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# SHOOTING Illustrated

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**NRA**™ Official Journal of the National Rifle Association of America

The NRA, the foremost guardian of the traditional American right to "keep and bear arms," believes every law-abiding citizen is entitled to the ownership and legal use of firearms, and that every reputable gun owner should be an NRA member.



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RICHARD MANN



## 10 Great Defense Loads for the 9 mm

Choosing a great defensive round can be tough. There are many outstanding 9 mm loads on the market, with more being introduced each year. We identified some of the most popular and a few of the ones less likely to be found at your local gun or sporting-goods store to deliver 10 options that make the best impact out of your 9 mm handgun.



## 6 Best Micro Nines on the Market Today

Remember when a concealed-carry 9 mm pistol meant a single stack with anywhere from a six- to a seven-round magazine? Today, manufacturers have doubled down on subcompact 9 mm pistols, offering enhanced magazine capacity without the bulky girth. The latest generation of micro nines also features user-friendly, minimalist controls.

CALEB GIDDINGS



## Can the Colt Python Pass the 2,000-Round Challenge?

In this two-part series, Caleb Giddings puts the Colt Python to the ultimate torture test: 2,000 grueling rounds to see if the revolver can take the beating and keep repeating. While we've reviewed the Python before, this test seeks to dispel the myth that the new snake gun from Colt isn't built to last.

## News

Lonestar Future Weapons  
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## Guns



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XD-M Elite 3.8-Inch  
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Some of the photographs in this magazine illustrate specific shooting stances or positions in which it was occasionally necessary to position the camera in front of the muzzle for instructional purposes. At no time was a loaded, functioning firearm used in these photographs; special, deactivated guns or solid plastic gun simulators were employed. In some cases the image was taken using a remotely triggered camera.

**WARNING:** All technical data in this publication, especially for handloading, reflect the limited experience of individuals using specific tools, products, equipment and components under specific conditions and circumstances not necessarily reported in the article and over which the National Rifle Association (NRA) has no control. The data have not otherwise been tested or verified by the NRA. The NRA, its agents, officers and employees accept no responsibility for the results obtained by persons using such data and disclaim all liability for any consequential injuries or damages. See asterisked (\*).

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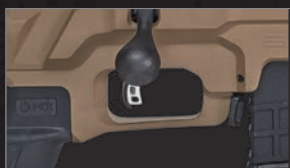
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# Reloading Ruckus



I really enjoyed Richard Mann's article, "Reloading for Beginners," in the April issue. I've been reloading for a while, but it was still a good refresher.

A friend of mine told me tactfully that some people tumble clean their brass as part of their reloading process. I replied that I didn't want to make ammo that's too pretty to shoot.

Beginning reloaders always need to be reminded that the people who write the reloading manuals have a ton of experience behind them and millions of dollars of technical testing equipment. So, when the manual says 5.4 grains of Wonder powder is the maximum, believe it. I like the Speer manual the best, because it often includes reduced loads for some of the most popular calibers.

**Donald R. Short**  
Peoria, IL

Richard Mann's article on reloading in the April issue was good, but I take issue with a couple of his omissions when it comes to reloading being hard and expensive. No mention was made of the Lee Basic Loader or casting your

own bullets. This basic system would allow someone to reload a single load for less than \$100 (based on prices at MidwayUSA in April). If you scrounge your lead and shoot target loads, that could turn into a lot of cheap ammo. I've loaded several thousand rounds with such a setup. It's slow, but it is easy and straightforward. I still have my Lee loader from 45 years ago and it still works great. Much of what you'd need to get started in this fashion can be found used at a local gun show.

**Steve Gouse**  
Hinsdale, MT

The article on "Reloading for Beginners" by Richard Mann was well written, but gives the wrong message to readers looking to try reloading. The opening photo of a progressive press is the wrong thing to illustrate beginning reloading. This is especially inappropriate when reloading supplies and equipment are nearly unavailable. The products, when available, are being sold at prices that make them not worthwhile. So, a better approach would be to demonstrate the bare bones basics. The article made reloading look more complex than it really is.

**Richard Mickinak**  
via e-mail

Many readers pointed out that the "Reloading for Beginners" article in the April issue was cut off mid-word, with no directions as to where the article continued. A fluke change between the editors and the printer resulted in the last sentence being cutoff. It should have read: "Taking up reloading during an ammunition shortage is probably not the best time to realize its benefits, but it might be the best time to start, because you have the motivation to learn." We apologize for the error.

—Ed Friedman

## Mixed Mixologist

Patrick Sweeney's review of the Heritage Barkeep in the April issue was great! I opted to order an engraved cylinder for mine, to give it even more of an "Old West" look and feel. Everyone I've handed this to so they could put a few rounds down range? Their first comment is "I love this! I have to get one!" It's currently my favorite revolver.

**Jimmy Anderson**  
via Shooting Illustrated.com

The review of the Heritage Barkeep looked interesting at first, until I noted the very low price. That led me straight to the material it is made from: "Frame: Zamak 5 zinc alloy." For me, I would never buy a firearm made from the same basic material that my Matchbox toys were made from back in my childhood. For some, it may be an attractive, affordable gun, but not for me.

**Jeffrey Brooks**  
Vienna, VA

## Correspondence is welcomed and encouraged

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**I**n Pearland, Texas, on the night of April 17, a couple had just gone to bed when they heard a loud noise coming from downstairs. The husband grabbed his pistol and investigated. He was startled to find that an unknown man had thrown a cinder block through a window and was hitting the walls with a hammer. When the suspect saw the homeowner, he charged him, and a struggle ensued. During the struggle, the wife came downstairs and stepped between her husband and the attacker. She was hit in the head twice with the hammer before her husband was able to shoot the suspect three times. The couple spent several days in the hospital recovering. The suspect was charged with two counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and one count of burglary. ([khou.com](http://khou.com), and [foxnews.com](http://foxnews.com), Pearland, Tx., 4/17/21)

**L**aw enforcement was called out to a home during the early morning hours of March 21, after a homeowner fired shots at two intruders. The homeowner told the responding officers that he was inside when two men, one of them armed, forced their way in. When the man realized what was happening, he ran to his bedroom and armed himself with his rifle. He fired several shots at the intruders, causing them to flee. A local hospital soon notified police that a man had arrived with a gunshot wound in his thigh. This patient was verified to be one of the alleged intruders and was to face a charge of first-degree burglary when discharged. The second suspect was also identified and arrested on the same charge. No charges were expected to be filed against the homeowner. ([wbvt.com](http://wbvt.com), Monroe, N.C., 3/21/21)

**A** home-security camera caught dramatic footage of a rabid bobcat attacking a woman on the morning of April 9. A couple was leaving home when the wife was attacked from behind by the bobcat. It scratched and bit her several times. Her husband was able to grab the animal and throw it into the front yard, but was bitten three times in the process. During the incident, the man was able to warn a neighbor who was jogging by of the threat before she could be attacked. Knowing the animal was acting very strangely and could attack again, the man shot it. It was confirmed that the bobcat did have rabies, and both bite victims have undergone treatment. ([wdbj7.com](http://wdbj7.com), Burgaw, N.C., 4/9/21)

**A**round 9 a.m. on the morning of April 16, a woman in Lucerne Valley, Calif., was sitting in her home when a 27-year-old man armed with a hammer forced his way through a back door. The man was yelling and threatening to kill her. The resident was armed and feared for her life, so she shot the assailant, stopping the attack. The suspect left the home and was found lying on the side of the road with a gunshot wound. He was airlifted to a trauma center. ([vvng.com](http://vvng.com), Lucerne Valley, Calif., 4/16/21)

**A** 42-year-old man was shot after allegedly breaking into an apartment in Lexington, Ky., around 3:30 a.m. on April 6. When police arrived, the victim told them that she was home when an unknown man broke into her apartment, threatening her. She fired at the intruder, causing him to run off. During the investigation, the police were notified of a man who had walked into the hospital with a gunshot wound. It was determined that this was the same man involved in the attempted burglary. Once released, he was charged with burglary and terroristic threatening. ([wkvt.com](http://wkvt.com), and [concealednation.org](http://concealednation.org), Lexington, Ky., 4/6/21)

**A** concealed-carry licensee was forced to defend himself in his own home from a presumed friend on the night of April 11. The homeowner reportedly had invited the friend over, not realizing the man was intoxicated. During the visit, an argument occurred and the visitor was asked to leave. Instead, he pulled a knife and charged the homeowner, who drew his gun and fired a single shot, striking the attacker. Both men called 911 to report the incident, and the wounded man was taken to a nearby hospital for his injuries. When the officers checked records, the knife-wielding man turned out to have outstanding warrants for his arrest in another jurisdiction and was turned over there. ([theoaklandpress.com](http://theoaklandpress.com), Holly, Mich., 4/11/21)

**A** 69-year-old veteran of the U.S. Army Special Forces stopped a home intruder with the help of his dog and his firearm on April 1 near Los Angeles, Calif. The dog alerted the homeowner of the intruder around 5 a.m. by jumping on his chest and growling. An intruder was standing in the bedroom doorway when the homeowner fully awoke. However, the trespasser just went into the bathroom, apparently believing the householders were still asleep. The veteran retrieved his firearm, pushed open the bathroom door, and said, "Do not move. I will blow you away." The man claimed to be a friend of the homeowner's son, but the veteran still held him at gunpoint until police arrived. (KCAL9, Los Angeles, Calif., 4/1/2021) 🔴





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## President Biden Would Rather Kill Freedom Than Save Lives

**Y**ou and I are now in the battle of our lives. Two of the most extreme, gun-hating politicians in America—Nancy Pelosi and Charles Schumer—control the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Anti-gun legislation is on the move in Washington, D.C., like we haven't seen in a generation.

For his part, President Joe Biden (D) has told gun owners point-blank that he doesn't want to wait "another minute, let alone an hour" to begin full-blown confiscation of tens of millions of lawfully owned firearms. As a precursor to his ultimate goal, Biden has penned numerous anti-gun executive orders, and he nominated gun-ban lobbyist David Chipman to head up the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

Chipman is an anti-gun extremist to his core. Under his leadership, there is no question that the ATF would be transformed from an agency charged with cracking down on criminals, to an agency that cracks down on law-abiding gun owners.

Of course, this is all in keeping with the Biden agenda: Ignore the criminals and persecute the law abiding.

We saw it last March, when a madman in Colorado murdered 10 innocent citizens in a supermarket. Biden didn't put the blame on the killer. He claimed he didn't have enough "information" to condemn this heinous criminal for taking 10 precious lives.

Instead, Biden pointed his finger straight at law-abiding gun owners and told America that we were to blame—you, me and our Second Amendment freedom.

The fact is, we are now living in a twisted political nightmare where our nation's president and congressional leaders are shielding violent criminals while waging open war on the freedoms that make this country the greatest nation on earth.

In their world, law-enforcement officers are thugs to be defunded and disbanded, while those who murder and terrorize innocent citizens are somehow "victims."

In their world, murderers and gun criminals should be let out of prison to "protect" them from COVID-19, and honest people should be forced to live with these violent felons in their neighborhoods and communities.

In their world, wealthy and powerful people have an ironclad right to 24/7 armed protection, while regular citizens

deserve to be stripped of our guns and of the freedom and security that the Second Amendment guarantees.

Last year, we were forced to bear witness to the full impact of their failed vision in cities and towns across this country.

In Los Angeles, murders were up by 30%. In New York, 40%. In Chicago, 50%.

In New Orleans, murders increased by 61%. In Seattle, 74%. And, in Milwaukee, the murder rate increased by 94% in one year alone.

Tragically, thousands of men, women and children across this country are dead because of the policies that Biden and his political allies have forced on the American people—policies that protect criminals and punish law-abiding citizens.

The truth is, Joe Biden knows he could save thousands of lives by simply enforcing gun laws that are already on the books—and by putting violent criminals in jail where they belong.

But Joe Biden would rather kill freedom than save lives.

And now, you and I are in a fight like we've never faced before.

The battle lines are drawn. It's hard-working Americans versus privileged elites. You and I and the NRA versus the gun-control zealots who stand behind armed guards while proclaiming that the U.S. Constitution doesn't apply to us.

This is the battle we hoped we'd never have to face. But I know it's a battle we can win if we stand and fight together under the NRA banner.

On that note, I'm proud to announce that tens of thousands of new NRA members continue to join our family each month. Our sustained growth in membership is a loud-and-clear message that patriotic Americans will never give up their right to arm themselves against the violent criminals being turned loose on our streets.

This shows every politician in America that we'll never compromise when it comes to protecting our lives, our homes and our loved ones.

Make no mistake, as the NRA continues to grow stronger each day, Biden, Pelosi and Schumer are forced to confront this reality: If they want our guns, they can take them—as our friend Charlton Heston used to say—from our cold, dead hands.

*Wayne LaPierre*



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By Carolyn D. Meadows  
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# One Hundred Days Of Biden

**A**pril 29 marked 100 days of Joe Biden as president of the United States. That's not very long, but he's done a lot of damage in that short time.

Biden has already established a pattern of attacks on the protections afforded law-abiding citizens in this country. And he's been particularly focused on eroding the Second Amendment. Attempting directly to repeal the amendment wouldn't work, but he will engage in any other measures designed to hollow out our natural right to defend ourselves and our families.

He pushes his gun-control agenda constantly, including during his recent joint address to the U.S. Congress. One of his primary tactics is to cloud the issue with lies and character attacks. He claims, for example, that most gun owners support further restrictions on gun rights; he pretends that gun manufacturers are free of liability suits, and he acts as if responsible gun owners are the cause of crimes.

His staff provides him with talking points that include inflated numbers of firearms-related homicides from highly suspect sources. He also has a habit of conflating homicide statistics with suicides to significantly beef up the numbers of firearms-related deaths. If you object to what he mislabels as "common sense"—if you stand up for the U.S. Constitution—Biden and the entire radical-left machinery behind him behave as if you're some sort of rabid fascist.

Biden's lying is so bad that even left-leaning media outlets finally decided to call him out on some of the claims he's made; for example, Biden claimed that at gun shows "you can buy whatever you want and no background check." He wants people to believe that gun shows are somehow free of the regulations that apply at gun stores, but this is simply not true. Regardless of venue, all licensed firearms dealers are required by law to run background checks. And anyone regularly engaging in firearms sales is required to become a licensed dealer, and thus to run background checks, even at gun shows. Targeting this aspect of the firearm market is certainly not going to decrease crime in any meaningful way. But it does help further **consolidate power in the federal government.**

Biden calls gun violence "a public-health crisis." One mainstream-media fact-checker suggested that he might be trying to correlate violence from armed criminals with the coronavirus pandemic. Certainly, if he could sell that correlation, government authorities could possibly gain broad powers around firearms they wouldn't otherwise have, making it one of the most dangerous of Biden's claims. At the least, claiming violence related to guns is a public-health crisis could allow him to weaponize the CDC to claim that science supports further

gun-control measures—even though many studies, even ones funded by the Obama/Biden administration, show just the opposite.

Biden also acts as if taking certain kinds of "scary-looking" firearms from law-abiding gun owners would make this country safer, but in reality, the criminal use of these rifles is extremely rare. Plus, these guns operate exactly the same as any other legal gun and are very commonly owned. Once again, we can see that decreasing crime is not the real focus—if it were, Biden's administration would work on improving the dangerous situations in big cities that consistently account for the bulk of murders.

Let's also not forget his falsehoods on the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA). Biden may not understand guns very well, but he certainly should understand the PLCAA, given that he was a senator when it was debated and passed. The PLCAA shields gun manufacturers and related businesses only from frivolous lawsuits, but Biden claims that it shields them from all liability for their products. He wants the PLCAA reversed so gun-grabbers can sue manufacturers out of existence, effectively eradicating Second Amendment rights without the messy legal process of actually amending the U.S. Constitution. In fact, Biden wants the PLCAA upended so badly, he said if he could ask God for one thing, that would be it. That fervent wish makes sense only in the context of dismantling the Second Amendment.

Biden's not all talk, either. He has issued executive orders for further gun control, targeting so-called "ghost guns" and stabilizing braces, and suggesting a model for "red-flag" laws, which turn due process on its head and leave dangerous people free to harm others. Biden's nominee for the head of the ATF is gun-control advocate David Chipman, who has a long, controversial history that should give anyone pause. Biden's administration is also applying significant pressure on Congress and the U.S. Supreme Court, **threatening to remove the filibuster and to pack the court with left-leaning, anti-gun justices.**

So, what can we conclude from Biden's first 100 days in office? Well, he is working hard to keep his campaign promises and appease the radical element of his party. Unfortunately, it seems that he wants his legacy to be undoing the protections our Founders put into the U.S. Constitution to protect us from tyranny and democide.

There is only one group that has the strength in numbers to stand up to this assault on freedom. That is, of course, your NRA. Be sure that you are staying engaged and active in the public policy arena. Why? Because we have a country to save!

*Carolyn D. Meadows*





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By Jason Ouimet  
Executive Director,  
NRA-ILA

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# NRA-Backed Case Brings The Second Amendment Back To SCOTUS

In April, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the NRA-backed case of *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*. This case presents the court with an historic opportunity to affirm the right to bear arms in public for self-defense.

There's a saying in sports that game day is merely when you show up to execute and collect the trophy. The real work that went into winning occurred unseen in the countless hours of practice, conditioning, coaching and preparation that preceded the event.

The same applies to headline-grabbing victories that occur in Second Amendment advocacy, such as getting the chance at a favorable U.S. Supreme Court ruling. It took vision, dedication, sophistication, expertise and countless hours of work by NRA members and staff to make it happen.

That effort goes on day in and day out, even when it's not in the news. We are at work in the legislatures, the courts, the academy, the media and wherever law-abiding Americans go to educate themselves about firearms and to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

That's the value the NRA brings to those who cherish the Second Amendment—everyone who supports the NRA with their memberships, their contributions, their volunteerism and their participation in its programs owns a piece of these victories. We function as a team, and we win as a team.

As a native New Yorker, I'm especially pleased that this case arose in the Empire State. New York has some of the country's most oppressive firearms laws, and its politicians have recently abused their authority to try to abolish the NRA altogether. This is our chance to confront anti-gun ideologues like New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) and New York State Attorney General Letitia James (D) outside of their home turf and in an arena where we stand a fighting chance.

New York law generally prohibits the possession of a loaded firearm outside the home. The only way for New Yorkers to lawfully exercise the right to bear arms in public for self-defense is to obtain a concealed-handgun license. But state law requires license applicants to show "proper cause," which in turn requires them to "demonstrate a special need for self-protection distinguishable from that of the general community ..."

In other words, the average, law-abiding applicant who wants to exercise the right to bear arms for self-defense will by

definition be denied. Licenses are reserved for extraordinary cases. In practice, this has meant that the rich, the famous and the well-connected might get one, but the ordinary citizen is out of luck. The NYPD Licensing Division has also been known to effectively sell licenses to the highest bidders, while leaving most New Yorkers defenseless.

This presumption of denial flies in the face of the U.S. Supreme Court's interpretation of the Second Amendment as "the individual right to possess and carry weapons in case of confrontation" (emphasis added). It's like saying you'd have to show an extraordinary need to go to church, to write a newspaper editorial or to have a lawyer defend you against criminal charges.

Indeed, New York is an outlier, one of only eight states that subject the right to bear arms to bureaucratic discretion.

The lower federal courts have been divided over this issue. The First, Second, Third and Fourth Circuits have upheld regimes similar to New York's. The D.C. and Seventh Circuits have declared them unconstitutional. And an *en banc* panel of the Ninth Circuit even went so far as to assert there is no right to bear arms outside the home for self-defense at all. Clearly, the issue is ripe for an authoritative opinion by the nation's highest court.

The 2016 election may seem like a distant memory, but candidate Donald Trump helped make it a referendum on who would replace the author of the Supreme Court's landmark *Heller* decision on the Second Amendment. The NRA went all-in to support his candidacy, and President Donald Trump (R) would go on to nominate, and a Mitch McConnell-led Senate to confirm, three U.S. Supreme Court justices.

Meanwhile, the NRA's legal team was painstakingly shepherding Second Amendment cases through the lower courts, intent on restoring the rights recognized in the *Heller* and *McDonald* decisions.

Now, the high court is poised to resolve a pivotal Second Amendment question. That's no coincidence.

We can never guarantee what any court will do. But there's never been a better time for the issue of bearing arms to reach the justices, with a majority having demonstrated a willingness to take the Second Amendment seriously.

The NRA has long been preparing for this showdown, and we are executing with our A game.



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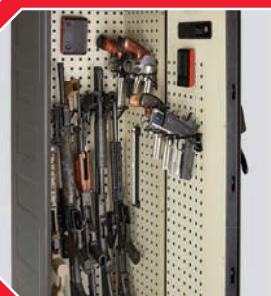
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Biden's nomination of former ATF agent and anti-gun activist David Chipman to head the ATF sends a clear message.

By Jason Ouimet  
Executive Director,  
NRA-ILA



# SO MUCH FOR MODERATION:

## Biden's Gun Grab Is Officially Underway

**J**oe Biden was sworn in as president of the United States on Jan. 20, 2021. Seventy-seven days later, on April 7, he announced a series of executive actions that would criminalize formerly lawful behavior and invest a rank gun-control advocate with the power to target gun owners as criminals.

Biden likes to portray himself as America's best hope for unity, moderation and normalcy. With these actions, however, he has made it unmistakably clear that millions of law-abiding gun owners do not deserve the consideration and respect of other Americans.

Instead, we are his scapegoats for social ills we didn't cause and for criminal acts we didn't commit. Worse, the price we are expected to pay will not even meaningfully improve public safety. Joe Biden has, for all practical purposes, removed gun owners from the privileges and immunities of U.S. citizenship and from the benefits of the rule of law.

The NRA has long warned this day was coming. But, as the White House emphasized in its official announcement, these orders are merely "initial actions" that are sure to continue and to escalate as long as Biden and the extremists who surround him remain in power.

Biden's determination to push activism over professionalism and unity was most exemplified by his choice to nominate David Chipman as director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Biden emphasized Chipman's time as an ATF agent, as if he were merely a dedicated police professional who would put politics aside to protect the American people.

In fact, Chipman's post-ATF career has been one of overt gun control and political advocacy,

including for Michael Bloomberg's Everytown for Gun Safety and for the Giffords gun-control group.

Chipman was a "policy advisor" for both organizations, meaning that he counseled them on which gun-control schemes to pursue. His government experience was supposed to provide the technical and subject matter expertise and credibility to back up the organizations' public bluster.

One would think a career law-enforcement agent would want to focus on violent crime and criminals in formulating policy supposedly to make America safer. Yet, Chipman has emphasized expanding the reach of the law to envelop people who unwittingly violate arbitrary bureaucratic line-drawing, rather than using criminal statutes to crack down on violent and unrepentant predators. His instincts are those of the opportunistic D.C. swamp creature rather than the traditional American lawman.

This is evident in the policies pushed by Chipman's gun-control paymasters. Everytown, for example, has long preached that so-called "universal background checks" are key to its "plan to end gun violence."

Yet, Chipman knows as well as anyone that serious criminals who are prohibited from firearm possession—the people who pose the biggest public safety threats with guns—don't submit to background checks. They obtain their guns through criminal networks, theft, straw purchases and other channels that purposely and systematically defy the law. The full weight of this policy will instead fall on the people who seek to obey the law, placing more fees, more bureaucracy and more government intrusion between them and the exercise of their constitutional rights.

The real value of this policy for gun-banners is the creation of a government-accessible and



taxpayer-funded paper (or digital) trail to every lawfully transferred firearm. Those records form the framework for a national gun registry, which would facilitate any future attempt to seize lawfully held guns.

Even if this happens in incremental steps, the final outcome is preordained. Two of Biden's other executive actions, as I'll explain, would upset what was considered settled law. But, the law is never truly settled for gun-banners as long as law-abiding Americans still have guns.

Giffords' gun-control agenda is more expansive, encompassing virtually every scheme that has been proposed in the last 50 years to make lawful firearm ownership more difficult, expensive, legally perilous and impractical. Giffords filed a brief in the landmark Second Amendment case, *District of Columbia v. Heller*. The brief argued that, "The Second Amendment does not limit the options available to cities to address the problem of gun violence." Notably, Giffords argued that the District's complete ban on the possession of handguns by law-abiding Americans was constitutional. Such an interpretation would have completely eviscerated the Second Amendment.

This extremist view put Giffords sharply out of touch with the American people. For those who might think that Giffords has moved on from such extreme views, their law center's website still proudly notes that they filed the brief arguing "that the right to possess a firearm is not based on an individual right of self-defense, but rather related to service in a militia based on the prefatory language in the Amendment." To the degree it reflects Chipman's view of the Second Amendment, it indicates he is more activist than lawman and would enthusiastically embrace the most-far-reaching gun control, including expansive gun bans.

Biden also ordered the Department of Justice (DOJ) to promulgate a new rule that would turn unfinished metal and plastic templates favored by hobbyists and do-it-yourselfers into regulated firearm receivers and stabilizing brace-equipped pistols into "short-barreled rifles" subject to special taxation and registration.

Since the founding of the Republic, Americans have always been able to make their own firearms for lawful personal uses. Traditionally, that

has been considered none of the government's business until the firearms entered the stream of commerce.

Current ATF policy does not consider what are known as 80% receivers as subject to the same types of regulations as finished receivers that are ready to be built into functional firearms. These 80% receivers, typically made of metal or polymers, are shaped to facilitate their transition into firearm frames or receivers, but still require relatively precise drilling and machining to be usable for that purpose.

The 80% threshold is partly a matter of practicality. If everything that could, with sufficient effort and know-how, be fashioned into a firearm was itself a firearm, then ATF would be overseeing the extraction of iron or bauxite ore from the ground. Lines have to be drawn.

## **BUT, THE LAW IS NEVER TRULY SETTLED FOR GUN-BANNERS AS LONG AS LAW-ABIDING AMERICANS STILL HAVE GUNS.**

Biden obviously wants to move those lines back to a more primitive stage of manufacture. If history is any guide, the ATF will want to set an arbitrary standard that will be changed again in the future when it suits their preference. And how detached will the policy eventually become from the legal standards actually present in the statutes enacted by Congress?

This proposal will therefore cause logistical headaches and legal jeopardy for legitimate firearm manufacturers and private makers, but it cannot stop those determined to evade the law to make and sell guns for nefarious ends. If people are willing to possess and use a gun in violation of the law, why would they have any qualms about violating the law to make it?

Biden also ordered the DOJ to promulgate a rule to "make clear when a device marketed as a stabilizing brace effectively turns a pistol into a short-barreled rifle subject to the requirements of the National Firearms Act." You may remember that ATF already tried to do this last December, sparking so much opposition and

outrage that it withdrew the proposal before the end of its comment period.

This effort has always been a solution in search of a problem. Braced pistols are used extremely rarely in crime, and are also more expensive than typical handguns. Braced pistols obviously do not feature the concealment, portability and relative affordability as standard handguns.

As with unfinished receivers, they are being singled out merely as a target of opportunity, not because doing so actually solves any pressing problem.

Biden's executive actions also order the DOJ to publish "model 'red-flag' legislation" for states that wish to empower courts to issue surrender or seizure orders for firearms whose lawful owners are determined to be a danger to self or others. While largely symbolic and duplicative of the various such laws and proposals already in existence, this move demonstrates that the administration is happy to use any pretext to encourage seizure of lawfully possessed guns.

It takes a gun-control advocate to argue a person is just dangerous enough to be ineligible to possess guns, but not for any other kind of intervention to address the true underlying cause of dangerousness. Seizing a person's lawful property could indeed make a volatile situation even worse; at least one gun owner has already been killed from an attempt to execute an order of this type.

Thanks to your support, NRA has already started a more than two-million-dollar campaign to counter this gun-control push. We've invested in television and digital ads, mailed postcards, sent thousands of text messages and engaged in town halls in targeted states to ensure that the United States Senate rejects Biden's gun-control agenda.

Official proposed language for the rules and model legislation was unavailable as this article went to press. Exact numbers are difficult to quantify, but clearly millions of Americans already lawfully own personally made firearms and braced pistols. Will they retroactively be declared criminals if they do not surrender, modify, destroy, register or pay new taxes on them? Time will tell.

But the time has passed when Joe Biden can claim to be a unifying moderate. His gun grab has officially begun. 🌀



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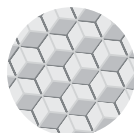
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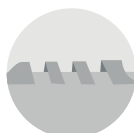
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**By Todd Grable**  
Executive Director of  
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## Now Is the Time to Stand Together.

**F**or decades, NRA members like you have led the fight to protect this nation's most essential freedom – our right to defend our homes, our lives, and our loved ones. But in the coming weeks and months, our commitment to safeguard the Second Amendment is going to be tested like never before.

Less than five months into the Biden administration, we're facing an all-out attack on our gun rights like many NRA members have never seen in their lifetimes – led by fanatics whose ultimate goal is the total disarmament of the American people. Nancy Pelosi and Charles Schumer are moving anti-gun legislation through Congress, Joe Biden is signing freedom-killing executive orders, and the media has launched a shameful disinformation campaign against gun owners that's unprecedented in history.

To defeat these attacks and keep our guns will be the toughest challenge we've ever faced together as NRA members. We're going to need all hands on deck and every ounce of strength we can muster. That's why we're asking you – regardless of your current NRA membership level – to recommit yourself to freedom's fight by extending or upgrading your membership no later than July 16th.

And as an extra way to honor your support, we're offering special opportunities

If you're a one-year, two-year, three-year or five-year member, this is your chance to extend your membership or even become a Life Member at a special discount rate. If you're a Life Member, Endowment Member, or Patron Member, this is your chance to save hundreds of dollars when you upgrade to an even higher NRA leadership rank. And if you're a Benefactor Member, Distinguished Member, or one of our Golden Eagles, we have some very special opportunities for you as well. No matter what your current level of membership, we've reserved some great commemorative gifts to honor your NRA support in the battles just ahead.

To take advantage of the membership opportunities we've reserved in your name, simply visit [NRA2021.org](https://NRA2021.org) and enter your membership number from the front of this magazine to see your discounts and gifts. Or, if you prefer to reach out by phone, just call NRA toll-free at 833-NRA-2021, and one of our representatives can help you in just a couple of minutes. But no matter how you choose to respond, please do so before these offers expire at midnight July 16th.

For more than 200 years, American patriots like you have never hesitated to step to the front lines in freedom's defense. Now it's our turn to answer the call. Your decision today – to renew or upgrade your NRA support – can and will make a difference.

On behalf of Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre and the entire NRA, I encourage you to visit [NRA2021.org](https://NRA2021.org) or call us at 833-NRA-2021 by July 16th. Thank you again for your NRA leadership and support!

*Todd Grable*

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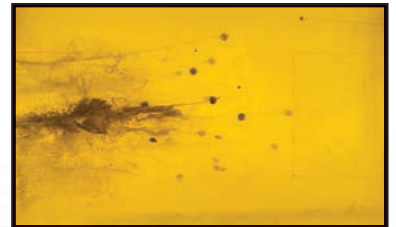
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# Art Meets Science In Holsters

Many options exist for carrying your preferred firearm—but how do those holsters get to market?



PHOTOS COURTESY GALCO

**A holster's primary function is handgun retention at a level commensurate with exertion and mission, while providing efficient presentation under duress. The best versions add day-long comfort.** *Shooting Illustrated* asked the experts how they address that seemingly impossible juggling act and what goes into the process of creating new models.

New handguns require hundreds of hours of design, testing and engineering work. The speed at which matching holsters appear—often simultaneously—can be astonishing, sometimes even fueling a mistaken belief that manufacturers don't invest heavily in their design. The truth is gun manufacturers provide holster makers a preview and samples long before the firearm ships to stores, and for good reasons.

"They will include us in their plans to introduce new firearms so we can have holsters available for sale at the time of launch," Trent Cooper, brand manager at N8 Tactical, explained. "There are times that this does not happen, but even then, we work diligently at obtaining a firearm or mold in

our attempt to be the first in the market with a holster."

DeSantis Holsters has a similar relationship. "We work with most of the leading firearm manufacturers, and they will send us either the firearm itself or a proxy of it to work off and get started making holsters in advance," said Chad DeSantis, warehouse manager for the company.

Gun companies reap benefits when working in concert with holster manufacturers, according to Nathan Engelking, executive vice president of Marketing at CrossBreed Holsters. "This helps them sell pistols as their customers know holsters are available, and it also helps get the word out about the newly launched firearms," he said.

Tom (last name withheld by request), owner of Dark Star Gear, confirmed that advantage "[W]e've just seen a great product launch a few weeks ago where a company recognized the value for the consumer, and on day one there were loads of options to alleviate any aftermarket concerns," he said. He noted, however, not all firearm firms harness that synergy.

## Design Time

Holster makers don't cut corners when it comes to the design and function of their potentially lifesaving equipment, even when modifications are relatively simple. "Most holsters generally can take anywhere from a few days, but it could take up to a couple of weeks depending on the complexity of the holster itself," DeSantis said.

The time frame at CrossBreed also depends on design complexity. "If it is brand new it could take years, whereas if it's just a modification or new fit we might have it done in 10 minutes," according to Engelking.

"Generally speaking, our products are principle based, so once we have a base model, adding the features each different model requires is a day or two worth of design work," according to Tom. "We'll then have molds cut on a mill, test press a few holster shells, and refine as needed. Typically, we can hit the mark on the second mold."

## Beta Testing

Physique, activity and daily schedule vary widely among gun owners, which presents an added challenge when it comes to testing prototypes. "We test a lot of our own gear in

There's more to making holsters than simply stitching leather or bending Kydex; having dummy guns available and keeping non-disclosure agreements sacrosanct is all part of the overall process.

house by wearing it throughout the day. We try and simulate the average person and their day-to-day activities,” DeSantis said. For additional input, though, “We have also given out samples to trusted friends in the firearm community to try and find faults.”

CrossBreed tests its holsters extensively prior to launching production, according to Engelking. “We will test as much as needed until everyone on the product-development team is in agreement that the holster is ready for launch,” Cooper said, emphasizing staff consensus was a critical requirement leading to a successful launch.

### Materials

Modern polymers have invaded the holster arena once considered a leather monopoly. They offer a variety of advantages, whether used in combination with the traditional material or exclusively. The challenges are different though, according to Tom. He said his holsters are “Largely a mix of Kydex and Boltaron, based on color and texture,” and “As for QC issues, any time we have someone new assembling or pressing, there are a few things to watch out for. Texture orientation is critical, overheating creates issues and there are some other cosmetic things that can lead to issues...”

As for what you should watch for when purchasing your next holster, Engelking offered this advice: “Don’t get overly caught up in trends and looks, focus on comfort and function first.”

## Economic Boost

The “Firearm and Ammunition Industry Economic Impact Report 2021”—released by the National Shooting Sports Foundation in March—indicates the gun industry grew by \$3.5 billion and added 10,000 jobs during 2020. The findings are in stark contrast to the overall increase in unemployment during the pandemic.

States with the top number of jobs directly related to the industry, in descending order, were: Texas, California, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Missouri and Georgia.



NSSF

### Shooting Off

***“Typically, bad guys don’t look for fights...They look for victims. And if a bad guy understands that his potential victim is armed as well as or better than him, typically he will rule that individual out as his target.”***

—David Hayes, a member of the 761st Gun Club of Illinois, told the *Chicago Tribune* in early March.

## Quick Shots

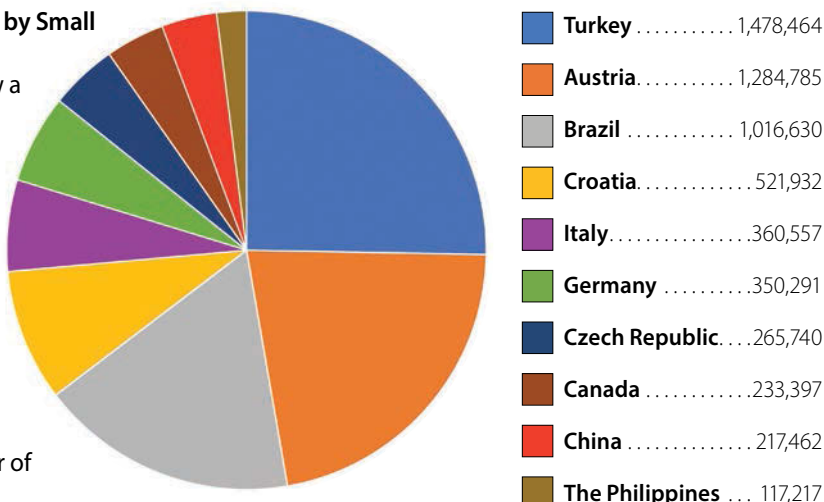
Silencer Central has acquired a new 35,000-square-foot building on 11.5 acres in Sioux Falls, SD, to centralize operations and serve as its new headquarters. The company currently has more than 125 employees across the country, but to meet the increased demand for its services and suppressors, 100 more staff members will be added by the end of the year.

The Delaware State Police has adopted SIG Sauer P320RXP pistols, which come equipped with a factory-installed SIG Sauer Electro-Optics Romeo1Pro red-dot sight. The agency employs more than 700 troopers.

Desert Tech has issued an immediate recall on its SRS strikers. The units affected were heat treated beyond standard certification, which makes them more brittle and possibly subject to breaking. Enthusiasts who received or purchased an SRS rifle, conversion kit or bolt between Dec. 8, 2020, and today, should contact the company’s warranty department at [striker@deserttech.com](mailto:striker@deserttech.com) immediately for a replacement.

## By the Numbers | Top Imports by Country of Manufacture

Figures released by Small Arms Analytics & Forecasting show a 60-percent increase in the number of firearms imported into the United States during 2020. Here’s a look at the top-10 countries of origin, in descending order of unit volume.





## Lifestyle | Chucking Wood



With enough daylight, opposable thumbs and a Berserker from Columbia River Knife and Tool, an industrious woodchuck would clear the entire back 40, stack kindling and still find time to stop for tea at 10 and 2. Failure to do so is uncivilized, even for a hardworking rodent.

The Viking-style axe profile on the Berserker is guaranteed to scare curious bears back into the forest, but the utilitarian, bearded edge is built for tackling those too-close-to-home saplings that serve as cover for curious bruins. Weighing in at slightly more than 2 pounds—the axe, not ambushing wildlife—with 4.65 inches of blade, it also makes short work of fireplace fodder. It's constructed from 1055 carbon steel to minimize resharpening chores with a manganese phosphate coating for a weather-defying finish.

The handle is double-burned, genuine Tennessee hickory and spares are available from the company. The Berserker, after all, looks good enough to spend time lounging proudly on a wall, but the no-nonsense design won't let it stay there long. MSRP is \$75. Visit [crkt.com](http://crkt.com) to order.

## Shooter's Bookshelf

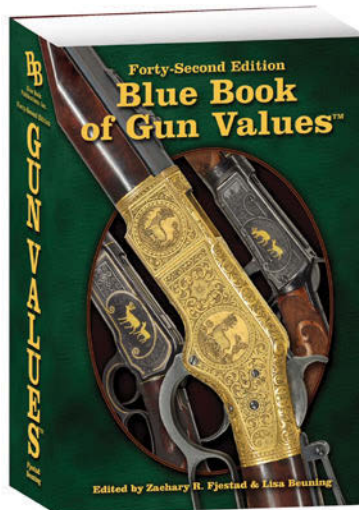
### Blue Book of Gun Values, 42nd Edition

By Zachary Fjestad & Lisa Beuning  
Blue Book Publishing  
\$59.95 plus S&H

Sure, recently, trying to figure out what a firearm is worth has been made more difficult, with record-setting sales and millions of new gun owners frantically searching for any firearm they can acquire. In the long term, though, values are stable and can be tracked. The "Blue Book of Gun Values" is in its 42nd year of rating and valuing pistols, rifles and shotguns in an extremely thorough collection and presentation of firearm worth.

In the 42nd edition are all the new makes and models released in 2021, of course. Pricing updates for current models, as well as models that have been discontinued, is also updated. More than 2,500 pages cover hundreds of manufacturers—current as well as those that have closed up shop—and nearly 30,000 models are included. Serial number charts have been updated and expanded to include more serial-number information than prior editions.

Arranged alphabetically by manufacturer, each section starts with a brief description of the firearm company. Models are listed by classification (rifle/pistol/shotgun/etc.) then



by action type (semi-auto, bolt-action, etc.), with each entry listing caliber/gauge, barrel length, capacity, frame/slide material and a whole host of other relevant options. Values are given based on percent of the Blue Book's proprietary Photo

Percentage Grading System (PPGS), which takes into account numerous factors for grading such as frame condition, deluxe finishes such as color-case-hardening and many other factors.

There are any number of reasons you might want to research a firearm's value. When doing so, referencing a source that's got decades of experience at ranking and rating firearms is critical. "The Blue Book of Gun Values" offers comprehensive information for tens of thousands of models. Whether you want to know what to expect when listing a firearm or want a price-check on that too-good-to-be-true pistol at the local gun store, the "The Blue Book of Gun Values" can help you make the right decisions.

## Quick Shots

Smith & Wesson's latest quarterly report reflects an increase of 102.2 percent—more than double the same period in 2020.

Sako sold its one-millionth Tikka T3 bolt-action rifle last year and, coincidentally, the company is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2021. The Riihimäki, Finland-based manufacturer has been part of Beretta Holding Group for the past 21 years.

Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Inc. was recently awarded the U.S. Army's Precision Sniper Rifle contract. This five-year, \$49.9 million contract involves the company's MRAD Mk22 Mod 0 rifle paired with a Leupold Mark 5 HD scope.

Winchester has been selected by the U.S. Army as a second-source provider for 5.56 NATO, 7.62 NATO and .50 BMG ammo with an initial order worth \$37 million. This is the third consecutive second-source contract Winchester has received.

The FBI has selected the ASP Agent Baton as its issued less-lethal impact weapon for Special Agents.



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# Ten-Shot Trainer

The following drill will help maintain essential marksmanship skills while keeping the round count low.



With an appropriate target, a shot timer, your EDC handgun and a mere 10 rounds of ammunition, you can regularly practice and hone your shooting skills to maintain readiness, even in the midst of an ammo shortage.

**W**ith ammunition expensive and hard to come by, making every shot count has never been more important. When I began writing this column, the emphasis was on drills using less than a box of ammunition; now I think it prudent to suggest drills requiring an even smaller number of rounds.

While I described the Gunsite School Drill in a column several years ago, I think now is a good time to look at it again. Why? Because it is an excellent Skills Check and only requires 10 rounds of ammunition. It's the sort of drill you can run from time to time to check your skill level and with ammunition prices and scarcity being what they are, it's an economical drill. I often use it when testing new pistols to find out if the sights, trigger and gun, in general, are working for me.

The School Drill, while seemingly simple, involves complex skills performed in short time periods. Drawing from the holster, aligning the sights, focusing on the front sight and pressing the trigger without disturbing the sights are some of them—and all necessary—if you're to be successful. Speed is of the essence with 1.5-second shots

into a head-shot zone about the size of a 3x5-inch card being the starting point.

We shoot the School Drill from the holster, but if you are not confident in quickly drawing the pistol or you're shooting on a range where it isn't allowed, it can be run from a low-ready, muzzle-depressed starting position.

You'll need an Option or silhouette target, 10 rounds of ammunition and a shooting partner to time you.

## Here's the drill:

**3 yards** One round to the head-scoring zone in 1.5 seconds. Repeat. Total: two rounds

**3 yards** Two rounds to the center-scoring zone in 1.5 seconds. Total: two rounds

**7 yards** Two rounds to the center-scoring zone in 1.5 seconds. Total: two rounds

**10 yards** Two rounds to the center-scoring zone in 2 seconds. Total: two rounds

**15 yards** Two rounds to the center-scoring zone, fired from kneeling, starting from standing, in 3.5 seconds. Total: two rounds

If you score the head- and center-scoring rings as five points, the possible score is 50. Hits on the silhouette but outside the scoring zones are good for two points. Shots off the target or not within the time limits are awarded zero points. Perfect scores are, well, perfect. Scores in the 40s are very good.

Want to attend the Gunsite Defensive Pistol 250 class and hope to receive an Expert rating? If you're in one of my classes you need to shoot a perfect School Drill, among other things. You can practice this five times with one box of ammunition. I assure you, it's a good investment. 🌀

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ARMORY



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The Springfield Hellcat® OSP™ (Optical Sight Pistol), the highest capacity micro 9mm in the world, is now available with an ambidextrous, low-profile manual thumb safety. While the Hellcat's numerous passive safety mechanisms make the striker-fired handgun safe to carry and operate, this new option is ideal for those that prefer the addition of a manual safety.



# When Discretion is Key

The following pieces of equipment help carry your essential EDC gear while providing the greatest level of concealment.

The **LA Police Gear Atlas Flannel** features breakaway snaps to provide instant access to your pocket(s) or waistband. The fabric weight and pattern help minimize printing. Two chest pockets feature a pen pass-through along the top seam. A hidden zipper in the right pocket offers a handy location for small items, and hook-and-loop closures along the top of each pocket conceal secondary pockets. Multiple colors are available.

MSRP: \$24.99; [lapolicegear.com](http://lapolicegear.com)

A smaller, more compact size and narrow profile make the **Buck Budgie Knife** an ideal addition to your EDC complement. A large thumb hole allows hassle-free, ambidextrous, one-handed opening, while its 2-inch, S35VN steel, drop-point blade ensures long-term edge retention during extended use. A contoured and textured G10 scale spans the left side of the handle, while a stainless pocket clip and a lanyard loop allow for multiple carry options.

MSRP: \$85; [buckknives.com](http://buckknives.com)

Constructed from Biothane Super-Flex webbing, **Henry Holsters' Flint Compact IWB/AIWB Holster** features a fold-over style that combines a minimalist design with practical features. A concealment kick along the rear of the holster tips the gun's muzzle outward while rotating the grip in toward your hip, enhancing concealment. Adjustable for cant and ride height, the Flint Compact is available for select Glock and SIG Sauer pistols.

MSRP: \$75 to \$95; [henryholsters.com](http://henryholsters.com)

Constructed of a high-density, closed-cell foam, the **Blackhawk Tecgrip Magazine Holster** holds tight against most fabrics, eliminating the need for traditional belt clips. Its outer layer is designed to hold the pouch securely against any material, keeping your spare magazine securely anchored in place, whether in a pocket or tucked in a waistband. It is available for single-stack magazines.

MSRP: \$18.95; [blackhawk.com](http://blackhawk.com)

Designed to treat life-threatening injuries in a small, compact, easily identifiable/transportable package, the **Dark Angel Medical Every Day Carry (EDC) Trauma Kit** ships with one CAT Gen 7 or SOFT-W tourniquet, one package of hemostatic gauze, one pair of Nitrile gloves, one mini compression bandage and one pair of Hyfin Vent compact chest seals.

MSRP: \$138.98; [darkangelmedical.com](http://darkangelmedical.com)







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40S&W  
45Auto

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# Sight Height Done Right

In the past few months, I have had the good fortune to acquire two new Mossberg pistols. One is an MC1sc to carry in my pocket and the other is an MC2c I carry concealed in a belt holster. Both are as accurate and reliable as any handgun I've shot. I have put several hundred rounds of different types and weights of 9 mm ammunition through each pistol trying to find something that hits where I want it to. So far, both guns shoot a few inches low for me, using the sight picture that I like to use. Both guns hit dead-on with Speer 124-grain hollowpoints, which may be fine for some people, but I like to see my target above the front sight so I'm sure of where my bullets are going to go. Aside from trying to convince me of changing my sight picture, which will not happen, what kind of sights can I change to in order to make both guns shoot where I want them to?

*Roy D.  
Remlap, AL*



In all fairness, the Mossberg people canvassed a number of experienced experts to get their opinion on where a pistol for personal defense

should be regulated to hit with typical, everyday-carry ammunition. The overwhelming response turned out to be point-of-aim, point-of-impact. That is to say, with proper sight alignment, the bullet would impact where the top of the front sight was located on the target when the bullet left the muzzle. It stands to reason that the pistols shoot a bit low for you with your preferred sight picture since the pistols were engineered to shoot point-of-aim, point-of-impact.

Mossberg engineers hedged their bets, however, by utilizing a previously proven sight system employed by SIG Sauer. The sights are dovetailed in the slide and may be drifted left or right to change windage. Elevation adjustments are made by changing the front or rear sight—or both—to get the point-of-impact desired by the shooter using their preferred shooting technique. The sights are numbered 5 through 9 for the

front and 5 through 10 for the rear sights. The higher the numerical value of the number, the higher the impact of the bullet on the target. According to SIG Sauer, each front-sight increment will move the impact of the bullet approximately 1 inch vertically at 25 yards. Each rear-sight increment moves the strike of the round approximately 2 inches vertically at 25 yards.

Mossberg chose the number 8 front and number 8 rear sights as standard fare for its pistols, much like the numbered sights found on SIG Sauer products. To raise the strike of the bullet on your target, depending on how far you need to go, replace the number 8 sights you have with higher-numbered sights that will give you the additional elevation to meet your criterion.

As another option, there are many after-market sight makers that manufacture their products with the SIG Sauer dovetail. The downside, unfortunately, is few use the incremental-numbering system.

There is a method other than trial and error to get the appropriate sight heights for your pistols to achieve the desired hits on target with your sight picture, however. The first step is to shoot a group or two using your preferred sight picture. Then measure the distance on the target from where you were aiming to the center of the group in inches. The second step is to measure the sight radius of your pistol in inches. Multiply step one by step two and then divide the result by the distance to the target in inches—remember to use inches, not feet or yards—and you will have the figure necessary to increase or decrease the existing sight height to make the change in bullet impact on the target.

Do keep in mind that the rear-sight height (value) is increased to cause the bullet to strike higher on the target. Adjusting the front sight is just the opposite. Decreasing the height (value) of the front sight will raise the strike of the bullet on the target.

As long as the sights you use have a SIG Sauer-style dovetail, you can interchange with the factory sights to your heart's content and to please your eye with the sight picture best-suited for you to hit where you want on the target.

Getting a Mossberg pistol to shoot on target while using a 6-o'clock hold can be accomplished by replacing the original sights with another set of SIG Sauer-type sights that have a higher number designation.

## Correspondence is welcomed and encouraged

**Write to:** Shooting Illustrated | NRA | 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400  
**e-mail:** [shootingillustrated@nrahq.org](mailto:shootingillustrated@nrahq.org)



# THE BITE IS WORSE THAN THE BARK

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# Upper Management

One of the biggest advantages of the AR-style rifle is the ability to change calibers quite quickly.

**C**hances are pretty good that unless you own an ammunition company or have really deep pockets, your range time has tapered off over the past year. People with rifles chambered in the few available ammo types may still be training, but what do you do when your rifle is not compatible with any of those calibers? One option is to change your gun's chambering, if possible. Modular rifle designs that allow temporary caliber conversions are an excellent alternative to not shooting at all, so long as all components play well together.

Many old and new rifle designs allow caliber changes, and when the retrofit components come from the firearm's manufacturer, it is usually a straightforward process. Aftermarket parts are where things can get tricky, and AR rifles and carbines lead the pack in this arena. Although quickly swapping AR upper receivers is the simplest way to change calibers, the availability of so many aftermarket and non-standardized components can present compatibility issues. These problems show up in both small- and large-receiver sizes, and are most often encountered when using uppers and lowers from different makers.

## Petite Packages

The majority of ARs in circulation are built on the small-frame, AR-15-size pattern. Fortunately, the presence of an actual "mil-spec" has kept small receiver manufacturers singing the same tune, even if they are not exactly on the same sheet of music. For example, older Colt

AR-15s use a front pivot pin that is approximately .065-inch larger in diameter than most other upper receiver brands' pivot-pin bores. Several companies sell two-piece, threaded adapter pins that allow those large-pin Colt lowers to work with now-standard uppers. I have used these adapters many times when pairing new uppers with older Colt lowers and they work great.

Some amount of play between upper and lower receivers is common, but it can get excessive when they come from different makers. While this "slop" has no effect on a rifle's mechanical accuracy, it can make holding a consistent body position more difficult due to the upper shifting during recoil. I have only seen two cases where receiver slop caused functional problems. If your lower has a tensioning screw directly under the rear takedown pin, eliminating this play is easy. If no screw is present, a gunsmith can retrofit the lower receiver with a tensioner or you can drop in a rubber "Accu-Wedge" to tighten things up.

Although forged lower receivers tend to be fairly uniform, one potential for variation is in the front pivot-pin housing's external geometry. Manufacturers use different wall thickness in this area, causing some freefloat fore-end designs to bind when an upper is "shotgunned" for cleaning (removing the rear pin and separating the upper and lower receivers, but leaving them joined at the front pin). A few minutes with a needle or rat-tail file on the fore-end's impact points will relieve the contact. Take it slow, removing a little at a time and testing the fit frequently.

The final issue I encounter when adding uppers to small-frame-AR lowers is that some



trigger groups do not work well with pistol-caliber carbine (PCC) uppers. Even though most PCC bolt carriers are now made to work with both Colt- and Glock-pattern magazines, their undersides differ from maker to maker. This problem can pop up with either match or mil-spec trigger groups, depending on the brands used. Anytime you add a new upper to your lower, be sure to do a proper function check to ensure that the safety and the trigger group's primary sear, disconnect and hammer operate correctly. If they do not, a different bolt carrier or trigger group will likely be required.

### Big Boys

Large-frame AR receivers have more cross-compatibility issues when adding a new upper to an existing lower. The first task is to make sure your new upper matches your lower's pattern: ArmaLite AR-10 cut, DPMS LR 308 cut or the less common DPMS Gen II short receiver. Beyond that starting point, there are slight takedown- and pivot-pin-size differences between receiver manufacturers, even though most makers theoretically use the same sizes. A tiny difference in diameter is more than enough to make seating the pins difficult or even impossible. Some receiver manufacturers list compatible products from other companies on their websites, but if you are unsure, contact both companies to ensure their receivers will work together before purchasing.

If you need an Accu-Wedge to remove large-frame receiver slop, the circular bottom of the wedge will probably need to be thinned. A razor blade works well to cut one thin slice at a time until the fit is just right. In a pinch, a third to half of a foam earplug can be compressed under the upper

receiver's rear takedown pin tab in the same manner. I used a piece of earplug this way in my Army-issued sniper rifle for several years before commercial solutions became readily available.

Differences in bolt-stop recesses between large-upper-receiver makers can cause problems, too. If you are trying to seat your new upper and find that something is stopping it from fully closing on the lower, check to see if the bolt stop is the issue. Press the bottom of the bolt stop so that the top edge tips out, and then try to fully seat the upper again. If it seats correctly, the top/inside edge of the bolt stop will need to be filed down until there's no interference. This part is supposed to be hardened, so filing should be slow. I remove the bolt stop and then use a low-rpm rotary tool with a mildly abrasive polishing drum, taking care not to overheat the part.

When mating uppers and lowers from different large-frame manufacturers, contours are often mismatched where the upper meets the bridge section of the lower receiver, just below the charging handle. Although the difference is usually just cosmetic, I encounter charging handle interference in this area from time to time. The best way to alleviate this problem—and all of the others listed above for both large and small frame sizes—is to use receivers from the same manufacturer.

I do not mean to imply that adding new uppers to AR lowers is always problematic—that is the exception, rather than the rule. These are simply the main issues I have dealt with over the course of adding several hundred uppers to existing lowers. While the days of 25 cents-per-round may be a distant memory, some popular centerfire rifle cartridges can still (as of this writing) be had for significantly less than a dollar apiece. If your rifle has the modularity to switch to one of these calibers, taking advantage of that capability will help to keep your skills sharp. 🔪



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# Welcome to the Party, Pal

Glock's remarkable popularity has led to an aftermarket where non-Glock, Glock-based pistols are now a thing.



Exotic slides, stylish barrels and elaborately enhanced frames are all available from a variety of manufacturers to make your Glock-based pistol truly "yours."

**T**he number of firearms that you can assemble yourself from scratch, from the frame/receiver up, without using a single part made by the original manufacturer makes for a pretty small club. And if that club is small, then the exclusive party room in the back is populated by designs where you can buy completely assembled derivatives from third parties. This usually happens when a popular firearm becomes old enough that any patents have expired, although sometimes clone makers do jump the gun and matters get settled in court.

Glock pistols, at least of the first three generations, have been in the first club for a while. Off the top of my head, I can't recollect when the first turnkey, aftermarket Glock frames became available, but it has to be getting close to 20 years. CCF Race Frames were certainly available in the early Aughties, and (as this is written, anyway) you've been able to buy stripped grip frames to get your DIY gun-building kicks for a while now.

But these days, Glocks have joined the Colt Government Model and a handful of rifles in that you can buy a turnkey, ready-to-fire, new-in-box gun that is literally part-for-part 100-percent compatible with a factory Glock, yet is not actually made by Glock.

This raises a question that used to arise in heated debates on the internet back in the days of people arguing Glock versus 1911 over dialup modems: When will "Glock," like "1911," become just a generic name for a kind of gun?

People call a paper facial tissue a "Kleenex" or a disposable bandage a "Band-Aid" without regard for whether or not it was actually made by Kimberly-Clark or Johnson & Johnson. Similarly, John Moses Browning's .45 ACP M1911 Government Model gets the bad rap for every malfunction suffered by every subcompact, alloy-framed, 3-inch, 9 mm single- or double-stack, polymer-frame 1911-pattern pistol made by any third-party manufacturer. "What'd you expect?" snort the detractors, "It's a 1911."

It will probably be a while before third-generation Glock clones have this sort of effect on internet gun lore, but it's not

impossible to imagine in future debates.

Another result of a firearm making the effective jump to "open source" like this is that it opens the door for experimentation and marketing to niches that might not attract the eye of a larger company. Like the aforementioned variants based on the 1911 architecture that vary greatly in size, caliber, capacity or construction materials from the original, the basic Gen3 Glock architecture is essentially now just a jumping-off point for an increasing number of creative manufacturers.

Alpha Foxtrot has a forged-aluminum frame which offers a host of refined ergonomic details. Zev Technologies offers its OZ-9 which, like a 2011-type racegun, mates a metal receiver/chassis with a swappable polymer grip-frame module.

One of the more radical riffs on the concept is ZRO Delta's Modulus concept, which is essentially a metal-frame Gen3 Glock G19

Continued on page 102



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# Hunting Shotguns For Home Defense?

**If all you have for home defense is a hunting-oriented scattergun, there are modifications you can easily make to improve its defensive capabilities.**

If you're like me—which I suspect you are or else you wouldn't be reading *Shooting Illustrated*—you own a dedicated home-defense shotgun (or two) tailor-made for the job. But, we are the minority. Many more Americans don't have an IWI US Tavor TS12 or a Mossberg 590A1 Tactical in a biometric rack above the headboard. Rather, they keep a wood-stocked Winchester Model 12, an old Ithaca double, a Browning A5, a Mossberg 500 All Purpose, a Remington 1100 or the like stashed behind the clothes in the closet or in a safe. While these fowling pieces may not have been specifically made for defending castles, they can do it. Here are a half-dozen of the most popular hunting shotguns that can serve double-duty as home defenders, along with some tips for employing them as such.



**Remington 870**

For the last 30 years, Remington's venerable 870 Express has been offered for around \$250 at major discount stores. That's because this 12-gauge pump just works every time, clean or dirty, in foul weather or air-conditioning. In its typical hunting configuration, it comes with three choke tubes and a 26- or 28-inch barrel. If you don't feel like spending any money making it the best home defender it can be, that's your call, but at least make sure the plug (mandated for use when hunting migratory birds) is removed so it'll hold four rounds in its tubular magazine. Then screw in its cylinder-choke tube and you're good to go. I'd rather have this hunting 870 in my hands than any handgun on the planet when a bad actor comes through my window.

If you wish to modify your 870 but still use it for hunting in the fall, buy a simple sling for it, a Plus-2 round magazine extension from XS Sights for \$82, a hook-and-loop mounted shell carrier to keep reloads handy and a simple flashlight mount like the Ultimate Arms Gear Flashlight Kit for \$30. The 870's only downside? While there are more than 11 million currently in circulation, finding a used one isn't hard, but at the time of this writing Remington's Ilion, NY, plant is not yet up and running under its new owners.



**Winchester Model 12**

Back before the Great War, if your granddaddy was a duck hunter he likely either shot an American-made double barrel or a Winchester Model 12. A hammerless update to the 1897, for half a century it was the fastest, most reliable repeater going, and that's why it was modified by the military and employed as a fearsome "trench gun" in World War II. Today in its 28-inch-barreled hunting configuration, it's still a quality firearm, although it was usurped by the more advanced Remington 870 in 1964. Even so, if this is the gun you've got, rest assured it'll work wonders for warding off evil. Hopefully, it has an improved-cylinder choke and you can figure out how to remove its magazine plug.



**Winchester SXP**

Winchester's current-production update to the Model 12 is its Super X Pump. Although this foreign-made model comes in myriad configurations—some more naturally suited for home defense than others—the most common is a 26-inch-barreled, camouflage, hunting version. If you have one, it'll work like gangbusters. It's likely the fastest and easiest-to-operate pump on the market due to its spring-loaded, rotary-bolt system that initiates the ejection stroke as the trigger is pulled. Just install the cylinder-choke tube and remove the plug so you can feed it with five 00-buck rounds. If you want to soup it up, order a flashlight mount and a sidesaddle for it.



**Mossberg 500**

If you don't have an 870, odds are good you've got a Mossberg 500 somewhere in the house. After all, 11 million Americans think the 500 is swell for everything from downing ducks in a salty marsh to rooting out terrorists in some less-appealing locations overseas. While I'd never recommend neglecting any gun, the 500 is one that needs next-to-no coddling to trust it. Mossberg 500s built in the last 30 years feature screw-in choke tubes, sling studs, an easy-to-see white bead, an ambidextrous tang safety and a 26-inch barrel. With its plug removed to liberate its five-round magazine (six rounds total), it's a great defensive option. Like the other popular shotguns on this list, there's no shortage of aftermarket parts for it, so with a few hundred bucks you can easily morph yours into the ultimate home defender. Most of the cash (\$187) would be spent on a factory 18.5-inch "Security" barrel and the rest on a four-round mag-tube extension, a flashlight mount, sidesaddle and sling. When duck season comes back around, have Batman change back into Bruce Wayne.



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#### Any Old Double

Perhaps the most common firearm found in any home is a hand-me-down from when Grandpa used to hunt rabbits, squirrels and quail for supper with a double-barrel shotgun. Most often these scatterguns—usually made in the early- to mid-1900s—are inexpensive guns that were sold by Sears & Roebuck or Stevens.

First, check that it is modern enough and in proper condition to safely fire high-energy 00 buck loads. If you're not sure, take it to a gunsmith. Second, is it choked Modified or more open? Some of these old guns were choked very tight. Third, does it have ejectors, or just extractors? If extractors only, you should know that removing the shells to reload can take valuable time; if ejectors, know to roll the gun to the side when opening the action so the shells won't strike you in the face. Next, find out if the gun has an automatic safety. If so, practice reloading and firing under pressure and working the safety each time after reloading so it becomes ingrained into muscle memory. Finally, realize that a double-barrel's splinter-style fore-end is mainly for show; to fire, wrap the fingers of the support hand firmly around the barrels ahead of the fore-end to help keep the barrels down.



#### Remington 1100/11-87

Throughout rural America, where bird hunters abound, Remington's 1100 and 11-87 models are prolific. While I'm not saying these are perfect guns for home defense (both are known to jam like rush-hour traffic when dirty) they can certainly be used to great effect in the home—especially if this is the gun you've been dropping birds with since you were 10. If so, it means you're able to load it blindfolded and hit moving targets with it almost subconsciously, and there's a lot to be said for that when it comes to home defense. Just make sure it's well broken-in, clean, well-lubed and stoked with full-power loads. If it's more than about 35 years old, it probably won't accept choke tubes, so you might think about buying a short, C or IC barrel if it's choked any tighter than Modified. Then just remove its plug, if it has one, so it'll hold five rounds. If you can spend \$100 more on it, buy an extended mag tube, a light mount and a sidesaddle. If you wish to trick out your home-defense double, consider a dab of white nail polish for its front bead and a slip-on shell carrier for its stock.

Whatever shotgun you settle on, remember: It is ultimately your skill in using it that wins gunfights.



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# Tips for Volume Loading

While it might be tempting to start hand-loading to beef up inventory, keep some basics in mind.



Setting up a progressive press to run properly takes time, effort and quite a bit of brass.

PHOTO: RICHARD MANN

**R**ight now, ammo is as hard to find as unicorn poop. When will the ammunition craze end? If it happens in less than two years, I'll be astonished, and if it happens in less than four, I'll be surprised. This has a lot of shooters—new and old—interested in loading their own ammunition in bulk. Of course, components are hard to find, too, but you might be able to wheel and deal and trade for the primers, powder, bullets and brass you need.

Whether you're a seasoned handloader or are just learning the skill, the best source for information on "how to" is one of the quality loading manuals available from companies like Hornady, Nosler, Sierra and Speer. Still, there are some things you learn from actually loading ammunition that the manuals may not mention. After years of loading lots of ammunition, I've learned a thing or two, and here are some of things you might not have considered.

## Load Development

Before you embark on any volume-loading project, you want to make sure that the load

you're creating delivers the performance you want. You want to make sure you've reached the target velocity and that the precision on target is at the level you demand. You also want to ensure reliability with the guns out of which you will be shooting the ammo. You can do this load workup on a progressive press, but I've found it much easier to do on a single-stage unit.

Before you can even begin to work up a load on a progressive press, you must set up the machine. Setting up a single-stage press is much easier and so, too, is making slight adjustments in seating depth, powder charge, primer choice and expander- and sizing-die adjustments. I'll determine all these settings on a single-stage press while I'm also establishing the load recipe for whatever cartridge I'm loading. Once I'm getting the performance I want, I'll transfer my dies to the progressive press and begin setting up the machine.

## Machine Setup

It takes some time to set up a progressive press. For example, if you're loading a pistol cartridge like .357 Mag., you must adjust the sizing die correctly, adjust the neck-expander die correctly, fill up your auto-priming system and make sure it's working, adjust the auto-powder dispenser and then adjust the seating and crimp. Each of these steps should be done singularly, because it allows you to do two things: First, focus on one adjustment at a time and second, use the least amount of brass possible.

I always start with the sizing die and then adjust the neck-expander die so I can easily place a bullet on the case mouth, so that it will not fall off during press operation. Next, I move to the powder dispenser and confirm with five measured charges that I'm getting the charge weight I need. The bullet seating and crimp functions are next, followed by coordinating the auto-primer feed. Once I feel I have everything adjusted properly, I'll load five or six rounds and test fire them to make sure I've recreated the load exactly like I developed it on the single-stage press.

## Brass Allotment

Once you have a progressive press set up for a particular load, you can expect about one in 100 mistakes in the loading process. These are mostly human error and include things like forgetting to press the lever down

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Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

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to prime a case, or maybe inserting a bullet upside down. The point is, if you want to load 500 rounds, make sure you have enough brass on hand to compensate for mistakes you might make.

Additionally, anytime you're setting up a progressive press, you'll need some brass to run through the setup procedure to make sure all of your die and press adjustments are correct. I typically set aside 20 cases for this process. It may not take that many, but I've found that it usually takes at least half that many to get everything just right. So, for example, if I want to load 500 rounds that involve a new setup on a progressive press, I'll need at least 525 cases to get there. Also, before even starting on the progressive press, you'll need at least another 25 cases to work with on the single-stage press while you're refining your load and checking it for velocity, accuracy and reliability.

### Safety

I always wear safety glasses when loading ammunition. I've never had an incident, but I see the potential for it all the time. Sometimes primers get loose and can fall into the mechanics of the machine, offering the opportunity for detonation. I've also heard of primers detonating in primer tubes. These occurrences are obviously rare, but so, too, are incidents when guns blow up. I've had several guns blow up due to ammunition issues, so I'm thinking it's only a matter of time until I have an incident on a loading bench. Humans have the ability to screw up just about anything.

I also learned early on to box and label my handloads as soon as I'm through, and sometimes even during the process. You might think you're going to come back tomorrow or next week and load more of the same, and you might actually show up much later to do that. Will you remember what

you loaded? Will you remember the exact recipe? Write it down as you go.

Also, don't leave powder and primers in your machine. If you finish a loading session, empty the primer and powder supply to circumvent potential disaster. If you know you're coming back shortly, at least label the powder in the dispenser and the primers in the feed so you know for sure what you're working with. When you're finished, always clean up completely.

Volume loading is not that complicated and is quite safe. The key to success is to do the preparation beforehand and to observe safety protocols. Both will save you time and components in the long run. Our current ammunition situation is frustrating, but so, too, is running out of brass when you still have 25 bullets to load, or having to dump a hopper of powder or a tube of primers because you didn't label them and don't know what they are. 🌀



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# Complacency Can get you Killed

There is no such thing as being too prepared for the worst.



Just as an unlocked footlocker is an invitation to thievery, being complacent in your daily life can result in you becoming a victim of crime.

A few years ago, a murder occurred in our little town. It happened in a private residence as the result of an argument, and the killer got away. It was 24 hours before he was found in a nearby vacant lot where he had committed suicide, probably within minutes after committing his heinous crime.

But, in those 24 hours following the shooting, our little town went into panic mode over the fact that a killer was on the loose. Doors were getting locked that probably hadn't been locked in the past 10 years. Keys were taken out of some cars

for the first time ever, and I'm sure that the local gun shop had a high-revenue day. Everywhere you went, you heard, "This is unbelievable! It just can't be happening in our little town!"

Well, of course it can. Crime happens everywhere—in seedy neighborhoods and even in upscale zip codes. Everywhere. In some places it occurs less frequently, however, and that can cause some people to become complacent.

We even see complacency among police officers. The cops who are working armed-robbery details, narcotics raids and felony apprehensions stay pretty well-tuned-up and alert. But, the officer who is assigned to daytime traffic patrol may be a whole other story. He or she doesn't see the fights and the shootouts on such a regular basis and may tend to not spend too much time thinking about it. They may be the type who leaves their ballistic vest at home because it is just too hot today. Complacency.

And we certainly see complacency among armed citizens. These are the folks who have a defensive handgun, but only carry when they think they might need it. Or they leave it in their car to keep it handy—which assumes they will be anywhere near their car when the balloon goes up, or that they will have time to get to the gun.

Then there are the armed citizens who don't seek out professional training because they got it in military service, however long ago that might have been. They think they can rely on a few days of training, from some 20 to 30 years ago, knowing full well that shooting skills are quickly diminishing skills. Complacency.

Back in the early part of the summer, we had a film crew out here to shoot a TV show. Since they weren't from around here, I gave them a little talk about rattlesnakes and how to avoid them. The first few days, I could tell that they were being careful, but by the end of the week, they were stomping around without a care in the world. They hadn't seen a snake, so they forgot about it.

But then I, too, live in a small town that has little violence. So, what do I do about it? My solution is found in being a full-time defensive writer and teacher. As I remind you of these things, I consciously remind myself of the need to be vigilant, to train and to practice.

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## STRAIGHT TALK | Complacency

It is that reminder we need. Folks living in or near high-crime areas get that reminder every time they hear the sirens, watch the local news or see the results as they drive down their streets. Nothing reminds you to drive carefully like driving past the scene of a major accident. And, nothing reminds you to stay defensively alert like driving by the scene of a violent crime.

Those of us who live in more peaceful climes can avoid complacency by daily giving some thought to our personal-defense plan. We need to deliberately set aside that time each day. It is even better if we have regular discussions with other family members or friends.

Some female friends of mine have a local chapter of The Well Armed Woman that meets once a month. Since ammunition has been so hard to get of late, they have turned those monthly meetings from range sessions into a lecture series. In a much more relaxed atmosphere than is found at the shooting range, they can sit around and discuss tactics, ask questions and share ideas. I would suggest local discussion groups with qualified guest speakers for anyone who is serious about their own safety.

The simple fact is no one can afford to be complacent, because anyone and everyone can be the victim of violent crime. Living in a small town will not stop it. Living in an upscale neighborhood won't stop it. Having the most professional police department in the whole country won't stop it, either.

We can't eliminate violent crime, but we can prepare to deal with it. That's why we get good training and practice what we've been taught. It is why we research and purchase quality equipment and then take the time to really learn how to use it. It's why we spend time developing a defense plan and continually modify and improve it. It is why we get serious about our own safety and avoid complacency. 



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# Nifty Fifty



Once again, Kel-Tec has designed a truly innovative gun that promises more performance for your money.

The days of blue steel and walnut as the defining style of firearms are long behind us. One company leading that charge was Kel-Tec. Its embrace of polymer and black-oxidized steel with almost industrial looks is the new baseline for firearms. And, the latest in its line of “why didn’t I think of that” firearms is the P50.

To start, the P50 is chambered in 5.7x28 mm. The 5.7 is not new. It has now been around for 30 years, and was just formally adopted by NATO. What made it not commonly seen on ranges was the dearth of options to use it. For most of its existence, only two firearms—both pretty pricey—were chambered for the round. With recent introductions from Ruger, CMMG, Diamondback and now Kel-Tec, however, there’s a lot of new life for this little speed demon. Not only is the P50 priced noticeably less than the original FN options, it also makes use of the most generous-capacity magazines to be had for the 5.7x28 mm.

By Patrick Sweeney  
Photos by Peter Fountain







Inside the top rail, a post-style front sight peeks out for use without an optic • Though small, the notch rear sight aligns well with the front post • A QD socket at the rear of the P50 lets the user attach a sling for added stability • Beneath the “dustcover” lies an accessory-rail section.

The P50 is a semi-automatic, delayed-blowback pistol that uses the 50-round magazines of the FN PS90 carbine. The P50 appears bulky, but the size is belied by its relatively light weight of 51 ounces empty. I have used heavier pistols in competitions, and none of them had a 50-round magazine.

On top, the P50 has a full-length Picatinny rail with plenty of room to mount whatever optic you choose. Matching it on the bottom of the receiver is a shorter rail for a light or laser. The groove down the center of the top rail is also where the iron sights are mounted, which is useful, but I imagine most users will quickly mount the most compact red-dot sight they can find to make the P50 even more handy.

Behind that lower rail, Kel-Tec has placed a curved hand-grip for your off hand, directly below the center of balance. The trigger guard and the pistol grip are just behind that hump. The Kel-Tec idea of a pistol grip in proportion and shape is exactly to my taste. It is relatively slim, with definite flat sides, so it indexes well. It is covered with large, rectangular, non-slip gripping blocks and the surface has a fine-grain texture to add to the secure grip.

Kel-Tec has positioned all the controls you need above and behind the pistol grip. Directly above the pistol grip is the safety, which is ambidextrous. With the lever pointing back, the P50 is on “safe,” with it pivoted to point down, it is on “fire.” Just above where you grip, Kel-Tec has located the receiver latch. Press this latch down, and the P50 unlocks with a *click*. To load, unload or

## KEL-TEC | P50



### SHOOTING RESULTS

Load	Velocity	Group Size		
		Smallest	Largest	Average
FN SS195LF 28-grain JHP	2,179	1.8	2.7	2.3
FN SS197SR 40-grain V-Max	2,007	1.3	1.9	1.7
Federal 40-grain FMJ	1,893	1.6	2.1	1.9

Velocity measured in fps 15 feet from the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a LabRadar chronograph. Temperature: 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Accuracy measured in inches for four consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yards from a sandbag rest.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** Kel-Tec CNC Industries; (321) 631-0068, [keltecweapons.com](http://keltecweapons.com)

**Action Type:** Delayed-blowback-operated, semi-automatic

**Caliber:** 5.7x28 mm

**Capacity:** 50 rounds

**Frame:** Polymer

**Finish:** Black oxide

**Barrel Length:** 9.6 inches

**Rifling:** 6 grooves; 1:7-inch RH twist

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 4 pounds, 12 ounces

**Sights:** Front blade, rear notch; full-length optics rail

**Overall Length:** 15 inches

**Width:** 2 inches

**Height:** 6.7 inches

**Weight:** 51 ounces

**Accessories:** Hard case, two 50-round magazines, QD sling, lock, manual

**MSRP:** \$995

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While substantially different from that of an AR-15, the P50's charging handle is ergonomically similar and just as easy to use. The pistol's outstanding trigger broke cleanly at less than 5 pounds of pressure. An unconventional design, the P50 splits open to allow insertion of its 50-round magazine. Rounds feed up into

the chamber located inside what amounts to an upper receiver. To open the pistol for magazine changes, a thumb-lever at the rear (where one might find a beaver-tail on a conventional handgun) must be pressed down to unlock the P50's upper and lower halves. In addition to an optics rail, the top of the P50 includes its ejection port.



With a nearly 10-inch barrel, the P50 offers a significant boost in velocity over the much shorter barrel of other 5.7x28 mm pistols. The muzzle is threaded for a suppressor, and comes with a thread protector installed.

reload, you push the selector to safe, then press the latch down. Hinge the upper-receiver assembly (the pivot point is below the muzzle) and you can access the magazine. Above that, Kel-Tec has provided a QD sling socket, which offers interesting possibilities for shooting. The charging handle is above the QD socket, and it, too, is ambidextrous, with two tabs you can grasp. While not an AR-15-compatible part, it functions in much the same way in terms of user interface.

Loading is simple. Put the P50 on safe, unlock the receiver assembly and hinge the upper receiver up. Hold the upper with your off hand and grab your magazine with your firing hand. Place the front end of the magazine in the gap in the upper created by a pair of sheet-metal fingers and hinge the magazine up toward the upper receiver. Press the magazine (with the cartridge ready to feed up, toward the upper) into the upper receiver until it clicks into place. Now reach down, grab the lower and hinge it up to the upper. The first few times you do this, it will seem counterintuitive. Every shooter I've handed the P50 to without telling them how to load tries to put the magazine in the lower and then close the upper down onto it. When you do this, the magazine will invariably shift, and the receivers won't close. Once they are closed, you grasp the charging handle, pull back, let go and you are ready—just like on an AR, which this is decidedly not. To shoot, aim, press the selector to fire, then press the trigger.

The ejection port on the P50 is on the top of the upper receiver and empties are ejected up and somewhat to the right. Keep the ejection port location in mind when you are mounting optics, as you do not want to block the path of the empty brass.

The QD sling socket is both a way to carry the P50 and a useful support for aiming. If you use a bungee-type sling locked into the



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Chamber, barrel and recoil springs are located in the upper receiver. Spent cases are ejected upward out of the top of the gun • Threaded to accept sound suppressors, the muzzle comes with a thread protector installed • Sporting Kel-Tec's recognizable square checkering, the pistol grip is

comfortable and ergonomic • Conveniently located above the grip on either side of the pistol, the safety selector proved easy to operate • Dual recoil springs help ensure reliability • The P50 was basically built around the FN PS90 50-round magazine, which is a proven commodity.



On top, the P50 has a full-length Picatinny rail with plenty of room to mount whatever optic you choose. Matching it on the bottom of the receiver is a shorter rail for a light or laser.

socket and adjust the sling so it tensions when you press your hands forward while holding the P50, the sling provides some added stability. Yes, this is the technique the Special Air Service (SAS) developed for use with the H&K MP5, half a century ago.

I did not perform accuracy testing this way, but rather tested the P50 while sitting at a shooting bench and resting it on sandbags. For that, I mounted an Aimpoint Micro T1, which, while not the most compact red-dot optic to be found (although it's close to it for a non-slide-mounted sight) it was handy, worked like a charm and it allowed me to wring out more accuracy from the P50.

The P50 came with two 50-round magazines, and loading them is another learning experience. The magazine holds the rounds horizontally, and at a right angle to the axis of the bore. The feed ramp built into the magazine (in the circular boss on one end) spirals each cartridge up and into line with the chamber. To load, the first round is done normally: press it down into the feed lips and push it back until it stops. Just remember the correct orientation: bullet tip pointed down the length of the magazine. The second round won't be as easy, and the third will seem impossible—if you follow the same pattern. Instead, take every round after the first one and press the base of that cartridge

straight down onto the cartridge in the feed lips, on the neck. When you press, you'll see the already-loaded round snap over to half the rotation point. You can now, while maintaining pressure, tilt the round you are loading down into line with the feed lips and press it back. Repeat until the magazine is full. The normal method of loading a pistol magazine does not offer the leverage the P50 magazine requires to press rounds down the spiral ramp inside the magazine, so you have to learn new skills.

With a nearly 10-inch barrel, the P50 offers a significant boost in velocity over the much shorter barrel of other 5.7x28 mm pistols. The muzzle is threaded for a suppressor, and comes with a thread protector installed. As the 5.7 round depends on velocity for its effectiveness, this is a good thing. With a boost of some 250 to 325 fps, depending on the ammunition used, the P50 delivers more energy than smaller pistols.

And there's the crux of the P50: size. Yes, it is not overly heavy for its size, but it is rather bulky for a handgun. However, that bulk gains you two advantages: added velocity and extra capacity. Besides being grand fun on the range (and a magnet to other shooters on the line) what is the P50 for? I can see it as a cracking-good home-defense tool. With the bungee sling and a light/laser combo mounted on the lower rail, it offers a light, relatively compact (much more so than a rifle or shotgun) defensive firearm, with plenty of capacity and light recoil. Even with a 40-grain bullet exiting the muzzle at speeds in excess of 2,000 fps, recoil is no big deal.

At \$200 or \$800 less than either of the original FN 5.7s, and not quite \$200 more than the Ruger-57 (which offers a "mere" 20-round magazine), the Kel-Tec P50 is perfectly positioned to be a serious competitor to both lines. Once ammunition is actually available again, we can all get back to practice. And with the P50, practice will be fun. 🌀

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# Changing Handgun Sights The Right Way

Swapping the sights on your handgun is often the first modification you'll want to make. Here's how to change them without driving yourself mad.

---

Story and Photos by  
Bryce M. Towsley

**F**or do-it-yourself types, swapping handguns sights is a good project. However, a few things have changed since your grandpa smacked the back sight out of his pistol with a ball-peen hammer and a scrap piece of brass.

First, why change the sights at all? There are plenty of answers to that question. A fair number of the sights that ship on new handguns are not all that great, as high-quality alternatives are expensive and selling handguns is a competitive field. One extremely popular brand ships their pistols with notoriously poor sights. Also, the ubiquitous three-white-dot variants found across the spectrum of handgun makers are disdained by many knowledgeable defensive-handgun experts—they can be very confusing in a tense situation.

Black-on-black models are fine for shooting targets, but not for much else. With everything the same color, they can be difficult to see, particularly in poor light and/or against a dark-colored target.

I once waded into a roaring fight between a large, angry black bear and a bunch of walker hounds. There was not a lot of light deep in that swamp, and when I tried to shoot the black bear with a revolver fitted with black-on-black sights I could not tell where the sights left off and the bear began.

I am a big advocate of adjustable sights on handguns for competition, target shooting or for outdoor use. I even have them on several carry guns. I want the ability to fine-tune the gun to any ammo I choose. So, I add adjustable sights to a lot of handguns shipped with fixed sights.

Furthermore, I insist on using night sights on my defensive handguns. In fact, adding night sights is the single biggest reason people bring handguns to my shop. They come both fixed and adjustable. Also, tritium night sights have a shelf-life (actually, a half-life) and should be replaced every 10 to 15 years.

Changing sights may look like an easy, do-it-yourself project, and for many years it usually was, but often now it is not. The trend today with some handgun makers is to use rear sights with “crush-pads” on the bottom of the dovetail. This may make the manufacturing process a bit easier, but it often causes problems for the end user, as the sights can stick quite tightly in the dovetail. Removing most sights installed with crush pads will require a top-end sight pusher. I have bent the frame on a very good (and expensive) sight-pushing tool to the point where it is currently unusable. I did this while trying to remove the sights from a Smith & Wesson M&P Shield chambered in .45 ACP. Any attempt to drive out sights that tight with a hammer and punch will cause damage to the gun, the sight, the punch and your mental health.





One old gunsmith's trick for a loose dovetail sight is to take a prick punch and stipple the bottom of the dovetail. This raises the metal around the stippling and will tighten up the fit.

Also, anytime you are working with night sights you should use a sight pusher. The glass vials that contain the glow-in-the-dark tritium are subject to breakage if you use a hammer and punch to move the sight. The small amount of tritium in the vials won't hurt you, but you don't want to get any on you all the same.

I know that we have all heard some loud-mouth at the gun club spouting, "That's just [bovine excrement]! I have installed hundreds of night sights with a hammer and punch."

First, no, he has not. Secondly, these sights are expensive and it's not worth the risk.

There are a lot of sight pushers on the market. Some of them are considered "universal," while many others are dedicated to a single manufacturer of handguns. They are all costly. If you are like me and work on a wide range of handguns, a universal unit is the best option. It may not work on every gun,

but it will cover most of them. My current sight pusher is the B&J Machine P500 Pro Universal Sight Tool that I got from Brownells.

High-quality sight pushers come with a premium price, but a good approach is to share the cost. If you have a group of shooting buddies or a gun club, why not have everybody chip in a fraction of the cost and buy one collectively? Then, leave it in a place where you all have access to use it. That makes a lot of sense, since it's unlikely any single person will be changing handgun sights all that often, but as a group, you might end up saving money on the pusher rather than going to a gunsmith.

You may also need a sight pusher to adjust fixed sights for windage. Those handguns using crush-fit rear sights claim to be drift adjustable, but doing it in the field is impossible on many of them. The traditional way is to tap the sight using a small hammer and a brass or nylon punch, but I have encountered several new handguns from multiple manufacturers on which this is impossible. I had a Remington RP9 on which I think you could beat the sights with a carpenter's framing hammer and a crowbar and they would not move. In fact, I am not sure a jackhammer could have moved that one.

It takes a bit longer, but pull the slide off the gun and use the sight pusher to make the adjustments with these sticky sights. It's much more precise and it can move these new-generation sights when nothing else will. (Besides, I suspect jackhammers void the warranty.)

For installing non-tritium sights, you can most likely use conventional methods. That is to hold the slide in a padded vise and gently drive the sight in the dovetail using a small hammer and a brass or nylon punch. The important thing is knowing when to stop. If the sight is not moving, don't get a bigger hammer, get a sight pusher.

A brass punch will often leave "tracks" on the sight where the brass smears on the steel. These are easy to remove with a copper-removing solvent made to clean rifle bores. Just wet a patch and rub the brass mark until it's gone. Then dry and coat with oil to prevent rust.

If it's a new replacement sight, it might be made oversize. In that case, you must fit the sight to the handgun. When fitting new sights to a dovetail, I like to break the sharp



Using a sight pusher makes removing and replacing pistol sights in a dovetail markedly easier • Polymer-frame, striker-fired pistols are extremely popular, but many come from the factory with less-than-excellent iron sights. Replacing them with a good set of night sights will enhance the performance of the pistol • When installing sights with a brass punch, it will often leave tracks on the sight. Wipe the brass marks away with a powerful copper-removing bore solvent.

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The old tried-and-true way of drifting a sight in a dovetail can use a brass, nylon or aluminum punch. The large nylon punch sometimes can get a bit more purchase on the sight. • A "safe" 60-degree parallel-side dovetail file can be used to carefully adjust a sight's dovetail • If you are going to drift a sight out of a pistol with a hammer and punch, put the slide in a soft-jaw vise to avoid damaging your pistol, the sights or both.



leading edges on the sight and the handgun's dovetail using a fine-cut, dovetail file. This will remove the finish though, so be careful on the slide. I only do enough to remove the sharp edge, like dulling a knife blade. This allows the sight to start and press into the dovetail without shaving material. Usually, a little cold blue will touch up if anything shows, but if the gun has a Cerakote or similar finish, it's best not to remove any material that will show.

Some dovetails are tapered. Install the sight from right to left with the muzzle facing away. (Left to right to remove.) This was the standard for years and still is on some firearms.

The sight should start into the dovetail with hard finger pressure. However, because standardized dimensions are a bit sketchy on dovetails, many sights come slightly oversize and are designed to be modified to fit. If the fit is too tight, you can use a dovetail file that is "safe," or non-cutting on two sides, so only one side has teeth. Make sure the angle is correct; a 60-degree compounded angle is

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most common, but some dovetails may be different. For example, some handguns are made with a 65-degree angle dovetail, so make sure your file matches the angle on the handgun as well as the new sight you are installing. Use a parallel sides file, not a tapered triangle file. Brownells is the best source I know for these dovetail files.

I much prefer the concept of cutting on the cheapest part, so modify the dovetail on the sight, rather than on the handgun. Be careful, because these sights rely on a tight, press fit. If you remove too much metal, the fit might become loose or sloppy.

If the fit is too tight, use the file to reduce the width of the sight's dovetail very slightly. Take perhaps .005 inch off the sharp edge on both sides on the sight. If the sight still does not fit, work on the slope of the dovetail while making light passes with the file. Add a very slight taper and break the leading edge with a slight radius so it won't shave metal. Take very light cuts and try the sight in the dovetail often. If it starts well into the dovetail under stiff finger pressure, it should be fine to install. I know at least one sight maker that says that the sight should go a quarter to a third of the way into the dovetail under finger pressure. Again, and I can't say this enough, be extremely careful and use light cuts—you can't replace the metal once it's gone.

One old gunsmith's trick for a loose dovetail sight is to take a prick punch and stipple the bottom of the dovetail. This raises the metal around the stippling and will tighten up the fit. I have used this trick on old rifles where the dovetail is worn and on a few newer handguns where somebody (not me) got overzealous with a file.



Some factory sights are in a format with which you may not be familiar. If they are fitted into dovetails and don't match your fancy, they are easy to change. The Wyoming Sight Drifter is a useful tool for adjusting rear sights, although in this case the sight itself is adjustable.

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With so many aftermarket sight options, choosing the exact best fit for you and your handgun is not a problem • Don't forget to back off the setscrew before attempting to move the sight • The author prefers night sights on his handguns, and this rear-sight unit from Trijicon includes self-illuminating tritium ampules.



Center the sight in the slide. This is easy to judge with your eye in bright, even light. The rear sight on a handgun with fixed sights needs to be a bit easier to move than the front sight. This is because with fixed sights, the rear sight will be drifted in the dovetail to adjust point-of-impact for windage. If the sight is easier to move, it can be done with a punch in the field, where the shooter probably will not have a sight pusher. If the rear sight is not an extra-tight fit, a plastic or brass punch with gentle hammer taps will move the sight. It should not be loose enough to push with your fingers or so tight you need a sight pusher. It's a fine line to get it right.

Or, use a tool called The Wyoming Sight Drifter which uses spring energy to move the sights, sort of like a slide hammer in reverse. After using it to adjust several dovetail sights I can say with all confidence that it works very well and moves a properly installed sight in a predictable manner, making fine tuning point-of-impact much easier. I believe one belongs in every shooting bag. You can find it at [skinnersights.com](http://skinnersights.com).



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Many new sights come with a small setscrew to lock the rear sight in place once the adjustment is made, so keep that in mind when fitting a rear sight. Always back the screw out so it's clear before installation. Also, remember, that the setscrew is often tiny and will strip rather easily, so be firm, but gentle, when tightening. Although some sight makers disagree, I like to put little blue #242 Loctite on the screw threads.

Of course, not all sights—particularly regarding front sights—are in dovetails. So, you may need the help of a gunsmith if the sight is pinned or welded in place. They can remove the sight and cut a proper dovetail for the new sight. Note also that some dovetail sights are locked in place with a pin through the sight and into the slide of the gun. Always remove that pin before trying to move the sight. Sometimes they are hiding under the fiber optic, so remove the slide and look from underneath.

One more note, changing the front sight on a Glock requires a little wrench to remove the screw that holds the sight onto the frame. There really is no viable substitute. They are not expensive, so take a little unsolicited advice: Next time you place an order, get the wrench. There is nothing worse than being in stalemate for a week while you wait for a wrench to be shipped. If you spend a few bucks now and have it in your tool box well in advance, people will think you are a genius. In fact, order two; one for the shop and one for your range bag for sights that become loose while shooting.

Me? I ordered three, because I am going to lose one of them right off the start. It's just the way it is. 🌀



Adjustable sights are normally considered a competition-only luxury, but they can be useful for defensive purposes, too • Make sure that



factory sights can be removed before trying to do so yourself. Some individual units may have been installed with greater zeal than others and will require the services of a gunsmith to replace.

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# Two for Defending Our Hearths and Homes

Looking for a home-defense shotgun that everyone can use? EAA's Churchill line just added two models that are worth a look.

**W**e've got a history in my family with shotguns in less-than-12-gauge. The first firearm I ever shot was a Stevens 311 side-by-side in .410-bore. My grandfather, not the largest guy on the planet, was an absolute sucker for the 16 gauge. I've got a safe full of shotguns in that now-rare gauge, from a genuine Winchester 1897 pump-action to a Remington Model 11 and others. Today, it seems as though 20 gauge has usurped the 16 in the "not quite 12 gauge, but nearly as powerful" category, and for good reason—it has 66 to 75 percent of the muzzle energy of the 12 gauge, but with significantly less felt recoil.

So, that's how we came to have a pair of new 20-gauge shotguns in EAA's Churchill line to review. New for 2021, these defense-oriented scatterguns are offered in a semi-automatic version and a pump-action model. Both offer a pistol-grip stock, "breacher" muzzle device and an EAA house-brand red-dot sight. Maneuverable 18.5-inch barrels grace both shotguns, as does five-round capacity, and each also has a red fiber-optic front sight and a short section of Picatinny rail for mounting the red dot. How the guns operate is the only significant difference between the two.

By Jay Grazio

Executive Editor

Photos by Peter Fountain





## EAA | Churchill Shotguns



### SPECIFICATIONS 220 OPTICS TACTICAL

**Manufacturer:** Akkar  
**Importer:** EAA; (321) 639-4842, eaacorp.com  
**Action Type:** Gas-operated, semi-automatic  
**Gauge:** 20; 3-inch chamber  
**Capacity:** 5 rounds  
**Finish:** Matte blued  
**Barrel Length:** 18.5 inches  
**Choke:** Breacher style, cylinder-bore; Beretta/Benelli style  
**Trigger Pull Weight:** 7 pounds, 2 ounces  
**Sights:** 5-MOA red-dot sight; red fiber-optic front sight  
**Length:** 37.5 inches  
**Weight:** 5 pounds  
**Accessories:** Red-dot sight, lock, manual  
**MSRP:** \$561

We'll start with the obvious: Yes, these are Turkish shotguns. EAA makes no secret of the origin; if you visit the Turkish website for Akkar, you see the same shotguns; in fact, the Akkar website is printed on the box in which the guns are shipped. With Remington's (likely temporary) egress from the marketplace, there's a rather serious shortage in available, American-made, shot-delivery-device options. While I understand and endorse buying American goods whenever possible, circumstances may dictate other options. In the case of the EAA Churchill line, these tactical models have two salient features in the current market: they're affordable and available.

How affordable, you ask? The semi-automatic 220 model has an MSRP of \$561, which includes the red-dot sight. The 620 pump-action comes with the same red dot at a price of \$427. For a gun that's ready for defensive-duty right out of the box, that's a great price for a truly convenient package. While there are a fair number of folks who enjoy tinkering, customizing and changing components on their firearms, there are plenty of people who just want something that works that they don't have to think about. It's analogous to factory-available pickup trucks that come with big tires and beefed-up suspensions.

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### SPECIFICATIONS 620 OPTICS TACTICAL

**Manufacturer:** Akkar

**Importer:** EAA; (321) 639-4842, eaacorp.com

**Action Type:** Pump-action

**Gauge:** 20; 3-inch chamber

**Capacity:** 5 rounds

**Finish:** Matte blued

**Barrel Length:** 18.5 inches

**Choke:** Breacher style, cylinder-bore;  
Beretta/Benelli style

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 5 pounds, 12 ounces

**Sights:** 5-MOA red-dot sight; red fiber-optic  
front sight

**Length:** 37.5 inches

**Weight:** 5 pounds

**Accessories:** Red-dot sight, lock, manual

**MSRP:** \$427

While some motorheads prefer to spec out their own off-landers, there's a definite market for turnkey variants. Think of EAA's Churchill Optics Tactical line of shotguns as turnkey defensive scatterguns.

Let's also not lose sight of the 20-gauge advantage here, either. With a significant reduction in felt recoil thanks to the milder 20 gauge, this line is friendlier to new shooters, smaller-stature folks and anyone who isn't a big fan of massive recoil. While the 12 gauge might be the king in the realm of fight-stopping and overwhelming muzzle energy, it's less-than-ideal for someone starting out their shotgun experience. For a modest investment, one might choose to add a Churchill 220 or 620 to their defensive armory to expand the circle of potential allied defenders in their home, for example, while at the same time having a lower-recoiling option for spreading the "gospel of the gauge" to the large number of folks new to shooting.

Looking at the Churchill Tactical line, there's a word for both guns, and that word is "utilitarian." Furniture is nondescript polymer; not good or bad, just, well, plastic. It's good for weight reduction and helps keep costs down, but isn't going to grab your attention like polished hardwood. This is hardly a knock on the line, mind you; it's a

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Slight differences between the semi-automatic 220 and the pump-action 620 are evident in the receiver, where the 220 has the requisite bolt handle and bolt-release button featuring prominently as distinguishing factors. Also differentiating the two models is the trigger guard, where the slide-release lever on the pump-action 620 sits forward of the guard itself; however both shotguns share the same crossbolt safety mechanism.

testament to the task for which these guns were designed. The receiver sports a matte-black finish while the barrels wear bluing, and the match between the two finishes is even and congruent. There's no significant change from the receiver to the barrel to jar one's aesthetic senses—if one were to concern oneself with the aesthetics of tactical shotguns, that is.

Differences between the pump-action 620 and semi-automatic 220 are limited mainly to the function of the shotgun. Areas where the function is identical, such as the buttstock and pistol grip, barrel, top rail, etc. are essentially indistinguishable. Minor differences, such as the bolt handle on the 220 or the slide-release lever on the 620 are certainly present for obvious reasons, but for the most part, the two shotguns could pass for twins. Fraternal twins, obviously, as the open section of tubular magazine that shows on the pump does make it easy to tell the two apart, but you might not immediately recognize which is which on a crowded gun rack. Granted, most people are going to buy one

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Prominent and polymer, both models include the same pistol-grip stock.

or the other, so telling them apart really isn't a big deal.

Operationally, both shotguns are run pretty much like every other shotgun of their respective type out there. Both load through a loading gate located on the bottom of the receiver, both have magazine tubes capable of holding five rounds, both have a pushbutton safety at the rear of the trigger guard and ejection occurs on the right side of the receiver. Press the bolt release or release the slide to chamber a round, the rest should be familiar (and if not, avail yourself of some quality shotgun instruction). It boils down to whether you want to work the action yourself, or let the gas operation do the work for you.

The addition of the 5-MOA red-dot sight to the top of each shotgun speaks to the simplicity—and ubiquity—of the red dot. In addition to keeping the aiming sequence similar to the carbine (and now pistol) with which many are familiar, the red dot allows both-eyes-open for increased visual information. In a home-defense situation, getting as much information to the brain as quickly as possible is an exceedingly good thing. Now, granted, the house-brand dot that comes with either Churchill Tactical shotgun isn't a Trijicon, Aimpoint or EOTech, but you

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Slightly sleeker, the 220 semi-auto variant features a trim fore-end, while the 620 pump's is more utilitarian, with plenty of space to grip • Offering six brightness levels and night-vision compatibility, the 5-MOA, house-brand red-dot sight also has a quick-release mount.



shouldn't expect it to be (and, all of those optics cost more than the 620 shotgun). However, both dots on both shotguns held up in our testing, and while it wasn't as exhaustive as some would like, if the optic was going to exhibit problems, we'd have had a chance to notice.

Speaking of testing, that's the real proof. With recent events, finding a wide selection of ammo—especially in 20 gauge—was a little more challenging than in years past, but we managed to pull together a decent assortment of birdshot, buckshot and even slugs. Testing was weighted a little more heavily on the semi-automatic 220 Tactical, because with the pump-action 620, it was either going to work or not.

Semi-autos are obviously more complicated and sensitive to ammunition variation, so we felt the focus should center on running a wider range of projectiles through the 220.

Initial results were, well, there's no way to put this differently—discouraging. Both models exhibited a glitch where two shells would exit the tubular magazine at the same time, fully jamming the lifter in the down (empty) position. This meant the action could not be



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closed until the two shells were pried apart, a complicated task given the tight confines of the receiver. It happened repeatedly, enough to give pause that this was a significant problem and not just a slight glitch to work out. A call to EAA and replacements were on the way.

This does drive home two salient points: One, that you should absolutely test any new firearm for function. I don't care how reliable the action is supposed to be. I don't care how flawlessly it ran in an online review, test it yourself. Two, even the vaunted pump-action shotgun can malfunction. Where EAA's Churchill Tactical line is set up as a turn-key defensive arm, one may be tempted to forgo some of the necessary testing. Again, don't. For those of us steeped in the firearm culture this is second-nature. However, with literally millions of new gun owners joining our ranks lately, it's good to repeat this advice.

EAA's replacement shotguns worked near-perfectly, and more meaningful data was achieved. With the "breacher" choke tube installed, the pattern of No. 3 buck at 10 yards stayed entirely on an 11x17-inch sheet of paper, a quick-and-dirty test for maximum-spread distance. Assuming that target is representative of center-of-mass on a standard-issue bad guy, find the farthest distance at which all pellets remain on paper—any pellet or pellets that fall outside that area are potential hazards to innocents. As the pump-action 620 and semi-auto 220 have the same barrel length and choke pattern, it was not surprising to find the two shotguns had the same 10-yard maximum. Slightly surprising, in a good way, was both red-dot sights being darn close right out of the box. At the 10-yard distance, one was spot on, and the



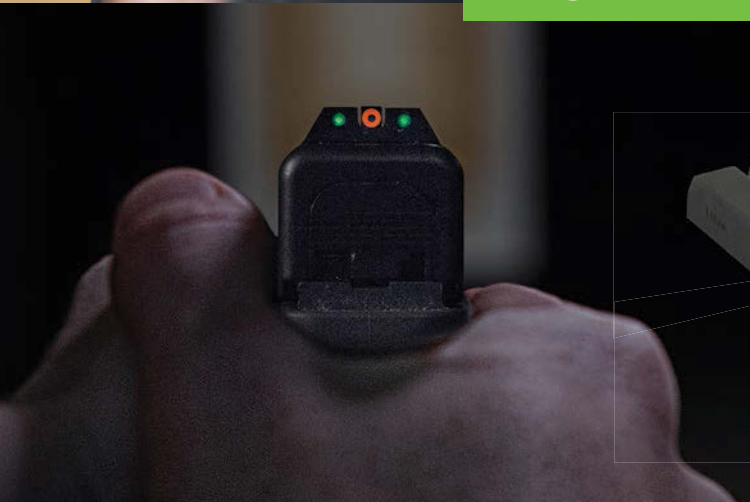
Generous and forgiving, the rubber butt pad soaked up recoil, even from 3-inch shells • Cylinder bore and tactical in appearance, the breacher choke is the same on both models • Protected by stout ears, the red fiber-optic pipe offers a backup-sight option.



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other needed only a slight elevation adjustment. This surprised me, because it's good luck, something of which I have little.

With the ammunition situation the way it is, we had to take what we could get for 20-gauge shells. Most of the rounds fired in testing operation were birdshot, with Winchester, Rio and Remington Nos. 7½ and 8 loads with velocities from 1,200 to 1,300 fps. Only Remington No. 3 buckshot was tested, simply because that's all the 20-gauge buck we had. Winchester PDX1 Defender slugs were available, but in such small quantity that we could only verify that they would work in the Churchill shotguns and were accurate out to 20 yards. Overall, nearly 200 rounds of various-weight birdshot, 50 rounds of buckshot and 20 slugs were fired through both guns, with no problems other than the initial jamming experienced in the first pair. We did note that the semi-auto 220 preferred the lighter, faster No. 7½ shot at 1,250 to 1,300 fps rather than the heavier No. 8 at 1,200, although it would run them under protest (hand-cycling the second round in the magazine was necessary for the

first two magazines). Semi-automatic shotguns, even high-end models, are notoriously finicky with some loads, particularly lighter-weight ones. This is not a problem for those using buckshot for home-defense.

Bottom line, EAA's Churchill Optics Tactical line of shotguns represents an affordable, out-of-the-box offering with lower recoil for any shooter. As with any new firearm, test thoroughly to ensure proper operation, find a defensive load it likes and keep it clean and well-lubricated. A red-dot sight gives rapid target acquisition, ideal for defensive scenarios, while the 20-gauge chambering offers reduced recoil. Check out these Churchills to defend hearth and home. 🌀



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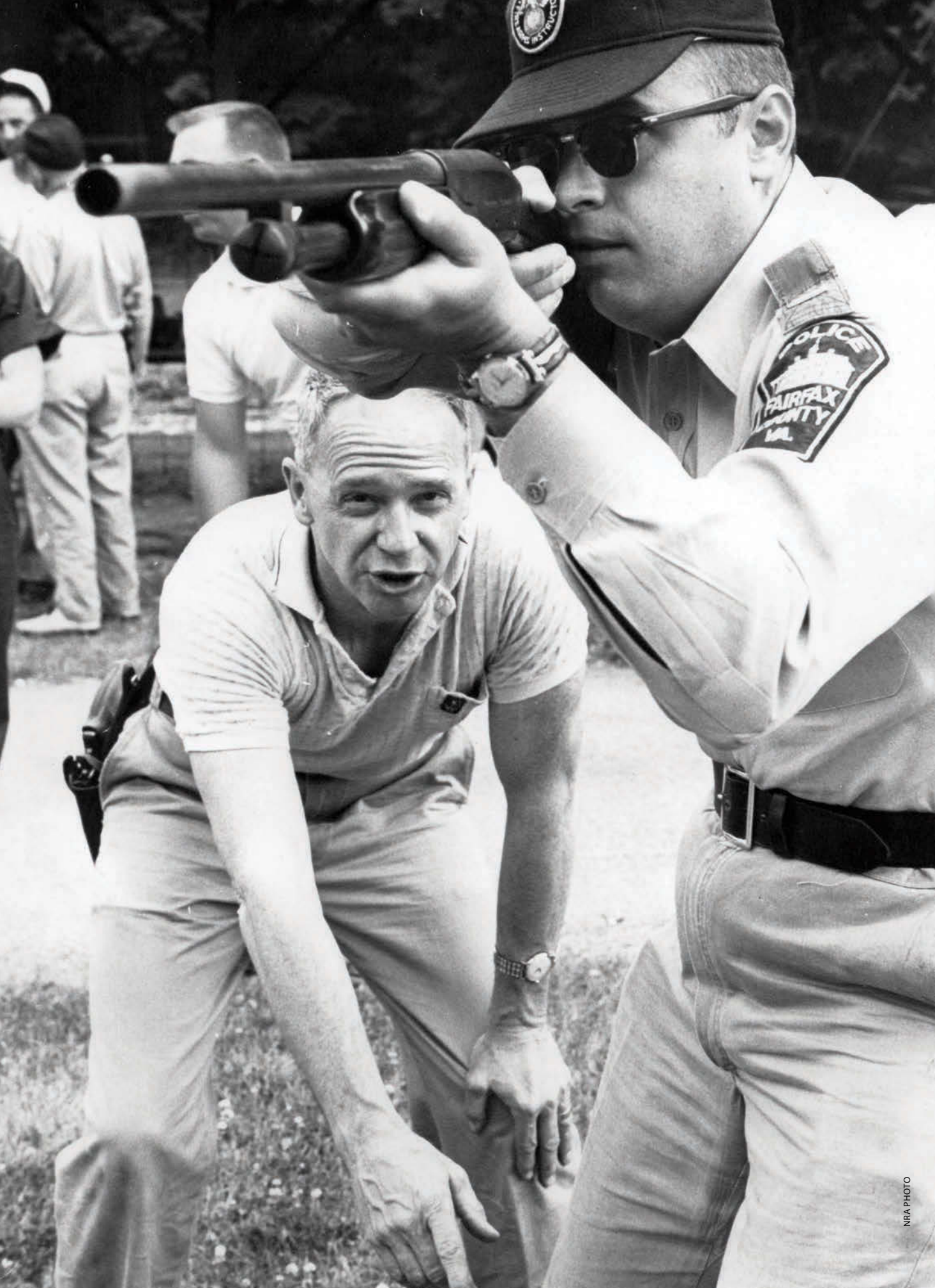
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# Learning Something New

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I love the idea of tackling something new. I haven't always. There was a time when I let my ego limit my life experiences. It's shameful now when I look back at those times, but it is also human nature. The best thing that could have happened to me was failing; realizing there is really nothing shameful in not knowing. Not wanting to learn was the greater travesty. Even in my current position, with the experience I have accumulated, I am still learning. I have come to enjoy failure at times, because it communicates to me an area I can improve. When it comes to shooting, over the years I have found lots of areas in which I can improve. Here are three of the most valuable lessons I have so far learned regarding accuracy, consistency and novelty.

I really love pushing my limits on all fronts. As I get older, I find myself facing new limitations. I may not be able to apply the same pounds-per-square-inch in my crushing grip I could 10 years ago. I'm OK with that, because now I'm more aware of the shortcoming. I can look at my shot group and see where my grip faltered. It means I will have to adjust my expectations as I get older. It also means I'm

excited to see what these new norms will be, granted with a tinge of disappointment. I try not to get hung up on the disappointment, to be honest. Instead, I focus on what I can do well. One area where I can continue to make gains is my accuracy. I'm constantly looking to shoot more accurately.

While shooting fast is important, I will reach a point where I will see my times getting slower. There is nothing I can do about that. I don't have to like it, but there is still nothing I can do about getting older and the mechanical decay my body will undergo. I have accepted it as fate and the result of a

life well lived. I will continue to push my limits for speed, but not at the expense of accuracy. I have established for myself a baseline of accuracy, and I aim to make improvements each time I handle my firearms. Sometimes the improvements are subtle and other times they are more pronounced. An example of a subtle improvement is when I hyper-focus on my front sight. Depending on the shot required and the time, distance and exposure I have to deal with, I try

NRA PHOTO



Accurate shooting for effective, rapid incapacitation is the goal for self-defense. The precepts are studied in the classroom (top) and put into practice on the range. Shotgun technique (opposite) hasn't changed much, though the guns certainly have, with semi-automatics and red-dot sights becoming prevalent (above).

By Jeff Gonzales



A lot of times we put up our own barriers to learning. Instead, I try to open my senses to everything. I may only pick up little nuggets of knowledge, but if I would not have learned it otherwise, it was totally worth the effort.

to make it a point to see my front-sight post the moment the shot is fired.

An example of a more pronounced improvement is sight tracking. This happens when I'm firing a string of shots and I can see the front sight lift out of the rear notch, climb to the top of my sight box then return to the rear notch. I'm not going to lie; it is so cool when I can see this same thing happen over and over.

Here are a couple of drills to practice the accuracy traits mentioned above. The first question you have to ask is: Can you see the front sight the moment the round is fired? If not, this is your starting point. How do we promote this type of front-sight focus? My suggestion is to slow things down. Give yourself time to really see the sight, but, more importantly, to smoothly pull the trigger. We use the term surprise break, which means you apply steady pressure on the trigger straight back with no lateral pressure. The surprise comes because the shooter cannot predict the break, and subsequently does not impart negative forces that disturb the sight picture. While I know it may seem counter-intuitive, trust me when I tell you it is a great skill to learn. As I slowly pull the trigger to the rear I am intently focused on the very tip of the front-sight post. As long as you are smoothly pulling the trigger, the ability to see the front sight post is there. With this intensive focus, coupled with the steady trigger pull, you create the best

chance of literally seeing the front-sight post lift out of the rear notch and climb upward. It allows the shooter to see the final point-of-aim before the shot is fired. This, in turn, will provide important feedback to the shooter as they develop.

One of the best things I learned as a sniper was how accuracy was nothing more than being consistent. This sentiment really hit home; it made sense at a cerebral level. If I wanted to excel at long-range shooting, then everything I did had to be done the same way each and every time, from how I interfaced with the rifle, to how I breathed; even to how I loaded the ammunition. I didn't fully appreciate this until much later in life. It's where I had to step outside of my comfort zone when learning new things. If I made it a point to be consistent, I could feel a deeper sense of learning taking place. I applied this method to anything at which I wanted to excel. I would not only practice the activity in a consistent manner, but my practice sessions would be consistent. This ensured I would provide myself with the opportunity to see the improvements. They don't happen overnight; you have to put in the work. When I did, I could see the fruits of my labor.

The challenge is trying to determine what consistency looks like for you. Is it every day, every week, every month? That is the question you have to ask yourself. For me, I would ask myself how important was this



NRA

One-handed point shooting where the handgun's sights are pretty much superfluous fortunately gave way to two handed-shooting focusing on the front sight. Now, that, too, is changing, thanks to red-dot optical sights purpose-built for pistols.





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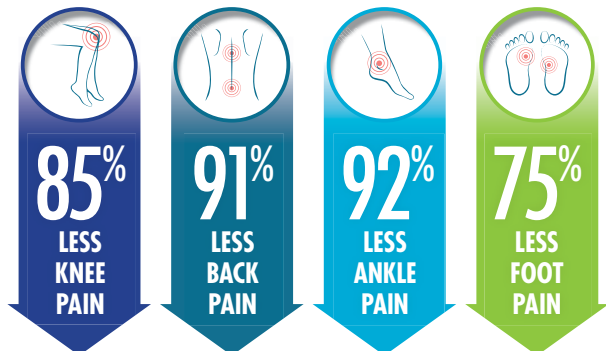
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Long-range rifle shooting has evolved in the past few years. Shooters now evenly splay their legs with their insteps flat on the ground. The buttstock is more centered on the chest and the strong-side thumb is often left alongside (rather than around) the pistol grip.

If I wanted to excel at long-range shooting, then everything I did had to be done the same way each and every time, from how I interfaced with the rifle, to how I breathed—even to how I loaded the ammunition.


skill I was trying to learn. Was it a hobby for entertainment or was it a skill for my profession? Since there are only so many hours in the day, this level of review allowed me to evaluate the draw on my existing resources. A lot of times I found something would have to give in order to make this work, so it was all about balance. Where could I find the right balance of duration and frequency?

My suggestion is to value the benefit of being consistent, then to determine what that will look like for yourself. When it comes to shooting, you have to add in additional variables such as ammunition availability and range usage. How much ammunition do you have or are willing to expend in the pursuit of this goal? If range availability is hard to come by, you need to consider the value of adding dry-fire to your practice. I promise you, though, within all of this there is an achievable balance.

As an adult, I'm pretty set in my ways. I find most of the time these patterns are beneficial even if they drive other people crazy. The problem is, I stopped exploring. I stopped looking to learn new things for whatever reason. Maybe it was time, maybe it was other life events, but I know some of it had to do with ego. This was the life lesson that had the biggest impact on me and my shooting: Learning how to learn again. I took up several new activities over the last decade. Some more as a bucket-list check off, others because I wanted to see my life enriched. I mean, who doesn't want to learn

how to dance with a beautiful partner? I became insatiable not only to learn a new skill, but to learn how other professionals in different fields taught, how they connected with their students or athletes.

The value I took away was hard to describe, but suffice it to say I wish I had started this sooner. When I set out to learn something new, it can be a little scary. I try to find a degree of fun in these new activities, because having fun encourages growth and learning. If we think back to our childhood days, we learned a lot when we were having fun on the playground. Explore the possibility of learning something new. If it is how to shoot a firearm, then great. My model of learning a new skill is pretty simple, I listen, read, watch and ask questions. I'm the kind of learner who has to do it manually to really learn, but I don't want to close off other learning methods. A lot of times we put up our own barriers to learning. Instead, I try to open my senses to everything. I may only pick up little nuggets of knowledge, but if I would not have learned it otherwise, it was totally worth the effort. When I put myself in charge of my own learning, it really makes a difference and activities I learned years ago are better retained. While I have terrible rhythm, I have an ability to remember movement patterns no matter the subject. I may not be the best dancer, but it doesn't take me long to get back into the swing of things.

Life is full of challenges—more so these days, it seems. Learning is a treasure and failure is the chest that holds your treasure. No matter your goals, being able to precisely place a projectile where you want is an amazing feat. Accuracy should be more important than speed regardless of your skill level. Doing something over and over until it becomes automatic is another way of describing consistency, but that is not all. It also means being consistent in your pursuit of knowledge or your new skill. You will have to put in the work to learn. Curiosity is the key to learning. Motivation to learn is important, but if the motivation is not internal, it may not have the same impact. However, doing something new challenges you to perfect how you learn. You will need to become your own learning advocate. There is much this life has to offer; have fun and learn something new. 

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# Making Contact

By George Harris

## The Problem

In your extreme-close-quarters-encounter class, you were cautioned that contact shots could cause a handgun to malfunction, and possibly not fire at all, leading to an even graver situation. You do not understand why either condition might happen, much less the possible benefit or detriment of shooting an assailant with the muzzle in contact with their person. What are the effective advantages and disadvantages of making a contact shot when involved in a lethal-force encounter?

Holding an opponent at bay with your off-hand forearm (while keeping it from slipping in front of your muzzle) can prevent contact between the pistol's muzzle and your adversary, which could possibly cause a malfunction.



## The Solution

It sounds like your instructor was suggesting that making a contact shot in a gunfight was a concept that one should avoid without getting into the detail of why that might be the case. There are a multitude of reasons a statement like that could be made, ranging from time constraints of the class curriculum to the infinite possibilities of the conditions surrounding a gunfight at bad-breath distance, where most occur.

From a purely mechanical standpoint, the type of handgun can determine whether it may fire or not when the muzzle is in contact with the adversary. If a revolver is the handgun of choice, as long as the trigger can be fully pulled and the hammer can fall cleanly, the gun will fire whether the muzzle is in hard or light contact with the target.

Semi-automatic pistols that have a fixed barrel, which does not move with the slide when the gun is fired, will usually work when only light contact is applied (by light contact, think about pressing the button on an elevator to change floors). Exceeding that degree of pressure may cause the slide to move rearward sufficiently to actuate the disconnector, rendering the gun unable to fire.

Semi-automatic pistols where the barrel and slide initially reciprocate as a unit when fired are more susceptible to failure to fire and function when firmly pushed into contact with the target. It only takes approximately one-eighth of an inch of rearward movement of the slide, in relation to the frame, for the disconnector to operate and disengage the trigger from the fire-control mechanism, suddenly and


unexpectedly changing the handgun into a makeshift impact weapon.

In either case regarding semi-auto pistols, the slide must be allowed to cycle fully in order to fire more than one shot. This means that clothing, body parts or other obstructions cannot be allowed to hinder the movement of the slide for multiple shots. During a struggle with one or multiple aggressors in close contact, the likelihood of the slide operating properly decreases, as it is possible to encounter some restriction.

Without going into great detail, the gases from the propellant powering the projectile down the barrel require a degree of consideration in conjunction with the bullet's penetration into the target. When the muzzle is in contact with the target as the gun fires, the bullet makes the initial penetration followed by a significant amount of high-pressure gases that create additional tissue damage. In some cases, depending on the cartridge fired in a contact wound, the gas-pressure damage to the target equals or exceeds that which was caused by the projectile itself. This is beneficial in stopping the unwanted action of the opponent in a gunfight.

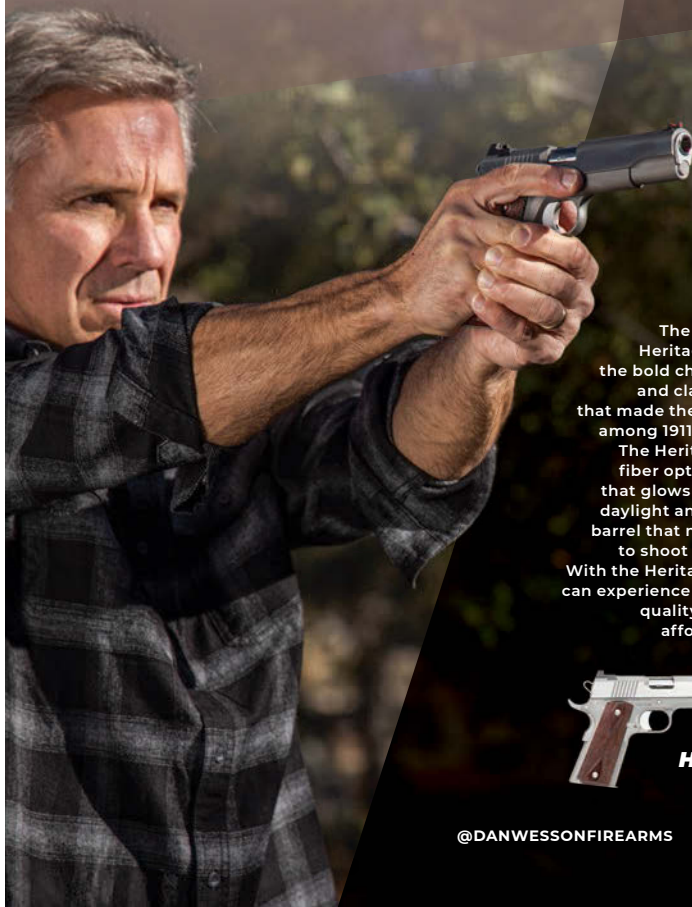
Revolvers pose a separate issue in that gas will escape at the barrel/cylinder gap, which could be detrimental in close proximity to the shooter as well as to the one being shot. In a close-quarter engagement with so many moving parts, it would be difficult to fully control the direction of the gasses escaping from that area of the revolver.

From a tactical perspective, your instructor may have been suggesting that allowing a criminal attacker to come within contact distance, facilitating the possibility of a contact shot, would not be a choice the one would want to make. He is right in that respect, as distance is often your friend in a gunfight.

Contact shots are usually quite effective, but are difficult to administer in a consistent manner during a dynamic confrontation. 

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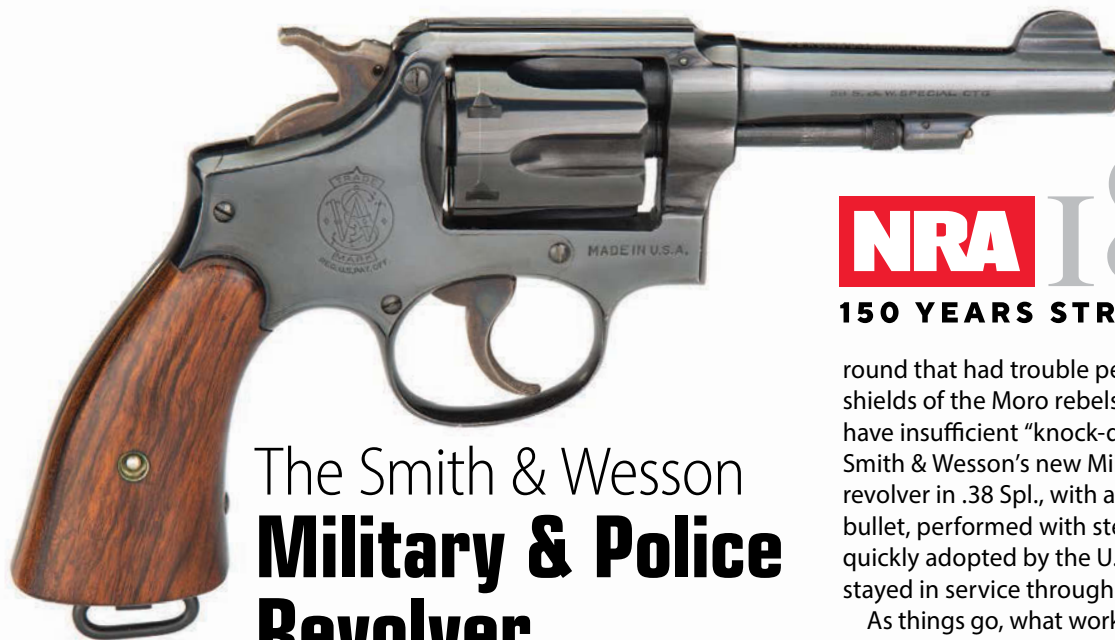
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### "1 Adam-12, Handle Code 3"

As a young child growing up in the late 1960s and early '70s, hearing those words blast over the TV on a Saturday evening meant that the next 30 minutes were going to be thrilling. Watching "Adam-12" on NBC was something I really looked forward to and I was enthralled with how officers Malloy and Reed handled street crime in Los Angeles. It gave me an early respect for police officers, especially the firearms they carried.

It wasn't until much later that I appreciated that their revolvers were Smith & Wesson Model 14s chambered in .38 Spl. Built on the company's famous K-Frame, the Model 14 was basically a Military & Police (M&P) with adjustable target sights. Introduced in 1899, the Smith & Wesson M&P, catalogued as the Model 10 since 1957, is perhaps the most prolific revolver of the 20th century, with more than 6 million manufactured.

Aptly named the Military & Police model, it was designed to take the new .38 Spl. cartridge developed by Smith & Wesson to replace the .38 Colt. The Colt cartridge was receiving bad reviews while in use with the Army trying to put down the Philippine Insurrection following the Spanish-American War of 1898. The old .38 Colt was a blackpowder

Law enforcement and NRA training have been partnered for more than a century, with both training styles and hardware evolving with the times.


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round that had trouble penetrating the shields of the Moro rebels and was found to have insufficient "knock-down" power. Smith & Wesson's new Military & Police revolver in .38 Spl., with a .357-inch-diameter bullet, performed with stellar results and was quickly adopted by the U.S. Military and stayed in service through the Vietnam War.

As things go, what works for the military will also work for law enforcement, and at the turn of the century, as metropolitan police forces were growing exponentially, the new M&P revolver found instant favor with patrolmen who needed more than a nightstick to subdue bad guys. It soon became the standard arm of most law enforcement officers in this country.

As the popularity of the M&P grew, the NRA, simultaneously, began an association with law enforcement organizations that continues more than a century later. In 1916, Frank J. Kahrs, writing for *Arms and the Man* magazine, the predecessor to the NRA's *American Rifleman*, stated that extensive training was necessary in teaching officers to shoot. Kahrs' article proposed "that a systematic program of instruction be made part of the original training of every policeman. Regular practice at standard paper targets should be held at least once a month."

To quote the NRA website: "In 1960 the NRA Law Enforcement Division was formed to provide the law enforcement community with a means of certifying firearm instructors. The NRA Law Enforcement Division offers a complete police shooting program to police departments and law enforcement agencies to encourage patrol officers to gain more experience, training and time on the range using their duty firearms. To further encourage law-enforcement officers to gain more experience, training and time on the range using their duty firearms, the NRA created the Police Pistol Combat (PPC) competitions, Tactical Police competitions and the National

Police Shooting Championships in 1962."

Shortly before World War II began in 1939, Smith & Wesson found itself in dire straits financially. A contract from the British Purchasing Commission for a light machine gun resulted in an influx of \$1 million into its coffers at an incredibly important time. However, when the Smith & Wesson Light Machine gun proved unacceptable to the British, the company was on the brink of financial ruin.

Faced with having to pay back the advanced money, a compromise was reached whereby Smith & Wesson provided the British with tens of thousands of M&P revolvers chambered in .38/200, with a phosphate military finish and wood grips. When the U.S. entered the war in 1941, Smith & Wesson chambered the gun in .38 Spl. and supplied the government with thousands of them; renaming them the Victory Model, with serial numbers starting with "V."

The M&P was purchased and used by military and police units of more than 30 countries. It remained popular with police officers well into the 1980s, when double-stack, semi-automatic handguns rapidly replaced revolvers in the law enforcement community. The revolver is still produced by Smith & Wesson as part of its Classics line. Models are still in use in France, Peru and a handful of other countries.

Every gun has a story. The story of the Smith & Wesson M&P revolver is as colorful as any ever manufactured. From arming law-enforcement officers for more than 80 years and seeing service on the front lines in World War II, this gun helped save its manufacturer from ruin, paving the way for it to become the most produced revolver of the 20th century.



MG Julian S. Hatcher was Chief of Ordnance for the Army and Technical Editor of *American Rifleman*. He donated his Smith & Wesson Victory Model, serial number 3 (seen here), to the National Firearms Museum. 🏹

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# Iver Johnson Eagle LR Special

Iver Johnson's new pistol embodies the 21st century 1911.

**T**he Eagle LR Special, from Iver Johnson, is one substantial piece of gear. All-steel pistols seem almost anachronistic in the age of polymer or aluminum-alloy frames, yet the Eagle is as modern as any 1911 out there, essential material notwithstanding.

Iver Johnson has of late been creating some striking pistols with a high-end appearance despite competitive pricing. The Eagle LR Special



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** Iver Johnson Arms;  
(321) 636-3377, iverjohnsonarms.com

**Action Type:** Recoil-operated,  
semi-automatic

**Caliber:** .45 ACP

**Capacity:** 8+1 rounds

**Frame:** 1045 steel

**Slide:** 4140 steel

**Barrel Length:** 5.75 inches

**Sights:** Suppressor-height XS Sight  
Systems Express Tritium Dot post front;  
tritium-enhanced "V" rear

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 4 pounds, 13 ounces

**Length:** 9.5 inches

**Width:** 1.33 inches

**Height:** 5.5 inches

**Weight:** 43 ounces

**Accessories:** Lock, hard case

**MSRP:** \$1,078

## SHOOTING RESULTS

Load	Velocity	Smallest	Group Size Largest	Average
Hornady 185-grain Critical Defense FTX	1,022	2.2	2.9	2.6
SIG Sauer Elite 200-grain V-Crown JHP	891	1.4	3.6	2.7
Remington 230-grain Black Belt BJHP	843	1.7	2.6	2.3

Velocity measured in fps 5 feet from the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a Oehler Model 36 chronograph. Temperature: 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Accuracy measured in inches for five consecutive, five-shot groups fired at 25 yards from a rest.

## ON TARGET

Easily accessorized

## OFF TARGET

Absence of texturing limits purchase

is no exception. I'm not usually a fan of two-tone pistols, but here the matte-blue (black) slide and Midnight Bronze Cerakoted frame complement each other, rather than contrast. The black controls accent the chromatic pairing, as do the deeply figured Dymondwood laminated stocks that exhibit streaks of everything from black to tan.

Present are all of the refinements that are now so *de rigueur* on modern 1911s, we scarcely note them anymore. For the record, they include a high-sweep beavertail grip safety with memory pad, extended thumb safety and slide release, lowered and flared ejection port, three-hole trigger and skeletonized hammer.

What is new and distinctive that the Eagle LR Special brings to the table are a threaded barrel with included thread protector; suppressor-height, tritium night sights and a Picatinny rail integrated into the dust-cover. It's a sturdy 1911 ready to embrace the modern world.

Picking up the Eagle, its heft seems considerable, even for an all-steel gun. That's because it is. With a barrel .75-inch longer than a standard 5-inch 1911, plus a thread protector, as well as the added mass of the rail, the Eagle tips the scales at 43 ounces, some 4 ounces heavier than a standard all-steel, full-size 1911.

The pistol feels nicely smooth in the hand; slick, but not quite slippery. On the other hand, there is a lack of available purchase. The frontstrap is not textured; it contains no checkering, stippling or serrations. Moreover, the aforementioned stylized grips, which incorporate both a smooth area and a "gator skin" area, don't offer a lot of "grab." There are, of course, a number of fixes for this, from having a gunsmith checker the frontstrap to applying skateboard tape to swapping out the grips for rubber units from Pachmayr or Hogue, among others.

The sights are XS Sight Systems Express Tritium Dot combination. The front is a post containing a green tritium dot surrounded by a white ring. The rear is an extremely shallow "V" with a vertical window of tritium. Using the front sight, dot the "I" of the vertical line in the rear sight or simply place the front dot in the deepest part of the rear's "V." Though they may be the fastest iron sights out there, be aware that within 15 yards they require a dead-on hold rather than a 6-o'clock one.

The rail is a three-slot design, allowing you to best position your accessory for comfortable manipulation. You can mount a light, a laser or a light/laser combo. You can also mount a light there and Crimson Trace LaserGrips on the grip frame. The Eagle gives you a lot of options.

Fit and finish were both good; no tooling marks were visible inside the slide. Controls were comfortable to access and actuate with moderate pressure and functioned with a snappy sureness. The trigger was particularly good, exhibiting some take-up and virtually no creep before cleanly breaking. You'd be hard-pressed to find a better trigger, stock or custom.

Though we can't see the Eagle being worn regularly for concealed carry, its weight pays off pleasantly at the range, where felt recoil is noticeably reduced. Furthermore, because that weight is at the muzzle and the dustcover, muzzle rise is attenuated. I imagined this would really help with hot loads, but Iver Johnson forbids both +P and reloads in this pistol.

We did experience a problem with the thread protector coming loose every few shots, necessitating unloading the pistol to safely retighten it. We corrected this with some removable, medium-strength threadlocker (don't use the permanent stuff, since you do want to be able to remove it). Also, during testing there were five failures to go into battery, with the extractor hook missing the case rim.

The addition of a suppressor (simplified by the threaded barrel and high sights) would make shooting the Eagle quieter, more convenient and more practical for those shooting on private property where noise can be an issue. However, it's also a fine pistol without a suppressor, one that just expands your options. Firing the vaunted .45 ACP round, equipped with night sights and mounting a light, laser or both, the Eagle should make a formidable home-defense tool. Overall, the Eagle LR Special is a versatile, easy-shooting pistol that evinces the best characteristics of the 1911 while also being nice to look at.



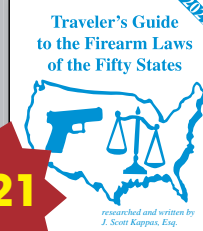
The front and rear Express sights are enhanced with self-luminous tritium capsules • A low-mass trigger contributes to an excellent trigger pull, which feels lighter than it measured • Accessorization is simplified by the muzzle being threaded .578x28 tpi for commonality • An integrated rail provides flexibility in positioning accessories for best accessibility • By coordinating the colors of the slide, frame, controls and laminated grips, Iver Johnson has made the Eagle LR Special a particularly handsome pistol.

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WRITTEN BY AN ATTORNEY



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# Ruger Custom Shop Precision Rifle

Custom refinements and a new chambering make Ruger's latest RPR capable of even greater tack-driving accuracy.

**T**he goal for most American-made firearms is to provide good performance at a great price. This is the reason you can purchase a bolt-action rifle like the Ruger American for less than \$500 and still shoot brag-worthy groups. With its Custom Shop Precision Rifle, Ruger's goal was to provide stellar performance. This rifle is not for everyone, because not everyone can afford it, and/or not everyone possesses the skill to let it perform to its maximum capabilities. It is designed to shoot as well at 1,000 yards as most rifles do at 200.

Starting with its standard Precision Rifle, Ruger made some critical enhancements to this just-released Custom Shop version. But, before we get into the particulars of this new rifle, it's important you understand what the standard Ruger Precision Rifle is. Simply put, it is a modular, magazine-fed rifle built on a two-piece—upper and lower—

receiver, with a freefloated barrel and an in-line positioned, fully adjustable, folding AR-style stock. It is a rifle that's quite well adapted to long-range shooting for pleasure or for PRS (Precision Rifle Series) Competition. With a suggested retail of \$1,599, it's priced right for the hobbyist. At \$800 more, the Custom Shop version is intended for the serious competitor.

What does this additional \$800 get you? For starters, you get an adjustable TriggerTech trigger with frictionless-release technology; it broke crisply at 2.5 pounds right out of the box. You get a Magpul MOE K2+ grip and an APA muzzle brake screwed on the end of a 5/8x24 threaded, 26-inch barrel, that's almost four-times caliber diameter at the muzzle. There's also the addition of Cerakote to select parts, a red-anodized barrier stop and an ambidextrous safety. The freefloat handguard is M-Lok compatible, and there are also M-Lok attachment slots machined into the sides of the magazine well for MatchSaver-style



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** Ruger; (336) 949-5200, [ruger.com](http://ruger.com)

**Action Type:** Bolt-action

**Caliber:** 6 mm Creedmoor

**Capacity:** 10 rounds

**Barrel Length:** 26 inches

**Rifling:** 5 grooves; 1:7-inch RH twist

**Sights:** None; Picatinny rail for optics

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 2 pounds, 8 ounces

**Stock:** Ruger Precision MSR

**Length:** 42.25 to 48.75 inches

**Weight:** 12 pounds, 13 ounces

**Accessories:** Custom Shop certificate, cloth, challenge coin, sticker, two 5-round PMags, M-Lok 3.75-inch rail section and QD sling attachment, sling swivel stud and hex-wrench, stick-on Sorbothane cheek pad, barrier stop

**MSRP:** \$2,399

## SHOOTING RESULTS

Load	Velocity	Smallest	Group Size Largest	Average
Hornady 108-grain ELD Match	2,797	.53	.95	.66

Velocity measured in fps at the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a Caldwell G2 chronograph. Temperature: 86 degrees Fahrenheit. Accuracy measured in inches for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 100 yards from a benchrest.

## ON TARGET

Impressive accuracy

## OFF TARGET

Nontraditional appearance



In addition to shipping with two magazines, the RPR is designed to be compatible with AICS and M110, SR-25, DPMS, Magpul and even some M1A magazines. The rifle's ambidextrous fire

controls are finished in red Cerakote to provide eye-catching contrast. An APA muzzle brake contributed to virtually no felt recoil. MSR enthusiasts will appreciate the presence

cartridge holders and other accessories compatible with the M-Lok system for attachments. Like the standard model, the rifle features the same 70-degree throw and a three-lug bolt with dual-cocking cams and nitride-coated body.

Though the red-accented trigger, safety and barrier stop add some colorful flare, this is not what traditionalists would call an attractive rifle. It does, however, carry an air of earnestness and the two-tone black and gray finish—a combination of Cerakote and Type III hardcoat anodizing—is easier on the eye than the basic black of the standard model. If you show up for a match with this rifle, other shooters will know it is different. But looks, as they say, are only skin deep; what matters is what is on the inside or more specifically, performance.



of the Magpul MOE K2 pistol grip • The adjustable TriggerTech trigger features Frictionless Release Technology for an ultra-crisp break with minimal overtravel and an extremely short reset • Not only is the Ruger adjustable for length-of-pull and comb height, its buttstock can also fold to the side for convenient storage and transport • An oversize bolt knob aids in fumble-free operation • The bolt-on barrier stop can provide added stability when shooting from cover or making use of field-expedient rests.


For testing, a Crimson Trace HardLine Pro 6-24x50 mm riflescope was attached to the 19-slot, 20-MOA Picatinny rail that comes on the rifle with Wheeler two-piece Picatinny Scope Rings. Mounting and zeroing a riflescope is always a good indication of precision assembly. With the scope reticle centered, and keeping in mind the 20-MOA offset, the initial bore sight found the reticle out of alignment by only about 1 MOA horizontally and 18 MOA vertically. That's near-perfect bore sight and is a good indication the rifle was assembled on the centerline.

Owing both to the few current options for 6 mm Creedmoor in normal times and the ammo crisis further limiting those options, the only load tested was the 108-grain, ELD-Match load from Hornady. Five, five-shot groups were fired, and each group was fired in less than 3 minutes with the barrel being allowed to fully cool between groups. Not a single group measured over 1 inch and the average for all five groups was .667-inch. The worst group fired, which measured .95-inch, was the result of a single wide flyer induced by shooter error. An additional rapid-fire 10-shot group was fired at 200 yards in less than 2 minutes. It measured .872-inch. This rifle will cut a dime at well beyond the distance you can see one and the bolt almost effortlessly cycles with just a flick of the wrist.

Because of the rifle's weight, its APA muzzle brake, the relatively light recoil of the 6 mm Creedmoor and the fact that the stock is in-line with the barrel, recoil was nearly nonexistent. You could shoot hundreds of rounds a day from this rifle with no shoulder fatigue. The Custom Shop RPR's action was comfortable to work with from the bench, from the prone position and that red-anodized barrier stop mounted just forward of the magazine well was quite handy when working from behind a stable support where you could lean into it. With a common hold on the grip, the safety lever could be manipulated without

grip adjustment, but this is mostly of no consequence; many right-handed precision shooters do not wrap their thumb around the grip, electing to leave it straight along the right side of the receiver. When this was done—and it can be done from either side—the safety lever was even easier to operate. Similarly, the magazine-release lever was quick and easy to manipulate with just a forward poke of the trigger finger.

The flat-bottomed handguard was much appreciated on the bench where it could be well settled into a sandbag. But, perhaps the most appreciated ergonomic feature of this rifle was the fully adjustable buttstock. It's the same stock you'll find on the non-custom version of Ruger's Precision Rifle and it can be easily field-adjusted to your exact length-of-pull and preferred comb height. Serious precision practitioners know these adjustments are not a one-and-done proposition; they often need tweaking depending on shooter/target position. The quick-release levers make this easy and there was even a neat little stick-on pad, for soft cheek-weld contact, that's included.

In the most skilled of hands, this is probably a quarter-MOA rifle. Most of the groups fired were one-hole with a single outlier. The rifle performed flawlessly and is extremely well configured to punch bug-hole groups or ring steel at stupid-long distances, even when shooting in field conditions. It flawlessly digested 100 rounds of ammo and seemed to shoot better the more it was fired. In the world of precision shooting, you could easily spend two to three times what the Ruger Custom Shop Precision Rifle costs and possibly end up with a rifle that will not shoot this well, and most assuredly not be this ergonomically adaptive. Unlike most modern, American-made, precision bolt-action rifles, this one does not represent good performance at a great price, but rather exceptional performance at a good price—what we've come to expect from Ruger's Precision rifles. 





Stock photo by romma

# States Keep Advancing The Second Amendment

**LATEST  
LEGISLATIVE  
NEWS FROM  
INSIDE THE NRA  
INSTITUTE FOR  
LEGISLATIVE  
ACTION**

**W**e are all painfully aware of the deluge of anti-Second Amendment messaging emanating from the folks in charge in our nation's capital. In spite of this, many states have been countering the attempts to push unconstitutional restrictions on law-abiding gun owners by the Biden-Schumer-Pelosi regime by enacting laws that move the needle on the gauge of freedom ever closer to where our Founders intended. Here is a run-down of just some of the pro-gun reforms NRA-ILA has helped to introduce and get signed into law.

## PERMITLESS CARRY CONTINUES TO SPREAD

In our last issue, we told you that Utah and Montana became the 17th and 18th states, respectively, to enact permitless carry laws. Such laws allow law-abiding citizens to lawfully carry concealed firearms for personal protection without first seeking permission from the government.

The permitless-carry club has now expanded to 20 members with the addition of Iowa and Tennessee. For more details on the passage of these two laws, go to [A1F.com](http://A1F.com).

In addition, Texas made history when it passed an NRA-supported permitless-carry bill (H.B. 1927) out of its House of Representatives and Senate for the first time. This is the first time a permitless-carry bill has been debated by, and passed out of, any chamber of the Texas legislature. As we go to press, differences between the House and Senate versions needed to be worked out, but Gov. Greg Abbott (R) has expressed his support. It seems the Lone Star State could be number 21 by the time you read this. Clearly, this expansion of the right to self-defense is building up momentum nationwide.

## RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENSE EXPANDS IN OTHER WAYS

New permitless-carry states are not the only way that the Second Amendment is being expanded. In North Dakota, where permitless carry has been on the books since 2017, Gov. Doug Burgum (R) signed a number of bills in April that enhanced the right to self-defense. Included were an expansion of what firearms can be carried in a vehicle for personal protection, an increase in the number of places where law-abiding residents may carry firearms, a reduction in permitless-carry residency requirements and the removal of certain minor violations that would disqualify individuals from carrying firearms.

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice (R) signed a bill into law that will now allow nonresidents to take advantage of that state's comprehensive agreements to carry handguns for self-defense in other states. This will help residents of other states that do not have good reciprocity laws for their permits, so that those law-abiding citizens will have more states in which they may lawfully carry firearms for personal protection when they travel to them. Those who wish to take advantage of this option will pay application fees to West Virginia and seek training from West Virginian instructors.

Wyoming also improved its existing permitless-carry law in April, when Gov. Mark Gordon (R) signed legislation that extended the law to include all law-abiding adults. The old law applied only to residents of Wyoming who had lived in the state for at least six months.

## NRA-ILA

**ILA Grassroots:**  
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**NRA-ILA website: [nraila.org](http://nraila.org)**

## PROTECTING THE 2A DURING STATES OF EMERGENCY

One of the many things we have learned during the last year-plus under the specter of COVID-19 and general unrest in some parts of America is that Americans will not sit idly by and presume the government will be their only line of defense if they feel their safety is in jeopardy. It seems like every month has seen a new record for the sale of firearms since the start of 2020, and last year's totals absolutely decimated the old record for annual sales.

This all happened in spite of some states with anti-gun governors moving to try to shut down gun stores as "non-essential," or when those states that mandate their own intrusion into firearm transactions slowed down the processing of required paperwork due to self-imposed staff shortages or closed offices.

Several states responded to these problems by passing legislation that ensured the Second Amendment would not fall victim to similar emergencies in the future.

Montana, North Dakota, West Virginia and Wyoming all passed bills that seek to ensure that the Second Amendment is not suspended during a declared state of emergency. These states enacted protections for law-abiding gun owners during such times, as well as for gun stores, ranges and other entities that engage in the lawful selling or servicing of firearms, components or accessories.

Governors Burgum, Gordon, Justice and Greg Gianforte (R-Mont.) all deserve the thanks of the pro-2A community for signing all of these bills, as do those legislators who supported their passage.

There are still opportunities remaining for states to continue the push to advance our rights protected under the Second Amendment, as several states remain in session as we go to print. Stay tuned. 🌀

Photo by Angela Taley

## Ray Stevens Is NRA COUNTRY



**N**RA Country is always excited to introduce our members to new country artists, but we also have a great appreciation and the utmost respect for classic country. When we had the opportunity to interview an icon who has won multiple Grammy Awards and been inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame and Country Music Hall of Fame, we immediately jumped at it. This month's featured artist is unlike any other, in part because of his varied talents. Ray Stevens is a singer-songwriter, comedian, solo artist, producer, music arranger and even television host. NRA Country's Vanessa Shahidi was honored to recently ask the multi-platinum-selling artist a few questions.

**VS: Mr. Stevens, where did you get your appreciation for the great outdoors?**

**RS:** I joined the Boy Scouts and loved camping and all that it entailed.

**VS: Who taught you how to shoot?**

**RS:** I taught myself and have learned from friends who are marksmen.

**VS: What is your favorite firearm?**

**RS:** I have several, but I especially like a .22 Colt revolver with an interchangeable magnum cylinder.

**VS: What are you currently working on?**

**RS:** I recently built and perform in a dinner/showroom in Nashville called CabaRay. I have a new recording studio and just finished a four-CD set of songs. I'm also redesigning and remodeling a great house, and at 82 years old, that's about all I have time for!

Be sure to catch all the news and announcements about Ray Stevens on Facebook and [raystevens.com](http://raystevens.com).

*NRA Country is a lifestyle and a bond between the country music community and hard-working Americans everywhere. It's powered by pride, freedom, love of country, respect for the military, and the responsibilities of protecting the great American life. Visit [nracountry.com](http://nracountry.com) and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.*

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## IN MEMORY NRA-ILA CONTRIBUTIONS

**March 1-31 2021**

**Lewis Tucker, Sr.**, Oxford, CT (from: Shirley Tucker); **Lana J. Johnson**, Tell City, IN (from: Ronald Johnson); **Carl Moore**, Billings, MT (from: Theodore Moore); **Donna Hill**, Springwater, NY (from: Springwater Rod & Gun Club); **Bob Moore**, Wayland, NY (from: Springwater Rod & Gun Club); **Chet Pierce**, Geneseo, NY (from: Springwater Rod & Gun Club); **Hellen Christensen**, Strathmore, CA (from: Five Dogs Creek Cowboy Family); **Duane J. La Fortune**, Mound, MN (from: Nancy La Fortune).

**April 1-30 2021**

**Greg Garner**, Fredericksburg, VA (from: Elaine A. Garner); **Herbert A. Stocksclaeder**, Eden, NY (from: Diana & George Graovac); **Michael J. Morin**, Mission, TX (from: Carol S. Morin); **Gerardo Pareja**, Hialeah, FL (from: Migdalia Pareja); **Paul Morris**, Fremont, NE (from: Elkhorn Valley Rifle Club); **Matt Rosson**, Attalla, AL (from: Barbara Bice); **Ed Schneider** (from: Springwater Rod & Gun Club); **Lana Johnson**, Tell City, IN (from: Ronald Johnson); **Danny Roth**, St. Mary, MO (from: Carl & Linda Jokerst); **Karen Snowman**, Cohocton, NY (from: Springwater Rod & Gun Club); **Brett Chapin**, Midland, MI (from: C. J. Hartung); **Myron E. Kelsey** (from: Howard Kelsey).



# NRA® Online Regional Report

To search for events in your area, go to

**[nrapublications.org/regional-report](http://nrapublications.org/regional-report)**

Visit the links below to find gun shows, programs, clubs, events and training in your area.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT

**[le.nra.org](http://le.nra.org)**

Public and private officers interested in becoming law enforcement firearm instructors should attend one of NRA's Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor Development Schools. NRA Police Pistol Combat competition is intended to be used as an extension of an officer's training.



## GUN SHOWS

**[gunshows.nra.org](http://gunshows.nra.org)**

Dates and locations of gun shows are subject to change. Please contact the show before traveling. Discounted NRA memberships are sold through NRA recruiters. Some shows may offer free admission to people who sign up for new memberships or renewals. To become an NRA Recruiter contact NRA Recruiting Programs at [recruiter@nrahq.org](mailto:recruiter@nrahq.org).



## AREA SHOOTS

**[ssusa.org/coming-events](http://ssusa.org/coming-events)**

For more information, send an email to Shelly Kramer at [mkramer@nrahq.org](mailto:mkramer@nrahq.org) or call (703) 267-1459.



## FRIENDS OF NRA

**[friendsofnra.org](http://friendsofnra.org)**

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## TRAINING

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The NRA's Refuse To Be A Victim® program provides information on crime prevention and personal safety. To learn more about the program, visit [refuse.nra.org](http://refuse.nra.org). The most up-to-date seminar and instructor training schedule is available on the Internet by visiting [nrainstructors.org](http://nrainstructors.org), or online training is available at [nraonlinetraining.org](http://nraonlinetraining.org). Questions? Email to [refuse@nrahq.org](mailto:refuse@nrahq.org) or by calling (800) 861-1166.



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**[stateassociations.nra.org](http://stateassociations.nra.org)**

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NRA Headquarters: (703) 267-1000

MEMBER SERVICE (800) 672-3888

NRASTORE.COM (888) 607-6007

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ManageYOURID (888) 759-7866

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Global Rescue (800) 381-9754

NRA Travel Center [NRA.HotelPlanner.com](http://NRA.HotelPlanner.com)

### INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

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### OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT/

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GUN COLLECTOR PROGRAMS (703) 267-1600

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HUNTER SERVICES (844) 672-6883

The "NRA Regional Report," a service for NRA members, is an up-to-date listing of NRA conducted and/or sponsored events scheduled in your region for the current month. Call to verify event dates and locations before traveling.





**By Joseph P. DeBergalis, Jr.**  
Executive Director,  
General Operations



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## 2021 NRA National Championships

Since its inception 150 years ago, the National Rifle Association has supported and organized competitions in pursuit of its goal to increase marksmanship skills. The cherished tradition of competition will continue this summer at the world-class ranges of Camp Atterbury, where the NRA has partnered with the State of Indiana to conduct the 2021 National Championships. Here, I would like to focus on this important event that is part of the NRA's history of leadership in competitive shooting.

The NRA High Power Rifle Nationals have been held annually since 2017 at Camp Atterbury, an active Indiana National Guard base about 45 minutes south of Indianapolis. Last year, the Smallbore and Precision Pistol Nationals were set to join High Power Rifle there, re-uniting the NRA National Championships at a single venue, but this was delayed due to COVID-19. I'm looking forward to the matches this summer at Camp Atterbury, where the Indiana National Guard and NRA match officials have been working tirelessly to prepare the facility for the debut of Smallbore Rifle and Precision Pistol. NRA members and competitors can be proud of the partnership between our association, the State of Indiana, and Camp Atterbury.

The NRA is no stranger to hard work in keeping the National Matches afloat, especially during the early years. In 1912, when the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice concluded that Army maneuvers conflicted with the proposed National Matches schedule that year, the NRA held firm and conducted its own championships at Sea Girt, independent of the War Department. By doing this, the NRA ensured the continuity of the trophies and maintained the National Matches legacy. And, in 1914, another year when it faced a lack of military support to conduct a combined National Match, the NRA conducted its own National Divisional Matches with events held across the country. Nearly a century later, the NRA continues to anchor summer competitions with its National Championships.

These championships, and all NRA sanctioned competitions, would not be possible without the unwavering support of the members of our NRA Board who lead the committees responsible for the oversight of the shooting sports, and the many dedicated volunteers, including my good friend and distinguished rifleman Hap Rocketto. You will be proud to know that the hardworking employees at our headquarters in Fairfax in the Competitive Shooting & Law Enforcement divisions are operating across department lines to ensure another year of successful comradery and competition at the firing line.

For the 2021 NRA National Championships, shooting will commence with the NRA Smallbore Rifle Championships at Camp Atterbury starting July 6 through July 18. The Championship will include 3-Position, Metric Position, Conventional Position, Prone and F-Class, and Metric Prone and F-Class.

After Smallbore Rifle, the NRA Precision Pistol Nationals at Camp Atterbury will begin July 20 and end July 25. The schedule includes the .22 LR Championship, Centerfire Championship and .45 ACP Championship, along with the Team Matches.

As for High Power Rifle, the 2021 NRA Mid-Range, Long-Range, F-Class Long-Range, F-Class Mid-Range and International Fullbore Championships will also be conducted at Camp Atterbury. The matches will begin July 23 and run through Aug. 29. In addition, the Extreme Long-Range (ELR) Championship is slated to return on Aug. 20, prior to the High Power Across-the-Course matches. This popular ELR event that debuted in 2017 at Camp Atterbury is a must for shooters looking to engage targets at one mile and beyond.

I wish all competitors well as they compete and put their skills to the test this summer! For more information about the 2021 NRA National Championships at Camp Atterbury, please visit [competitions.nra.org](http://competitions.nra.org).







# NRA®

## 2021 DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

**T**he nominees for election to the NRA Board in 2021 have been selected by the Nominating Committee.

The Board consists of 76 Directors. The terms of office of one-third of the 75 Directors expire at each Annual Meeting of Members. One Director will be elected for a one-year term at each Annual Meeting of Members. That Director shall be selected from only those candidates who were not elected by the mail ballot.

The 2021 election will fill the 25 three-year terms that expire in 2024. Voting members will vote for a total of 25 candidates. The 25 candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be elected to three-year terms.

**Nominations by the Nominating Committee.** The Committee, elected by the Board of Directors, includes

six Directors and three Lifetime members who are not Directors. The Committee met and gave consideration to 71 names recommended by the membership. Each person was given serious, deliberate and careful consideration. Thirty candidates were selected.

### **Nominations by Petition of the Membership.**

There are no candidates that qualified by petition of the membership. Each petition sponsored by an NRA member or member organization required the signatures of not less than 551 voting members.

Prior to the ballots being printed, two of the Nominating Committee candidates withdrew their name from consideration. Therefore, a total of 28 candidates will appear on the ballot.

- 
- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Scott L. Bach<br>Newfoundland, New Jersey        | 12. Maria Heil<br>New Freedom, Pennsylvania              | 23. Wayne Anthony Ross<br>Anchorage, Alaska   |
| 2. William A. Bachenberg<br>Allentown, Pennsylvania | 13. Antonio Hernández-Almodóvar<br>San Juan, Puerto Rico | 24. Don Saba<br>Tucson, Arizona   |
| 3. Ronnie G. Barrett<br>Murfreesboro, Tennessee     | 14. Niger Innis<br>North Las Vegas, Nevada               | 25. William H. Satterfield*<br>Birmingham, Alabama  |
| 4. Donald J. Bradway<br>Hayden, Idaho               | 15. David A. Keene<br>Ft. Washington, Maryland           | 26. John C. Sigler<br>Dover, Delaware   |
| 5. Dean Cain<br>Malibu, California                  | 16. Carrie Lightfoot<br>Scottsdale, Arizona              | 27. Craig Swartz<br>Adel, Iowa  |
| 6. James Chapman<br>Live Oak, California            | 17. Duane Liptak, Jr.*<br>Austin, Texas                  | 28. James Tomes<br>Wadesville, Indiana  |
| 7. Anthony P. Colandro<br>Woodland Park, New Jersey | 18. Carolyn D. Meadows<br>Marietta, Georgia              | 29. James L. Wallace<br>Newburyport, Massachusetts  |
| 8. David G. Coy<br>Adrian, Michigan                 | 19. Bill Miller<br>Beckley, West Virginia                | 30. Robert J. Wos<br>Sarasota, Florida  |
| 9. John L. Cushman<br>Patchogue, New York           | 20. Owen Buz Mills<br>Paulden, Arizona                   | <i>*Mr. Liptak and Mr. Satterfield withdrew their names from consideration after being nominated.</i> |
| 10. Edie P. Fleeman<br>Durham, North Carolina       | 21. Janet D. Nyce<br>Elliottsburg, Pennsylvania          |   |
| 11. Joel Friedman<br>Henderson, Nevada              | 22. Kim Rhode<br>Big Bear Lake, California               |   |

# Board Backs NRA's Texas Reorganization Filing

**T**he following action and roll call vote are published in accordance with Article IV, Section 3(d) of the NRA Bylaws. During the March 28, 2021, special meeting of the NRA Board of Directors in Dallas, Texas, the Board took action regarding a resolution authorizing and ratifying Chapter 11 reorganization. A roll call vote was taken on the following motion:

WHEREAS, on January 14, 2021, pursuant to the power authorized by the Board of Directors of the National Rifle Association (the "NRA") and the Employment Agreement between the NRA and Wayne LaPierre, its Executive Vice President, in consultation with the Special Litigation Committee, determined that a Chapter 11 reorganization of the NRA would advance the best interests of the NRA, its members, and its mission;

WHEREAS, on January 15, 2021, the NRA and its wholly owned single member-managed Texas subsidiary, Sea Girt, LLC ("Sea Girt"), filed Chapter 11 in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Texas, thereby commencing the cases being jointly administered as Case No. 21-30085-hdh11 (together, the "Chapter 11 Case");

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors understands that questions have been raised by the New York Attorney General

and others as to the authorization to file the Chapter 11 Case and desire to affirm that the Board of Director approves and ratifies the filing of the Chapter 11 Case and the retention of counsel;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has determined that a Chapter 11 reorganization of the NRA, along with its wholly owned single member-managed Texas subsidiary, Sea Girt, will advance the best interests of the NRA, its members, and its mission, as well as the interests of Sea Girt; it is therefore

RESOLVED that the commencement of a Chapter 11 reorganization proceeding in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas on behalf of the NRA and its wholly owned, single member-managed limited liability company, Sea Girt, was, and hereby is, authorized directed and ratified; and be it further

RESOLVED that, to the extent necessary, the Board of Directors hereby ratifies and confirms the commencement of

the Chapter 11 Case; and be it further

RESOLVED that, to the extent the pending Chapter 11 Case is dismissed, the Board of Directors hereby authorizes and directs the commencement of a Chapter 11 reorganization proceeding in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas on behalf of the NRA and Sea Girt; and be it further.

RESOLVED that, to the extent the pending Chapter 11 Case is dismissed and subsequently refiled, the NRA and Sea Girt shall retain, as debtors' counsel in connection with such reorganization proceeding, the firms of Neligan LLP and Garman Turner Gordon LLP to serve as general bankruptcy counsel and Brewer Attorney & Counselors ("BAC") as special counsel to prosecute and defend certain litigation matters during the course of such Chapter 11 proceeding, including the prepetition matters presently handled by BAC.

## VOTING IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION:

Joe M. Allbaugh  
Thomas P. Arvas  
Scott L. Bach  
Bob Barr  
Ronnie G. Barrett  
J. Kenneth Blackwell  
Dean Cain  
J. William Carter  
Ted W. Carter  
Patricia A. Clark  
Anthony P. Colandro  
Charles L. Cotton

David G. Coy  
Larry E. Craig  
Richard S. Figueroa  
Edie P. Fleeman  
Joel Friedman  
Sandra S. Froman  
Mark Geist  
Marion P. Hammer  
Maria Heil  
Graham Hill  
Niger Innis  
Curtis S. Jenkins  
David A. Keene  
Tom King


Willes K. Lee  
Carrie Lightfoot  
Robert E. Mansell  
Bill Miller  
James W. Porter II  
Jay Printz  
Todd J. Rathner  
Mark Robinson  
Barbara Rumpel  
Don Saba  
Ronald L. Schmeits  
Steven C. Schreiner  
John C. Sigler  
Mark E. Vaughan

Linda L. Walker  
James L. Wallace  
Howard J. Walter  
Judi White

## VOTING AGAINST THE MOTION:

Rocky Marshall, Jr.

## PRESENT, NOT VOTING:

Phillip B. Journey  
Owen Buz Mills  
Bart Skelton 

## NRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Joe M. Allbaugh**, Oklahoma; **Thomas P. Arvas**, New Mexico; **Paul D. Babaz**, Georgia; **Scott L. Bach**, New Jersey; **William A. Bachenberg**, Pennsylvania; **Bob Barr**, Georgia; **Ronnie G. Barrett**, Tennessee; **Clel Baudler**, Iowa; **J. Kenneth Blackwell**, Ohio; **Matt Blunt**, Virginia; **Robert K. Brown**, Colorado; **Dave Butz**, Illinois; **Dean Cain**, California; **J. William Carter**, Kentucky; **Ted W. Carter**, Florida; **Patricia A. Clark**, Connecticut; **Anthony P. Colandro**, New Jersey; **Allan D. Cors**, Florida; **Charles L. Cotton**, Texas; **David G. Coy**, Michigan; **Larry E. Craig**, Idaho; **Todd R. Ellis**, Pennsylvania; **Richard S. Figueroa**, Texas; **Edie P. Fleeman**, North Carolina; **Carol Frampton**, South Carolina; **Joel Friedman**, Nevada; **Sandra S. Froman**, Arizona; **Mark Geist**, Colorado; **Marion P. Hammer**, Florida; **Maria Heil**, Pennsylvania; **Graham Hill**, Virginia; **Susan Howard**, Texas; **Niger Innis**, Nevada; **Curtis S. Jenkins**, Georgia; **Phillip B. Journey**, Kansas; **David A. Keene**, Maryland; **Tom King**, New York; **Herbert A. Lanford, Jr.**, South Carolina; **Willes K. Lee**, Virginia; **Carrie Lightfoot**, Arizona; **Karl A. Malone**, Louisiana; **Robert E. Mansell**, Arizona; **R.B. "Rocky" Marshall, Jr.**, Texas; **Carolyn D. Meadows**, Georgia; **Bill Miller**, West Virginia; **Owen Buz Mills**, Arizona; **Il Ling New**, Idaho; **Oliver L. North**, Virginia; **Robert A. Nosler**, Oregon; **Johnny Nugent**, Indiana; **Ted Nugent**, Texas; **James W. Porter II**, Alabama; **Jay Printz**, Montana; **Todd J. Rathner**, Arizona; **Kim Rhode**, California; **Mark Robinson**, North Carolina; **Wayne Anthony Ross**, Alaska; **Carl T. Rowan, Jr.**, Washington, D.C.; **Barbara Rumpel**, Florida; **Don Saba**, Arizona; **William H. Satterfield**, Alabama; **Ronald L. Schmeits**, New Mexico; **Steven C. Schreiner**, Colorado; **John C. Sigler**, Delaware; **Leroy Sisco**, Texas; **Bart Skelton**, New Mexico; **Kristy Titus**, Oregon; **Dwight D. Van Horn**, Idaho; **Mark E. Vaughan**, Oklahoma; **Blaine Wade**, Tennessee; **Linda L. Walker**, Ohio; **James L. Wallace**, Massachusetts; **Howard J. Walter**, North Carolina; **Allen B. West**, Texas; **Judi White**, Arizona; **Donald E. Young**, Alaska.

Communications intended for any member of the NRA Board of Directors should be addressed to: (Name of Board member), NRA Office of the Secretary, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030; or [nrabod@nrahq.org](mailto:nrabod@nrahq.org); or (703) 267-1021. Please include your name, contact information and NRA membership I.D. number, as only communications from NRA members will be forwarded.



# Whittington Center Announces New Dates For Founder's/Donor Appreciation Weekend

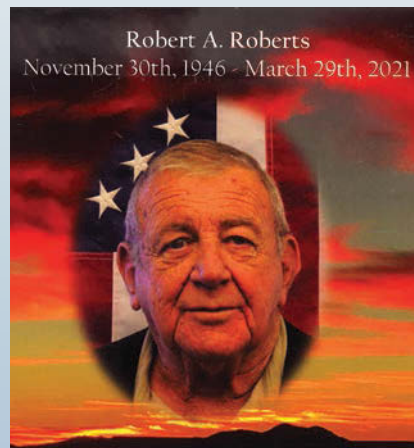
**D**ue to the rescheduling of the NRA Annual Meetings and Exhibits, now taking place September 3-5 in Houston, Texas, the Whittington Center has moved its Founder's/Donor Appreciation Weekend to September 16-19, 2021. This annual meeting of NRA Whittington Center members, donors and supporters promises to provide a weekend that is both entertaining and educational.

Among other things, this year's celebration will honor the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe trail. Vastly important to the history of the region, the trail was a 19th century route through the old West, actually connecting Santa Fe, N.M., with far-off Franklin, Missouri. Initially pioneered by one William Becknell,

in 1821, the route served as a vital commercial artery until 1880, when the railroad arrived and took its place. As part of the Founder's/Donor Appreciation event, the Whittington Center will even feature several wagons that traveled the Santa Fe Trail. These will be on display adjacent to the trail where it crosses Whittington Center property.

Saturday night's entertainment will be handled by Michael Martin Murphey. An artist of 50 years' experience with a wide-ranging background, Murphey has topped the Pop, Country, Western and Bluegrass charts throughout various eras. A Texas native, Murphey is best known for his hits "Wildfire," "Carolina In the Pines," "What's Forever For," "Long Line of Love," and many more across 35 existing albums. Beyond his own career as a performing artist, Murphey has found success further afield, having his songs recorded by The Monkees, Kenny Rogers, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, John Denver, Johnny Cash, Tracy Byrd, Dolly Parton and many others.

Sunday evening will wrap up with a Patriot member dinner featuring guest speaker Phil Schreier, the senior curator of NRA Museums. A 32-year veteran of the museum, with an absolute wealth of historical and firearm knowledge, Mr. Schreier regularly presents the museum's programs and exhibits to a national audience, both in person and on the air. Attendees can be sure of an enthralling address to accompany their table fare.



The event is dedicated to Robbie Roberts, the late curator of collections at Whittington.

The entire celebration is dedicated to Robbie Roberts, the late curator of collections. Mr. Roberts spent 20 years at Whittington and previously held the positions of program director and deputy executive director, among many others, before his passing in March.

Whether one's taste is history, music, firearm knowledge and good food, or all of the above, this is a weekend no one will want to miss. For more information, visit the events page at [nrawc.org](http://nrawc.org), or call (575) 445-3615.



Country music star Michael Martin Murphey will provide Saturday night's entertainment.

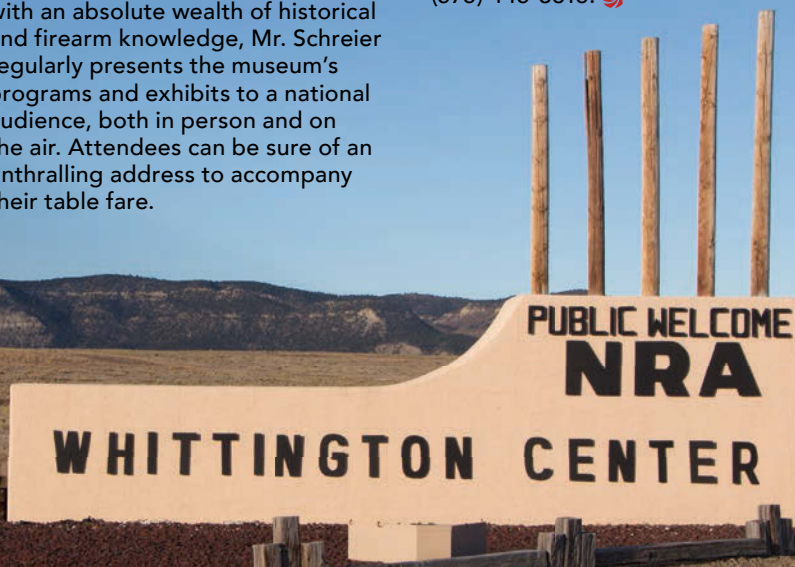


Photo by Ken Scar

Photo by NRA Staff



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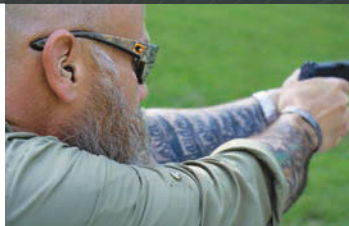




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## HANDGUNS | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

clone that is almost entirely plug-and-play. Like Legos, nearly everything about the pistol can be swapped around to tailor it to the needs of the shooter: backstraps, mag wells, different-length dustcovers to match up with different-length slides. The whole kit can be had in a foam-fitted case. It's quite James Bond.

“...Third Gen Glock architecture is effectively now just a jumping-off point for creative manufacturers.”

Building one to your personal tastes has never been easier. A site like Brownells or Lone Wolf Distributors is practically a wish book of wild after-market parts to mate with a frame of your choice. If you don't want to try your hand at building a your own lower from Polymer 80, but like the way they handle, the company will sell you one already assembled in its PF-series of pistols (following a standard transfer procedure via an FFL). If that's too vanilla, Faxon uses the P80 frame as the basis for its FX-19 Hellfire.

With this bewildering variety of boutique and custom options, you can get just about any configuration of "Glock" you'd like: Beavertail? Finger grooves? Mag well? Long slide and short grip, or short slide combined with a full-length grip? Someone offers it, and if they don't, you can likely build it yourself.

There's something to lament, I suppose, about the good ol' days when a Glock was a specific model of pistol that came in any color you wanted as long as it was black, came in a plastic tub that looked suspiciously like a Tupperware sandwich box and just plain worked with no tinkering or worrying about recoil-spring weights.

On the other hand, choice is good. Variety is the spice of life. Getting a handgun that is specifically tailored to your hand and your own personal needs is great.

Just ask any custom 1911 owner. 🔪

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.45 ACPs or 9 mms, there have also been some .38 Supers and even a few .30 Lugers (for export). Over the years, the details of sights, finish and grips have varied with the times and customer preference. Like all personal-defense firearms, Commanders are carried a lot more than they are fired. They are a good choice in the sense that the power-to-weight ratio is excellent. However, the recoil of a 26-ounce .45 ACP is snappy, particularly when the shooter has made a debatable choice in +P ammunition. The Commander began to be the go-to gun for the combat shooters of the Southwest Pistol League in California who proved that its recoil could be managed with practice.

When people began to buy Commander slides and barrels to install on steel frames, Colt saw the light and offered the same thing itself. The Combat Commander was a commercial success—an all-steel 1911-style pistol, with the 4.25-inch barrel and slide. While I had fired the early light Commanders off and on since the 1960s, I had never owned one. The Combat version caught my fancy and I bought one in the mid-'70s. I still have and often fire this aging veteran. It has a Bar-Sto barrel (fitted by "Stoney" himself) and one-of-a-kind Novak sights. Commanders don't usually carry a reputation for match accuracy, but this one will put a magazine into a sub-1-inch group on command.

The light .45 ACP by Colt has been part of the warrior culture since the Korean War. In those days, Marine lieutenants stopped by Evaluators Limited in Quantico, VA, to buy one (OK, sometimes it was a Model 15 Smith & Wesson). I can also remember the lieutenant in my outfit in Vietnam who wanted one. The post office at Chu Lai was a tent, but they issued money orders. He got one for the proper amount, mailed it off to Gil Hebard in Illinois and, in a few weeks, got his pistol.

From its earliest days, we knew the Colt Commander was fightin' iron. 🐉

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# The Commander

Even great military service pistols go through a form of evolution.



The satin-nickel-finished, steel-frame Combat Commander shown above serves as a testament to the many changes the 1911-based pistol has endured over the last 110 years.

We are now well into the second century of the 1911 service pistol and its legendary cartridge. Few firearms enjoy such a long period of solid service. Ten years ago, the centennial of this warrior's tool was celebrated widely, and rightly so. But, as we move toward its sesquicentennial, it is almost as though shooting folks in general have finally just accepted the full utility of the big cartridge and the Colt pistol that fires it. We know that with patents long expired, every major U.S. handgun maker catalogs its version of the grand-old service pistol. Every ammunition manufacturer offers at least a couple of loads of that stubby cartridge.

The gun was first used by Soldiers of the U.S. Army in the defense of American lives and property along our Southern border. This was in the 19-teens, just before the nation went to war in Europe. Initially made at the Colt plant in Connecticut and the Springfield Armory in Massachusetts, the pistol was in such demand as to warrant other gunmakers getting into the act. It was popular with those who used the gun to the point that a high percentage of those issued were never recovered. America was sixgun country

before "Johnny Doughboy" was issued one of the new semi-autos. It hit hard, it hit often and was hugely reliable in trained hands.

There were a few little glitches in the management of the original 1911 pistol, and they got official attention in the 1920s. The result was the M1911A1 version of the Government Model. With changes to certain contours of the pistol, it was a better gun—enough as to be made in great quantity for service in World War II. The M1911A1 came out of the war with an even greater level of respect than when it entered it. Still, it was a rather large pistol with a 5-inch barrel and overall weight of 39 ounces—empty. It was difficult to carry concealed. And rumors began to circulate about the government going to a new service sidearm. When Army Ordnance officials began to talk to Colt about a new variation of the 1911, the die was cast.

Colt, in the early 1950s, was a forward-thinking company willing to experiment deeply. It offered a range of revolvers, as well as new semi-autos for target work. One of its best ideas involved the use of lightweight alloys for major components of handguns. Colt's Cobra revolver was an instant hit with plainclothes police officers, and it didn't take long before the company was looking at the 1911 and reflecting on the twin problems of size and weight. Enter the Commander.

Since there was considerable interest in the 9 mm cartridge, the first Commanders were chambered for that round. But, the obvious commercial possibilities of a smaller, lighter .45 ACP were massive and Colt started making them. The Commander is functionally the same as the full-size Government Model. There are two major differences: The slide is three-quarters of an inch shorter and houses a barrel similarly shortened. On the first Commanders, the grip tang was bit shorter and so was the distinctively different rowel hammer. The second difference was more significant. A shortened gun is a lighter gun, but when the frame of that pistol is made of aluminum, it is significantly lighter. The first Commander weighed 26 ounces, compared to 39 for a standard 5-inch M1911A1.

The idea caught on, and Colt never looked back. The company has made these handy, easy-to-carry .45s for 70 years. There have been a few modifications. While most are

Continued on page 103

# Do You Know Joe Biden?

Now a powerful new movie reveals the **REAL** Joe Biden and his stunning 50-Year Record!

**"Joe Biden has been wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past four decades."**

— **Robert Gates**, Pres. Obama's Sec. of Defense

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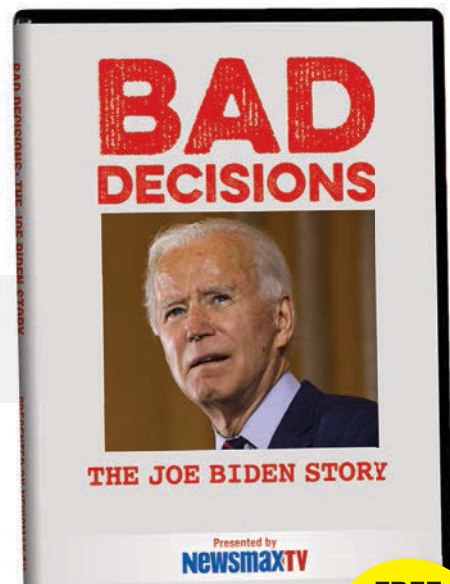
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- **Openly opposed the operation to kill Osama bin Laden, considered the hallmark achievement of the Obama presidency.**
- **Opposed amnesty for illegal immigrants, then supported it.**
- **Seesawed on taxes — approving of a payroll tax cut during the Obama years, then slamming President Trump's tax cuts.**
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