



SFWA

PERSONAL PROTECTION
AT HOME



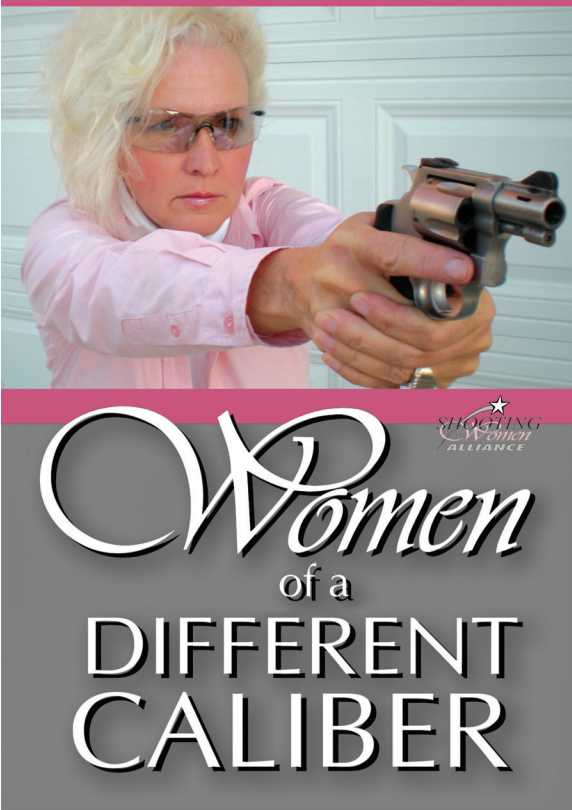
TN STATE CERTIFIED LEVEL II HANDGUN SAFETY SCHOOL # 2-47-18


SFWA *University*



was established under the direction of **Shooting for Women Alliance**, a non-profit organization dedicated to the education and motivation of women worldwide toward all the shooting sports and personal protection has to offer. SFWA is a Level II State Certified School which offers Instructor Training and Continuing Education Courses for both men and women.

SUSAN CARRICHNER REXRODE



An Inspirational True Story

After being held hostage in her house for 5 1/2 hours at knife-point and stalked for 2 years in the early 1990's, Susan decided to help other women (and a few good men) gain the knowledge and skills to help them if they ever had to defend themselves against an assailant. Since carrying a firearm for personal protection long before Handgun Carry Permits were available, and understanding the importance of becoming proficient with a firearm, she and her husband Rob have dedicated their time and talents toward quality and effective firearms education—

with an emphasis on providing what women want in an instructor. Plus, as an Attorney at Law, Rob has the ability to teach the legalities of carrying a firearm for personal protection as part of SFWA University.



SFWA has a strong volunteer base and is funded solely by donations. Thank you for choosing SFWA U! —*Susan and Rob*



*has invested its resources
to compile this material
for the purpose of providing a tool
for SFWA University Students
who are interested in taking their training
with handguns to a higher level
with regard to personal protection while at home.*

Table of Contents

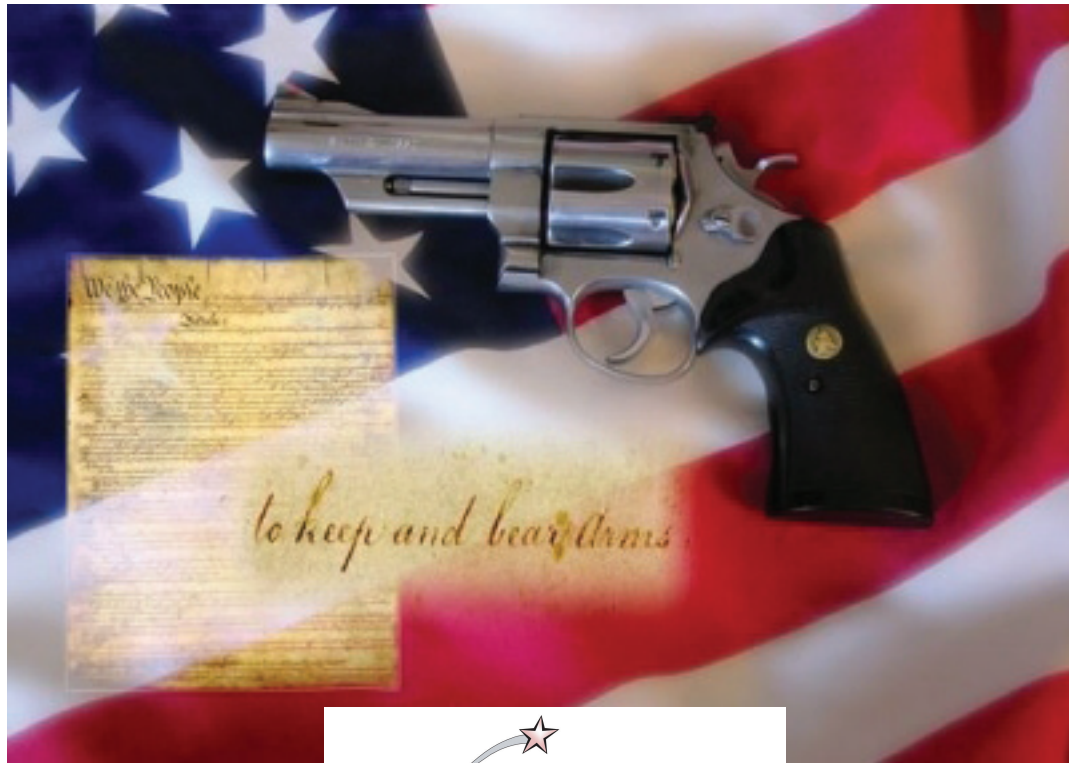
1	LEVELS OF AWARENESS	necessary to recognize and be more prepared to defend yourself at home 6
2	THE MINDSET	required to plan for and respond to a home invasion 8
3	THE USE OF DEADLY FORCE	legally speaking and personally to protect yourself at home 12
4	YOUR HOME LIMITS	planning for the worst case senario in your home, workplace, or other building . . . 18
5	ENCOUNTERING THE ASSAILANT(s)	defending yourself in a confined space 24
6	DEALING WITH DIFFERENT SCENARIOS	real life situations discussed, dissected, and tactical solutions discovered 30
7	EMERGENCY and TACTICAL RELOADING	getting more firepower under duress 38
8	POINTS TO PRACTICE	tips and tricks to help improve defensive skills at home, work, or other places . . . 50
9	TYPES and CALIBERS of FIREARMS	that are good selections for personal protection at home 52



This material is part of a SFWA continuing education class

Personal Protection At Home

Copyright © 2011-2013 All Rights Reserved



*“The right to keep and bear arms shall not
be infringed”*

—The Second Amendment

*“The right to receive the highest quality
continuing education possible
shall not be infringed”*

—SFWA University

1

LEVELS OF AWARENESS necessary to recognize and be more prepared to defend yourself at home

“I never saw it coming” is something you never want to experience—and worse, you may not survive. The first step in surviving an attack is recognizing the threat—the next is to act quickly and effectively. Sadly, law enforcement are not around when crime happens, and often you are on your own.

Survey.

- #1: Do you have any weapons or firearms at home?
- #2. Have you or anyone you know personally ever been a victim of a violent crime while at home, work, church or other private building?
- #3. Have you or anyone you know personally ever been raped?
- #4. Have you or anyone you know personally ever been a victim of domestic violence?
- #5. Have you ever been in a situation where you were in fear for your life or were at the point of panic?

Stats.

Hours of day = type of crime
% of crimes that take place with a gun or knife
Rape/attempted rape
Home Invasions

Levels of Awareness



Unaware



Aware



Alert



Alarm



Maintaining Awareness

2

THE MINDSET required to plan for and respond to a home invasion

“Doing what is right is no guarantee against misfortune”

—William McFee, *Writer*

The decision is . . . submit, posture, flight or fight?

Decide

Decide you are your own security guard

Decide it can happen to you

Decide you will act on your instincts

Decide you will remain active vs reactive

Decide you will implement a defense plan

Decide you will work together as a family

Maintaining Awareness

What if ?

- Burglary: give them what they want
- Abductions: start moving with all your strength
- Rape: FIGHT back, submission has proven to be the WRONG thing to do
- Plan escape routes from each room
- Develop verbal code words (babysitting, something is wrong)
- Imagine worse case scenarios, what action to take to come out GOOD

Do's and Don'ts

- Don't be blinded by the day light
- Be Aware
- When at home, choose seats or stand where you can see around you, easily observe doors and windows, and position your back to a wall or area where you will only need to observe a 180 degree area, if possible
- Lock your doors and set alarms even when at home
- Implement a defense plan for your house/work/other
- Avoid opening the door to a stranger
- Install a storm door with deadbolt locking system
- Install an alarm system
- Keep the exterior of your home free from hiding places
- Have a cell phone so as to avoid phone wire cutting
- Avoid making your home an easy target for criminals
- If you can't get away from an intruder, get close and go mad—go nuts, absolute madness is only key to success
- Get yourself OUT of the attack
- Evade the Blade/ Run from the Gun
- When attacker grabs your wrist= NOT available
- When attacker chokes you= 7 second rule, NOT available
- NEVER give up and fight with all your might!

Home Personal Defense Options

- Martial Arts
- Pepper Spray
- Self Defensive Devices
- Tasers
- Firearms
- Alarm System
- Guard Dog
- Signs/Symbols
- Video Surveillance

It really is OK to FIGHT DIRTY

The family jewels:

Guys protect them—first stomp elsewhere, then go for the groin

Primary target areas:

Eyes, throat, groin

Secondary target areas:

Knees, kidneys, ribs, temple, solar plexus, nose

Adopt the mindset:

- Don't be intimidated
- Think of yourself as **TOTALLY** armed
- Elbow pokes, teeth bites, finger jabs and pulls
- Use what is around you as a weapon
- Remember, that bad guys will stalk you, cozy up to you, and then use sheer force against you to assault you. (Sneak up, cozy up, beat up)
- You don't need a martial arts degree or be perfectly fit to fight
- Don't ever take the blame for some bad guy's crime

- Remember that IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU!
- In the aftermath, always keep telling your story and how you feared for your life from the actions of the assailant
- Do whatever it takes to win
- Don't let pain or injury stop your will to survive

3

THE USE OF DEADLY FORCE legally speaking and personally to protect yourself at home

The Castle Doctrine. The right to use justifiable deadly force to defend one’s personal safety (co-occupants and family) in one’s home (“castle”) comes from Tennessee common law, or case law—and has been codified into the Tennessee Code by the Legislature.

In *Morrison v. State*, 212 Tenn. 633, 371 S.W.2d 441 (1963), Tennessee adopted the “castle” doctrine; that is, one assaulted in his own home is under no duty to retreat, but is entitled to stand his ground and repel the force of the attacker with whatever force that is necessary to defend himself. See also *State v. Kennamore*, 604 S.W.2d 856, 861 (Tenn.1980).

In *State v. Cannon*, 661 S.W.2d 893, 897 (Tenn. Ct. App. 1983), the castle doctrine was qualified: “while a person assaulted in his own house is not bound to retreat, his right to invoke this doctrine depends upon his being without fault in bringing on the difficulty....[T]he law is well settled that the ‘castle’ doctrine can be invoked only by one who is without fault in bringing the conflict on.”

T.C.A. § 39-17-1322. Defenses.

A person shall not be charged with or convicted of a violation under this part if the person possessed, displayed or employed a handgun in justifiable self-defense or in justifiable defense of another during the commission of a crime in which that person or the other person defended was a victim.

T.C.A. § 39-11-601. Justification a defense.

It is a defense to prosecution that the conduct of the person is justified under this part.

T.C.A. § 39-11-611. Self-defense.

(a) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

* * * * *

(2) “Curtilage” means the area surrounding a dwelling that is necessary, convenient and habitually used for family purposes and for those activities associated with the sanctity of a person’s home;

(3) “Dwelling” means a building or conveyance of any kind, including any attached porch, whether the building or conveyance is temporary or permanent, mobile or immobile, that has a roof over it, including a

tent, and is designed for or capable of use by people;
(4) “Residence” means a dwelling in which a person resides, either temporarily or permanently, or is visiting as an invited guest, or any dwelling, building or other appurtenance within the curtilage of the residence; and

* * * * *

(b) (1) Notwithstanding § 39-17-1322, a person who is not engaged in unlawful activity and is in a place where the person has a right to be has no duty to retreat before threatening or using force against another person when and to the degree the person reasonably believes the force is immediately necessary to protect against the other’s use or attempted use of unlawful force.

(2) Notwithstanding § 39-17-1322, a person who is not engaged in unlawful activity and is in a place where the person has a right to be has no duty to retreat before threatening or using force intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily injury, if:

(A) The person has a reasonable belief that there is an imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury;

(B) The danger creating the belief of imminent death or serious bodily injury is real, or honestly believed to be real at the time; and

(C) The belief of danger is founded upon reasonable

grounds.

(c) Any person using force intended or likely to cause death or serious bodily injury within a residence, business, dwelling or vehicle is presumed to have held a reasonable belief of imminent death or serious bodily injury to self, family, a member of the household or a person visiting as an invited guest, when that force is used against another person, who unlawfully and forcibly enters or has unlawfully and forcibly entered the residence . . . and the person using defensive force knew or had reason to believe that an unlawful and forcible entry occurred.

(d) The presumption established in subsection (c) shall not apply, if:

(1) The person against whom the force is used has the right to be in or is a lawful resident of the dwelling . . . or . . . residence . . . such as an owner, lessee, or titleholder; provided, that the person is not prohibited from entering the dwelling . . . or . . . residence . . . by an order of protection, injunction for protection from domestic abuse, or a court order of no contact against that person;

(2) The person against whom the force is used is attempting to remove a person or persons who is a child or grandchild of, or is otherwise in the lawful custody or under the lawful guardianship of, the person against whom the defensive force is used;

(3) Notwithstanding § 39-17-1322, the person using force is engaged in an unlawful activity or is using the dwelling . . . or . . . residence . . . to further an unlawful activity;

Or

(4) The person against whom force is used is a law enforcement officer, as defined in § 39-11-106, who enters or attempts to enter a dwelling . . . or . . . residence . . . in the performance of the officer's official duties, and the officer identified the officer in accordance with any applicable law, or the person using force knew or reasonably should have known that the person entering or attempting to enter was a law enforcement officer.

(e) The threat or use of force against another is not justified:

(1) If the person using force consented to the exact force used or attempted by the other individual;

(2) If the person using force provoked the other individual's use or attempted use of unlawful force, unless:

(A) The person using force abandons the encounter or clearly communicates to the other the intent to do so; and

(B) The other person nevertheless continues or attempts to use unlawful force against the person;

* * * * *

Remember . . .

The Castle Doctrine only affords you the defense of a “presumption” that the intruder/attacker was in your home, business, etc, with a “presumed” intent to cause serious bodily injury or death to you. Your level of fear of sustaining serious bodily injury or death must still be imminent and to the point that a reasonable person would use deadly force.

Thus, deadly force may be used ANYWHERE you are faced with imminent fear of serious bodily injury or death.

Further, the Castle Doctrine does not give you the right to protect your property with deadly force—including, land, home, animals, personal property or household goods.

. . . and your homeowners insurance will not cover your involvement or damage caused when using deadly force.

4

YOUR HOME LIMITS planning for the worst case scenario in your home, workplace, or other building you frequently inhabit

Floorplan of your home:

In order to sufficiently study the map you will rely on to protect yourself at home, you need a simple floor plan of each floor that has the following noted:

- All windows and doors
- Trigger points for the alarm
- Furniture location
- Firearm storage areas
- Sleeping quarters for each household member
- Location of “cover”
- Safe room if any
- Most popular gathering spots
- Locations of items that can double as weapons

Things to consider:

The first thing to do when determining what may make your home more attractive to a criminal, or to deter criminals from making the decision to attack you or your home is to **THINK LIKE AN CRIMINAL**.

- How easy is it to get into your home without

being observed or setting off any type of alarm system?

- Are you projecting the proper image by the way your home appears?
- When travelling do you have friends or neighbors keep the outside of your home from looking abandoned?
- Do you have sufficient outside lighting, and is it in good working order?
- Are there any ladders or other climbing assistance apparatus readily available to an intruder?
- What level of awareness do you have when approaching your home?
- Can you observe visitors from inside your house without opening a protective door between you and them?
- Do you always require repair persons, utility workers, sales representatives or other unfamiliar people to provide you with acceptable identification?
- Are any valuables, firearms or other items of interest visible from the door or window, or other areas?
- When you have people come into your home, have you sufficiently hidden valuables?

- Do you have any accessories or other objects in plain view that would indicate that you have firearms or other valuables?
- Where are the places on the outside and inside of your house where an assailant could hide or otherwise go unnoticed?

Exterior of house:

Trees and other plantings that provide privacy around your house can also be prime locations for hiding places.

Remove garage door openers from your vehicles and keep your garage door closed.

Keep bushes and other plantings close to your house trimmed back so that they are below window sills and away from doorways and do not hide walkways.

If you do not have a guard dog, make it look like you do. Even if you have a small dog, place “big dog” toys and drinking bowl in a conspicuous place near the house.

Lighting should be placed at entrances, in hiding place areas and along walkways.

Developing a SAFE ROOM:

The ability to retreat to a place of safety and refuge when faced with danger, is priceless. It is important to note that it may not always be possible to actually “get there” in a surprise invasion or attack situation—but having one is a basic element of personal protection at home.

At least one room should be set up to function as a safe room. Depending on the layout of your home, it may be necessary to designate multiple safe rooms to accommodate your home living style.

Whenever you have multiple safe rooms in a home it is essential to position them in such a way to avoid crossfire dangers. Another consideration when selecting a safe room is whether or not the possibility of cutting off access to it may exist and if so, alternate safe rooms must be established in the event an intruder keeps you from entering the primary safe room.

Not just any room can be a safe room. To function effectively a safe room must have certain elements and equipment:

- Single point of entry—usually the door. This makes it easier to defend. Upstairs rooms are better to avoid the possibility of entry via a window on the ground floor.
- Reinforcement and strength to deter entry—

by an assailant or live fire from a firearm. Solid doors with reinforced framing and solid steel are essential, with deadbolt locks for security.

- Equipment necessary includes:
 - 1.) a telephone (with a lighted dialing area, pre-programmed emergency contact numbers, and a list of addresses and phone numbers that you may need to provide to law enforcement;
 - 2.) Flash light (LED) with extra batteries, multiple lighting options, quality construction, and be tested periodically to assure it works;
 - 3.) Firearm(s) and ammunition should already be in the safe room and not be stored in a place that would require bringing it to the safe room;
 - 4.) extra loaded magazines and ammo
 - 5.) other household accessible weapons—knife, baton, baseball bat, etc.
 - 6.) Sufficient “cover” for everyone which is positioned in a place to avoid being hit with live fire, or at the very least enough concealment for everyone;
 - 7.) Additional dark colored clothing for everyone to be used to conceal skin from view in the dark;
 - 8.) Drinking water
 - 9.) Extra set of house keys attached to an

- oversized reflective item that can be thrown out a window to law enforcement for easy entry to the house
- 10.) a weapon for each person in the room

It may be necessary to have adults split up into two different safe room locations to sufficiently protect children or others who may not be able to make it to the primary safe room. Be sure that each safe room is sufficiently equipped to provide effective cover, concealment, and required weaponry to sustain a violent attack.

When to leave the safe room:

It is always best to leave the house if it can be accomplished safely to avoid attack. The safe room is the second choice, and in many cases, it may not be safe to leave it once you are secured inside.

Never leave a safe room unless you can do so safely. Remember that you may be unable to ascertain the number of intruders, or the level to which they are armed. An attempt to flee the safe room could very well place you in more danger, and should be avoided if at all possible (especially with elderly, handicapped or young people).

Safe Areas in gathering or sleeping areas:

It is important to take into consideration where you could position yourself in rooms that you frequent, in the event you can not get to a designated safe room.

5

ENCOUNTERING THE ASSAILANT(S) defending yourself in a confined space

Hand-to-hand defensive skills:

Very often, you will be forced to defend yourself with your bare hands—before you can even draw your handgun in self defense.

You should learn basic hand-to-hand techniques that will help you defend yourself upclose and personal—it is not necessary to become a black-belt or accomplished martial artist, but you should spend more than a few hours learning basic fighting skills.

There are a few basic defensive skills that will help you gain access to your handgun more readily in an up close encounter:

- Use the open palms of your hands to strike your assailant in the face, eyes, nose, throat, groin, knees, kidneys, ribs, temple, solar plexus, shins or ankles
- Move into your assailant, not away from them—to force them off balance and onto their heels—in an aggressive strong manner

- Strike the assailant with the strong hand first, then with the weak hand, until you can free up your strong hand to draw your handgun—never draw a handgun until you are in control of the moment and have sufficient separation to do so
- Do not panic, think clearly, and respond with the instincts you have
- Never give up!

Shooting at close range:

You will more than likely not be able to acquire a standard sight picture. The importance of training and practicing your defensive skills is paramount to being able to perform instinctively while in the grasp of an assailant.

Training, no matter how much you try to mimick reality, is NEVER like the actual encounter. You will not be able to safely create a situation where your fear level will rise to the state where deadly force is justifiable—therefore you must practice your skills as well as your mindset.

You must always be mindful of where your muzzle is in relation to yourself, the assailant and others.

Never pull the trigger while in a struggle unless you are in control of the moment.

Clearing a room:

If you must move from room to room in your home, in search of a safer position, be sure that you “clear” (search for any potential threat/attacker in every visible area) each room or location you pass, if at all possible. The reason is that you do not want to be ambushed, flanked or otherwise attacked by an unobserved assailant. Be sure to look for parts of a body partially visible behind furniture, walls, etc, and not just full figures. Listen very carefully for tell-tale noises. Keep any firearm you may be holding close to your body and pointed in a safe direction.

What to do when you come home and fear that someone is inside your house:

- Call 911 immediately
- Move to a safe location, keep your eyes and ears open, and pay attention to details
- Do NOT enter the house

What to do if you fear that someone is inside or breaking into your home while you are inside:

- Call 911, if possible
- Retreat to a safe place, if possible
- Follow your personal protection at home “plan”
- Prepare to fight for your life
- Never pull the trigger until you know your target and what is beyond

What to do if you are surprised by an intruder:

- Fight for your life
- Never negotiate with an intruder
- Use firm verbal commands
- Show no fear
- Avoid tunnel vision, look around for others
- Stay as far away from them as possible and do not be misled by their demeanor as they may be positioning themselves to get close enough to you to attack

Some things to remember:

You may be injured during an attack but you must keep fighting. Most wounds look worse because of bleeding than they really are, so do not let the sight of blood stop you from defending yourself.

With training and practice, you will be more prepared to actually hit the target you are aiming for than most law enforcement officers or assailants.

Conduct personal protection at home drills, like you would in case of fire. You are more likely to find yourself at the mercy of live-fire than the flame of a fire.

Never approach an attacker to disarm them or to determine their condition. It is not your responsibility to perform first aid on an assailant, just to request medical

help (ambulance) when you call 911 after an encounter. Stay away from the attacker, period.

Once your attacker is down, or wounded does not mean that they are no longer a threat.

Remember, there may be additional attackers.

Until law enforcement arrives, remain in your cover position and keep an eye on your attacker and your weapon in a ready position. Do NOT talk to the assailant except to yell short, decisive commands as necessary to maintain control of the encounter—conversation may distract you.

If you must control an attacker with a firearm until law enforcement arrives, instruct them to lay face down with their legs spread, arms out to the side, and their palms up. Keep your back up against a wall, keep your eyes on the attacker and quickly check from side to side for any others.

Freezing will make you incapable of any action whatsoever, so try to snap out of it if you are startled, threatened or overwhelmed.

Submitting to an attacker has proven unsuccessful as an approach to staying alive.

Posturing yourself with words, actions or other means of combat without contact is not recommended as an end result to avoiding attack. It is difficult to stop an aggression

with less force and you may not succeed. Prepare to fight, rather than posture yourself for possible failure before you even get a chance to really defend yourself.

Retreating or taking *flight* is a natural instinct when faced with a life-threatening situation. If you can leave, by all means avoid the altercation. If not, . . .

Fight for all you are worth! The best self defense fight is one that only includes sufficient force to stop the attack. Remember, the use of deadly force is only justifiable when you are in immediate fear of serious bodily injury or death.

No matter how trained you may be, everyone is subject to physiological and perceptual reactions in a life threatening encounter. In most cases:

- your heart rate and respiration will increase to allow more oxygen to the brain
- your pupils will dilate to allow more light to see the attacker more clearly
- your muscles will tense up in anticipation of the need to react suddenly
- you will get an adrenaline rush to prepare your body to fight or take flight
- you will experience loss of fine motor skills and find it harder to load shells, present a firearm, or unlock a gun safe
- you will experience tunnel vision, lose your auditory function, and ability to gauge time

6

DEALING WITH DIFFERENT SENARIOS real life situations discussed, dissected, and tactical solutions discovered

Home Defense Survival Priorities:

Many people focus on their equipment as if it was the single most important priority in survival tactics. Fact is, although equipment is important, it is really last on the list of priorities for survival.

- Awareness—the first defense against an attack
- Know the defensible places in your home—develop a personal protection at home plan
- Tactics—learn practiced responses and proactive measures to sustain an attack
- Skills with your equipment—much more important than the equipment, is your ability to use it proficiently and instinctively to protect yourself
- Your equipment itself—get the best you can afford, but most importantly, equipment that is suited to your individual capabilities and needs in the largest caliber you can effectively handle.

The Use of Cover vs Concealment:

Cover: will protect you from getting hit by live fire.

Concealment: will hide you from view but not protect you from being shot.

You should know the difference and how to use both to your advantage:

Using COVER effectively:

- Be aware of the angle from which you emerge from cover to fire a defensive shot
- Emerge from cover as little as possible
- Do not assume that there is only one assailant as you emerge from cover
- Good cover will stop a bullet from hitting you (car engine, block or concrete wall, metal freezer or full refrigerator, or other solid object like a full book case or filing cabinet, marble slab or fireplace wall)
- Emerge from cover at different spots—pop up at different places from behind cover, rather than at the same location whenever possible
- Be careful not to let any parts of your body be exposed if at all possible when using cover—but if the cover is not large enough to completely cover all of your body, position yourself so that your vital organs, head and feet are unexposed.

Limited Cover:

Some objects may provide “limited cover” which will help protect part of you, or may be used to effectively deflect a bullet. Any cover is better than nothing at all; concealment at the very least will make it more difficult to hit you.

Using CONCEALMENT effectively:

- Hide behind whatever you can to avoid being seen by an assailant as you move toward cover
- Be aware that concealment will not protect you from being shot, so do not linger in the same spot
- Remember that parts of your body may be visible to an assailant if not totally concealed, making you an easier target
- Concealment is better than nothing at all

Remember, if you can see them, they can see you—but they may be able to see parts of you, even if you can't see them.

Multiple Adversaries:

When faced with multiple assailants, there are a few basic principles you should employ. The following will help you defend yourself:

- Shoot the one that is the biggest threat to your life first—it may be the one that is closest to you, but

maybe not.

- Move your body to reduce the number of assailants that can see you—if one person is behind the assailant in front of them, they will not be able to see you; thus, they will have a harder time attacking you.
- Shoot each assailant one time, then reassess if any of them need to be shot again. Shooting each assailant multiple times in a row before moving to the next one will give the others more time to attack you.
- Do not let any assailant out flank you, or move more than 180 degrees of you—you may have to position yourself up against a wall in a slightly harder escape mode, than risk being attacked from behind.
- The time to shoot more than once at an assailant is when they are emerging one at a time from concealment or cover—as each one falls, be sure to scan the area for more potential attackers.
- Remember that you will develop tunnel vision and will not hear well once you begin firing so be sure to SCAN the area after dealing with an assailant, looking for hands, legs, arms, heads or other unexposed body parts.

Defense in your home:

The best defense you may have in your home is that you are more familiar with the layout than an intruder. Your first choice should be to escape the encounter if at all possible. Doing the following increases your chance of survival:

- Lock your doors and windows at all times
- Never shoot at someone unless you can see and identify them as intruder—you do not want to take a chance that you would hurt someone you know
- Keep the firearm pointed in a safe direction at all times—beware of pointing it at common household objects such as a water heater, portable heater, gas can, etc.
- It is good to set up a safe room in your house—especially if you do not have sufficient cover or the ability to keep an intruder from flanking you.
- Be sure to keep firearms stored where they are inaccessible to unauthorized persons and not convenient to intruders.
- Do not leave loaded firearms sitting in different locations in your home as a way to defend each room—you may be arming the wrong person.

- Keeping loaded firearms readily available for your personal defense while you are at home is not the same as leaving loaded firearms in convenient places in your home when you are not there.
- Avoid keeping window coverings open at dusk or dark—and do not leave valuables or firearms in view of a window or door.
- Keeping a handgun on your person while at home is one of the safest and most convenient means of personal protection at home—in a manner consistent with safe carry practices.
- Shooting a warning shot is strongly discouraged.

Shooting on the move:

Most trained professionals have great difficulty hitting a moving target when shooting a firearm. Moving in a lateral direction is the best way to avoid being shot. No matter what, move!—do not become a stationary target. Sitting ducks don't survive when the quack of the gun is heard! You must remember to move if confronted by an intruder in your home:

- Moving targets are harder to hit
- Move toward cover for safety

- Move toward someone you are trying to defend
- Move get a better shot
- Location, location, location—move!

Be sure to call 911 ASAP and position yourself for survival of an attack if at all possible:

Part of your best defense plan must include calling 911 FIRST—not after you call a neighbor, friend or loved one.

You must do the following if at all possible:

- Move to a safe location
- Call 911—stay on the phone with them but keep your hands free for defensive purposes
- Stay quiet, out of harm's way if at all possible
- Position yourself in a strong defensive place
- Never go looking for the intruder—you stand too great a risk of being ambushed, flanked, or overtaken by an assailant
- Do not rely on placing a laser on the body of an assailant or the sound of racking a slide being an effective deterrent

- Be sure of your target and what is beyond the walls
- Use whatever is near you as a weapon
- Stay as calm as possible—be active, not reactive
- Use deadly force as a last resort—a firearm is perhaps the most effective tool for personal defense and requires personal training to be effective
- Have additional ammunition at hand
- You may have to use hand-to-hand defense tactics before you can ever access your firearm
- Tactical and marksmanship training is required
- Remember to break tunnel vision by looking around
- Never give up



Shooting from different positions:

During an encounter with an assailant, the chances of you always standing squarely on two feet is unlikely. Thus, it is important to practice shooting from different positions which include: standing, sitting, prone and even laying on your back in the event you are knocked over or tackled.

7

EMERGENCY and TACTICAL RELOADING getting more firepower under duress

Emergency and tactical reloading is one of the essential skills you must master to have a chance at surviving an encounter when shooting more rounds than what you have in your handgun is necessary to stop the assailant(s).

There are basically two styles of reloading a firearm during an emergency—tactical and speed loading.

The difference is:

Speed loading is the fastest way to unload and reload a firearm. During this process you are not concerned with where the magazine or speed loading device lands or whether or not you are wasting live rounds. In Tactical loading, the object is to also keep control of the magazine or the emptied rounds in case any of them are still able to be fired.

Revolver Speed Loading Process (assuming you have both hands available):

- Open the rotating cylinder with your weaker hand
- Turn the firearm over in a vertical position so that the empty casings will fall out when the ejector rod is pressed

- Press the ejector rod in a fast, forceful motion
- Flip the firearm over in the opposite direction to permit “dropping” of the rounds into the chamber easier and faster
- LOOK at the empty chambers as you load the rounds
- Drop the speed loader (no need to throw it out of the way)
- Close the cylinder and begin firing

Revolver Tactical Loading Process (assuming you have both hands available):

- Open the rotating cylinder with your weaker hand
- Turn the firearm over in a vertical position so that the empty casings will fall out when the ejector rod is pressed
- Press the ejector rod in a fast, forceful motion BUT CUP your hand under the cylinder to catch the rounds in the event any of them may not have been fired
- Place the emptied rounds into a pocket or other place for safe keeping
- Flip the firearm over in the opposite direction to permit “dropping” of the rounds into the chamber easier and faster

- LOOK at the empty chambers as you load the rounds
- Drop the speed loader (no need to throw it out of the way)
- Close the cylinder and begin firing

Semi Automatic Speed Loading Process (assuming you have both hands available):

- Pop the magazine out with your weak hand keeping the handgun in a vertical shooting position
- Allow the magazine to drop out without touching it
- While the magazine is falling, grab the replacement magazine with your weak hand
- LOOK at the magazine entry point to assure that the magazine is actually going into the intended slot
- Slam the magazine in to assure it has seated properly
- Close the slide (use of the slide release is faster than racking the slide)
- Begin firing

NOTE: Should the slide have remained shut prior to reloading, rack the slide eject whatever round is in the chamber to assure that a new round is in the chamber before firing

Semi Automatic Tactical Loading Process (assuming you have both hands available):

- Grab a replacement magazine with your weak hand
- Pop the magazine out with your strong hand keeping the handgun in a vertical shooting position
- Catch the empty magazine in the weak hand as well keeping them separated with a finger
- **LOOK** at the magazine entry point to assure that the magazine is actually going into the intended slot
- Slam the replacement magazine to assure it has seated properly
- Place the ejected magazine in a safe place (pocket, holder, etc)
- Close the slide (use of the slide release is faster than racking the slide)
- Begin firing

NOTE: Should the slide have remained shut prior to reloading, rack the slide eject whatever round is in the chamber to assure that a new round is in the chamber before firing

Techniques for reloading semi-automatics when you do NOT have both hands available:

The one-handed, semi-automatic reload should only be used in an emergency when the dominant hand is disabled due to injury or attack. It should be a last-ditch technique and not a “trick” or exhibition method to chamber a round once the magazine is in the pistol.

ALWAYS be certain that live ammo is removed from the practice area and secured in a lockbox or safe. Brightly colored plastic or polymer dummy rounds should be used when practicing.

The first step is to study the front and rear sights of your semi-automatic. Most Glocks, SIGs, Berettas, Smith & Wessons, and similar popular pistol platforms have prominent front- and rear-sight combinations. Prominent sights are your most important component to a proper one-handed reload. The sights will be used to grab onto and to make contact with leather, denim, or other fabric.

One technique is the “leather gun belt” reload. Leather is extremely dense and will provide an excellent surface for the sights to grip. After inserting a fresh magazine, flip the pistol over using a one-handed grip and rack the slide against the gun belt while pressing the front and rear sights together against the belt. It’s important that the front and rear sights be pressed against the leather as a group to gain the best angle and hold on the slide to enable the grip and frame to be moved to load a round.

It is possible to do this with either the front or rear-sight group singularly, but it's difficult and takes a lot of practice.

Make sure the muzzle is pointed in the safest possible direction, away from the body. Practice chambering the dummy round in two positions—one while standing, a second while prone on a flat surface to simulate an incapacitated position.

Note: Remember to move the grip and frame of the pistol in the direction of the muzzle when you dig the sights into fabric, denim or leather, as you will be racking the slide in a backward manner.

Another one-handed reload method involves using the upper or lower leg surface area of your pants which will preferably be sturdy fabric. This area offers a wide surface for the sights to grip through and gain a strong grip. After inserting the magazine into the pistol, grasp the entire grip and frame of the gun with your weak (non-dominant) hand. Turn over the pistol, gain a stronghold into the fabric, and rack the slide. This is easier than the gun belt technique, but it requires practice.

This drill may seem intimidating at first. Please remember to move the grip and frame of the pistol in the direction of the muzzle when you dig the sights into fabric, denim or leather. As long as you do this with enough force, you will allow the slide to move back enough and subsequently forward to chamber a fresh round and bring the gun into battery. You can always use the weak (non dominant) hand to eject empty magazines.

If you're right-hand dominant and that hand is disabled, use the index finger of the left hand to drop the magazine and use the left hand to practice the one-handed reload. Most semi-automatics have the magazine release button on the left side (shooter's first-person perspective). Others provide ambidextrous controls.

In some cases, there may still be enough feeling left in your disabled hand to insert a fresh magazine. You can then use your non-dominant hand to properly seat the magazine in the gun by using something sturdy as a base to slam the firearm down on top of the inserted magazine—rather than slamming the magazine into the gun.

Techniques for reloading a revolver when you do NOT have both hands available:

Loading a revolver with one hand is similar to loading a pistol—you still have to drop the empty cases, reach for spare cartridges, load the gun and close the action to get back into the fight, but there are few twists.

The main twists are dropping the empty cases and filling the cylinder with fresh cartridges. Most of us use one hand to hold the gun while using the other to hand to eject and reload, but in the current example, one hand is disabled. The technique required to load a revolver with one hand is control. You have to be able to move your hand around multiple times without dropping the gun.

The most common way to manipulate a revolver for a one-handed reload is by pressing the gun against the body when relocating the hand on the gun.

- After opening the cylinder, press the grip against your side before moving your thumb around and into the open cylinder
- Then, reach your fingers around the frame to press the ejector rod
- Once the cases have dropped free, spin the gun in the hand and insert it into your holster, or belt, or waistband with the grip facing forward so as to permit the cylinder to remain open on the outside
- With the gun stabilized, load the gun
- Then, twist your arm to grip the handle so it can be drawn from the holding position
- Flip the cylinder closed—a practice that should only be done while training with one hand or in a real-life situation when two hands are not an option
- Return to the target and resume firing

As with all training drills, be sure to use dummy ammunition, especially when the training that is more about gun manipulation than shooting.

Reloading techniques for shotguns:

Loading a shotgun is similar to loading a pistol, and will vary depending on whether or not it is an autoloader (which ejects the spent shells automatically) or designed similar to a revolver (in that you must manually eject and load the shells).

There are many opinions as to the best speed/tactical reloading techniques for shotguns.

The basic speed reloading procedures with an *autoload* shotgun are from the bottom and from the top. The best way to speed load is to get an elastic side saddle. The tactical reload (the round dump) is the one where you load the shell from the top into the chamber.

Learn how to reload quickly.

Many say, if you have time, opportunity and cover, execute a tactical reload (load the magazine tube). Even if you only have two of the three, perform a tactical reload. If you have one or none of the three, perform a speed load. The speed load consists of turning the autoload shotgun 90 degrees counterclockwise, dropping a round into the ejection port while the forearm is back, then shucking the round into the chamber.

It's better to have that next round on hand, than a full tube without one in the chamber. *It's all about having the next round.* Depressing the trigger with no "boom" is more than an unfortunate event.

Also, when tactical reloading, keep the butt of the stock on your hip or stomach and point the muzzle in a safe direction. With a little practice, you won't need to look down to reload—you can watch your target instead.

Non-autoloaders are less likely to malfunction under duress. They are similar to a revolver in that the empty shells must be manually ejected. However, with practice, effective reloading is achievable.

The best tactical reloading procedure for home defense is to have extra shells easily accessible to you for the shotgun and to take the time necessary to ASSURE that you have placed the new shells properly into the chamber, period.

Practice, practice, practice with dummy rounds until you have mastered the technique to the point that you can do it SAFELY, fast. KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF OF THE TRIGGER!—the shotgun is heavier and harder to manipulate under duress, so use extra caution.

Having a handgun in addition to a shotgun in the home is suggested. Whereas shotguns offer excellent stopping power with a wide shot area, handguns are easier to maneuver with in close quarters. No matter which you choose, it is imperative that you practice regularly, operate them safely and keep them clean and in good working order.

Although a combination caliber revolver that shoots both 410 shotgun shells and 45 defense ammo is hard to conceal as a handgun carry option, it is a good “one gun” option for home defense or in a motor vehicle.

The speed versus tactical reload debate:

The concept of the tactical reload in an altercation is the ability to avoid losing valuable unspent rounds. When compared to the speed load, where you may discard a magazine that still has live rounds in it, or dump a revolver cylinder, the question is: *which one will keep me alive?*

The tactical reload can be the basis for a firearm malfunction because the magazine fails to properly seat itself. Trying to hold multiple magazines in your fingers and properly load the full one makes it difficult to “slam” the magazine into place—which is a technique relied on during many firearm competitions to help assure that the rounds will load properly and can also prove to be invaluable in a life-threatening moment—not to mention the lost seconds fumbling around trying to place the magazine back in your pocket.

Using a technique that leads to malfunctions at a time when seconds are critical, or requiring extra time to make sure the magazine was properly seated after performing a tactical reload, seems like the least desirable of the two. Granted, in speed loading you possibly could leave a live round on the ground, but at least you stand a better chance getting off another attack stopping shot in less time.

Plus, the tactical reload is based on nonfundamental fine motor movements, it requires more mental attention to have any hope of accomplishing it in an expedited manner. That means during the course of the reload, the shooter’s focus is off the threat longer. So, you’ve now turned your

attention away from your attacker for at least a couple of critical seconds.

If an attacker can travel 21 feet (seven yards—the distance within which most violent crimes commence) in 1.5 seconds, you will be behind cover fumbling with your gun while your assailant is moving into a more threatening position. In the five seconds it's likely to take you to reload, you could be overcome—worse yet, dead.

Thus, odds are that if you are trapped and need more rounds, it is better to speed reload the gun. Drop the partially used magazine on the ground, ram the full magazine in hard, and continue with what you were doing as quickly as possible. If you're kneeling behind cover when you do the reload and there's time, by all means pick up and stuff somewhere the partially charged magazine, or loose unspent rounds from a revolver.

Typically, civilian gunfights are not determined on round count, but rather the skill of the shooter. But if too little rounds are of concern, preload more speed loaders or magazines and have them handy.

During all speed or tactical reloading procedures, always KEEP the muzzle pointed in a SAFE direction.

8

POINTS TO PRACTICE tips and tricks to help improve defensive skills at home, work or other places you frequently inhabit

- *Keeping your finger off the trigger while practicing*
- *Drawing a firearm from concealment*
- *Drawing and reholstering a handgun while looking straight ahead*
- *Acquiring a sight picture asap—if only for the moment before you pull the trigger*
- *Becoming a moving target, rather than a sitting duck*
- *Awareness at all times*
- *Reloading the firearm (use only dummy ammo) in the dark, with one hand, lying down, with your eyes closed, etc.*
- *Speed and Tactical Reloading*
- *Clearing ammunition and mechanical malfunctions*
- *Use verbal commands that are not normally spoken during an encounter when co-training*

- *Moving into your assailant and when they are off balance, step back to acquire sufficient separation to safely draw your handgun with control of the muzzle*
 - *Scanning and assessing the area after shooting an assailant*
 - *Hand-to-hand defense moves*
 - *Executing your personal protection plan*
 - *Review in your mind what you would do if . . . ?*
-
- *Specific things you specifically need to practice . . .*

Remember, the first one to hit their target in a shooting usually wins—so practice, practice, practice!

9

TYPES and CALIBERS of FIREARMS and other options that are good selections for personal protection at home

With all of the different handgun options available today to be used for personal protection, it is understandable that selecting the type and caliber best suited to your skill level and your individual needs might be overwhelming—especially when after you purchase one, it is not returnable



like a pair of shoes that you decided did not fit after all. Thus, it is important that you make a fully informed decision before you make the investment.

Let's start with the fit. When a handgun "fits" a person's hand, the following is true:

- the fingers on the strong hand will be able to wrap around the grip sufficiently to maintain control of the firearm when it is fired.
- the pad of the trigger finger should touch the trigger lever naturally
- when the firearm is placed in the "v" of the strong hand, the barrel will be in alignment with the forearm and the fingers will wrap around the grip as required with the trigger

finger pad resting properly on the trigger lever

- the shooter can squeeze the trigger without cocking the hammer first
- the shooter can hold and control the handgun with the strong hand only

You should be able to effectively control the firearm with and without the use of the support hand—and become proficient with it, which is more than just effectively hitting an “x” on a target at the range.

You must be able to clear a jam, operate the action without delay, see the sights clearly, and shoot it with precision, if you plan to rely on it to stop an assailant(s). The ability to properly maintain the firearm goes without saying to assure it is ready when you are.

The “caliber” of firearm you should use for personal protection is the largest caliber you can adequately control.

Contrary to some opinions, .22 caliber handguns can do a lot of damage to an assailant when used tactically correct. For example: a .22 round that hits the throat, up the nose thru the brain, the temple, or a vital organ is deadly. If a smaller caliber firearm is all you can handle proficiently, then that is all the firepower you should use for personal protection. You do not want to risk losing because you can not sufficiently control your weapon of choice.

Smaller caliber firearms like a .22, .25, 32, or even a .380 are usually smaller in overall size—many will fit in the palm of a normal size hand, which can be a safety hazard because fingers can easily find their way out in front of the muzzle.

A popular caliber of revolver used for personal protection is a .38—which ammunition options come in a number of impact designs and power levels. Next, the .357 revolver is a powerful choice that feels like a .38 but fires like a 45 cal.

Semi-Automatics are popular selections for personal protection in both compact and fullsize models in 9mm, 40, 45 calibers—which offer more “stopping power” in the cartridge itself. People who prefer semi-auto style handguns regularly select .380 caliber compacts when they want the benefit of a smaller firearm.

Do not be misled by those who state that it takes a large caliber of handgun to stop an attacker—there have been many instances where a assailant was hit with multiple shots from a .45 caliber handgun and lived to tell about it. The most important part of using a handgun for personal protection effectively is the will to live, the training and skill developed with the handgun, and the ability to perform under duress by relying on learned muscle memory and instinctive response from practicing with the handgun.

Basically, when it comes to deciding what type and caliber

firearm should be selected for personal protection with a handgun, consideration should be given to:

- ability to stop an attacker at close range with a caliber of ammunition that will be less likely to penetrate walls and/or hurt an innocent bystander if the shot becomes a “thru and thru”
- caliber that the shooter can adequately control
- proficiency of the shooter with either a revolver or semi-automatic while under duress (not just during a relaxed shooting session)
- recoil impact and control



Home defense ammunition:

Many manufacturers make different types and calibers of frangible ammunition which is designed to breakdown after initial impact to avoid unintentional collateral damage. The ammunition is available for shotguns and handguns.

Understanding how shotguns operate will help you determine which one is the best option for you as a home defense firearm.

The autoloading action, the pump action, and the break action (single shot and double barrel) are the most popular action types that the vast majority of modern shotguns employ. There are other shotgun types which will not be addressed (such as the unusual Darné sliding block action or the inexpensive bolt action) as these types represent a small percentage of shotgun sales.



The autoloader

Long recoil operated, short recoil operated, and gas operated autoloading actions were all devised by John Browning, and the firm that bears his name has made all three types which can be easily recognized by the familiar “square back” receiver.

A long recoil action uses the force of recoil to achieve the operation. It requires the barrel and bolt (locked together) to travel rearward for a distance somewhat greater than the full length of the fired cartridge before coming to a stop so that the fired shell may be extracted and ejected. Then the barrel unlocks from the bolt and returns to battery, followed a little later by the bolt, which strips a fresh shell from the magazine and chambers it as it returns to battery. Springs, compressed on the rearward movement, power the return to battery of the barrel and bolt. The jolt

caused by the heavy barrel/bolt assembly reaching the end of its rearward travel immediately after the recoil caused by the firing of the cartridge gives the long recoil gun a peculiar “double shuffle” kick, which some shooters find disconcerting.

The *short recoil action* shotgun also uses recoil energy for power, but the barrel and bolt are only locked together for a short distance, usually less than 1/2 inch. Then the two are separated and the barrel returned to battery by a spring while the bolt continues rearward to eject the fired case. At the end of its travel the bolt is forced forward (by another spring) and it strips a fresh round from the magazine and chambers it as it returns to battery.

Most autoloading *pistols* also operate on the short recoil principle, and this is where the system has found its most common application.

The *gas operated autoloading action* shotgun uses the power of the expanding gas from the power charge to operate the action. It works in a similar manner to the gas operated autoloading rifle. Probably the best-known gas operated shotgun ever made, and typical of the type, is the Remington Model 1100. This benchmark design has influenced the great majority of subsequent autoloaders.

Autoloaders are very popular for the various clay target sports and also for hunting because of their perceived reduction in recoil and the ability to control the second and third shots easier. The fact that autoloaders hold more than one or two shells gives additional opportunity to stop an

attacker without the need to reload.

Autoloaders are a little more expensive than an equivalent pump gun, but much cheaper to manufacture and sell than a decent double gun. They can offer more versatility in that a second barrel of different configuration can be purchased at a reasonable price. Barrels can usually be interchanged in minutes without tools.

Autoloaders generally require more maintenance than other types. Without it they are apt to become less reliable than a manually operated action, particularly in very cold weather. They must be kept clean and should be inspected for proper adjustment and worn parts on a regular basis. Other shotgun types will run practically forever if you merely swab out the chamber and bore and wipe down the outside of the gun with a silicone cloth. This is not true of autoloaders, and particularly gas operated autoloaders.

The primary disadvantage of the autoloading shotgun, besides increased maintenance, relates to the length of the receiver necessary to contain its action. This long receiver between the barrel and butt stock makes an autoloader about 4" longer than a break action gun with the same length barrel. Autos tend to be muzzle heavy and slow to swing with a barrel longer than 26" in length. This is a disadvantage shared with the pump gun (see below).

Some shooters find the automatic operation of the action between shots distracting and often autos tend to be fussy about ammunition; they will often fail to eject light loads, and sometimes fail to feed heavy loads.

Most experienced shooters consider autoloaders the most dangerous type of shotgun in the hands of a careless or ignorant shooter. Because, after the first shot, it is ready to shoot again with no action required by the shooter beyond pulling the trigger. This is, of course, also true for a double gun with a single trigger. Safety is really an operator problem, as the autoloader is as safe as any other repeater when used correctly. Careless individuals are dangerous to themselves and others with any sort of gun and should not be permitted to use a firearm unsupervised.



The pump

The *pump action* is cycled by “pumping” the forearm after a shot is fired. The forearm is connected to the breech-bolt by rods called “action bars.” These cause the bolt to move with the forearm, performing the operation. There are two motions to pumping a shotgun. First the forearm is pulled straight to the rear. This initially unlocks the bolt, then extracts and ejects the fired shell as the bolt moves rearward. When the forearm reaches the end of its rearward stroke, it is pushed in the opposite direction, straight forward. It pulls the bolt with it, until the bolt once again locks in the fully forward position. During its forward motion the bolt picks up a fresh shell from the magazine, pushes it into the chamber, and locks into place. The gun is then ready for another shot.

Pump guns handle virtually identically to gas operated autoloaders. Because of their long receiver they tend to be muzzle heavy if equipped with a barrel the same length as typically found on a break action gun. A pump gun with a 24" barrel is about the same overall length as a double with 28" barrels, and handles well, but the short barrel increases muzzle blast. A 26" barrel gives a pump about the same overall length as a double with a 30" barrel.

Because of its relatively low price, reliability and multi-shot capacity the pump action shotgun has for many years been a favorite of both the military and the police when a short range, hard hitting weapon is called for. Short barreled "riot gun" type pumps have also become popular with urban residents, who may indeed be faced with a riot just beyond their front door, started on the flimsiest of pretexts.

The principal advantages of the pump gun are its relatively economical price, 3+ shot capacity, reliability and fast manually operated action. Although it is not as popular in competition as the over/under or autoloader, many trap and skeet shooters do use pump guns and a quick second shot for doubles can be achieved with practice.

Pumps are particularly useful as field guns. They are not sensitive to ammunition and can be used with light or heavy loads, including reloads. A second barrel (longer or shorter) or multiple choke tubes can be purchased to increase the versatility of the gun at modest cost. A pump gun is usually the cheapest, and often the best, way for the occasional shotgun shooter to get into a repeater that is suitable for fast follow-up shots in the field.

The break action

Break action shotguns commonly come in single barrel and double barrel styles. Single barrel guns are usually either inexpensive beginner guns or special purpose trap (competition) guns. Double barrel guns have the barrels placed side-by-side or one superposed over the other (over/under). There are also a few three-barrel break action guns called “drillings.” They usually have two side-by-side shotgun barrels over a single rifle barrel.

Any break action gun is the safest of all shotgun types, since simply opening the action reveals whether it is loaded and renders it inoperable. It also makes it very easy to check for barrel obstructions. A break-action gun should not be closed until it is time to shoot.

Single barrel



The *single barrel, break action* shotgun is compact, light, handy, well balanced and effective. It is most commonly seen as a beginner’s field gun. These are usually rather plain, inexpensive, mass produced guns stocked in hardwood or plastic, but seldom walnut. They often have an external, rebounding hammer that must be cocked before they can be fired. If equipped with an ejector a single barrel can be reloaded fairly rapidly.

These were the shotguns with which generations of young Americans learned to shoot.

Another commonly encountered form of single barrel shotgun is the single barrel trap gun. These are top-flight competition guns, built by many of the famous double gun manufacturers. They are usually impeccably fitted and finished guns, typically featuring long 32 or 34 inch barrels with elevated ventilated ribs, beavertail fore-ends, and straight, Monte Carlo, or adjustable combs.



Side-by-Side double barrel

The queen of shotguns is the elegant *break action, side-by-side double barrel*. No other design is as graceful or as aesthetically pleasing. Double guns are generally built on actions called “boxlock” (where the action parts—the locks—are carried inside of the action body), or “sidelock” (where the lockwork is attached to sideplates inletted into the wood behind the body of the action). Both types were invented in Britain.

Virtually all double-barreled shotguns today are of the familiar break-open design, fundamentally similar to the break-action single shot guns with which most kids learn how to shoot. To open the action, a top lever (operating what is called a Scott spindle) is pressed to the side and the barrels pivot down around a hinge pin at the front of the action bar, opening the action and exposing the breech end of the barrels for loading or unloading.

Most of the better double guns have automatic ejectors,

which eject fired shell cases when the action is opened, but merely extract unfired cases from the chamber for easy hand removal. Automatic ejectors were developed to reduce the time it takes to reload a double gun, for while reloading must be accomplished by hand, unloading can be made automatic.

Competition guns usually forgo this feature, since two shots are the limit in competition and fast reloading is unnecessary.

For speed reloading, some doubles feature assisted opening. This uses some form of spring action to help kick the barrels open when the top lever is operated. Of course, this spring must be compressed when the gun is closed, requiring more effort to close the gun.

Another feature incorporated into most British best guns is the “clean” breech face. This is also intended to speed reloading, by eliminating any projections from the face of the breech that could interfere with the removal or insertion of shells. Unlike most American doubles, which hold the action closed by means of some sort of bolt through an extension of the top rib, British (also Spanish and Italian) guns typically use underbolts. These operate in a large central slot in the center of the action’s watertable and lock into “bites” (deep notches) cut into “lumps” (lugs) placed centrally between the “flats” (underside) of the twin barrels, which fit into the slot in the action’s watertable when it is closed. doubles use the British system and have a clean breech face.

Hand detachable locks are often seen on certain British and Spanish best grade sidelocks. This feature permits the shooter to remove the sideplates with their attendant mechanisms for easy cleaning without resorting to tools. The interior of such locks are usually highly polished or engine turned, and sometimes the parts are gold plated.

Some double guns also have a single selective trigger (SST), which the user can set to fire either barrel first and which then automatically resets to fire the second barrel. This is a complicated type of trigger. Not all makers of best guns offer a SST and some of those that do probably shouldn't. Many are prone to "doubling" (firing both barrels at once) or "balking" (not firing the second barrel when the trigger is pulled).

There are also single non-selective triggers, which always fire the same barrel first. Since they are much simpler than SST's these usually work fine.

Most double guns intended for hunting still have two separate triggers, one for each barrel. Two triggers can be harder to operate in a self defense situation.

As you can perhaps tell, much thought and mechanical ingenuity has gone into the evolution of the double gun. In fact, a best grade double is the most highly evolved of all firearms. It is also the only common action type that has no military application. The modern double gun is strictly a civilian innovation.

A side-by-side double gun offers an instant choice of two

chokes, short overall length (compared to a repeater) for any given barrel length, a trim receiver for easy carrying, a very quick second shot, superior “between the hands” balance and generally the best handling available in a shotgun. It is also the most graceful of all guns. As noted above, any break action gun is the safest of all shotgun types, since simply opening the action reveals whether it is loaded and renders it inoperable. The typical double’s sliding tang-mounted safety is quicker and easier to operate than the safety mounted in the trigger guard of most repeaters. A double is also extremely easy to check for barrel obstructions.

*Over/Under
double barrel*



Like side-by-side double guns, *over and under actions* can be of either the boxlock or sidelock type. The redoubtable John Browning popularized the O/U in the 20th century with his innovative Superposed boxlock design. The company that bears his name is still one of the largest suppliers of the type.

Despite its somewhat ungainly appearance (compared to a side-by-side), the O/U is the best selling double barreled gun in the world today. The stack barrel can be made to balance and swing just as well as a side-by-side, but its receiver is thicker so it doesn’t look or feel quite as trim.

The O/U’s advantages include a single sighting plane, short overall length, excellent balance, tang-mounted safety and

the same safety advantages as other break action guns. Most O/U's today come with single triggers and offer a very fast second shot, faster than an autoloader since no time is wasted while the action cycles. The first of these advantages is why most shooters today prefer it to the side-by-side. The other advantages are why so many top-level competition shooters prefer the O/U to repeating shotguns, despite its much higher price.

About the only disadvantage to any quality double, whether side-by-side or over/under, is price. These superior guns are expensive to manufacture.

Personal Defense Tactical Designed Shotguns:

Manufacturers have answered the call for tactical-friendly shotgun options for personal protection at home. Some models mimic the old style shotgun design while others are more law enforcement or military in appearance. Each have taken the best features for personal protection and put them to work in a tactical application that offers numerous individual possibilities.



The Coach Gun

The *Coach Gun* replicates the old stagecoach wild west style shotguns with shorter barrels and stocks. These are almost always side-by-side style with dual triggers, one for each barrel.

The Pistol Grip Pump



The *Pistol Grip Pump Gun* operates with a single trigger with a similar feel to a handgun. The barrel is shorter than competition and hunting shotgun models.

Over/ Under Short Barrel



The *Over/Under Short Barrel Double Defense Gun* operates with a single trigger and the break open action of a typical double barrel shotgun. This is the shortest legal barrel length option for personal defense at home.



The Double Defense Gun is also available in a side-by-side barrel configuration. Both are designed to accommodate various tactical accessories including flashlights and sighting systems. They are made from different materials including: painted wood, synthetic composite polymer, and ABS plastic.



Different style tactical pump shotgun



Shooting for Women Alliance University • 501 Clinch Avenue, Second Floor, Knoxville, TN 37902 • 865-329-3293 • MySFWA.com

