

S&W 686 Plus .357 Magnum

Retail Price...\$518



Our recommendation: Buy it. This seven-shooter shot accurately, had a reasonably small carry profile, and handled great.

SPECIFICATIONS

Warranty: One Year

METAL FINISH	SS	SIGHT RADIUS	4.25 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	35 oz.	CAPACITY	7 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	7.8 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	Rubber
OVERALL HEIGHT	6 in.	OPTIONAL GRIPS	Wood
MAX. WIDTH	1.5 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA/DA
BARREL LENGTH	2.5 in.	TRIGGER PULL Wt. DA ...	10 lbs.

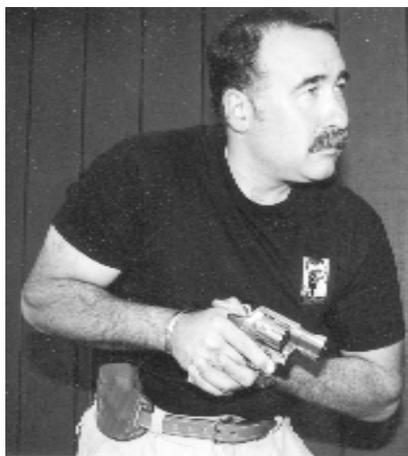


More rounds are a great equalizer in a wheelgun.



The full lug barrel shrouds an abbreviated ejector rod.

The red insert front sight could be a problem for the color-blind shooter.



The 686 Plus's timed runs of 4.11, 4.67, 3.75, 4.30, and 3.71 seconds were noticeably slower than the Taurus, in part because the fine sights tempted us to try for center hits.

framed guns, and the 4-inch seven shooters are noticeably longer and heavier than this pair. Of the two guns, we liked the Smith product better, since its accuracy and fit were superb. However, the Taurus product performed suitably as well, and its cheaper price may make it a better budget choice.

Following are more details about how the two products performed in our tests:

Smith & Wesson 686 Plus

Our recommendation: Buy it. You will have utter confidence in its ruggedness and your ability to shoot it well.

With an exposed backstrap and thin-profile Hogue grip, this \$518 medium-frame 2.5-inch-barrel .357 Magnum revolver does its best to play the role of a concealable carry gun. The seventh round adds nothing to the 1.54-inch diameter of its cylinder, making it a mere 0.10 inch larger than the six-shot K-frame cylinder. Only the target hammer and adjustable rear sight threatens to snag clothing. The 686s are considered to be medium large in size, fitting between the small J-frame, medium K-frame, and jumbo N-series frame. The L-frame was built slightly taller to distance the crane from the barrel and accommodate a full outside diameter at the forcing cone. Additional weight can also be traced to the full lug barrel, which shrouds an abbreviated ejector rod.

Originally called the Combat Magnum, the 686 series is favored by Action Pistol aficionados for its accuracy and strength. As noted elsewhere, it shot sub 3-inch groups with all but one ammo tested. The front sight is pinned in place and can be switched out with little work. For pure target use we would have preferred a patridge rather than a ramped blade with orange insert. Depending on your ability to see color (many men are red/green color-blind), a plain ramp serrated to avoid glare may