes.

Trigger-Free System

The Schwartz system, its patent having long since expired, has been resurrected and modified. Many of the pistols made by Colt had a provision for installing these parts, but as World War II loomed closer, the concept was dropped, never to be resurrected by Colt.

In the Schwartz's concept, as you depress the grip safety, the block moves up and out of the way. Thus, unlike the Series 80 system in which trigger pressure is the force that moves the firing-pin safety, this design does not make the trigger pull heavier.

The heavier pull was one of two gripes pistol enthusiasts have had about the Series 80 design. The second was more serious: If improperly fitted, these parts could align in a way that prevented the gun from firing at all.

There were rare and scattered reports of Colts from certain production runs with roughly finished parts that hung up in this area and prevented firing. Putting the parts in backward after detail-stripping, however, was a more frequent culprit.

About two years ago, Kimber hired



Pen points to Schwartz/Sirkis firing-pin safety interface as it projects from a stainless Kimber's frame...



...and corresponding part on slide. Trigger is bypassed, and pull is unaffected.

Nehemiah Sirkis, an Israeli firearms designer who is well-known in the industry and highly respected. He worked for Uzi for some time and had a lot of influence on the design of the NAA Guardian pistol. It was Sirkis who updated the original Schwartz patent and adapted it to what has become the Kimber Series II.

Kimber assures us that the parts cannot be assembled backward in their adaptation of the Schwartz design, and that it is impossible for sloppy reassembly by the owner to result in an unshootable gun. Moreover, they assure us that the combination of their CAD-CAM machining and MIM (metal injection molded) parts results in components that are so true to specification and burr-free that parts snagging due to roughness is beyond the pale of likelihood.

Model designations will remain the same, with a "II" suffix denoting guns with firing-pin safeties. The Royal becomes the Royal II, and the CDP will become the CDP II, etc. The test gun I received was a close to standard baseline Custom model, now designated Custom II.

Good News, Bad News

I was very pleased with this pistol's accuracy. The gun was 100-percent reliable. I don't consider a failure of the magazine to fall freely to be a "jam." The pistol always went into battery, always fed, extracted, ejected and fed again. That's what counts.

I worry about medium to long triggers inside tight 1911 trigger guards when wearing thick, heavy gloves. But even a pair of big snowmobile gloves did not allow premature discharge. This is why 4 lbs. should be the minimum "street trigger" for a cocked-and-locked handgun.

The composite grip panels and checkered mainspring housing helped keep the gun from shifting significantly inside the heavily gloved hand, even with +P recoil.

I spent a day carrying, and many

rounds shooting, left handed. The pistol is completely "southpaw friendly." And—bottom line—the Kimber Series II safety never failed once to operate as intended.

In firing, you couldn't tell there was a firing-pin safety in there. All you felt was a clean, crisp, "street duty" trigger pull. In one demonstration of transition from shotgun to pistol at between 5 and 7 yards, shooting one-handed and looking over the top of the sights in a StressPoint Index aim, this pistol pumped three 230 gr. ball rounds into an inch in approximately one second.

In casual off-hand Isosceles shooting from 35 yards, it put seven out of eight in a 3" center-head group. And even the eighth, a shooter wobble, was still in 4.5".

But that's nothing you don't already

know if you're familiar with the Kimber product. The good news is, the firing-pin lock seems absolutely foolproof.

The device gives peace of mind: sometimes for those who carry it, sometimes for those who care about the person who carries it—and sometimes for those who have to answer for the person who carries it, such as chiefs of police.

The Kimber Series II is good news for serious students and users of the 1911 pistol. Mr. Schwartz, wherever you are, at long last you have been validated.



For further information, contact Kimber, One Lawton St., Yonkers, NY 10705, or call (800)880-2418, or visit www.kimberamerica.com



With ambi safety, newest Kimber worked well southpaw, and with good "street trigger," was safe in a gloved hand.

Defensive Tactics: Weapon Retention And Weapon

By James Williams

Photos By Ichiro Nagata

Whenver human beings are in conflict at close-quarters, the question of weapon retention and its corollary, weapon take-away, is raised. This is just as true in a self-defense scenario as it is in a full-force SWAT room entry. The need to safeguard your own weapon while at the same time having the ability to disarm an opponent is a vital, potentially life-saving skill. The ancient warrior had the same problem. However, he was afforded a much greater opportunity to train for combat than today's culture permits. Lifestyles in Sparta or Rome or feudal Japan differed dramatically from the cozy world of today. The ancient warrior spent years, indeed an entire lifetime, training for combat. He experienced a continuity of learning, practicing and teaching that is virtually gone from the modern world. And so it is to the past that we turn for the lessons of weapon retention and its companion, weapon extraction, and its most highly skilled practitioners—the Samurai of Japan.

The combative arts of the Samurai provide for some very sophisticated and effective techniques for weapon retention and take-away. My extensive background in these ancient arts is coupled with personal experience and augmented by training through the Surefire Institute which has evolved a series of very effective modern adaptations of these ancient techniques.

Working with Ken Good, the founder and director of the Surefire Institute, over the last seven years has led to a

teachable skill set that provides simple and effective solutions to these problems. Police and military units from all over the world have trained in these techniques through the Institute. Such experience provides a constant opportunity to perfect these skills.

Any technique or operating system that is used in a weapons-based environment must of necessity be functional over the entire spectrum of the force continuum. Unarmed combat and weapon retention techniques cannot rely on a strength-based or adrenaline-based operating system. Brute force cannot then yield to the self-aware, relaxed, sensitive mindset that is essential to success in a fight.

Under duress you will devolve to your least sophisticated operating system. If you are big and strong, this may be beneficial when weapons are not involved. However, if the lead is flying, the big, strong guy becomes an easier target.

The most skilled of the ancient warriors understood this and the highest distillation of their arts manifested a mentally calm, aware, physically relaxed, optimally functional operating system. This operating system fulfills all of the requirements of the force continuum at a superior level of function. It will be necessary to make a time investment to learn these techniques and how they are executed. However, the performance gained will be in greater proportion to the time spent. Let's look, then, at weapon retention and take-away from the eyes of the ancient Samurai.



Take-Away



Control your breath. Uncontrolled breathing, which depletes carbon dioxide, leads to an over-excited mental and physical state that manifests in a rapid heart rate and decreased fine-motor function. Relax. Especially relax your shoulders, neck and back. When your muscles are tense, they are not as effective and your opponent can more easily read your intent.

Learn to use your subconscious mind. This is facilitated by defocused vision, breath control and a relaxed body. Your conscious mind is a slow operating system that can only handle seven variables, plus or minus two. Under duress, this leads to tunnel vision and target fixation.

Teach yourself to become consciously aware of minutiae. Everything from critical distance and skeletal relationship to environmental factors, stress tones in the attacker's voice and tension in his body. This is all vital information that can help you solve the problem that you may face.

Allow your fear without allowing it to control you. The belief that we are controlled by our bodies is an inferior understanding. Here is a superior perspective on fear written by Dave Kalama who puts himself in harm's way on a regular basis: "Fear, in a physical sense, to me means tightening your muscles in preparing yourself for impact or fighting. I still have fear— obviously, because I have a fear of dying— but I'm trying not to let the fear have control over my body."

"Usually when you experience fear is when you need to be as loose as you can possibly be and focused on the task, rather than tightening up. Your movement needs to be as agile and spontaneous as it possibly can be. Fear just exists. That's the way it is. The better you can deal with it the more prepared you are for any situation."

This quotation is from the book "Jaws-Maui" about the monster waves that only a very few are capable of surfing and surviving. The attributes acquired in this environment are a matter of necessity and are identical to those needed in any life-threatening situation.

Our goal is to gain optimum efficiency in problem solving. We define efficiency as the least amount of time, space and energy used to solve a problem. In your training, always look for efficiency. Extensive practice is necessary to become proficient in accomplishing these tasks under duress. You must ask yourself how important your life or those of your loved ones is to you.

Practice in, and a familiarity with, the combative environment lead to proficiency. This proficiency also facilitates a calm, aware state of mind. This calmness is essential to perform at peak efficiency. Adrenaline dump, tunnel vision and time-space distortion all work against optimum performance in skill-related activities.

The trained and experienced warrior displays the attributes of enhanced awareness, calmness in the face of danger, accurate perceptions, emotional control, objectivity, integrity of character and the ability to make rapid, accurate decisions followed by proper and timely action even in situations that would horrify and mentally overwhelm most people. This adds up to an ability to think and act at one's maximum capacity when the danger is greatest. As Flavius Vegetius Renatus said in 378, "The courage of the soldier is heightened by the knowledge of his profession."

Key Elements Of The Combat Mindset

Weapon Take-Away



Step One: Act Docile

Soft Hand Grab

Grasp the weapon with a soft hand. Do not lever the weapon! If you try to muscle it, the chances of being able to control it diminish rapidly. Just move the barrel gently, leaving the rest of the weapon in his grasp. This is easier to feel than describe, however, with practice you will be able to tell the difference and learn to move the weapon with ease. Take some time with a training partner to learn this well.

It will open up a whole new world of function.



Step Three: Use The Gun As A Lever

Rotate The Force

While rotating the bones of his hand, wrist and arm, they are going to come under significant tension to the point of fracture. When practicing with a partner, be careful not to injure him at this point.

Feign Capitulation

Bad situation! Here we use the ancient Samurai strategy of deception. We feign to surrender, by giving an immediate reaction of capitulation. The Hollywood response of belligerence— You talkin' to me, punk?— will probably get you shot.

If the mugger hasn't shot you already, he is looking for capitulation. So give it to him. As you begin to slump and look away dejectedly, let your left hand (in this scenario) drift off enough to have his eye pick it up. Bring your right hand up without lifting your shoulder.

If you do not raise your shoulder to alert him to impending movement, your arm will be blocked from his vision by his own arm, allowing you to make contact before he is aware of your movement. These subtle details of movement and deception are essential for a high probability of success.

Step Two: Gentle Reach



Weapon Take-Away

Step One: Gather The Grabber

Skeletal Control

Use the weapon to control your opponent's skeleton, thereby controlling his center of gravity. It is essential that you "gather" the opponent and control him through this entire movement, which actually takes very little time to accomplish. Using the firearm as an extension of his skeleton is a real advantage in prevailing in the engagement.



Step Two: Remove The Weapon

Disarm

As you continue to rotate, the weapon can be removed from his hand while still controlling his skeleton. At this point the assailant may be thrown, dropped or pinned. You have the ability to deploy your own weapon at this point as well.



Weapon Retention Against A Double-Hand Grab

Step One: Relax Your Grip



Gun Grabber!

The assailant has grabbed your weapon with both hands. Don't tense! Relax your arms and shoulders and exhale, holding your weapon lightly, like a baby would hold your finger. If you tense, you give your adversary the ability to use your strong grasp as a fulcrum to twist the weapon out of your hands.

Go with the pressure in the direction that he is applying it. Release your near hand from the weapon and place it on his face. As he is target-fixated on the weapon, this maneuver is easy to accomplish.

Rather than struggle with him over the weapon, remove his "base" by triangulating him in the direction that he is applying pressure. The key here is to relax your hand.

Use of the eyes is of utmost importance. The eyes are directed and defocused. This allows access of the subconscious mind as well as maximizing information input.

Control your breath. All actions are done with a controlled exhale.

Step Two: Head Tip The Grabber

Unbalance The Grabber

Tipping back the head to unbalance an opponent is not a matter of "pushing" on his forehead. It is a subtle redirecting of energy that at once equally weights his feet while triangulating him to the rear.

The rear triangulation point is determined by taking a line half way between his ankles and the length of his tibia, to the rear. At first this may seem complicated; however, with practice it becomes instinctive. When the proper pressure wave is applied into this triangulation point, the opponent falls.

The hand actually moves in the shape of a question mark. This takes the pressure over his base into the triangulation point. You can direct the point of impact of his body, dropping him either on his head or on his back.



Weapon Retention Against Holstered Gun Grab

Step One: Press Down The Grabber's Hands



Hold The Grab

As your opponent reaches to grasp your holstered weapon, press down on his hands, firmly locking them to the weapon and, ultimately, to your body. If he has a significant forward momentum, allow him to move you backward without losing your balance.

Stay vertical as you move. Keep his spine straight so you don't let him tip you off balance. The important thing is to keep in contact with him. If he pushes you, he will actually unbalance himself, making the technique easier to execute.

Step Two Pivot Around The Grabber

Release And Turn

Release the left side of your body forward, which both circumnavigates the force that he is applying as well as allowing you to enter and "gather" his center of gravity. This is a movement of "rolling around the point of force," allowing him to tip more as you remain balanced and vertical. The locking of the elbow joint affects the balance of his entire body. This unbalancing removes his base and compromises his ability to apply strength with force.



Step Three: Throw The Grabber

Step Through The Attack

After he releases the weapon—due to the pressure on his elbows and his lack of balance—he can be thrown by stepping through with your hips, moving forward and keeping an erect posture. You have free access to your weapon if you find it necessary to deploy lethal force at this point.

This is a small cross section of the techniques that we teach. Practice them with the proper mind/body relationship, and they will serve you well.



Weapon Retention Classes

The author conducts defensive tactics training, including weapon retention and take-away, through Strategic Solutions Inc. Contact James Williams at (760) 753-2060 or www.stratagos.com or james@bugei.com



The new ILS lock prevents the mainspring from compressing, thus locking the gun from firing or even retracting the slide.

Springfield Armory Updates The 1911A1

By Massad Ayoub

*Kimber is not alone in updating the venerable 1911 pistol. Its chief rival, **Springfield Armory**, has introduced at least three meaningful innovations this year.*

Springfield Armory has updated its 1911s with a series of improvements designed to make the timeless pistol "safer." Several of the changes were implemented to meet the "drop test law" passed by California; others were made to forestall child-safe and "smart" gun laws that may well come into being in the next decade.

The first improvement is a titanium firing pin with a special heavy spring. 1911 cognoscenti have long known that a lightweight titanium firing pin, coupled with a heavy firing-pin spring, is another proven route to "drop safing" this pistol without resorting to a separate, passive firing-pin lock.

In 2001, Springfield Armory became the first manufacturer to actually start building 1911s that way. By the middle of the year, this feature will be in all Springfield Armory pistols, across the board.

"The new firing pin is skeletonized somewhat," says Dave Williams, director of Springfield Armory's Custom Shop. "While it will not fit the Colt Series 70 or other such guns, it will fit in any Springfield Armory pistol as a retrofit. The spring is a proprietary design, built for us by Wolff."

How well does it work? "We basically did it for the California drop tests, in which the gun is dropped one meter plus one centimeter onto concrete, and of course it passed those," says Williams proudly. "It also passes the FBI drop test, which is four feet onto concrete."

Williams designed the ILS (internal locking system) over the course of a little more than a year. "It is a gun disablement mechanism, completely contained in the mainspring housing," he explains. "A locking bolt in the piece blocks the mainspring cap from moving, which in essence keeps the hammer from moving, which in turn keeps the slide from moving.

"The hammer has to be in the down position, at which time a key is inserted into the opening in the mainspring housing and turned a quarter turn. This will lock hammer and slide, preventing the pistol from being fired or charged."

The device is totally passive, available in flat or arched housing style, and in no way interferes with the trigger or any other functioning part of the gun. "If you don't want to use it," says Williams, "throw the key away." The ILS should fit any single stack 1911 pistol and is available as an aftermarket unit from Springfield Armory.

Not content to simply improve the safety of their 1911, Springfield Armory has come out with a frame featuring an Integral Light Rail. Almost every manufacturer of polymer-framed handguns has followed HK's lead with the USP in shaping the front of the frame for snap-on flashlights and other accessories. And S&W has attached a similar metal rail to its steel and aluminum-frame "Tactical" pistols.

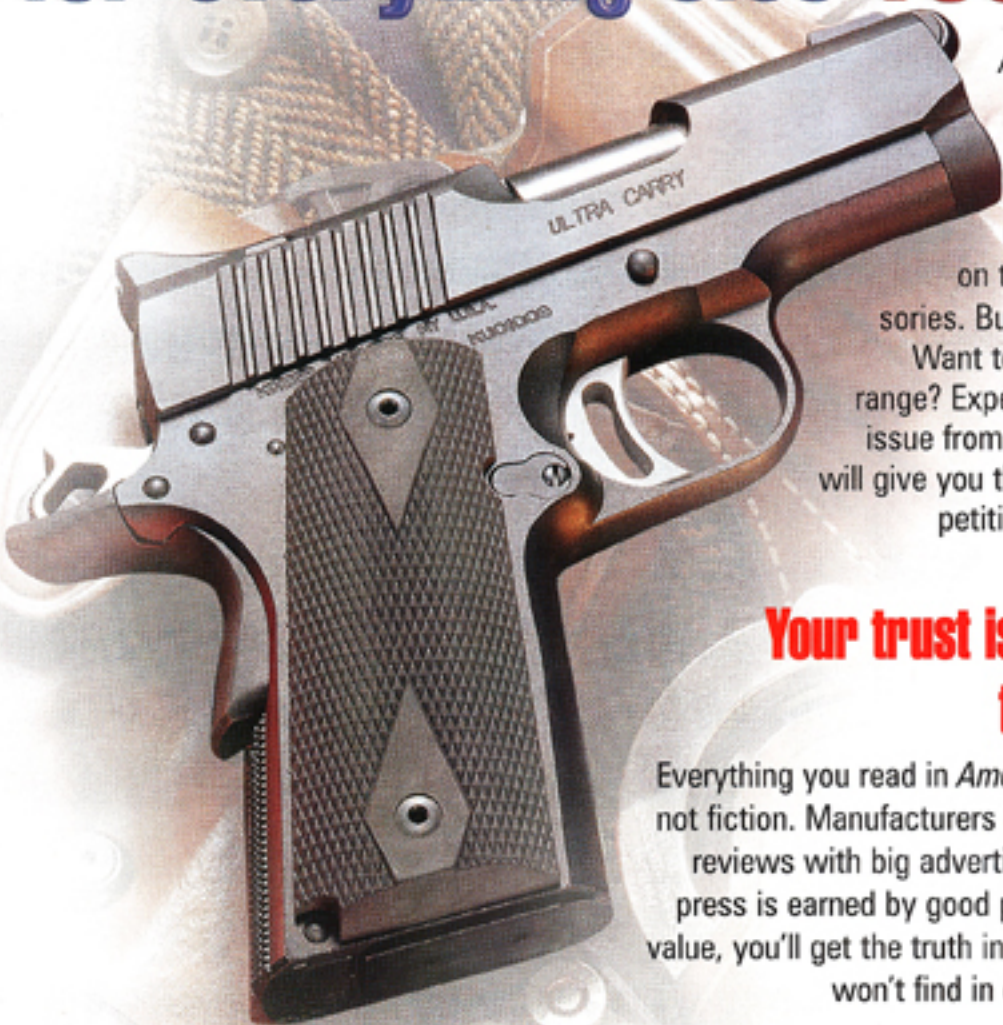
Springfield Armory has now become the first company to manufacture a 1911 with such a device already in place. It can be ordered on the bottom-priced milspec 1911A1, or on the more expensive TRP (Tactical Response Pistol).



Springfield Armory's new TRP Operator features an integral Picatinny rail for mounting a Sure-Fire weapons light.

For further information, contact Springfield Armory, 420 West Main St., Geneseo, IL 61254, or phone (800)680-6866, or visit www.springfieldarmory.com

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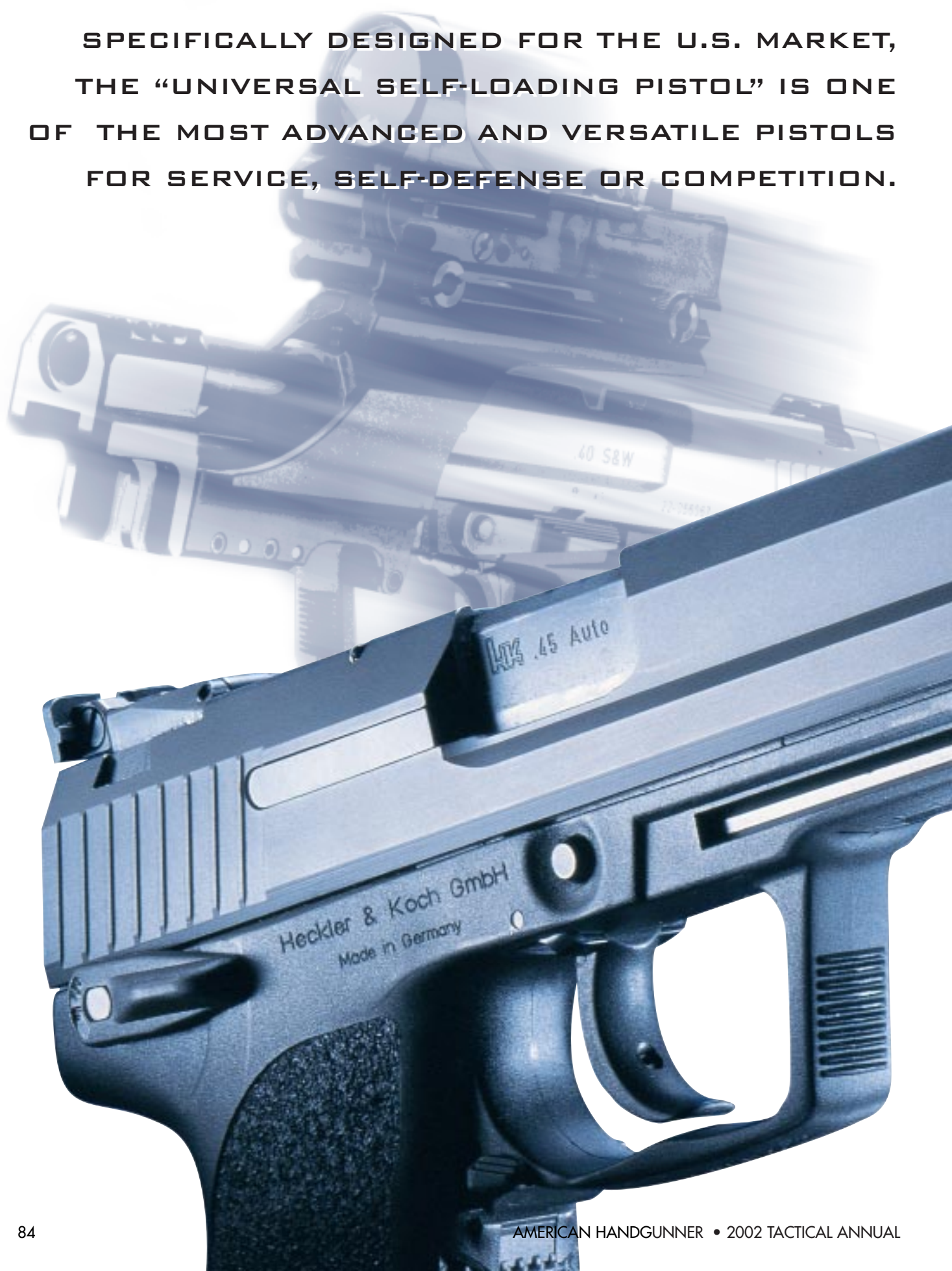
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The Heckler & Koch USP:

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

BY CHARLES CUTSHAW
PHOTOS BY ICHIRO NAGATA

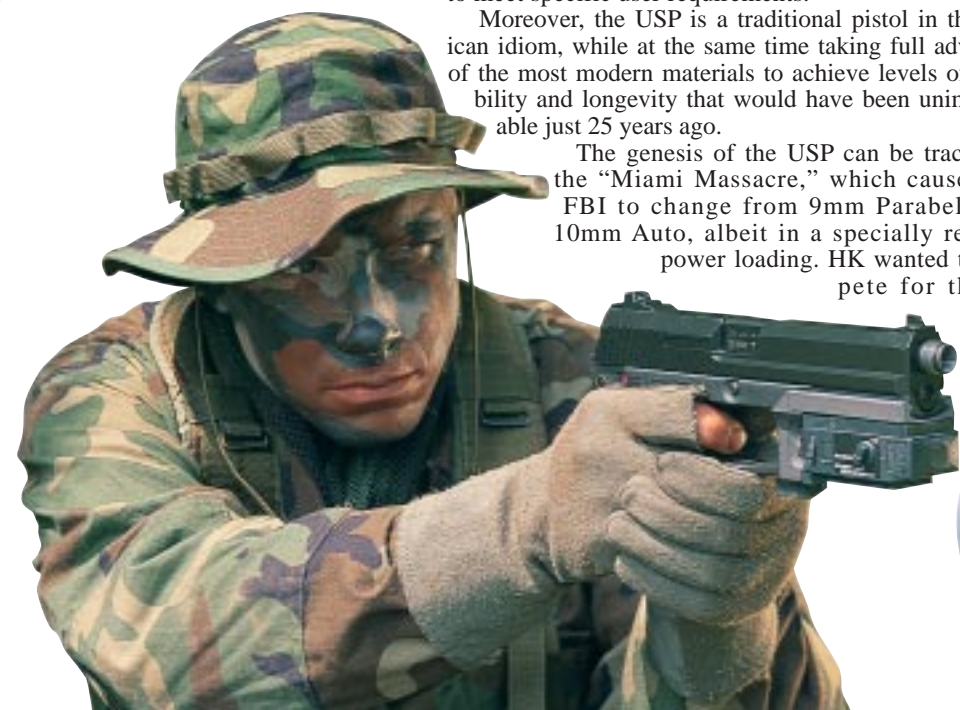


Heckler & Koch's Universal Self-Loading Pistol, better known as the USP, is a true firearms success story in what has become a highly competitive worldwide handgun market. In order to succeed in this arena, a handgun must not only meet the criteria for which it was designed, but also must actually exceed most of them. In essence, a good firearm is synergistic—it is greater than the sum of its parts. The USP is such a pistol.

The USP combines the best of traditional firearms features with state-of-the-art firearms technology. While not as widespread in police use as Glock pistols, the USP is nonetheless just as reliable, while being more flexible in its ability to be modified to meet specific user requirements.

Moreover, the USP is a traditional pistol in the American idiom, while at the same time taking full advantage of the most modern materials to achieve levels of reliability and longevity that would have been unimaginable just 25 years ago.

The genesis of the USP can be traced to the "Miami Massacre," which caused the FBI to change from 9mm Parabellum to 10mm Auto, albeit in a specially reduced-power loading. HK wanted to compete for the FBI





10mm pistol contract, had no pistols in 10mm caliber, nor a conventional double-action mechanism as required by the FBI's specifications. In fact, HK had no pistols other 9mm Parabellums. And the company came to realize that if it was to maintain its viability in an increasingly competitive handgun market, it would have to expand and diversify its product line.

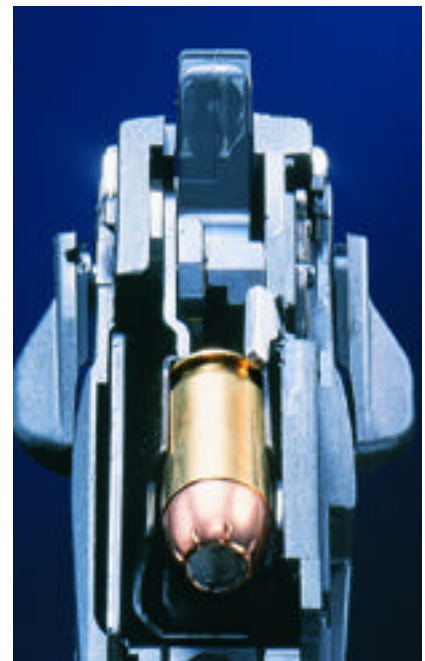
Moreover, management realized that as good as their pistols were, several, such as the P7 *squeeze cocker*, were considered unconventional. Most Americans who purchase handguns are essentially conservative, preferring more conventional designs. Furthermore, HK realized that P7 pistols for the most part had become so expensive that they could not effectively compete against companies such as Glock and Smith & Wesson in the U.S. market.

The American Study

The company decided to begin with a clean slate and gather input from the shooters themselves to influence the design of the new pistol. HK also decided that their next pistol should be developed primarily for the U.S. market. Accordingly, HK conducted a market survey to determine the preferences of American handgun shooters of

A Compact version of the USP (above) is the preferred choice for undercover cops or concealed carry licensed citizens while the Expert version (below) is an accurized version made for competition shooters. Both models feature an integral accessory rail for mounting a weapons light.





Unlike most polymer pistols which come in one-size-fits-all, the USP is highly modular with interchangeable components for nine different action types. At right, the fully adjustable sights on the Expert version do not present an acceptable sight picture for demanding IPSC shooters. We would replace them with a set of Bo-Mars.

all types— military, law enforcement and civilian. This study was completed in July, 1989.

The HK study revealed a number of facts regarding the American handgun market that many firearms manufacturers would do well to heed. Perhaps most important was the fact that people who were serious about handguns were conservative.

Whether they were professionals or simply serious enthusiasts, they preferred a handgun of conventional design. This is not to say that the American market is hostile to innovation. Far from it. But Americans have traditionally been enamored with innovation and technology. And technology alone cannot replace that which is of proven efficacy unless it improves upon it.

Heckler & Koch concluded that a conventional pistol incorporating as many high-tech innovations as possible would be most attractive to the American market.

Affordability was another major concern. While many people might well have purchased an innovative HK P7, its high price made that pistol a non-starter for most individuals and law enforcement agencies.

Other major considerations were quality, durability, reliability, safety,



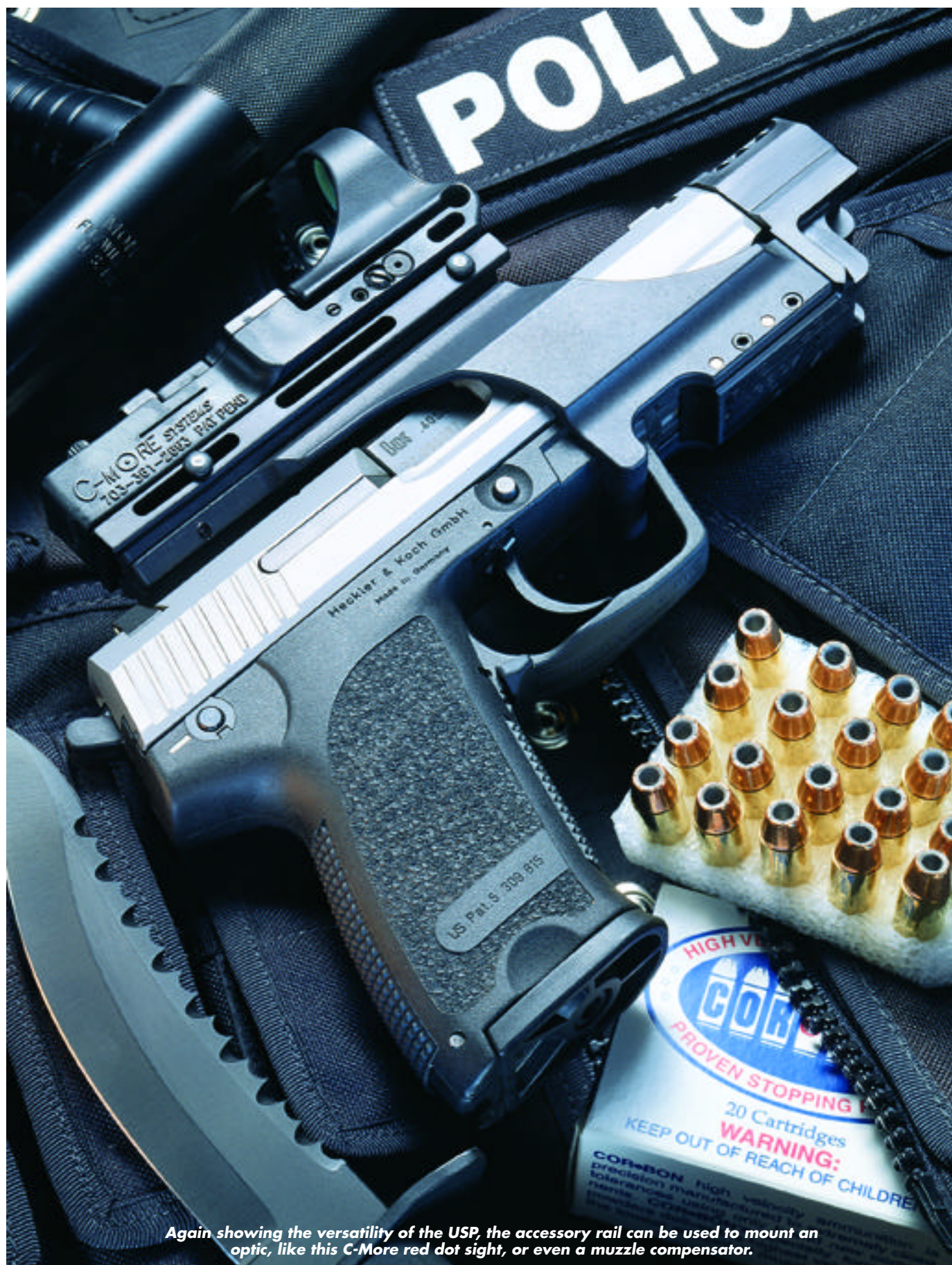
accuracy, magazine capacity and low recoil. And finally, the science of ergonomics would play a large part in design of the new pistol.

Design Considerations

After its market study, HK compiled and prioritized the characteristics of what would eventually become the Universal Self-Loading Pistol. In addition to the characteristics already noted, it was decided early in the design process that the pistol would be a conventional double-action with the capability for straightforward conversion to a number of different configurations to satisfy the

requirements of as many users as possible. Consequently, the USP can be configured as a DA-only, cocked-and-locked single-action, or conventional double-action.

HK also decided that the pistol would be initially chambered for the .40 S&W cartridge with other calibers to follow. This decision was based on the increasing popularity of the .40 S&W, which delivers ballistics nearly on a par with those of the venerable .45 ACP, although with less recoil. Also, a pistol designed from the outset for .40 S&W would have no problem accommodating the less powerful 9x19mm cartridge.



Again showing the versatility of the USP, the accessory rail can be used to mount an optic, like this C-More red dot sight, or even a muzzle compensator.



The SOCOM version of the USP was designed for U.S. Special Forces and comes with both a sound suppressor and a quad system illumination and aiming module (on the accessory rail) which includes a white light, IR light, visible laser and IR laser. The whole shebang weighs close to a fully decked out M16.

HK had noted that some .40 S&W pistols that were modified from 9mm design platforms had durability problems. The engineers in Oberndorf wanted to ensure that there were no such problems with their new pistol. In fact, the USP was the first pistol specifically designed for the 40 S&W cartridge.

Design development began in September 1989 and took nearly two years. The head of the design team was Helmut Weldle, designer of the P7 pistols.

SOCOM Pistol

By May 1991, basic USP design work was nearly completed and the desired characteristics agreed upon. Shortly thereafter, in August, HK began design work on the Offensive Handgun Weapons System (OHWS) for the United States Special Operations Command. This design was later type-classified as the Mark 23 Mod 0 USSOCOM Pistol, hereafter referred to as the Mark 23.

While development of the Mark 23 pistol was concurrent with that of the USP and the final products shared many similar characteristics, they were developed independently within HK. The fact

that the USP went into production after the Mark 23 prototypes were delivered to the U.S. government for testing is not indicative that the USP design was derived from the USSOCOM handgun.

On the contrary, many of the Mark 23's features were derived from the USP, which was already under development when the U.S. government's Request For Proposal (RFP) for the OHWS was announced in December 1990.

At the same time, development of the USP was influenced by the Mark 23's development process. While the Mark 23 is not a member of the immediate USP family, it is a first cousin and must be included in any discussion of the USP's development.

By late 1991, the first prototype of the USP had been constructed and the USP name assigned to the new pistol. Two further prototypes were pro-

duced and tested during 1992. Testing was successful, and the basic design was "frozen" in December of that year.

Reliability testing on the USP prototypes was unfinished at the time of the design "freeze." But since both pistols had fired 10,000 rounds of their 20,000-round reliability test without incident, it was decided to freeze the design and proceed with production planning and formal introduction of the USP at the January 1993 Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trades (SHOT) Show.

Actual production of the USP40





The SOCOM pistol (top) is a large gun, especially when shown next to a Compact version of the USP. Note the separate decocking lever under the thumb safety on the SOCOM pistol. Even though the USP design could incorporate a decocker into the thumb safety, the military spec'd a separate lever. Yes, this is a camel pistol.

USP & Mark 23 Specifications

Type	Caliber	Capacity	Width	Height	Weight	Sight	Radius	Barrel
USP9	9mm	15+1	1.26"	5.35"	1.66 lb.	6.22"	4.25"	7.64"
USP40	.40 S&W	13+1	1.26"	5.35"	1.66 lb.	6.22"	4.25"	7.64"
USP45	.45 ACP	12+1	1.26"	5.35"	1.74 lb.	6.22"	4.41"	7.87"
USP9 Compact	9mm	13+1	1.14"	5.00"	1.6 lb.	5.35"	3.58"	6.81"
USP357 Compact	.357 SIG	12+1	1.14"	5.00"	1.6 lb.	5.35"	3.58"	6.81"
USP40 Compact	.40 S&W	12+1	1.14"	5.00"	1.7 lb.	5.35"	3.58"	6.81"
USP45 Compact	.45 ACP	8+1	1.14"	5.06"	1.75 lb.	5.63"	3.8"	7.09"
USP Expert	.45 ACP	12+1	1.26"	5.9"	2.30 lb.	6.34"	5.2"	8.74"
USP45 Tactical	.45 ACP	12+1	1.26"	5.9"	2.24 lb.	6.34"	5.08"	8.64"
USP Elite	9mm	18+1	1.49"	5.7"	1.89 lb.	8.34"	6.0"	9.44"
USP Elite	.45 ACP	12+1	1.55"	5.8"	2.02 lb.	8.34"	6.0"	9.44"
Mark 23	.45 ACP	12+1	1.53"	5.9"	2.42 lb.	7.76"	5.87"	9.65"

was undertaken in February 1993.

Reliable As An Anvil

At this point, it is worth noting the testing process that the USP underwent in the final stages of its development. The fact that the pistol passed a 20,000-round reliability test without meaningful wear on any component or any effect on accuracy has little meaning until one considers that the tried-and-true 1911A1 pistols which still serve in some military special operations units—not all have purchased the Mark 23 at the time of this writing—require a depot-level rebuild after approximately 12,000 rounds to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Another measure of the rugged design of the USP is the fact that unmodified USP45s have presently fired over 6,000 rounds of the hot .45 Super ammunition without incident. 1911-type pistols must be modified to reliably fire the .45 Super cartridge.

USP testing was heavily influenced by the development of the Mark 23, which had to meet stringent military durability and reliability standards. The tests of the USP paralleled the NATO military test protocols of the Mark 23, which are much more stringent than commercial standards.

The USP pistols were subjected to test firing in various attitudes and were checked every 1,000 rounds for damaged or broken parts and for accuracy. After each 10,000 rounds, the slide was manually cycled 1,000 times. A bullet was driven into the forcing cone of the USP barrel, a live round chambered and the pistol fired. There was no damage to the pistol and accuracy was unaffected.

Another bullet was driven 30mm into the muzzle of the pistol and the pistol fired, again with no damage or degradation in performance.

The pistols were dropped onto rubber on all sides and at a 45 degree angle onto the muzzle from a height of 4 feet with a primed case in the chamber, 13 dummy rounds in the magazine and the safety/decocking lever set in the “fire” position—all without incident.

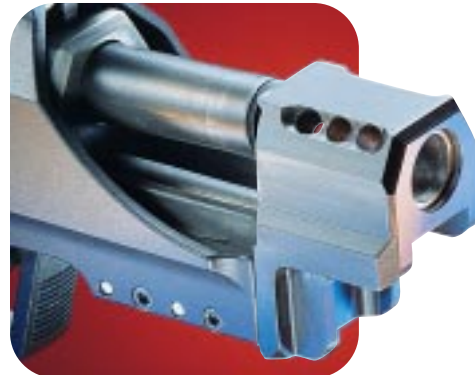
The pistols were then dropped six times onto a cocked hammer from a height of 3 feet. No discharge. Up the ladder went the engineer and repeated the test onto a steel/concrete surface, this time from 7 feet. There were no primer indentations in any of these tests.

For ammunition compliance testing, USPs were tested using every type of commercially available ammunition.

Environmental testing of the USP was virtually identical to that of the Mark 23. The USP had to function in temperatures as low as -51 degrees and as high as 145 degrees Fahrenheit. It functioned after a 10-



Showing the many features of the USP, here we find the modular thumb safety, the ambidextrous magazine button and a muzzle compensator on the accessory rail.



minute mud bath, after a 10-minute exposure to blowing sand, freezing rain (water spray on the pistol to a thickness of 1mm to 3mm).

After these torture tests, the parts of four different caliber pistols were interchanged, except for barrel, slide and magazine. The USP passed or exceeded all tests, and the .40 S&W caliber pistols were placed on the market in the United States in April 1993. The 9mm USP followed in September.

1911 Friendly

The USP is, as we have stated, largely a traditional pistol design executed in nontraditional ways. It is a short recoil, modified Browning system similar to that used in the Browning P-35 Hi-Power. This system is simple, very reliable, and inexpensive to produce. And it makes barrel replacement easy.

Unlike the system used in the Hi-Power, the HK locks on the front and rear edges of the ejection port, rather than using locking grooves machined into the slide and barrel.

The safety/decocking lever, called a “control lever” by HK, is positioned at the same relative location on the frame

as that in both the Hi-Power and 1911 pistols, and functions in the same fashion—up is “safe,” down is “fire.” There is one difference, however. Pressing the lever down past the “fire” position usually decocks the USP when the hammer is cocked. The lever then automatically returns to the “fire” position, enabling the USP to be operated in the double-action mode for the first shot.

This feature also allows the USP to be safely carried in Condition One—cocked and locked—which is favored by many armed professionals who are intimately familiar with the Colt Government Model and its many copies. Unlike the 1911, however, setting the USP to the “safe” position does not lock the slide.

The control lever can easily be set up for left-handed, right-handed, or ambidextrous use. It should also be noted that besides having controls that are very similar in function to those of the 1911, the grip angle of the USP is identical to that of the venerable Browning design. Thus, an individual familiar with the 1911 or Hi-Power can pick up a USP and use it with very little familiarization training.

Not all USPs, however, incorporate this system. The versatility of the USP allows it to be configured without a safety or decocking position in some versions. The different versions into which the



The SOCOM version of the USP, officially known as the Mark 23, is the first offensive handgun issued to the U.S. military since the LeMat revolver of the Civil War era (which technically was not a U.S. military issue since it went to Confederate troops).



USP can be configured are shown in the accompanying table.

The slide release of the USP is also located similarly to that of the 1911 and Hi-Power and like the earlier designs it is used to disassemble the pistol. The ambidextrous magazine release, however, is a real improvement over the traditional 1911 "push button."

The magazine release of the USP is located in essentially the same position as the older pistols, but instead of having to push in to release the magazine, the release button is pressed down to drop the magazine. This is a much more natural movement than pressing inward. The release is actually shielded by the trigger guard to prevent inadvertent actuation.

We should also note that the magazines of the USP drop free when the release is pressed, an important tactical consideration. Despite this, there are "tearaway grooves" on the sides of the grip, just in case.

The USP incorporates three or four separate safety mechanisms, depending on variant. Two of these safeties, the disconnecter and the firing pin block, are passive. All USP pistols incorporate these two passive mechanisms.

Six of the nine USP variants have a manual safety/decocker. Variant Seven has the double-action safety with no manual control lever at all. Variants Three and Four do not have a manual safety, but have a decocking lever. The reader can determine the specific features of USP variants by referring to the chart accompanying this article. While Variant Eight is listed in the chart matrix, it was never produced except in very small numbers for U.S. Immigration and Naturalization and U.S. Border Patrol testing. Variant Eight was essentially a Variant Seven with European tritium sights.

USP Barrels

The barrel of the USP is cold hammer forged. Early pistols had six lands and grooves with a right hand twist. USPs in .40 S&W were rifled with a 1:14.96 twist, while 9mm Parabellum pistols had rifling at a rate of 1:9.84 inches.

In November 1994, the rifling was changed from conventional lands and grooves to polygonal rifling, an HK innovation. Twist rates remained the same as in earlier guns, but the cold hammer forged polygonal rifling has several benefits. Muzzle velocity is increased versus standard rifling due to a tighter gas seal. Because there are no sharp edges, bore wear and erosion are reduced, thus providing longer service life. Barrels with polygonal rifling are easier to clean and maintain because there are no grooves, per se, in which fouling and metal



The Navy SEALs refuse to issue the SOCOM pistol, preferring their trusty SIG P226 instead. They don't dislike the big USP, they simply find it too cumbersome for their mission profile.

deposits can accumulate. Finally, polygonal rifling increases accuracy. The USP45 was never manufactured with conventional rifling.

The polymer frame of the USP continues a Heckler & Koch tradition that dates back to the mid-1960's VP70, P9S and other HK firearms. The precise makeup of the polymer frame is a proprietary secret, but it is glass-fiber reinforced with metal guide rails on which the slide runs.

As previously mentioned, the grip has "tear away" grooves to enable the shooter easy access to the magazine floorplate in case the magazine does not drop free when the release is pressed. The trigger guard is oversized to allow use of gloves and is shaped so as to help prevent the magazine release from being inadvertently pressed, which could prove highly embarrassing, not to mention fatal!

Accessory Rail

The entire surface of the frame is textured for a positive grip, even with wet hands. The USP's texturing is very similar to that of the Mark 23 and incorporates stippling on the grip side panels and

deeply embossed grooves on the grip front and backstraps. A lanyard loop is molded into the heel of the grip as part of the insert that retains the hammer spring. The magazine well is beveled and stepped to facilitate reloading.

Another feature of the USP frame is the molded in grooves for mounting accessories such as lasers, tactical lights, optical sights or muzzle compensators. The grooves are parallel with the bore of the pistol, so any accessory is automatically boresighted when mounted. HK claims that the grooves are more secure and resistant to recoil forces than

trigger guard mounts in addition to providing automatic bore alignment for attached accessories.

HK makes a full range of accessories for all versions of the USP, including a tactical light, designated the Universal Tactical Light (UTL). HK once manufactured the "Quik-Comp" muzzle brake that attached to the mounting grooves. This may still occasionally be found as a used component.

Finally, HK has a scope mount available for the USP. This mount incorporates a Weaver mounting rail, can be used either with or without the





Chambered in .40 S&W, the USP makes an excellent law enforcement pistol with a capacity of 13 rounds. SWAT officers (below) have long favored HK's MP5 subgun and now can complement their longgun selection with an HK USP for the shield man.



"Quik-Comp," and does not interfere with the pistol's iron sights. The popularity of the USP has caused aftermarket manufacturers to begin producing similar accessories for the USP pistol family.

USP Magazines

Magazines of the .40 S&W and 9mm pistols are made of polymer with a stainless steel insert, while those of the USP45 are steel. Magazine capacity is 13 rounds in .40 S&W, 15 rounds in 9mm and 12 rounds in .45 ACP. However, civilian-use pistols are all equipped with the federally-mandated "politically correct" 10-round magazines.

The .45 ACP magazine was made from steel to keep grip circumference down while maximizing magazine capacity. The .45 magazine design is virtually identical to that of the Mark 23 USSOCOM pistol. All magazines drop free when the release is pressed, contain "round count" holes with corresponding numbers and can be disassembled for cleaning and maintenance by the owner, even the 10-round civilian-use magazines.

Recoil Buffer System

A unique feature of the USP is its recoil reduction system, again virtually identical to that used on the SOCOM pistol. Essentially, the recoil reduction system consists of two concentric springs held in place by a guide rod. The outer recoil spring is a lower rate than the inner buffer spring, which slows the slide at the end of its recoil movement, prevents the slide from impinging against the frame and buffers the unlocking of the barrel from the slide during the first three to four millimeters of movement.

The buffer system reduces recoil forces by approximately 30 percent and provides a number of benefits. First is reduced felt recoil to the shooter, resulting in reduced muzzle flip for quicker recovery time after each shot and increased accuracy. Another benefit is reduced stress on components, which is one of the reasons for the extremely long service life of all USPs.

The USP recoil-reduction system is "transparent" to the shooter; it is insensitive to ammunition, requires no maintenance and has an indefinite service life. On early USPs, the recoil spring could be removed from the guide rod, but in September 1994, a "captured spring" design was incorporated, which makes USP disassembly and reassembly easier and safer. The new recoil reduction system can be retrofitted into earlier USPs without modification.

USP Compact pistols have a different recoil reduction system than the full-size service pistols because there is insufficient space for a dual-spring system and

because the compact designs use a flat recoil spring to save space and facilitate shortening the barrel and frame. The buffer in the HK USP Compact is therefore a high-strength polymer bushing that surrounds the recoil spring and cushions the blow of the slide against the frame as the slide recoils. Life of this polymer buffer is stated to be over 20,000 rounds.

High-Tech Finish

The polymer frame of the USP is virtually impervious to wear or corrosion. But the USP, like all firearms, also incorporates metal components, which are subject to corrosion and wear unless protected. A stainless steel slide is available for all USP models. Heckler & Koch applies a proprietary Hostile Environment (HE) nitrogen/carbon finish to the USP slide. This finish is not only extremely hard (732 HV1 Vickers), but also highly corrosion resistant, as well.

The nonreflective HE finish has been used on the G3SG1 sniper rifle since the 1970s and has proven itself in service. All other USP components, both external and internal, are finished with Dow-Corning's "Molykote," a very tough corrosion-resistant finish that also incorporates low-friction qualities.

Two versions of the USP that are not available in the United States are HK's German military P8 and P10 pistols. The P8 replaced the Walther P1, a modernized Walther P-38, in Bundeswehr service, while the P10 is issued to German police. Both are versions of the USP9



The Compact version of a .40 S&W chambered USP might be the ideal carry gun for off-duty or CCW licensed citizens. There are nine different action types in what HK calls "variants."

and USP9 Compact, respectively, but with two differences in comparison to other USP versions. Indeed, these pistols could be considered a new USP variant, were they commercially available.

One difference is the functioning of the control lever, which reverses the "safe" and "fire" positions of the Variant One USP. The uppermost position of the lever on both German pistols is "fire," rather than "safe." The mid position is "safe," and fully down decocks the pistol, as with other USP variants.

The second difference is that when the trigger is released on the P8 and

P10, the control lever automatically returns to the "safe" position. Some 20,000 USP P8 variants have been issued to the German military.

.45 ACP Follow-On

The USP45 was a follow-on to the original USP40 and USP9 pistols and was introduced in January 1995 at the SHOT Show. The pistol became available for sale in May of that year. The change to .45 ACP was not as simple as changing barrel, slide and recoil spring.

As mentioned earlier, the USP45 steel magazine was essentially carried over



At left, the controls of the USP are in the traditional Browning-inspired locations, although they are quite a bit more sophisticated than anything John Moses ever designed. With nine variations and an ambidextrous mag release, the USP is the most versatile handgun ever produced. At right, the SOCOM pistol introduced the use of a small O-ring around the barrel to improve accuracy. As simple as it sounds, it works remarkably well and is surprisingly durable.



A stainless steel USP offers a handsome contrast of brushed stainless against the stippled black frame.

from the Mark 23 USSOCOM pistol because use of polymer magazines would have caused the grip circumference to be too large. The recoil reduction system was lengthened to accommodate the longer .45 ACP cartridge while providing an identical 30-percent reduction in recoil forces.

The USP45 was the first pistol to incorporate an improved trigger system which is not only smoother and lighter than the original, but also virtually eliminates “stacking,” or increased resistance as the trigger is pulled back in double-action. In the USP45, the DA trigger take-up does not begin until the trigger

reaches the “half-cock position.” This enhanced trigger feature was incorporated into all USPs in early 1995.

The USP45 is different than its smaller caliber sisters. While the USP9 and USP40 share virtually 100 percent parts interchangeability, only 78 percent of USP45 parts will interchange with the earlier guns. The USP45 was subjected to and passed all the tests of the earlier firearms, including a durability test of 24,000 rounds of +P ammunition.

CCW Inspirations

As we have seen, the USP pistols were

designed with the American market in mind and the success of the pistol in the U.S. market and overseas clearly indicates that Heckler & Koch was “on target” with its design. One of the major trends in the U.S. firearms market has been engendered by the spread of “shall issue” concealed carry laws in the majority of the states. As of this writing, 33 states have “shall issue” concealed laws which mandate that any citizen of good character who applies must be issued a license to carry a concealed weapon, usually a pistol.

This has engendered a demand for compact pistols and many manufacturers have begun producing pistols designed for concealed carry. Compact versions of the USP for concealed carry were therefore virtually inevitable. The first two .40 S&W and 9mm USP Compact pistols were introduced in early 1997 and a USP Compact .45 followed that autumn. A USP Compact in .357 SIG followed shortly thereafter. There is no full-sized .357 SIG caliber USP as of this writing.

Aside from the shorter length and height, there are minimal differences between the compact USPs and their full-size sisters, most of which have already been discussed. First, of course, is the fact that the pistols are smaller both in height and in length for concealment. Grip circumference and trigger reach are also reduced for improved handling. Dimensional differences may be found in the accompanying specifications tables.

Unlike many “scaled down” pistols, the grips of the USP Compacts accommodate the entire hand of most shooters, even without using the extended floor-plate magazine. (The USP Compact is shipped with two magazines—one with a flat, flush-fitting floor plate for maximum concealability and another with an extended floorplate to provide maximum comfort for those with large hands.)

In terms of overall size, the USP Compacts are very close dimensionally to the Colt Officer’s ACP except for the slide, which is slightly thicker. Other changes in the compact pistols were the previously discussed recoil spring and buffer mechanism. I had the opportunity to test one of the USP45 Compact pistols in October 1997 and shortly thereafter purchased one for personal use. It has since had several thousand rounds fired through it without a single stoppage.

Tactical Model

The next iteration of USP was the USP45 Tactical Model, shown at the 1998 SHOT Show and officially put on sale in April of that year. The Tactical Model USP is essentially a hybrid between the Mark 23 and the USP, incorporating the best features of both.

H&K USP Variants

- Variant 1:** DA/SA, left side safety, decocking
- Variant 2:** DA/SA, right side safety, decocking
- Variant 3:** DA/SA, left side lever, decock only
- Variant 4:** DA/SA, right side lever, decock only
- Variant 5:** DAO, left side safety, no decocking
- Variant 6:** DAO, right side safety, no decocking
- Variant 7:** DAO, no external controls
- Variant 8:** DAO government test model. No external controls. Not produced.
- Variant 9:** DA/SA, left side safety, no decocking
- Variant 10:** DA/SA, right side safety, no decocking



The Expert comes only in .45 ACP and uses a longer slide with a distinctive profile than others in the USP family. Like the USP Tactical, the Expert features a match grade trigger with an overtravel stop. At right, an underside view of the trigger guard with the press-down-to-release ambi mag catch.

The USP45 Tactical Model uses the barrel developed for the Mark 23, which is threaded for attachment of a suppressor. USP45 Tactical threads, however, are left handed to prevent installation of the Mark 23's suppressor, which was designed for a heavier slide and thus will not reliably cycle the lighter USP45. At the time of this writing, a Knight's Armament Co. stainless suppressor and a Brugger & Thomet aluminum suppressor are available for the USP45 Tactical.

The sights on the USP45 Tactical are fully adjustable and are designed to look above an installed suppressor. Trigger pull is greatly improved over earlier USPs and an adjustable trigger stop is incorporated as a standard feature. Magazines are of an improved design with an extended floor plate to improve retention. All USP45 Tactical pistols are provided with a cleaning kit, spare barrel "O" rings, and tools for sight and trigger stop adjustment.

It is clear that the USP45 Tactical was designed for military and law enforcement use, but this requires some explanation. Several U.S. military special operations forces did not purchase the Mark 23 and continue to use modified 1911A1 pistols, which are reaching the end of their service lives, despite having been rebuilt by military special operations armorers time after time.

Moreover, while the 1911A1 will continue to function beyond 20,000 rounds, it begins to lose its accuracy after approximately 12,000 rounds and must be depot rebuilt. The failure of all special operations organizations to purchase the Mark 23 was not engendered by any specific fault of the Mark 23 itself; the pistol was built to the specifica-

tions determined by USSOCOM and surpassed all of them.

In the words of one special operations requirements officer, "The Mark 23 isn't a bad pistol; it simply doesn't meet our requirements." The fact is that USSOCOM does not directly speak for all special operations forces, nor can it require them to purchase a pistol that does not meet their individual service requirements. This will be further discussed in the section on the Mark 23 that follows.

Nonetheless, a military requirement exists for a .45 caliber pistol that is different than the Mark 23, while improving on the venerable 1911A1 and at the same time maintaining the operational characteristics virtually identical to those of the Mark 23. Although, HK has made no official comment regarding the intended market for the USP45 Tactical Pistol other than the statement, "...the USP45 Tactical Pistol is designed for users who require the features of the HK MK 23/Mark 23 pistol for tactical, combat, or CQB use in a smaller and more affordable package."

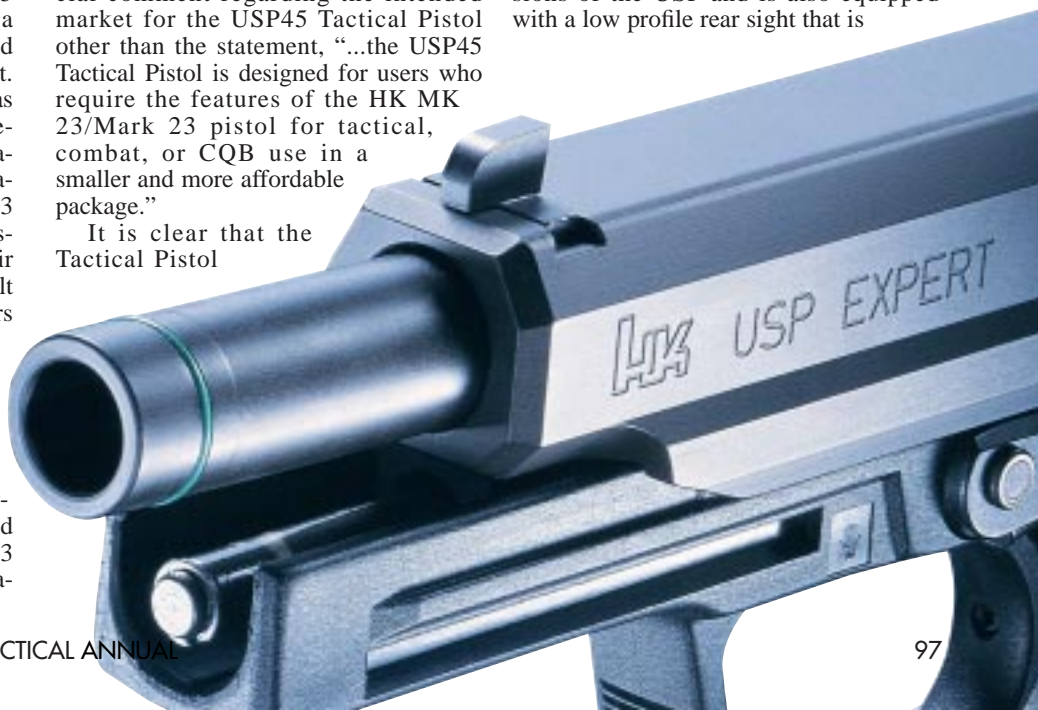
It is clear that the Tactical Pistol

is aimed at this market, and if the basic characteristics of the USP45 Tactical Pistol are any indication, it can be expected to be seen in the hands of many military and police special units in the coming years.

IPSC Expert Model

In 1998, HK began competing in IPSC competition and developed a "full-race" version of the USP for its IPSC team. The IPSC pistol, called the USP45 Expert, went on sale in Europe in late June 1998 and shortly thereafter was added to the American USP product line.

As its name implies, the USP45 Expert is sold only in .45 ACP caliber. The Expert model has a longer slide of different configuration than other versions of the USP and is also equipped with a low profile rear sight that is



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fully adjustable for windage and elevation. Like the USP45 tactical, the Expert's trigger is match grade with an overtravel adjustment.

USP Elite

The most recent addition to the USP lineup is the USP Elite model in either 9mm or .45 ACP calibers. This latest version of the USP is in limited production and presently is available only in Europe. HK has not yet made a decision as to whether or not to import the pistol into the United States.

The Elite is intended for use in competitive shooting disciplines where a 6" barrel is allowed. As such, the Elite has a significantly modified slide that is intended to provide enhanced handling properties and a longer sight radius. The Elite also incorporates HK's O-ring barrel seal for consistent lockup and enhanced accuracy. The adjustable match-grade trigger from the Tactical and Expert Models is also carried over to the Elite.

A unique feature of the USP Elite is its ability to be changed from .45 ACP caliber to 9mm Elite or Expert configuration by simply changing slide, barrel and magazine. The exchange does not work in the opposite, however.

Despite its availability in European pistols, this feature will not be available for liability reasons should the Elite be imported into the United States.

And finally, the latest modification to the USP pistols is the Law Enforcement Modification (LEM) trigger module that was developed for DA-only pistols used by many police agencies. One of the few complaints about the USP was its double-action trigger pull, which was overly heavy and uneven.

The LEM DA-only trigger corrects this problem in USP Variant Seven and is presently available only to law enforcement agencies. The USP40 Compact, issued to all plainclothes INS agents, was the first large scale use of the LEM trigger system. The user can adjust the DA-only trigger pull simply by replacing the firing-pin block spring.

The LEM system consists of six drop-in components, although due to high demand, they are not presently available for retrofit to existing pistols. HK has not yet decided whether or not to make pistols with the LEM commercially available.

The Offensive Handgun

The USP was already under development when the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) issued its requirement for an offensive handgun, at the time designated the Offensive Handgun Weapon System (OHWS).

While the OHWS designation was used throughout the development of the pistol, the OHWS became MK 23 Mod 0 USSOCOM Pistol when the pistol was officially adopted and type classified. Pis-

tols for civilian sale are designated Mark 23 and so marked on the slide. We will use the designation Mark 23 to avoid confusion and to maintain continuity.

Before entering into the history of the Mark 23, we should examine the term "offensive handgun" or "offensive pistol," which to many is an oxymoron.

The handgun has traditionally been the weapon of last resort or a backup to the primary weapon, and hence not truly a weapon of preference, at least in military terms, for engaging the enemy. The handgun is traditionally a defensive weapon, used in the military by officers as a backup and by others such as machine-gun crewmen as a secondary weapon.

While the pistol may be the law enforcement officer's primary weapon, it is still considered essentially a defensive weapon.

Nonetheless, the handgun has been used offensively by the military. The first notable instance of this was the LeMat revolver used by Confederate cavalry in the War Between the States. This large .40-caliber revolver held nine shots, and its cylinder revolved around a 16-gauge shotgun barrel. All in all, the LeMat was a formidable weapon for its time. Confederate cavalymen preferred to carry two of these big revolvers and used them for close combat in lieu of their sabers.

A more recent offensive handgun was used in Vietnam by "tunnel rats" who searched Viet Cong tunnels armed with only a handgun and a flashlight. The essence of both operational uses of the pistol was the fact that it was used to "carry the battle to the enemy" rather than to defend against him.

This single characteristic defines the essential difference between the offensive and defensive use of the handgun. While almost any handgun may be used offensively, few are specifically designed for that purpose. The ultimate determining factor between the offensive or defensive use of the handgun is the nature of the mission and as such no pistol can truly be said to be solely intended for offensive or defensive uses.

However, the Mark 23 is intended to be used by special operations personnel to carry the battle to the enemy and kill him, not to drive him away, hence its "offensive handgun" designation. As such, a few of its essential required characteristics are worth noting.

The first of these is lethality. The .45 ACP has proven to be more lethal than any other military pistol cartridge in the world. Large magazine capacity is another salient characteristic of the Mark 23 with its 12-round magazine capacity.

One-handed operation is another desirable offensive handgun characteristic because the operator will more than likely be using his other hand for another purpose. This summary is not intended to be a comprehensive discussion of the charac-

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teristics of the offensive handgun concept or design, but to give the reader an idea of the thinking behind the requirements that eventually became the Mark 23.

Design History

The history of the current offensive handgun concept dates to 1987 when the naval special warfare community became dissatisfied with the Beretta M9 pistol. The Navy adopted the SIG-Sauer P226 in 1989 as an interim special operations weapon until a fully satisfactory pistol could be developed. In June, the Navy approved a requirement for an improved 9mm handgun.

Later in 1989, the Navy and USSOCOM joined forces to develop a new pistol for special operations. The Army and Air Force both expressed interest in the program, but the Navy took the lead under their improved 9mm pistol requirement with the program office established at Naval Surface Warfare Center in Crane, Ind. (NSWC, Crane) in December 1989.

In February 1990, the USSOCOM Joint Service Operational Requirement (JSOR) for an offensive handgun was issued. The stated purpose of the JSOR was, "To provide special operations forces (SOF) an offensive handgun for close-quarter battle and sentry incapacitation during target-site infiltration firing a family of .45 ACP munitions. This handgun will provide SOF a handgun with extended service life, greater reliability, increased environmental soundness and greater one-shot incapacitation than current service pistols."

The requirement went on to specify four components of the offensive handgun system: the pistol itself, a laser aiming module, a suppressor and a new .45 caliber +P+ rated cartridge. The new cartridge was dropped from the requirement when no ammunition manufacturer could be found to produce it. The wildcat .45 Super round which was mentioned earlier is similar to the original USSOCOM requirement and is now being tested for certification in both the Mark 23 and the USP45.

Requirements for the pistol were stringent and definitive. The pistol was required to have a service life of 30,000 rounds of +P ammunition with minimal parts breakage before requiring depot-level maintenance. It should be recalled that modified 1911A1 pistols currently used by some special operations units must be rebuilt to maintain accuracy after only about 12,000 rounds. The JSOR went on to require that the pistol demonstrate another 30,000 rounds service life on the frame and slide after depot level maintenance.

Pistol reliability was set at 2,000 mean rounds between stoppages. Accuracy was required to be 2.5" average extreme spread for nine out of 10 five-round

groups fired at 25 meters. This constitutes near-match accuracy from a service pistol and some at the time believed that the accuracy and reliability requirements were mutually exclusive. Subsequent events have proven that they were not.

Environmental requirements were that the pistol still function after having been immersed in 66 feet of sea water for two hours, after having been exposed to sand and dust for 96 hours, after continuous exposure to mud for 96 hours and after two hours exposure in surf and then 96 hours in a humidity chamber.

The suppressor requirement was for noise reduction of 24 dB dry and 33dB wet using 1911 ball ammunition, a 75-percent flash reduction, less than 2" change in point of impact at 25 meters and a service life of 5,000 rounds.

It should be noted that standard M1911 ball ammunition is subsonic and thus will not produce a *crack* as the bullet breaks the sound barrier upon exiting the muzzle of the suppressor. However, .45 ACP +P ammunition is not subsonic and a suppressor is therefore less effective when used with this type of cartridge.

Competing Contracts

Two competing contracts were issued in 1991 for development of the Mark 23. One, of course, went to HK; the other went to Colt's Manufacturing Co. By 1993 it was clear to all who had the opportunity to fire both pistols that the HK candidate was superior and would probably be selected. Colt's candidate appeared to be based on the hapless All-American 2000 and the prototype that the author fired in 1993 was clearly inferior to the HK pistol in terms of ergonomics and overall handling.

Each competitor completed 30 pistols, suppressors and laser modules for Phase I of the development program. At the end of Phase I, HK's pistol was selected. Laser module selection was delayed. For Phase II, the refinement phase of the pistol's development, HK and Knight's Armament Co. teamed to provide 30 additional pistols and suppressors which were further evaluated prior to final production and fielding in Phase III.

Exceptional Success

The Mark 23 was a success in that it met or exceeded all of the rigorous demands placed upon it by USSOCOM. The fact that the Mark 23 exceeded most of the requirements, rather than simply meeting them, is a tribute to the overall excellence of the basic design.

For example, the Mark 23 was required to have a mean time between stoppages of 2,000 rounds. In fact, it exceeded the norm three times over! Accuracy was far better than the requirement, with group size averaging only 1.56" for all Mark 23s tested.

Service life also far exceeded the

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requirement. Mark 23 pistols tested showed no signs of accuracy degradation after having been fired 30,000 times with +P ammunition. This remarkable level of accuracy and durability is due to an ingeniously simple, but "high-tech" solution to the problem of achieving consistent "lock-up" of the barrel to the slide of the pistol. HK engineers placed a high-temperature rubber O-ring at the forward end of the barrel to seal it to the slide until the pistol unlocks.

This rubber O-ring has a tested service life of over 20,000 rounds and can be replaced by the user without tools in a matter of seconds.

All told, though, the Mark 23's design success has been tempered by the fact that not all of the U.S. special operations commands purchased it. In fact, only the Navy currently uses the Mark 23 in quantity.

As we have previously seen, this is not because of any qualitative faults with the pistol. Part of the reason may be the size of the Mark 23. A glance at the specifications table will reveal that it is a very large pistol, although it is not particularly heavy when compared to other contemporary military handguns. It is only marginally heavier than the Beretta M9 when empty. In fact, the Mark 23 weighs less unloaded than a 1911A1!

Another problem may be the Mark 23's price. At the time of the Mark 23's initial operational capability in 1995, each pistol with three magazines cost the government \$1,186.

As we have already mentioned, HK has addressed potential shortfalls of the Mark 23 with its USP45 Tactical Model, which combines the best features of the both the Mark 23 and the USP into a somewhat smaller, but highly accurate and reliable package with definite military potential. Given these facts, one is tempted to ask why HK didn't produce the USP45 Tactical Model as the Mark 23 in the first place?

For one reason, the USP45 didn't exist when the Mark 23 was in development; the USP45 owes much of its life to the parallel development of the Mark 23. Moreover, the USP45 was not what USSOCOM asked for; the Mark 23 precisely met or exceeded the USSOCOM requirement in every way.

In point of fact, there are as many differences as similarities between the USP45 Tactical and the Mark 23, as a quick glance at the specifications table will reveal. For the immediate future, however, both pistols will be available to customers whose mission or personal needs require high-quality pistols of different size that offer slightly different capabilities.

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Plan A is carry a defensive handgun. But sometimes a pistol is not available, and now it's time to use techniques developed by the ancient samurai to save your life with your pocket knife.

PLAN B: THE DEFENSIVE USE OF A COMBAT FOLDER

By James Williams
Photos By Ichiro Nagata

Defending your life, or the lives of your loved ones, is both a right and a responsibility. Handguns are extremely effective defensive tools; however, not everyone carries a pistol. Even those in law enforcement or civilians licensed to carry concealed do not always obey the first rule of a gunfight: Have a gun.

For those who are concerned about their personal safety, the next best thing to a defensive pistol is a folding knife of the genre popularly known as the "combat folder." The mindset necessary to use an edged weapon defensively differs significantly from that of the handgunner. Pistols fire projectiles that can incapacitate an attacker with a single press of the trigger from a considerable distance.

Knife work, on the other hand, is a messy business. To survive you are going to have to get your hands dirty. It will take all of your mental and emotional resources, not the least of which are grit and courage.

As an instructor in edged weapons, I am often asked how to prepare for a knife engagement— what knife to carry and how to train.

My first recommendation is to buy a good pair of running shoes and learn how to use them. I am absolutely serious. For both legal and survival reasons, it is foolish to engage with a knife if you have a reasonable chance for evading the attack altogether. Anger, ego and alcohol are extremely bad reasons to deploy an edged weapon.

Which brings us to the point of this article. This article is not about teaching you how to knife fight; it is to give you some idea about using a small knife to defend yourself when that is the only choice that you have. We are assuming here that you are in a situation where evasion or other nonlethal force options are not available. We also assume that your life is in immediate danger. This is very important because after you successfully defend yourself, you are going to have to convince the legal system that you were justified in your actions.





SELECTING A COMBAT FOLDER

Many of you carry small folding knives that go by various names such as tactical or combat folders. These knives have many everyday uses and I encourage everyone to carry such a knife. They are typically seen with 3" to 4" blades in all sorts of styles, from dagger points to pseudo-tantos to spear points. The vast majority feature a one-hand-opening mechanism, either a thumb stud or a thumb hole.

Virtually all combat folders have a locking mechanism, usually either a liner lock, a frame lock or a conventional lock-back. Other innovative locks, such as the Benchmade axis lock, are also encountered. In spite of the hoary terms used to describe such knives, they are too small to be considered fighting knives.

Although people may be easily cut with a small knife, it is difficult to bring down a skilled, determined attacker with an edged weapon, let alone one with a mere 3" to 4" blade. I carry a Pat Crawford "Kasper" model from CRKT. I have no connection to the company that makes the knife, it just fits my criteria for a functional folding knife that may have to be used for personal defense.

Regardless of what you carry, obtain the maximum legal blade length. It should have a handle that is big enough to take the pressure of the work that has to be done once you get down in the kitchen and get to work.

The blade should have strong lateral support when opened and the shape should have good penetrating capabilities. The really serious damage that is going to be done by a small blade will be from penetration rather than slashing. Positive locking is a must to prevent it from being accidentally closed if there is pressure on the back of the blade.

UNDERHAND FORWARD GRIP

There are many knife grips that can be effectively used for defense. Small knives present some unique problems because of their blade length. The grip I favor, which we can call an "underhand forward grip," gets the most performance from a small blade in a critical environment. It is a standard hammer grip except the edge is facing up instead of down.

This grip takes advantage of the biomechanics of a thrust-and-withdraw motion. After the blade is inserted into a vital area, the natural motion of the arm when contracting the biceps is to withdraw the blade upward. By having the edge facing up, you can maximize the amount of tissue deformity.

This is no time to get squeamish. If you have found it necessary to access your knife in defense of your life, then you can get sick after you have survived the encounter.



SEE THE LINE-OF-SIGHT

Remove your knife from the attacker's line-of-sight. If he has a larger knife, draw him closer to neutralize his reach advantage. Stay loose and balanced by controlling your breath and relaxing your shoulders.

Your eyes should be directed at the middle of his chest and defocused so that the subconscious mind can be accessed and you have maximum vision. Your attacker may not be alone and it is essential that you have your peripheral vision.

If the attacker is holding his knife out in front, he is making your job easier. Be patient and prepared to act with commitment.



A SELF-PORTRAIT

It is important to know the picture that you are presenting to your opponent. You need to be able to see yourself as he sees you. This allows you to deceive him about your intentions and abilities. Surprise is an enormous asset. Even though he may know that you have a knife, the fact that he has no direct visual contact with it makes it very difficult for him to pick up your counter in time to prevent it.

The eyes are relatively easy to deceive and this is facilitated by his inability to see the knife until it is too late. He must come to you if he is going to press an attack and he is most vulnerable when he attacks.



MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE

If the attacker is experienced and committed, the chances of him getting in his cuts are reasonably good. However, you can prevent him from doing serious damage if you are willing to take a cut in a manner that prevents him from getting to vital areas.

A hard cut across the shoulder and face is messy, but will not prevent you from continuing the combat. You need to be committed and disciplined enough to counter with a cut that will do far more serious damage.

Jerking backward from pain or fear can expose vital areas to his blade. Courage and discipline are essential here.

When a cut is unavoidable, raise your shoulder and drop your chin to prevent him getting to your neck. As basic rule of thumb, keep your arms close to your body to protect your vital organs. Roll your body with the cut, like a boxer rolling with the punch, to minimize the damage done.



DISABLING THE BICEPS

A deep cut at the insertion of the biceps just above the elbow can incapacitate the attacker's arm. There is also a good chance of arterial bleeding and nerve damage. Stick to your attacker with pressure across his body from your arm as you continue to flank him to prevent him from squaring up on you. In this way you can continue to punish him with cuts until he decides to flee or is no longer a threat to your safety.



TARGET THE THIGH

Another target is the inside of the thigh. This is a viable cut as long as you control his center of gravity so that he cannot bring his knife to bear on you. Hopefully, one or two deep, hard insertions will deter your attacker. It is essential, however, to control his weapon by controlling him to prevent a potential counter-attack.



REDIRECT THE ATTACK

Redirect the initial attack as you remove his target, your body, from the direct line-of-attack with a centripetal rotation of your hip girdle. This is a relatively sophisticated movement that was perfected by elite samurai.

The arm is used in a movement similar to the way that a cupee, or a disengage, is used in fencing. Gather his center by control of his humerus bone with a soft, sticky touch and pick your target. As I demonstrate here, my knife is still hidden from the attacker's view as his arm is blocking his own line-of-sight.





THE COUNTER-ATTACK

Now it is your turn to counter-attack. Roll your hand around to grasp his— these techniques become second nature from practicing ancient weapons-based arts like aikijujutsu.

Press his arm sideways across his body to gain access to his kidney. It is necessary when you are doing this technique to keep him off balance as you press. You need to be entering to get closer to him and continue to press on his arm as you flank him, to prevent him from turning back into you. Don't put pressure down into his base, take it out to the side. This keeps him off balance and makes it difficult for him to counter.

The kidney sits half under the floating ribs. With the underhand forward grip, enter at an angle that will take the blade up into the kidney, then draw the blade back to you after insertion. This will cause maximum tissue deformity and greatly increase your chances of surviving the encounter.



COUNTER TO A GRAB

As the assailant grabs your arm to open you for an attack, don't tense up. Relax, exhale and roll your body and arm to the right. Don't give in to his pressure, just let it help your roll. This changes your skeletal relationship with the attacker, forestalling his attack and allowing you to counter.

COMMITTED COUNTER-STRIKE

Your counter-strike needs to be committed and effective. Continue to flank him as you counter by using a reaching pressure on his arm in a manner that controls the humerus bone and thereby his torso rotation. This also prevents him from bringing the knife into play.

He can ultimately be taken to the ground face down with this technique if your knife counters have not yet forestalled his attack. Get used to working close to the knife without flinching or jerking away.



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Most violent encounters take place in low light conditions. The ability to blind your attacker, even momentarily, with intense white light increases your chances of survival immensely. In my experience, proper use of light can prevent an attack before it begins.

In the event that the attacker is determined to proceed, you have the considerable advantage of moving behind the light to counter his attack. You are literally coming out of the sun and the surprise factor in a committed defensive counter can overwhelm the attacker.

The hard bezel of the light can be used to parry his knife hand as you insert your knife with the liver as your target. In most street engagements, a deep stab into the liver should end the encounter.

When deploying the light, make sure to shine it directly into the attacker's eyes. This deprives him of good visual information and allows you to advance at will. To confirm the effectiveness of this technique, try it with a friend in a low light environment. The quality of the light will make a difference and the practice will be invaluable.

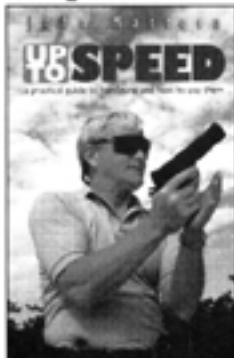


BLOCK AND THRUST

Use the flashlight to block the attacker's arm as you advance behind the beam to neutralize the attack. Remember that your choice of target is essential; here I am targeting the liver.

A knife engagement should be avoided if at all possible both for personal safety as well as legal reasons. We have dealt with those situations where you cannot avoid the engagement and your life or those of your loved ones is at stake. A knife fight carries serious legal complications and we do not want to survive the one and fall prey to the other.

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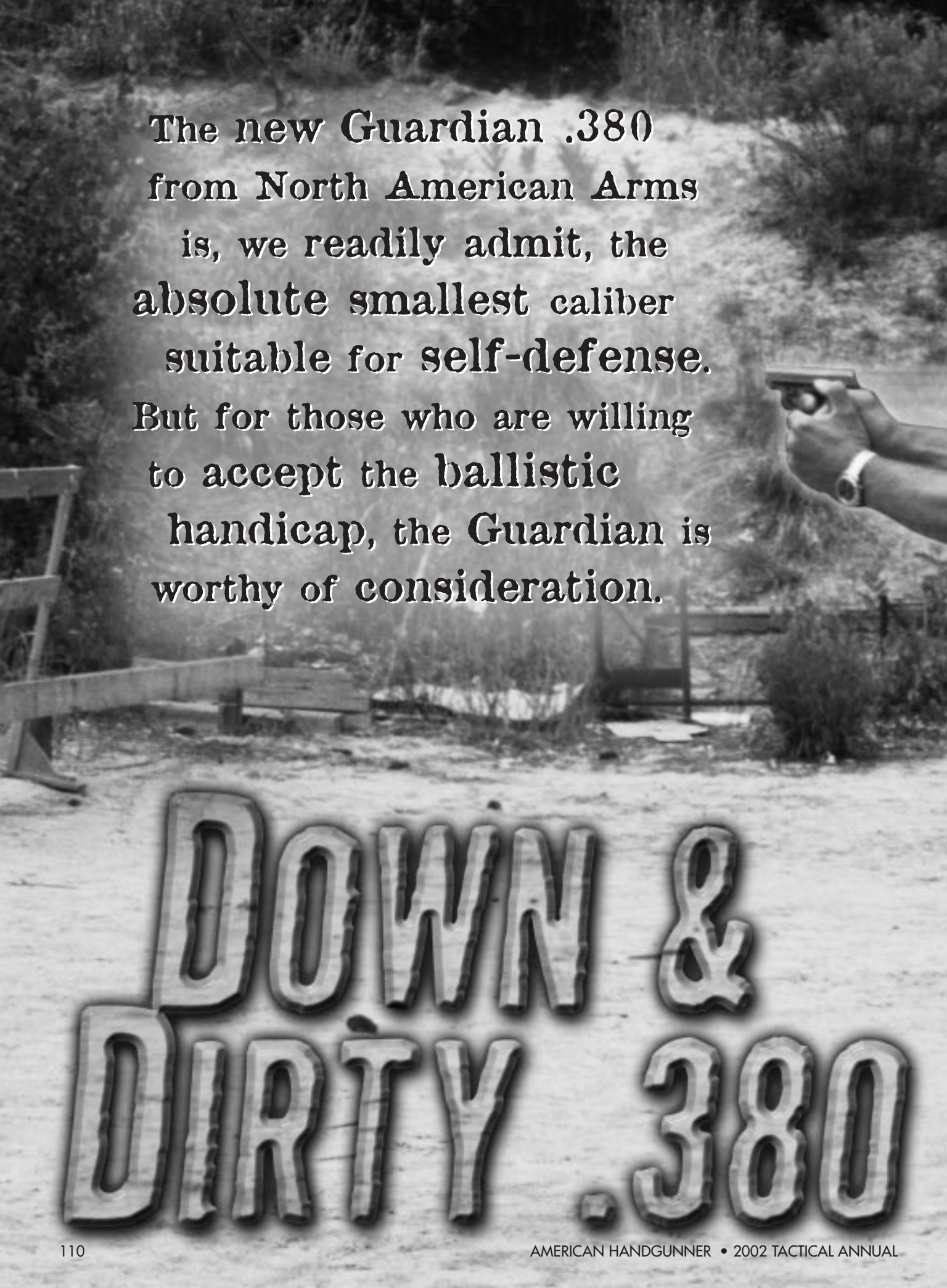
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to accept the ballistic
handicap, the Guardian is
worthy of consideration.

DOWN &
DIRTY .380

By Massad Ayoob



Whenever I review a .380 pistol, I feel like Ralph Nader test-driving a Corvair. I'm the guy who said "Friends don't let friends carry mouse-guns." However, I recognize that not everyone is fortunate enough to be able to live by my relaxed dress code— and not everyone can conceal even a small-frame .38 Special.

If it's a small pocket auto or a Bic, it makes sense to go with the small pocket auto. When I was young, if you wanted a really small "automatic pistol" you were stuck with a .25 ACP or .22 LR. Then came the Seecamp, a high-quality .25 ACP pistol the size of a CZ pocket gun in the same caliber. It was stainless, well-made and utterly reliable. And it quickly became popular.



Like most autos this size and shape, the Guardian tends to point low if the shooter doesn't visually aim.

The Seecamp family discovered that they could make the same-size gun in .32 ACP. It was “Nelly, bar the door!” The Seecamp LWS-32 became the vest-pocket gun of the cognoscenti. A tremendous backorder situation ensued, followed by black-market pricing on many of the available guns. The situation remains to this day.

Autauga Arms and North American Arms jumped into the breach with a remarkably similar miniature .32, which has sold quite well. Even Beretta’s bigger .32 Tomcat enjoyed robust sales in the market Seecamp had established, but was too big for the small, family-owned business to fill.

In 1999, looking at options to increase production volume without sacrificing quality, Larry Seecamp discovered a new process developed by Ruger’s Pinetree Castings. He told a colleague, “Basically, the Pinetree developments meant that we could build a stronger handgun in an identical size and weight. It was so strong that it could be made to handle an even more powerful cartridge, such as the .380 ACP.”

Some early guns got into firearms periodicals, and the stampede for the .380 Seecamp was on. If anything, the backorder situation got worse than before. This writer phoned in his order for one in mid-1999 and two years later is still waiting for a Seecamp .380 ACP.

Sandy Chisholm, CEO of North American Arms, saw a golden opportunity. He set to work on research and development immediately. By January 2001 at the SHOT Show, he had a sample on display of the Guardian .380, barely larger than the successful Guardian .32 that had also been made in the Seecamp’s image. I ordered one, and

it arrived less than six months later.

Initial Impressions

The Guardian .380 is a tad larger than the .32, but one is hard put to tell the difference unless both guns are put together for immediate comparison. The Guardian .380 fits my Guardian .32 holster sold by North American Arms.



Guardian .380 is shown with Glock 27 in .40 S&W

Cartridge capacity is 6+1, a generous volume considering the very small size of the pistol. The fire-control mechanism is DA-only, with a spurless hammer that fits flush with the back of the slide. The magazine release is a conventional push button, which the manufacturer touts as an improvement over Seecamp's butt-heel release.

Barrel length is 2.5", .475" longer than the Seecamp. When compared with factory specifications— usually from pressure barrels or 4" barrels— we can see that very small .380s give us even less potency than the ballistics tables promise. Consider that a Winchester Silvertip 85 gr. bullet leaves a 2" .380 barrel at 782 fps.

The Guardian's stainless construction suits it to carry in deep concealment locations: pockets, belly bands and ankle holsters. Since hot weather is often the excuse for carrying a gun this low on the power scale, assume lots of perspiration while the gun is being carried very close to the salty, sweaty skin. Stainless makes sense here.

Sizable Gains

The NAA double-action design allows "second strike" capability. That is, if the shot misfires the first time, you can pull the trigger again and take another crack at busting a recalcitrant cap. Many shooters feel this is good news.

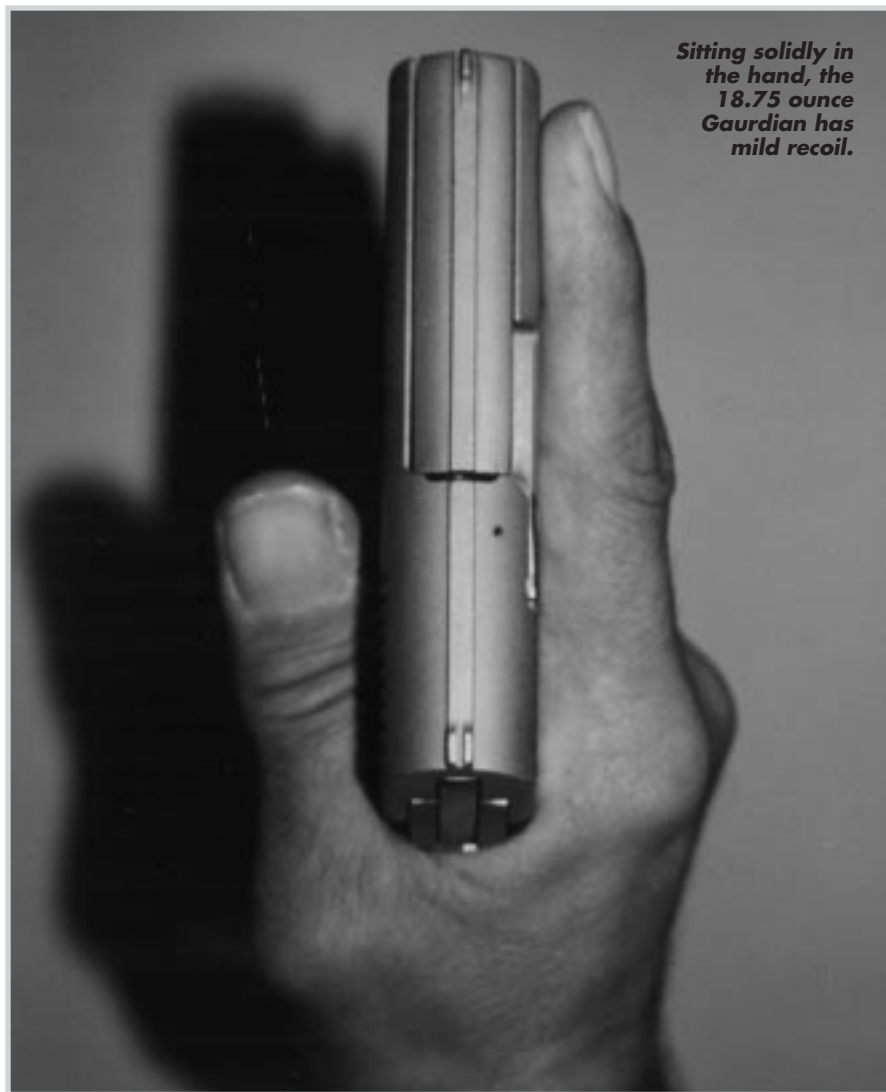
Well, here's better news: the test gun never misfired, so this feature was never called into service.

The DA-only, hammer-fired design is "pocket safe." The heavy trigger pull is not going to be activated accidentally! The hammer design allows you to place your thumb on its spurless back as you holster the gun, which is the best way to prevent an accidental discharge if something like, oh, a finger interdicts the trigger while the pistol is going into the scabbard.

The Guardian comes with miniscule sights. That it has sights at all is a gain, but that the sights are so small is a pain. Still, if you carry a .380, you've already bought into the "something is better than nothing" mentality, and these small sights are better than nothing at all.

I haven't yet shot the Seecamp .380, but I have shot the sightless .25 and .32 Seecamps. And the fact is that I can hit more accurately with the minimalist sights on the Guardian .380. This is true even at close range and is particularly true as you get out to 10, 15 or 25 yards.

While Seecamp recommends its pistols be fired only with Winchester Silvertip, no such caveat accompanies the North American Arms equivalent. With the gun held rigidly, six brands of jacketed hollowpoint .380 we tested worked fine.



Sitting solidly in the hand, the 18.75 ounce Gaurdian has mild recoil.



Guardian .380 is shown with S&W AirLite Ti .38 special



7 rounds is a decent payload for a pistol this tiny

The push-button magazine release “in the usual place” is seen as an advantage of the NAA Guardian. I would have found that more true if the magazines had dropped free. Which brings us to...

The Pains

At least one reviewer has called the Guardian’s sights so tiny as to be useless. I won’t go that far. True, the rear sight is maybe half as wide as a J-frame Model 640’s front sight, if that. True, the Guardian’s front sight is postcard-thin if not paper-thin. Still, “something is better

than nothing” remains true.

Recoil was mild, and I found no objectionably sharp edges on any body contact surfaces during carrying or hand-contact surfaces in shooting or routine manipulation. However, the push button magazine just drops the mag a fraction of an inch, requiring the free hand to pull it clear before a reload can take place. This, to my mind, negates one advertised advantage of this gun.

The all-steel Guardian “feels heavy” for its size. It weighs 18.75 ozs. unloaded, compared to 13.5 ozs. for the Seecamp

.380 and 14 ozs. for the Guardian .32. By contrast, a Smith & Wesson Airweight .38 Special with a 2” barrel and aluminum alloy frame weighs 14.5 ozs. And those little powerhouse revolvers come down to the 10 or 11 oz. range when built with Scandium or Titanium.

The Guardian’s trigger pull is heavy enough to interfere with accuracy even in slow fire, and will impact rapid fire even more adversely. It’s fatiguing in long strings of fire, as will be done in training and qualification.

Reliability: Job One

I’ve been reviewing handguns for gun magazines for 30 years now. Anything that repeatedly malfunctioned earned my vigorous “thumbs down,” even though it often meant advertisers withdrawing big bucks from the pages of the journals that published my work. Anything that jammed once every seven shots would get a scathing condemnation.

Perhaps I’m mellowing in my old age or perhaps a unique thing has happened here. Bear with me, hear me out, and then tell me in care of this magazine whether I need anti-Alzheimer drugs or not.

The first Guardian .32s I shot had a tendency to fail to eject, with the last round in the gun catching in the ejection port. I reported it. Chisholm got on top of it and changed the springs. It seems to have fixed the problem; however, it surfaced again in my test Guardian .380.

Almost without exception, these malfunctions occurred with the very last shot. It happened with light bullets (85 gr. Silvertip) and heavy bullets (102 gr. Remington Golden Saber) and medium weight bullets (Federal 90 gr.). The one exception was when it happened in the middle of a string of fire with a single Federal round. Interestingly, it did not occur with 88 gr. Blazer or 90 gr. PMC hollowpoints.

It did not take long to figure out the problem. Because the sights were so tiny,



Pistol comes with flush bottom magazine, which allows 1.5 finger wraparound... and another with finger extension, allowing two whole fingers purchase.



Keyholes notwithstanding, the test gun always hit the head at 7 yards.

I had brought them closer to the eye, firing in Ross Seyfried's very "tight-in" variation of the classic Weaver stance. Though the gun hand was pushing forward with the support hand pulling back, an integral part of the Weaver's biomechanics is that it absorbs recoil by letting the gun come straight back to some degree, the tensioned bent elbow acting like a shock absorber. This requires the wrist to be bent to where the forearm is no longer directly behind the pistol.

Remember, this pistol's slide does not lock open after the last shot. Apparently, in the midst of a string (with the single exception noted), the resistance that the slide encountered in coming forward when it picked up the next live round delayed its forward travel enough for the spent casing from the previous shot to finish clearing the ejection port. When it was the very last round in the gun whose spent case was being ejected, the slide came back forward faster with nothing to slow it down. This trapped the spent casing horizontally in the ejection port.

I switched to shooting with the gun arm locked straight out, using either the Chapman-Weaver (which features this element of technique) or the Isosceles stance (with both arms rigidly locked all the way toward the target). Voila. The failures to eject ceased to occur.

Mysterious Malfunctions

The malfunctions described would normally have been sufficient for me to "thumbs down" the pistol in question.



The Guardian is distinctly smaller than standard "pocket" .380s like SIG P-230 (left) and Walther PPK (right).



Rear sight of Guardian .380 (left) is smaller than front sight of S&W J-frame .38 (right).



True vestpocket size of Guardian .380 (center) is evident compared to FN .25 Auto (top) and Beretta Minx .22 Short (below). It is vastly superior to either ballistically.



Above and Below: Typical last-shot malfunction with Remington... and—the only time it happened before the last shot—Federal.

I'm less inclined to do so with this gun for three reasons.

First, studies done by Smith & Wesson when they introduced their short-lived "disposable" gun—the zinc and polymer .380 Sigma—indicated that the overwhelming majority of people who carried small .380 autos did not carry spare ammo for them. This is why the Sigma only came with one magazine. If this carries through to buyers of the Guardian .380, a malfunction after the last round is fired will be irrelevant since users will be done shooting and have nothing to reload into it anyway.

Second, every time this malfunction occurred, it was quickly cleared by turning the gun upside down and jacking the slide. Gravity pulled the trapped casing away from the slide and breech-face mechanism. This included even the one time it jammed with live rounds left in the magazine.

Since the gun has no slide-lock function and you'll have to jack the slide to reload a completely dry Guardian

anyway, the user can learn to turn the gun over 180 degrees while working the slide.

Third, in my test sample at least, the problem was cured by always firing with a rigidly locked gun arm, whether shooting with one hand or two. Yes, I am fully aware that I might be hurt or otherwise compromised in a fight to the point where I can't lock my gun arm. But hey, if I can convince myself that a .380 is all I'll need to stop a 250 lb. speed freak, I can convince myself that I'll always be able to lock out my gun arm under stress.

Shooting the Guardian

Half a dozen defense loads were tested for accuracy. At 25 yards, the normally very accurate Federal Classic 90 gr. sprayed itself into a pattern measuring 8.65" for five shots fired from a bench rest. One of the bullets had keyholed. This did not look good.

I began to see why some people who test such guns do so at the more forgiving distance of 7 yards. It seemed a good time

to capitulate to that conventional wisdom.

From 7 yards, I loaded the gun each time with all seven rounds it could hold and fired from an Isosceles stance at the center of the head of an IDPA silhouette target. PMC 90 gr. ammo keyholed more shots than hit straight even at this short distance, but perversely, it delivered the best group: 1.50" center to center for all seven rounds.

Remington 102 gr. Golden Saber was next with a 1.85" group, including a single uncalled flyer; the other six shots were in one inch even. Federal Classic 90 gr. put seven shots in a cluster 2.05" wide by 1" high. Though one such round had keyholed at 25 yards, none did so at 7.

CCI's inexpensive 88 gr. Blazer never keyholed and delivered a group that measured 2.45" wide by 1.1" high. The old reliable Winchester 85 gr. Silvertip delivered a 2.50" group. Everything shot somewhat to the right.

The keyholing, even if it allows adequate accuracy, impairs the bullet's function on impact. Rifling twist in this

stubby gun is one turn in 15". Experimentation might be needed here.

Carrying The Guardian

I loaded the test gun and carried it for a few days as a backup. It came out of the NAA pocket holster quickly enough and was never uncomfortable. I wore it one very hot, very humid day without a holster in the pocket of my shorts. And at day's end, the pistol was covered with beads of perspiration. I left it like that for a couple of days. No corrosion or even discoloration developed. Good stainless!

Finally, I wore it for a day with just shorts in the clip-on DeSantis nylon belt pouch it comes with, backing up a Glock 27 .40 caliber in a Kramer pocket holster. I'm not accustomed to this carry mode, but it was acceptable: reasonably comfortable, low profile and not as slow as it could have been.

Bottom Line

My prejudice against the .380 shows through in this article. Is that unfair? I think it would be unfair otherwise. Too many times while testing ammo in the slaughterhouse, I've shot a hog in the center of the forehead with a .380, only to see the bullet stop in the frontal skull plate or skid around the side of the skull without ever reaching the brain. This doesn't happen with the better hollow-point .38 Specials in 2" revolvers. While .380 ball penetrates deeper in soft tissue, it is even more prone to ricochet off bone.

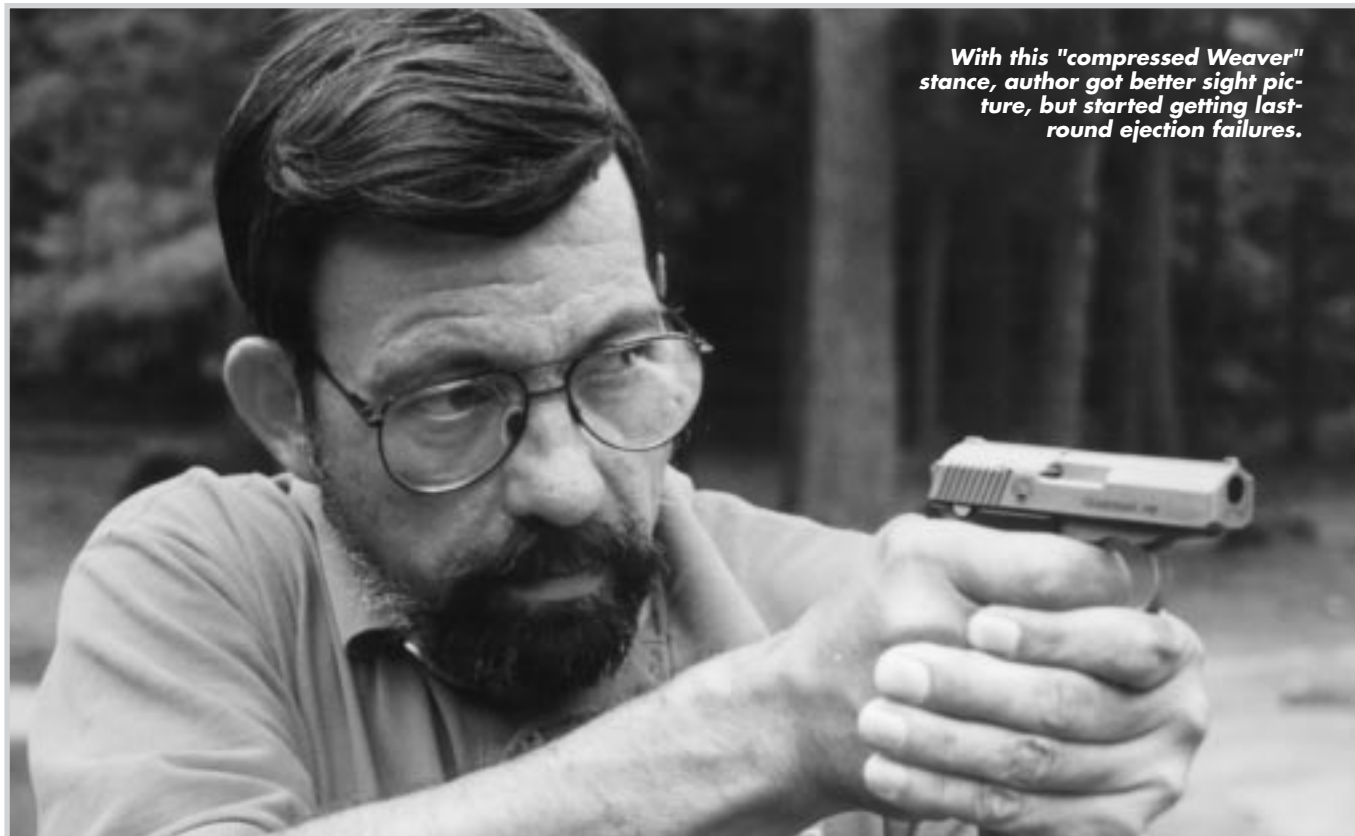
My prejudices aside, you and I both know that there are a lot of people with a perceived need for a very small .380 pistol. You may be one of them. If that is the case, the Guardian .380 brings to the table a flat, seven-shot package of very small size—and at a reasonable price.

NAA has a reputation for bending over backward to please the end users of

its products. They listen to constructive criticism. With the frame produced by Kahr Arms, the springs by Wolff and the magazines by MecGar, the best tradition of "outsourcing" has been brought to bear by North American Arms. If someone perceives their need to be a truly tiny .380 auto, there are only a couple of choices. This is one of them.



Optional pocket holster available from NAA worked well in testing.



With this "compressed Weaver" stance, author got better sight picture, but started getting last-round ejection failures.

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Sights: Windage adjustable, blade front
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\$1,520 (Concept III);
\$1,499 (Concept IV with Baer adjustable rear sight)



BAER 1911 CONCEPT S.R.P. PISTOL

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered Cocobolo
Sights: Tritium night sights, front and rear
Misc: Similar to FBI contract gun but uses Baer-forged steel frame; all parts Mag-na-fluxed
Price: \$2,240 (Government or Comanche length)



BAER 1911 NATIONAL MATCH HARDBALL PISTOL

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered Cocobolo
Sights: Baer dovetail front with undercut post; low-mount Bo-Mar rear with hidden leaf
Misc: Forged steel frame, double serrated slide and barrel with stainless brushing; lowered, flared ejection port; polished feed ramp, throated barrel
Price: \$1,335



BAER 1911 PREMIER II AUTO PISTOL

Caliber: 9x23, 38 Super, 400 Cor-Bon, 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 or 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered rosewood, double diamond pattern
Sights: Baer dovetailed front; low-mount Bo-Mar rear
Misc: Deluxe Commander hammer and sear; aluminum speed trigger with 4 lb. pull; extended ambidextrous safety
Price: \$1,428 (blued) to \$1,558 (stainless); \$1,595 (6" model, blued)



BAER ULTIMATE MASTER COMBAT PISTOL

Caliber: 9x23, 38 Super, 400 Cor-Bon, 45 ACP (others available)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5", 6"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered rosewood
Sights: Baer dovetail front; low-mount Bo-Mar rear with hidden leaf
Misc: Full-house competition gun; Baer triple port tapered cone compensator
Price: \$2,440 to \$2,690 (Compensated with Baer optics mount)



BERETTA 9000 SERIES

Caliber: 40 S&W, 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 25.7, 26.8 or 27.5 ounces
Grips: Plastic
Sights: 3-dot
Misc: Type F models are available in double and single action and have a hammer decocking feature. Type D models are DAO
Price: \$551



BERETTA BRIGADIER 92FS, 96

Caliber: 9mm (92FS) or 40 S&W (96)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.9"
Weight: 34 ounces (92FS) to 36 ounces (96)
Grips: Rubber, checkered
Sights: 3-dot dovetailed to slide, adjustable for windage
Price: \$716 to \$771



BERETTA CENTURION 92D, 92FS, 96, 96D

Caliber: 9mm or 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.4"
Weight: 34 ounces
Grips: Plastic, checkered, sand-blasted matte
Sights: 3-dot sight system
Misc: Wood or plastic
"D" models are DAO; Tritium sights also available
Price: \$669 to \$771



BERETTA COUGAR MODEL 8000/8040/8045

Caliber: 9mm (8000), 40 S&W (8040) or 45 ACP (8045)
Capacity: 8 rounds (8045) or 10 rounds (8000/8040)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 27.6 ounces (Mini Cougar 8000/8040) to 33.5 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic, walnut optional
Sights: Blade front, rear adjustable for windage (3-dot system)
Misc: Slide-mounted safety; exposed hammer; matte black finish
Price: \$709 to \$764



BERETTA BOBCAT MODEL 21

Caliber: 22 LR or 25 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds (22 LR) or 8 rounds (25 ACP)
Barrel Length: 2.5"
Weight: 11.8 ounces (22LR) or 11.5 ounces (25 ACP)
Grips: Plastic or walnut
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Blue, matte, or stainless finish
Price: \$252 to \$307



BERETTA TOMCAT MODEL 3032

Caliber: 32 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.4"
Weight: 14.5 ounces to 16.9 ounces (Titanium model)
Grips: Black plastic, checkered
Sights: Fixed blade front, drift adjustable rear
Misc: Tip-up barrel for direct chamber loading/unloading; Polished, matte, blue or Titanium finish
Price: \$340 (matte), \$370 (blue), \$418 (stainless) and \$572 (Titanium)



BERETTA CHEETAH MODEL 80 SERIES

Caliber: 22 LR or 380 ACP
Capacity: 22 LR: 7 rounds; 380 ACP: 8 rounds or 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.8" (84 and 87 Cheetah), 4.4" (86 Cheetah), 5.9" (87 Target)
Weight: 20.1 oz. (87), 21.9 oz. (85), 23.3 oz. (84 and 86), 40.9 oz. (87 Target)
Grips: Black plastic or optional wood
Sights: Drift adjustable rear, fixed front
Misc: Various models (84, 85, 87) with slightly varied features available
Price: \$381 to \$456



BERETTA CHEETAH MODEL 86

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.4"
Weight: 23.3 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Adjustable rear, fixed front sights
Misc: Features a tip-up barrel for first-round loading, Bruniton finish
Price: \$404



BERETTA MODEL 89 WOOD SPORT GOLD STANDARD

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 6"
Weight: 41 ounces
Grips: Walnut with thumbrest
Sights: Adjustable rear, interchangeable blade front, matte black, Bruniton finish
Price: \$771



BERETTA MODEL 92FS

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.9"
Weight: 34.4 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic or rubber (wood optional)
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front sights
Misc: Squared trigger guard, matte or blued finish
Price: \$629 to \$2,002 (470th Anniversary Edition)



BERETTA MODEL 96

Caliber: 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.9"
Weight: 34 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Fixed or 3-dot sights
Misc: Similar to Model 92
Price: \$468



BERETTA MODEL 950 JETFIRE

Caliber: 25 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.4"
Weight: 9.9 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic or walnut
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Tip-up barrel (similar to Model 21), matte or stainless finish
Price: \$226 to \$267



BERSA THUNDER 380, 380 DELUXE

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 7 or 9 rounds (Thunder 380 Deluxe)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 22 to 25.75 ounces (Thunderer)
Grips: Black polymer
Sights: Drift adjustable rear, fixed front
Misc: Double action; blue or nickel finish
Price: \$249 to \$292 (Thunder 380 Deluxe blue)



BROWNING BDA-380 DA

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.2"
Weight: 32 ounces
Grips: Walnut with medallion
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front sights
Price: \$564 (blue) to \$607 (nickel)



BROWNING BUCK MARK 22

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5"
Weight: 32 ounces
Grips: Black molded plastic (Plus has laminated wood grips)
Sights: Adjustable rear, ramp front
Price: \$265 (blue), \$312 (nickel), \$324 (Buck Mark Plus)



BROWNING BUCK MARK SILHOUETTE

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 9.875" or 9.9"
Weight: 53 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Pro Target Cup rear, hooded adjustable blade front
Price: \$448



BROWNING BUCK MARK TARGET 5.5

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5"
Weight: 35.5 ounces
Grips: Walnut with thumbrest
Sights: Adjustable front and rear
Price: \$425 to \$477 (Gold and Nickel models)



BROWNING BUCK MARK VARMINT

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 9.875" or 9.9"
Weight: 48 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: No open sights, full-length scope base
Price: \$403



BROWNING HI-POWER

Caliber: 9mm or 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75"
Weight: 32 ounces
Grips: Hand checkered walnut or black Polyamide
Sights: Fixed or adjustable rear, fixed front
Misc: Magazine safety, fixed rear sights available
Price: \$579 (Mark III, fixed sights, ambidextrous safety);
\$615 (Fixed sights, walnut grips);
\$668 (Adjustable sights, walnut grips);
\$684 (Silver chrome finish, adj. sights, Pachmayr grips)



CALICO M-110

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 100 round rotary magazine
Barrel Length: 6"
Weight: 3.7 pounds (loaded)
Grips: Molded plastic
Sights: Fixed rear notch, adjustable post front sight
Misc: Aluminum alloy frame; flash suppressor; ambi safety; helical feed magazine
Price: \$432



CENTURY MODEL 100

Caliber: 30-30, 375 Win., 444 Marlin, 45-70 or 50-70
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.5", 8" or 10"
Weight: 6 pounds (loaded)
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Millett rear, ramp front
Misc: Manganese-bronze frame, blue cylinder and barrel
Price: \$1,250



CIMARRON ARTILLERY MODEL

Caliber: 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5"
Weight: 39 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Case-hardened frame and hammer, Italian-made Colt reproduction
Price: \$499



CIMARRON U.S. CAVALRY MODEL

Caliber: 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 42 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Color case-hardened frame and hammer, rest charcoal blue, Italian-made Colt reproduction
Price: \$499



COLT SINGLE ACTION ARMY

Caliber: 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Black composite Eagle stocks
Sights: Blade front, notch rear
Finish: Blue with color case-hardened frame or full nickel
Misc: Available with gold grip medallions. The original Colt Single Action Army.
Price: \$1,938 to \$2,125



COLT DEFENDER

Caliber: 45
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 3"
Grips: Wraparound rubber finger groove grips
Sights: Fixed
Finish: Brushed stainless
Misc: Extended thumb safety and upswept beavertail with palm swell
Price: \$773



COLT GOLD CUP

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 39 ounces
Grips: Black wraparound
Sights: Dovetail front, Bomar-style rear
Misc: Stainless frame and round top slide
Price: \$1,116



COLT 1991 SERIES

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.25" (Commander) or 5" (Gov't 1991)
Grips: Checkered rubber composite
Sights: Fixed
Finish: Matte black or matte stainless
Price: \$645 (blue), \$800 (stainless)



COLT XSE SERIES

Caliber: 45
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.25" (Commander and lightweight Commander) or 5" (Gov't)
Grips: Checkered, double diamond, rosewood
Sights: Fixed
Finish: Stainless brushed
Misc: Adjustable 2-cut aluminum trigger
Price: \$950



COONAN 357 MAGNUM & 41 MAGNUM PISTOLS

Caliber: 357 Mag. or 41 Mag.
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 42 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Interchangeable ramp front, rear adjustable
Price: \$735 to \$1,014 (6" compensated barrel)



CZ 75 B, 75 BD & 85

Caliber: 9mm Para., 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.9" (75 B Compact), 4.7"
Weight: 32 to 35 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Square post front, rear adjustable; 3-dot system
Price: \$419 to \$526



CZ 83 B

Caliber: 32 ACP, 380 ACP or 9mm Makarov
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.8"
Weight: 26 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Removable square post front, rear adjustable; 3-dot system
Price: \$378



CZ 100

Caliber: 9mm Para. or 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.7"
Weight: 24 ounces
Grips: Grooved polymer
Sights: Blade front with dot, white outline rear drift adjustable
Price: \$432



DAN WESSON SUPER RAM SILHOUETTE

Caliber: 22 LR, 357 Mag., 357 SuperMag/Maxi, 41 Mag., 44 Mag., 414 SuperMag or 445 SuperMag
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 8"
Weight: 64 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber fingergroove
Sights: Bo-Mar target sights with hooded front
Misc: Available in blue or stainless; SRS-1 laser engraving
Price: \$1,149 to \$1,295



DAVIS DERRINGER

Caliber: 22 LR, 22 WMR, 25 ACP or 32 ACP
Capacity: 2 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.4"
Weight: 9.5 ounces
Grips: Laminated wood or pearl
Sights: Blade front, fixed notch rear
Price: \$100



DAVIS P-32 & P-380

Caliber: 32 ACP and 380 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds (P-32) and 5 rounds (P-380)
Barrel Length: 2.8"
Weight: 22 ounces
Grips: Laminated wood (P-32) or black composition (P-380)
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Black Teflon or chrome finish
Price: \$88 (P-32) and \$98 (P-380)



E.A.A. BOUNTY HUNTER

Caliber: 22 LR/22 WMR, 357 Mag., 44 Mag. or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5" to 7.5"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, grooved topstrap rear
Misc: Blue or nickel finish; hammer-forged barrel
Price: \$187 to \$298



E.A.A. WITNESS DA

Caliber: 38 Super, 9mm, 40 S&W or 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5"
Weight: 35 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber
Sights: Adjustable rear, undercut blade front
Misc: Compact models available; blue or chrome finishes available
Price: \$351 to \$366



EMF DAKOTA 1875 SINGLE ACTION

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 46 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, fixed groove rear
Price: \$300



EMF 1890 POLICE SINGLE ACTION

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Blade front, fixed groove rear
Price: \$600



EMF HARTFORD SINGLE ACTION

Caliber: 22 LR, 32-20, 357 Mag., 38-40, 44-40, 44 Special or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 45 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, fixed rear
Misc: Bullseye ejector head and color case-hardening on frame and hammer
Price: \$375 to \$500



EMF 1875 OUTLAW SINGLE ACTION

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 46 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, fixed groove rear
Price: \$575 to \$590



FREEDOM ARMS MODEL 252

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 59 ounces
Grips: Black and green laminated hardwood
Sights: Express sights, notched rear, brass bead front
Misc: Extra fitted 22 WMR cylinders available for an additional \$264; other custom options available
Price: \$1,527



FREEDOM ARMS MODEL 97

Caliber: 357 Mag. or 45 Long Colt
Capacity: 5 or 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 40 to 42 ounces
Grips: Hardwood or black micarta
Sights: Adjustable rear, ramp front
Misc: Available in fixed sight mode, stainless steel with brushed finish
Price: \$1,391 (fixed); \$1,492 (adjustable)



FREEDOM ARMS FIELD GRADES

Caliber: 454 Casull, 50 AE, 44 Mag., 357 Mag., 41 Mag. or 475 Linebaugh
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 6", 7.5" or 10"
Weight: 50 to 52 ounces
Grips: Pachmayr
Sights: Fixed or adjustable rear; ramp front
Price: \$1,322 to \$1,400



FREEDOM ARMS PREMIER GRADES

Caliber: 454 Casull, 50 AE, 44 Mag., 357 Mag., 41 Mag. or 475 Linebaugh
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 6", 7.5", 9" or 10"
Weight: 50 ounces
Grips: Hardwood
Sights: Adjustable rear; ramp front and fixed
Misc: Stainless steel; optional cylinders in 45 Colt, 45 ACP, and 45 Win. Mag. with 454 only available for \$264
Price: \$1,663 to \$1,820



GLOCK 17, 20, 21 & 22

Caliber: 9mm (17), 10mm (20), 45 ACP (21) or 40 S&W (22)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5"
Weight: 22 oz. (17 and 22), 26 oz. (20), 25 oz. (21)
Grips: Black polymer
Sights: Fixed or adjustable rear; fixed front
Misc: Double action trigger; mechanical firing pin safety
Price: \$616 to \$800



GLOCK 19 & 23

Caliber: 9mm (19) or 40 S&W (23)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 21 ounces
Grips: Synthetic
Sights: Fixed or adjustable rear
Misc: Compact versions of the Glock 17 and 22, also available with ported barrels
Price: \$616 to \$646



GLOCK 26, 27 & 31

Caliber: 9mm, 40 S&W or 357 SIG
Capacity: 9 rounds (40 S&W) or 10 rounds (9mm)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 21.8 ounces
Grips: Integral; stippled polymer
Sights: Dot on front blade, fixed or fully adjustable white outline rear
Misc: Mini-Glocks will accept magazines (including high capacity) from the larger, similar caliber Glock models
Price: \$616 to \$644



GLOCK 29 & 30

Caliber: 10mm (29) or 45 ACP (30)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.75"
Weight: 24 ounces
Grips: Integral; stippled polymer
Sights: Dot on front, fixed or fully adjustable white outline rear
Misc: Subcompact Glocks will accept magazines (including high capacity) from the larger, similar caliber Glock models
Price: \$668 to \$697



HAMMERLI 160/162 FREE PISTOLS

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 11.3"
Weight: 47 ounces
Grips: Target style walnut
Sights: Fully adjustable match rear, changeable front blade
Misc: Model 160 has mechanical set trigger; Model 162 has electronic trigger; Precision target pistols for Free Pistol event of UIT competition; Imported by SIG Arms, Inc.
Price: \$2,085 to \$2,295



HAMMERLI MODEL 208S

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.9"
Weight: 36.7 ounces
Grips: Walnut with adjustable palm rest
Sights: Blade front, open fully adjustable rear
Misc: Adjustable trigger; imported by SIG Arms, Inc.
Price: \$2,201



HAMMERLI MODEL 280 TARGET PISTOL

Caliber: 22 LR, 32 S&W Long WC
Capacity: 6 rounds (22 LR) or 5 rounds (32 S&W)
Barrel Length: 4.5"
Weight: 34.6 ounces (22LR) or 41.8 ounces (32 S&W)
Grips: Match style walnut with stippling, adjustable palm shelf
Sights: Interchangeable match, micrometer adjustable
Misc: Interchangeable trigger is adjustable for pull weight, take-up weight, let-off, and length; comes with interchangeable metal or carbon fiber counterweights; imported by SIG Arms, Inc.
Price: \$1,643 (22 LR) to \$1,853 (32 S&W)



HECKLER & KOCH MARK 23

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.9"
Weight: 42.5 ounces
Grips: Stippled and checkered black polymer
Sights: 3-dot system; optional laser aimer
Misc: Threaded barrel; polygonal bore; single or double action; mechanical recoil reduction system
Price: \$2,289



HECKLER & KOCH P7M8

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.13"
Weight: 29 ounces
Grips: Stippled black plastic
Sights: Adjustable rear, fixed front; 3-dot system
Misc: Unique squeeze cocking system; gas-retarded action; blue finish
Price: \$1,369



HECKLER & KOCH USP45, USP40 and USP9 COMPACT

Caliber: 45 ACP, 40 S&W or 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.8" to 4.9"
Weight: 27.5 ounces (40 S&W) to 26.5 ounces (9mm)
Grips: Stippled black plastic
Sights: Fixed Patridge style, adjustable for windage and elevation; 3-dot system or optional tritium
Misc: Universal mounting grooves for installing accessories
Price: \$739 to \$1,449



HECKLER & KOCH USP45 & USP45 TACTICAL

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.92"
Weight: 2.24 pounds
Grips: Non-slip stippled polymer
Sights: Blade front, rear adjustable
Price: \$1,069



HECKLER & KOCH USP EXPERT

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.20"
Weight: 2.3 pounds
Grips: Synthetic
Sights: Adjustable target
Misc: Has patented recoil reduction system
Price: \$1,449



HERITAGE ROUGH RIDER

Caliber: 22 LR or 22 LR/22 WMR Combo
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5", 4.75", 6.5", 9"
Weight: 31 to 38 ounces
Grips: Exotic hardwood
Sights: Blade front, adjustable sight or Red Dot Reflex versions available
Price: \$135 to \$239



HIGH STANDARD SUPERMATIC CITATION

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5"
Weight: 44 ounces
Grips: Checkered hardwood with thumbrest
Sights: Undercut ramp front, rear adjustable
Misc: Push-button barrel takedown system; blue or Parkerized finish; 22 Short conversion kit available (for \$309)
Price: \$468



HIGH STANDARD SUPERMATIC CITATION MS

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 10"
Weight: 54 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut with right-hand thumbrest
Sights: RPM sights, fully click-adjustable for windage and elevation
Misc: Comes in a matte blue finish with nickel accents; features push-button barrel takedown system; barrel is drilled and tapped for mounting scopes or optics
Price: \$632



HIGH STANDARD SUPERMATIC TROPHY

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" to 7.25"
Weight: 44 ounces
Grips: Checkered hardwood with thumbrest
Sights: Undercut ramp front, rear adjustable
Misc: Push-button barrel takedown system, adjustable trigger pull, blue finish and gold-plated accents; a 22 Short conversion kit is available
Price: \$510 (5.5") to \$650 (7.25")



HIGH STANDARD VICTOR

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5" to 5.5"
Weight: 46 ounces
Grips: Checkered hardwood with thumbrest
Sights: Undercut ramp front, rear adjustable
Misc: Comes in either a blue or Parkerized finish with gold accents; features a push-button barrel takedown system, adjustable trigger, and drilled and tapped receiver; 22 Short conversion kit available; 4.5" is scope base model only
Price: \$532 to \$591



KAHR ARMS K9/40

Caliber: 9mm Para or 40 S&W
Capacity: 7 rounds (9mm) or 6 rounds (40 S&W)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 25 ounces
Grips: Wraparound, textured soft polymer
Sights: Blade front, rear drift adjustable; bar-dot combat style
Misc: Double action only; matte black finish; all steel; also available in nickel with wood grips
Price: \$538 to \$836 (Duo-Tone with tritium night sights)



KIMBER PRO CARRY

Caliber: 45 ACP or 40 S&W
Capacity: 7 (45 ACP) or 8 rounds (S&W)
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 28.3 ounces
Grips: Black synthetic, high beavertail grip safety
Sights: Low profile blended combat sights; dovetail mounted
Misc: Match grade trigger group; beveled magazine well and slide serrations; lowered and flared ejection port; tactical ejector; bushingless bull barrel, aluminum frame
Price: \$773 to \$808 (matte blue); \$845 to \$881 (stainless steel slide); \$1,142 (CDP Series)



KIMBER CUSTOM 1911 PISTOLS

Caliber: 45 ACP or 40 S&W
Capacity: 7 to 10 rounds (depending on caliber and frame)
Barrel Length: 3", 4" and 5"
Weight: 24 to 38 ounces
Grips: Black synthetic; hand-checked rosewood; hand-checked walnut
Sights: Dovetail mounted fixed; adjustable or Tritium 3-dot night sights
Misc: 40 different models available; standard features include match grade barrels and chambers and match grade trigger groups; high beavertail grip safety; Commander-style hammer
Price: \$730 and up; many custom options available



KIMBER POLYMER MODELS

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 round magazine; (14 round available where legal)
Barrel Length: 3", 4" and 5"
Weight: 24 to 34 ounces
Grips: Polymer frame with stainless steel or 7075-T7 aluminum frame insert; impressed positive checkering
Sights: Dovetail mounted, fixed or adjustable
Misc: Stainless steel beavertail grip safety
Price: \$745 to \$1,177



KIMBER ULTRA CARRY

Caliber: 45 ACP or 40 S&W
Capacity: 7 round magazine
Barrel Length: 3"
Weight: 24 ounces (Ultra Ten II) to 25 ounces (single stack)
Grips: Black synthetic
Sights: Dovetail mounted fixed with low profile combat
Misc: Dual captured low-effort spring design for easy operation; accepts all quality Officer's-type magazines
Price: \$808 to \$847 (matte blue); \$886 to \$931 (stainless); \$1,142 (CDP series); \$896 (Ultra Ten II)



LLAMA MAX SERIES, MICROMAX, MINIMAX, MINIMAX SUBCOMPACT

Caliber: 9mm, 45, 40 S&W, 32 or 380, Micromax in 380
Capacity: 6, 7 or 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 23 to 36 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber or high impact polymer
Sights: 3-dot combat
Misc: Minimax, Micromax, Max models available in matte, chrome or duo-tone finish; extended slide release; distributed by Import Sports Inc.
Price: \$282 to \$350



MAGNUM RESEARCH DESERT EAGLE

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44 Mag. or 50 AE
Capacity: 9 rounds (357), 8 rounds (41 and 44) or 7 rounds (50)
Barrel Length: 6" or 10"
Weight: 4 pounds, 6.5 ounces (6"), 4 pounds, 15 ounces (10")
Grips: Plastic
Sights: Fixed combat, Millett adjustable (optional)
Misc: Also available: Custom finishes, chrome, nickel, gold and titanium gold
Price: \$1,199 (6"), \$1,699 (10")



MAGNUM RESEARCH ONE PRO

Caliber: 45 ACP or 400 Cor-Bon
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.75"
Weight: 31 ounces
Grips: Textured plastic
Sights: Fixed
Price: \$209 (400 Cor-Bon non-compensated) to \$249



M.O.A. MAXIMUM SINGLE SHOT

Caliber: Most calibers from 22 LR to 375 H&H
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 8.5", 10.5" or 14"
Weight: 3 pounds, 8 ounces (8.5"); 3 pounds, 13 ounces (10.5"); 4 pounds, 3 ounces (14")
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Adjustable rear, post front
Misc: Tapped and drilled for scope mount; extra barrels available
Price: \$799 (blue) to \$883 (stainless)



NAVY ARMS 1873 COLT-STYLE SAA

Caliber: 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3", 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 36 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Blade front, groove in topstrap rear
Price: \$385



NAVY ARMS 1875 SCHOFIELD

Caliber: 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3" (Hide Out Model), 5" (Wells Fargo Model), 7" (Cavalry Model)
Weight: 39 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Blade front, notch rear
Misc: Cavalry, Hide Out and Wells Fargo models available in either caliber
Price: \$695



NAVY ARMS "BISLEY MODEL" SAA

Caliber: 44-40 or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Blade front, notch rear
Price: \$405



NAVY ARMS FLAT TOP TARGET MODEL SAA

Caliber: 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Spring loaded front, adjustable rear
Price: \$425



NAVY ARMS NEW MODEL RUSSIAN

Caliber: 44 Russian
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Blade front, notch rear
Price: \$745



NORTH AMERICAN ARMS MINI-MASTER

Caliber: 22 LR or 22 WMR
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 10.75 ounces
Grips: Checkered hard black rubber
Sights: Blade front, white outline rear adjustable, or fixed
Misc: Heavy vent barrel, full-size grips; extra cylinders available
Price: \$286 (fixed) to \$304 (adjustable); \$324 to \$343 with extra cylinders



NORTH AMERICAN ARMS BLACK WIDOW

Caliber: 22 LR or 22 WMR
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 2"
Weight: 8.8 ounces
Grips: Black rubber
Sights: Millett fixed or adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Extra cylinders available; heavy barrel, full grips, vent ribbed barrel
Price: \$256 (fixed) to \$274 (adjustable); \$294 (fixed) to \$312 (adjustable) with extra cylinders



NORTH AMERICAN ARMS MINI

Caliber: 22 Short, 22 LR or 22 WMR
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.125" or 1.625"
Weight: 4 to 6.5 ounces
Grips: Laminated wood
Sights: Blade front, notch fixed rear
Misc: Extra cylinders available
Price: \$186 to \$240



PARA-ORDNANCE P10

Caliber: 9mm, 40 S&W or 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3"
Weight: 24 ounces (alloy) or 31 ounces (stainless steel)
Grips: Textured composition
Sights: 3-dot system
Misc: Black or stainless finish available
Price: \$740 to \$799



PARA-ORDNANCE P12

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 26 ounces (alloy) or 34 ounces (stainless steel)
Grips: Black plastic
Sights: Low mount rear, dovetailed front
Misc: Stainless or black finishes available; steel or alloy frames; high capacity magazines available
Price: \$740 to \$799



PARA-ORDNANCE P13

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.25"
Weight: 28 ounces (alloy) or 36 ounces (stainless steel)
Grips: Black plastic
Sights: Fixed rear, blade front (3-dot system)
Misc: Alloy, steel or stainless frame; black or stainless finish; high capacity magazines available
Price: \$740 to \$799



PARA-ORDNANCE P14

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 31 ounces (alloy) or 40 ounces (stainless steel)
Grips: Black plastic
Sights: Adjustable rear, dovetailed front
Misc: Alloy, stainless or steel frame; black, duotone or stainless finish; high capacity magazines available
Price: \$740 to \$799



PARA-ORDNANCE P16

Caliber: 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Black plastic
Sights: Adjustable rear, dovetailed front
Misc: Steel or stainless frame; high capacity magazines available; black or stainless finish
Price: \$750 (black) to \$799 (stainless)



PARA-ORDNANCE 7.45 LDA

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 39 ounces
Grips: Chekered rosewood standard, black optional
Sights: Adjustable rear
Misc: Available with black carbon steel or stainless frame
Price: \$775



PARA-ORDNANCE 14 LDA, 16 LDA & 18 LDA

Caliber: 45 ACP (14 LDA), 40 S&W (16 LDA) or 9mm (18 LDA)
Capacity: 10 rounds (18 rounds in 18 LDA)
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 40 ounces
Grips: Black plastic
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Double action, steel frame and stainless or black finish; Model 18 LDA for law enforcement or military only; high capacity magazines available
Price: \$775 to \$824



PARDINI ARMS MOD SP STANDARD PISTOL & MOD HP CENTERFIRE PISTOL

Caliber: 22 LR (SP) or 32 WC (HP)
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75"
Weight: 38.9 ounces
Grips: Adjustable; stippled walnut match type
Sights: Fully adjustable rear, interchangeable blade front
Misc: Adjustable match trigger; imported by Nygord Precision Products
Price: \$950 (SP) to \$1,050 (FHP)



PARDINI ARMS MOD K22 FREE PISTOL

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 9.75"
Weight: 34.6 ounces
Grips: Wraparound walnut; adjustable match type
Sights: Interchangeable post front, fully adjustable match open rear
Misc: Imported by Nygord Precision Products
Price: \$1,295



PHOENIX ARMS HP 22/25

Caliber: 22 LR (HP 22) or 25 ACP (HP 25)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3"
Weight: 20 ounces
Grips: Checkered composition
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Available in satin nickel or polished blue finish
Price: \$116



ROSSI MODEL 851

Caliber: 38 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 27.5 ounces
Grips: Rubber
Sights: Adjustable
Misc: Double action, blue steel, and + P rated, integral key lock action
Price: \$298



ROSSI MODEL 971

Caliber: 357 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4" or 6", heavy
Weight: 36 ounces
Grips: Rubber
Sights: Adjustable
Misc: Double action, stainless or blue steel, + P rated, integral key lock action
Price: \$345 (Blue) to \$391 (Stainless)



RPM XL SINGLE SHOT PISTOL

Caliber: Available in a wide variety of calibers from 22 LR to 45-70
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 8", 10.75", 12", 14" and 15"
Weight: 60 ounces
Grips: Smooth Goncalo Alves with thumb and heel rests
Sights: Hooded front with interchangeable post or Patridge; ISGW rear adjustable.
Price: \$2,000



RUGER BISLEY

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44 Mag., 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5"
Weight: 48 ounces
Grips: Rosewood with Ruger medallion
Sights: Fixed or adjustable rear, fixed front
Misc: Unfluted cylinder and roll engraving
Price: \$510



RUGER BISLEY SMALL FRAME

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.5"
Weight: 41 ounces
Grips: Rosewood with Ruger medallion
Sights: Fixed rear, fixed front
Price: \$402



RUGER BISLEY-VAQUERO

Caliber: 44 Mag. or 45 Long Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" and 4.625"
Weight: 39 to 40 ounces
Grips: Smooth rosewood with Ruger medallion
Sights: Notch rear, blade front, fixed
Price: \$510 (blue) to \$529 (stainless)



RUGER BLACKHAWK

Caliber: 30 Carbine, 357 Mag., 41 Mag or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.625", 6.5" or 7.5" (30 Carbine and 45 Colt only)
Weight: 38 ounces to 44 ounces
Grips: American walnut with Ruger medallion
Sights: Ramp front, micro-click adjustable rear
Price: \$415 to \$505 (depending on caliber and finish)



RUGER SUPER BLACKHAWK

Caliber: 44 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.625", 5.5", 7.5", 10.5"
Weight: 45 to 51 ounces
Grips: American walnut
Sights: Ramp front, micro-click adjustable rear
Price: \$489 (blue) to \$519 (stainless)



RUGER NEW BEARCAT

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 24 ounces
Grips: Rosewood
Sights: Blade front, fixed notch rear
Price: \$359



RUGER REDHAWK

Caliber: 44 Mag. and 45 Long Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 49 to 54 ounces
Grips: Goncalo Alves, square butt
Sights: Adjustable rear, Patridge-type front
Price: \$560 (Blue) to \$650 (Stainless, model KRH-45 R with 1" scope rings)



RUGER SUPER REDHAWK

Caliber: 44 Mag., 454 Casull, 480 Ruger
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 7.5" or 9.5"
Weight: 53 and 58 ounces
Grips: Santoprene with Goncalo Alves insert
Sights: Adjustable rear; interchangeable front inserts
Misc: Heavy extended frame, stainless steel
Price: \$650 (Stainless) to \$745 (Stainless Target Gray)



RUGER SUPER SINGLE-SIX

Caliber: 22 LR or 22 WMR (available with extra cylinder)
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.625", 5.5", 6.5" or 9.5"
Weight: 32 to 35 ounces
Grips: Rosewood with Ruger medallion
Sights: Adjustable rear, Patridge front
Price: \$369 (blue) to \$449 (High Gloss Stainless)



RUGER VAQUERO

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40, 44 Mag. or 45 Colt
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.625", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 39 to 41 ounces
Grips: Smooth rosewood with Ruger medallion
Sights: Blade front, fixed rear
Price: \$510



RUGER GP-100

Caliber: 357 Mag. or 38 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3", 4" or 6" (heavy barrels available)
Weight: 35 to 43 ounces
Grips: Santoprene with Goncalo Alves inserts
Sights: Fixed, adjustable on 4" heavy, 6", and 6" heavy
Price: \$465 to \$515



RUGER SP-101

Caliber: 22 LR, 32 Mag., 38 Special +P or 357 Mag.
Capacity: 5 rounds (38 Special, 357) or 6 rounds (22 LR & 32 Mag.)
Barrel Length: 2.25", 3.1" or 4"
Weight: 34 ounces
Grips: Santoprene cushioned grip with Xenoy inserts
Sights: Fixed; adjustable rear on 22 LR and 32 Mag.
Misc: Stainless steel small frame; spurless hammer, DAO version introduced in 1993
Price: \$458



RUGER 22/45

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 4.75" or 5.5" (bull bbl.)
Weight: 28 to 35 ounces
Grips: Zytel
Sights: Adjustable or fixed rear, blade front
Misc: All blue or stainless steel with fixed or adjustable sights
Price: \$275 to \$359



RUGER MARK II STANDARD

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75" or 6"
Weight: 35 to 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Fixed, wide blade front, square notch rear adjustable
Price: \$278 (blue) to \$364 (stainless)



RUGER MARK II TARGET

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.9"
Weight: 42 ounces
Grips: Checkered hard plastic
Sights: Blade front, micro-click rear
Price: \$336 (blue) to \$420 (stainless)



RUGER MARK II GOVERNMENT TARGET

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.9"
Weight: 46 ounces
Grips: Checkered hard plastic
Sights: High profile adjustable rear, fixed front sights
Price: \$405 (blue) to \$485 (stainless)



RUGER STAINLESS GOVERNMENT TARGET SLAB SIDE

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 6.9"
Weight: 45 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut with thumb rest
Sights: Open sight; drilled and tapped for scope mounts
Price: \$499



RUGER P-89

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5"
Weight: 32 ounces
Grips: Grooved black Xenoy composition
Sights: Square post front, square notch rear adjustable
Misc: Alloy frame, black matte finish; DAO, decocker and safety models available in blued or stainless steel
Price: \$452 (blue) to \$499 (stainless)



RUGER P-90

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.5"
Weight: 33.5 ounces
Grips: Grooved black Xenoy composition
Sights: Square post front, square notch rear adjustable
Misc: Stainless steel, decocking or manual safety
Price: \$499 (blue) to \$539 (stainless)



RUGER P-93

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.9"
Weight: 31 ounces
Grips: Synthetic, grooved
Sights: Post front, adjustable rear
Misc: Available in decock-only or DAO models
Price: \$467 to \$546



RUGER P-94

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.25"
Weight: 33 to 34 ounces
Grips: Synthetic, grooved
Sights: Post front, adjustable rear
Misc: Available in decock-only, DAO or manual safety models (blued or stainless steel)
Price: \$467 to \$546



RUGER P-95

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.9"
Weight: 27 ounces
Grips: Synthetic, grooved
Sights: Post front, adjustable rear
Misc: Available in decock DAO models and safety models
Price: \$407 to \$453



SAVAGE STRIKER 500 SERIES

Caliber: 22-250 Rem., 243 Win., 308 Win., 223 Rem., 7mm-08 Rem.
Capacity: Internal box with 2 round capacity
Barrel Length: 14"
Length: 22.5"
Weight: Approx. 5 pounds
Misc: Left-hand bolt, right hand ejection, mid-grip, ambidextrous composite stock with grooved forend, dual pillar bedding, free-floated button rifled barrel; available in blued, stainless and stainless steel with adjustable muzzle brake (AMB)
Price: \$400 (blued), \$450 (stainless), \$500 (stainless with AMB)



SAVAGE STRIKER 516 SERIES

Caliber: 223 Rem., 22-250 Rem., 243 Win., 7mm-08 Rem., 308 Win.
Capacity: 2 rounds
Barrel Length: 12" barrel and 2" Adjustable muzzle brake
Weight: 5.5, 5.75 pounds
Grips: Synthetic or wood
Sights: Drilled and tapped for scope mounts
Misc: Stainless barreled action, left-hand bolt, right-side action
Price: N/A



SEECAMP LWS 32

Caliber: 32 ACP
Capacity: 6 round magazine
Barrel Length: 2"
Weight: 10.5 ounces
Grips: Glass-filled nylon
Sights: Smooth, no-slag, contoured slide and barrel
Price: \$425



SIG SAUER P-210

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.8", 5.9"
Weight: 32, 33.9 and 37 ounces
Grips: Wood
Sights: Target
Misc: Blued finish
Price: N/A



SIG SAUER P-220, P-220ST

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds or 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.4"
Weight: 27.8 ounces
Grips: Checkered black plastic
Sights: Drift adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Blue finish or ILAFLON finish and night sights available; imported by SIG Arms Inc.
Price: \$810 (blue) to \$969 (stainless and night sights)



SIG SAUER P-226 & P-229

Caliber: 9mm, 40 S&W or 357 SIG
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.4" (226); 3.9" (229)
Weight: 28.3 or 30.6 ounces (226); 28.1 or 29.5 ounces (229)
Grips: Plastic
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Double action only model available; blue, two-tone or Nitron finish available; imported by SIG Arms Inc.
Price: \$851 to \$994 (Nickel/Nitron, DAO and night sights)



SIG SAUER P-232

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds (380)
Barrel Length: 3.6"
Weight: 16.2 ounces (20.8 ounces in stainless steel)
Grips: Plastic (Hogue on selected models)
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Blue, stainless, two-tone finish available; imported by SIG Arms Inc.
Price: \$518 (blue) to \$579 (two-tone, night sights)



SMITH & WESSON AIRLITE TI

Caliber: 32 H&R Mag. or 38 S&W Special
Capacity: 5 rounds (38 S&W) or 6 rounds (32 H&R)
Barrel Length: 1.9"
Weight: 11 to 12 ounces
Grips: Uncle Mike's Boot or Dymondwood Boot
Sights: Pinned black serrated ramp front, fixed notch rear
Misc: Titanium cylinder; aluminum alloy frame, barrel shroud and yoke; stainless steel barrel liner
Price: \$682 to \$699



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 10/64

Caliber: 38 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 2", 3" or 4" (Model 10 in 4" only)
Weight: 30.5 to 36 ounces
Grips: Uncle Mike's Combat
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Finishes: Model 10 (blue); Model 64 (stainless)
Price: \$420 (Model 10) to \$454 (Model 64)



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 65LS

Caliber: 357 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3"
Weight: 31 ounces
Grips: Rosewood, round butt
Sights: Serrated ramp front, fixed notch rear
Misc: Stainless with frosted finish; smooth combat trigger; service hammer
Price: \$539



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 66

Caliber: 357 Mag. and 38 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.5", 4" or 6"
Weight: 36 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber
Sights: Red ramp front, micro-click rear adjustable
Misc: Satin stainless finish
Price: \$545 (2.5") to \$551 (4", 6")



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 22A/22S

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" Bull
Weight: 38.5 ounces
Grips: Dymondwood or rubber
Sights: Patridge front, adjustable rear
Misc: Matte black finish, 22S has aluminum frame
Price: \$320 (22A) to \$379 (22S)



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 629

Caliber: 44 Mag. or 44 S&W Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5", 6.5" or 8.4"
Weight: 47 to 51 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber combat or wood combat
Sights: Adjustable rear, interchangeable front
Misc: Stainless finish
Price: \$670 to \$888 (Classic DX)



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 36/37/60

Caliber: 38 Special +P or 357 Mag. (Model 60 only)
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.9" (Model 36 & 37), 2.13" or 3" (Model 60)
Weight: 15 to 24 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber, rosewood or Uncle Mike's Combat
Sights: Serrated ramp, fixed notch
Misc: Finishes: Model 36 (blue steel); Model 37 (blue aluminum alloy) and Model 60 (stainless steel)
Price: \$406 to \$536



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 38/649

Caliber: 38 Special or 357 Mag.
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.9" to 2.13"
Weight: 14.5 (Model 38) to 20 (Model 649) ounces
Grips: Uncle Mike's Combat
Sights: Pinned black serrated ramp front, fixed notch rear
Misc: Finishes: Model 38 (blue) and Model 649 (stainless)
Price: \$462 to \$502



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 60LS LADYSMITH

Caliber: 38 Special or 357 Mag.
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.9"
Weight: 21.5 ounces
Grips: Rosewood
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Stainless finish
Price: \$539



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 317 AIRLITE

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.9" to 3"
Weight: 10.5 (rubber grip) to 12 ounces
Grips: Dymondwood Boot or Uncle Mike's Boot
Sights: Front serrated ramp, rear fixed notch
Misc: Clear Cote Aluminum finish; Airlite LadySmith also available
Price: \$508 to \$568



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 337 CHIEFS SPECIAL AIRLITE TI

Caliber: 38 S&W Special
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.875"
Weight: 11.2 ounces
Grips: Uncle Mike's Boot; Dymondwood Boot
Sights: Black serrated front; fixed notch rear
Misc: Aluminum alloy frame, barrel shroud and yoke; titanium cylinder; stainless steel barrel liner
Price: \$682



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 442/640/642

Caliber: 357 Mag. or 38 S&W Special +P (Model 442 & 642 in 38 Special +P only)
Capacity: 5 rounds
Barrel Length: 1.9" to 1.25"
Weight: 15 to 25 ounces
Grips: Uncle Mike's Boot or Uncle Mike's Combat
Sights: Serrated ramp, fixed notch
Misc: Finishes: Model 442 (blue); Model 640 & 642 (stainless); Concealed hammer; Full lug barrel on 357 Mag.; LadySmith version also available
Price: \$505



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 686

Caliber: 357 Mag.
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 6" or 8.4" (Model 686 also comes in a 2.5" barrel)
Weight: 34.5 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber
Sights: Adjustable rear, red ramp front
Price: \$534 to \$550



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 617

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 6 to 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 6" or 8.4"
Weight: 42 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber
Sights: Adjustable/black rear, pinned Patridge front
Misc: Stainless steel with satin finish
Price: \$524 to \$578



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 625

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 46 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber combat, wood optional
Sights: Adjustable/black rear, Patridge front
Price: \$636



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 629 CLASSIC & 629 CLASSIC DX

Caliber: 44 Mag. or 44 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 5", 6", 6.5" or 8.4"
Weight: 41.5 to 54.5 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber combat or wood combat
Sights: Adjustable rear; interchangeable, red ramp or Patridge front
Misc: Stainless finish; chamfered cylinder; full lug barrel and drilled and tapped for scope mount; Classic DX model features five interchangeable front sights
Price: \$670 (Model 629) to \$888 (Classic DX)



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 657

Caliber: 41 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 6"
Weight: 48 ounces
Grips: Hogue rubber combat
Sights: Adjustable rear, pinned black ramp front
Misc: Stainless finish
Price: \$564



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 686

Caliber: 357 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.5", 4", 6", 8.4"
Weight: 41 to 46 ounces
Grips: Hogue black rubber
Sights: Adjustable rear blade, pinned fixed front
Misc: Stainless steel with full lug ported barrel
Price: \$514 to \$564



SMITH & WESSON CS9, CS40 & CS45

Caliber: 9mm (CS9), 40 S&W (CS40) or 45 ACP (CS45)
Capacity: 6 rounds (CS45) or 7 rounds (CS9 & CS40)
Barrel Length: 3" or 3.25"
Weight: 20.75 to 24 ounces
Grips: Hogue wraparound rubber
Sights: 2-dot white rear, post with white dot front
Price: \$648 (CS9) to \$683 (CS40 & CS45)



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 41

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" or 7"
Weight: 44 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut with modified thumbrest
Sights: Adjustable rear, Patridge front
Price: \$801



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 410

Caliber: 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 28.5 ounces
Grips: One-piece Xenoy wraparound with straight backstrap
Sights: Post front, fixed 2-dot rear
Misc: Blue carbon steel slide and alloy frame
Price: \$563



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 457

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.75"
Weight: 29 ounces
Grips: One-piece Xenoy wraparound with straight backstrap
Sights: Post front, fixed 3-dot rear
Misc: Matte blue carbon steel slide and alloy frame in blue finish
Price: \$563



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 908

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 26 ounces
Grips: One-piece Xenoy wraparound with straight backstrap
Sights: Post front, fixed 3-dot rear
Price: \$509



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 910

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 28 ounces
Grips: One-piece Xenoy wraparound with straight backstrap
Sights: Post front with white dot, fixed 2-dot rear
Price: \$509



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 3913

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 26 ounces
Grips: One-piece Delrin wraparound with straight backstrap; textured surface
Sights: Post white dot front, Novak Lo Mount Carry 2-dot rear
Misc: Stainless finish and ambidextrous safety, extra magazine included
Price: \$662 to \$724



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 3913LS LADYSMITH

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 26 ounces
Grips: Straight backstrap gray; ergonomically correct for a woman's hand
Sights: Novak Lo Mount Carry 2-dot rear, white dot front
Misc: Stainless finish and single side safety; extra magazine included
Price: \$744



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 4006

Caliber: 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 38.5 ounces
Grips: Xenoy wraparound with checkered panels and straight backstrap
Sights: Adjustable 2-dot rear, white dot front
Misc: Stainless slide and alloy frame; ambidextrous safety; tritium night sights available
Price: \$864 to \$991



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 4046 DAO

Caliber: 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 39.5 ounces
Grips: Straight backstrap
Sights: White dot front, Novak Lo Mount Carry 2-dot
Misc: Stainless steel slide, slightly bobbed hammer and double-action only
Price: \$864 to \$991



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 5906 TSW

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 37.5 ounces
Grips: Curved backstrap
Sights: Post white dot front, Novak Lo Mount Carry or adjustable 2-dot rear
Misc: Stainless slide and frame; ambidextrous safety; traditional DA
Price: \$861



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 5946

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 37.5 ounces
Grips: Curved backstrap
Sights: Novak Lo Mount Carry or adjustable 2-dot rear, post white dot front
Misc: Stainless slide and frame and .260" serrated hammer; DAO
Price: \$822



SMITH & WESSON SIGMA SW380

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 3"
Weight: 14 ounces
Grips: Integral black polymer
Sights: Fixed groove in slide
Price: \$328



SMITH & WESSON ENHANCED SIGMA SERIES

Caliber: 9mm or 40 S&W
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 24.5 to 24.75 ounces
Grips: Integral black polymer
Sights: White or tritium dot front, fixed or tritium 2-dot rear
Misc: High capacity magazines available for law enforcement or export orders; unique, recontoured angle grip; integral accessory grooves for mounting lights, laser sights, etc.; melonite or stainless finish
Price: \$447 to \$657



SPRINGFIELD CHAMPION 1911-A1

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 28 to 34 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Novak night sights
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in a Parkerized, stainless or matte finish and also in a light weight
Price: \$817 (Parkerized); \$867 (lightweight matte); \$870 (stainless)



SPRINGFIELD COMPACT LIGHTWEIGHT 1911-A1

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 26 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Novak night sights
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in a stainless or matte finish
Price: \$826 to \$900



SPRINGFIELD FULL-SIZE 1911-A1

Caliber: 9mm, 45 ACP, 40 S&W
Capacity: 9 rounds (9 mm), 7 rounds (45 ACP) or 8 rounds (40 S&W)
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Novak patented low mount or fully adjustable rear
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in stainless, blued, Parkerized or matte finish and in a V-12 or light weight model
Price: \$770 to \$878



SPRINGFIELD LONG SLIDE 1911-A1

Caliber: 45 ACP or 45 ACP Super/45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 6"
Weight: 41 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Fully adjustable target
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; comes with a stainless finish and is available in a Trophy Match or V-16 model
Price: \$1,002 to \$1,399 (Trophy Match)



SPRINGFIELD MIL-SPEC 1911-A1

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5" (Ultra Compact), 5"
Weight: 32 ounces (Ultra Compact) to 35.6 ounces
Grips: Checkered black plastic
Sights: 3-dot Hi-Viz Fixed Combat
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in a Parkerized finish
Price: \$559 to \$682



SPRINGFIELD TROPHY MATCH 1911-A1

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds (8 rounds in Armory Kote model)
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Fully adjustable target
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in blued or stainless finish and in a high capacity or long slide model
Price: \$1,115 to \$1,225



SPRINGFIELD ULTRA-COMPACT 1911-A1

Caliber: 9mm or 45 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds (8 rounds in 9mm model)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 25 to 32 ounces
Grips: Plastic
Sights: Novak patented low mount or Novak night sights
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in Parkerized, stainless, bi-tone or matte finish and in V-10, bi-tone or stainless steel models
Price: \$817 to \$884



SPRINGFIELD FULL-SIZE HIGH CAPACITY

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds (13 rounds available to law enforcement)
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: Checkered black plastic
Sights: Novak patented low mount
Misc: Pistol comes Parkerized
Price: \$807



SPRINGFIELD TACTICAL RESPONSE PISTOL TRP FULL-SIZE & TRP OPERATOR MODEL

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: Checkered walnut
Sights: Novak night sights
Misc: Pistol comes "loaded" with value added features; available in Armory Kote, or stainless finish; TRP-PRO MODEL is the FBI's pistol for their SWAT Hostage Rescue Team
Price: \$1,265 to \$1,395



SPRINGFIELD ULTRA COMPACT HIGH CAPACITY

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 10 rounds (12 rounds available to law enforcement)
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 33 ounces
Grips: Checkered black plastic
Sights: Novak patented low mount
Misc: Pistol comes Parkerized
Price: \$870



STEYR M-SERIES

Caliber: 40 S&W, 9X19 or 357 SIG
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 28 ounces
Grips: Advanced ultra-rigid synthetic
Sights: Triangle/trapezoid sighting system
Misc: Three user selectable safety conditions, integrated limited access lock with key, reset-action trigger system and true direct loaded chamber indicator
Price: \$610



STEYR S-SERIES

Caliber: 40 S&W; 9x19
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.58"
Weight: 22.5 ounces
Grips: Advanced ultra-rigid synthetic
Sights: Triangle/trapezoid sighting system
Misc: Three user selectable safety conditions; visual/felt indicator
Price: \$610



TAURUS MODEL 44

Caliber: 44 Mag.
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 6.5" or 8.4"
Weight: 45 to 57 ounces
Grips: Soft black rubber
Sights: Micro-click adjustable rear; serrated ramp front
Misc: Features include a compensated barrel; a heavy, solid rib on 4" or vent rib barrel on 6.5" and 8.4"
Price: \$500 to \$575



TAURUS MODEL 82 & 82SS4

Caliber: 38 Special
Capacity: 6 rounds (7 rounds in Model 827)
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 36.5 ounces
Grips: Soft black rubber
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Heavy, solid rib barrel and key lock
Price: \$325 (Model 82 blue) to \$375 (Model 82SS4 stainless)



TAURUS MODEL 85 & 731

Caliber: 38 Special and 32 Mag. (731)
Capacity: 5 rounds and 6 shots (731)
Barrel Length: 2"
Weight: 17 to 24.5 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber, rosewood, mother of pearl
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Matte, blue or stainless finish; key locks, concealed hammer and Ultra-Lite versions available;
Model 731: 32 H&R Mag., 6 rounds, 2" barrel, weighs 17 ounces with matte stainless steel finish
Price: \$345 to \$445



TAURUS MODEL 94 & 941

Caliber: 22 LR or 22 Mag.
Capacity: 8 or 9 rounds
Barrel Length: 2", 4" or 5"
Weight: 18 to 27.5 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber
Sights: Adjustable
Price: \$325



TAURUS MODEL 445 & 617

Caliber: 44 Special (Model 445 only) or 357 Mag. (Model 617)
Capacity: 5 rounds (Model 445) or 7 rounds (Model 617)
Barrel Length: 2"
Weight: 20 to 28 ounces
Grips: Soft black rubber (617), Ribber (445)
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Options include key locks, ported barrel and concealed hammer; heavy, solid rib barrel on Model 445, also available in titanium
Price: \$345 to \$500



TAURUS MODEL 605 & 817

Caliber: 357 Mag. (Model 605) or 38 Special (Model 817)
Capacity: 5 rounds (Model 605) or 7 rounds (Model 817)
Barrel Length: 2"
Weight: 21 to 24 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Available with ported barrel, concealed hammer, key lock and an Ultra-Lite version; comes in a blue, matte or stainless finish
Price: \$345 to \$440



TAURUS MODEL 608

Caliber: 357 Mag.
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4", 6.5" or 8.4"
Weight: 44 to 56 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber
Sights: Adjustable
Misc: Available with ported barrel with solid or vented ribs; in a bright blue or matte stainless finish
Price: \$445 to \$525



TAURUS PT-22 & PT-25

Caliber: 22 LR (PT-22) or 25 ACP (PT-25)
Capacity: 8 rounds (PT-22) or 9 rounds (PT-25)
Barrel Length: 2.75"
Weight: 12 ounces
Grips: Rosewood, wood or mother of pearl
Sights: Fixed
Misc: Features exclusive tip-up barrel; available in blue with gold trim, nickel or duo-tone finish.
Price: \$190



TAURUS PT92

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10+1 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 34 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber, rosewood or mother of pearl
Sights: 3-dot fixed
Misc: Ambidextrous 3-position safety
Price: \$575 (blue) to \$670 (polished stainless steel)



TAURUS PT99

Caliber: 9mm
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 34 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber, rosewood or mother of pearl
Sights: 3-dot adjustable
Misc: Ambidextrous 3-position safety
Price: \$575 (blue) to \$670 (polished stainless)



TAURUS PT111 & PT138

Caliber: 9mm (PT111) or 380 (PT138)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.25"
Weight: 18.75 ounces
Grips: Checkered
Sights: 3-dot fixed
Price: \$425 (blue) to \$500 (matte stainless)



TAURUS PT957, PT911, PT938 & PT940

Caliber: 357 Sig (PT957) or 9mm (PT911), 380 ACP (PT938) or 40 (PT940)
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.75" (PT938), 3.6" (PT957 and PT940) or 4" (PT911)
Weight: 26.75 to 28 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber, rosewood or mother of pearl
Sights: 3-dot fixed, night sights available (911, 940)
Misc: 3-position ambidextrous safety; PT957 is ported
Price: \$505 to \$600



TAURUS PT945

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.25"
Weight: 29.5 ounces
Grips: Checkered rubber, rosewood or mother of pearl
Sights: 3-dot fixed
Misc: 3-position ambidextrous safety
Price: \$525 (blue) to \$655 (polished stainless)



TAURUS RAGING BULL SERIES

Caliber: 454 Casull, 44 Mag. or 45 long Colt
Capacity: 5 or 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5", 6.5" or 8.4"
Weight: 51 to 63 ounces
Grips: Soft rubber
Sights: Adjustable
Misc: Features a key lock and ported barrel
Price: \$575 (blue) to \$855 (matte stainless)



THOMPSON/CENTER ENCORE

Caliber: 22-250, 223, 7mm-08, 243, 308, 270, 30-'06 or 44 Mag.
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 12" and 15", tapered round
Weight: 64 to 64.5 ounces
Grips: Walnut with finger grooves, walnut forend
Sights: Blade on ramp front, adjustable rear, or none
Price: \$550 (12") to \$560 (15")



UBERTI 1873 BUCKHORN

Caliber: 44 Mag. or 44 Mag./44-40
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: One-piece smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, groove rear; fully adjustable rear available
Price: \$410 (steel backstrap) to \$475 (convertible)



UBERTI 1873 CATTLEMAN

Caliber: 22 LR/22 WMR, 38 Special, 357 Mag., 44 Special, 44-40 or 45 Colt/45 ACP convertible
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 4.75", 5.5" or 7.5", 44-40, 45 Colt also with 3", 3.5" and 4"
Weight: 38 ounces
Grips: One-piece smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, groove rear; fully adjustable rear available, Bisley model available
Price: \$365 (brass backstrap) to \$435 (steel backstrap)



UBERTI 1875 ARMY OUTLAW

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40, 45 Colt or 45 Colt/45 ACP convertible
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5", 7.5"
Weight: 44 ounces
Grips: Smooth walnut
Sights: Blade front, notch rear
Price: \$435 (blue) to \$475 (convertible)



UBERTI 1890 ARMY OUTLAW

Caliber: 357 Mag., 44-40, 45 Colt or 45 Colt/45 ACP convertible
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 5.5" and 7.5"
Weight: 37 ounces
Grips: American walnut
Sights: Blade front, groove rear
Price: \$435 (blue) to \$475 (convertible)



UBERTI ROLLING BLOCK

Caliber: 22 LR, 22 WMR, 22 Hornet, 357 Mag. or 45 Colt
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 9.9"
Weight: 44 ounces
Grips: Walnut grip and forend
Sights: Fully adjustable rear, blade front
Price: \$410



WALTHER P-5

Caliber: 9mm Para.
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.5"
Weight: 28 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Blade front, adjustable rear
Price: \$900



WALTHER P-88 COMPACT

Caliber: 9mm Para
Capacity: 10 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.93"
Weight: 28 ounces
Grips: Checkered black polymer
Sights: Blade front, drift adjustable rear
Price: \$900



WALTHER P-99 & P-990

Caliber: 9mm Para., 40 S&W or 9mm x 21
Capacity: 10 rounds (12 and 16 available to law enforcement)
Barrel Length: 4"
Weight: 25 ounces
Grips: Polymer
Sights: Blade front, micrometer rear adjustable
Price: \$749 (990) to \$799 (P99)



WALTHER PP

Caliber: 380 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds
Barrel Length: 3.8"
Weight: 23.5 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Fixed; white markings
Price: \$999



WALTHER PPK

Caliber: 380 ACP or 32 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds (380 ACP) or 7 rounds (32 ACP)
Barrel Length: 3.27"
Weight: 21 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Fixed; white markings
Misc: Blue or stainless finish; made in USA, distributed by Walther USA
Price: \$540



WALTHER PPK/S

Caliber: 380 ACP or 32 ACP
Capacity: 7 rounds (380 ACP) or 8 rounds (32 ACP)
Barrel Length: 3.27"
Weight: 23.5 ounces
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Fixed; white markings
Misc: Blue or stainless finish; made in USA, distributed by Walther USA.
Price: \$540



WALTHER TPH

Caliber: 22 LR or 25 ACP
Capacity: 6 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.25"
Weight: 14 ounces
Grips: Checkered black composition
Sights: Adjustable rear, blade front
Misc: Stainless or blue finish; made in USA, distributed by Walther USA
Price: \$440



WICHITA CLASSIC SILHOUETTE

Caliber: All standard calibers with maximum overall length of 2.80"
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 11.25"
Weight: 3 lbs. 15 ounces
Grips: AAA American walnut with oil finish, checkered
Sights: Adjustable rear, post front
Price: \$3,450



WICHITA INTERNATIONAL

Caliber: 22 LR, 22 WMR, 32 H&R Mag., 357 Mag., 357 Super Mag., 7R, 7mm Super Mag., 7-30 Waters or 30-30 Win.
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 10", 10.5" or 14"
Weight: 3.125 pounds
Grips: Walnut
Sights: Adjustable rear, fixed front
Misc: Stainless steel; extra barrels available
Price: \$775 to \$875



WICHITA SILHOUETTE BOLT ACTION

Caliber: All standard calibers with maximum overall length of .280"
Capacity: 1 round
Barrel Length: 14.94"
Weight: 4.5 pounds
Grips: Walnut with oil finish
Sights: Wichita Multi-Range sight system
Price: \$1,800



WILKINSON "SHERRY" AUTO

Caliber: 22 LR
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 2.125"
Weight: 9.25 ounces
Grips: Checkered black plastic
Sights: Fixed, groove
Misc: Blue finish or blue slide and trigger with gold frame available;
Cross-bolt safety locks the sear into the hammer
Price: \$195



WILSON COMBAT KZ-45 TACTICAL CARRY PISTOL

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 9 rounds (compact), 10 rounds (full-size)
Barrel Length: 4.1" (compact), 5" (full-size)
Weight: 29 ounces (compact), 31 ounces (full-size)
Grips: Checkered plastic
Sights: Tritium Nite-Eyes
Misc: Includes an instructional video, nylon pistol rug and 2 extra magazines
Price: \$1,030 to \$1,130



WILSON CUSTOM PISTOLS

Caliber: 45 ACP
Capacity: 8 rounds
Barrel Length: 5"
Weight: 26.5 to 48 ounces
Grips: Checkered wood
Sights: Lo-Mount adjustable, Tritium Nite-Eyes or Tactical Combat
Misc: Finish varies by version
Price: \$1,199 to \$3,495



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