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LIBERATOR** PG. 32



**2017
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When it comes to self-defense firepower, small is the new big. That's the conclusion we came to after cruising the aisles at the Shooting, Hunting & Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show early in 2017. Want to see the very extensive list of small, new and totally hot? Check out Gordon D. Smith's roundup that starts on page 86. Downsized firearms aren't new, but technology keeps on advancing.

In this issue we're featuring the world's thinnest .45 ACP—Heizer Defense's PKO-45—which, like many great inventions, started from a sketch on the back of a napkin. And the folks at Ruger have listened to end-user feedback to come up with the LCP II, which is certain to give shooters everything they've come to expect from Ruger plus a whole lot more in terms of accuracy, shootability and ease of carry. Taurus revealed its newest pocket entry with the futuristic-looking Spectrum in .380 ACP, and other "first looks" include Springfield Armory's 4-inch-barreled EMP Concealed Carry Contour, Wilson Combat's Sentinel XL, Kimber's Micro 9 Two-Tone and Inland Manufacturing's Liberator .45.

There's a ton more in this issue, including a state-by-state carry law guide and Massad Ayoob's article on true stories where pocket pistols saved the day. We might be out of space for the printed version of *Pocket Pistols*, but here's a look at what's happening on the digital side of Athlon Outdoors:

PocketPISTOLS®

2017

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⚡ PLUG IN TO ATHLON OUTDOORS



MICRO MADNESS:
A company called Empty Shell recently created the world's first handheld Gatling gun in 5.56mm NATO—the XM556 Micro—and we've got exclusive video of it in action. Head to tactical-life.com to see it for yourself (<http://bit.ly/2kjFv3p>).

ADD TO CART:

Magazine subscriptions and back issues of Athlon Outdoors' special-interest titles like *AK-47 & Soviet Weapons*, *Concealed Carry Handguns*, *American Frontiersman* and *Model 1911: America's Handgun* are now available online. Visit outdoorgroupstore.com to score huge savings!

HOT DOGS:

Who doesn't like content regarding man's best friend? You'll love this breakdown from realworldsurvivor.com on the top 12 dog breeds for personal and home defense. (<http://bit.ly/2jmOUYv>)



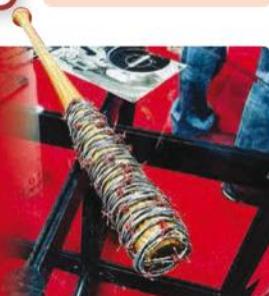
LIVE-FIRE ACTION:

Athlon Outdoors' film crew, hosted by Aaron Barruga, made the rounds at the "live-fire" Industry Day At The Range event. Check out more than 30 videos from the event at tactical-life.com (<http://bit.ly/2jNjFNN>) and personaldefenseworld.com (<http://bit.ly/2jKEoZv>).

FRESH DAILY:

Athlon Outdoors' contributors—field editors, photographers and writers—have vowed to keep things real, fun and fresh. Link up and join the commentary with our 634,000 (and growing) followers via our social media platforms:

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THE TOP 10: No website or e-newsletter would be complete without a top 10 listing.

Trending on personaldefenseworld.com these days is our breakdown of 10 modern, cutting-edge pocket pistols pulling self-defense duty. (<http://bit.ly/2jvbrNX>)

NEW ON THE BLOCK:



Fresh off its SHOT Show 2017 debut, Hudson Manufacturing's striker-fired H9 pistol has shooters at personaldefenseworld.com licking their chops. (<http://bit.ly/2jNFW2o>)



30

POCKETPISTOLS®

2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

14



4 CARRYING THE FIREPOWER

By Fred Mastison

Must-know tips for striking the balance between comfortable and comforting everyday carry.

10 POCKET SAVES THROUGH TIME

By Massad Ayoob

Tiny yet formidable, here are 10 real-world cases where a backup gun helped save the day.

14 REMASTERED RUGER LCP .380

By Mike Detty

Packed with fan-feedback improvements, the LCP is back with a vengeance!

20 SWEET CCC SPRINGFIELD

By Paul Scarlata

And in this corner, hailing from Geneseo, Illinois, the newly contoured EMP Lightweight Champion!

28 CURVE APPEAL

By Paul Scarlata

Taurus' laser-equipped .380 will twist your perception of concealed carry.

30 THE TAURUS SPECTRUM

By Athlon Staff

An exclusive look at an innovative, stylish .380 ACP striker.

32 LONG LIVE THE LIBERATOR

By William Bell

Check out Inland's new take on a super-covert .45 from World War II!

37 AGI's DOUBLE TAKE

By Will Dabbs, MD

Get a closer look at Bond Arms' derringers with the American Gunsmithing Institute.

38 HEIZER'S POCKET .45

By Mike Detty

It's time to turn up the CCW heat with the world's thinnest .45 semi-auto!

44 WC SENTINEL XL

By Rob Garrett

Don't let the name fool you—Wilson's newest 1911 carries small but offers big possibilities!

56



64



82



50 MINI SIG

By Andy Massimilian

The Ultra Compact 9mm rises above the pack of carry-ready 1911s.

56 COLT'S DETECTIVE SPECIAL

By Will Dabbs, MD

This little snubie has backed up officers and civilians for decades.

60 BATTLE OF THE NINES

By Dennis Adler

Two subcompacts—the Kimber Micro 9 and SCCY CPX-2—duke it out!

64 COMPACT KAHR

By Dr. Martin D. Topper

It's time to go Kahr shopping for some ultra-reliable pistols that offer on-the-go protection 24/7.

68 BACKUP BLADES

By Tim Stetzer

Rugged, affordable knives to ride shotgun to your trusted sidearm.

74 LITTLE GUNS & LASERS

By Richard Mann

See how a Crimson Trace laser on Big Green's RM380 can help increase your precision.

78 REBORN CLASSIC

By Rob Garrett

Cylinder & Slide resurrects the Colt Model 1908 Pocket Hammerless—in .45 ACP!

82 WALTHER SHOOTOUT

By Will Dabbs, MD

Testing two compact pistols—old and new—to see which is best for self-defense.

86 WHAT'S HOT FROM SHOT

By Gordon D. Smith

Check out the new guns and holsters debuted at the 2017 SHOT Show!

93 STATE-BY-STATE CARRY LAWS

By Jeremy D. Clough

Charting the concealed-carry laws for all 50 states in 2017.

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CARRYING THE

**Must-know tips
for striking the balance
between comfortable and
comforting everyday carry.**

BY FRED MASTISON • STRAIGHT 8 PHOTOS

So, the new year has arrived and you followed up on your decision to buy a new handgun for everyday carry.

The process was a bit convoluted because suggestions on just what to buy were diverse to say the least—from your friend who insisted that it had to be .45 ACP 1911 because, well, they don't make a .46 ACP, to a gun store clerk who said a .22 LR semi-auto was fine because it was all about shot placement anyway. Somehow you found a good gun that fit your needs and abilities.

However, in all of the discussions about what gun and ammo would serve you best, nobody seemed to have much input on just how to carry said pistol. This is a concealed-carry gun, so the method of carry is pretty important. To help you do more than just wedge it in your pants gangster style, let's take a few minutes and look at the best ways to carry your firearm concealed.

FIREPOWER

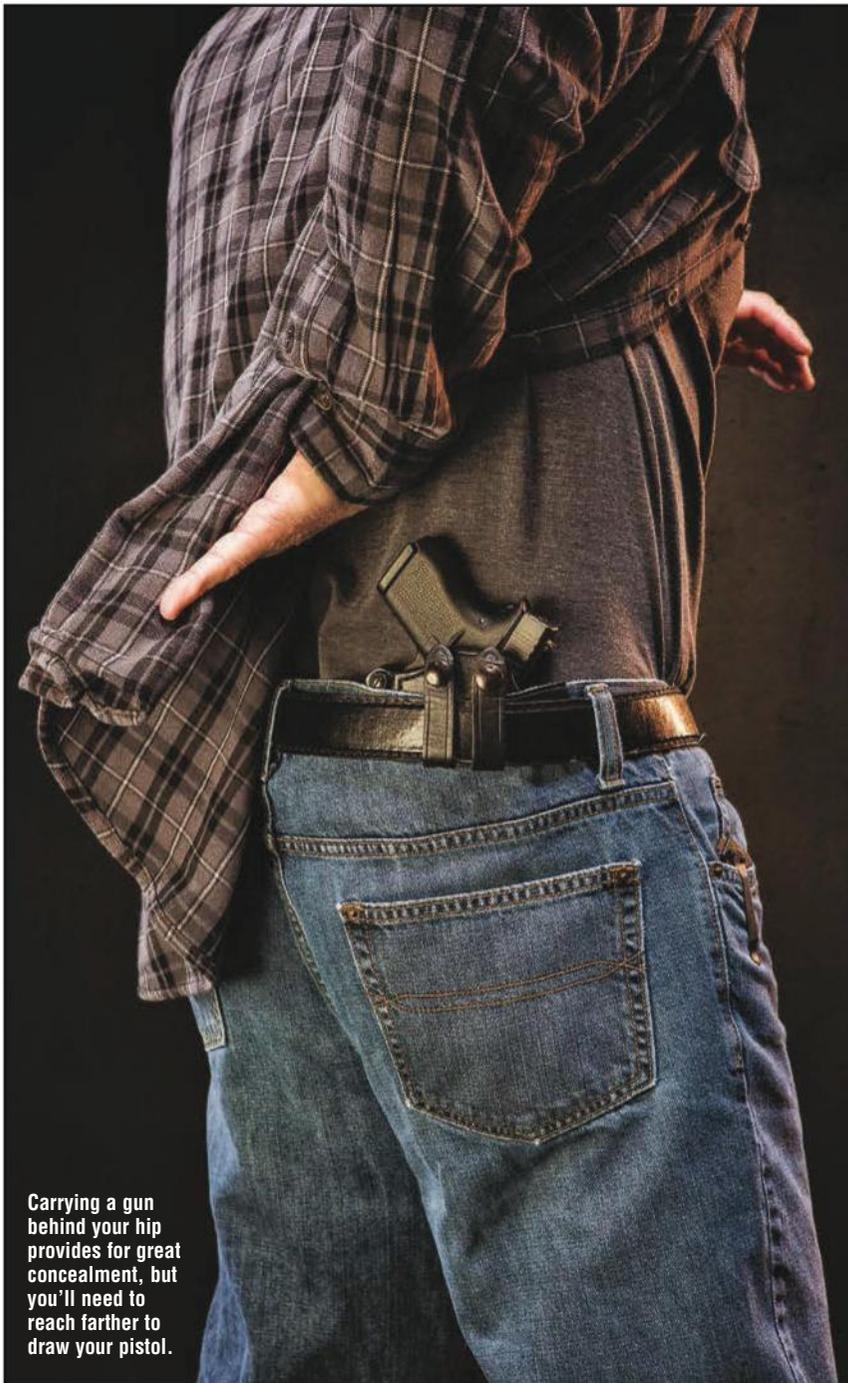
A close-up photograph of a person's torso and hand. The person is wearing a dark grey t-shirt and a plaid shirt. Their right hand is extended forward, palm up, with fingers slightly curled. The background is dark and out of focus.

► Keep It Hidden

The primary word we must look at first is “concealed.” The entire purpose of concealed carry is to carry a pistol in a fashion that does not let anyone know you are carrying. Poorly concealed handguns can lead to serious problems.

The first and most common issue we see is “printing.” This is when your garments form around your pistol and it becomes very obvious to everyone around that you are carrying a gun. Tight shirts and poor placement are generally the culprits here. While not classified as illegal in most places, it can result in nervous citizens calling the police because they simply see someone with a gun.

The next problem we see is unintentional exposure. An example of this is if a breeze catches your cover shirt and blows it open, momentarily exposing your handgun. Once again, while it cannot be truly defined as brandishing, it can draw unwanted attention and once again end up in a phone call to police. Of course, none of this is designed as legal advice. My focus is on making sure that you enjoy the advantages of concealed carry without the hassles of doing it incorrectly. With that being said, let’s look at some of the most common carry methods to help you find the one that fits you best.



Carrying a gun behind your hip provides for great concealment, but you'll need to reach farther to draw your pistol.

► On The Waist

The most common location for concealing a handgun is along the waistline. This is a solid choice because it provides easy access to your gun with a fast and effective drawstroke. Where you carry on the waistline is a personal choice. There are generally three areas where people most commonly carry.

First up is on the hip. This places the gun in the general area where your arm naturally falls. This is the most common method because it is the same location most people use when they train with an open-style holster on the range and in classes. The pros of this position are that it is easy to access your weapon should the need

“
**Concealed carry...
is a huge
responsibility
that requires
professional
training
to become proficient.**
”

arise and it allows for a simpler draw. The cons are that it can be uncomfortable for some people to have a gun on the side of their hip. This really becomes apparent when driving or sitting.

Another common option is in the 6 o'clock position, with your pistol in the small of the back (SOB). This area provides great concealment so long as your cover garment is appropriate. But it requires more reach and motion to access the gun.

The final area we will look at on the waistline is called appendix carry. This method has the pistol holstered in front of your abdomen, usually just off of the center of the body. This is a very fast carry position that allows you to get your gun into the fight quickly. The cons again come down to comfort. Sitting for long periods of time while carrying with this method can be uncomfortable. And muzzle orientation is critical. In appendix carry, the muzzle is oriented in a fashion that could cause serious if not lethal consequences should a negligent discharge occur. While I am not a naysayer nor advocate for this style of carry, it is something you should consider.

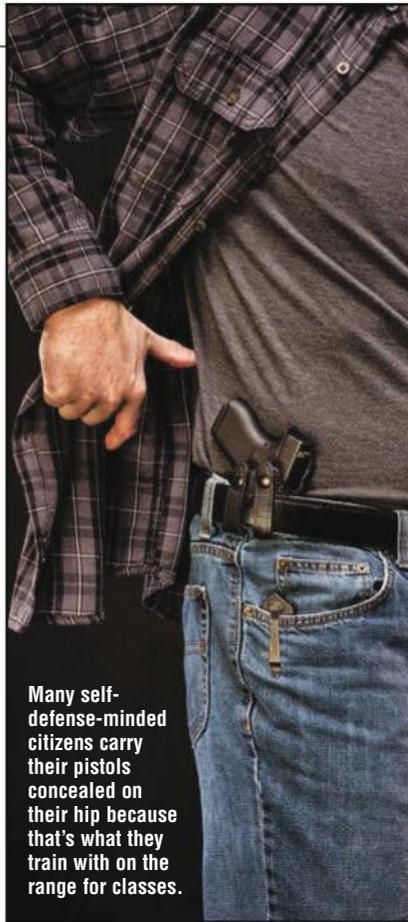
► More Carry Positions

There are three other common styles of concealed carry we need to look at. First is the old-school shoulder holster. Once the gold standard for concealed carry,

it has moved a bit into the antiquated category. The advantage here is comfort. A well-made shoulder rig can make it easier to carry a gun. The disadvantage is that shoulder holsters are hard to conceal well. You can't wear just a T-shirt or polo shirt with a shoulder holster. Additionally, it can be difficult to quickly draw a pistol from a shoulder rig without muzzling yourself or others.

Next up is pocket carry. This has become a popular carry style as more and more subcompact pistols hit the market. The pros are that it can be very comfortable and easy to carry in this position. The cons are that you must still use at least some sort of holster in the pocket. This, combined with a generally small area, limits you to very small guns light on capacity.

The last position we will discuss is ankle carry. Ankle holsters have been go-to backup gun carry options for decades. These holsters provide exceptional concealment, but carrying in this position takes some getting used to, and like pocket carry, you're generally limited to a low-capacity gun.



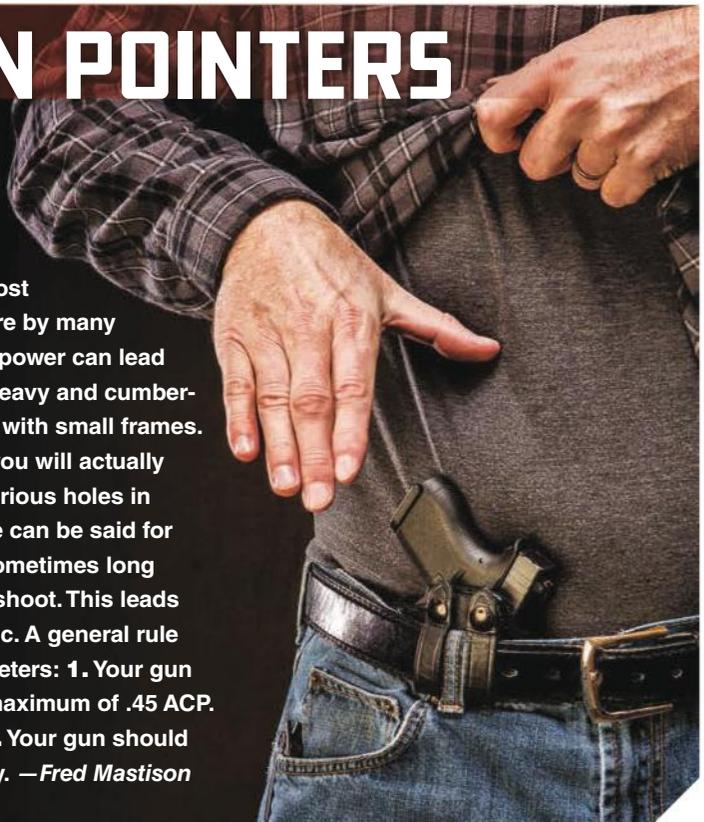
Many self-defense-minded citizens carry their pistols concealed on their hip because that's what they train with on the range for classes.

Of course, these aren't the only concealed-carry methods. From women's holsters connected to bras to men's holsters built into underwear, the options are endless. I've only discussed the most common methods. One method of carry I have left off is called "off-body" carry. This is when a person carries their gun in a purse or bag. While it is true that this does conceal the gun, you'll run into problems getting to the gun quickly, and it's very possible for an attacker to take your bag and gun. I hear attempted justifications for this carry style from many students, and the comments are always based on clothing options and how carrying a handgun is not possible with certain women's clothing. I will simply say that you need to make a choice as to what is more important to you—fashion or carrying a defensive weapon. It is absolutely possible to dress around a handgun. In the immortal words of Colonel Jeff Cooper, "Carrying a gun is not supposed to be comfortable; it's supposed to be comforting."

GUN SELECTION POINTERS

So, we have looked at the most common carry methods—how about some general tips to make the most of it? It all begins with your choice of handgun. The gun you choose to carry must be selected carefully and meet several criteria. The most important item: Will you actually carry it? The desire by many to carry a large handgun because of its perceived power can lead to less-than-consistent carry. Large guns can be heavy and cumbersome to conceal. This is especially true for people with small frames.

It is also important that the gun be something you will actually train with. While a .500 S&W revolver will punch serious holes in things, it is also a bit of a bear to master. The same can be said for many micro-sized pistols. Their light weight and sometimes long trigger pull make them snappy and unpleasant to shoot. This leads to a lack of training time, which can be catastrophic. A general rule is to choose a handgun that falls into these parameters: **1.** Your gun should be chambered in at least .380 ACP with a maximum of .45 ACP. **2.** It should fit your hands and be easy to shoot. **3.** Your gun should also fit your body size and chosen method of carry. —Fred Mastison





► Holster Options

The second part of our successful concealed-carry formula deals with holsters. The topic of holsters is one that could easily fill an encyclopedia. Opinions range from mild to wild and everything in between. Instead of going into which company to choose, I will instead give you some general guidelines:

1. The holster must be extremely well made and void of harsh edges.
2. It must be comfortable for you to wear for long periods of time.
3. It should be durable and hold its shape, allowing for consistent drawing and reholstering.
4. A good holster will have adjustable attachment points to allow you to customize its fit.

► What To Wear

The last part of the equation is clothing. Choosing the right clothing to conceal your weapon is important. Clothing should be worn loose enough to not only avoid printing, but also to allow quick access to the weapon should the need arise. I encourage people to buy pants that will

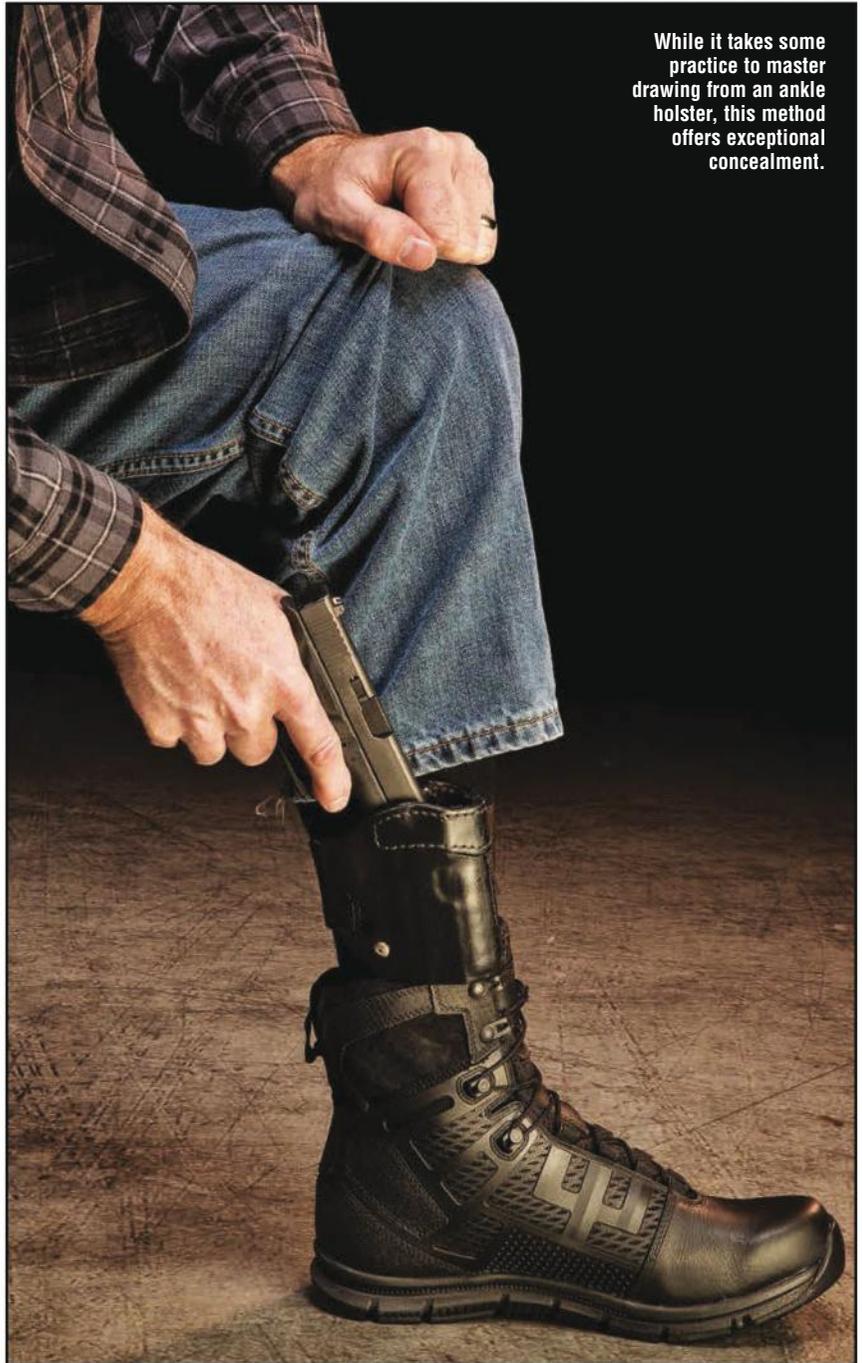


**Poorly concealed handguns can lead to
SERIOUS PROBLEMS.**



comfortably accommodate the extra mass of a handgun if that is your chosen carry method. That may mean you buy them one size larger than you normally would. The same may go for skirts and shirts. It all depends on your size and build.

I would also like to offer some personal advice: Don't advertise. What I mean is, try to blend in with the general population. While your handgun may be concealed, the fact that you are wearing tactical cargo pants, a rigger's belt, tactical boots, a "Death From Above" T-shirt



While it takes some practice to master drawing from an ankle holster, this method offers exceptional concealment.

and a "Molon Labe" hat are a bit of a giveaway. While I will never tell people what to wear, I would encourage you to not stand out in a fashion that says, "I am probably carrying a gun." You make yourself an easy target for a thug who may be preparing to commit a crime.

Concealed carry is something I advocate. It allows you to carry a weapon that could ultimately save your life or

that of a loved one. It is a huge responsibility that requires professional training to become proficient. You must master the art of presenting your weapon as well as understanding the laws that go with it. In the end, though, the effort you put into the choice of gun, carry style, holster and clothes will serve you well and bring you comfort both physically and psychologically.

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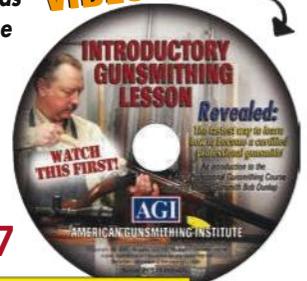
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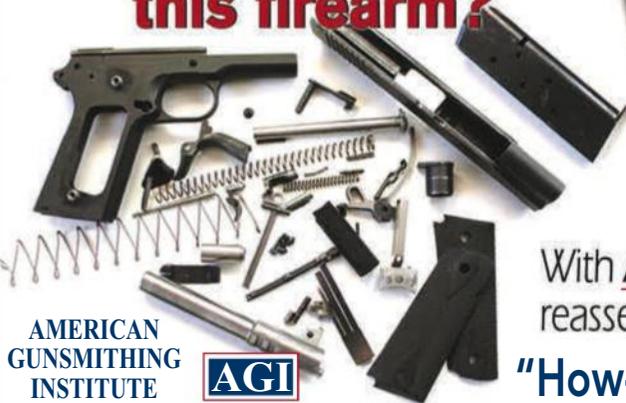
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POCKET SAVES THROUGH TIME

Tiny yet formidable, here are 10 real-world cases WHERE A BACKUP GUN HELPED SAVE THE DAY.

BY MASSAD AYOOB

IN the culture war known as “gun control,” those who would abolish the cherished American right to keep and bear arms see handguns small enough to carry in a pocket as tools of the devil suitable only for committing murder. History, however, shows us otherwise.

Let’s go all the way back to the Old West and look at **Example One**. Marshal Dallas Stoudenmire tamed the town of El Paso, Texas, with a pair of cut-down, short-barreled Colt six-shooters that he carried concealed in leather-lined hip pockets. Stoudenmire won multiple gunfights with that equipment before his luck ran out in his final shooting affray.

Another Western gunfighter who favored a short-barreled Colt revolver carried in the hip pocket was Luke Short. Consider him **Example Two**. He was a ladies’ man who always dressed at the height of fashion and didn’t want bulging guns to spoil the lines of his clothes—or let his opponents know he was armed and ready. Gunfighter-turned-writer Bat Masterson had this to say about Short’s most famous shootout, in which he killed a much-feared bully and gunman named Jim Courtright:







One advantage of a shorter barrel is draw speed. The 3.5-inch-barreled Trapper 1911 (right) clears a Mitch Rosen ARG holster faster than a 5-inch-barreled Springfield Range Officer (left).

“No time was wasted in the exchange of words once the men faced each other. Both drew their pistols at the same time, but, as usual, Short’s spoke first and a bullet from a Colt’s .45-caliber pistol went crashing through Courtright’s body. The shock caused him to reel backward; then he got another and still another, and by the time his lifeless form had reached the floor, Luke had succeeded in shooting him five times.”

During World War II, the great combat instructor Col. Rex Applegate often served as a bodyguard for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. One of Applegate’s favorite guns for this sort of thing was a big “Fitz Special,” a .45-caliber Colt New Service revolver with its barrel cut short and tuned by Colt’s legendary J.H. Fitzgerald. The Colonel’s favorite location for this big snub-nose? His hip pocket. Consider him **Example Three**.

One of Applegate’s contemporaries was Pacific Theater combat vet and Border Patrolman Bill Jordan, who we’ll consider for **Example Four**. Famed for his deadly speed with a .357 Magnum out of the Jordan Border Patrol uniform holster he designed, Bill liked to hedge his bets with a Smith & Wesson Chief’s Special Airweight .38 with a bobbed hammer that

lived in his hip pocket on his weak side. I know how fast he was with it, too. Forty some years ago, he “shot” me with it. Fortunately, it was at one of his demonstrations and we were both loaded with blanks. I was holding a cocked Colt Single Action Army on him, finger on the trigger, when he cleared the little pocket gun and “shot” me before I could pull the trigger of the already-aimed .45.

► Modern Times

Moving into more modern times, the pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Philadelphia became **Example Five**

when a thug targeted him for a street robbery. Fortunately, the clergyman had a subcompact Glock 27 pistol in the side pocket of his down vest, loaded with 165-grain CorBon .40 S&W jacketed hollow points. The pastor, whom I’m proud to say was one of my graduates, had the situational awareness to see the event unfolding, and he slipped his hand into his pocket and onto the Glock 27 in a ready-to-draw position.

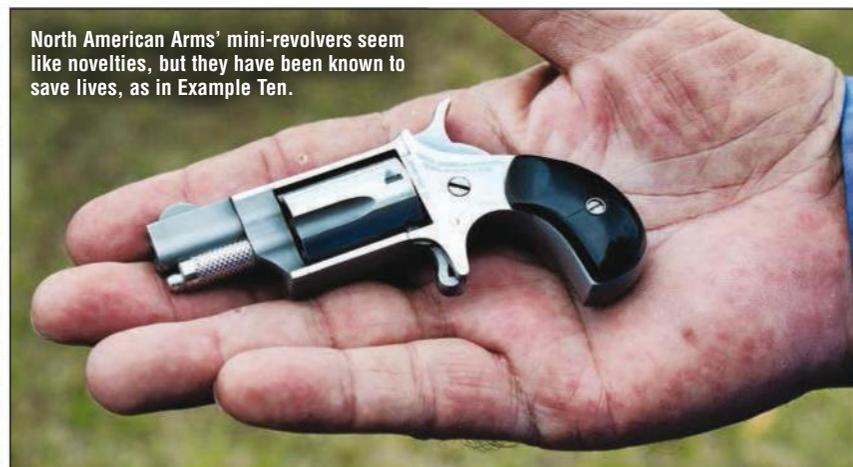
When the armed robber, spewing obscenities, whipped out a white-handled gun, the minister was already ahead of the curve. He drew and fired first, a pelvic shot that very quickly dropped his assailant, who threw his gun away and ceased hostilities.

A shorter barrel clears leather faster.

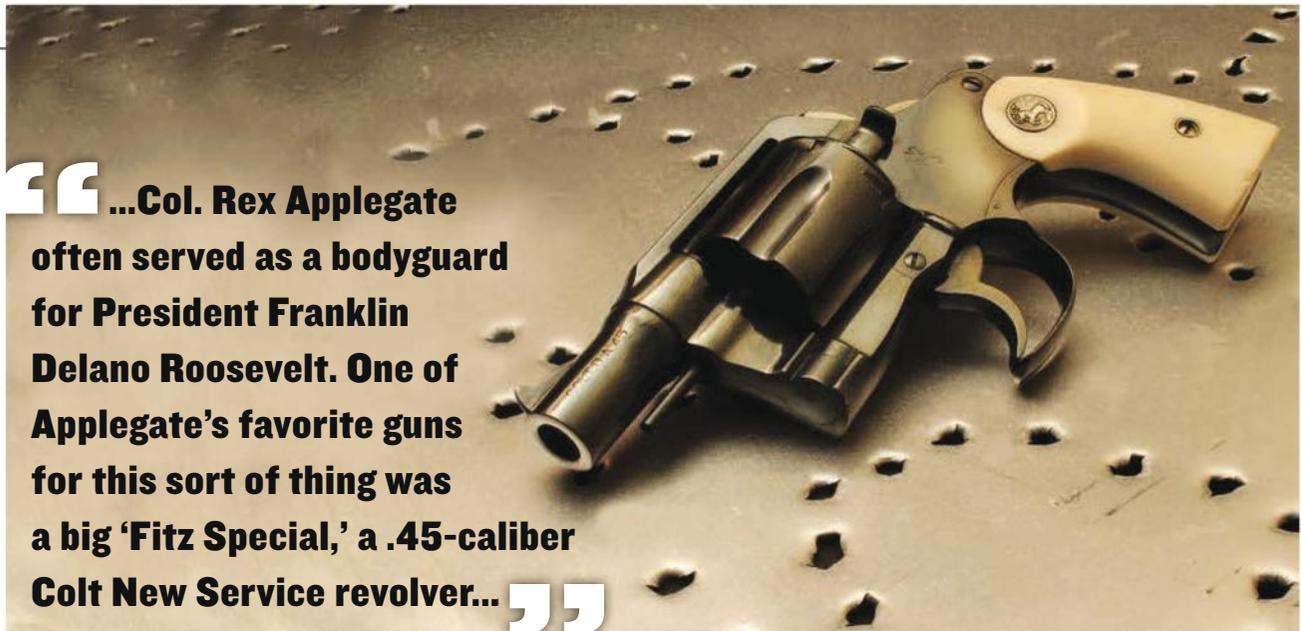
Example Six: Master gunfighter Bill Allard of the NYPD Stakeout Squad determined that at close range, his 2-inch-barreled Colt Detective Special was just as accurate as his 4-inch-barreled S&W Model 10 service revolver, but its shorter barrel allowed him to clear a hip holster and get the first shot on target just a bit more quickly. Here, the pocket-sized gun actually affords another advantage over something bigger when carrying on the hip.

► Small Calibers

The smallest handguns in the “pocket pistol” category tend to be light on stopping power. **Example Seven:** In a seedy dive in the community where I live, a drunken thug drew a .22 handgun in the course of an argument and emp-



North American Arms’ mini-revolvers seem like novelties, but they have been known to save lives, as in Example Ten.



“...Col. Rex Applegate often served as a bodyguard for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. One of Applegate’s favorite guns for this sort of thing was a big ‘Fitz Special,’ a .45-caliber Colt New Service revolver...”

... tied it into two victims. When his gun ran dry and he fled, they chased him out into the street and when they caught up with him, beat him mercilessly until police arrived. Officers who responded told me that one of the victims didn’t even know he had been shot until after the cops got there; the other knew he had been shot but wasn’t particularly inconvenienced or slowed down by his .22 wounds. Both men recovered, and the shooter went to jail. In that case, it worked out well for the good guys, but it is a lesson for good guys when they are the ones holding the firearm. As the late author Robert Ruark put it so well, “Use enough gun!”

Example Eight: Twenty years ago, time claimed a dear friend and mentor who, at the end of World War II, was one of the investigators tasked with hunting down Nazi war criminals. Some of those men were determined that they would rather die with a gun in their hand than at the end of a rope, and Jim and his colleagues accommodated more than one of them. In this case, Jim and another investigator had found the Nazi fugitive at a sidewalk café in Europe. When they showed him their guns and told him he was under arrest, he whipped out a semi-auto .25 and shot Jim in the center of the forehead.

Jim told me he felt a startling slap and realized he was dead, but decided instantly to take the Nazi with him. He pumped a couple of .45 slugs from his M1911A1 into the man’s heart. The Nazi

died at the table. Jim had a short-term headache and a keloid scar that was visible on his forehead for the rest of his days: the .25 slug had glanced off the forehead, traveled under his scalp and exited without so much as fracturing bone. Again, it worked for the good guys that time, but it serves as a lesson that very small calibers are not reliable for stopping determined human aggressors.

Some consider North American Arms’ mini-revolvers to be cute “novelty guns,” but I’ve seen multiple cases where they have saved lives. **Example Nine:** An off-duty cop in one of our biggest cities was carrying a snub-nose .38 as his primary weapon and a .22 Short

mini-revolver for backup when he was canoodling with his girlfriend on a public park bench. An armed thug caught the young officer off guard and relieved him of his wallet, badge and .38. At an opportune moment, the young officer drew the .22 and shot the criminal in the back of the head. The bullet glanced off the area of the occipital protuberance, skidded up under the scalp, and exited the skin at the front of the forehead without ever entering the man’s cranial vault. However, when he felt the slap at the back of his head, the man reached up and touched the bloody exit wound in the center of his forehead. He apparently concluded that he had been shot through the brain, because he screamed and promptly fainted.

A good outcome, all things considered, but might it not also have been a miracle of deliverance? There are cases where NAA mini-revolvers have worked more decisively. Consider **Case Ten:** A rapist attacked a woman in California and roughly pulled her close; she put her NAA against his sternum and triggered a .22 bullet through his heart. He promptly fell and died.

History is replete with cases where a handgun small enough to fit inside a pocket has averted tragedy and saved innocent lives, but I have run out of space. Hopefully, this short list of “saves” will be helpful to you the next time you are debating with someone who mistakenly thinks pocket-sized handguns are only for the black of heart. **PP**



Small enough for pocket carry, Glock’s subcompact G43 in 9mm conceals well in a leather Flashbang Sophia hip holster, too.

▶ POCKET TEST





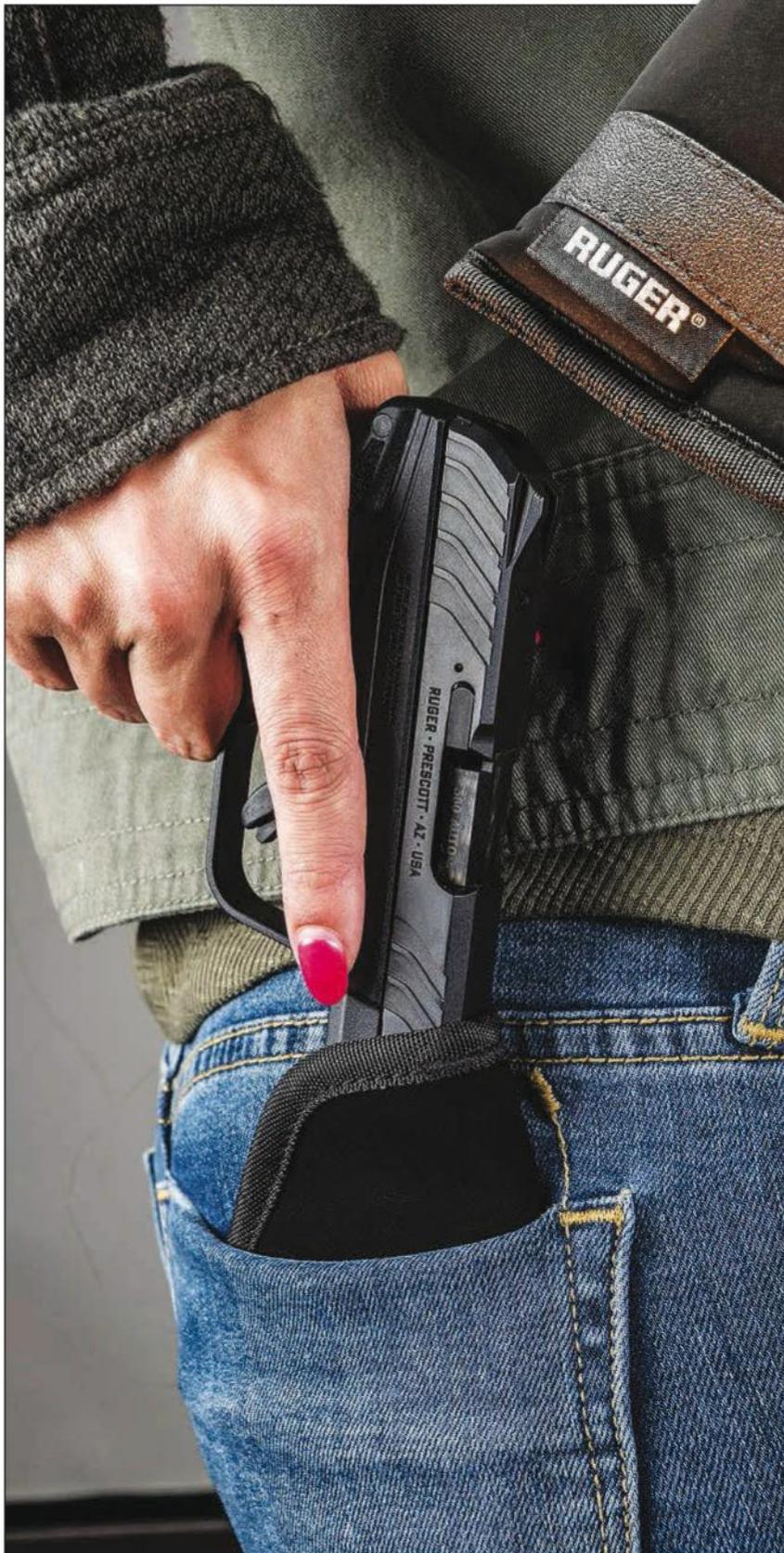
REMASTERED RUGER LCP 380

**Packed with fan-feedback improvements,
the LCP is BACK WITH A VENGEANCE!**

BY MIKE DETTY • ALEX LANDEEN PHOTOS

Not every firearms manufacturer is as responsive to customer feedback as Ruger, but then again, not every company is as successful as Ruger, either. When a company decides to revamp one of its best-selling guns, you know with certainty that its concern is providing consumers with the best product it is capable of building. So, it really shouldn't have been a surprise when Ruger recently introduced the semi-auto LCP II in .380 ACP.

Ruger introduced the first LCP (Lightweight Compact Pistol) in 2008, and shooters found it to be an easy-to-carry gun. The little semi-auto utilized a polymer frame with an aluminum subchassis housing a double-action-only (DAO) fire control system. Its light weight and small profile made it a gun that could go just about anywhere, and it's concealable in nearly every style of clothing. It was and still is an extremely popular CCW choice for those who just don't want to pack a heavier gun. But nothing is perfect, and in its eight years of production, Ruger



Ruger includes a fabric pocket holster with the LCP II to protect the gun and keep it oriented properly in your pocket.

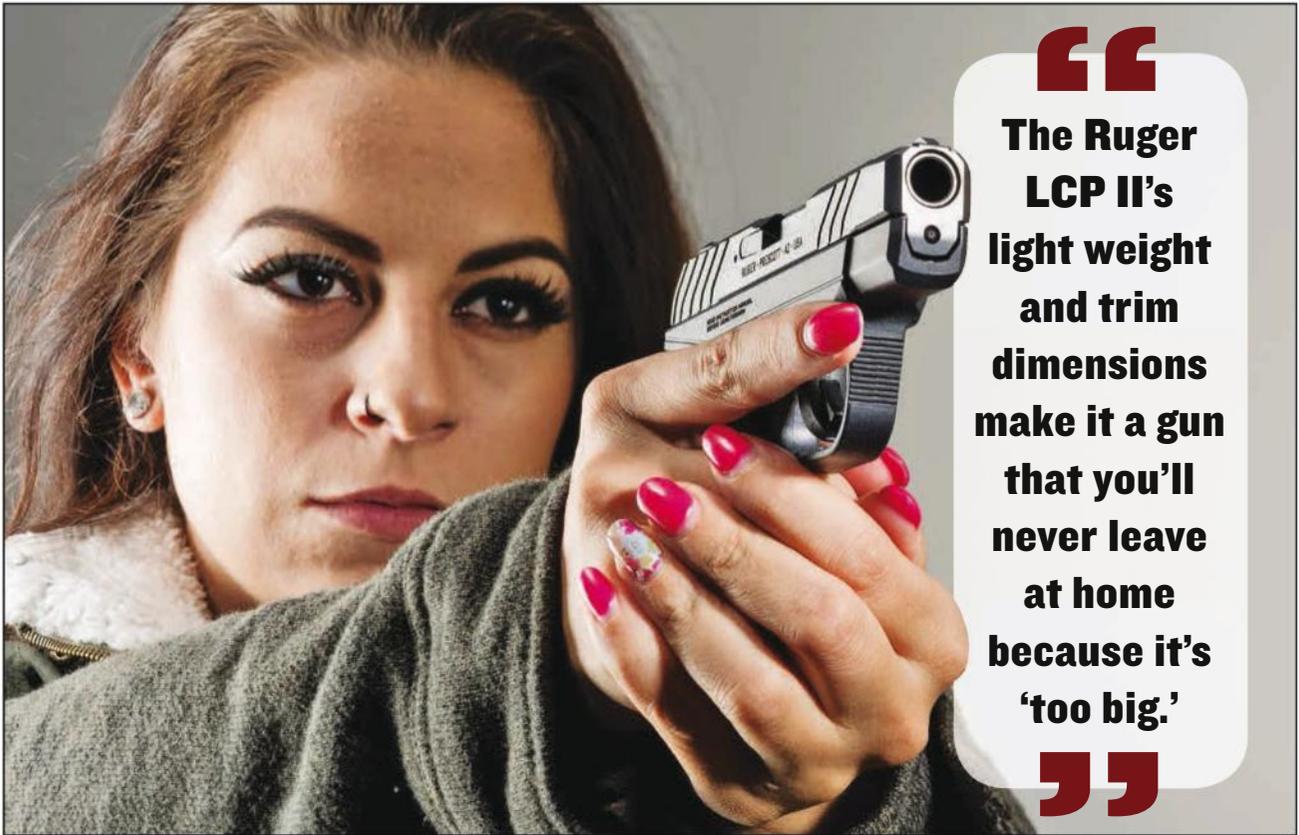
learned a thing or two from the people who carried LCPs.

While the Ruger LCP has plenty of mechanical accuracy, this means nothing if the gun can't be shot accurately. There's a huge difference between mechanical and practical accuracy, and one common criticism of the LCP was its heavy DA trigger. Also not aiding in the accuracy department was the LCP's sights. Designed more for snag-free concealment, the low-profile sights made shooting the little Ruger as difficult as the DA trigger. Even though the LCP fires the underpowered .380 ACP, its light weight and thin backstrap made shooting hotter defensive ammo downright unpleasant. It's amazing just how much torque the little gun has with defense loads.

► Revamped Ruger

The new LCP II is an answer to all of these problems and criticisms. After studying feedback on the LCP, Ruger engineers went back to the drawing board in an effort to create a gun with the best features while still being very affordable. The LCP II is not just a cosmetically improved gun—it also has some important mechanical differences between it and its predecessor.

First to go was the LCP's long and heavy DA trigger. My old LCP had a trigger pull of about 7 pounds and required



“
**The Ruger
 LCP II’s
 light weight
 and trim
 dimensions
 make it a gun
 that you’ll
 never leave
 at home
 because it’s
 ‘too big.’**
 ”

about 0.7 inches of travel. The new LCP II has a single-action (SA) trigger that breaks with 4.25 pounds of pressure. It’s crisp and predictable and makes shooting with precision an easy matter. There is about 0.38 inches of take-up with light pressure until it reaches a point of more resistance. Adding the additional pressure and about another 0.25 inches of travel will break the shot. Ruger has also added a bladed trigger safety to the LCP II that must be fully depressed for the pistol to fire.

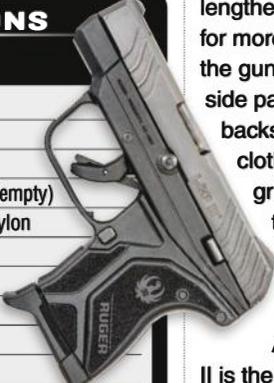
The original LCP really didn’t have traditional sights. Its sights were actually machined into the slide top and were low profile in design, as are the LCP II’s. The new contour of the LCP II’s slide actually adds about a half-inch of sight radius—a small but significant difference that can add to the user’s ability to shoot more accurately. Both the front and rear sights are serrated to reduce glare on the new model, and they present a bolder sight picture. Because the sights on the LCP II are machined into the top of the slide, there are provisions for windage or

elevation adjustments; however, Ruger’s precise machining makes it very unlikely that you’ll need to adjust the sights.

Unfortunately, the same elements that made the LCP such a popular CCW gun also made it uncomfortable to shoot with the hotter self-defense loads. Even though the gun fires from a locked breech, its light weight and narrow backstrap could make the little gun an unpleasant handful. With a firm grip, I often found myself rearranging the gun in my

hand after each shot. Ruger engineers made a couple of subtle changes on the LCP II to provide a solution to these issues. The width of the backstrap on the LCP II has been increased by about 0.15 inches. This seemingly small addition in girth has absolutely no ill effect on its concealability but goes a long way in making the gun more comfortable to shoot. It increases the surface area of contact between the gun and hand and spreads the recoil over a wider area. The rear of the backstrap has also been lengthened slightly and, again, allows for more contact between the hand and the gun. Ruger has also textured the side panels as well as the front- and backstraps with an almost emery cloth-like finish to provide a secure grip to the shooter. In my opinion, this is much more aesthetically pleasing and quite a bit more functional than the molded checkering of the original LCP. Another feature of the new LCP II is the last-round-hold-open capability. The magazine holds six rounds, and

SPECIFICATIONS	
RUGER LCP II	
CALIBER:	.380 ACP
BARREL:	2.75 inches
OA LENGTH:	5.17 inches
WEIGHT:	10.6 ounces (empty)
GRIP:	Glass-filled nylon
SIGHTS:	Fixed
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	6+1
MSRP:	\$349

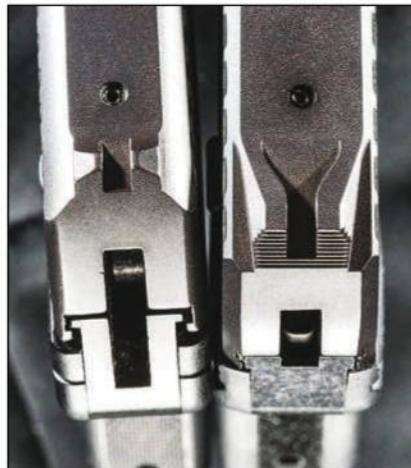




after the last shot, the slide will lock open. The magazine's follower engages the slide lock when empty and will lock the slide into its open position. Magazines will also interchange between the LCP and LCP II, but LCP magazines will not lock the slide open on the LCP II, nor will LCP II mags lock the slide open on the first-generation LCP. Ruger ships the gun with a single six-round magazine that has a finger extension so the shooter can get two fingers on the frontstrap. A magazine floorplate without the extension is also included for those who need a smaller profile.

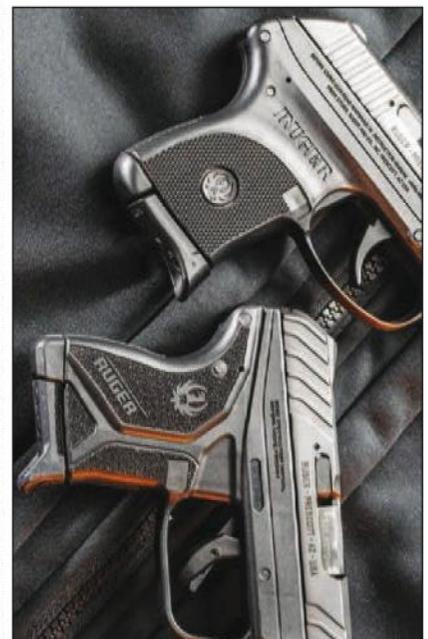
► Range Time

Shooting the LCP II was a pleasure. I had a good selection of ball ammo and some really decent self-defense rounds. The first thing I discovered is that the LCP II is inherently more accurate than I am. This is a gun that just wants to shoot. Firing the gun from a two-handed combat stance with my target at 7 yards



The LCP II features a redesigned slide with new serrations at the front and rear, taller sights that are serrated to reduce glare and a wider grip frame with new texturing.

produced a ragged hole. While some might test a pocket gun like this from a bench at 7 yards, I didn't think a bunch of one-hole groups would tell us much, so I pushed the distance back to 10 yards. I also fired five-shot groups utilizing a two-handed grip at 7 yards to give you an idea of the LCP II's practical accuracy compared to its mechanical accuracy.





The LCP II is a single action with a trigger safety toggle (left). Also, unlike some pocket pistols, the slide locks back after the last round has been fired. Note the slide release lever (below).

There were several things to note during this test. First and foremost, the gun digested almost every round I fed it. Early on, I had one failure to extract with an FMJ round, and this was the only problem I had in 300-plus rounds. You'll note that I used a broad range of ammunition, and the little Ruger fed, fired, extracted and ejected everything without a hiccup. Hornady's 90-grain Critical Defense FTX rounds produced the smallest five-shot group, which measured just slightly over half an inch. DoubleTap's 95-grain JHPs churned up the most energy, generating a whopping 246 foot-pounds of energy (fpe), and Federal's 99-grain HSTs weren't far behind with 226 fpe. CorBon's 70-grain Pow'RBall rounds offered exceptionally low recoil and great accuracy while giving the gun sufficient slide velocity. If you live in a locale where hollow points are illegal, this round is what you need.

To disassemble the gun for cleaning, remove the magazine by depressing the magazine release on the left side of the receiver. Pull the slide to the rear and remove the chambered round. Now pull the slide rearward and press upwards on the slide lock to lock the slide open.



Use a screwdriver or knife blade to pry out the takedown pin on the frame's left side. Once the pin is removed, depress the slide lock and **allow the slide to go forward and off the frame.** The **trigger** does not need to be

pressed for this operation. Depress the recoil spring guide slightly to disengage it from its seat on the barrel lug and remove it. The barrel can now be removed from the slide.

While the Ruger LCP II may be considered a "pocket gun," there is no endorsement or encouragement from me or Ruger to simply drop the LCP II into your pocket and go. With its steel slide and barrel, the top end of the gun is heavy enough to do a somersault in a pocket, putting the shooter in an embarrassing position of not knowing which end of the gun they will be grasping when it's time to remove it from the pocket. Remember: This is a gun without a manual safety. For pocket carry, Ruger includes a fabric pocket holster to keep the gun positioned consistently and prevent it from turning in the pocket. For deep concealment, my preference is an appendix inside-the-waistband (AIWB) holster from CrossBreed. I've used these holsters before for larger guns and have always been impressed with just how comfortable they are even while driving. The pistol stays secure when bending at the waist or, in one case, changing a flat on the side of the highway during heavy rainfall. Wearing an untucked shirt conceals the gun effectively and makes it extremely easy to get into action quickly.

The Ruger LCP II's light weight and

trim dimensions make it a gun that you'll never leave at home because it's "too big." The upgrades made in the trigger system and sights reaffirm Ruger's commitment to continually improving established and popular products. My test sample was nearly flawless in performance and possessed accuracy not normally seen in a pocket gun. If your needs dictate an easily concealable .380 ACP, the starting point for your search should be the Ruger LCP II. It offers a lot of value for the money! For more information, visit ruger.com.

PP

PERFORMANCE

RUGER LCP II



Load	Velocity	Accuracy	
		7 Yards	10 Yards
Aguila 95 FMJ	880	1.44	1.00
Colt Defense 90 JHP	904	1.19	0.70
CorBon 70 Pow'RBall	1,081	0.89	0.67
CorBon 80 DPX	1,044	1.18	0.90
CorBon 90 JHP	964	1.19	0.72
DoubleTap 95 JHP	1,080	1.42	1.13
Federal American Eagle 95 FMJ	841	1.37	1.05
Federal 90 Hydra-Shok	890	1.25	0.88
Federal 99 HST	1,014	1.17	0.94
Hornady 90 American Gunner XTP	886	1.44	0.99
Hornady 90 Critical Defense FTX	900	1.23	0.54

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 7 yards (off-hand) and 10 yards (benched).

**FIRST
LOOK!**



Sweet CCC

There can be no denying the popularity of the 1911 pistol.

Since its introduction, it has set the standard that all other combat handguns are judged by. Yet, in spite of its many positive aspects, for those who have to carry a pistol all day, it presents a significant problem—size.

Your average, full-sized, steel-framed 1911 is at least 8.5 inches long and, when unloaded, will tip the scales in excess of 2 pounds. That is quite a chunk of metal to lug around on your belt or conceal under a jacket all day. Despite this, many hardcore aficionados would never think of carrying anything but a 1911-style pistol.

The primary reason for the 1911's inconvenient dimensions and weight is the cartridge it was designed to fire. The .45 ACP is a B-I-G round, and thus the immutable laws of physics require a pistol of a certain size to launch it. Over the years, a number of manufacturers have offered “compact” 1911 pistols, but the process of “compacting” generally consisted of little more than hacking off sections of the slide and barrel and shortening the grip frame. While this has resulted in a shorter, lighter pistol, it has come at the cost of ergonomics, reliability and magazine capacity.

Springfield Armory of Geneseo, Illinois, currently markets one of the most complete

line of 1911s and has responded to requests for a more compact 1911. Several years ago, the company released the Enhanced Micro Pistol (EMP), which was radically re-engineered specifically for concealed carry.

► **EMP Series**

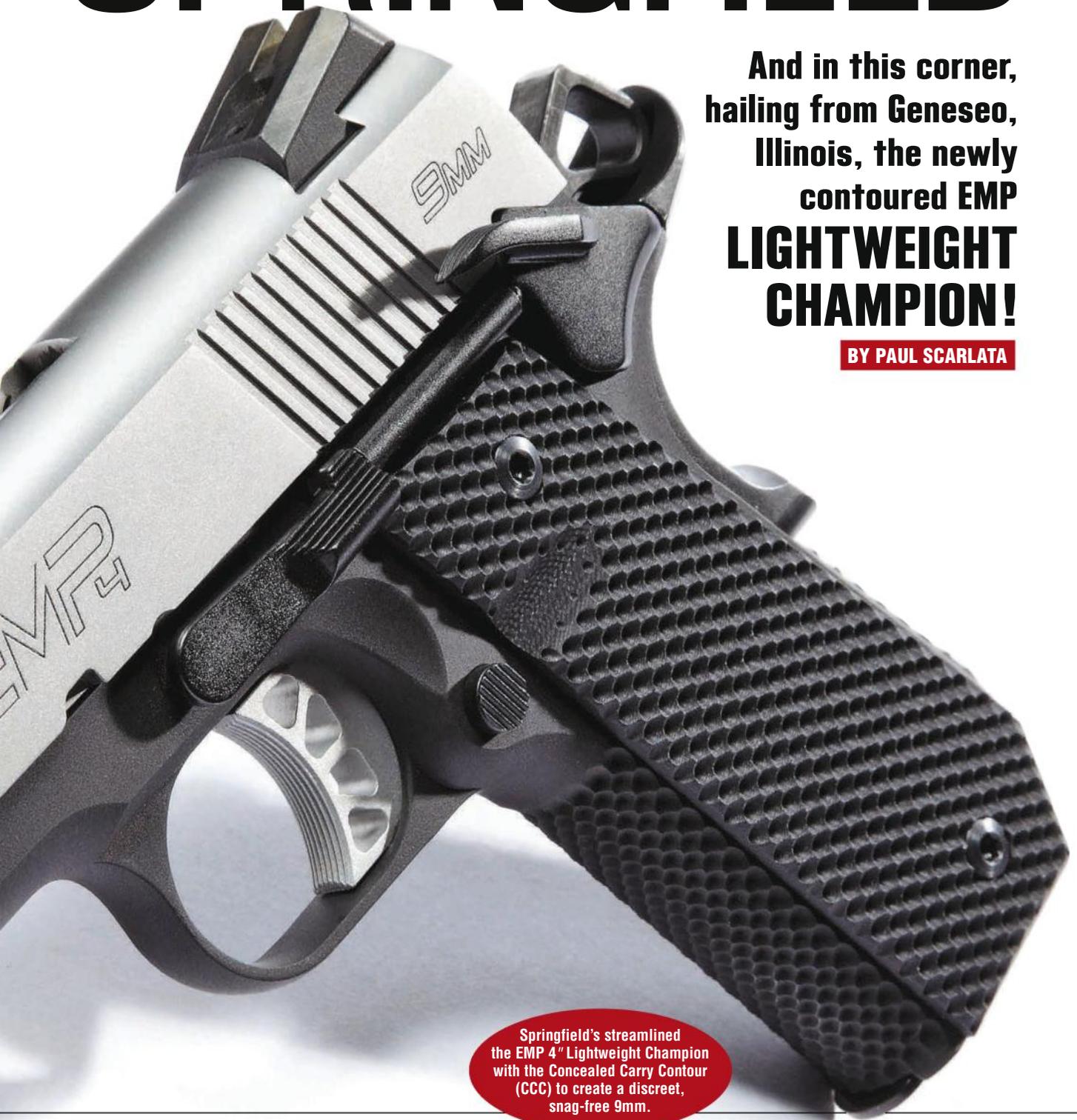
To achieve this, the first thing Springfield's engineers had to do was to discard that sacred icon of 1911dom—the .45 ACP cartridge—and chamber the new pistol for the 9mm. While we can hear all the wails of protest and gnashing of teeth out there, pay it no attention. Despite what the big-bullet crowd persists in believing, when loaded with high-performance hollow-point bullets, modern 9mm ammo no longer has to take a backseat to its larger-caliber cousins when



SPRINGFIELD

And in this corner,
hailing from Geneseo,
Illinois, the newly
contoured EMP
**LIGHTWEIGHT
CHAMPION!**

BY PAUL SCARLATA



Springfield's streamlined the EMP 4" Lightweight Champion with the Concealed Carry Contour (CCC) to create a discreet, snag-free 9mm.

it comes to on-target performance while providing the added benefits of less recoil and higher magazine capacity.

Using the 9mm cartridge was only the first of many changes that Springfield made. In fact, no fewer than 15 different components were redesigned to produce the EMP, including the slide, extractor, firing pin, firing pin spring, frame, trigger bow, trigger mechanism, plunger tube and spring.

The pistol was fitted with a 3-inch barrel and a correspondingly shorter stainless steel slide, which reduced its overall length to 6.6 inches. The frame was made from black anodized aluminum alloy, which pared the EMP's unloaded weight down to a mere 27 ounces unloaded—about the same as many snub-nosed revolvers.

Due to it being designed around the 9mm cartridge, Springfield's engineers were able to reduce the diameter and front-to-rear dimensions of the grip frame by 0.25 and 0.13 inches, respectively.

Now, while this might not sound like much, when you pick up an EMP, this reduction is immediately evident, especially when you factor in the extra-thin grip panels. The one downside to this was that EMPs could not accept standard 9mm 1911 magazines and instead required proprietary magazines. And, due to the popularity of the .40 S&W cartridge,



Springfield redesigned a number of 1911 parts to create the original scaled-down EMP in 9mm, and the CCC variant sports a number of upgrades while still being easy to takedown for cleaning and maintenance.

Springfield soon began offering the EMP in this chambering.

In recent years, a "new" type of 1911 has become popular

on the market, one that is more concealable than traditional Commander-sized pistols but has superior handling features to Officer's Model-type pistols. To this end, Springfield's 1911 stable includes Champion series pistols that feature full-sized grip frames and 4-inch barrels, splitting the difference between the 3- and 4.25-inch barrels common to the aforementioned pistols.

The longer barrel/slide unit of the Springfield EMP 4" Lightweight Champion provides a longer sight radius, a bit more recoil-dampening weight up front and extra velocity for improved performance from



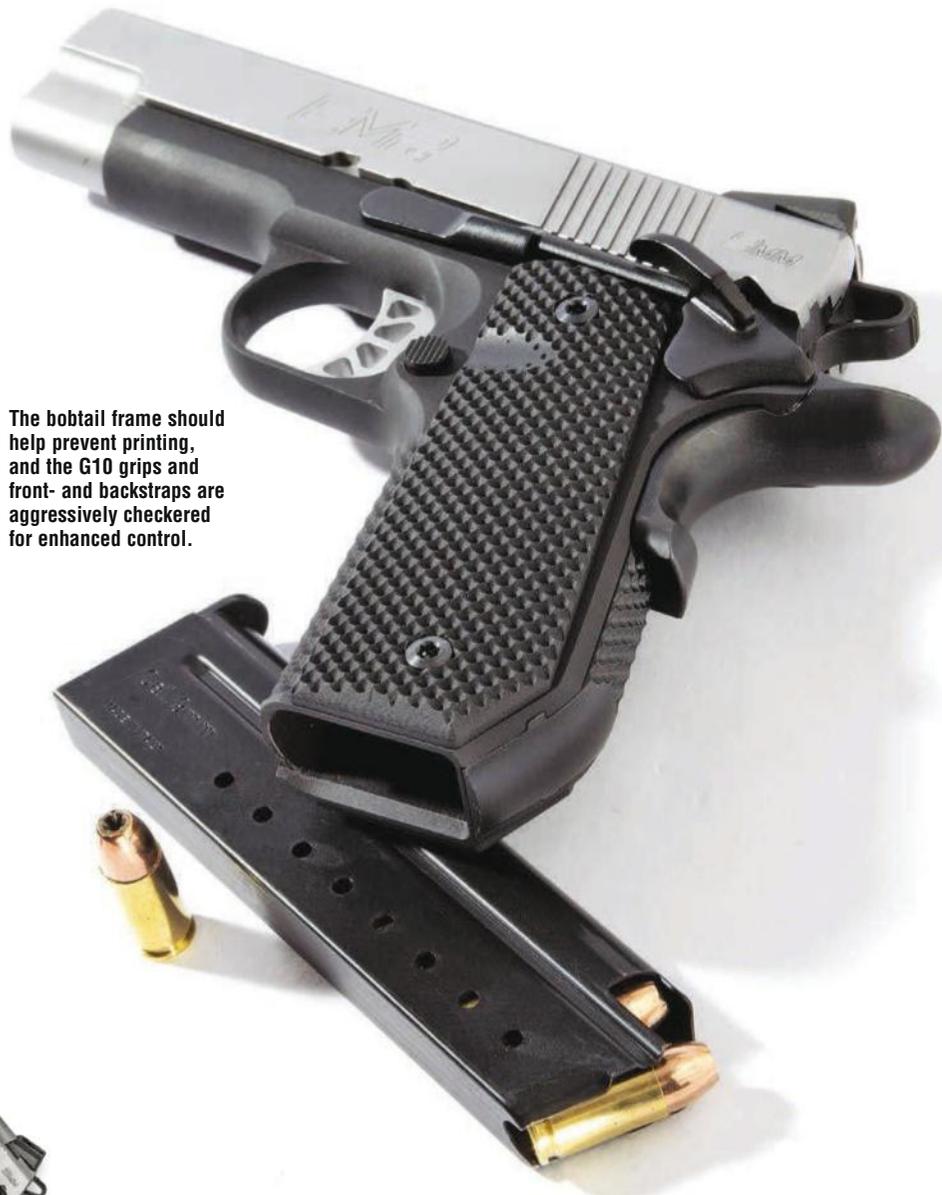
the 9mm cartridge—all without increasing the size or mass of the pistol to any noticeable degree.

So it came as no surprise to me when, shortly before the 2017 SHOT Show, Springfield's Debbie Williams asked if I'd like to test the company's newest offering—the EMP 4" Lightweight Champion with the Concealed Carry Contour (which I'm just going to call the "CCC" for the sake of brevity).

► Seeing The Contour

While dimensionally and mechanically similar to the EMP 4" Lightweight Champion, the CCC has a number of well-thought-out features that make it suitable for concealed carry. So let's check them out.

The stainless steel slide sports a fiber-optic front sight and a low-mount, two-dot rear sight, and both are mounted in dovetail cuts. All of the slide's edges have been radiused for shooter comfort and to lessen the chances

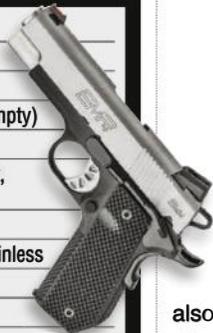


The bobtail frame should help prevent printing, and the G10 grips and front- and backstraps are aggressively checkered for enhanced control.

SPECIFICATIONS

SPRINGFIELD EMP 4" WITH CONCEALED CARRY CONTOUR

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	4 inches
OA LENGTH:	7.5 inches
WEIGHT:	30.5 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	G10 Posi-Lock
SIGHTS:	Fiber-optic front, two-dot rear
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY:	9+1
MSRP:	\$1,220



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
HPR 115 JHP	1,113	2.00
Remington 124	1,146	1.30
Golden Saber JHP +P		
Sig Sauer 147 V-Crown JHP	962	1.60
Winchester 115	1,148	1.90
USA Forged FMJ		

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 15 yards.

of it snagging when drawn from concealment. The ejection port has also been lowered and flared to ensure spent cases are reliably removed.

Inside the slide we find a stainless steel, match-grade, bushing-less, fully supported, ramped, bull barrel while dual captive recoil springs move on a full-length guide rod to ensure reliable operation and consistent lock-up with enhanced accuracy.

The forged aluminum alloy frame has a subdued black anodized finish that contracts attractively with the slide's satin finish. An ambidextrous thumb safety makes the CCC a southpaw-friendly pistol while the beavertail grip

safety positions it properly in your hand while dispersing the recoil impulse for more comfortable shooting.

I was especially taken with how the aggressively checkered frontstrap and mainspring housing teamed up with the G10 Posi-Lock grip panels to ensure a firm purchase, even with perspiring or oily hands, and enhance recoil control. A nice touch was the beveled area on the left grip panel that makes it easier to access the magazine release.

The CCC's most noticeable feature—and one that enhances its concealed-carry bona fides (and where the "Contour" in its moniker comes from)—is the aforementioned mainspring hous-

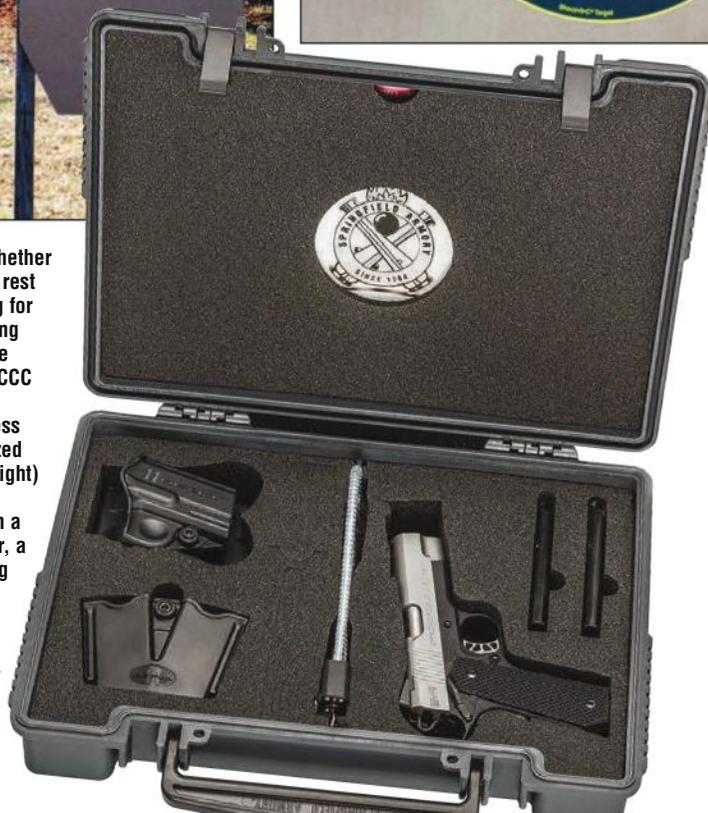


Becky Scarlata Photos



“ The recoil, even with the +P rounds, was extremely controllable, enabling me to make fast, accurate follow-up shots. ”

(Above) Whether firing off a rest or shooting for speed during some range drills, the CCC proved its effectiveness on man-sized targets. (Right) The pistol comes with a belt holster, a double mag pouch, a cable lock and two magazines.



ing. It has received what is known as the “bobtail” treatment, where the bottom corner of the mainspring housing and grip frame are cut away at an angle and beveled. The purpose of this treatment is to reduce the signature of the pistol when worn under light clothing.

Finally, the mouth of the magazine well has been slightly beveled to ensure smooth, snag-free reloads. And yes, the magazines fell free when the release was pressed—empty or partially loaded, slide forward or locked back.

► Trigger Time

With the able assistance of my wife, Becky, I ran the CCC through its paces one sunny December afternoon. Firing from an MTM K-Zone rest at 15 yards showed the CCC to be quite accurate with the ammo it liked, and I was able to produce several sub-2-inch groups.

We then set up a trio of USPSA targets, and after belting on the belt slide holster that came with the pistol, I set about performing a series of off-hand drills. As I am not a fan of white-dot sights, before starting I used a marker pen to blacken the dots on the rear sight. The drills looked like this: At 5 yards, I drew the pistol from its holster and fired three rounds at each target with just one hand. Then I reloaded and repeated the shots. At 10 yards, I drew the pistol and double-tapped each target, this time firing with a two-handed grip before reloading and reengaging each target. I repeated this drill twice more. Finally, at 15 yards, I drew the pistol, engaged each target by firing three carefully aimed shots, reloaded and repeated.

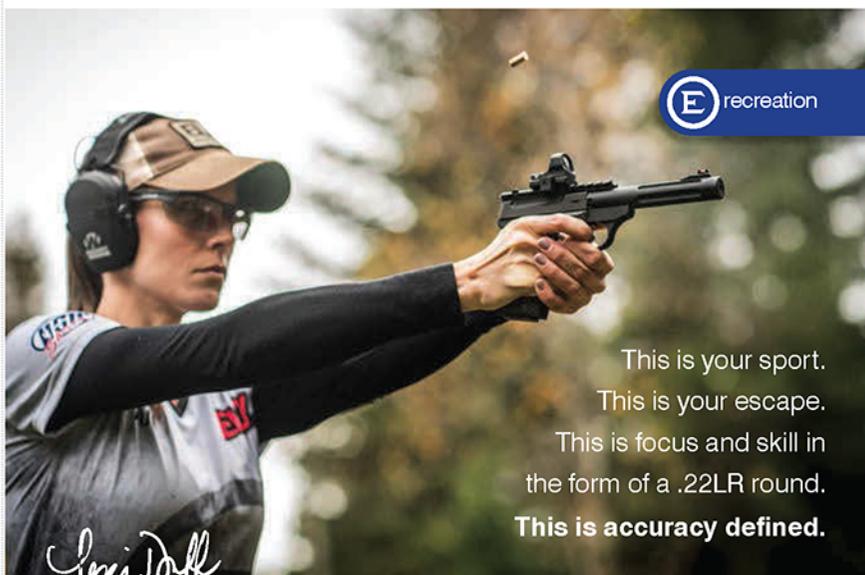
During these drills, the CCC handled beautifully, although I found the narrow magazine well opening slowed my combat reloads down somewhat. I also experienced a single malfunction when one round of the steel-cased Winchester ammunition required a second strike to fire. The recoil, even with the +P rounds, was extremely controllable, enabling me to make fast, accurate follow-up shots.

While I would like to be able to say that all of my rounds found their way

into the A-zones of the targets, the sense of honesty that all gun writers possess forces me to admit that several of them wandered out into the C-zones. I have no idea how that happened. Honest!

All in all, I found Springfield's CCC to be an eminently practical concealed-

carry pistol. If you are a fan of the 1911 platform but want a smaller, lighter CCW handgun, you would be doing yourself a disservice if you did not check out the CCC. It's just a damn nice little handgun! For more information, visit springfield-armory.com or call 800-680-6866. **PP**



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CUTTING-EDGE CCW

CURVE APPEAL

**Taurus' laser-equipped .380 will
TWIST YOUR PERCEPTION of concealed carry.**

BY PAUL SCARLATA • PHOTOS BY SCOTT BAXTER

The history of concealed-carry handguns is long and varied.

The first were small single- or double-barreled flintlocks known generically as “overcoat pistols.” With the introduction of percussion ignition, gun-makers were able to produce smaller—and much more reliable—muzzle-loading pistols. The most famous of the breed was the Philadelphia Deringer made by Henry Deringer between 1852 and 1868, which became a favorite among gamblers, ladies of the night and presidential assassins.

The perfection of self-contained cartridges saw the market awash with small single- and double-barreled pistols (known as “derringers” to avoid patent infringement) and revolvers. These were mostly chambered for uninspiring rimfire cartridges of .22 to .41 caliber. By the end of the 19th century, small revolvers dominated the concealed-carry market and saw wide use at a time when the lack of police protection led to

a large percentage of the population going about their daily chores armed.

In 1900, John Moses Browning introduced his first “pocket” pistol, the FN Model 1900 chambered for the 7.65mm Browning (.32 ACP) whose popularity led to dozens of gun-makers in Europe and the U.S. offering “pocket pistols” (“*Taschenpistolen*” in German). The introduction of the 6.35mm Browning (.25 ACP) cartridge led to a new generation of very small self-loaders known as “vest pocket pistols” (*Westentaschenpistolen*).

But on this side of the Big Pond, the revolver retained its popularity, and by the 1920s the concealed handgun of choice was a short-barreled revolver, usually chambered in .38 Special, which continues to be a major player in today's concealed-carry market.

With ever greater numbers of states approving “shall issue” concealed-carry licenses, the U.S. market for small handguns has exploded, and more and more people are demanding small, lightweight handguns for everyday carry. While .38-caliber snubbies continue to be popular, as has happened with American police and civilian handgun

markets, small semi-auto pistols are rapidly becoming the CCW handguns of choice. The most popular of these are polymer-framed guns, and one of the most radical, odd-looking and perhaps practical is the Taurus Curve.

► Out Of The Box

Chambered for the popular .380 ACP, the Curve is the most radical departure from the pocket pistol genre I've ever seen. In fact, it doesn't even look like a pistol! Except for its reciprocating slide, the Curve has the oddest-looking profile I've seen on a modern handgun because the metal frame insert, trigger and hammer mechanisms, and detachable, six-round magazine are all encased in a one-piece polymer shell.

The steel slide reciprocates on dual rails integral to the frame insert. The breech locks via the barrel hood bearing on the front edge of the ejection port. When fired, the slide moves to the rear. A cam on the bottom of the barrel pulls it down, unlocking the barrel from the slide, which itself continues to the rear, extracting and ejecting the spent case. The recoil spring then pulls the slide forward, picking up the next round from the magazine and chambering it. As the slide goes into battery, the barrel is cammed upward until its hood enters the ejection port, locking the two units together again. A loaded-chamber indicator is located at the rear of the ejection port, which provides a visual and tactile indication of the pistol's condition.

The Curve has a smooth profile similar to that of many of the accessories people carry upon their person, such as a wallet, cell phone or pager. And this is possibly its most important characteristic, because it can be carried in your pocket or under light clothing without any "signature" that would indicate a firearm. The exterior is completely smooth and snag-free, allowing unimpeded presentation from concealment.

When viewed from the rear, the pistol's name becomes obvious, as the left side of the grip is curved so as to further reduce the signature while making it more comfortable to carry close to or against the body. For those who prefer

SPECIFICATIONS

TAURUS CURVE

CALIBER:	.380 ACP
BARREL:	2.7 inches
OA LENGTH:	5.2 inches
WEIGHT:	13.6 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Integral laser, crosshairs
ACTION:	DAO
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	6+1
MSRP:	\$392



this style of carry, the pistol features a belt clip on the right side, allowing you to carry the Curve inside your belt or the waistband of your trousers without the need for a holster. This is where I should note that even though the grip itself is curved, it is not pronounced enough to prevent the use of a straight-sided magazine.

The pistol's short grip frame has coarse, non-slip texturing on the front- and backstraps, so while I was only able to get a two-finger grip, considering the low recoil of the .380 ACP cartridge, I found it more than sufficient for good recoil control. To remove the six-round magazine, use your thumb and trigger finger to pinch the catch on the left side and withdraw it.

When the magazine is empty, the follower moves up to hold the slide to the rear, but since there is no slide stop lever, you must remove the empty magazine, retract the slide slightly, release it and let it run forward. The Curve has a disconnect safety that prevents firing when the magazine is removed from the grip.

As on many of Taurus' handguns, the Curve has the Taurus Security System, which allows the shooter to lock the hammer and trigger to prevent unauthorized firing. You simply insert a key (two are provided) into the lock located on the rear of the frame and rotate it clockwise until it clicks. To unlock, simply reinsert the key and rotate it counterclockwise.

Unlike most pistols of its class, the Curve is hammer-fired, which I feel provides more reliable cartridge ignition

than small striker-fired pistols. While its double-action-only (DAO) trigger has a rather long and heavy stroke, I feel this is a positive feature on a deep-cover defensive handgun and, considering the "reach out and touch someone" distances it is likely to be used at, is in no way a disadvantage. Unfortunately, the Curve does not have a second-strike capability, which means the slide must be retracted slightly to reset the firing mechanism in the event of a misfire. Or better yet, quickly retract the slide fully and chamber a new cartridge.

► Zeroing In

Perhaps one of the Curve's most notable features are its sights—or should I say lack thereof. Instead, it boasts an industry first: A light and laser are built right into the frame. Inside the polymer shell, in front of trigger, is a Viridian laser and dual lights. Pressing or swiping a serrated button in front of the triggerguard activates the laser and dual lights.

A small memory pad is located above the switch where your finger should be placed when not shooting, and with a bit of practice, swiping the button becomes a natural action as your finger moves towards the trigger. You can adjust the laser's windage and elevation with supplied Allen wrenches. To replace the light/laser battery, simply unscrew the slotted cap located above them, insert a new Viridian CR1/3N wrapped battery and reinstall the cap.

The Curve earns its name because of its slightly curved polymer grip, which makes it easier to carry in an IWB position on the right side.



The Curve comes with an accessory called a "Trigger Shield." This is a polymer sleeve that fits over the front of the pistol and covers the trigger and light/laser unit. If it is attached when the light/laser unit is on, it automatically shuts them off, and pulling the Shield off automatically activates them. The Trigger Shield has a lanyard made of 550 paracord that you can attach to your belt when carrying the pistol inside your waistband. As you draw the pistol, the cord pulls the Shield off the gun.

For shooting without the laser, a set of white crosshairs on the back of the slide align with the bore of the barrel. For "aiming," you line up the upright crosshair with the two ears of the loaded-chamber indicator. While basic in the extreme, it works at close range.

► Range Time

My wife, Becky, immediately took a shine to the Curve we received for testing. She felt it would be an excellent CCW choice for women because of its ability to be carried in a small purse, a jacket pocket or under light clothing.

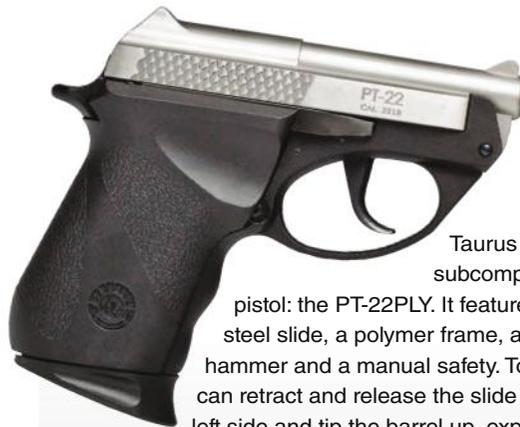
To gauge its reliability, we ran three magazines each of four different brands of .380 ACP ammunition through it: Hornady's 90-grain FTXs, Black Hills' 100-grain FMJs, Winchester's 95-grain Train & Defend rounds and Browning's 95-grain X-Point rounds. I'm pleased to report that we did not experience a single malfunction of any type.

Realizing that trying to shoot tight groups with the Curve would likely be an exercise in futility, we limited our test-firing to engaging a combat-type target at the aforementioned "reach out and touch someone" distance with the laser sight.

It took a bit of practice to get the hang of that little red dot dancing around, but once I had the measure of it, I was able to put 22 rounds into one ragged hole at the top of the target's 10 ring, with only a single pair wandering out into the 9 ring. Not only was I impressed with such performance, but I also feel it is more than adequate for a handgun of this class and fulfills the Curve's task in life to perfection. For more information, call 800-327-3776 or visit taurususa.com.

PP

MORE TINY TAURUSES



**Taurus
PT-22
PLY**

Taurus also offers another subcompact, polymer-framed pistol: the PT-22PLY. It features a blued or stainless steel slide, a polymer frame, a DAO trigger, a bobbed hammer and a manual safety. To load the pistol, you can retract and release the slide or pivot a lever on the left side and tip the barrel up, exposing the chamber.

You then insert a cartridge and close the barrel. The pistol has no extractor, so to unload it you remove the magazine, tip the barrel up again and manually remove the round from the chamber.

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber: .22 LR ■ **Barrel:** 2.33 inches
OA Length: 4.88 inches ■ **Weight:** 11.27 ounces (empty)
Grips: Polymer ■ **Sights:** Fixed ■ **Action:** DAO
Finish: Matte black, stainless ■ **Capacity:** 8+1 ■ **MSRP:** \$256-\$271



**Taurus
738
TCP**

Those desiring a larger-caliber, polymer-framed pocket pistol need look no further than

Taurus' 738 TCP in .380 ACP. Small and lightweight, it conceals easily in a pocket, IWB holster or purse, but thanks to its smooth outline and DAO trigger, it can be drawn smoothly for quick action. It is available with a blued or stainless slide, and ladies might find the model with the pink-colored polymer frame attractive.

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber: .380 ACP ■ **Barrel:** 2.84 inches
OA Length: 5.25 inches ■ **Weight:** 10.2 ounces (empty)
Grip: Polymer ■ **Sights:** Fixed ■ **Action:** DAO
Finish: Black, stainless, pink ■ **Capacity:** 6+1 ■ **MSRP:** \$254-\$356

SNEAK
PEEK

THE TAURUS



For the first time in its history, Taurus has designed, engineered and manufactured a new firearm entirely within the United States.

The Taurus Spectrum is also the first semi-automatic pistol equipped with soft-touch panels seamlessly integrated into the grip and slide. This breakthrough design delivers better comfort, better responsiveness

and better control. The company is also offering the gun with several color combinations to choose from, merging fashion and function for truly distinctive firearms.

When Taurus decided to design a new .380 ACP pocket pistol, its engineers decided to address that entire segment of the market. One of the main issues with traditional .380s is that they are not pleasant guns to shoot or handle. These guns are typically small for better concealability, but as firearms become smaller, they also become less manageable. So, with the Spectrum, Taurus focused on

SPECTRUM

An exclusive look at an innovative, stylish .380 ACP striker. **BY ATHLON STAFF**



ergonomics, recoil management, trigger control and usability.

“The industry has missed the mark on developing a micro-pistol that melds ergonomics and usability and is safe and easy to manipulate,” said Dusty Sroufe, Taurus’ director of product development. “Our desire at Taurus was to create a gun that is pleasant to shoot at the range as well as to carry with confidence. The Taurus Spectrum is the complete package consumers are seeking.”

To that end, Taurus took a fresh look at how the gun interfaces with the user. The company collaborated with PolyOne, a global provider of specialized polymer materials, services and solutions. Together, they conducted a major ergonomic study to better understand the challenges of making a small pistol that fits various hand sizes. Drawing on PolyOne’s expertise, Taurus executed an enhanced grip design featuring unique contours that enable the hand to naturally conform to the firearm, providing a more secure grip.

This study was also vital in developing an extended

magazine that is ergonomically contoured to fit your hand, providing a natural point of aim and a confident user experience. The extended magazine option holds seven rounds and features a finger groove for more comfort and control.

Recoil management was addressed through both ergonomics and innovative materials. Utilizing its relationship with PolyOne, Taurus enhanced the functionality of the firearm with the use of proprietary polymers. Soft-touch material was used to improve grip retention in both wet and dry conditions. And while typical designs rely on grip texturing to keep the gun secure in the user’s hand while shooting, the soft-touch material provides better friction than standard stippling.

The collaboration with PolyOne was integral in striking the perfect balance between function and durability.

The grip materials are permanently bonded together; they’re stain and chemical resistant, and can be easily cleaned with mild soap and water. The material properties are not affected by extreme hot or cold temperatures.

Racking the slide can also be problematic for some shooters, and Taurus decided to take an innovative approach in addressing this challenge. Instead of traditional slide serrations, Taurus developed a stylish design that allows the fingers to engage indentations on the slide, providing positive contact points for enhanced traction, minimizing short strokes while racking for enhanced safety. Additionally, the same soft-touch material that is used on the grip is also incorporated into the slide for better traction.

These elements, when combined, make it much easier to chamber a round.

Finally, the Spectrum is striker-fired with a long and smooth 7- to 9-pound trigger. Unique to Taurus, this true double-action-only trigger system features a non-energized striker, with no pre-cocking or pre-loading applied, ensuring no contact

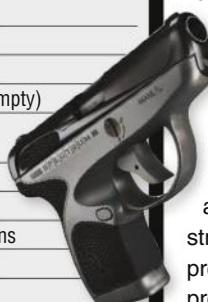
between the sear and striker. The wide, flat trigger aids in correct finger placement. For additional safety, the gun comes equipped with a striker block, providing peace of mind for everyday carry.

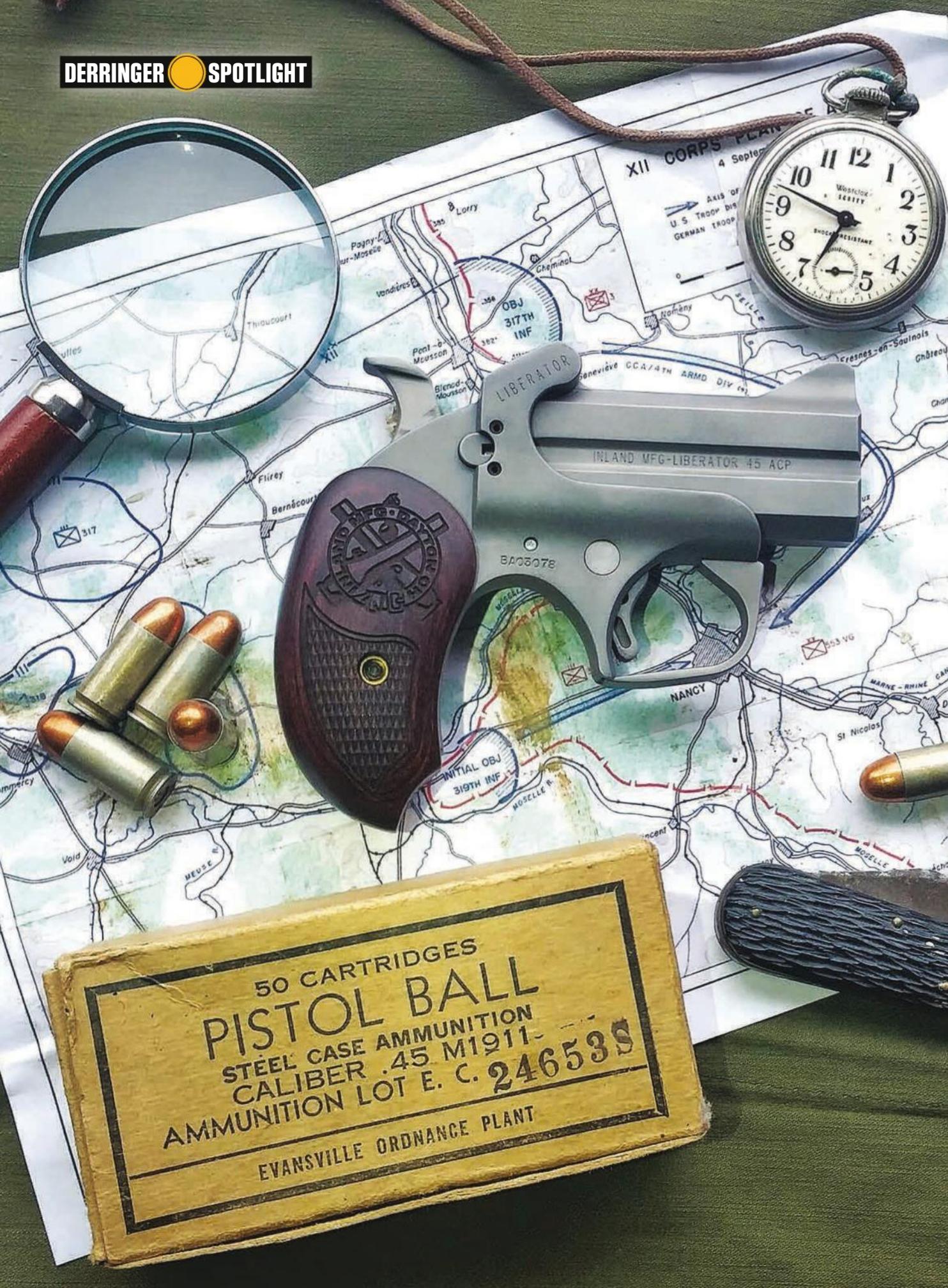
► Wide Appeal

Shaping the future of everyday carry, the new Taurus Spectrum covers every aspect of the concealed-carry experience. Not only is the product intended to feel good and perform reliably, but Taurus also wanted a product that was visually appealing to the consumer. Taurus paired fashion and function with more elegant color choices. Aside from inevitable special-edition offerings, the Spectrum is available in eight standard color offerings, including a black, gray or white frame option with either black or gray overmolding and a black or stainless slide. Then there are the “house color” options: a black frame and slide with Flat Dark Earth overmolding; a white frame, stainless slide and cyan overmolding; and a gray frame, a black slide and mint overmolding.

To appeal to more shooters, the magazine release is reversible, and the gun is designed for easy disassembly. The trigger doesn’t have to be pulled to take the pistol down for cleaning or maintenance. For more information, visit taurususa.com or call 800-327-3776.

SPECIFICATIONS	
TAURUS SPECTRUM	
CALIBER:	.380 ACP
BARREL:	2.8 inches
OA LENGTH:	5.4 inches
WEIGHT:	10 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Soft-touch overmolding
SIGHTS:	Low profile
ACTION:	Striker-fired
FINISH:	Various options
CAPACITY:	6+1, 7+1
MSRP:	\$289-\$305





50 CARTRIDGES
PISTOL BALL
STEEL CASE AMMUNITION
CALIBER .45 M1911-
AMMUNITION LOT E. C. 24653S
EVANSVILLE ORDNANCE PLANT

THE LONG LIVE LIBERATOR

Check out Inland's new take on a super-covert .45 from World War II!

BY WILLIAM BELL • PHOTOS BY SCOTT BAXTER

ALL-OUT WAR calls for answers to problems that may have never come up before. In World War II, the Allies were looking for a way to help resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied areas obtain weapons and ammunition. The easiest way for a member of the French Resistance, for example, to obtain a firearm was to take it from a dead or captured enemy soldier. And it was helpful if the resistance member had some kind of weapon to obtain said firearm.

Enter the FP-45 Liberator. This was a small, single-shot pistol in .45 ACP designed at the Inland Division of General Motors in Dayton, Ohio, in 1942. For counter-intelligence purposes, it was classified as a flare pistol, hence the FP designation. It had a 4-inch, smoothbore barrel, and the gun itself was only 5.55 inches long and weighed about 16 ounces. Made basically of stamped-steel parts, it was easy to mass produce, and some 3 million were made in about 11 weeks. It had an effective range of 1 to 4 yards and was shipped in

a cardboard box along with 10 cartridges and a comic-book-style instruction sheet. While there are few records of this gun being issued and used, it did see action in both the European and Pacific Theaters.

► A Modern Take

Fast-forward to today. Inland Manufacturing—in cooperation with Bond Arms—is now offering a new Liberator pistol in the spirit of the FP-45. This particular version of the Liberator is also in .45 ACP, but its base platform is the over/under derringer produced by Bond Arms. The head honchos of Inland and Bond Arms—Ron Norton and Gordon Bond, respectively—have been friends for years, and Bond has always considered Norton an “innovator” and offered some suggestions to make the “reborn” Liberator a reality.

First and foremost was the chambering, then Bond, in keeping with the original, added a “distressed look” with a dull phosphate-style finish on the metal and less gloss on the oversized rosewood stocks. This gives the Liberator a military appear-



The Liberator sports wide rosewood grips with smooth front- and backstraps. Also note the large hammer.

ance without trying to replicate the original FP-45. According to Ron Norton, “I like to think that the Inland Liberator is a blend of the past and the future, a forging of yesterday’s simplicity created with modern firearms technology.”

This is a single-action gun with a rebounding hammer and a sliding bolt safety. There is also a safety locking device activated with a hex wrench that makes the gun child-proof. A rotating,

Mission-wise, there’s not much difference between the Liberator of 1942 and the Liberator of today.

spring-loaded hammer face moves via a selector cam when the hammer is cocked to hit the retracting upper and lower firing pins. The Inland Liberator has a removable triggerguard, and the spur trigger’s pull weight is between 6 and 7 pounds. Note: The trigger pivots and an extension acts directly on the sear to release the hammer, so you need to press the trigger on the lower portion or tip—otherwise the pull is more like 20 pounds.

On the left side of the frame is a simple spring-loaded locking lever that, when pivoted downward, unlocks the barrels so they can be tipped up for loading. A cutout on the left side of the barrel breech allows you to pull out the cases after firing. The port in the barrels also acts as a loaded-chamber indicator. Another item I discovered is that you can pivot the barrels open

even when the gun is cocked.

The 3-inch barrels are part of a one-piece assembly made of stainless steel. The fixed ramp front sight and square-notch rear sight are integral to the barrel assembly; the rear sight is part of the hinge. Unlike the original FP-45, the new Liberator’s barrels are rifled for enhanced accuracy.

The gun comes in a hinged and lockable black plastic case with a small hex-head wrench for the safety lock, an owner’s manual and literature from Bond Arms and Inland. The fit and finish on my test Liberator were very good overall, and the finish on the metal was evenly applied but somewhat susceptible to light scratching. The rosewood grips are oversized and

SPECIFICATIONS

INLAND LIBERATOR

CALIBER:	.45 ACP
BARREL:	3 inches
OA LENGTH:	5 inches
WEIGHT:	20 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Rosewood
SIGHTS:	Fixed
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Matte stainless
CAPACITY:	2
MSRP:	\$495



cover the backstrap of the grip frame. The wood-to-wood fit was above average, but the wood-to-metal fitting was a little off at the top of the backstrap, up near the hammer. On the sides of the grip panels is some well-executed checkering and above this is the Inland Manufacturing logo.

► Doubling Down

As this gun is primarily aimed at the self-defense market, I wanted a mix of traditional military-type and commercial defense ammunition.

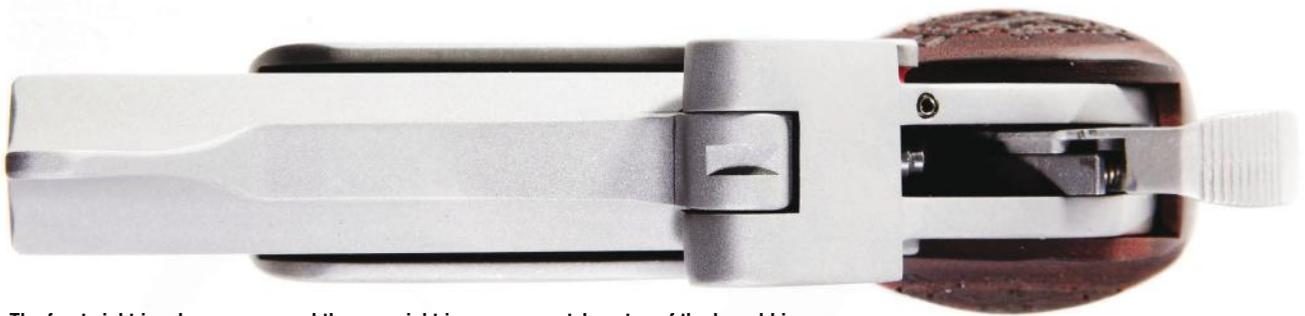
The original military load for the .45 ACP was a 230-grain FMJ. To duplicate this I selected Winchester’s 230-grain “White Box” FMJs. Next, I wanted some lighter-weight bullets, so I went with CorBon’s 165-grain +P JHPs and Federal’s 185-grain Personal Defense JHPs. I opted not to use any type of holster in keeping with the original intent of the FP-45 Liberator.

I ran all of the test ammo through my chronograph to see the velocities produced with the Liberator’s 3-inch barrels, and there weren’t any surprises here velocity-wise.

Since this is an over/under derringer, the sup-



The 3-inch barrels are rifled for enhanced accuracy, and the triggerguard is removable.



The front sight is a large ramp, and the rear sight is a square notch on top of the barrel hinge.

position was that the stacked barrels wouldn't shoot to the same point of aim (POA). I put up a rather large target at 7 yards for this reason. It also became apparent that the group sizes would have to be separated into top- and bottom-barrel groups. Three 2-shot groups were fired at each target, with the top- and bottom-barrel bullet holes being segregated.

The owner's manual said the Liberator could be ammo sensitive. We had two test guns; one did not like

the Winchester FMJs and produced a number of light primer strikes with the lower barrel, so we withdrew it from testing. The second gun had no problem with any of the .45 ACP test ammunition, so we went with it.

My son, Jordan, was helping me, and he'd fire a series of groups, then I would. The best group of the day came with the CorBon +P JHPs. The three-hole cluster from the bottom barrel measured 1.53 inches but was some 5 inches below the POA. The best top-barrel three-shot

group came in at 1.62 inches, and it was only 2.25 inches below the POA.

The hot CorBon +P ammo also had the most centered groups of the three test cartridges. Wanting to keep the groups separated, we found out the best way to tell which firing pin the hammer would hit was to cock the hammer, then carefully observe the hammer "head." If there was a lot of space above it, the bottom barrel would fire—not so much and the top barrel would fire. It was decided that for this particular gun the

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LONG LIVE THE LIBERATOR



top barrel had an edge on accuracy.

Mission-wise, there's not much difference between the Liberator of 1942 and the Liberator of today. This pistol is a close-range proposition, although the effective range of the Inland Liberator is a bit longer than the original's due to the rifling in the barrels and the much-improved sights.

Jordan and I decided to do a practical shooting exercise based on what a real WWII resistance fighter might experience. I placed a B-27-type silhouette target at the 7-yard line and had Jordan slowly eased towards it as if it were an enemy sentry. With the Liberator in his right hand and concealed behind his leg, out of sight, he'd close with the "sentry," bringing the gun up, cocking it while doing so and fire one shot into the center-mass and a second shot to the head from about 3 yards.

Without a glove, this wasn't so much of a problem. A total of 12 shots were fired; one headshot was a near miss and one hit was in the center of the neck. The center-mass shots scored 3 in the X-ring, 1 in the 10-ring and 2 out in the 9-point scoring area. The shooting was done as quickly as possible with a one-handed hold. Once the trigger was mastered, the Liberator was fairly quick to get into action. The .45 ACP slugs would have done their job, and we would have gotten the sentry's weapon and ammunition.

► Ready & Able

This little exercise pointed out that the best place to have this gun once a possible threat has been

The stainless steel barrel assembly pivots upward for easy loading and unloading. Also note the high-quality checkering and company logo on the grip panels.

identified is in hand but out of sight. The hammer spur is wide and serrated for a good thumb purchase, but that spur is also a hook for snagging on the pocket liner or inside of a loose-fitting shirt

or jacket. If I were carrying this gun, it would be in a pocket holster, and if I were expecting trouble, my thumb would be over the hammer, both to ease drawing the gun and to have it pre-positioned

to cock the hammer after the pocket is cleared and the gun is being brought to bear. Although the original Liberator had a trigger-guard, I would remove the trigger-guard on this version, especially if I used a two-handed hold. For more information, visit inland-mfg.com or call 877-425-4867.

PP

PERFORMANCE

INLAND LIBERATOR

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY Top Barrel / Bottom Barrel
CorBon 165 JHP +P	943	3.21 / 1.53
Federal 185 Personal Defense JHP	831	1.81 / 2.33
Winchester 230 FMJ	689	2.62 / 4.41

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for six-shot groups at 7 yards.

AGI's DOUBLE TAKE

Get a closer look at Bond Arms' derringers with the American Gunsmithing Institute.

BY WILL DABBS, MD

Bond Arms derringers are staples in American gun shops.

Built to impeccable standards of workmanship in Texas by Texans, these two-shot defensive handguns are modern renditions of 19th century derringers. Variants are available in a bewildering array of both rimfire and centerfire chamberings. If Bond Arms doesn't offer it, you likely don't need it.

Among their many salient attributes, the Bond Arms guns are deceptively simple. This makes them both durable and reliable. The stainless steel frames are fully modular, and it takes only moments to swap out the barrel assemblies. However, even these simple-seeming derringers incorporate some complex mechanical safety devices. Thankfully, the American Gunsmithing Institute (AGI) is now offering an instructional DVD that allows laymen in possession of the most basic mechanical skills to fully disassemble, understand, maintain and reassemble their Bond Arms handguns.

► Learn From The Pros

This DVD, *Bond Arms Derringers*, covers the history, development and theory behind these novel and ubiquitous firearms in just over an hour of intensive and informative video. The various safety systems of the weapon are fully explained as well as the functions of literally every disparate part using a professional cutaway sample of the gun. AGI instructor Ken Brooks is experienced, engaging and effective.

AGI offers these intensive video courses on dozens of different firearms. Where previously it might

take a lifetime of study or a lengthy apprenticeship to learn the many facets of these disparate weapons, AGI's superb videography now allows viewers to get up close and personal with the intricacies of these guns. A brief time in front of one of these videos leaves you with a remarkably detailed understanding of the tool to which you might actually someday entrust your life.

► Strong Bonds

While these powerful little handguns seem simple, their guts belie an unexpected intricacy that ensures the weapon is both safe to carry and reliable in action. Each gun has a manual crossbolt safety that can be locked in place with a small Allen-head screw to render the gun inert. There is a safety interlock within the gun's mechanism that prevents the hammer from falling unless the barrels are fully secured in place. The Bond Arms guns are single actions, so the ample hammer must be cocked manually with each shot.

The hammer automatically indexes from one barrel to the other via a clever cam mechanism that is fully explained in the

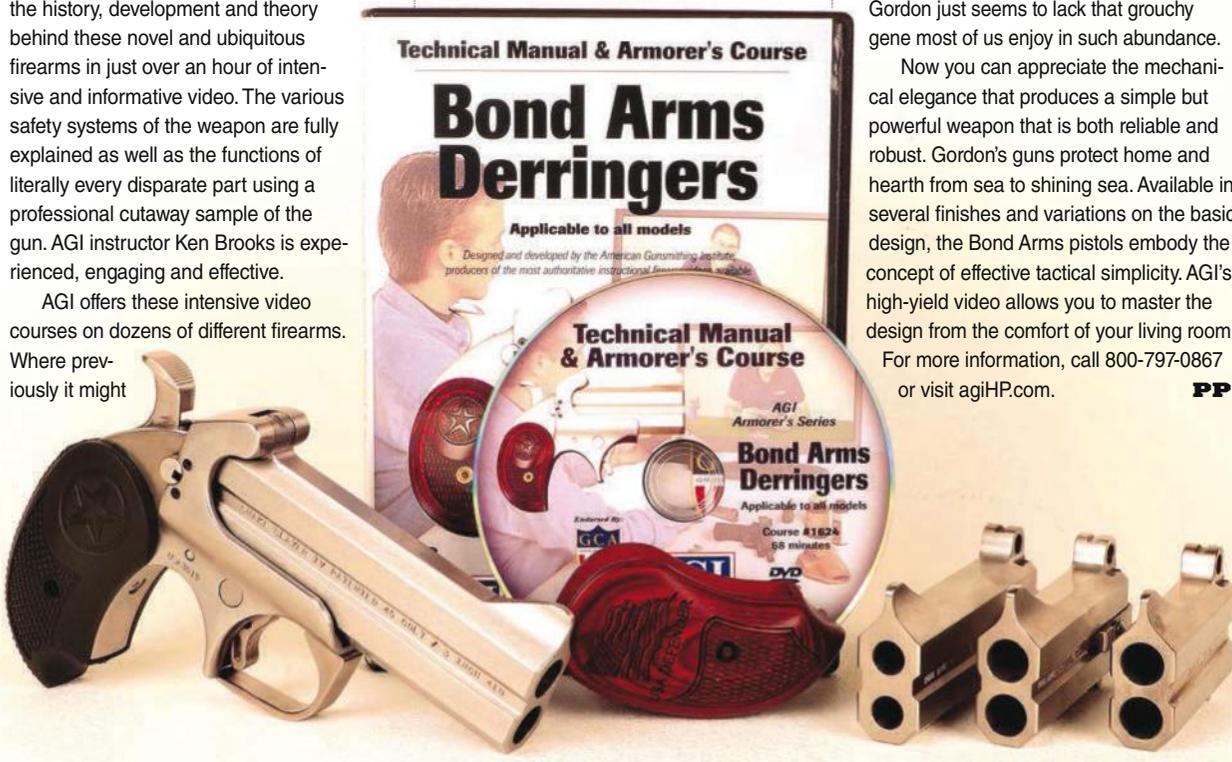
video. The hammer itself is of the rebounding sort that simply cannot contact the firing pins unless the trigger is pulled. At rest, the hammer remains securely clear of both cartridges. The triggerguard is easily removable should you prefer to run the gun without this modern appendage. The gun's grips are easily exchanged via a single screw, and many of the gun's accessories are touched upon in the course. Every single component of the Bond Arms design is explained clearly and concisely in the AGI video.

► Behind The Guns

Gordon Bond, the beating heart behind Bond Arms, is a fixture in the American gun manufacturing community. In the interest of full disclosure, Gordon is also a friend of mine. The passion he exudes for each one of his creations is obvious from the moment you meet him. His standard is perfection and nothing less. Unexceptionally effusive and friendly while exhibiting a nuclear-powered enthusiasm for his remarkably versatile little guns, Gordon is the kind of guy with whom you could enjoy a long car trip. While his family might disagree, Gordon just seems to lack that grouchy gene most of us enjoy in such abundance.

Now you can appreciate the mechanical elegance that produces a simple but powerful weapon that is both reliable and robust. Gordon's guns protect home and hearth from sea to shining sea. Available in several finishes and variations on the basic design, the Bond Arms pistols embody the concept of effective tactical simplicity. AGI's high-yield video allows you to master the design from the comfort of your living room.

For more information, call 800-797-0867 or visit agiHP.com. **PP**





FIRST LOOK!

HEIZER'S POCKET 45

BY MIKE DETTY It's time to turn up the CCW heat with the world's thinnest .45 semi-auto!

It seems some of the world's greatest inventions have started with a sketch on the back of a napkin. And so it was with the Heizer Defense PKO-45. According to Tom Heizer, he, his father and sister were sitting at a Houston restaurant table. They were there for the 2013 NRA Annual Meetings & Exhibits and had just introduced the PS1 pocket shotgun, a break-action, single-shot handgun chambered for .45 Colt cartridges and .410-gauge shotshells. As Tom put it, "Dad said, 'Hey, I've got a good idea for a semi-auto pistol. It will have less moving parts and we can build it incredibly thin and still chamber it for a powerful cartridge.'"

As they looked over his shoulder, Charlie Heizer sketched what would become the PKO-45, a semi-auto cham-

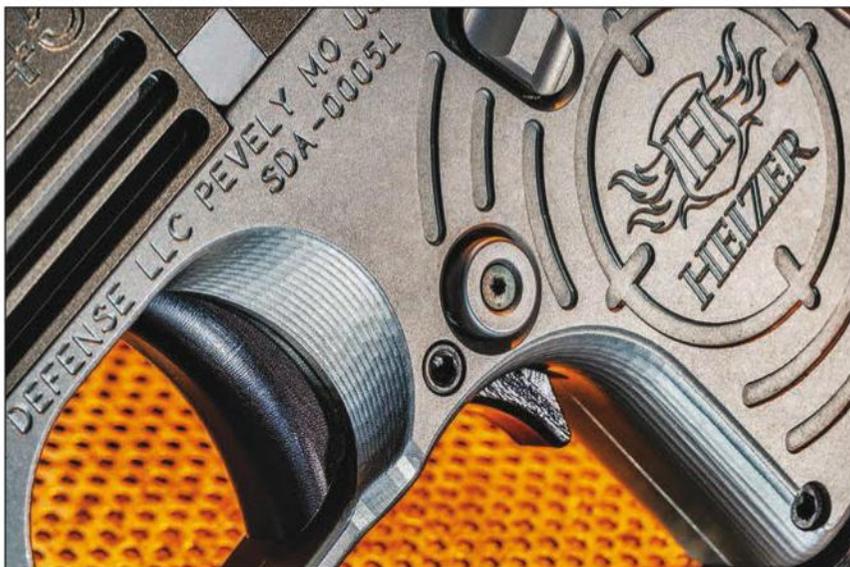
bered for the mighty .45 ACP, weighing just 25 ounces and measuring 0.8 inches thick. Blowback-operated, the PKO-45 uses a fixed barrel and a relatively light recoil spring. While the mechanical parameters of this gun might take a team of engineers with the latest computer programs and months of time to design, Charlie Heizer did it in just minutes with a ballpoint pen.

► Heizer's Ingenuity

Born in 1933, Charlie Heizer grew up in Hungary near the Austrian border and witnessed the horrors of war firsthand with his village being occupied first by German and then Russian troops. After the war, discarded military equipment became a treasure trove for the young man, who used his father's machine and

It might be unconventional, but the Heizer PKO-45 is packed with innovations to pair light recoil with .45 ACP power.





A small lever where the triggerguard meets the grip (above) serves as a grip safety. Also note the pistol's deep rear slide serrations (right).

blacksmith shop to modify the parts. Farm equipment, motorcycles and firearms were some of Heizer's favorite projects to build. At one point he found an old shotgun whose barrel had been damaged by the bombing. Heizer rebuilt the shotgun, cut down the barrel and handloaded his own shells using pieces of lead pipe for shot, and he was able to put rabbit and quail on his family's dinner table.

An interest in all things mechanical led Heizer to get a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and a master's degree in internal combustion engines from the Budapest Institute of Technology. Just months away from receiving his doctorate degree, Heizer

Defense to build guns. His extensive knowledge of steels, alloys and precision machining are as relevant to firearms as they are to aviation.

I spoke to his son, Tom, recently, and he explained that every metal used in the PKO-45 is aerospace-grade stainless steel. "We machine everything in-house and even bore the gun's barrel and rifle here at our factory in Pevely, Missouri."

▶ **A Closer Look**

The PKO-45's barrel is just 2.75 inches long, and its placement in the frame is the key to the gun's controllability. The elder Heizer designed the gun with a



escaped the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and landed in the United States with a toothbrush, a thermodynamics textbook and no working knowledge of the English language. Eventually he met and married another Hungarian refugee and started a family. Heizer established a small machine shop and landed a contract to make parts for Douglas Aircraft, and this led to other jobs with Boeing, Lockheed and Airbus as well as many of their suppliers. Fifty-five years after its inception, Heizer Aerospace now occupies over 300,000 square feet of manufacturing space. But Heizer never abandoned his love of firearms and, using the excuse of diversifying, he established Heizer

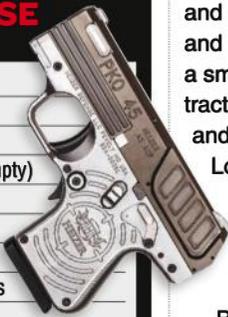
fixed barrel and placed the recoil spring over the barrel. This translates to a lower bore axis in the shooter's hand, minimizing muzzle flip.

Before I had a chance to handle the PKO-45, I was concerned that a blowback-operated gun chambered for the .45 ACP would have a horribly strong recoil spring, but I was pleasantly surprised to find that this wasn't the case. Despite the fact that the gun uses no sort of locking mechanism, it is easy to manually chamber a round. Heizer used a small-diameter, tightly wound recoil spring that possesses enough strength to retard the slide's rearward velocity and chamber the next round in the magazine.

SPECIFICATIONS

**HEIZER DEFENSE
PKO-45**

CALIBER:	.45ACP
BARREL:	2.75 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.1 inches
WEIGHT:	25 ounces (empty)
GRIP:	Steel
SIGHTS:	Low profile
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Black, stainless
CAPACITY:	5+1, 7+1
MSRP:	\$899



The PKO-45 has a tube attached to the frame, just above the barrel's chamber, and it extends almost all the way to the rear of the frame. The recoil spring slides inside the tube, which keeps it from kinking when the slide reciprocates. At the front of the slide, a takedown pin retains the recoil spring guide.

Heizer Defense machines the PKO-45's frame from stainless steel in two halves and joins them, not by welding, but by using five screws. The halves are expertly fitted, and it's hard to discern the seam. I asked Tom Heizer if the end-user should ever separate the two halves. "There's really no reason to. We have done extensive testing and fired 5,000 rounds through one of our test guns. We separated the halves just to check for wear and found the gun's internals to be very clean."

To keep the gun as trim as possible, Heizer designed the slide to run on rails inside the frame. An external extractor is also used on the PKO-45. Heizer places a small square of hardened steel on the slide at the point where the slide stop engages it to minimize wear. There's a slide stop lever located between the manual thumb safety and the 1911-style magazine release. It is positioned appropriately for manipulation while maintaining a firing grip.

At the front of the PKO-45's frame is a grip safety. The pistol cannot fire unless this safety is depressed. In use, it is not noticeable and provides an additional safeguard to prevent an accidental discharge. The frame is undercut at the junction of the frontstrap and triggerguard, and this helps the shooter get a high grip on the gun. Additionally, the exaggerated

ated heel of the frame helps the shooter lock the pistol into a secure firing grip.

An internal hammer is used on this gun—it's not striker-fired—and the PKO-45 has an ambidextrous manual thumb safety. The pivoting safety will be familiar to 1911 users; up for "safe" and "down" for fire. In use, I often found myself visually checking to see if I had disengaged the safety, as the levers are very low profile. In my opinion, the levers should be slightly more pronounced for positive engagement.

► Going Hot

The trigger pull on my pre-production test sample was extremely crisp at about 6.5 pounds with a positive reset. Production guns will have sights manufactured by an outside contractor, but I had no problem aligning the low-profile sights. The accuracy was better than I would have hoped for with a gun possessing a 2.75-inch barrel, but it does have a decent sight radius of about 5.5 inches. I set up my targets at 10 yards and fired five-shot groups with each load, with the best groups listed here.

Ruger's new 118-grain ARX load printed the best five-shot group. This round continues to impress me and almost always turns in the best accuracy regardless of the caliber tested. It has very light recoil yet functions well in everything I have shot it in, and its point of im-

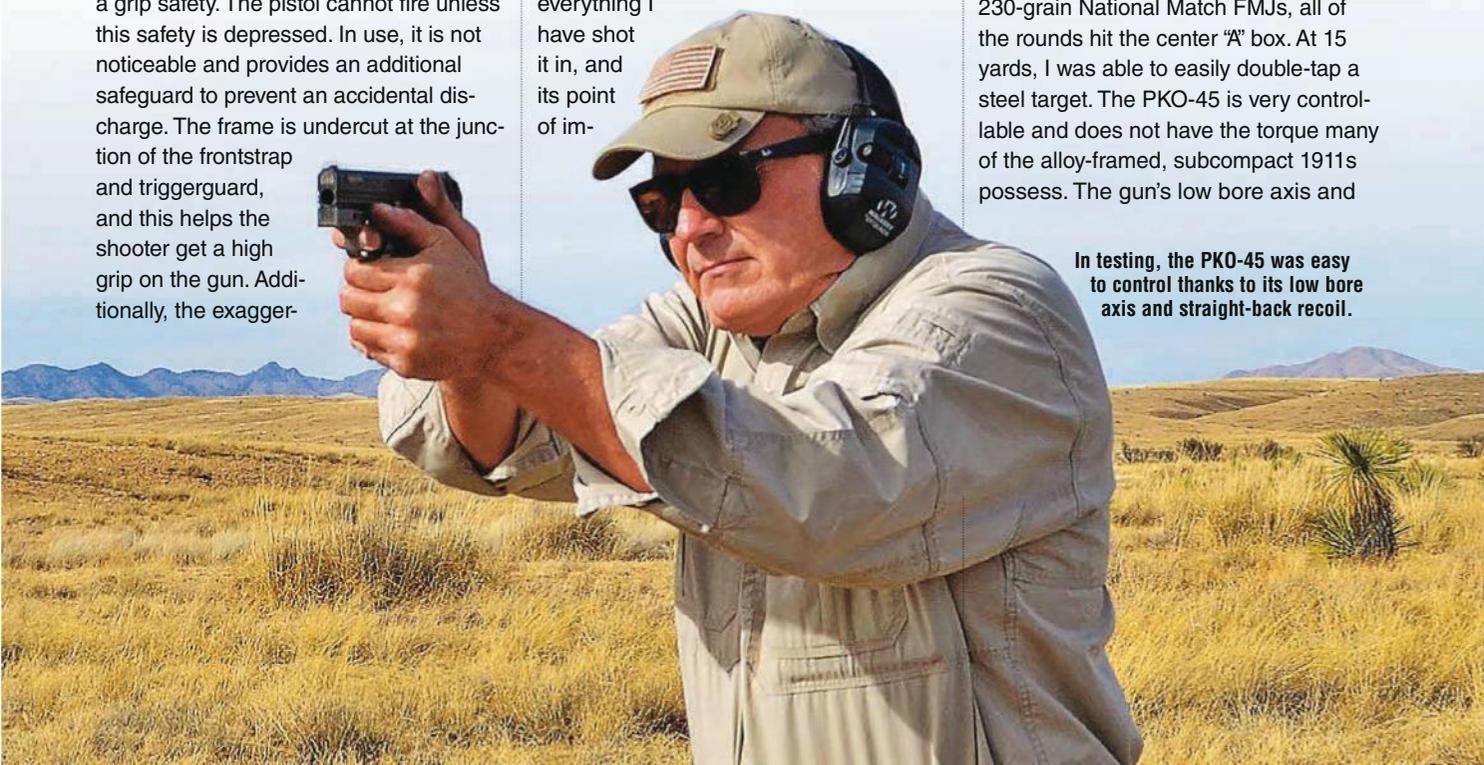


Turning the lever on the left side of the slide, near the muzzle, allows you to remove the recoil spring assembly during the takedown process.

pact is not noticeably different than the point of aim. It also possesses the second highest energy of the rounds I tested. CorBon's 200-grain +P JHPs churned up an astonishing 392 foot-pounds of energy (fpe) and printed a 1.5-inch group at 10 yards.

I set up a standard USPSA target at 5 yards and fired 10 magazines, five rounds each, rapidly into the target. Using Colt's 230-grain National Match FMJs, all of the rounds hit the center "A" box. At 15 yards, I was able to easily double-tap a steel target. The PKO-45 is very controllable and does not have the torque many of the alloy-framed, subcompact 1911s possess. The gun's low bore axis and

In testing, the PKO-45 was easy to control thanks to its low bore axis and straight-back recoil.





The PKO-45 has a concealed hammer as well as an ambidextrous thumb safety.

With the PKO-45, the 2.75-inch barrel remains fixed in position as the slide reciprocates.

well-designed grip account for its shootability. The gun recoils straight back into the hand with little muzzle flip.

Disassembly of the gun is an easy matter and does not involve any tools. After removing the magazine and ensuring the chamber is empty, engage the thumb safety and place a finger over the recoil spring guide on the front of the slide. On the left side of the slide, near the muzzle, is what appears to be a lever but in reality is more of a pin. Turn this lever and remove it from the slide. Now allow the recoil spring guide, under tension, to exit the slide. Remove the guide and spring, and then pull the slide rearward and off the frame. That's as far as you should ever need to disassemble the PKO-45 for routine maintenance and cleaning.

► More Innovation

Heizer Defense will offer the PKO-45 in a variety of PVD-coated slide colors like Champagne, Copperhead, Ghost Grey and Technical Black, with the frame retaining its natural silver stainless steel color. The PVD coating is lubricious and eliminates the need for heavy lubrication on the slide rails.

Despite the fact the PKO-45 is just launching, Heizer Defense shows no signs of losing momentum. Already in the works is a PKO-45 with a titanium frame, which will shave about 4 ounces or a quarter-pound from the gun's weight. Additionally, a version will be offered with an extended and threaded muzzle for suppressor use. The blow-back operating system and fixed barrel will eliminate some problems normally associated with adapting a suppressor to a dropping-barrel semi-auto. Heizer Defense also plans to offer a semi-

automatic 9mm pistol with an aluminum alloy frame in the near future.

I fired over 300 rounds through the PKO-45 during the course of my evaluation. It is accurate, reliable and controllable, and its thin dimensions, rounded contours and light weight are certain to make it a top choice for concealed carry. A product of a mechanical genius with an inventive bent, the PKO-45 will appeal to those who recognize quality and innovation and demand the best. For more information, visit heizerdefense.com or call 888-965-0972.

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Editor's Note: Catch live-fire action of the author wringing out Heizer's PKO-45 at personaldefenseworld.com.

PERFORMANCE

HEIZER DEFENSE PKO-45

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Black Hills 230 FMJ	755	1.76
Colt National Match 230 FMJ	650	1.63
CorBon 200 JHP +P	940	1.52
Federal 165 Guard Dog	943	1.58
Hornady 185 Critical Defense FTX	838	1.64
Ruger 118 ARX	1,143	1.45
Wilson Combat 185 TAC-XP	842	1.49



Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 10 yards.

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To steal a phrase from an old commercial, **“When Bill Wilson talks, people listen!”**

The original quote was from a commercial for E.F. Hutton, a giant stock brokerage firm in the 1970s and 1980s. In the early 1970s, a young man named Bill Wilson started working on guns in the back of his father's jewelry store. He was shooting in competitions but wasn't pleased with his stock guns. Soon he was working on other shooters' guns and the business grew. In 1977, the fledgling gunsmith opened the doors of his own shop. That was the beginning of what is now Wilson Combat, located in Berryville, Arkansas. Since that time, the business has grown from a one-man shop to a corporation that employs 60 people and builds a wide variety of pistols, rifles and shotguns. The company is best known for its extensive line of

1911s, which now includes five categories and, by my count, a total of 53 specific models. You almost need a play card to keep up with the offerings.

Wilson Combat values the feedback it gets from its customers and keeps track of current trends in the industry. The two trends that have influenced the company the most are the explosion of concealed-carry firearms and the increase in the popularity of 1911s chambered in 9mm.

► **Why The Nine?**

During a recent email exchange, Bill made the following comments: “As to the popularity of 9mm 1911 pistols, we've seen this trend happening for several years now due to customer

demand and focused a lot of development time on learning how to build the most functionally reliable 9mm 1911 and especially on the design of our 9mm ETM magazines, which I believe to be the best on the market.”

Bill attributed this trend to the lower cost of ammunition when compared to .45 ACP rounds, lower recoil and reliable 10-round magazines. In addition, Bill noted the greatly improved terminal performance of modern 9mm personal-defense loads. He also stated, “At Wilson Combat, we're getting close to 50/50

WC
SUBCOMPACT 1911

SENTINEL

XL



**Don't let
the name
fool you—
Wilson's newest 1911
CARRIES SMALL
but offers
BIG POSSIBILITIES!**

BY ROB GARRETT



The Sentinel XL's longer barrel and slide translate to a longer sight radius, which will help shooters get on target more easily.

Bill what led to the Sentinel XL. He stated that his wife, Joyce, has carried a Ms. Sentinel for several years. The Ms. Sentinel is an aluminum-framed pistol that is 4.8 inches tall and 7.2 inches long with a 3.6-inch barrel. Weighing just 26.8 ounces, the Ms. Sentinel is a great compact 9mm with many upgraded

features. However, short guns are harder to shoot and, make no mistake, Joyce Wilson is a shooter. Bill noticed the difference when Joyce shot a 4-inch-barreled Compact model. So, Bill dropped a 4-inch barrel and a correspondingly longer slide on the Sentinel frame and the XL was born. The longer slide allows the Sentinel XL to be offered in 9mm, .38 Super and .45 ACP.

To quote Joyce Wilson, "I carry every day, and while I have access to almost anything available, my gun of choice is the Sentinel XL. Its shorter frame makes the whole package more concealable while still being as easy to shoot as my range pistol. I haven't found a better combination for my needs. I carry my Sentinel XL because it functions flawlessly. Luckily I've never had to use it on anything oth-

in regards to the .45s versus 9mms we build, and 9mm magazine sales continue to increase monthly, so the demand for a 9mm 1911 has legs."

I have to agree with Bill on all of these points. Recently, I was fortunate to receive one of Wilson Combat's new X-TAC Elite 1911s in 9mm. Like many shooters who "grew up" on the .45 ACP 1911, years of shooting has taken a toll on my hands and elbows. Ken Hackathorn and Larry Vickers, while still devoted to the 1911, will readily admit to shooting 9mm 1911s during teaching and training events. After spending a couple of days on the range with the X-TAC Elite, I came to understand their enthusiasm. As I was completing my evaluation, Wilson Combat announced a new model, the Sentinel XL. I quickly requested a sample for testing.

► **Upgraded Sentinel**

Wilson Combat's Sentinel pistols feature subcompact frames and are available in seven different configurations. I asked



er than a feral hog or snake, but I know I can depend on it if I need it. I love my Sentinel XL. The longer slide helps my aging eyes see the sights better, and the weight is perfect for all-day carry as well as controllability while shooting.”

When I unpackaged the Sentinel XL, I was a little surprised at how compact it was. The Sentinel is a full half-inch shorter than Wilson’s compact frame. As one would expect, the Sentinel XL exudes the quality and class that Wilson Combat is known for. The fit and finish are superb, and the slide-to-frame fit feels like glass on glass. The little pistol is also loaded with features.

Starting with the frame, the front-strap and main-spring housing sport 30-lpi

checkering. The base of the triggerguard is also undercut so shooters can get a higher grip on the pistol. To aid in concealment, Wilson has equipped the Sentinel XL with its smaller Concealment Bullet Proof beavertail grip safety. The ambidextrous safety is Wilson’s Tactical model, and though it has smaller levers than many designs, it’s fully functional. The solid, medium-length trigger is equipped

with an overtravel stop, and my test sample’s broke cleanly at 4.22 pounds. In keeping with its concealed-carry design, the magazine release is shortened and rounded. Wilson also contoured the maga-

zine well and countersunk the slide stop. Ultra-thin black cherry grip panels set off the Sentinel XL, and they feature Torx-head grip screws, pewter “WC” medallions and a unique checkering pattern.

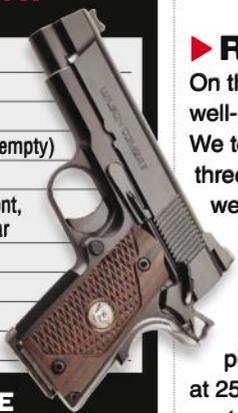
While every Wilson Combat pistol features a durable Armor-Tuff finish, you can customize the grips, sights and frame color—grey, burnt bronze, black, Flat Dark Earth or green.



SPECIFICATIONS

WILSON COMBAT SENTINEL XL

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	4 inches
OA LENGTH:	7.6 inches
WEIGHT:	27.6 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Black cherry
SIGHTS:	Fiber-optic front, Battlesight rear
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Armor-Tuff
CAPACITY:	8+1
MSRP:	N/A



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Gorilla Silverback 135 SCHP	938	2.75
Wilson Combat 95 TAC-XP	1,238	2.10
Wilson Combat 115 TAC-XP +P	1,044	2.50
Wilson Combat 124 XTP +P	1,206	1.80

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 25 yards.

The slide has Hi-Power-style carry cuts, and the bottom edge has been chamfered. The top of the slide has 30-lpi checkering to reduce glare, and the rear of the slide has 40-lpi checkering for the same reason. The match-grade, stainless steel barrel, flush-cut with the end of the slide, has a reverse crown. The barrel is also fluted, which looks nice and helps reduce weight. The hammer is Wilson's Concealment hammer, which is designed to work with the Concealment grip safety. This combination works very well. The Sentinel XL uses a single, flat-wire recoil spring and a stainless, full-length recoil spring guide rod.

The Sentinel XL comes standard with a green fiber-optic front sight, but other options are available. The rear sight is Wilson's Battlesight, which features a deep U-notch for fast acquisitions. The leading edge of the rear sight also features a shelf that enables

positive one-handed cycling. Finally, two 8-round Elite Tactical magazines are included with each pistol.

► Ready To Protect

On the range, I was pleased with how well-mannered the Sentinel XL was. We tested the compact pistol with three loads from Wilson Combat as well as a subsonic load from Gorilla

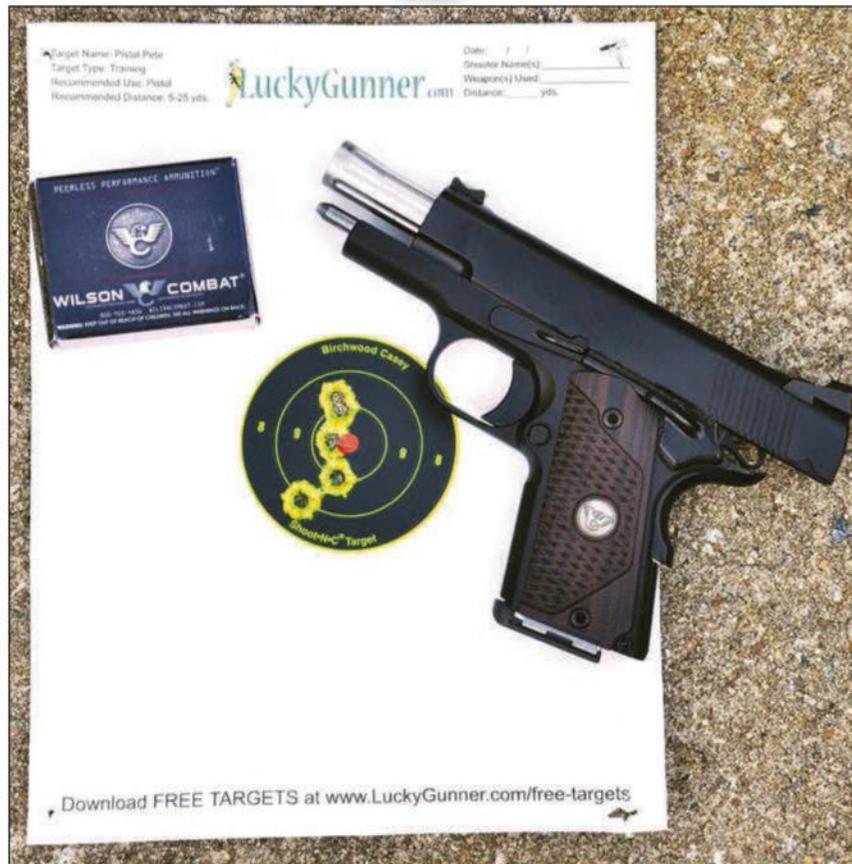
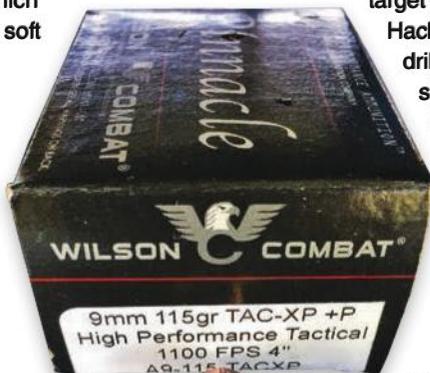
Ammunition, which was extremely soft shooting.

I tested the pistol's accuracy at 25 yards. And let me just say that I cannot match the capabilities of the Sentinel XL. I will admit that attempting to shoot tight groups with a bright green fiber-optic front sight is not that easy. In an attempt to properly measure the

pistol's inherent accuracy and minimize shooter error, I shot from a seated position, resting the pistol between my knees. I fired a 10-shot group with each load and measured the best five shots. The three Wilson Combat loads all created sub-2.5-inch groups while the Gorilla group measured 2.75 inches.

After shooting the required tedious groups, I broke out a 25-yard Bullseye target and shot a modified Hackathorn "10-10-10" drill, where you fire 10 shots in 10 seconds from 10 yards. Given the eight-round capacity of the Sentinel XL, I modified the drill to fire eight shots in eight seconds,

At the range, the Sentinel XL ran flawlessly with all of the test ammo and produced some tight five-shot groups at 25 yards.





Note the pistol's fiber-optic front sight, rear Battlesight, skeletonized hammer and black cherry grip panels. The top and rear of the slide are serrated to help reduce glare, and two 8-round mags are included.

from 10 yards. I shot the drill twice for a total of 160 maximum points. Two of my shots wandered into the 9-ring and three went into the 8-ring to lose 10 points. The longer sight radius of the Sentinel XL, when combined with the fiber-optic front sight, enabled me to establish a good rhythm to score well on this drill. My times were 7.47 seconds on the first run and 8.02 seconds on the second run. I'll take that all day long. The Sentinel XL was also 100-percent reliable during the range testing. I noted that the ejected cases were all in a neat pile, which indicated that the extractor and ejector were properly fitted and tuned.

► XL Versatility

I have been in the gun-writing business for over 30 years. I learned long ago that you can't keep every gun you test. But after running the Sentinel XL, I'm very tempted to call Wilson Combat with my credit card number on hand. Besides, my CPA says I need some additional business write-offs! In the meantime, I foresee the Sentinel XL finding its way into my daily carry routine. For more information, visit wilsoncombat.com or call 800-955-4856.

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**ULTRALIGHT CARRY SENTINEL
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MINI SIG

**The Ultra Compact
9mm rises above
the pack of
carry-ready 1911s.**

**BY ANDY MASSIMILIAN
PHOTOS BY ALEX LANDEEN**

Once considered an inferior “man-stopping round” by some, the 9mm cartridge continues to gain ground on the prolific .45 ACP in 1911-style pistols, with Sig Sauer’s 1911 Ultra Compact being one of the latest additions to the crowd. Firearms production data shows that the 9mm is the most popular defensive caliber made, and its prevalence is

growing as new bullet designs make it more effective than in the past.

Though Sig Sauer is mostly known for its P-series pistols and, more recently, its technologically advanced MPX and MCX carbines, the company offers 22 models of 1911s that span four categories based on height and length: Full Size, Carry, Compact and Subcompact.



The Ultra Compact is a Subcompact available in 9mm or .45 ACP. I recently got my hands on the former.

► **Sig Details**

The Ultra Compact is Sig Sauer's smallest 1911. It has a respective length and height of 6.8 and 4.8 inches compared to a full-sized 1911 of 8.7 and 5.5

inches. The barrel length on the Ultra Compact is 3.3 inches versus 5 inches on the full-sized. Both pistols are 1.4 inches thick, so the reduction in the overall footprint primarily comes out of the length rather than the height. Thus, the Ultra Compact is smaller than other variants but still affords the shooter a full grip. With its eight-round magazine,

you give up only one round of capacity compared to the larger 1911 models.

The Ultra Compact is made with a frame milled from a billet of aluminum alloy, a stainless steel slide made from bar stock, and a stainless barrel. Two-Tone pistols like the one I tested have satin stainless finishes on their slides while the standard models have black

Nitron-finished slides. Both versions come with black anodized frames.

This pistol has a drop-safe feature that allows it to be safely carried in a proper holster with a round chambered and the thumb safety applied. The drop safe is a spring-loaded plunger that retains the firing pin away from the primer until the trigger is depressed. It is intended to stop the firing pin from moving forward to contact the primer if the pistol is dropped on the muzzle.

The fit and finish on my sample were very good, especially the tight slide-to-frame and barrel-to-slide fit, and the thumb safety, slide lock and magazine release all operated crisply with the proper amount of resistance.

▶ Short Yet Reliable

The Ultra Compact uses a locked-breech design similar to the 1911's. It has locking lugs on the top of the barrel, just ahead of the chamber, that mate with corresponding lugs in the slide and a swinging link connecting the barrel lug to the frame. However, Sig Sauer



This Sig is a bushing-less design with a full-length recoil spring guide rod for easy disassembly. Also note the pistol's smooth edges—there's nothing to snag on clothing.



SPECIFICATIONS

SIG SAUER 1911 TWO-TONE ULTRA COMPACT

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	3.3 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.8 inches
WEIGHT:	28 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Rosewood
SIGHTS:	SIGLITE night
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Black, stainless
CAPACITY:	8+1
MSRP:	\$1,119



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Atlanta Arms 115 Match JHP	1,094	1.50
Freedom Munitions 124 RN	960	1.75
Winchester 115 FMJ	1,082	1.40

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 15 yards.

explains that making a reliable, ultra-short-barreled 1911 requires lots of engineering and a design that necessarily departs from the original in many more aspects than shortening the slide, frame and barrel and using a heavier recoil spring to maintain proper slide velocities.

For instance, the manner in which the front of the barrel fits the slide needed revision. Because the repeatability and tightness of this fit is critical to accuracy, Sig uses a slightly flared barrel to mate with the slide. Another change is a full-length, one-piece steel recoil spring guide rod that captures the recoil spring. In conjunction with the flared barrel, this design makes field-stripping the pistol much easier and quicker than a tradi-

tional 1911 with its guide rod plug and barrel bushing. Two other improvements include an external pivoting extractor instead of an internal extractor and a flat recoil spring instead of a round wire spring. Sig was one of the earliest 1911 makers to use this extractor with tests showing that extractor tension is more consistent and lasts longer than the

internal design. Sig also feels that flat recoil springs keep their tension longer and uses them on all of its 1911s.

► Mini 1911 Test

To test the pistol's accuracy, I used a Caldwell rest to fire five-shot groups with three brands of ammunition at a target 15 yards away. The best groups, measuring 1.4 and 1.5 inches, came with the Winchester and Atlanta Arms loads. All three of the test loads shot 1 to 2 inches above the point of aim and required no windage adjustments, which would be fairly easy to do by loosening the setscrew on the rear sight and drifting it by hand. Sig sells an adjustable combat rear sight if replacement is needed.

The average group sizes were considerably wider at 2.25 to 2.75 inches due to group-widening fliers that I attribute to the sights, which reflected glare

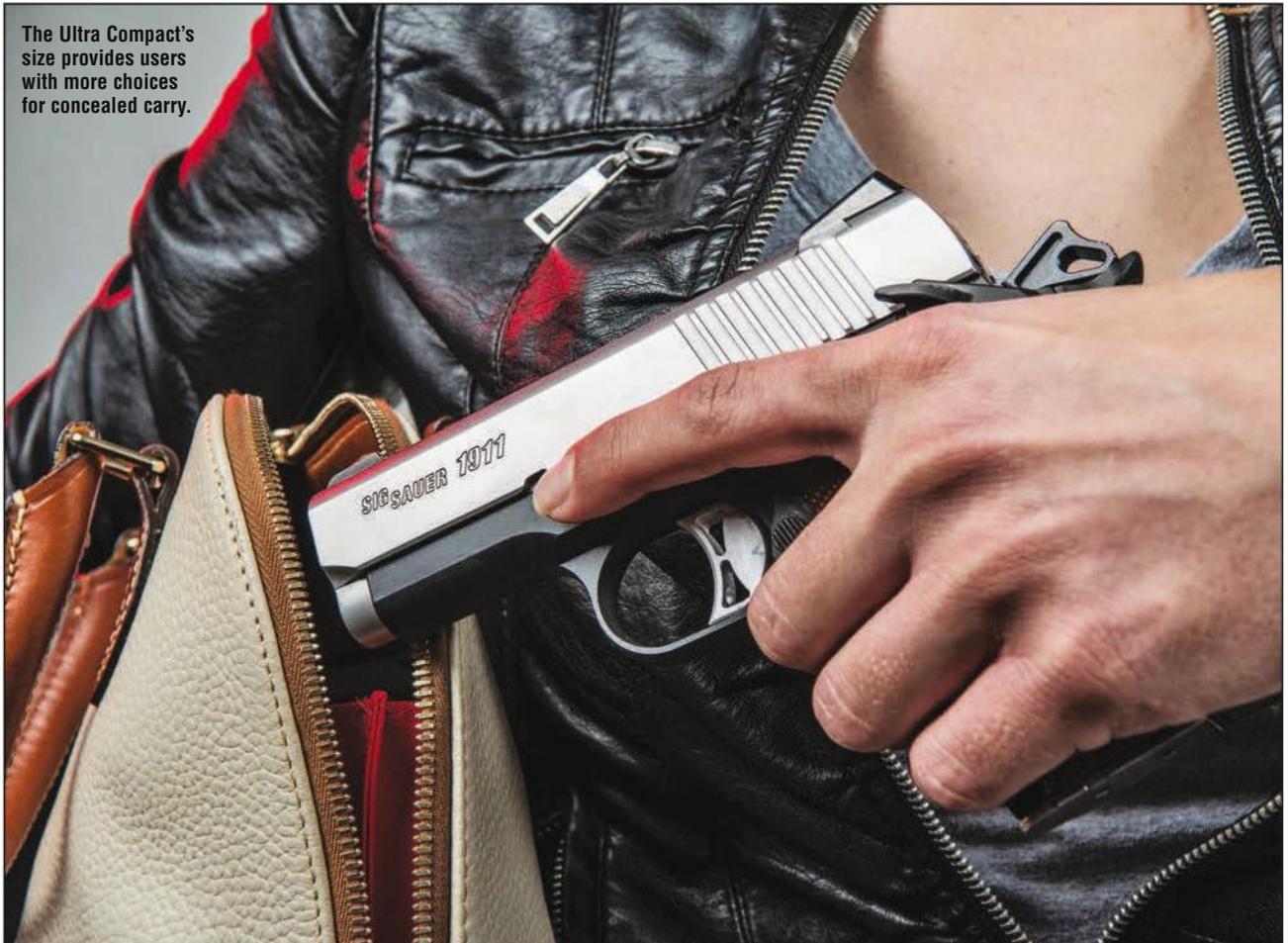
Though the Ultra Compact is on the short side for a 1911, this pistol's grip was large enough to provide the same control and easy recoil management of a larger model.

and made precision work very difficult.

Given the velocities that hovered just below 1,100 fps, I would personally carry +P loads in a pistol with a barrel this short to get the numbers over 1,100 fps for consistent bullet expansion. Quantifying the difference in velocity between the 3.3-inch barrel of the Ultra Compact compared to the 5-inch barrel of a full-sized 1911 is worthwhile, but it wasn't possible at the time of testing. However, a rough comparison showed that the longer barrel of the full-sized Sig 1911 generated 106-fps more velocity using the same brand of ammo and at moderately different temperatures. Bottom line: For defensive handguns, testing for both functioning and reliable bullet expansion is a good idea regardless of the barrel length.

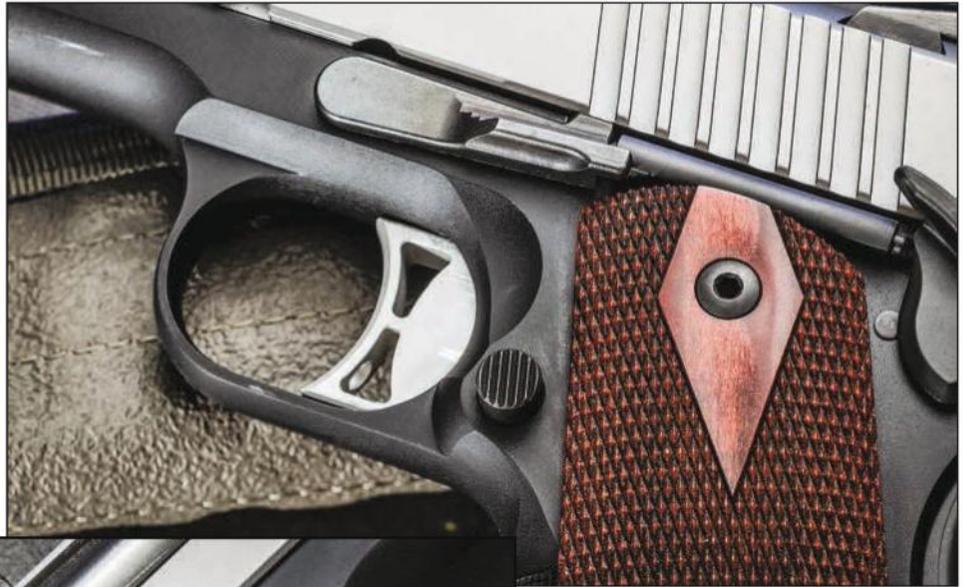
The pistol's reliability was perfect in firing 200 rounds except for three failures to lock the slide back after the last round

The Ultra Compact's size provides users with more choices for concealed carry.

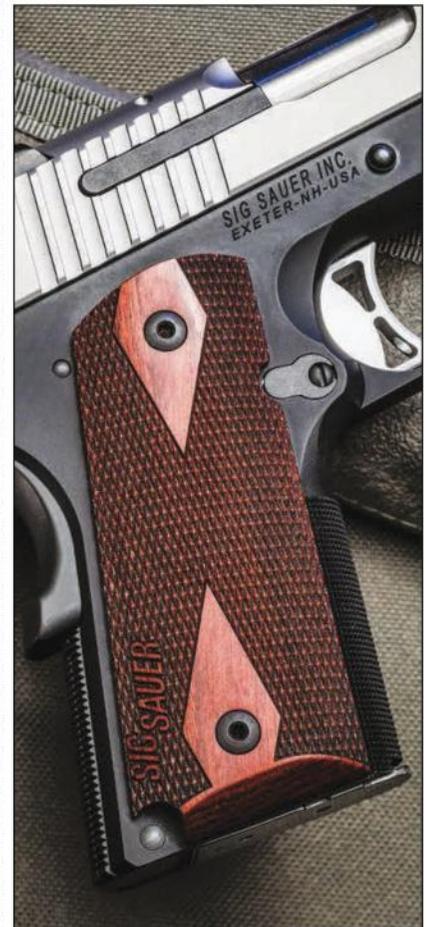


was fired, but switching the magazines in use solved the problem immediately.

The Ultra Compact points very well and handles recoil easily. The trigger weighed 4.69 pounds according to my Lyman digital trigger pull gauge, and it had about 0.13 inches of take-up and barely discernible creep. The trigger came properly set from the factory for no overtravel, so adjustments weren't necessary using an Allen-head screw accessible through the front of the trigger. The trigger



Some of the Ultra Compact's custom-grade enhancements include an external extractor, a skeletonized trigger, checkered rosewood grip panels and large, easy-to-reach controls like the slide stop and single-sided thumb safety.



shoe has a grooved face and is long enough to position my finger well for single-action fire.

Tactical reloads are easier with the Ultra Compact than some other pistols since a full magazine can be inserted and locked into place when the slide is closed without excessive force.

This pistol has good ergonomics thanks to the checkered rosewood grips and 25- and 20-lpi checkering on the frontstrap and mainspring housing, respectively, that afford a very good grip and a safety that activates positively and easily. The magazine release button can be activated without a change in grip, and for left-handed

shooters, a thumb safety lever can be added on the right side for \$100 from the Sig Custom Shop. The slide release lever is slightly longer than most designs, and it allows activation with the shooter's right thumb. This technique also worked, albeit imperfectly, when firing left-handed by using the trigger finger. Still, a slightly longer lever would optimize the fit with small-to medium-length thumbs.

Though the Ultra Compact is on the short side for a 1911, this pistol's grip was large enough to provide good control and easy recoil management. It also makes accessing and drawing the pistol from an inside-the-waistband

(IWB) holster like the Alien Gear Cloak Tuck that I use easier and quicker than pistols with abbreviated grips that supply a four-finger rather than a full-hand hold on the pistol.

► Successful Sig

If you are considering a subcompact, single-stack 9mm, the Sig 1911 Ultra Compact compares favorably in size, quality and ease of shooting with everything on the market. It disassembles for cleaning with the ease of any polymer-framed pistol and has an eight-round magazine where some of the more popular plastic models have fewer. Though this pistol would be normally carried using its flush-fitting, eight-round magazine, spare 10-round magazines are made by Wilson Combat. Finally, the 1911's crisp trigger and large, easy-to-activate thumb safety are easy to learn. For more information, visit sigsauer.com or call 603-610-3000. **PP**



Sig Sauer equips the 1911 Ultra Compact with SIGLITE night sights set up in a three-dot configuration for easy aiming in any lighting.

...The Sig 1911 Ultra Compact compares favorably in size, quality and ease of shooting with everything on the market.

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CLASSIC WHEELGUN

This little snubbie has backed up officers and civilians FOR DECADES.

BY WILL DABBS, MD



COLT'S DETECTIVE

Henry Ford once bemusingly announced that his customers could buy his Model T in any color they wanted so long as it was black.

While the car had previously been available in several hues, and polychromatic variations were offered later on as well, black was indeed the only color on the lot when he penned those words in 1922. Black paint dried more quickly

and subsequently offered faster, more economical production. Mr. Ford was all about fast and economical production.

Henry Ford introduced the world to the concept of the assembly line. His cars subsequently mobilized the planet while simultaneously making him fabulously wealthy. Ford contrived a reliable design and then optimized it for mass production.

For decades, something similar could be said of American pocket pistols. There was admittedly a modest selection of slim semi-automatics avail-

able. However, for the most part, if you wanted a decent backup gun, you could have anything you wanted so long as it was a .38-caliber revolver.

► **Snubbie Genesis**

The world's first snub-nosed revolvers were adaptations of the Colt Single Action Army in the late 19th century. These stubby variants were alternately called "Shopkeeper Specials," "Banker Specials" or "Sheriff's Models." While their shortened barrels did indeed make



SPECIAL

the otherwise full-figured wheelguns more concealable than their service counterparts, the heavy chamberings and classic frame still lent the weapons a great deal of bulk.

In 1927, Colt introduced the compact Detective Special. Typically sporting a 2-inch barrel and chambered for the then-novel .38 Special cartridge, this carbon-steel revolver entered terms like “snubbies,” “snub-nosed” and “belly gun” into the American vernacular. The Colt Detective Special rendered fine service

for decades as either a backup gun for uniformed police officers or as a primary weapon for plainclothes detectives. One of the local law enforcement agencies in my town still issues snub-nosed .38 revolvers as backup guns today.

The Detective Special is a double-action/single-action (DA/SA) design that weighs 21 ounces unloaded. Variations were also chambered for the .32 New Police and .38 New Police cartridges, and there were versions with 3-inch barrels as well. The cylinders held six

rounds, and the sights were fixed and open. With the exception of a seven-year period between 1986 and 1993, the Detective Special was in production from 1927 until 1995.

There is a well-attended religion that orbits around the nuances of collecting old revolvers, and I am not qualified to expound on the minutiae that define that particular gospel. Should I hazard such an attempt, I fear I might inaccurately describe some widget and find myself burned in effigy by angry Colt collectors

incensed that such a rank amateur might ever have been unleashed behind a word processor. The topic I am now fully qualified to orate upon, however, is what these delightful little guns look like on the inside.

► Fixer Upper

When you write for gun magazines, there is this false assumption that you know everything there is to know about firearms. In this vain, a dear friend recently brought me a sick Colt Detective Special with a plaintive request to “fix it.” The gun was produced in 1972 and was in splendid condition. However, the cylinder would not close. Upon closer inspection, the cylinder assembly had ridden backward ever so slightly on its axis pin and jammed the action open. Intrigued, I settled down at my bench, fetched my tools and performed a bit of mechanical surgery.

The fix was straightforward enough. A bushing of sorts had unthreaded slightly with repeated reloadings and allowed the cylinder to slide backward just enough to deaden the gun. Absent the special wrench required to rectify the problem properly, I danced around this component with a pair of jewelers’ screwdrivers until I got everything back the way Colt intended. What made the exercise so interesting, however, was the subsequent glimpse into the way folks used to make these handguns.

The voluptuous curves of this tidy little pistol lack the harsh geometry of modern utilitarian service pistols. The engineers who designed this gun deigned to square a corner when something rounder and more elegant might do. After a little research, I found that many of the parts on these old guns are not interchangeable absent a bit of hand fitting. These components were intentionally made slightly oversized and then hand-finished by professional firearms assemblers at Colt who had studied since their apprenticeships to build these revolvers.

While this approach would undoubtedly imbue Henry Ford with some post-mortem anger, the end result with this old Colt pistol is a fit and finish that exceed the capabilities of modern machinery to

reproduce. The bluing is deep and sensuous, and steel glides across steel like greased glass. The cylinder spins like it is magnetically levitated, and the action is inimitably crisp and sharp. The firing pin is fixed to the hammer, and the SA trigger breaks like crystal. However, the DA trigger pull, while still glassy smooth, is long and heavy enough to make for safe pocket carry. The little gun demands a certain intentionality to make it discharge, something that is immeasurably important for a deadly firearm that might end up loose in a purse or in a pocket alongside your most sensitive anatomy. (That’s why you always carry it in a holster!)

The gun packs a full six rounds in a geometric envelope not much larger than a competitor’s gun that carries five. To break open the action for reloading, the release must be pulled to the rear. Compared to the Smith & Wesson version that presses forward, this seems a bit unnatural. However, greater men than I have won many a gunfight armed with weapons so designed. Who am I to judge?

The ejector rod on this particular version is shrouded underneath the barrel. There are others wherein the

rod is left free. Once the action is open, pressing this rod backwards drops the empty cases cleanly. The rod is naturally spring-loaded and returns to its resting position automatically. I got familiar with that aspect of the design while I had the little gun dissected as well.

The Detective Special shoots plenty straight for defensive use. I never can seem to drop my rounds to precisely the same spot in both SA and DA modes, but that is undoubtedly a training deficiency. I should always practice more. There are scads of holsters available that pack the little wheelgun into most every anatomical crevice that is geometrically large enough to admit it.

► Parting Shots

Modern CNC milling machines are great, and I drool over the latest and greatest in firearms just as much as the next gun nerd. However, they just don’t make them like this anymore. There is a certain antiseptic sameness to your typical Glock, Sig or S&W service pistol. Fit and function are monotonously identical, and every single component will fit every single gun. Not unlike an iPhone or a Big Mac, every example of the species looks exactly like every other. For an off-the-rack weapon used in combat, universal interchangeability is certainly a desirable trait. But for a time, mass-produced guns were still finished by hand. It was that final interplay between flesh and steel that made the gun perfect, polishing out its eccentricities and imbuing it with its own unique personality.

Such stuff as this brought us Georg Luger’s P08, the Mauser C96 and the Thompson submachine gun. Nowadays, this deep into the 21st century, more human beings around the world have cell phones than regularly use toothbrushes. We expect our machines to take care of the monotonous things so we will have more time to do whatever it is we actually do these days. In a world awash to its gunwales in identical devices, it can sometimes be fun to tear down an old pistol and see how our forebears in simpler times skinned their cats. For more information, visit colt.com or call 800-962-2658.

PP

SPECIFICATIONS

COLT DETECTIVE SPECIAL

CALIBER:	.38 Special
BARREL:	3 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.75 inches
WEIGHT:	21 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Fixed
ACTION:	DA/SA
FINISH:	Blued
CAPACITY:	6
MSRP:	N/A



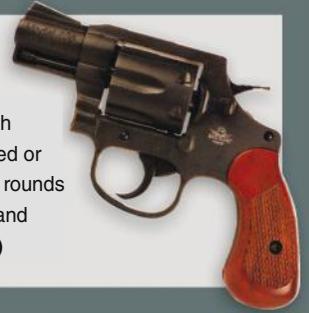
PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Armcor 158 FMJ	690	1.60
Sig Sauer 125 FMJ	668	2.25
Sig Sauer 125 JHP +P	773	1.30

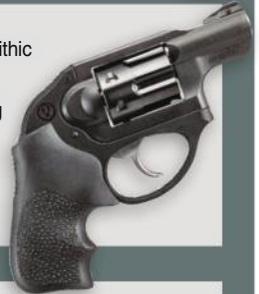
Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best four-shot groups at 18 meters.

MORE CAN'T-MISS SNUBBIES

Rock Island Armory M206: The Rock Island Armory M206 is dirt cheap. Built upon a steel frame by the guys who produce more 1911 pistols than anyone else on the planet, the M206 is a compact sixgun that you can afford to carry in your tackle box. Each M206 comes with both slim wooden grips as well as interchangeable fat rubber versions. The gun can be had with either exposed or spurless hammers in both parkerized or matt nickel finishes. Chambered for .38 Special and packing six rounds onboard, the M206 is a Colt-pattern gun wherein the cylinder latch is pulled rearward. Robust, compact and super affordable, the M206 delivers the goods without breaking the bank. (armscor.com; 775-537-1444)



Ruger LCR: This odd-looking wheelgun is touted as the next generation in revolver technology. The monolithic frame is cut from aerospace-grade 7000-series aluminum for excellent strength and light weight. A patented friction-reducing cam ensures a smooth, non-stacking double-action trigger pull, and the patented polymer fire control housing keeps everything oriented at the lowest possible weight. The high-strength, stainless steel, five-shot cylinder is aggressively fluted to minimize weight and bulk. The LCR has a shrouded hammer while the LCRx keeps this appendage exposed. Optimized for concealed carry, the Ruger LCR is light, compact and powerful. (ruger.com)



Ruger SP101: This compact five-shot revolver, officially known as Model 5737, is rated for .38 Special +P ammo and sports a 2.25-inch barrel. Built upon Ruger's full-figured SP101 frame, this muscular snubbie features a full-length underlug and Ruger's patented transfer bar trigger for the ultimate in safety. The gun has a satin stainless finish, the cylinder locks in three places and the wraparound rubber grips tame recoil. The SP101 is also unusually easy to field-strip and maintain. (ruger.com)



Smith & Wesson M&P Bodyguard 38 Crimson Trace

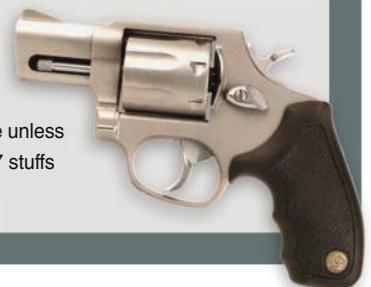
The S&W M&P Bodyguard 38 Crimson Trace is an aluminum-framed, hammerless, five-shot defensive revolver with a Crimson Trace laser sight built into the grips. The 1.9-inch barrel and cylinder are made of blackened stainless steel, and the gun weighs a mere 14.4 ounces unloaded. The Bodyguard 38 is rated for +P ammo and features a carry-friendly, snag-free design. With a long, smooth double-action trigger for safety and state-of-the-art materials, the Bodyguard 38 is optimized for personal protection. (smith-wesson.com; 800-331-0852)



Taurus Model 85: Taurus offers one of the largest selections of wheelguns in America. Available with a wide variety of finishes, barrel lengths and grip options, Taurus revolvers are rugged and dependable. The company's standard five-shot pocket gun utilizes a transfer bar ignition system for maximum safety and sports a 2-inch, underlugged barrel. The lightest of the lot tips the scales at a meager 17 ounces. The generous rubber grips ameliorate recoil, and the cylinder release button presses forward for activation. Taurus pocket revolvers offer a whole lot of gun for the money. (taurususa.com; 800-327-3776)



Taurus Model 617: Packing seven rounds into a space not much bigger than its six-shot brethren, the Taurus Model 617 allows you to train on low-recoiling .38 Special rounds and then ramp up to .357 Magnum power for serious social work. The 617 sports a steel frame to offset recoil as well as those splendid Taurus rubber grips. The transfer bar trigger ensures that the gun will not fire unless the trigger is pulled. With a 2-inch barrel and a corrosion-resistant stainless steel finish, the Taurus 617 stuffs legitimate horsepower into an easily packable package. (taurususa.com; 800-327-3776)



BATTLE

Two subcompacts—the Kimber Micro 9



Kimber's Micro 9 Two-Tone is a high-end pocket 1911 that holds 6+1 rounds of 9mm ammo.

Light carry weight is one of the most important features of any pocket pistol, and with 9mm models it is essential, since the pistols are only slightly larger than most .380 ACP semi-autos. Let's take a closer look at two popular subcompact 9mms and see how they compare. The first is from a newer manufacturer, SCCY, and the latter is from Kimber, a well-established maker.

► SCCY CPX-2

SCCY is one of the newest U.S. manufacturers, which puts the Daytona

Beach, Florida, arms-maker on the cutting edge of manufacturing technology, and the company uses that to its full advantage to produce high-quality parts at a lower cost. The company builds all of its components in-house, much like Kimber, and there is no outsourcing of parts except for springs. SCCY even builds its own magazines. Every part at SCCY goes through multiple inspection and quality-control steps before the final assembly process.

SCCY's 9mm CPX-2 holds 10+1 rounds and is offered in a virtual color wheel of more than 20 frame and slide color combinations. For this comparison, I chose a subtle two-tone CPX-2 with a black slide and a distinctive sniper gray frame. Other SCCY color choices include frames in black, white, crimson, purple, orange, pink, turquoise and Flat Dark Earth combined with either black or stainless steel slides.

The hand-filling Zytel polymer grip offers solid heft for a polymer-framed

pistol, plus an extended trigger-guard with ample room for a gloved finger in cold weather. A large and easily activated slide release and positive button-type magazine release complete the exterior features. The gun uses a stainless steel, broach-rifled barrel, and the DAO trigger and internal hammer mechanism are ruggedly built for dependable operation.

► Kimber Micro 9

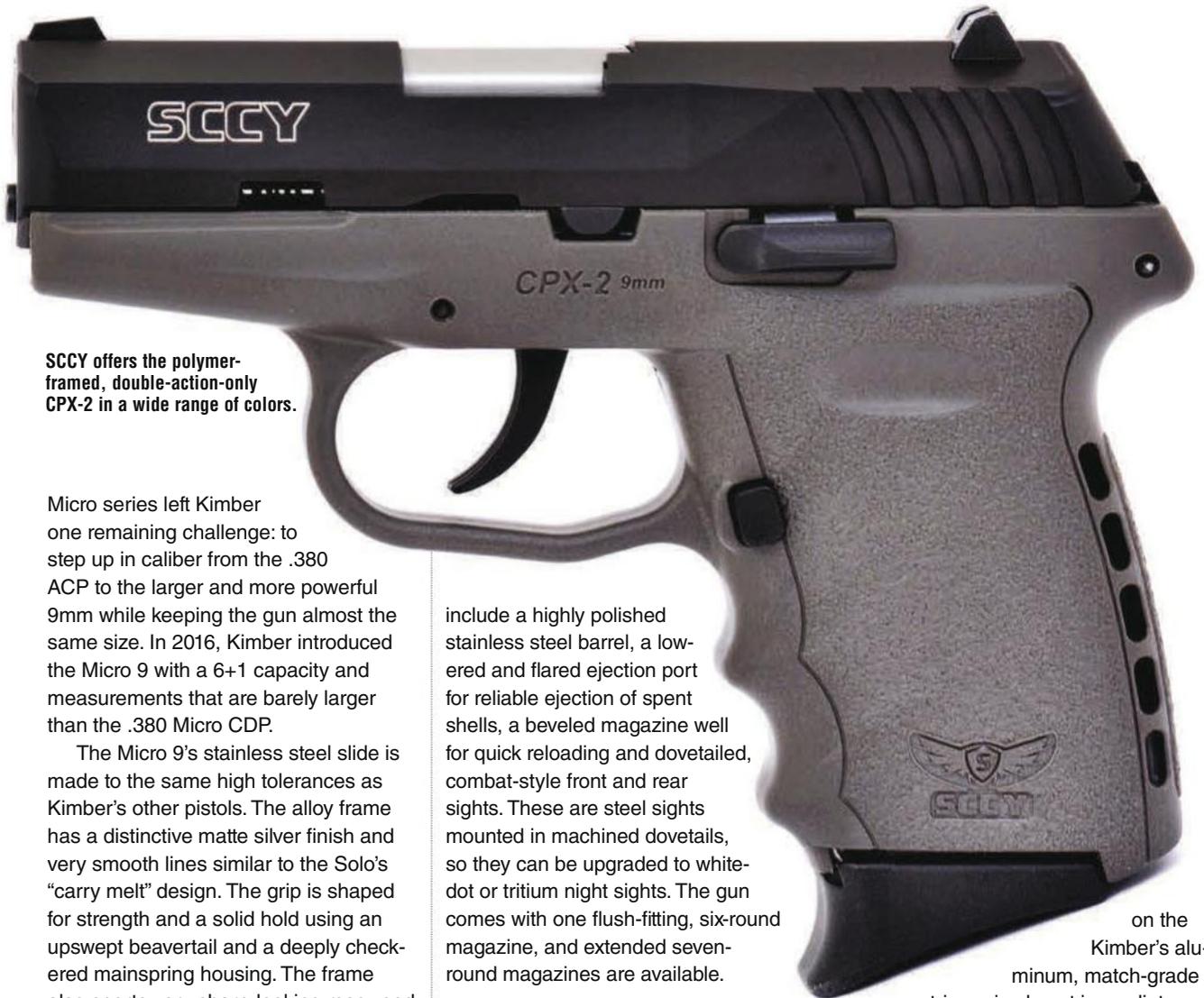
Breaking down the barriers between size and caliber has been Kimber's forte for years. Established in 1997, Kimber became world renowned for building 1911s of unparalleled quality and standardized custom features as well as compact 1911s. But the real heart of Kimber's ingenuity was revealed when the company introduced the groundbreaking 9mm Solo in 2011. The Solo became the smallest single-stack, 6+1, 9mm pistol in the world.

Kimber then turned its sights on the .380 ACP with the Micro CDP and an entire line of Micro .380 models. Looking like a highly refined Colt Mustang with a standard capacity of 6+1, the .380 ACP



NINES

and SCCY CPX-2—DUKE IT OUT! BY DENNIS ADLER



SCCY offers the polymer-framed, double-action-only CPX-2 in a wide range of colors.

Micro series left Kimber one remaining challenge: to step up in caliber from the .380 ACP to the larger and more powerful 9mm while keeping the gun almost the same size. In 2016, Kimber introduced the Micro 9 with a 6+1 capacity and measurements that are barely larger than the .380 Micro CDP.

The Micro 9's stainless steel slide is made to the same high tolerances as Kimber's other pistols. The alloy frame has a distinctive matte silver finish and very smooth lines similar to the Solo's "carry melt" design. The grip is shaped for strength and a solid hold using an upswept beavertail and a deeply checkered mainspring housing. The frame also sports very sharp-looking rosewood grips. The controls are Colt inspired, though the thumb safety has the same improved contours as the .380 Micro CDP's. In many respects, the Micro 9, like the Micro CDP, is a scaled-down 1911 without the grip safety, making it a very familiar gun to handle for shooters experienced with the 1911.

Where the Kimber design really kicks in is the fit and finish. Standard features

include a highly polished stainless steel barrel, a lowered and flared ejection port for reliable ejection of spent shells, a beveled magazine well for quick reloading and dovetailed, combat-style front and rear sights. These are steel sights mounted in machined dovetails, so they can be upgraded to white-dot or tritium night sights. The gun comes with one flush-fitting, six-round magazine, and extended seven-round magazines are available.

► How They Stack Up

Right out of the box, the CPX-2 has two notable advantages over the Kimber: superior capacity and an internal hammer-fired DAO action with a second-strike capability. The trigger pull averages 9.5 pounds with a very smooth inch of take-up, a crisp break and zero overtravel. It does, however, take almost a full release of the trigger to reset, whereas the reset

on the Kimber's aluminum, match-grade trigger is almost immediate.

The Micro 9 wins here with a short, smooth pull averaging 6.16 pounds with a mere 0.19 inches of travel, no stacking, a very crisp break and a short 0.13-inch reset. The tradeoff with the Kimber is the second-strike capability.

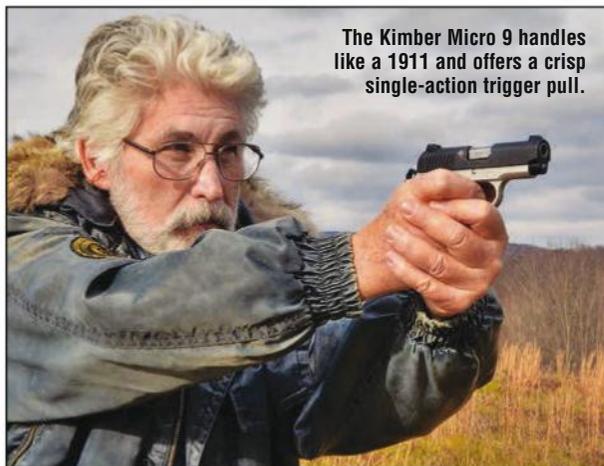
Comparing their sizes, if you take into account the length of the beavertail grip design on the Kimber Micro 9, the SCCY CPX-2 is almost exactly the

same overall length (about 0.24 inches shorter), but almost a full inch taller and 0.26 inches wider due to its higher-capacity double-stack magazine. But the CPX-2's magazine also includes a finger extension for a full grip. The SCCY and Kimber weigh 15 and 15.6 ounces unloaded, respectively.

The Kimber has an edge for pocket carry with its narrow width of just 1.06 inches, compared to the CPX-2's wider frame and slide, which measure 1.2 inches at the widest point. While the pocket carry advantage solidly goes to the alloy-framed Kimber Micro 9, the SCCY has a four-round advantage in standard capacity, and four rounds is a lot. The CPX-2 has a 3.1-inch barrel and an overall length of 5.7 inches; the Kimber's barrel is 3.15 inches long with an overall length of 6.1 inches. Only fractions of an inch continue to separate these two guns, thus it all comes down to construction, quality, handing, accuracy and price.

► Concealed Carry

The Kimber Micro 9 fits into the majority of pocket holsters designed for the Colt Mustang, Kimber Micro CDP and Sig Sauer P238, even though the Micro 9 is



The Kimber Micro 9 handles like a 1911 and offers a crisp single-action trigger pull.

about 0.5 inches longer and a fraction of an inch larger overall. The pistol's excellent beavertail is really the culprit in a front pants pocket position, but it's still not a big deal.

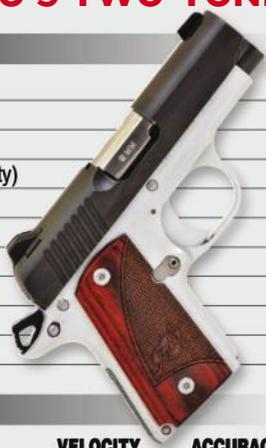
As for belt holsters, the Micro 9, for whatever reason, fits very nicely in the same holsters as the Sig P238 with a little muzzle exposed. The most interesting holsters I had on hand that were ideal for the new Kimber were a contoured Galco Stinger and a Safariland Bianchi Black Widow made for the PPK/S, but they fit the Micro 9 like a glove. If you are

shopping around for a Micro 9 holster, there are already a number available, including 20 different styles from CrossBreed. I'm just partial to the Black Widow and Stinger holsters since I also carry a PPK/S from time to time, and it's nice to know this new 9mm can be solidly carried in the same familiar rigs. The CPX-2 is a little bigger overall, and while it still fits nicely into a pocket, it's harder to keep from printing because of the double-stack magazine and grip frame width. As a holster pistol, it has the same added width to cover but is a lot easier to pack in an IWB or belt rig than many other subcompact 9mms with less ammo. SCCY has its own line of holsters, but like the Kimber, the SCCY fits holsters made for other guns as well, including many rigs designed for the Glock 42. I found my best fit and comfort level with a handsome, handcrafted MTR leather

KIMBER MICRO 9 TWO-TONE

SPECIFICATIONS

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	3.15 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.1 inches
WEIGHT:	15.6 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Rosewood
SIGHTS:	Black
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Black, stainless
CAPACITY:	6+1
MSRP:	\$654



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Sig Sauer 115 FMJ	1,123	1.75

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 7 yards.

SCCY CPX-2

SPECIFICATIONS

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	3.1 inches
OA LENGTH:	5.7 inches
WEIGHT:	15 ounces (empty)
GRIP:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Three-dot
ACTION:	DAO
FINISH:	Black, sniper gray
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	\$314



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Sig Sauer 115 FMJ	1,070	1.20

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 7 yards.

belt holster for the G42. The contoured, pancake-style MTR rig holds the pistol close to the body, making the CPX-2 easy to wear in the 4 o'clock position.

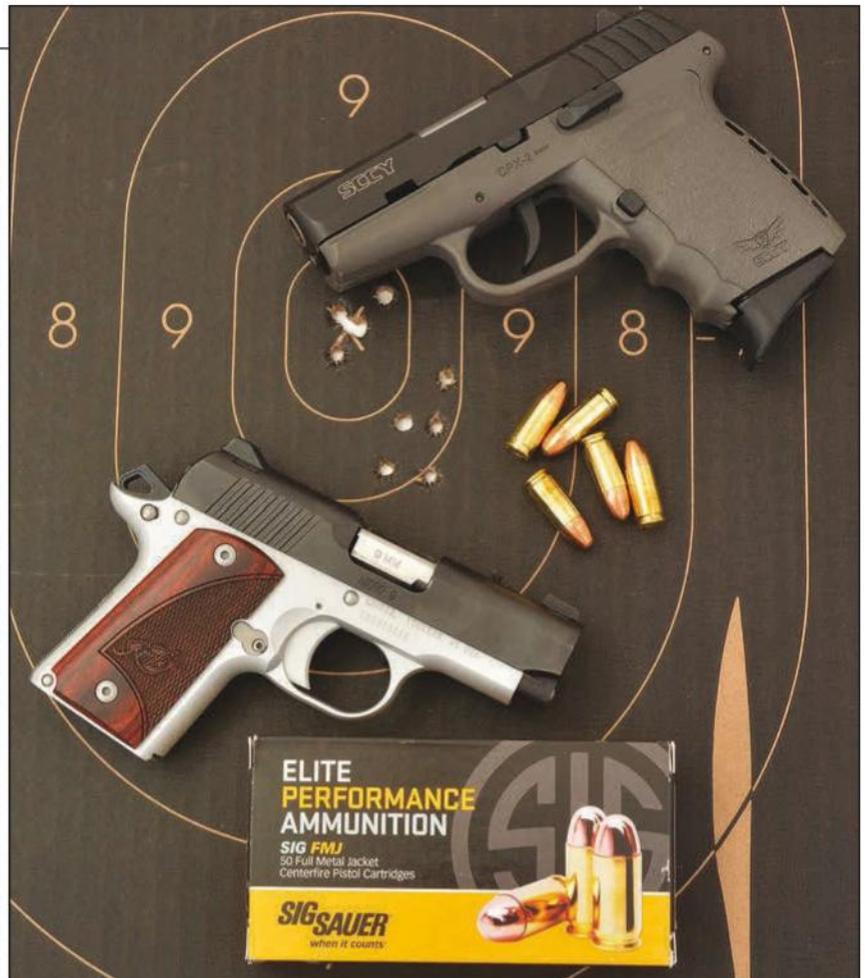
► In The Ring

Here you are dealing with two entirely different firing systems, so it is hard to make a direct comparison; the SCCY is a hammer-fired DAO design with a long trigger pull and the Kimber is a single action with a shorter and lighter trigger pull. Which one's better is more a matter of personal preference. I like a hammer I can put on safe, and the Kimber has the added advantage of a Colt Mustang-style mechanism, which allows the gun to be checked, cleared or chambered with the hammer cocked and still on safe. The SCCY CPX-2 has no manual safety; the long trigger pull serves as a measure of safety. Both guns have internal hammer blocks and drop safeties.

For a baseline comparison shooting test, I selected only one load: Sig Sauer's 115-grain Elite Performance FMJs. The average velocity with the SCCY was 1,070 fps and 1,123 fps from the Kimber. Firing off-hand from 7 yards produced a best five-round group measuring 1.2 inches with the SCCY and a slightly wider 1.74-inch group with the Kimber.

Aside from my own preferences from gun to gun, the trigger pull on the Kimber is much lighter than the CPX-2; however, the felt recoil is a bit more substantial and the sights are more difficult to lock on target. The SCCY's trigger is smooth enough to work quickly and has a wider shoe, making it easy to handle. The SCCY generates slightly less felt recoil through the frame (partly due to the CPX-2's backstrap design), and it's easier to sight on target because it has white-dot sights. The drawback is the full release of the trigger to reset. The CPX-2 also has a very heavy recoil spring and thus requires a strong hand to cycle the slide when loading or clearing the gun.

Most Kimber subcompacts like the 9mm Solo model also have heavy recoil springs. The Micro 9 is no different, and it has a 16-pound recoil spring and a full-length guide rod but requires noticeably less effort to run the slide when cham-



At 7 yards, the SCCY CPX-2 and Kimber Micro 9 both printed tight groups with the Sig ammo.

bering the first round or clearing the gun than the SCCY. Recoil for a pistol of this size and weight is usually pretty heavy, but again the Micro 9 surprises, with less felt recoil than its 9mm Kimber Solo stable mate, making it a bit more manageable, just not quite as manageable as the slightly more hand-filling SCCY.

► The Verdict

I have carried semi-auto .380s for over 25 years, either as backups or primary sidearms for concealed carry—everything from a Walther PPK/S to a Ruger LCP Custom and Glock 42—and the question I have to answer for myself (and thus for many of you) is that, given an almost equal size and weight, would I trade my .380s for either of these two new 9mm subcompacts? After looking at the shooting results, the effective stopping power of the 9mm versus the .380, comparative recoil with these particular pistols, and the fact that I don't have to

change holsters or carry techniques to switch out guns, the answer is yes. You give up very little and gain a full step up in caliber and stopping power with either the Micro 9 or CPX-2.

As to which one you should choose, I think I will defer to a popular advertising line: "What's in your wallet?" It's more a matter of aesthetics than functioning or reliability. The Kimber is a high-end, quality-built handgun, and the SCCY is a brilliantly engineered, polymer-framed pistol that gives more than its price suggests. **PP**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kimber America
kimberamerica.com
888-243-4522

SCCY
sccy.com
866-729-7599

CCW SPECTRUM

COMPACT



CM4543TU3 ▶

CW3833TU3 ▶

If there's one thing that can be said about Kahr Arms, it's that the company produces a compact semi-auto for the concealed-carry needs of just about every shooter. In fact, Kahr produces three sizes of compact pistols with approximately 70 different variations. There are so many variations of the Kahr design that one could easily get confused trying

to determine what is compact versus subcompact, etc. So, let's be practical and simply define compact from the perspective of concealed carry. A "compact pistol" is one that can easily be concealed inside the waistband (IWB) or in a large pocket.

This definition includes semi-auto handguns with barrels under 4 inches, magazines that hold seven or fewer rounds and weigh less than 23

ounces. To me, any pistol that meets these criteria has to be considered compact when today's average service pistol has a 4-inch barrel, a magazine that holds at least 10 to 15 rounds and a weight of somewhere between 26 and 35 ounces. By these criteria, even the larger Target models from Kahr are really in between compact and full-sized. Therefore, all of the handguns made

KAHRS

CM9093TU3 ▶

◀ CT3833TU3



BY DR. MARTIN D. TOPPER

It's time to go Kahr shopping for some ultra-reliable pistols that offer on-the-go protection 24/7.

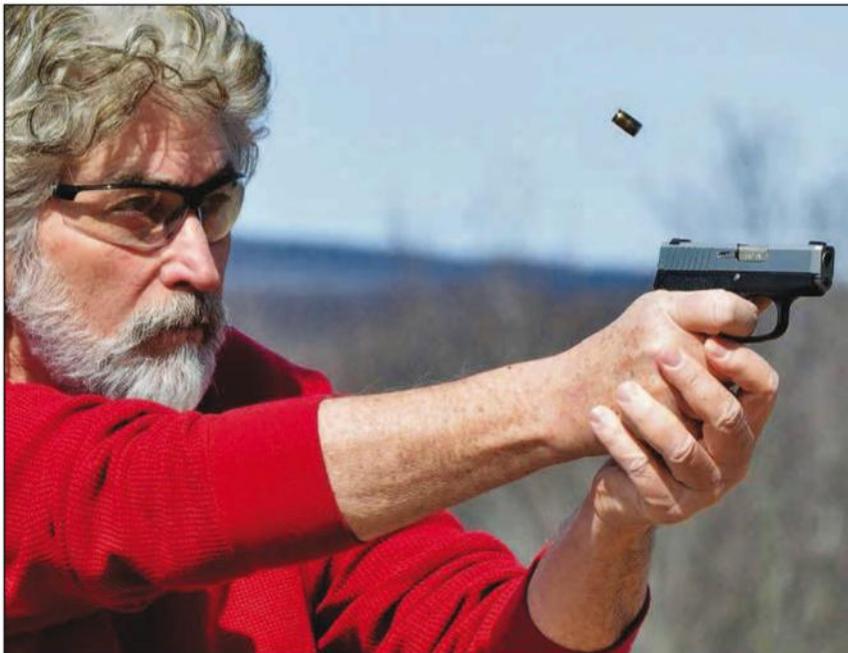
by Kahr Arms can be seen to closely adhere to the mission that Kahr CEO Justin Moon defined when he set out to design the ideal concealed-carry pistol in the early 1990s.

▶ Kahrs Made To Order

One thing that can be said of Kahr Arms' pistol lineup is that the buyer has quite a large number of features and calibers to choose from. You

can literally get a personalized pistol from the factory. To begin with, compact Kahrs are chambered in four of the most common personal-defense cartridges used in semi-automatics: .380 ACP, 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. There are two main series: the Premium Series and the Value Series. The difference between the Premium and Value Series pistols is important to some buyers, but there

is no difference in terms of reliability or durability. The Premium pistols have polygonal rifling, dovetailed steel front sights, two magazines with flush floorplates and a higher grade of decoration. The Value Series pistols have conventional rifling, pinned polymer front sights and come with one flush-floorplate magazine. Both grades have good reputations for accuracy and quality.



Dennis Adler Photo

Whether it's a Premium or Value Series pistol like the CW380, every Kahr is known for reliability.

The main differences are simply the price and level of finish.

Another area of variation is found in the material from which the pistols' frames are made. The first Kahr pistols had steel frames. Today some models are still available with frames made of stainless steel, but due to customer preference, most Kahrs now come with polymer frames. The barrels are also made of stainless steel and come in eight different lengths between 2.58 and 4 inches depending upon the caliber of the gun and the size of the frame. The slides are stainless steel and may be silver, black, "titanium" or bronze in color. Not all slide finishes are available in every caliber or frame size. There have also been a few Kahrs with blue polymer frames. Lastly, there are a variety of sights to choose from. Kahrs can have open sights, tritium night sights, laser sights and red or green fiber-optic sights. Given all of these variations, a prospective buyer is likely to find a Kahr pistol that can closely fit his or her needs and tastes.

Of course, there is a limit to the number of variations available in a production handgun. For example, all Kahr pistols have the same basic design. In addition,

they all have slides machined from 416 series stainless steel, a low bore axis to reduce felt recoil, a striker-fired ignition system, a smooth double-action-only

(DAO) trigger that breaks at approximately 6 pounds, a striker block safety, an offset feed ramp that reduces slide width and a slim profile grip. The net result is a very flat semi-auto that tends not to print through a shirt or pocket.

► Kahr Spectrum

It would take many pages to describe every possible Kahr model. Therefore, I asked my friends at the Florida Gun Exchange to go through their inventory and provide a Kahr in each centerfire caliber to give you some idea of the range of variability available in Kahr's lineup.

The **CW380** is a Value Series pistol in .380 ACP that's only 3.9 inches tall, 4.96 inches long and 0.75 inches wide. The CW380 has a 2.58-inch barrel with conventional rifling, and it holds six shots in its magazine and one in the chamber. An optional seven-shot magazine with a grip extension is also available. The pistol weighs only 11.5 ounces with the empty flush-fitting magazine in place. These dimensions make it the smallest and lightest Kahr, and a natural for pocket carry. White

SPECIFICATIONS

KAHR CM40

CALIBER: .40 S&W
BARREL: 3.1 inches
OA LENGTH: 5.47 inches
WEIGHT: 17.7 ounces (empty)
GRIP: Polymer
SIGHTS: White bar-dot
ACTION: Striker-fired
FINISH: Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 5+1
MSRP: \$460



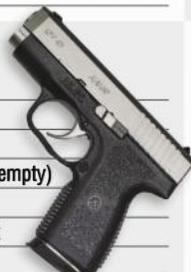
KAHR CW380

CALIBER: .380 ACP
BARREL: 2.58 inches
OA LENGTH: 4.96 inches
WEIGHT: 11.5 ounces (empty)
GRIP: Polymer
SIGHTS: White bar-dot
ACTION: Striker-fired
FINISH: Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 6+1
MSRP: \$419



KAHR CM45

CALIBER: .45 ACP
BARREL: 3.14 inches
OA LENGTH: 5.79 inches
WEIGHT: 19.3 ounces (empty)
GRIP: Polymer
SIGHTS: White bar-dot
ACTION: Striker-fired
FINISH: Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 5+1
MSRP: \$460



KAHR PM9

CALIBER: 9mm
BARREL: 3.1 inches
OA LENGTH: 5.42 inches
WEIGHT: 15.9 ounces (empty)
GRIP: Polymer
SIGHTS: White bar-dot
ACTION: Striker-fired
FINISH: Matte black, stainless
CAPACITY: 6+1, 7+1
MSRP: \$810



bar-dot sights come standard, and tritium sights are available.

Part of the Premium Series, the 9mm **PM9** is 4 inches tall, 5.42 inches long and 0.9 inches wide at the slide. This pistol has a 3.1-inch barrel, which, given the 9mm's pressure curve, gives up very little in velocity and bullet energy to a 4-inch-barreled gun. It's ammunition capacity with the flush-fitting magazine is 6+1 rounds. An available extended magazine with a finger extension holds one more round for a maximum capacity of eight shots. The PM9 is a bit larger than the CW380, yet it comes in at a very light 15.9 ounces with an unloaded flush-fitting magazine. The standard pistol comes with Kahr's white bar-dot sights; however, the PM9 shown has optional night sights.

The **CM40** is a Value Series .40 S&W that has the same dimensions as the PM9, except the slide is only slightly wider at 0.94 inches. Given the wider



The 140-grain CorBon DPX and 180-grain Speer Gold Dot expanded very well from the CM40.

slide and larger diameter of its 3.1-inch barrel, the weight of this .40-caliber pistol is 1 ounce more than the PM9 with the flush-fitting magazine in the gun. However, 17.7 ounces is still very light for a pistol chambered in this powerful caliber. Because of the larger diameter of the .40 S&W cartridge, this pistol's flush-fitting magazine holds one less round than that of the PM9; however, Kahr also makes an extended six-round magazine with a finger extension, giving a CM40 with an extended magazine a total capacity of seven shots.

This Value Series **CM45** in .45 ACP is the largest of Kahr's "Micro" pistols. It is 5.79 inches long, 4.49 inches tall and has a slide width of 1.01 inches. The barrel is 3.14 inches long. Weighing 19.3 ounces with the flush-fitting magazine in

place, it is also the heaviest of the CM-series Kahrs. This increase in size is due to the larger architecture of the .45 ACP cartridge and the fact that Kahr has kept the capacity of the CM45 the same as the CM40. As with the other three pistols described here, there is an optional extended magazine with a grip extension.

► Range Testing

I had a chance to shoot a CM40 some time ago and found it to be a handy little pistol that was both reliable and accurate. Despite its small size and short sight radius, the little pistol could be counted on to consistently make headshots at 7 yards and center torso hits at 15 yards. The .40 S&W recoil was surprisingly mild due to the low bore axis of the pistol and the ergonomic shape of the grip. And this pistol's ability to deliver rapid hits on target at close range was very impressive in light of the .40 S&W's reputation for recoil. In CQB situations, it would be a formidable tool for neutralizing a threat.

As with the 9mm., the fast pressure curve of the .40 S&W cartridge allowed the CM40 to deliver velocities only about 10 percent below the velocities expected from a full-sized pistol with a 4-inch barrel. This clearly gives the 9mm and .40 S&W an advantage over cartridges

that operate at lower pressures when it comes to short-barreled handguns. This ability to conserve velocity and energy in short barrels pays off in bullet expansion. Expansion tests I conducted indicated that every hollow-point bullet fired from the CM40 expanded fully. Overall, the CM40 was an impressive pocket pistol that delivered more stopping power than a traditional snub-nose .38 in a slimmer, trimmer and, in some cases, lighter package.

► Concept Kahrs

In 2017, Kahr Arms is planning to introduce some additional features on some of the compact pistols, which means that there will be even more choices for the consumer. Four models—the CM9093TU3, CW3833TU3, CT-3833TU3 and CM4543TU3—will come with three-dot sights, Pachmayr Tactical Grip Gloves and tungsten Cerakote-finished slides, slide stops and triggers. Given the past success of Kahr's pistols, their quality, reliability and the company's continued commitment to provide new choices to its customers, it's safe to say that these compact Kahrs won't be driving off into the sunset anytime soon. For more information, visit kahr.com or call 508-795-3919.

PP



At CQB distances, the Kahr CM40 delivered fast, accurate headshots during a house-clearing drill.

BACKUP

A good folding knife can mean the difference between life and death, especially if someone tries to grab your handgun. Some quality options include (clockwise from top right) the KA-BAR Jarosz Folder, the Benchmade Crooked River, the SOG Zoom S30V, the Spyderco Positron Carbon Fiber, the OKC Dozier Arrow SP, the Byrd Cara Cara 2 Ti, the CRKT Ruger 2-Stage and the Kershaw Launch 5.

There's a good chance that if you carry a pistol on a regular basis, you probably already carry a knife. If you don't, then you really ought to start thinking about doing so. While a knife is certainly useful for a myriad of daily tasks it's also an important part of your defensive tool kit. Your self-defense

gun is only good as long as you maintain control over it, and a properly utilized blade can be an important weapon-retention device.

Weapon retention is a very real thing. As a police officer, I'm very cognizant

of my weapon when I'm in public. I typically work in plainclothes, so I'm basically in the same boat as the average armed civilian. I carry my pistol on my strong side in a Level 2 retention holster, with a jacket covering it in most cases. Of course, the first step to retaining your weapon is not letting folks

BLADES

Rugged, affordable knives to ride shotgun to your trusted sidearm.

BY TIM STETZER • PHOTOS BY JIM HOLMAN



know you have a gun in the first place. That's one reason I'm personally not a fan of open carry. Why let folks know you have a weapon and give them a chance of taking it?

But even if you're careful, people can figure it out. Your weapon might print through your clothes, your clothes can ride up or someone may get a glimpse of it as you go into your pockets, grab your cell phone, reach for that item on the top shelf at the grocery store, etc. In my case, once folks figure out I'm a cop, they know I have a gun whether they've see it yet or not. So, it pays to plan for

the eventuality that someone is going to realize you have a gun no matter how discreetly you carry it, and that someone may decide they don't want you to have it any longer.

The best thing you can do is find a class or trainer to help you practice weapon-retention techniques. Practice empty-handed techniques for hanging onto your weapon, keeping it in its



holster, and breaking free of the bad guy so you can get some distance and take control of the gun yourself. The other thing you can do is stack the deck in your favor and carry some tools that will help even the odds when you're taken by surprise and/or dealing with an adversary who's bigger or stronger than you. In this situation, a blade is one of your best bets.

Knives are easy to carry, easy to deploy one-handed if you make the right selection, and effective at inflicting pain and deterring the person trying to take your weapon. Keep in mind that

if a person is going after your weapon, you're in a life-or-death struggle. The person you're dealing with may not be armed, but the minute they try to take your weapon, they are a lethal threat. You have the responsibility—to yourself and those around you—to hang onto that weapon. The other thing to keep in mind is that this isn't a knife fight, and it certainly isn't a fair fight. Your objective is to get that person off of you by whatever means necessary.

With that in mind, I carry my knife where I can access it readily with my off hand. I carry my firearm on my strong

side, so my primary hand is going to be occupied with controlling my weapon or keeping it in its holster; I need to be able to access my knife with my other hand. So, find a spot on your body where you can clip a blade and access it with one hand, or better yet, with both hands just in case.

Once you access your blade, the key point is pain compliance. Again, weapon-retention training is truly invaluable here. But, whether you're highly trained or a novice, if calamity strikes, start cutting. A buddy who has spent a lot of years studying martial arts of the

Benchmade Crooked River

Benchmade has been a long-time player in the cutlery field, especially everyday-carry and tactical blades. It's hard to go wrong with any of the company's models, but a standout this past year has been the Crooked River line. The Crooked River is a big, functional blade that carries well, is easy to operate with either hand and has a reversible clip for either right- or left-side tip-up carry. It has classic lines with a clip-point blade and is rather classy with its stabilized wood scales and orange highlights, but that doesn't detract from its function whatsoever. (benchmade.com; 800-800-7427)

SPECIFICATIONS

Blade Steel: CPM S30V
Blade Length: 4 inches
Blade Thickness: 0.12 inches
OA Length: 5.33-9.3 inches
Weight: 5.41 ounces
Handle: Stabilized wood
MSRP: \$230

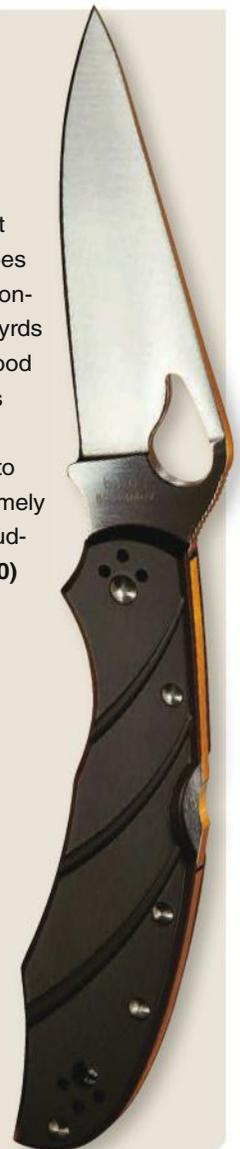
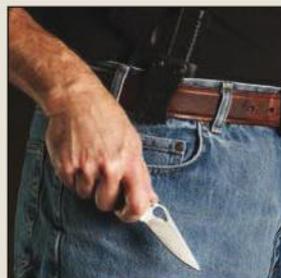


Byrd Cara Cara2 Ti

Byrd is Spyderco's budget line of imported knives, but don't think that means inferior quality. Spyderco does a fantastic job of ensuring quality control on all of its products, and the Byrds are no exception. While it uses a good but pedestrian 8Cr13MoV stainless steel blade, the Cara Cara 2 Ti has a titanium frame and a sturdy lock to make an affordable, light and extremely sturdy folder that won't bust your budget. (spyderco.com; 800-525-7770)

SPECIFICATIONS

Blade Steel: 8Cr13MoV
Blade Length: 3.75 inches
Blade Thickness: 0.11 inches
OA Length: 4.78-8.53 inches
Weight: 3.8 ounces
Handle: Titanium • **MSRP:** \$100



Philippines once told me that if you get into a fight with a knife, “Cut what you can.” While an advanced knife fighter is going to have techniques and preferred cuts, when you’re in a down-and-dirty fight with a guy right on top of you, I tend to go with the “cut what you can” theory. A knife jammed into his thigh or side and twisted is going to be pretty distracting. If you can rake the blade across your assailant’s hands or wrist and dislodge him from your gun, that works, too, but the main thing is to keep cutting until he’s off of you. That isn’t pretty or sophisticated, but it works. I

know of two incidents personally where that’s exactly what happened, and both law enforcement officers are still here to talk about them. Both had basic police weapon-retention training, but neither had any special knife training.

► What Should You Carry?

While a very good argument can be made for carrying a fixed-blade knife, something like the KA-BAR TDI knife for instance, I think most of us end up carrying a folding knife of one type or another. They’re convenient, they’re

discreet, and there is a huge variety to choose from these days. We really do live in the golden age of cutlery in that there are a great many quality companies out there making a wide variety of blades with different locking and operating systems and carry variations. It’s not hard to find a good knife these days, no matter what your budget is, but it is sometimes hard to figure out what you need because there are so many options available. With that in mind, let’s take a look at some of the newer offerings available from a number of top manufacturers to give you some ideas.

CRKT Ruger 2-Stage

Columbia River Knife & Tool’s 2-Stage is part of a line of officially licensed knives for Ruger, and it’s a big and bold tanto-point, frame-locking knife designed by Texas native Robert Carter. While the stoutest of the knives covered here, it’s still easy to carry with its four-position pocket clip and flat profile. (crkt.com; 800-891-3100)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** 8Cr13MoV
- Blade Length:** 4 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.2 inches
- OA Length:** 5.47-9.44 inches
- Weight:** 8.1 ounces
- Handle:** Aluminum, stainless steel
- MSRP:** \$80



KA-BAR Jarosz Folder

The Jarosz Folder is a collaboration between custom knifemaker Jesse Jaroz and KA-BAR, bringing you Jesse’s custom design in a rugged, affordable production knife. The Jarosz Folder comes in two variations: drop-point (shown) and tanto-point designs. Both models use liner locks, glass-filled nylon handles and blades made from hollow-ground AUS 8A stainless steel. The low-profile pocket clip is reversible for tip-up or tip-down carry. (kabar.com; 800-282-0130)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** AUS A8
- Blade Length:** 3.5 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.15 inches
- OA Length:** 4.63-8 inches
- Weight:** 5.6 ounces
- Handle:** Glass-filled nylon
- MSRP:** \$55





Kershaw Launch 5

Kershaw's Launch 5, a collaboration with Emerson Knives, is part of the company's automatic knife line. The Launch 5 is a top-end, American-made folder featuring CPM 154 steel and hardcoat anodized aluminum handles. It's activated by a left-side-mounted push button that is recessed so it's flush with the handle to avoid accidental activations. The reversible pocket clip can be set up for either right- or left-hand carry. (kershawknives.com; 800-325-2891)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** CPM 154
- Blade Length:** 3.4 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.15 inches
- OA Length:** 5.1-8.5 inches
- Weight:** 4.1 ounces
- Handle:** Aluminum
- MSRP:** \$170



OKC Dozier Arrow SP

The Dozier Arrow from the Ontario Knife Company (OKC) was designed by custom knifemaker Bob Dozier for everyday carry, and it offers a lot of punch for your dollar. To maintain a slim profile, the knife features liner-less G10 handle scales and a dagger-style, spear-point blade made of D2 tool steel. A single thumb stud allows for one-handed opening, and the pocket clip is set up for tip-up carry. Weighing less than 3 ounces, the Dozier Arrow is a knife that you'll forget you're carrying until you need it. (ontarioknife.com; 800-222-5233)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** D2 tool steel
- Blade Length:** 3.6 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.11 inches
- OA Length:** 4.6-8.2 inches
- Weight:** 2.88 ounces
- Handle:** G10
- MSRP:** \$79



SOG Zoom S30V

Consider the Zoom S30V, with its carbon-fiber handle scales, to be the Cadillac of SOG's Zoom line. Its reversible carry clip and assisted opening mechanism make it discreet to carry yet fast in operation. A manual safety is included in case you're worried about the Zoom opening a little too fast or too soon. (sogknives.com)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** CPM S30V
- Blade Length:** 3.6 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.11 inches
- OA Length:** 4.7-8.2 inches
- Handle:** Aluminum, carbon fiber
- Weight:** 4.2 ounces • **MSRP:** \$240



Spyderco Positron Carbon Fiber

The Spyderco Positron Carbon Fiber is an elegant folder that doesn't sacrifice function for style. With a top-notch CPM S30V blade, carbon-fiber handle scales and a sturdy liner lock, the Positron performs as well as it looks and carries easily in a pocket with its low-profile wire clip. (spyderco.com; 800-525-7770)

SPECIFICATIONS

- Blade Steel:** CPM S30V
- Blade Length:** 3.05 inches
- Blade Thickness:** 0.12 inches
- OA Length:** 3.97-7.02 inches
- Weight:** 2.6 ounces
- Handle:** Carbon fiber
- MSRP:** \$280



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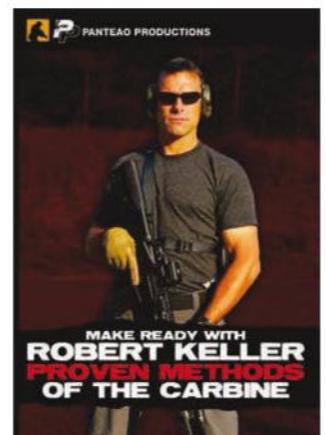
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[ACCURACY UPGRADES]

LITTLE GUNS

See how a Crimson Trace laser on Big Green's RM380

BY its very nature, concealed carry demands compact pistols. Large and heavy handguns are hard to hide and carry for very long.

The current concealed-carry trend is precisely why pocket pistols like Remington's RM380 are so popular. The trick with these derringer-like handguns is shooting them accurately. Some believe they don't provide the same precision as larger handguns. But the real problem is that these handguns are harder to shoot. This is partly due to their diminutive proportions and somewhat exaggerated recoil, but mostly because of their short sight radius.

► Sighting In

A full-sized handgun with a 5-inch barrel can have a 7-inch sight radius. If you're sight alignment is off by 0.1 inches, at 10 yards your bullet will strike about 5 inches from your intended point of aim. By comparison, Remington's RM380 has a sight radius of only 4 inches. A 0.1-inch error in sight alignment with

the RM380 will cause the bullet to land about 9 inches off target.

The point here is that every error in sight alignment you make with a pocket pistol will induce an error in shot placement about twice as large as you would experience with a full- or duty-sized handgun. The little guns still have the precision—it's just harder for humans to extract it.

Additionally, the sights on pocket pistols are

notoriously small. This is not an indication of the quality, but a trait of a pistol intended to be carried in a pocket. Lasers can help, but interestingly, when laser sights were first offered, many shooters looked at them as a crutch or novelty. However, when Crimson Trace introduced its Lasergrips—replacement handgun grips with an integrated and instinctively activating laser—the opinions of open-minded shooters began to change. Now with the



& LASERS

can help increase your precision. **BY RICHARD MANN**



Laserguard, which mounts forward of the triggerguard, that same instinctive activation is offered without a grip modification.

About a year ago, I attended an event at Gunsite Academy where Remington introduced its RM380. Over two days, I fired about 1,000 rounds through the pocket pistol and was impressed—not just at how well it functioned, but at how comfortable it was to shoot. Based on that experience, I ordered an RM380 and have carried it off and on ever since.

Still, as with just about every other pocket pistol, I found the sights rudimentary. Fortunately, when Remington was developing the RM380, the company

worked with Crimson Trace so a laser would be available when the gun was introduced. Crimson Trace engineered one of its Laserguard units to perfectly fit the RM380. In fact, you can buy a brand-new RM380 that comes with one.

I ordered a Laserguard for my little Remington and, after installation and zeroing, conducted some drills out of my book, *Handgun Training for Personal Protection*. I did this specifically to see exactly how much the laser would improve my accuracy and speed.

► Drill Time

The Forty-Five Drill is a great representation of self-defense shooting skills because, to some extent, it replicates a real-world encounter. You start standing 5 yards from a target with a 5-inch kill zone.

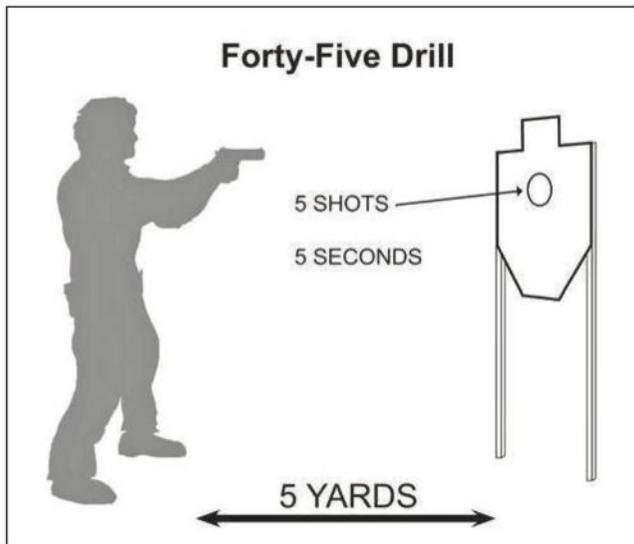
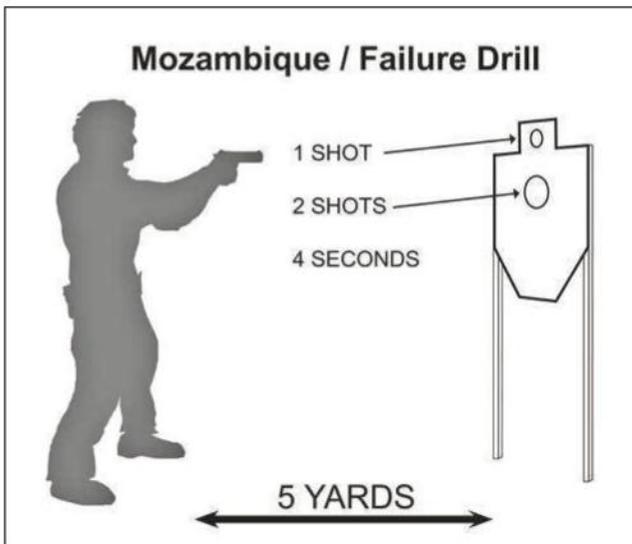
The goal is to draw from

concealment and get five hits inside the 5-inch kill zone in less than five seconds. The drill gets its name from its four elements of five. Without the laser, my average time was 4.75 seconds. Out of the 25 shots, I missed the kill zone three times. With the laser, my average was 3.46 seconds with two misses. That's a speed increase of 27 percent, and it exists because the laser is much easier to see and position on target than the minimalist sights.

The Failure Drill might be the most used and copied defensive handgun drill. Initially, it was developed for the shooter to learn to fire a shot to the head after realizing two torso shots did not stop the threat. The drill has morphed into many variations, and aside from any practical application, it's a great test of skill. This is because the shooter runs hard to get the two torso hits but must slow down for the headshot. Using the RM380 without the laser, my average time for five runs was 3.67 seconds. Out of the 15 shots, I missed the head zone one time. With the laser, my average

While the Remington RM380 is a great choice for concealed carry, adding a Crimson Trace Laserguard only makes it easier to aim and shoot in an emergency.





Detailed in the author's book *Handgun Training for Personal Protection*, these drills are excellent methods for testing and improving your skills.

was 2.74 seconds with no misses—my shots were more accurate and the average engagement time was 25-percent faster on average.

► **The Laser's Edge**

Aside from the fact that a laser sight can make a pocket pistol easier to get hits with, there are numerous other advantages. Obviously, when it comes

to shooting in low-light situations, lasers are a much better option than any fixed or even glow-in-the-dark sights. This is partly because the laser is so much easier to see, but also partly because you can maintain your focus on the threat with a laser sight.

Being able to focus on the threat is helpful in other ways, too. It can help you shoot faster because you do not

have to shift your focus from the threat to the sights, and then concentrate on three different things: the threat, the rear sight and the front sight. And, in a situation where you're holding a suspect at gunpoint, you can lower the gun below your line of sight, allowing you to fully observe the threat. This lets you deal with the situation while knowing you have a perfect hold, and you



can shoot accurately and instantly at any time. Laser sights are also perfectly suited to any situation where you cannot get your handgun up in front of your face to see the sights. You could be in a variety of unconventional positions during a lethal attack and need to respond with gunfire immediately, or you may be injured and cannot get the pistol between your eyes and the bad guy.

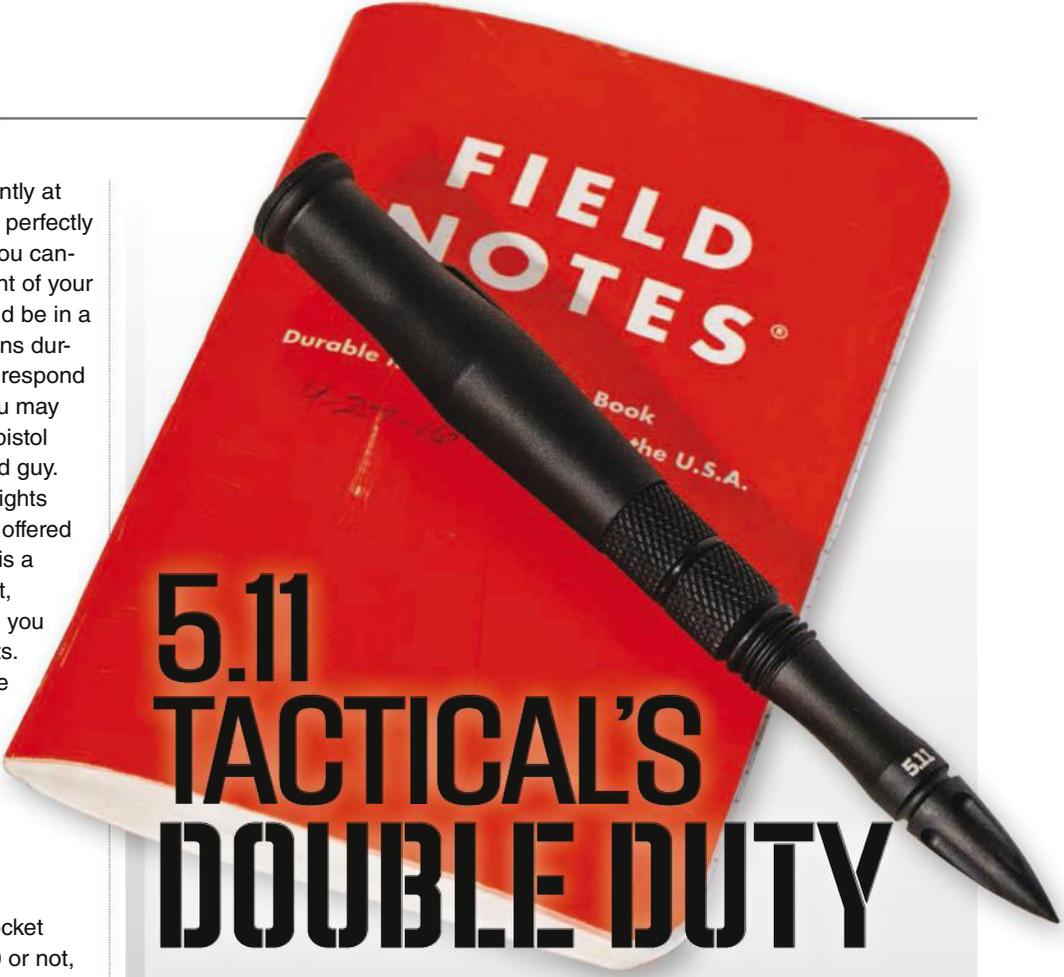
Of course, any time lasers sights are discussed, the argument is offered that the batteries may fail. This is a fact, but it's also the reason that, when you train with a handgun, you should train to draw to the sights. If during the drawstroke you see the laser before your sights are acquired, you can engage immediately. If the laser is not seen, then you default to the sights and engage accordingly.

► Seeing Crimson

Regardless of whether your pocket pistol is the Remington RM380 or not, Crimson Trace has an extensive line of laser grips and Laserguard units for pocket pistols. You can choose between red or green laser models with prices in most cases ranging between \$200 and \$300. For some ultra-compact pistols, the company even offers the Laserguard Pro. It combines a 150-lumen LED light with a laser. Crimson Trace also has a free instructional DVD that walks you through all of the advantages of laser sights, and if you buy a laser sight now, Crimson Trace will supply you with batteries for the rest of your life. That's almost as good as free donuts!

Concealed carry is all about small guns because they're the guns you're most likely to actually have with you. And small guns are harder to shoot accurately. Savvy up and put a laser on your defensive handgun. Whether it's a large gun or a little gun, a laser will help you shoot better and faster. Though some still believe lasers are a gimmick or even a bad idea, the results speak for themselves. Only fools remain reluctant to accept progress when presented with the facts.

PP



5.11 TACTICAL'S DOUBLE DUTY

Not all personal-protection situations demand the application of lethal force.

And sometimes you're in a situation where you cannot carry a gun. Options like pepper spray and impact weapons exist, but they're not the most concealable things in some situations. Because of this I've become almost permanently attached to the Double Duty Tactical 1.5 Pen from 5.11 Tactical.

In almost all aspects of life, having something to write with makes good sense. The same can be said for a weapon, especially one that can be covertly carried anywhere you go. The Double Duty Tactical 1.5 Pen is machined from aerospace-grade aluminum and contains a replaceable Fisher black ink

cartridge. The screw-off cap has a flat 0.6-inch surface, and the tip is a fluted point. By placing the pen in your palm and your thumb on the cap, you can generate enough force to easily drive the tip through quarter-inch plywood. Palmed again, you can also use the pen as a pressure-point/kubotan-type defensive tool. Whether in an of-

ice or educational-type environment, or even on an airplane, this is a comforting utensil to have handy. The pen may not be mightier than the sword, but it is a hell of a lot easier to carry and conceal. (511tactical.com; 866-451-1726)

—Richard Mann

REBORN

Cylinder & Slide resurrects the Colt Model

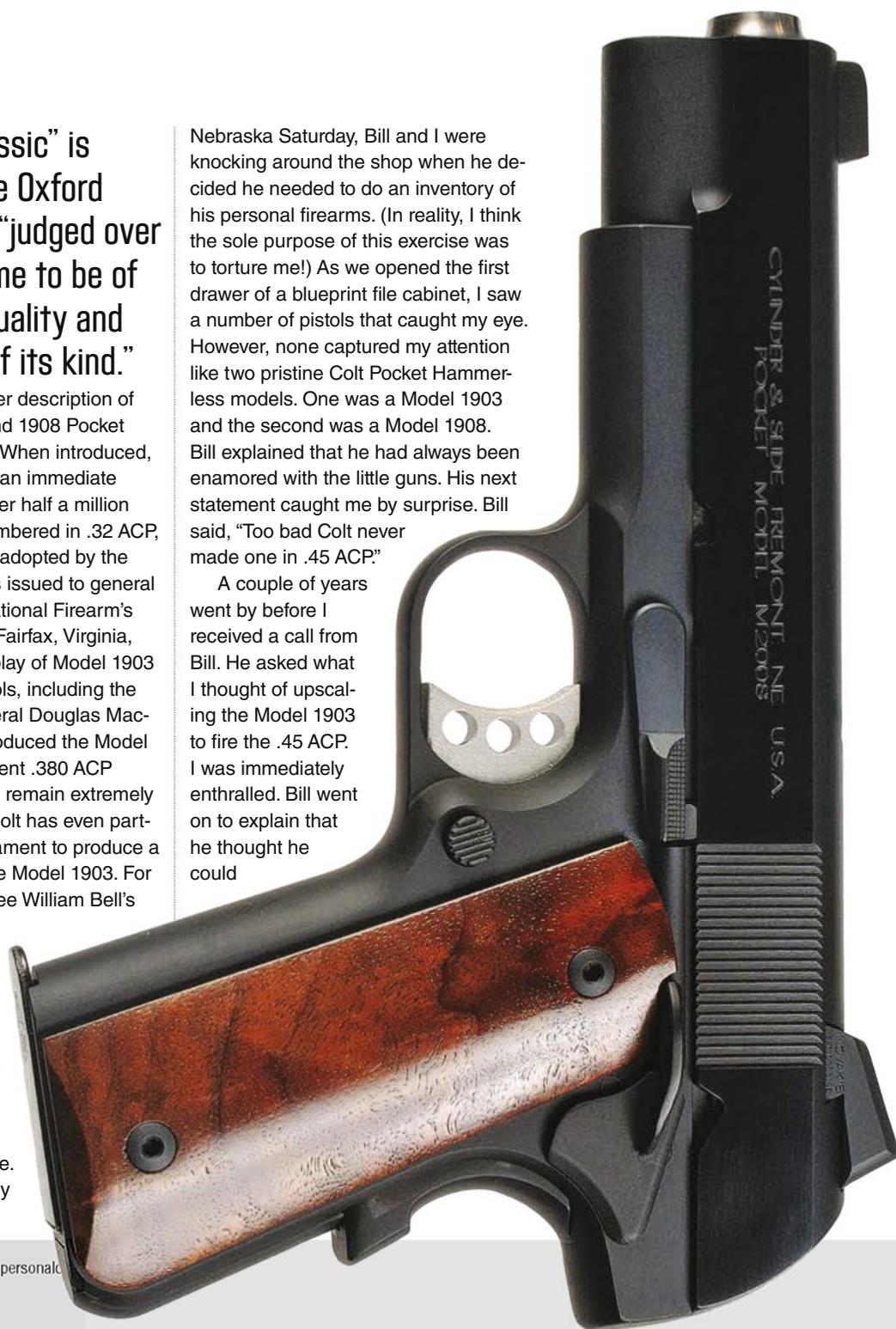
The term “classic” is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “judged over a period of time to be of the highest quality and outstanding of its kind.”

I can think of no better description of Colt's Model 1903 and 1908 Pocket Hammerless pistols. When introduced, the Model 1903 was an immediate success, and well over half a million were produced. Chambered in .32 ACP, the Model 1903 was adopted by the U.S. military and was issued to general officers. The NRA National Firearm's Museum, located in Fairfax, Virginia, has an excellent display of Model 1903 general officer's pistols, including the pistol issued to General Douglas MacArthur. Colt later introduced the Model 1908 in the more potent .380 ACP caliber. These pistols remain extremely popular to this day. Colt has even partnered with U.S. Armament to produce a new production of the Model 1903. For a complete review, see William Bell's article in the March 2017 issue of *Combat Handguns*.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to visit Cylinder & Slide and spend a couple of days with my good friend, Bill Laughridge. On a cold and gloomy

Nebraska Saturday, Bill and I were knocking around the shop when he decided he needed to do an inventory of his personal firearms. (In reality, I think the sole purpose of this exercise was to torture me!) As we opened the first drawer of a blueprint file cabinet, I saw a number of pistols that caught my eye. However, none captured my attention like two pristine Colt Pocket Hammerless models. One was a Model 1903 and the second was a Model 1908. Bill explained that he had always been enamored with the little guns. His next statement caught me by surprise. Bill said, “Too bad Colt never made one in .45 ACP.”

A couple of years went by before I received a call from Bill. He asked what I thought of upscaling the Model 1903 to fire the .45 ACP. I was immediately enthralled. Bill went on to explain that he thought he could



CLASSIC

1908—in .45 ACP!

BY ROB GARRETT • PHOTOS BY CAMERA ONE



use an Officer's Model frame and a Commander-length slide as the foundation for the build. If anyone could figure this out, I knew it would be Bill. I also knew that it would either be done correctly or not at all!

► The Build Begins

To quote Bill, "The greatest problems to overcome were making a slide and frame that would conceal the hammer and the internal extractor that the 1911 was designed with. The advent of the external extractor for the 1911 pistol solved the extractor problem, but the manufacture of the slide and frame was still the problem. Welding additional pieces of metal onto the slide and frame and re-machining them was not a good option, as the welding would ruin the heat treatment in the slide and frame. Re-heat treating the parts was not an economical

option. It suddenly came to me that the additional metal parts could be silver soldered on without destroying the heat treatment in the slide and frame, and I have one of the best silver solder experts working with me in the shop, Chris Hagemann. I approached Chris about the project, and he thought that he could solder the parts together without any problems."

Bill started off with a Caspian Commander-length slide with an external ejector and an Officer's Model frame. He then set out to "graft" an extension onto the rear of the slide and redesign the hammer to function inside the extension. He also had to design a new mainspring housing, grip safety and recoil spring plug. The recoil spring plug had to fit flush with the end of the slide and the contour of the barrel. Then came the barrel. Bill designed a conical barrel that did not require a barrel bushing but had the uniquely shaped extension past the end of the slide. Due to the enclosed slide, the firing pin had to be modified. The greatest problems to overcome were making a slide and frame that would conceal the hammer and the internal extractor that the 1911 was designed with.

Every few weeks, as the prototype was being built, Bill would send me a few teaser photos and we would talk on the phone about the project. The project was not without its challenges, but Bill was



Despite being chambered in .45 ACP, the Pocket Model 2008 is easy to keep on target thanks to its ergonomic, hand-filling design.



able to solve every problem. Once the prototype was completed, Bill needed to crunch the numbers and contact the manufacturers to see if the project was actually feasible. Bill drafted the blueprint drawings of the parts and set about finding vendors for items that he could not produce in-house. His first call was to Caspian for the frame and slide. Caspian found that it could modify one of its frame molds to include the rear extension. The company also signed on to machine the slides with the rear extension to conceal the hammer. Bill is quick to point out that without Caspian's assistance, the project could have never gone into production. Bill Jarvis agreed to manufacture the uniquely profiled barrel. Internally, Bill used Cylinder & Slide's billet alloy steel hammer, sear and disconnector. Bill retained the 1911's traditional frame-mounted magazine release.

► Pocket Big Bores

The end result was the introduction of the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model 2008. Due to the substantial investment of the specialized components, the first production run included 50 pistols. The majority, "Historical" variants, featured original-style fixed sights. These guns

were master polished on both the rounds and the flats before bluing. The extractor, thumb safety, magazine catch, slide stop and grip screws were finished in a high-luster niter blue. The result was absolutely stunning.

The markings on the C&S Pocket Model deserve a special comment. Bill worked to find a font that replicated the original Colt markings and a size that was proportional to the size of the pistol. The right side of the slide is marked "C&S AUTOMATIC" with a second line that is marked "CALIBRE .45 ACP HAMMERLESS." On the left side of the slide is the manufacturer's marking with "CYLINDER & SLIDE FREMONT NE USA" on the top line and "POCKET MODEL M2008" on the lower line. The markings are crisp and add to the appearance of authenticity. It looks like a Model 1908!

However, Bill also recognized that there was a market for everyday carry and personal defense. Therefore, he also offered the "Standard" model, which featured Novak low-profile sights,

a three-hole aluminum trigger and a Cylinder & Slide extended thumb safety. In addition, the Standard model has a matte blue finish with only the slide flats being polished.

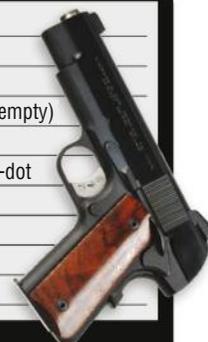
In 2016, Bill started the process to build a second run of 50 Pocket Models. I recently received one of his Standard models for evaluation. As with the Historical models, the Standard model is shipped in a cardboard box that is stamped with the C&S logo and company information. A line is also provided for the model and serial number of the pistol. This is a very old school touch. Opening the box, I found that the pistol was wrapped in corrosion-inhibiting paper, another nice touch.

A closer examination found that the Pocket Model was built to the same high standards as every other custom C&S pistol I have tested. The slide-to-frame fit was void of any play, and the slide cycled like glass on glass. The lockup was very tight, and I was glad I ran a box of 230 FMJs through the gun to break it

SPECIFICATIONS

C&S STANDARD POCKET MODEL 2008

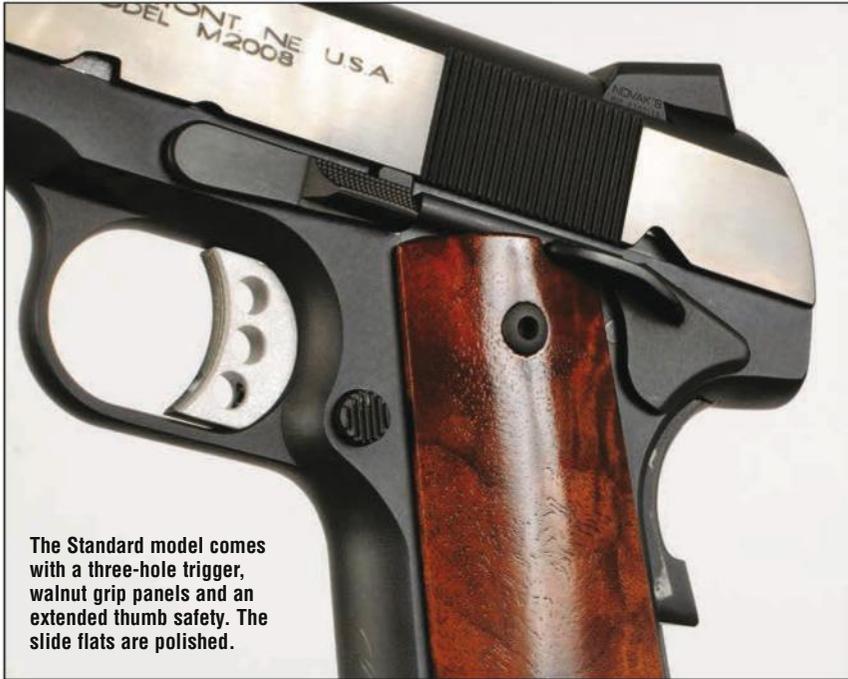
CALIBER:	.45 ACP
BARREL:	4.38 inches
OA LENGTH:	7.88 inches
WEIGHT:	39 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Walnut
SIGHTS:	Novak three-dot
ACTION:	SA
FINISH:	Blued
CAPACITY:	6+1
MSRP:	\$4,000



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Gorilla 230	750	1.55
Silverback SCHP		
Hornady 185	984	2.00
Critical Defense FTX		
Sig Sauer	867	1.45
200 V-Crown JHP		

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 15 yards.



The Standard model comes with a three-hole trigger, walnut grip panels and an extended thumb safety. The slide flats are polished.

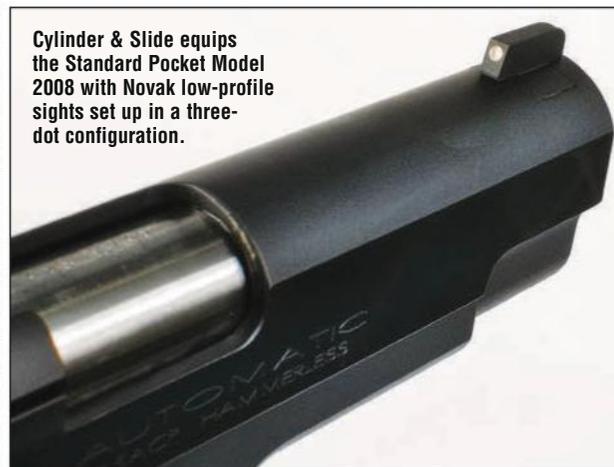
in. The enclosed slide provided a very clear and uncluttered sight picture, something I had not thought about. The extended thumb safety is contoured so that, when in the “fire” position, the lever lays parallel to the slide. The speed bump on the grip safety ensures that positive contact is made with a proper grip. The trigger broke cleanly, averaging 4.44 pounds with no overtravel. Finally, the rounded butt prevented the corners of the shortened frame from digging into the palm of my hand. Although the hammer is concealed, the manual of arms for the Pocket Model is the same as any other 1911. The single exception is that there is no way to manually lower the hammer.

► Standard Testing

Since this Standard model is designed for personal defense, I selected three modern defensive loads for this evaluation. Perhaps the most unique is Gorilla’s Silverback 230-grain FBI load. The bullet is a solid-copper projectile that is machined on a Swiss lathe. The projectile has a very distinctive waist and is pre-scored for rapid and controlled expansion. The Silverback was the mildest shooting of the three loads, averaging 750 fps. I also tested

Hornady’s proven 185-grain Critical Defense FTX load, which averaged 984 fps. My final test load, Sig Sauer’s 200-grain V-Crown JHPs, averaged 867 fps. All of the loads were reliable in the Pocket Model, with the Gorilla load being favored due to the lower velocity and soft shooting characteristics. Also, the pistol’s three-dot Novak sights were more than adequate for the testing.

So, is the Pocket Model worth the price? Setting aside the classic appearance, the Pocket Model is a modern and reliable pistol built with quality and proven parts. It is a specialty pistol that requires a substantial investment to



Cylinder & Slide equips the Standard Pocket Model 2008 with Novak low-profile sights set up in a three-dot configuration.

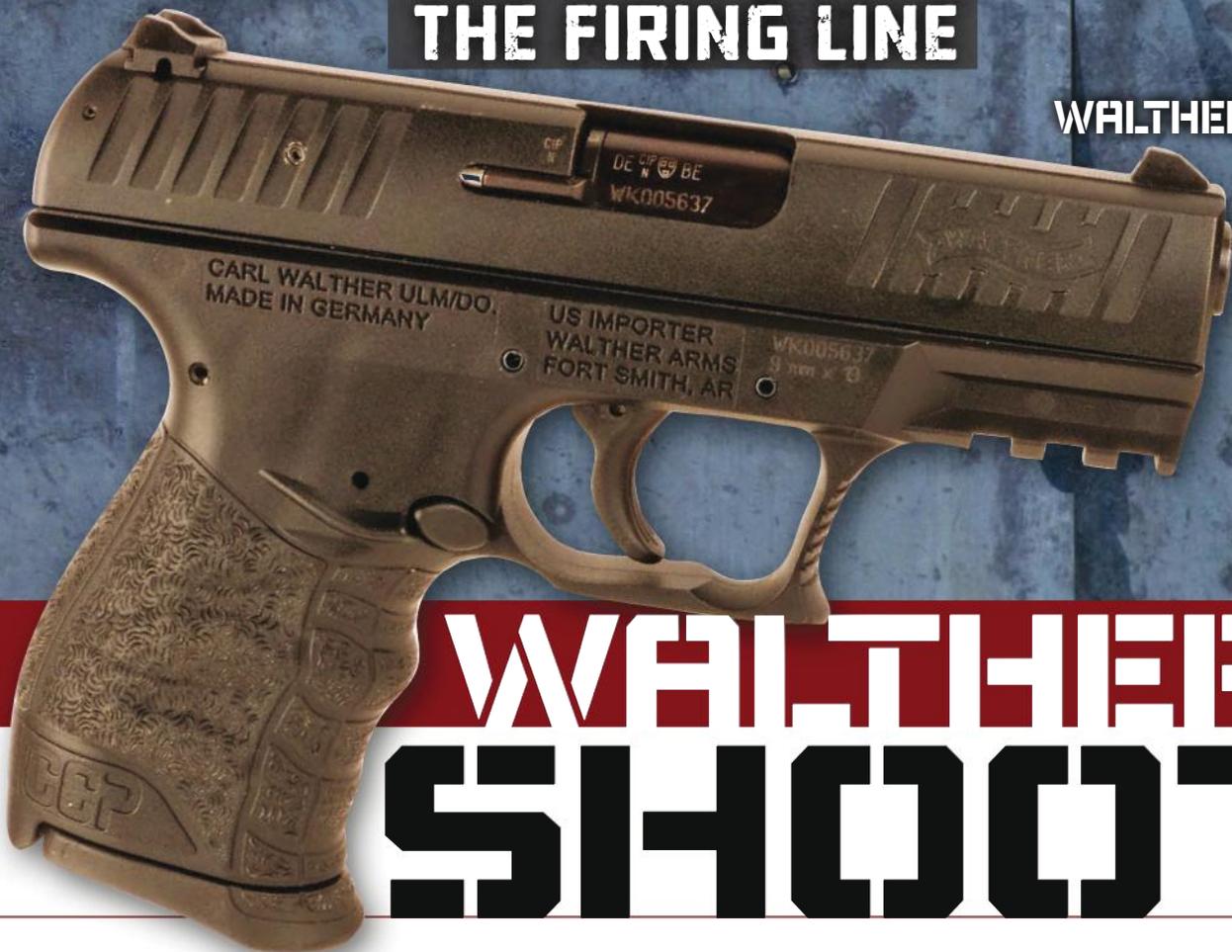


own. However, it is no more expensive than mid-level pistols offered by Nighthawk Custom and Wilson Combat. The Pocket Model fits the hand, conceals well and shoots like a dream. It is certainly a pistol that I would carry on a daily basis in my Milt Sparks Summer Special IWB rig. The design also makes it an ideal pistol for appendix carry for those who favor this method of concealment.

If I could change anything, I’d probably opt for a plain black rear sight and a gold bead front sight. I would also prefer a solid, medium-length trigger. The three-hole unit just doesn’t look right to me. Finally, I would have to invest in a set of politically incorrect ivory grip panels! Even being an everyday-carry pistol, the lines of the pistol are begging for some engraving. I may not spring for full coverage, but it would take an already gorgeous pistol and make it stunning.

I want to thank Bill and the C&S crew for allowing me to grab one of the first Standard models out of the second run

for this evaluation. While I have tested a lot of neat pistols over the years, this one was special. As I said before, the second run of Pocket Models will be 50 units. If you are interested, don’t hesitate to call. They will sell rather quickly. For more information, visit cylinder-slide.com or call 800-448-1713. **PP**



WALTHER SHOOT

IN 1929, Carl Walther *Waffenfabrik* introduced a revolutionary new pistol that changed literally everything about combat handguns. The *Polizeipistole* (PP) was designed for law enforcement use and combined the revolver's double-action/single-action (DA/SA) trigger with a compact semi-automatic handgun design. The gun world would never be the same.

The Walther PP utilized a fairly uncomplicated blowback mechanism and was offered in .22 LR, .25 ACP, .32 ACP and .380 ACP. And, thanks to its ingenious design, the gun could be safely carried with a round in the chamber ready to fire via a long DA trigger pull. Subsequent trigger pulls in SA mode were lighter and shorter. The PP incorporated a reliable internal safety mechanism, a handy magazine release

and a last-round-hold-open feature, all in a remarkably svelte, compact and stylish chassis.

The smaller PPK (*Polizeipistole Kriminalmodell*, or Police Pistol Detective Model) went on to become the definitive variant, and it is one of the world's most iconic close-quarters defensive handguns. The Walther P38 used essentially the same trigger in an attempt to replace Georg Luger's P08 during World War II. The PP and PPK armed a rogues' gallery of Nazis throughout that planetary conflict.

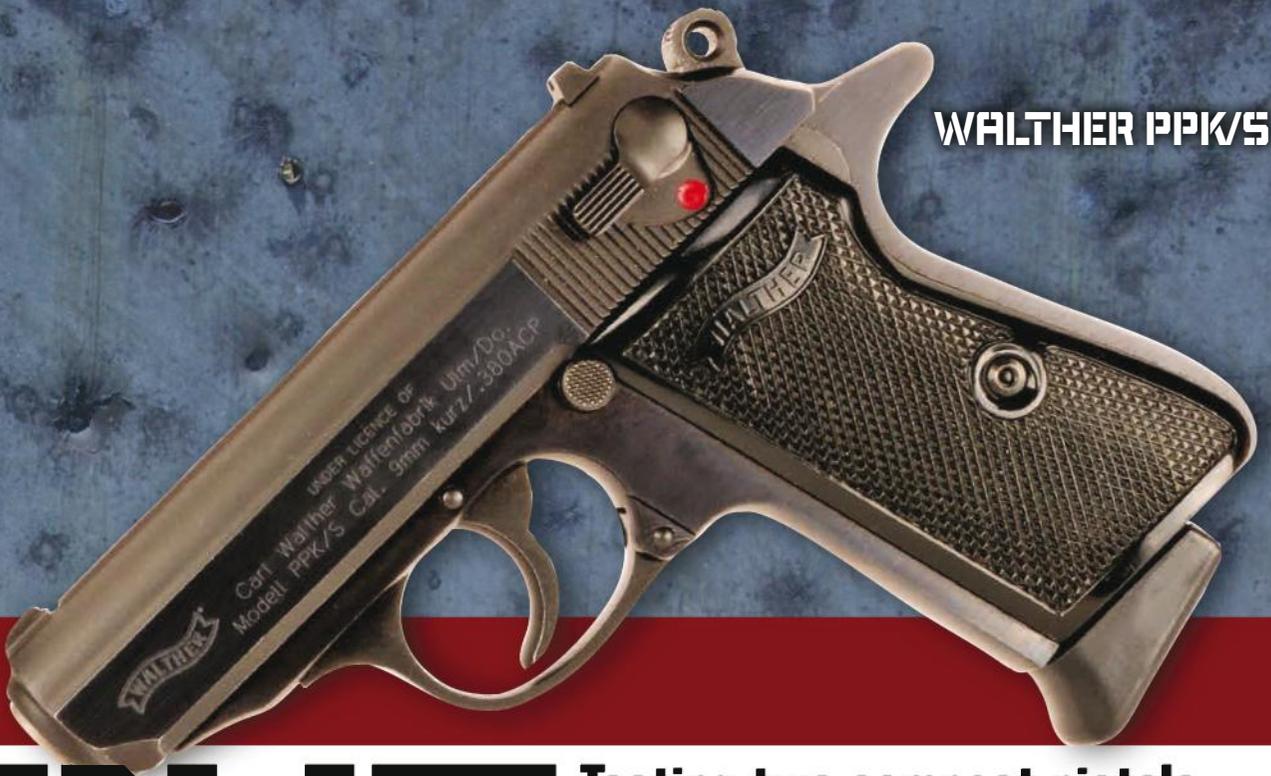
The overwhelming majority of PPK pistols issued throughout WWII were chambered in .32 ACP. While this indeed made for a compact and sweet-shooting handgun, the downrange performance of this anemic cartridge was fairly underwhelming, particularly

when launching FMJ bullets. Where the American M1911A1 in .45 ACP was a brawny handgun designed for serious close combat, the PPK was actually better suited as an executioner's tool.

► War Stories

Elvis Presley was fond of an engraved PPK sporting his characteristic "TCB" ("Taking Care of Business") motto. Legend has it that the King gave his personal PPK to *Hawaii Five-O* actor Jack Lord as a gift in 1973.

The most famous user of the iconic Walther PPK, however, is not even a real guy. Ian Fleming's fictional MI6 agent James Bond carried a .25 ACP Beretta 418 in his earliest adventures. A firearms expert named Geoffrey Boothroyd eventually convinced Fleming to swap Bond's standard handgun out for a PPK just in



COWT

Testing two compact pistols—old and new—to see which is best for self-defense.

BY WILL DABBS, MD

time for his run-in with Dr. No in 1958.

The United States was always the largest postwar market for PPK handguns, and the design was amended slightly to accommodate the 1968 Gun Control Act, which established morphological criteria that had to be met for small handguns to be importable into the U.S. The subsequent PPK/S sported a slightly longer frame that held an extra round in the magazine. While Walther still offered the smaller calibers, most post-war PPK pistols fed .380 ACP ammunition. Walther now produces the PPK and PPK/S in Arkansas.

► Design Influence

While the internal safety features and loaded-chamber indicator of the PPK have become *de rigueur* on many modern combat handguns, it was the

DA/SA trigger that really made a splash.

The same basic mechanism drove most handguns until the 1990s. Familiar weapons like the Beretta M9, the Sig P226, the CZ 75 and various Smith & Wesson semi-autos of the day all used some variation of this trigger system. This design reigned supreme until Gaston Glock debuted the striker-fired Safe Action trigger system that has since transformed modern combat handguns.

While most law enforcement pistols employ striker-fired triggers these days, the DA/SA mechanism remains a brisk seller. Many serious gunmen, myself included, enjoy the added safety of a long trigger pull for the first round out of the holster. Despite a literal lifetime of trying, I can never seem to shoot to precisely the same point of aim in both modes. However, I am personally acquainted

with three accidental discharges that spawned from striker-fired handguns, two of which inflicted severe officer injuries. The DA/SA trigger still has a place among modern handguns even today.

But let's take a closer look at the PPK/S. This is a steel-framed, blowback-operated pistol with a rotating hammer-drop safety mounted on the left side of the slide. The thumb easily accesses this device when the gun is fired right-handed. The magazine release is thumb-activated like that of the revered 1911. The sights are fixed and fairly small, though the top of the slide sports wavy serrations to minimize glare.

The slide on the PPK/S locks to the rear automatically after the last round in the magazine is fired. Swap magazines and snatch the slide back slightly to release it over a fresh magazine. The

recoil is snappy for a .380 ACP handgun given its unlocked blowback action. However, the gun remains both fun to shoot and a personal favorite.

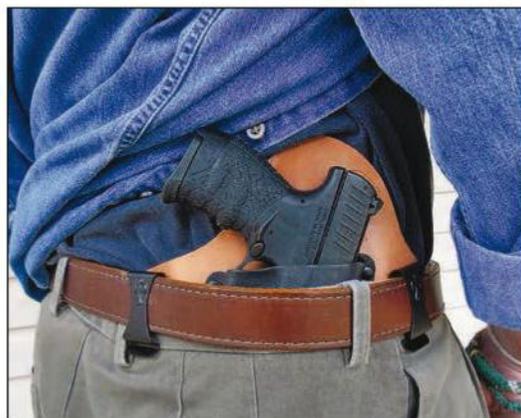
► **Next-Gen Treatment**

That Walther is an established innovator in the field of combat handguns is indisputable. One of its most modern designs, however, remains absolutely unique among dozens of competitors. The Walther CCP uses a gas-delayed blowback operating system to put 9mm power into a .380-sized chassis. Walther calls this the Softcoil system.

Most modern combat rifles are gas-operated. There are a few exceptions to this rule, but not many. The details vary, and these individual details sell a lot of guns. However, most modern combat rifles tap a bit of gas off near the muzzle and use this energy to cycle the action and fire another round. Such contrivances allow a weapon to be much smaller and lighter than might be the case were the gun driven by pure unvarnished blowback. In the case of the CCP, Walther engineers took a basic gas piston design and turned it around backwards. In so doing, they slowed the action down rather than sped it up. The



The 9mm Walther CCP carries easily in an IWB holster and is light on recoil thanks to its innovative Softcoil system.



result is absolutely inspired.

The polymer-framed Walther CCP is subsequently thin, lightweight and portable. The CCP was designed from the outset for concealed-carry applications, and everything about the gun is optimized for this role.

There are no sharp angles to snag, and thanks to the gas-retarded operating system, the slide is remarkably easy to rack.

The CCP is indeed lightweight and svelte in hand. There is an exposed manual safety on the left side for peace of mind as well as an external manual slide release, also on the left. The reversible magazine release is in the same spot as that of the PPK/S. The stippling on the grip is pronounced without being uncomfortable. I have big hands and the CCP fits both my petite bride and me comparably well. While utterly reliable, the CCP is tedious to disassemble.

The striker-fired trigger is consistent from the first shot to the last. I did find the trigger to be longer and grittier than that of most striker-fired designs, but the CCP tames the 9mm cartridge splendidly and renders fine accuracy at close combat ranges. Riding in a CrossBreed IWB holster, the gun is small enough to be comfortable yet adequately powerful for serious social uses.

► **Old & New**

Both the PPK/S and the CCP have kept me company as concealed-carry tools on countless occasions. The PPK/S

SPECIFICATIONS

WALTHER CCP

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	3.54 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.41 inches
WEIGHT:	22.33 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Three-dot
ACTION:	Striker-fired
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	8+1
MSRP:	N/A



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Browning 147 FMJ	937	1.25

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best four-shot groups at 18 meters.

carries an inimitable ambience, while the CCP is arguably the most innovative compact 9mm on the American firearms market. Both guns shoot plenty straight to defend your person during outings to the sorts of places where the Wild Things roam. Each of these two weapons fulfills the same mission in very different ways.

A man much smarter than am I once opined that variety is the spice of life. While I would take issue with that statement as it applies to perhaps spouses, such stuff is the rocket fuel that launched many a gun nerd into the limitless ether of modern gun collecting. While the vast majority of modern defensive handguns owe their parent-

SPECIFICATIONS

WALTHER PPK/S

CALIBER:	.380 ACP
BARREL:	3.3 inches
OA LENGTH:	6.1 inches
WEIGHT:	23.6 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Fixed
ACTION:	DA/SA
FINISH:	Black
CAPACITY:	7+1
MSRP:	N/A



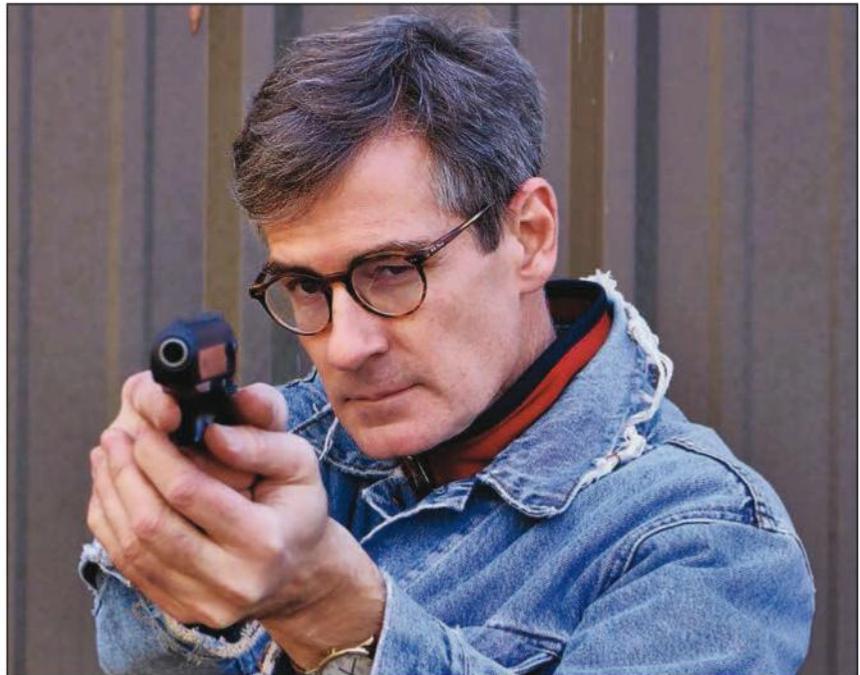
PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Browning 95 FMJ	859	2.40

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph and accuracy in inches for best four-shot groups at 18 meters.

age to the singular brilliance of one John Moses Browning and his locked-breech, recoil-operated Hi-Power, both the PPK/S and CCP follow their own unique paths.

The original PPK introduced the world to a novel trigger system that subsequently dominated military handgun designs for generations. The CCP took something familiar and pedestrian and turned it on its ear. In so doing, the CCP established for itself a unique niche in the remarkably busy field of modern



It's hard to beat the PPK/S in .380 ACP when it comes to classic styling and DA/SA operation.

defensive handguns. The CCP is as cutting edge as tomorrow's headlines, and the PPK/S remains relevant today nearly nine decades after its introduction. Between these

two guns we get a glimpse into the genius that has characterized Walther firearms for nearly a century. For more information, visit waltherarms.com or call 479-242-8500.

PP



Here you can see the author's 18-meter groups with the 9mm (top) and .380 ACP (bottom) loads.

WHAT'S HOT FROM SHOT

Check out the new guns and holsters debuted at the 2017 SHOT Show!

BY GORDON D. SMITH

The 39th annual Shooting, Hunting & Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show is now in the history books. It seemed to be a strong and upbeat event, in no small part due to the results of the election. Even though there was political uncertainty, the firearms industry marched on, spending time and money to get new products developed and ready for the marketplace. Here we've gathered a number of those advances in the realm of small firearms as well as new holster systems to facilitate concealed carry.



Avidity Arms PD10

Part of the Eagle Imports umbrella, Avidity Arms has introduced its first firearm, the PD10. A purpose-built, striker-fired 9mm built in America, the PD10 was designed by renowned defensive shooting instructor Rob Pincus as his answer to what he saw was lacking in the options available to someone looking for a personal-defense firearm. It comes standard with a 10-round Chip McCormick magazine. The single-stack magazine helps keep the width of the pistol stay below an inch for a full-sized feel without sacrificing any concealability. The rear sight is designed so it can be used to rack the slide one-handed in the case of one hand or arm becoming incapacitated. Rob's goal was to offer the complete package at a reasonable price while still offering a limited lifetime warranty to the original purchaser. When the PD10 becomes available in the next couple of months, the MSRP is expected to be under \$500. (eagleimportsinc.com; 732-493-0333)



Kahr Tungsten Cerakote Pistols

Kahr Arms recently introduced four upgraded models to its line that all feature tungsten Cerakote slides, triggers and slide stops; white three-dot sights; Pachmayr Tactical Grip Gloves and Pearce finger rest extensions on their magazines for added control. The new models include the 9mm CM9093TU3, the .380 ACP CW3833TU3 and CT3833TU3, and the largest of the bunch, the .45 ACP CM4543TU3, which does not come with a magazine extension. (kahr.com; 508-795-3919)

Colt Cobra

After a long hiatus, one of Colt's famous "Snake" series revolvers returns for 2017. The Colt Cobra double action is back in .38 Special. This matte stainless steel, 2.1-inch-barreled, six-round, small-frame revolver should ignite a renewed interest among those who love snubbies. Weighing in at 25 ounces unloaded, the Cobra sports Colt-branded Hogue grips that have been moved rearward to help tame recoil, and the revolver incorporates Colt's LL2 (Linear Leaf) trigger system for a smooth trigger pull. (colt.com;

800-962-2658)



FNS-9 Compact FDE

While the FNS-9 Compact was debuted last year, FN is now offering a Flat Dark Earth (FDE) version. This short 3.6-inch-barreled pistol was designed to be snag-free to facilitate quick draws from concealment. The three-dot sights allow for faster target acquisitions. It has a 12+1 or 17+1 capacity depending upon the magazine used. Weighing 23.4 ounces unloaded, the black and FDE versions should be at home with any shooters looking for a compact striker-fired handgun. (fnamerica.com; 703-288-3500)

Heckler & Koch P30SK

While Heckler & Koch did not introduce a new version of the P30SK at SHOT, in speaking with folks in the booth there was an indication that this compact pistol would be available in a larger caliber later in the year. The current model is a 9mm with a 3.2-inch barrel. It also comes with extra side and backstrap panels so users can customize the grip to fit their needs, as well as a limited lifetime warranty to the original purchaser. Of course, no details were available on the new caliber at this time, so stand by if you like the P30SK but want a carry gun with more punch. (hk-usa.com; 706-568-1906)



Kimber Micro Pistols

Kimber showed several Micro 9 models to include the Stainless Raptor, Sapphire CDP, Bel Air and CDP (LG). They all have 3.15-inch barrels, 6+1 capacities and Kimber "carry melt" treatments for smooth edges to reduce snags upon drawing. Each has its own personality like the Raptor, with its scale accents and tritium night sights, or the Bel Air, with its polished slide and special turquoise color. Also new are a couple of .380s that are quite eye-catching. The Micro Amethyst sports a satin frame with a deep purple slide and controls and some engraved scrollwork on the slide, and the Micro Desert Night features a matte black slide and a desert tan frame. Both have 2.75-inch barrels and 6+1 capacities, and tritium night sights complete the package on the Amethyst. (kimberamerica.com; 888-243-4522)



Remington R51

After a less-than-successful rollout of the R51 a while back, the company worked hard to recover and relaunch a new, improved R51 this year. This 9mm subcompact has a newly enhanced trigger design that is light and crisp, a lower bore axis and tighter tolerances all around. More enhancements include a new grip angle and a slide that requires less effort for racking. The match-grade barrel is 3.4 inches long, and the pistol includes an ambidextrous magazine release, a grip safety and rounded edges. (Remington.com; 800-243-9700)

Ruger American Compact

Ruger has updated its striker-fired American Pistol line to include the American Compact series pistols in 9mm or .45 ACP. The Pro models only feature trigger safeties, but models with manual thumb safeties are also available. These pistols feature Novak LoMount Carry three-dot sights and black nitride-finished slides. The 9mm models sport 3.55-inch barrels and come with one 12-round magazine and one 17-round mag while the .45 ACP comes with seven- and 10-round magazines. (ruger.com)





Ruger LCRx

Along with the new LCP II (see page 14), Ruger has unveiled the LCRx revolver in .357 Magnum. This compact revolver carries five rounds in its extensively fluted 400 series stainless steel cylinder. That fluting, combined with the polymer fire control housing, helps reduce its overall weight. An exposed hammer allows for single-action shooting, which is enhanced by the next-generation friction-reducing cam for a smoother trigger pull. It sports a Hogue Tamer overmolded grip and a pinned front sight. (ruger.com)



SCCY CPX-3

SCCY introduced its new CPX-3 pistols this year. This is the company's third generation of 100-percent American-made DAO pistols. These .380s feature the "Roebuck Quad Lock" to lock the barrel and slide in four places for enhanced accuracy. The barrel length is 2.96 inches, and the capacity is a pleasantly surprising 10 rounds. Black and two-tone versions are available, and each gun comes with a "perpetual warranty," meaning the lifetime warranty accompanies the gun, not the original owner. (sccy.com; 866-279-7599)

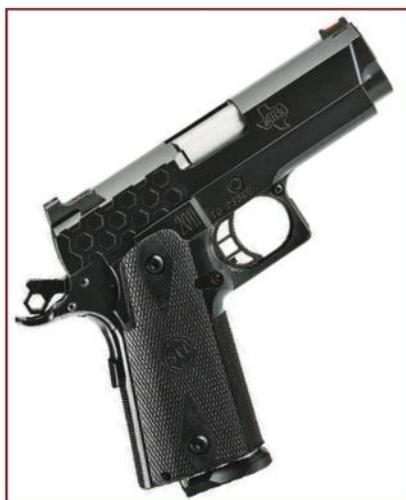
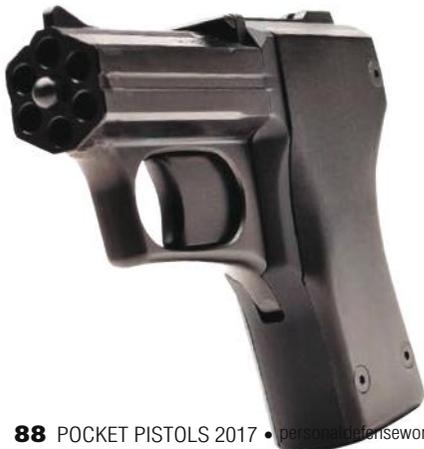
Smith & Wesson Performance Center Model 642

The Model 642 from the S&W Performance Center is a five-shot, aluminum-framed .38 Special with a 1.88-inch barrel. A DAO revolver with a shrouded hammer, the 642's action has been tuned and certain areas are highly polished. The cylinder is cut so full-moon clips can be used, and the grip is synthetic with wood inserts. The 642 only weighs 15 ounces unloaded. (smith-wesson.com; 800-331-0852)



Standard Manufacturing S-333 Volleyfire

An unusual pistol was shown at this year's SHOT Show that fits into this category: the S-333 Volleyfire. It holds six .25 ACP rounds in a non-rotating barrel assembly, and upon each long pull of the large slab trigger, two rounds discharge simultaneously. It will be available later in the year in several different colors. Of course, there is lots of controversy about the .25 ACP's effectiveness for self-defense, but the S-333 is new and unique, so we'll see how it is received in the marketplace. (stdgun.com; 860-22-6581)



STI Hex Tactical 3.0

STI recently released its HEX Tactical 3.0, a shorter, more compact version of the popular HEX Tactical 4.0 and 5.0. This 3.7-inch-barreled version sports a Cerakote finish and unique Hex serrations on the slide for easy racking from any angle. Both single-stack (SS) and double-stack (DS) versions in 9mm are available, and the latter offers a whopping 15+1 capacity. (stiguns.com; 512-819-0656)

Taurus Spectrum

The .380 ACP Spectrum is considered by Taurus to be a groundbreaking new micro pistol designed, engineered and built in the U.S. The pistol is touted to deliver better comfort and control in this platform through its ergonomics and proprietary "soft-touch" polymers for sure grasping surfaces, even wet. The pistol is a DAO with a 2.8-inch barrel, a long 7- to 9-pound trigger pull and an unloaded weight of only 10 ounces. Six- and seven-round magazines come with the gun. For those who prefer a little flair, there will be more than 70 color options available. To learn more, turn to page 30. (taurususa.com; 800-327-3776)





Springfield Armory XD Mod.2 4" Service Model

Along with the new EMP Concealed Carry Contour (see page 20), Springfield has unveiled a 4-inch-barreled XD Mod.2 Service Model in .45 ACP. Thanks to its redesigned "GripZone" frame, this pistol is much easier to carry for those who prefer larger calibers. This pistol comes with two 13-round, stainless steel magazines, a fiber-optic front sight, a two-dot rear sight and a dramatically redesigned slide that makes for easy racking in any condition. (springfield-armory.com; 800-680-6866)



Walther CCP

New this year from Walther is the CCP (Concealed Carry Pistol) with Softcoil technology. The new technology in this delayed-blowback 9mm bleeds off some gas to push on a piston under the barrel, resulting in less felt recoil. The barrel is 3.54 inches long, and the pistol has a 5.5-pound trigger pull. The CCP has an 8+1 capacity, an ambidextrous magazine release and a 22.3-ounce weight unloaded. It also sports a black Cerakote or brushed stainless slide. (waltherarms.com; 479-242-8500)

HOLSTERS & CARRY SYSTEMS

Once a person decides to carry concealed, a good holster and/or carry system (perhaps several) is necessary to safely and comfortably carry the firearm. An amazing array of options is available, including totes, handbags, fanny packs and more. Kydex and thermoplastics are produced in multiple colors and patterns, and traditional leather is still a very viable option, giving consumers a myriad of choices. A number of vendors introduced new items at this year's show. Here are some of the best.

1791 Gunleather UIW

1791 Gunleather offers artisan-quality, 100-percent American-made holsters made by four generations of professional leather crafters who work with premium native heavy steerhide. At SHOT, the company unveiled its new UIW (Universal Inside the Waist) holster for guns of various barrel lengths with rails and lights/lasers. This double-stitched holster is ambidextrous and highly versatile. (1791gunleather.com; 800-407-1791)



Alien Gear ShapeShift

Alien Gear's new ShapeShift Modular Holster System should be available soon. The Idaho firm touts this as a groundbreaking design offering an "endless array of custom carry options." One holster can be adapted to many different carry positions, from an IWB position to a thigh rig and any other carry method you might require. Made in the U.S., all of the parts needed for the transformations are included. (aliengearholsters.com; 208-215-2046)



Bravo Concealment DOS

Makers of Kydex carry systems right here in the U.S., this Texas company released its DOS (Drop Out of Sight) IWB holster for deep concealment. Tough and durable, it can be made in options for pistols with lights. Bravo offers a 30-day money-back guarantee and a lifetime warranty. (bravoconcealment.com; 956-783-7682)



Clinger Holsters Trump Tuck

Clinger Holsters recently introduced the Trump Tuck IWB holster. Users can adjust the cant from 0 to 30 degrees for strong-side carry, to a negative cant for a crossdraw setup. It also has soft loop retention straps, and users can adjust the ride height. The holster body has a small profile so it won't print. (clingerholsters.com)

Comp-Tac Cavalry

Comp-Tac produces the Cavalry holster specifically for pocket guns. A hybrid holster combining Kydex with a leather backing, it is ideally sized for IWB carry. Adjustments can be made for cant and retention as well as ride height. (comp-tac.com; 281-209-3040)



Concealed Carrie

Doesn't this woman-owned holster company have a great name? Concealed Carrie offers elegant off-the-body carry options in leather, and buyers can choose exotic prints like ostrich and alligator if desired. Recently, the company's line has expanded into men's concealed-carry items under another clever brand name: Concealed Carry. (concealedcarrie.com; 844-522-7743)

El Paso Summer Cruiser

El Paso Saddlery has been making holsters in Texas since 1889, and it's known for its beautiful Western rigs. The company also produces modern variants, including the new Summer Cruiser IWB holster in rough-out cowhide for natural adhesion to clothing. A metal reinforced rim at the mouth keeps it open for easy reholstering. With a forward cant and a polished interior for easy draws, it is available for several small pistol designs. (epsaddlery.com; 915-544-2233)



Fobus XDSC

Based out of Israel, Fobus is known for producing holsters from a proprietary material that is considered superior to Kydex. New for 2017 is the inside-the-waistband XDSC holster, and variants are available to fit a number of popular compact semi-autos, including the Beretta Nano, Springfield XD-S, Ruger LC9 and S&W M&P Shield. (fobusholster.com; 267-803-1517)

Galco Scout IWB Gen 2

New in the Galco lineup is the Scout IWB Gen 2. The rough-out steerhide "grabs" clothing and stays put while the polished interior helps ensure a smooth draw. It is an open-top holster with no cant, and right- and left-hand models are available for both semi-autos and revolvers. (galcogunleather.com; 800-874-2526)



Gold Star Holsters

With the new Opti Carry Slim from Gold Star Holsters, "Opti" stands for options. Capitalizing on the same features of the original Opti Carry, only with a slimmer clip, this new design fits tighter to the body, especially when worn in an OWB position. The holster is made gun-specific using a combination of Kydex and Hermann Oaks leather. (goldstarholsters.com; 417-413-1922)

Crossfire Elite

Crossfire is known for producing a number of holsters, including the Undercover, which is designed for revolvers. All of the holsters are made in the U.S. and carry a limited lifetime warranty. One new rig is the EDC, a hybrid inside-the-waistband holster designed for extreme comfort and easy concealability. It is small, low profile and contains a comfort panel for extended wear.

(crossfiregear.com; 208-461-8888)



DeSantis Nylon Mini-Scabbard

Founded in 1972, DeSantis Gunhide is one of the largest holster manufacturers in the world. Recently, the company expanded its extensive lineup to include the Mini-Scabbard, which is made of ballistic nylon and thermoformable materials. It features an adjustable tension device and accommodates belts up to 1.75 inches wide.

(desantisholster.com; 800-424-1236)

DoubleClick Holsters

Headquartered in Texas, this company specializes in custom thermoplastic holsters and accessories in a variety of colors and patterns. The name is derived from the "dual retention" of the systems. At SHOT, the company introduced the SafeCarry Ranger and the Micro Tactical Pro, which can be adjusted for strong-side hip, small-of-the-back or IWB carry. (512-516-1477; doubleclickholsters.com)



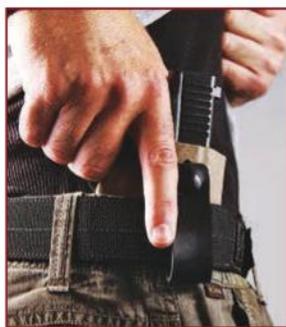
DSG Holsters

DSG Arms recently began offering carry rigs under the DSG Holsters name. Already in use by law enforcement personnel throughout North America, these holsters are made of Kydex. The new DSG Alpha fits pocket guns and comes with a limited lifetime warranty.

(dsgarms.com; 800-382-7571)

Gun Tote'n Mamas

This woman-owned, family-run company has been offering concealed-carry handbags for more than 12 years. The company unveiled several classy handbag styles this year, and prices begin around \$100. Gun Tote'n Mamas also branched into off-the-body concealed-carry options for men to include a soft-sided leather briefcase and a leather iPad case for under \$200. (guntotenmamas.com; 847-446-0700)



High Threat Concealment

High Threat Concealment is a veteran-owned business that specializes in tactical gear. At SHOT this year, the company offered both IWB and OWB options molded from a high-impact PVC/acrylic alloy that can withstand extreme temperature and rough use. The company's "no heat" vacuum-forming process avoids the stresses common to traditional heat forming.

(highthreatconcealment.com; 757-750-0300)

Hunter Holsters

Making leather holsters in Colorado since 1952, Hunter turns out handcrafted items made by American craftsmen. In fact, some of their employees have been there over 40 years. New offerings for small Glocks like the G42 and G43 are available in right-hand configurations for around \$90. (huntercompany.com; 303-427-4626)



Kaos Concealment

Kaos also makes its Kydex holsters exclusively in the U.S. The holsters are ambidextrous with adjustable cant capabilities. The clips are made of injected polymer, and all of the edges are smoothed for snag-free carry. The company's newest holster, the Fusion Plus, can be configured for IWB or OWB carry and comes with all of the necessary parts. (kaosconcealment.com; 661-496-3707)

Pistol Wear PT-2

Pistol Wear makes innovative holsters for use with all styles of clothing. The company's holsters are soft but incorporate the favorable properties of rigid holsters. Breathable and lightweight, they work very well when you're jogging or otherwise active in loose-fitting clothing. Pistol Wear's latest patent-pending design is the PT-2. Designed for small semi-autos and revolvers, it has a outer pouch wall insert to prevent the gun from printing. It provides noise-free access and is hand washable. (pistolwear.com; 918-364-5617)



Sticky Holsters

As the name implies, with every Sticky holster, retention is based on the friction between the supple rubber exterior and compression in the waistband or pocket. The interior is woven Cordura nylon with closed-cell foam between the layers that conforms to the gun's profile. There are no hooks or clips, so each holster is ambidextrous, and breathability was a big factor in designing these rigs. (stickyholsters.com; 844-416-1844)

Tagua Gunleather

Tagua makes 100-percent cowhide holsters with lifetime warranties. But this year the company has stepped into the polymer world with the CZY-APP, which fits multiple small pistols. Another introduction is the IPH 3, an ambidextrous leather holster adjustable for three different carry styles. (taguagunleather.com; 866-638-2482)



Talon Holsters

Home of the "No Bull" guarantee, Talon produces traditional leather holsters in the U.S. using only American components, including Hermann Oak leather. The company was started by a career LEO who knew what worked and what didn't, and he put that knowledge into his products. New for this year are tuckable and IWB pocket holsters that fit the newer subcompacts from Kahr and Glock as well as models that accommodate lasers. (talonholsters.com; 850-363-3396)

Telor Comfort-Air

New to SHOT, Telor Tactical utilizes knowledge from the medical industry—specifically the wheelchair cushion industry—to build holsters and carry systems that are comfortable and stay in place. A breathable layer of Sil-Air silicone foam is placed between the inner and outer layers of each holster. This construction is durable and does not hold in body heat. Telor's newest offering is the Comfort-Air IWB holster, with two sizes to fit many of the compact and subcompact guns on the market. (telortactical.com; 706-466-0889)



Urban Carry G2

The G2, the second generation of the original Urban Carry IWB holster, is made of 100-percent saddle-grade leather in Tennessee. Developed with user input, the G2 rides below the waistband for comfort and requires a lift-and-draw technique. It also has a custom steel clip to withstand pulling in stressful situations. Two styles for different guns/mounting options and a laser-compatible version are also available. (urbancarryholsters.com; 844-446-5783)

Ulticlip

The Ulticlip was designed to replace spring clips on existing holsters and provide 10 times the retention force with a smaller footprint when the holster is clipped to a belt or clothing. The Ulticlip is 100-percent American made. There are two sizes to cover most holsters on the market. (ulticlip.com; 239-400-2547)



Versacarry Protector S2

The Protector S2 from Versacarry is a leather OWB/IWB holster for right-hand carry. Users can choose between black or distressed water buffalo leather. The holsters are hand-crafted in Texas from the highest-quality materials. The Protector S3, also an OWB/IWB rig, is a versatile design that can be adjusted to fit most handguns. (versacarry.com; 855-278-9678) **PP**

STATE-BY-STATE CARRY LAWS

Charting the
concealed-carry laws
for all 50 states
in 2017. **BY JEREMY D. CLOUGH**

Alex Landeen Photo



All 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, allow some form of concealed carry, but the laws remain as different as the states themselves and change constantly. The following is a general overview of each state's laws on issuing permits as well as whether they issue permits to non-residents and if they recognize permits from other states. While "reciprocity" is a term of art, here it is used in the more general sense of whether or not they will recognize another state's permit. The exact terms of the reciprocity they offer are, of course, different for each state. Just because a state recognizes some out-of-state permits doesn't mean they recognize yours, so you'll need to check that. Other relevant laws you'll need to know are limits on ammunition or magazine capacity as well as the laws of self-defense for that state. Washington, D.C., for example, prohibits permit holders from carrying any more cartridges than are required to fully load the pistol, and in no event more than 10. Included are links to official sources in each state as well as the citation for their CCW statute to serve as starting points for the additional research you should do to make sure you obey the law.

What follows is not legal advice. For that, you must contact an attorney licensed in that state who specializes in this area of law. This article is not intended to answer all of the questions you need to ask, but to tell you where to look for the answers you need.

Be aware that laws change constantly, and new ones often become effective at unpredictable times. Roughly one-third of all states made some changes in their CCW law during 2016, and some states have multiple versions of their CCW law staged to take effect at different times, some as far in advance as 2021. There's no guarantee that they won't change again by the time this gets to press and into your hands. Further complicating things, available information, even when it comes from state agencies, may be conflicting. While the information in this article came from state government sources (including directly from the most recently published statutes), do not rely on this or any other unofficial source. Verify all information prior to traveling, and if you have any doubt at all about carrying, don't do it.

It's easy to find people on the Internet who will suggest that you should push the limits and carry in places where it's illegal. The theory seems to be that it's easier to get forgiveness than permission, but that's a foolish approach; all it takes is a traffic stop to get caught. In many states, carrying a weapon carries mandatory jail time and is often a felony. In Rhode Island, for example, it carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Be smart and be safe. Know the law and follow it. If you're in doubt, don't. It's hard to protect your family if you're in prison.



ALABAMA

<http://www.ago.alabama.gov/Page-Gun-Reciprocity-Law%20>

Statute: Code of Ala. § 13A-11-75

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: Varies by jurisdiction and length of time for which permit is issued

Length: 1-5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: Alabama recognizes a permit issued by any state provided that Alabama residents are required to have an Alabama permit.

ALASKA

<http://dps.alaska.gov/statewide/PermitsLicensing/concealedhandguns.aspx>

Statute: Alaska Stat. 18.65.700

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety, apply at State Trooper office

Cost: Up to \$99 initial/\$30 renewal

Length: Up to 5 years (expires on the person's birthday in the fifth year following issuance)

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: While a permit is available, none is required to carry concealed in Alaska

ARIZONA

http://www.azdps.gov/Services/Concealed_Weapons/

Statute: A.R.S. § 13-3102, 13-3112

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety, Concealed Weapons Permits Unit

Cost: \$60 initial/\$43 renewal • **Length:** 5 years

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: While a permit is available, none is required to carry a weapon in Arizona. Consult state laws on limitations on where and how weapons may be carried.

ARKANSAS

<http://asp.arkansas.gov/services-and-programs/detail/concealed-handgun-licensing>

Statute: Ark. Code § 5-73-309

Issuing Authority: Director of Department of State Police

Cost: \$100 plus other costs if under 65 years of age (currently \$142.11), \$50 plus other costs if over 65 (currently \$90.61).

Renewals: \$35 plus other costs, with no difference based on age (currently \$62.80).

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: Arkansas recognizes a valid permit issued by any other state. A recent statute change settled a long-standing dispute and now allows concealed carry without a permit.

CALIFORNIA

<http://oag.ca.gov/firearms>

Statute: CA Penal Sec § 26150, 26155

Issuing Authority: County sheriff or chief/head of police

Cost: Varies; licensing authorities application fee is limited to \$100 and \$25 for renewals, but statute provides for other fees (including up to \$150 for any required psychological exam) and for regular increases in cost.

Length: 2 years maximum for civilian permit

Terms Of Issuance: May issue • **Reciprocity:** Not provided for

Out-Of-State Permits: Code appears to allow county sheriff to grant a permit to one not residing in their county if their primary place of business is there and they spend a "substantial period of time" there.

Note: Some changes in forms became effective January 1, 2017. New assault weapons restrictions are currently being implemented.

COLORADO

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cbi/chpstatutes>

Statute: Colo. Rev. Stat. 18-12-203

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: No more than \$100 initial, \$50 renewal, plus other fees

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes, but appears to apply only to resident permits

Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: A temporary emergency permit is also available and its age limit was lowered from 21 to 18.

CONNECTICUT

<http://www.ct.gov/despp/cwp/view>

asp?a=4213&q=494614&desppNav_GID=2080

Statute: Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-28

Issuing Authority: Chief of police, warden or first selectman for temporary permit, Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection (State Police) for state permit and for non-residents

Cost: \$140 initial (appears to be \$70 for local, \$70 for state) plus other fees, \$70 renewal

Length: 5 years for state; temporary permit unclear, but appear for state permit within 60 days of receiving local permit

Terms Of Issuance: May issue • **Reciprocity:** No

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes; statute appears to require that non-residents already be permitted by another jurisdiction, but not necessarily their home state.

Note: Residents must apply locally for a temporary permit prior to eligibility for state permit; out of state, apply directly to Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection (State Police). Some minor changes took effect October 1, 2016.

DELAWARE

<http://courts.delaware.gov/superior/weapons.aspx>

Statute: Del. Code Title 11 § 1441

Issuing Authority: Prothonotary of Superior Court

Cost: \$65 initial/renewal

Length: Expires on June 1; 2 years initial/3 renewal

Terms Of Issuance: May issue • **Reciprocity:** Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Attorney general has authority to issue a short-term permit to non-resident under very limited circumstances

Note: Statute allows 3-year initial permit/5-year renewal, but procedural rules only allow 2/3.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/page/applying-concealed-carry-pistol-license>

Statute: DC Code § 22-4506, DC Code § 7-2509.02

Issuing Authority: Chief of Metropolitan Police Department

Cost: \$75 application fee plus \$35 for fingerprints (if not on file) and other possible fees

Length: 2 years (chief may limit "times of the day, week, month or year" license is effective)

Terms Of Issuance: May issue • **Reciprocity:** No

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes; you must either have a place of business in D.C. or a permit from another state, unless home state does not require permit

Note: DC limits ammo to no more than the number of cartridges required to fully load the firearm or 10 cartridges, whichever is less. The CCW statute appears to still be subject to active litigation and is therefore likely to change without notice.

FLORIDA

<http://www.freshfromflorida.com/#Concealed-Weapons>

Statute: Fla. Stat. Ch. § 790.06

Issuing Authority: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Cost: \$102 initial, \$50 renewal (including fingerprint processing fee; renewal is \$92 if non-resident)

Length: 7 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: Reciprocity appears to apply only to those with permits issued by their state of residence, but is extended to license holders under 21 if they are serving or have been honorably discharged from the military.

GEORGIA

<http://dps.georgia.gov/georgias-firearm-permit-reciprocity> (reciprocity information only)

Statute: O.C.G.A. § 16-11-129

Issuing Authority: Judge of County Probate Court

Cost: \$30 initial/renewal plus additional fees that vary by county, \$1 for temporary renewal permit

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: For those serving in or honorably discharged from the military, the age limit is reduced from 21 to 18.

HAWAII

<http://www.honolulu.org/information/index.php?page=gunmain>

Statute: Haw. Rev. Stat. § 134-9 • **Issuing Authority:** Chief of police

Cost: \$10 • **Length:** 1 year

Terms Of Issuance: May issue "in an exceptional case"

Reciprocity: No

Out-Of-State Permits: Appear to be provided for

Note: Permits appeared to be limited to carrying in the counties in which they are issued. No residence requirement appears in the statute, which also authorizes permits for certain foreign nationals.

IDAHO

http://www.ag.idaho.gov/concealedWeapons/concealedWeapons_index.html

Statute: Idaho Code § 18-3302, § 18-3302K (enhanced permit)

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$20 initial, \$15 renewal plus additional fees

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: "Enhanced" permit requires training, a requirement that is otherwise discretionary with the issuing sheriff.

Temporary emergency licenses are available. Pursuant to a change that became effective in 2016, state residents 21 or older may carry a concealed handgun without a permit if otherwise eligible for permit.

ILLINOIS

<https://www.ispsfb.com/Public/CCL.aspx>

Statute: 430 ILCS 66/10

Issuing Authority: Department of State Police

Cost: \$150 initial/renewal for resident, \$300 initial/renewal for non-resident

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: No

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes, if state of residence has substantially similar weapons laws

Note: Non-residents who may lawfully carry in their home state are not prohibited from transporting a concealed firearm within their vehicle in Illinois, but they may not remove the gun from their vehicle and may not leave it unsecured if they get out.

INDIANA

<http://www.in.gov/isp/3179.htm>

Statute: Ind. Code § 35-47-2-3

Issuing Authority: Superintendent of State Police through local chief law enforcement officer (chief of police/sheriff)

Cost: \$40-125 plus fingerprints (for unlimited license; qualified license is only for hunting and target shooting)

Length: 4 years or lifetime • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: Out-of-state permits appear to only be issued to those with a regular place of business in Indiana.

IOWA

http://www.dps.state.ia.us/asd/weapon_permits.shtml

Statute: IA Code Sec. § 724.11

Issuing Authority: County sheriff, Commissioner of Public Safety for out-of-state applicants

Cost: \$50 initial/\$25 renewal

Length: 5 years nonprofessional, 1 year professional, duration of employment for some LE professional permits

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue • **Reciprocity:** Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes, but professional permit only

Note: contact Commissioner of Public Safety for out of state and some professional permits. Minor wording change took effect July 1, 2016.

KANSAS

<http://ag.ks.gov/public-safety/concealedcarry>

Statute: K.S.A. § 75-7605

Issuing Authority: Attorney general through county sheriff, card issued at driver's license station

Cost: \$132.50 initial/\$25 renewal

Length: 4 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: While a permit is available, pursuant to legislation passed in 2015 no permit is required to carry concealed in Kansas.

KENTUCKY

<http://www.kentuckystatepolice.org/conceal.htm>

Statute: KY Rev. Stat. § 237.110

Issuing Authority: State Police if electronic application, through county sheriff if paper application.

Cost: \$60 initial/\$60 renewal

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

LOUISIANA

<http://www.lsp.org/handguns.html>

Statute: La. Sec. 40:1379.3

Issuing Authority: Deputy Secretary of Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Cost: \$25 per year initial/renewal, with possible additional fees for initial, including a one-time \$50 for those who have not resided in the state for the 15 years prior to application; annual cost reduced by half for those 65 and older and active military. Lifetime: 20 years prepayment for under 65, 10 years for those over 65.

Length: 5 years or lifetime, with statutory provision for less than 5 years, and proof of training required every five years for lifetime.

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue • **Reciprocity:** Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: Temporary permits available for those protected by a restraining order.

MAINE

http://www.maine.gov/dps/msp/licenses/weapons_permits.html

Statute: 25 M.R.S. § 2003

Issuing Authority: Varies by area of residence: mayor/municipal authority, chief of local police or chief of State Police (nonresidents apply to chief of State Police)

Cost: \$35 initial/\$20 renewal (\$60 initial/renewal for non-residents)

Length: 4 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: Effective October 15, 2015, no permit is required to carry concealed in Maine provided the person is 21 (or 18 with current military service or honorable discharge) and not prohibited from possessing a firearm. Reciprocity limited to permits issued by state of residence.

MARYLAND

<http://mdsp.maryland.gov/Organization/Pages/CriminalInvestigationBureau/LicensingDivision/Firearms/WearandCarryPermit.aspx>

Statute: MD Code Pub. Safety § 5-306

Issuing Authority: Secretary of State Police

Cost: No more than \$75 initial/\$50 renewal, plus other fees

Length: 2 years initial (expires last day of holder's birth month)/3 years renewal

Terms Of Issuance: Statute reads "shall issue," but requires a "good and substantial" reason

Reciprocity: No • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Appear to provided for

MASSACHUSETTS

<http://www.mass.gov/eops/firearms-reg-and-laws/>

Statute: ALM GL ch. 140, § 131

Issuing Authority: Local licensing authority or colonel of State Police

Cost: \$100 • **Length:** 5-6 years; expires on applicant's birthday

Terms Of Issuance: May issue

Reciprocity: No (limited to hunting, competition or exhibition by collectors)

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

Note: There are currently two different versions of Massachusetts' CCW Statute: one in effect until January 1, 2021 (which is the one covered above), and a second that goes into effect January 1, 2021. Some minor changes for non-resident temporary permits went into effect January 1, 2017.

MICHIGAN

http://www.michigan.gov/msp/0,4643,7-123-1878_1591_3503_4654---,00.html

Statute: Mich. Comp. Laws § 28.422

Issuing Authority: County clerk of court

Cost: \$100 initial plus possible other fees and \$115 renewal

Length: 4-5 years; expires on applicant's birthday

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: Reciprocity does not appear to be extended to non-resident permits. Some minor changes took effect January 2, 2017; others are scheduled to become effective in November and December of 2018. Emergency permit is available.

MINNESOTA

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/administrative/Pages/Permit-to-Carry-FAQ.aspx>

Statute: Minn. Stat. § 624.714

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$100 or less initial/\$75 or less renewal

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: An emergency permit is available.

MISSISSIPPI

<http://www.dps.state.ms.us/firearms/firearms-permit-unit/>

Statute: Miss. Code § 45-9-101

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety

Cost: \$80 initial/\$40 renewal (resident over 65, renewal fee is \$20), with possible other fees (\$112/72 currently listed by DPS)

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes (statute allows residency requirement to be waived: DPS website, however, says they do not issue non-resident permits)

Note: Handguns may be carried in a purse, briefcase, or belt or shoulder holster without a permit.

MISSOURI

https://www.mosheriffs.com/?page_id=2334

[http://ago.mo.gov/divisions/public-safety/concealed-carry-reciprocity\(reciprocity-information-only\)](http://ago.mo.gov/divisions/public-safety/concealed-carry-reciprocity(reciprocity-information-only))

Statute: MO Rev. Stat. § 571.101

Issuing Authority: County or city sheriff or designee

Cost: \$100 or less initial/\$50 or less renewal

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: The legislature overrode a veto by the governor to pass a law allowing concealed carry without a permit; permit-less carry, however, is restricted in many places where those with permit may carry.

MONTANA

<http://doj.mt.gov/enforcement/concealed-weapons/>

Statute: Montana Code § 45-8-321

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$50 initial (with possible additional \$5 fingerprint fee) /\$25 renewal

Length: 4 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

NEBRASKA

<https://statepatrol.nebraska.gov/news/display.v/SEC/Services/Concealed%20Carry%20Permits>

Statute: Neb. Rev. Stat. § 69-2433

Issuing Authority: State Patrol • **Cost:** \$100 initial/\$50 renewal

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

NEVADA

<http://www.lvmpd.com/Permits/ConcealedFirearms/tabid/124/Default.aspx>

[http://gsd.nv.gov/Resources/Carry_Concealed_Weapon_\(CCW\)_Permit/](http://gsd.nv.gov/Resources/Carry_Concealed_Weapon_(CCW)_Permit/)

Statute: Nev. Rev. Stat. § 202.3657 • **Issuing Authority:** County sheriff

Cost: \$60 initial/\$25 renewal, plus additional fees (\$96.25/\$61.25 in Las Vegas)

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

NEW HAMPSHIRE

<http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/nhsp/ssh/permitslicensing/plupr.html>

Statute: NH Stat. 159:6

Issuing Authority: Local selectmen, mayor, chief of police, sheriff or designee for residents, director of State Police or designee for non-residents

Cost: \$10 resident/\$100 non-resident

Length: Not less than 4 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: Reciprocity not extended to permits issued by a state in which the permit holder does not reside. Former requirement that non-resident submit a copy of permit from their home state was eliminated due to a June 2016 State Supreme Court decision.

NEW JERSEY

http://www.state.nj.us/njsp/about/fire_ag2.html

Statute: NJSA § 2C:58-4, NJ Admin Code 13:54-2.1

Issuing Authority: Apply to chief police officer/superintendent of State Police, but issued by superior court

Cost: \$20 plus additional fees • **Length:** 2 years

Terms Of Issuance: May issue

Reciprocity: No • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: While the statute says that superior court "shall" issue a permit, it's "if, but only if...satisfied that the applicant...has a justifiable need to carry."

NEW MEXICO

<http://www.dps.state.nm.us/index.php/nm-concealed-carry/>

Statute: NM Stat. § 29-19-4

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety

Cost: Not more than \$100, plus fingerprint fee initial/\$75 renewal

Length: 4 years, with refresher course required at 2 years

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: May only carry one handgun at a time, and you must qualify with highest caliber you carry.

NEW YORK

<http://www.troopers.ny.gov/Firearms/>

Statute: NY PEN Law § 400.00

Issuing Authority: County or city licensing officer with some procedural oversight by superintendent of State Police

Cost: Varies by geographic location

Length: Varies by geographic location, but all permits must be recertified to the division of State Police every five years.

Terms Of Issuance: May issue

Reciprocity: Statute does not appear to provide for it

Out-Of-State Permits: Unclear, but appears so

NORTH CAROLINA

<http://www.ncdoj.gov/about-doj/law-enforcement-training-and-standards/law-enforcement-liason/concealed-weapon-reciprocity.aspx>

(reciprocity information only)

Statute: NC Gen. Stat. § 14-415.12

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$80 plus up to \$10 for fingerprints initial/\$75 renewal

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** No

Note: Temporary emergency permits are available.

NORTH DAKOTA

<https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/public-safety/concealed-weapons-licenses>

Statute: ND Cent. Code § 62.1-04-03

Issuing Authority: Bureau of Criminal Investigation

Cost: \$60 plus fingerprints and \$50 testing fee initial/renewal amount unclear but appears to be \$60 (plus additional testing fees for Class 1 license)

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • **Out-Of-State Permits:** Yes

Note: Non-resident permits limited to those living in reciprocal states who have a permit from that state. Class 1 permits have greater reciprocity recognition than Class 2 permits.

OHIO

<http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/ConcealedCarry.aspx?from=nav>

Statute: Ohio Rev. Code 2923.125

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$67 initial plus other possible fees/\$50 renewal plus other possible fees if not a state resident for five years

Length: 5 years • **Terms Of Issuance:** Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes, but appear to be limited to those employed in Ohio

Note: Temporary emergency permits are available.



STATE-BY-STATE CARRY LAWS

OKLAHOMA

http://www.ok.gov/osbi/Concealed_Weapons_Licensing/
Statute: Okla. Stat. Tit. 21 Sec. 1290.12

Issuing Authority: State Bureau of Investigation, apply at county sheriff

Cost: \$100 initial for 5 years/\$85 renewal plus no more than \$25 for fingerprints and \$10 for photo; \$200 initial for 10 years/\$170 renewal

Length: 5 or 10 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: Some changes in application statute became effective November 1, 2016. Temporary permits are available for those who have been given a domestic abuse protective order.

OREGON

<https://apps.oregon.gov/SOS/LicenseDirectory/Results?USStr=concealed> (application information by county)
Statute: ORS 166.291

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$65 for initial/\$50 renewal

Length: 4 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: No • Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

PENNSYLVANIA

<http://www.psp.pa.gov/firearms-information/Pages/Carrying-Firearms-in-Pennsylvania.aspx#.Vm4KE3j5pUQ>
Statute: 18 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 6109

Issuing Authority: County sheriff/chief of police

Cost: \$20 • Length: 5 years

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue • Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes (must have permit in state of residence if available)

RHODE ISLAND

<http://www.riag.ri.gov/Forms/BCIPermit%20Application.pdf> (attorney general permit)

Statute: R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-11, 18

Issuing Authority: Attorney general or local authorities including board of police commissioners/chief or superintendent of police, town clerk, etc.

Cost: \$40 • Length: 4 years • Terms Of Issuance: May issue

Reciprocity: No (limited reciprocity extended to those passing through the state without delay, and appears to only apply in their vehicle)

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

Note: While the attorney general may issue a permit based on a "proper showing of need" under 11-47-18, 11-47-11 provides that local licensing authorities shall issue a permit to a "suitable person" with a "good" or "proper reason" for seeking a license. Non-resident applying for permit must have one issued by another state.

SOUTH CAROLINA

<http://www.sled.sc.gov/cwp.aspx?MenuID=CWP>

Statute: SC Code § 23-31-215

Issuing Authority: South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

Cost: \$50 initial plus up to \$5 for fingerprints/\$50 renewal

Length: 5 years upon renewal

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue • Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Only if applicant owns real property (land) in South Carolina

Note: Reciprocity appears only to extend to resident permits

SOUTH DAKOTA

<http://sdsos.gov/services-for-individuals/concealed-pistol-permits/default.aspx>

Statute: SDCL § 23-7-7

Issuing Authority: Secretary of state through county sheriff

Cost: \$10 regular, \$70 Gold Card, \$100 Enhanced initial/renewal \$10 regular, \$70 Gold Card, \$50 Enhanced

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: The Enhanced permit has additional training requirements and a fingerprint background check; effective January 1, 2017, an intermediate "Gold Card" permit became available with the fingerprint background check but without the training requirement. Both offer greater reciprocity than the standard.

TENNESSEE

<http://www.tn.gov/safety/article/handgunmain>

Statute: Tenn. Code § 39-17-1351

Issuing Authority: Tennessee Department of Safety/Highway Patrol

Cost: \$100 initial/\$50 renewal, \$300 initial for lifetime, \$200 at renewal to upgrade to lifetime

Length: 8 years or lifetime (with continuing eligibility check every 5 years)

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

Note: Out-of-state permits appear limited to those employed in Tennessee whose home state does not have reciprocity with Tennessee. There are currently three versions of Tennessee's CCW statute; this information is from the one that became effective January 1, 2017.

TEXAS

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/rsd/ch/index.htm>

Statute: Tex. Government Code Sec. § 411.172

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety

Cost: \$140 initial/\$70 renewal, with some possible reductions, including a 50-percent reduction for those over 60 years of age or indigent (falling below the federal poverty guidelines)

Length: First birthday after fourth anniversary of issuance for initial, 5 years for renewal

Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

Note: Changes took effect January 1, 2016, that removed the word "concealed" from the handgun statute.

UTAH

<http://bci.utah.gov/concealed-firearm/>

Statute: Utah Code § 53-5-704

Issuing Authority: Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Identification

Cost: \$37 initial (\$47 for out of state) which includes fingerprint processing/\$15 renewal (all, \$15.75 if over Internet)

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes (nonresident residing in a state that

recognizes Utah permit must hold permit in state of residence)

Note: Fees changed effective October 1, 2016.

VERMONT

<http://ago.vermont.gov/divisions/criminal-division/gun-laws.php>

Statute: VT Stats Title 13 Sec. § 4003

Issuing Authority: No permit required or available

Cost: N/A • Length: N/A • Terms Of Issuance: N/A

Reciprocity: N/A • Out-Of-State Permits: N/A

Note: No permit required for concealed carry.

VIRGINIA

<http://www.vsp.state.va.us/Firearms.shtml>

Statute: Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-308.02

Issuing Authority: Circuit court

Cost: \$50 or less, \$100 or less for out-of-state initial/renewal

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes (apply to State Police)

Note: Some fee waiver requirements for retired LE/military personnel change July 1, 2018.

WASHINGTON

<http://www.atg.wa.gov/concealed-weapons>

Statute: Wash. Rev. Code (ARCW) § 9A.1.070

Issuing Authority: Chief of Police/Sheriff

Cost: \$36 initial with possible additional fees/\$32 renewal

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: Yes

WEST VIRGINIA

<http://www.ago.wv.gov/gunreciprocity/Pages/default.aspx> (reciprocity only)

Statute: W. Va. Code § 61-7-4

Issuing Authority: County sheriff

Cost: \$75 plus additional \$25 fee

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: The legislature overrode a veto by the governor to pass a law allowing concealed carry without a permit.

WISCONSIN

<http://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/conceal-carry/>

conceal-carry

Statute: Wis. Stat. § 175.60

Issuing Authority: Department of Justice

Cost: Less than \$37 plus \$10 cost of background check initial (currently \$40 total)/less than \$12 plus \$10 cost of background check renewal

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes • Out-Of-State Permits: No

Note: An emergency permit is available.

WYOMING

<http://wyomingdci.wyo.gov/dci-criminal-justice-information-systems-section/concealed-firearms-permits>

Statute: Wyo. Stat. § 6-8-104

Issuing Authority: Attorney general though county sheriff

Cost: \$64 for initial plus possible other fees/\$45 renewal (by statute, both are \$50)

Length: 5 years • Terms Of Issuance: Shall issue

Reciprocity: Yes

Out-Of-State Permits: Yes (applicant must be licensed in a state that recognizes Wyoming permit)

Note: Though one is available, no permit is required to carry concealed in Wyoming as long as eligibility requirements are met.

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