

## PRO CARRY RELOADING

**In** 2009 and beyond, the specter of inflated ammunition prices looms large. In this test, we shot our the Sig Sauer 45 ACP pistol with one ammunition we loaded ourselves. Here are some tips on how you can save time and money and in many cases produce superior ammunition.

First, you will need a press. You can call it a loading press, but we'd rather refer to it as a reloading press. That's because the most economical way to use the press is to reload spent brass casings and reload them over and over. Or you can simply pick up and reload the spent brass after firing the ammunition you already have in the closet. Our 45 ACP test rounds were loaded on a **Dillon Precision Super 1050**, shown at right. We recommend visiting [dillonprecision.com](http://dillonprecision.com) to see progressive loaders ranging in price from \$340 to \$1540 that are capable of loading 400 to more than 1000 rounds per hour of rifle and pistol ammunition. Every other component of ammunition is single use only. That includes the bullet, primer, and powder. For best accuracy results, we recommend buying new brass and keeping track of how many times it has been fired. Also, dedicating brass to an individual gun can be beneficial.

But to save additional money, you can often purchase fired brass. Once-fired brass is your second-best choice, but even if you can only purchase fired brass of unknown age, accuracy can be still be maximized. Begin by sorting the spent cases by headstamp. This means keep all the Winchester brass in one bag, Federal brass in another. We have found that groups fired with reloads utilizing like cases are more consistent.

Since the chambering of some guns allows the brass to expand more than others, we also recommend that you use a resizing die that is strict in tolerance. Evolution Gun Works sells resizing and decapping dies that are purposely undersized to correct spent cases (\$22 from [egw-guns.com](http://egw-guns.com)). These dies are especially helpful for sizing spent brass from Glock pistols so they can be used in barrels with

tighter match-grade chambers.

To save time you will need a progressive press. The progressive press is in effect a complete production line. This means the empty case can enter the press in one station and be turned into a finished live round by the time it has visited each position.

Reloading on a progressive press starts with the resizing and de-priming die. With a stroke of the handle this die squeezes the sides of the case into its original dimension before it was expanded by the blast of ignition. At the same time a pin pushes out the spent primer into a catch basin. The case is then rotated either mechanically by a stroke of the operating handle or manually by the operator to the priming station. Another empty case can then be inserted into the first station. Working the handle once more pushes in a fresh primer. Back in station one, another case is being sized and deprimed.

Next the primed case is ready to be filled at the powder-drop station. The powder is dropped by a feeding tube that also expands the mouth of the case. This "belled" profile makes it easier to place the bullet atop the case mouth where in the following station the bullet will be pressed into place. The last station crimps the case mouth around the bullet. Meanwhile, the previous stations do their jobs simultaneously. This makes high-volume reloading easy.

A good source of instruction is the video, *Competition Reloading: Basic to Advanced*, by Brian Enos, (item number 14340, \$20, from [dillonprecision.com](http://dillonprecision.com), 800-762-3845).

—Roger Eckstine

