

S&W 686-5

Retail Price...\$534



SPECIFICATIONS

METAL FINISH	Stainless St.	SIGHT RADIUS	7.75 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	44 oz.	CAPACITY	7 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	11.5 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	Rubber
OVERALL HEIGHT	6.6 in.	OPTIONAL GRIPS	Yes
MAX. WIDTH	1.5 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA/DA
BARREL LENGTH	6 in.	TRIGGER PULL WT. SA	4.25 lbs.

Warranty: One Year

Our recommendation: Buy it. The 686-5 is accurate, durable, smooth, and powerful.



The addition of a seventh cartridge slot didn't change the 686-5's ratchet/hand relationship; we didn't notice any change in inertia from a six-shot pattern. However, one of the chambers didn't unload and load as well as the other six.



The 686-5's front sight was a ramp style with orange insert. The insert's smooth surface reflected glare, which made the front sight hard to decipher.



The 6-inch 686-5's full-lug barrel puts a lot of weight out front, which can ameliorate recoil.



The rubber Hogue Monogrip provided a soft, tacky surface that felt great in the hand.

inches. The Ruger managed to shoot one group of the Winchester ammo under an inch, and notched 1.24-inch average groups. Even the Rossi checked in with groups well under 3 inches with three out of the four rounds tested.

While the 158-grain semi-wadcutter and the 148-grain wadcutters are widely used for target shooting, the 125-grain wadcutter is a throwback. We'd like a chance to experiment more with them, but the reloaded 3D rounds were victim of

the inconsistent quality of their components. Our first group out of the rest with the 686-5 measured 0.90 inch. Each gun was able to shoot very good if not spectacular groups with this round, but had trouble maintaining consistent results, as the accompanying accuracy table shows.

Of course, as we shot we gathered other insights about the guns and formed opinions about whether we would buy them or not. Here's what we thought about each gun.

Smith & Wesson 686-5

Our recommendation: Buy it. The only thing better than a good six-shooter is a good seven-shooter, and this may be Smith & Wesson's best all-around firearm. As good as it is, it can be even better, and durable to boot.

The 686-series revolvers are referred to as Combat Magnums. The name conjures up a rugged image of ready to go at any time. The original answer to the ballistic shortcomings of the Model 10 police gun in .38 Special was Bill Jordan's switch to the .357 Magnum round in the Model 19. When Smith introduced the Model 28 for police use (Model 27 with target sights for the civilian market), the company was seeking more durability. The 27/28 N frames proved more durable but were considered a little too large for daily carry. The answer was a .357 Magnum sized in between the