GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

$5.95 August 2017/Vol. XXIX, No. 8



THE RETURN OF REMINGTON'S R51

We recently shot the second iteration of Big Green's much-touted R51 pistol against the Taurus Slim, the SIG Sauer P938, and Kel-Tec's PF-9. One was rated a Best Buy. But which one? Find out on... **● Page 6**



SLUGS FOR SELF DEFENSE

These shotgun rounds rock on both ends, we found. If you're looking for a home-defense slug to pair up with a handy pumpgun or semi-auto, Federal's Tactical hollow point is an awfully good choice. **● Page 17**



SURPLUS PISTOLS FROM STAR AND BERETTA

These choices are inexpensive, but some look worse for the wear. Are they still worth chasing to add them to your collection? In a couple of cases, we think so. Find out which ones on... **● Page 23**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● SHORT SHOTS: 30 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

PERUTA DECLINED S.C. HEARING



Todd Woodard

I was disappointed to see that on June 26, the U.S. Supreme Court decided not to hear *Peruta v. California*. A Supreme Court decision would have answered some important legal questions: Does the Second Amendment's coverage for people to keep and bear arms extend outside the home? Does it cover the right to carry concealed firearms in public? *Peruta* might have provided definitive legal answers to those questions. Gun owners already know the answers, so we're frustrated that a natural right to self protection is hemmed in by state statutes.

Edward Peruta is the named appellant in the case, which was brought on behalf of the California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA) Foundation and five individuals who were denied carry licenses by the San Diego Sheriff William D. Gore. In February 2014, a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit hearing *Peruta* resulted in a monumental ruling that held that the San Diego County sheriff's policy of refusing to issue licenses to carry firearms in public—unless an applicant could demonstrate a special need—was an unconstitutional violation of the Second Amendment. Basically, *Peruta* struck down the "good cause" requirement that many states use for allowing someone to carry a concealed firearm in public. What didn't count as a "good cause" was one's personal safety—unbelievable.

Then the decision was reversed in June 2016 when an 11-judge *en banc* panel of the Ninth Circuit found that the Second Amendment offers no protection for gun owners. The majority wrote, "Because the Second Amendment does not protect in any degree the right to carry concealed firearms in public, any prohibition or restriction a state may choose to impose on concealed carry—including a requirement of 'good cause,' however defined—is necessarily allowed by the Amendment."

That is the decision that will stand now that the Supreme Court has declined to hear the case.

In a dissent to the decision to deny the hearing (certiorari), Justices Thomas and Gorsuch said, "We should have granted certiorari in this case. The approach taken by the en banc court is indefensible, and the petition raises important questions that this Court should address. I see no reason to await another case. The en banc court's decision to limit its review to whether the Second Amendment protects the right to concealed carry—as opposed to the more general right to public carry—was untenable. Most fundamentally, it was not justified by the terms of the complaint, which called into question the State's regulatory scheme as a whole."

Then, further: "The Court's decision to deny certiorari in this case reflects a distressing trend: the treatment of the Second Amendment as a disfavored right… The Constitution does not rank certain rights above others, and I do not think this Court should impose such a hierarchy by selectively enforcing its preferred rights." GT

GUN TESTS®
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

Editor.....W. Todd Woodard
Managing Editor..... Tracey Taylor
Sr. Product Coordinator..... Kevin Winkle
Contributing Editors.....R.K. Campbell
Roger Eckstine
Robert Sadowski
David Tannahill
Ralph Winingham
Sr. Tech Coordinator ..... John Taylor
Preproduction..... Cara Blake

TO CONTACT THE STAFF:
GunTestsEditor@icloud.com

GUN TESTS ACCEPTS NO COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

GUN TESTS ® (ISSN No. 1042-6450) is published monthly by AG Media, Inc.; 111 Corporate Drive, Big Sandy, TX 75755-2446. Periodicals Postage Paid at Big Sandy, TX, and at additional mailing offices.

Copyright © 2017, AG Media. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part is strictly prohibited. Printed in U.S.A.

Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658.

Subscriptions: $49 (U.S.) annually. Outside the U.S. and Canada $72 (U.S.) for one year, $144 (U.S.) for two years. Single copies $7.50 (U.S.). Bulk-rate subscriptions for organizations and educational institutions are available.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to: ***GUN TESTS***, P.O. Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535, or ***GUN TESTS***, P.O. Box 39, Norwich ON, N0J 1P0. **Canada Publishing Agreement** #40016479.

ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:
www.Gun-Tests.com
Click "Contact Us"
Or call toll free (800) 829-9084

BACK ISSUES:
Call (800) 571-1555

Getting Brighter on Fiber Optics

Also, how to choose between a SIG Sauer and a Kimber—a problem a lot of people have. And a reader who's also a quality engineer would like to see a simpler grading scale.



Re "Three More 10mm Autos: Kimber, Dan Wesson, Tanfoglio," May 2017

In the technical module about the Dan Wesson Bruin Bronze 1881 10mm pistol (p. 17, May 2017 issue), there is the statement, "The Dan Wesson front sight uses a fiber optic to charge up a tritium dot." While it is true that some "glow in the dark" items collect light energy when illuminated and then glow in the dark for a while, that has nothing to do with how tritium sights work. The tritium sights glow because tritium gas (the radioactive isotope of hydrogen) is sealed in a small, gas-tight hollow glass bead, along with a substance that glows when struck by the radioactive particles given off by the tritium. The bead is not "charged up" by light; it continues glowing as long as the radioactivity lasts, regardless of outside conditions. I'm not sure what the fiber-optic element in the sight does, but is not there to keep the tritium sight charged. The article was quite good otherwise, although I doubt any article would get me to buy a 10mm pistol. **— Leonard**

Thank you, Leonard. We agree the 10mm pistols are an acquired taste. Fiber-optic sights, paired with tritium night sights, create a consistently bright sight picture, day or night. In glaring daylight, tritium sights' relatively small light output won't be much help to the shooter, but ambient light hitting the fiber optics make them brighter and easier to see. As ambient light diminishes, the fiber optics get less bright, and the tritium sights will become relatively easier to see in low-light and dark conditions.

— Todd Woodard

Choosing Between SIG and Kimber

I have recently subscribed to Gun Tests and enjoy reading it when it arrives. One or two issues back, you were testing some SIG Sauer handguns, which provoked my curiosity, although my gun was not specified. I have a SIG P238 380 Auto with decorative finish which I love. However, I really wanted a red-dot sight. At the time I purchased my gun, it would have become a bulky nuisance because of how it had to be mounted. I carry it when I handle large amounts of money (which is frequently) or any time risk is apparent. Most people think it is a cellphone because I have a Sneaky Pete holster. I have a CCDW permit and have had the associated training. I am now wondering if I should consider the new Kimber Micro Nine Crimson Carry with Crimson Trace Grips. I have no way to compare the two guns, either in performance or price, so I thought an email to you might help me decide. As a matter of interest, my SIG has been admired

GUN TESTS REPORT CARD GRADING

Gun Tests Grade: A

A gun with this rating functions perfectly, shoots accurately, and exhibits comfortable, easy use for its owner. We may prefer one gun over others based on its unusual accuracy, superior performance, unusual features, or nice cosmetics. We recognize such a gun for these traits without regard to its cost.

Gun Tests Grade: B

We give this ranking to a gun that functions appropriately for its category, but which might not do as well in major areas as an **A**-ranked gun.

Gun Tests Grade: C

We may have reservations about some aspect of a gun's performance or pricing. We express those reservations so the reader can balance our concerns with his or her needs.

Gun Tests Grade: D

Some aspect of a gun's performance — in particular, safety, function, or accuracy — doesn't meet our standards and isn't easily resolved.

Gun Tests Grade: F

Some aspect of a gun's performance is dangerous, inappropriate for the category, or is likely to fail.





by several friends and associates, so I would not have problem with selling it, should I choose to. It has had exactly one regular box of ammo fired through it. **— John**

Hey John: We haven't compared those two guns head to head, so I can't offer any advice about switching. However, I can relate what we've said in the past about the SIG P238 in various configurations. In the November 2014 issue, we tested the SIG Sauer P238 238-380-NBS12 380 ACP, $710, and gave it a C grade. From the review: "Based on our history with this line, this gun was a disappointment. Its control set should have produced a 1911-like functional experience, but the inconsistent trigger pull affected accuracy. We loved the feel of it, but the rubber grips would affect the draw if it's not in a holster. The laser is included in the price, and that optic helped accuracy." This particular handgun came with a nice leather holster to accommodate the laser, which was mounted on the trigger guard. In that test, we preferred the Glock 42: "For a retail price at or below $440, we'd buy a Glock 42 Subcompact Slimline and add the Viridian R5-G42 Reactor Green Laser, $239. The G42 was big enough to shoot well and small enough to hide well. With the laser, it was very accurate. The controls, takedown, and maintenance are so easy an Austrian could do it. Would we buy the G42 by itself? Probably not." We tested another laser-equipped P238, the SIG Sauer P238 Tactical Laser No. 238-380-TL 380 ACP, $829, and gave it a B-grade in the February 2013 issue. We said: "1911 aficionados like the P238 for its trigger and laser activation. It was the best of the bunch in those functions. Ease in concealment took slightly more effort than the others." A Ruger LCP-LM No. 3718 380 ACP, $443, won that test. You can log on to Gun-Tests.com and read other reviews of the P238 we've done.

However, if you're looking for a 380 Auto, we compiled a list of these firearms in a Value Guide in the October 2015 issue on page 11. From that list, here were the top-ranked items: Kimber Micro Carry Advocate Brown (September 2015, Grade A-); the Ruger LCP-CT (January 2014, Grade A-), the Ruger LC380 No. 3219 (June 2013, Grade A-), and the Taurus 738B (January 2011, Grade A-).

More On Fake Law

Hi Todd: When researching the latest ruling to uphold the Maryland Assault Weapons Ban, I came across your "Fake Law" editorial in the April 2017 issue.

With the complexity of the original 2013 law, it's difficult for the average reader to fully understand what exactly it prohibits. To simplify this for our customers, our team at TacticalGear.com created an infographic that breaks down the different combinations of weapon features that are prohibited in the state of Maryland. The link is here:

Tacticalgear.com/maryland-assault-weapons-ban

I'm sure your readers would also benefit from this simplified visual aid! Thanks so much for your time and consideration. **— Rhonwyn @TacticalGear.com**



Thank you. I've attached a sample to encourage readers who are affected by the ban to go take a look at its features. — tw

Todd Woodard's "Fake Law" editorial was right on the mark. How is it that so many people, including jurists, miss the point of the 2nd Amendment? Any militia needs to be militarily effective. The 2nd Amendment seeks to ensure that the American public will be able to stand up to a tyrannical government. To do that, we need the same kinds of weapons. They have "assault rifles," so we need to be able to buy and own "assault rifles." Thanks for all your efforts. **— Peter**

Proposes Flattened Grading Scale

Dear Sir: I have been a subscriber for many years. I am also a quality engineer. I wish to take issue with you about the rating system used by the magazine. I refer (only as an example) to "Affordable 1911 Rail Guns." In that article, GT reported its experience with four new 1911s. An ATI had to be returned to the factory for repair. The trigger was too heavy to be usable (14) pounds. This is a new out-of-the-box gun. It was rated D. It should have been rated F. A new out-of-the box should be ready for its intended use. It should not have any flaws requiring return to factory. The EAA had a problem with either magazine sensitivity or the magazine latch. It was rated B-. It should have been rated F. A new out-of-the box handgun should be ready for its intended use. Rock Island was okay except for an non-ambi safety. It was rated A and ready for its intended use. Springfield Armory was okay, and it was rated A- and ready for its intended use.

As a quality engineer, I can tell you that simple mechanisms like a 1911 should never be allowed to escape from the factory and end up in your hands. But GT sure seems to get numerous examples of almost completed manufacturing and tested firearms. That it does indicates the manufacturer has a marginal or no quality-control system. I assure you that if the manufacturer isn't testing for simple operation of their product they aren't testing for metal treating or spring temper, etc., either. They rely on the buyer to do the testing and then try to fix the reported problems on warranty.

Virtually every issue of GT discovers a problem, requiring the test gun be returned to the factory at a significant cost to the buyer. This should earn an automatic "F" rating. Consider the difference in complexity of a modern automatic transmission and a 1911 pistol. Have you ever heard of anyone who had to return a new-car automatic transmission to the factory? Why is that? A 1911 has a handful of parts. An automatic transmission has hundreds of parts.

Your rating system should only have four levels of quality: A+, A, A-, and F. Who would buy a gun rated B; C; D; or F? No one who is sane. A gun should come out of the box and be perfect. A rating below A- indicates poor quality control.

Frankly, I don't care when GT reports a grade of C and or why the gun got rated that way. I want an "A" gun. I am sure every one of your readers feels the same way. I suggest that the rating system be changed. Then Gun Tests will become more useful to its readers. **— Larry**

Hey Larry: By publishing your note, I'll ask the other readers what they think. We don't mind failing guns at all, and it is odd that we find so many that are flawed, even if we differ on how to score those flaws. Also, I have had a lot of mail over the years saying we should just abolish the grading and report the outcomes of the test. — tw

Print Subscribers: How to Get Web Access to the Archives

Setting up free electronic access to our website allows you to search the **Gun Tests** archives for specific guns — and you get access to the current issue on the web before it hits your mailbox. Also, you can check the status of your subscription account, update your mailing or email address, pay your subscription invoice or renew your subscription, and communicate with the editorial staff. Current subscribers can begin activating free online access by typing this into your browser: **Gun-Tests.com/activate.**

To create your web-access login, you provide your first and last name, the ZIP/Postal Code, and your account number. That's the first 11 digits found on your magazine's mailing label just above your name. If you can't get the account activated, contact us at **Customer_Service@GunTests.info**, or call 1-800-829-9084.

There are two ways to find guns we've reviewed. The Compare Guns feature (top left corner of the page under the logo) allows you to input several descriptors and narrow the search results. Or you can use the Search function. If you search for a common item, such as "22 LR," you'll get tons of references. Basically, the search function finds every instance of the searched-for topic and lists the accompanying articles the topic appeared in. The more specific and unique the reference, the better the search. We do our best to list the catalog numbers for guns we've tested, so that's usually a good place to start. There's also an "Advanced Search" area to help you narrow the results.

We welcome mail from our readers. To send us comments or questions about previous articles in the magazine, email us at: **GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.** *If you'll include the month and year of the article you're writing about, it's a big help. Also, please include your name, address, and phone number. We won't publish your personal information other than your name, but we may need to contact you about material in your letter.* **GT**

The Return of Remington's R51 Semi-Auto: How Does It Fare?

When we shot the second iteration of Big Green's supposedly world-killing pistol, we were underwhelmed. The winner was a Taurus that won't 'Slim' down your pocketbook too much.

We recently tested four single-stack 9mm Luger defense-oriented handguns, among the most popular carry guns in America. Three were single-action pistols and one was a double-action-only model. The spread in expense was pronounced, from less than $200 to more than $700. As always, when we're evaluating carry pistols, handling and accuracy mean a lot, but reliability is the bottom line, and we start with a pistol that has had a mark beside its name for being unreliable. In the lineup was a pistol taking its second bite at the apple, Remington's R51 96430 9mm Luger, which has undergone a recall and revamp and is now back on dealer shelves. Pitted against it were a SIG Sauer P938 Engraved Rosewood Micro-Compact 938-9-ESR, a Taurus 709 Slim 1-709031FS, and a Kel-Tec PF-9.

All of these handguns have a history with us. Most recently, the R51 did well in its initial test in our pages, but was recalled shortly thereafter. In the August 2014 issue, we said, "The Remington R51 was a handy, comfortable pistol of just the right size for its power. Felt recoil with the hottest ammo was amazingly light, and muzzle flip was almost non-existent. It had an odd takedown procedure that was easily mastered. The gun had enough accuracy for its intended purpose. It worked well, was not too expensive, had a great trigger and great sights, and we really liked the concept.



The Remington R51 malfunctioned from the outset. The hull stuck in the ejection port is from a Federal 115-grain Federal Syntech load. One round that ran well in the R51 was the Federal American Eagle 124-grain load in the background.

"Though our FFL advised us that other shooters were having function problems with the R51, our test



We have tested versions of all these pistols before, with varying results. Clockwise from bottom right is Remington's R51 96430 9mm Luger, which has been recalled and reissued. Bottom left is a Taurus 709 Slim 1-709031FS, then top left is the fancy SIG Sauer P938 Engraved Rosewood Micro-Compact 938-9-ESR, and then a Kel-Tec PF-9, top right. A previous version of the Remington R51 worked well for us, but a lot of other folks had trouble with theirs. Though our FFL advised us that other shooters were having function problems with the R51, our test gun simply did not exhibit those problems. We also had trouble with a previous P938. Not so with the Slim and PF-9, which have done okay in past comparisons.

gun simply did not exhibit those problems. Because we only report what happens in our tests and base our grades on our own experiences, we could not fault the R51 for issues other people were having.

"However, after publication of the August print issue, we learned that the R51 had been recalled by Remington. We adjusted the grade on the R51 to an F and returned our test gun to the factory under the recall program."

Then, late last year, Remington Arms Company announced that the R51 had returned to the market with enhancements that included updated slide internals, precision-engineered extractor, locking snag-free sights, tuned recoil spring, hard-chromed barrel bushing, a single-action trigger, and two semi-flush 7+1 round magazines. At the time of the re-release, Remington said the pistol had been extensively tested. The company again touted the R51's features and benefits, including a lightweight aluminum frame with rounded edges for comfortable conceal carry, a grip safety, low bore axis for reduced recoil/muzzle flip, a concealed carry trigger that was a light, crisp single action, low slide racking-force for ease of manipulation, an ambidextrous magazine release, locking drift-adjustable sights, and optimized grip angle. Our test gun, a full replacement of the original, has a suggested retail price of $448.

The last time we looked at the Kel-Tec PF-9 9mm was in April 2011. Of the PF-9, we said, "All business-like flat black, the blued Kel-Tec PF-9 is slim and easily concealable. It was a bit too big for most trouser pockets, but would fit most overcoat pockets. The fixed sights gave an excellent picture that we thought could be improved by widening the rear notch. There were three white dots. The rear sight was adjustable for windage, and by shimming for elevation. An Allen screw secured it. Both the front and rear sights were polymer, as was the trigger and, of course, most of the frame.

REMINGTON R51 96430 9MM LUGER, $400

GUN TESTS GRADE: D

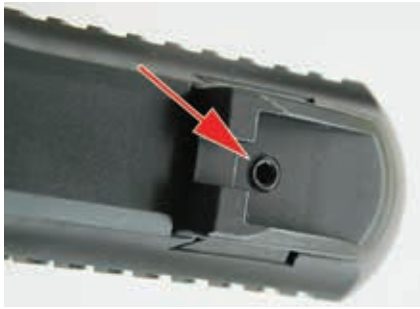
The Remington is priced fairly, and it is accurate enough for personal defense. Some liked the racy lines of the R51. Performance was not impressive; it simply refused to function with one type of ammunition. The trigger was poor, in our opinion, with no discernible reset and some annoying side-to-side motion. We would not purchase this handgun.



Action	Semi-auto single action; Pederson block design
Overall Length	6.5 in.
Overall Height	4.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.1 in.
Weight Unloaded	22.2 oz.
Weight Loaded	24.7 oz.
Barrel Length	3.4 in.
Barrel	Steel, +P rated; hard-chromed barrel bushing
Magazine	(2) 7-rd. semi-flush
Slide	Steel; black FNC
Frame	Aluminum alloy; black anodized finish
Frame Front Strap Height	2.4 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.0 in.
Grip	Checkered black polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.0 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Drift-adjustable rear; front post
Trigger Pull Weight SA	6.6 lbs.; polymer
Trigger Span Single Action	3.6 in.
Safety	Grip
Warranty	2-year limited
Website	Remington.com
Telephone	(800) 243-9700



The R51 is a distinctive handgun. Wish it had worked better. The Remington R51 simply did not meet our standards for reliability.



We like the design of the rear sight. Loosening that set screw allows the user to drift the sight right or left in the dovetail. It also had a flat forward face to allow the slide to be opened on an available surface.



Once we had a preferred load, the R51 functioned pretty well on the firing range.

"The integral grips had a coarse checkerboard pattern that provided excellent traction, and the front and rear grip straps had vertical serrations. The magazine release was a steel button that was not easy to hit accidentally, but let the mag come out easily when intentionally pressed. The gun could be fired with the magazine removed.

"In our testing we came to love the trigger of the Kel-Tec. We had no trouble whatsoever with short-stroking the trigger in rapid shooting. In fact, the recoil seemed to blow the gun backwards and our trigger finger forward. We were unaware of the trigger needing to be carefully allowed to go all the way forward. We essentially had no problems at all with the Kel-Tec PF-9. We had one failure for the slide to lock back on empty with the first magazine-full through it, but that never happened again. We think this is one mighty fine 9mm handgun, but it is not for the recoil-sensitive person."

About a year later (March 2012) we test-fired the Taurus 709B Slim No. 1-709031. Back then, we said of the handgun, "We never suffered a failure to ignite or any other type of malfunction, so all shots in our tests were performed using the single-action trigger. From the 10-yard bench, only two groups measured 2 inches wide or larger. Overall average size for all groups fired in our tests computed to about 1.5 inches.

"We found the Taurus 709B to be controllable, so even the hottest EXP rounds were not tiring to shoot. Due to its small size, we actually preferred shooting the 709B held in one hand. This could be a plus, in our view, because when fighting in close quarters the support-side hand might be busy wrestling with an assailant.

"Our Team Said: The 709B performed quite well. We did notice discoloration on ejected brass that told us the barrel was unlocking prematurely and allowing gas to blow rearward into the chamber. But suitable velocities for each round were recorded, and the 709B was one of the least tiring or abusive little nines we've tried."

And we've had a lot of asks from readers to look at SIG's P938 again, because the first time, the handgun didn't do so well: An "F" grade in the March 2013 issue. That model was the SIG Sauer P938 Extreme No. 938-9-XTM-BLKGRY-AMBI. It was plagued by malfunctions, we reported: "Our initial test firing made us think we'd found the ideal small nine. Everything was great, we thought. And then the nightmare began. On our next familiarization shooting with a few dozen rounds, we had a handful of failures to fire. Inspection showed the primers were essentially untouched. One or two had the tiniest mark of the firing pin. Some rounds failed to fire from repeated strikes of the hammer. Along with the failures to fire, we had occasional failures to completely eject. Commonly the last cartridge case from the magazine would get caught and mangled on its way out.

"Inspection revealed a broken extractor. It was such a clean break we couldn't be sure at first, but comparison with other extractors indicated there should have been more meat on this one. SIG overnighted us a new extractor. The part is investment cast, lightly machined, and has a small stress relief in the form of a fillet along one side of the chunk that broke off. It doesn't have a fillet behind the hook. We didn't like the design, but it's common in today's handguns. If the extractor had been milled from a forging and heat-treated properly, it would most likely never break in a thousand years."

Next was the problem of the failures to fire. All our misfires had been with Cor-Bon ammo. We tried one round three times and it still didn't fire, and its primer was unmarked. The other two types of test ammunition worked perfectly. Somewhat dumbfounded, we sent for a duplicate gun to see if it would work. While the solution seems to be to avoid the otherwise excellent and time-proven Cor-Bon ammo, who is to say another brand of ammunition might not do the exact same thing? The ultimate solution is to test, test, and retest your chosen self-defense ammo. And then do it again.

Still, "Our Team Said: We would not buy this gun. It was a disappointment to have so much trouble."

So, with all that as a backdrop, here's how these handguns fared in the here and now.

Remington R51 96430
9mm Luger, $400

This was the asking price at Cabelas.com. The Remington R51 is billed as a modern version of the classic R51 380 ACP pistol, save in 9mm caliber. The SIG P938 is also an upsized and redesigned version of a 380 ACP handgun, the SIG P238. The Remington R51 was released a few years ago and then withdrawn due to several problems that affected function. As noted above, there are a number of changes to the handgun, and our goal was to forget about the previous problems and let the 2016 version stand on its own merits.

The pistol isn't a locked-breech design like the other handguns tested and most other 9mm-caliber pistols. The barrel is in a fixed position held by the slide-stop pin and tenons that fit into mortises in the frame. The recoil spring is wound around the barrel, uncommon for a 9mm handgun, but standard operating procedure for many compact 380 ACP pistols. The barrel and slide ride lower in the frame with this design, which results in a lower bore axis. (The bore center line is close to the hand, limiting muzzle flip. There is simply less leverage for the recoiling gun to kick against and rise.) The pistol operates by retarded blowback action, similar in principle to the Heckler & Koch P7, but different in operation. Another similar handgun as far as operation is the Walther CCP. Instead of retarding slide action with a gas block, the Remington uses the breech block. When the R51 fires, the breech is locked, but only momentarily. Once the bullet exits the barrel and pressure abates, the cartridge case pushes the breech block, which is a separate part of the slide, to the rear. The breech block



Remington R51 markings indicate the pistol can be used with +P loads.



Grip abrasion on the Remington was fine; it was not so coarse that it made for uncomfortable shooting.



The Remington barrel is grooved for easy grasping during disassembly.



The Remington was supplied with two magazines, the only handgun tested that came with a pair of magazines.



The grip safety is the only safety built into the R51.



The dual ambidextrous magazine release works fine.

is stopped by a locking shoulder. The slide continues its rearward travel, and as the bullet exits the barrel, pressure drops, and then the slide cams the breech block out of its locked position. The two parts, breech block and slide, then move rearward together. The extractor pulls the spent case from the chamber and the spent cartridge case is ejected. The slide is pulled forward by the recoil spring and a fresh cartridge is loaded.

The pistol has no safety other than the grip safety. The grip safety engages both the sear and the firing-pin block or drop safety. There is a distinct click as the grip safety is depressed. Some raters referred to it more as a grating sound than a click. The pistol isn't difficult to rack, but it was more difficult to rack and load than the other handguns due to the powerful recoil spring, a necessity for a pistol that doesn't use locked-breech operation. All short-slide 9mm handguns must have a strong recoil spring for reliable operation, but the locked-breech design doesn't require quite as heavy a recoil-spring weight.

The trigger isn't as tight was we would like, there is considerable lateral motion. The trigger broke consistently at 6.6 pounds, heavier than the version we tested some years ago. The slide is stainless with a dark Melonite coating. There is a visual loaded-chamber indicator cut into the top of the slide. The cocking grooves are adequate. The barrel fits the slide well, and the barrel is grooved for grasping during disassembly.

Disassembly is difficult. We feel first-time buyers attempting to field-strip and maintain the pistol will be frustrated. Our raters are experienced and one works as a gunsmith. Depressing the ejector as you replace the slide and watching a sagging breech block tries one's patience. The pistol cannot be assembled, we found, unless held upside down. The pistol is field-stripped by removing the slide lock, moving the slide toward the rear, pulling the barrel forward to disengage the breech block, removing the slide, barrel and breechblock, and then reassembling the handgun. Be certain the slide lock fits properly, or the pistol will malfunction. We rated the pistol down a grade based on its reassembly difficulty.

The frame is aluminum alloy. The checkering on the grip panels is adequate, and the backstrap has no checkering. The front strap is very nicely checkered, a good feature. There are slight depressions behind the trigger to improve finger reach. A cut-out under the trigger guard makes for a space that allows a firm grip and lowers the bore axis. The magazine release is ambidextrous. The steel magazines have a 7-round capacity. The three-dot white outline sights are credible sights for a handgun this size, but they are not exceptional, we believe. There is a flat spot on the rear sight for racking the slide on the belt if need be, similar in concept to the Honor Defense Honor Guard handgun sights in a pistol tested in an upcoming match up. The pistol was test fired with a total of five 9mm Luger loads, including the 115-grain Federal Syntech, Federal American Eagle 124-grain FMJs, the

SIG SAUER P938 ENGRAVED ROSEWOOD MICRO-COMPACT 938-9-ESR 9MM LUGER, $730

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Failures to fire and failures to lock the slide open on the last shot disappeared with full-power defensive loads. The pistol had enough break-in glitches to be rated down a full grade. Nonetheless, the SIG P938 is attractive and desirable. The P938 is compact, but easy enough to fire well. The slim grip is ideal for concealed carry. We really like the trigger; it is the best of the test. The SIG demonstrated excellent practical accuracy and also good absolute accuracy.



Action	Semi-auto single action
Overall Length	6.0 in.
Overall Height	3.9 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	16.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	18.5 oz.
Barrel Length	3.0 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	(1) 6-round
Slide	Stainless steel, Nitron finish; polished and engraved
Frame	Aluminum allow; Micro Compact; hard coat anodized
Frame Front Strap Height	1.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.2 in.
Grips	Hogue rosewood; medallion inlay
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.0 in.
Sights	Siglite night sights
Trigger Pull Weight	5.25 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.8 lbs.
Safety	Dual ambidextrous lever
Warranty	Lifetime
Website	SIGSauer.com
Telephone	(603) 610-3000





We had two failures to fire with the SIG. The first, top, was despite a hard smack from the SIG, the cartridge did not fire. The second, bottom, was from a light primer strike. This isn't easily explained, having one light primer strike, which appears gun related, and another problem that is obviously ammunition related. But this did not occur with any other handgun and the Federal loads.



Fit and finish of the P938 is good in every detail. This is one handsome handgun. The pistol's engraving really sets the metalwork finish off.

SIG Sauer 124-grain V-Crown, the Hornady 100-grain Critical Defense Lite, and the Hornady 124-grain XTP +P American Gunner. Some of the loads were used for combat firing only and others for accuracy. We wished to be certain the Remington and the other pistols were reliable with a range of ammunition. The R51 is marked to accept 9mm Luger +P, so we fired a magazine of the Hornady +P load in each pistol during the combat firing.

First up was the Federal Syntech 115-grain 9mm. We intended to fire 50 rounds in the combat firing course, firing at targets at 5, 7, and 10 yards. Although properly lubricated, the Remington refused to function. It choked on every round, with the spent case found in the ejection port. This wasn't a good start. We switched to the Federal American Eagle 124-grain rounds and loaded the two supplied magazines. The pistol failed to function with two of six cartridges in the first magazine and then began to function. We were able to fire the combat test with the R51 using a string of 44 rounds of 9mm 124-grain Federal American Eagle without difficulty. After firing the 124-grain 9mm loads, we went back to the 115-grain Syntech, thinking that we had encountered a break-in malfunction. The R51 would not function with the 115-grain 9mm load at all. As a result of this testing, the Remington was fired more than the other pistols during the tactical firing tests. Reliability certainly is a concern. We rated the pistol down a full grade on these failures. A break-in period is acceptable, but the other pistols did not experience these break-in problems, and the pistol refused to function with a load that the other handguns ran with. The SIG did fail to lock on the last shot when new on several occasions, but that was not as big of a problem as the Remington's troubles.

When firing off hand for combat groups, the pistol was controllable. The long slide, low bore axis, and long grip with a finger-extension magazine made for good control.

RANGE DATA

Federal American Eagle 124-gr. Full Metal Jacket AE9AP	Kel-Tec PF-9	Taurus 709 Slim	Remington R51	SIG Sauer P938
Average Velocity	1014 fps	1062 fps	1057 fps	990 fps
Muzzle Energy	283 ft.-lbs.	310 ft.-lbs.	308 ft.-lbs.	270 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.5 in.	2.0 in.	2.4 in.	1.9 in.
Largest Group	4.5 in.	3.1 in.	3.0 in.	2.3 in.
Average Group Size	4.0 in.	2.6 in.	2.5 in.	2.1 in.

Hornady Critical Defense Lite 100-gr. FTX Hollowpoint 90240	Kel-Tec PF-9	Taurus 709 Slim	Remington R51	SIG Sauer P938
Average Velocity	1055 fps	1107 fps	1080 fps	1070 fps
Muzzle Energy	247 ft.-lbs.	272 ft.-lbs.	259 ft.-lbs.	254 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.6 in.	2.6 in.	2.3 in.	2.0 in.
Largest Group	4.7 in.	3.2 in.	2.9 in.	2.7 in.
Average Group Size	4.2 in.	2.4 in.	2.6 in.	2.3 in.

SIG Sauer V-Crown 124-gr. Jacketed Hollowpoint	Kel-Tec PF-9	Taurus 709 Slim	Remington R51	SIG Sauer P938
Average Velocity	1104 fps	1142 fps	1129 fps	1112 fps
Muzzle Energy	335 ft.-lbs.	359 ft.-lbs.	351 ft.-lbs.	340 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.0 in.	2.5 in.	2.0 in.	1.9 in.
Largest Group	4.1 in.	3.6 in.	2.9 in.	2.7 in.
Average Group Size	3.5 in.	3.0 in.	2.6 in.	2.4 in.

Notes: Average velocity readings were recorded by firing five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first skyscreen. Ambient temperature: 85 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. The accuracy figures are the average of three five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun at a 15-yard target from a benchrest. ***Ammunition details and sources:*** *SIG Sauer 124-grain V-Crown ($13.87/20 from AmmoDepot.com); Hornady Critical Defense Lite 100 grain ($17.69/25 from CheaperThanDirt.com); and Federal American Eagle 124-grain FMJ AE9AP ($14.75/50 from LuckyGunner.com). Other loads used for function testing were Federal Syntech 115-grain AE9SJ1 ($12.82/50 from SportsmansGuide.com) and the Hornady 124-grain XTP +P American Gunner 90224 ($14.69/25 from CheaperThanDirt.com).*

The trigger has no detectable reset. After firing, the trigger cannot be ridden forward to reset with the finger on the trigger as some designs may be. The finger must completely release the trigger, and even then there is no click or discernible rest, other than the trigger becoming tight after it resets. Combined with the play in the trigger, we rated the Remington down a full grade based on the poor trigger action.

When fired at combat targets, the pistol gave good results despite the trigger, centering the hits at 10 yards. Sometimes the group was off center, which one rater blamed on "trigger wobble," the side-to-side play we mentioned previously. The R51 was reliable and comfortable to fire with the Hornady +P loading. It was behind the SIG and the Taurus but ahead of the Kel-Tec in combat firing. Moving to firing for accuracy, we shot the Hornady Lite load, the SIG Sauer V-Crown JHP, and the Federal American Eagle 124-grain loading. The Remington functioned with all three loads, even the low-impulse Hornady Lite load, intended as a low-recoil personal-defense round. Accuracy was good, with the best showing coming with the V-Crown, 2.0 inches at 15 yards.

Our Team Said: The R51 pistol is accurate enough and functioned well with some, but not all, loads. The power factor of the Syntech load was higher than the Hornady Lite, yet the R51 refused to run the Federal Syntech 115-grain load, which all the other handguns fed, chambered, fired, and ejected. Also, the R51 was the hardest pistol to rack, had a difficult field strip, and a poor trigger action. We would not buy this handgun.

SIG Sauer P938 Engraved Rosewood Micro-Compact 938-9-ESR 9mm Luger, $730

This was our price at ImpactGuns.com. This pistol's features made it the flashiest pistol tested and also the most expensive. The nicely blued slide, the engraved section of the slide, the rosewood grips, and night sights really set this piece apart. As the R51 is a 9mm version of a 380 ACP pistol and the SIG P938 is also a 9mm version of a 380 ACP handgun, in this case the SIG

P238, it's worth noting that the makers cannot simply re-chamber the barrel and be good to go. The frame had to be enlarged and other important modifications to the design performed. They are different guns, but the appearance of the P938 is very similar to the P238 pistol. These handguns are more correctly termed "1911-like" than 1911s because the design differs from the 1911 template. They are more similar to the Star FireStar pistols in design. As an example, the FireStar 9mm, and particularly the earlier Star PD 45 ACP, had a well-deserved reputation for excess wear and battering. The SIG, however, uses a recoil spring and guide with a flat coil spring and a cup at the end of the spring. This prevents the battering present in earlier designs of the same type from different makers. It was recommended the Star guide rod assembly be replaced every 500 rounds. The SIG should go much longer.

The SIG P938 features a locked-breech design. The P938 is a single-action pistol with an alloy frame. We like the short slide and found the grip only looks abbreviated; it is short in perspective to the relatively long slide. It is length wise no larger than most other slim-line 9mm pistols; it simply looks fat and short because of the short grip and long slide. The magazine holds 6 rounds. Only the Remington was supplied with a spare magazine, and we suffered through the evaluation with one magazine in each of the other handguns. Most raters could get a full firing grip, some, with larger hands, found the small finger hanging. The safety is positive in operation with a strong detent and is ambidextrous. The safety operates in a different manner than a true 1911. When the safety is applied, it does not block the slide's movement. The pistol may be loaded with the safety on. The safety also may be applied with the hammer down, which we think has little practical application. The pistol may be carried cocked and locked, hammer to the rear or hammer down, with a loaded chamber. The trigger has some spongy take up and over travel but breaks at 5.25 pounds. This is lighter than a different version of the P938 we previously tested.

The slide is designed for a SIG P-series like appearance, with the slide featuring steps from the ejection port forward. The ejection port is large enough to allow for administrative handling with 9mm ammunition. The slide is very nicely finished in bright blue. The version tested features nicely done laser engraving. We liked the appearance. The sights are good example of combat sights. These are self-luminous iron sights. The tritium inserts were appreciated, and the sight picture excellent.

The frame is blue anodized. The smooth grips are well finished. The front strap is checkered in a very neat pattern that offers excellent abrasion in combination with the rear strap checkering at the base of the rear strap. Close examination shows other good features, including a top cartridge stabilizer at the bottom of the slide that keeps the top round in the magazine from moving under recoil. Also, the barrel is butted into the slide in SIG fashion for lockup, and it unlocks by angled camming surfaces, very un-1911 like. It works well and works better, in our opinion, than a swinging link would in this size handgun. The pistol isn't difficult to field strip and reassemble. The 6-round magazine is high quality and isn't difficult to load.



Our ammunition for this test included, from top, SIG Sauer 124-grain V-Crown, Hornady Critical Defense Lite 100 grain, Hornady 124-grain XTP +P American Gunner 90224, Federal Syntech 115-grain AE9SJ1, and Federal American Eagle 124-grain FMJ AE9AP.





The 9mm personal-defense loads gave good results in water, above, even when fired from the short-barrel 9mm handguns. Left to right are some recovered slugs from the water jugs: Hornady 100 grain, Hornady 124 grain +P, and the SIG Sauer V-Crown 124-grain JHP.

Compact 9mm handguns have to be handled with a proper grip, and that is a very tight grip with no pressure on the slide. For those who practice, the small-frame firearms may produce good accuracy. For those who become sloppy and crowd their hands onto the slide, the pistol will malfunction due to pressure on the slide and you will also miss the target. With that in mind, we began our evaluation of the SIG P938. When firing 50 rounds during the combat course, the pistol proved easy enough to rack. Recoil was not excessive. The pistol gave the best showing on the combat course, although the Remington R51 and the Taurus Slim were not far behind.

Then the SIG P938 suffered problems that may not be related to the handgun. In one instance the hammer fell and the cartridge did not fire. We ejected the cartridge and found a light primer strike. This seemed to be a gun-related failure, but we remembered similar problems in the previous test. Then, toward the end of the test, we experienced another problem, and this time, when

the cartridge was removed from the chamber, the primer had taken a solid whack from the firing pin. This isn't easily explained, having one light primer strike, which appears gun related, and another problem that is obviously ammunition related. But this did not occur with any other handgun and the Federal loads.

While this marred the combat firing stage to an extent, the SIG P938 turned in excellent results overall. However, the slide did not lock open on the last shot on several occasions with the practice FMJ loads. With heavier personal-defense loads, the slide never failed to lock open. In the accuracy tests, the best results were smaller than the Remington R51's, another accurate handgun, and superior to the other handguns.

Our Team Said: The SIG P938 gave excellent results with the full-power defense loads. The failure to lock open on the last shot that occurred occasionally and the light primer strike were taken into account and the pistol rated down a grade. Also, this is an expensive pistol, and though it is a handsome handgun, a pistol this expensive should be supplied with a spare magazine. We rated it down another half grade on this count. A plus is that the pistol is supplied with a plastic range-grade holster.

Kel-Tec PF-9 9mm Luger, $257

At $257 (from BudsGunShop.com), the PF-9 is much less expensive than the Remington, and you could purchase two PF-9s and the Taurus Slim for the price of the SIG. The Kel-Tec PF-9 was among the first, if not the first, slim-line ultralight 9mm handguns. The pistol features a polymer frame and double-action only trigger. The trigger was tight, and while some of the raters commented it felt heavier, it broke at 6.5 pounds. This isn't a striker-fired handgun, but the PF-9 uses a hammer. The unloaded weight is a light 12.5 ounces. The pistol is 5.25 inches long and width is 0.9 inch. The PF-9 is small but has an advantage in its 7-round magazine, versus the 6-round magazine of the P938, as an example. When you compare the pistol to the 8.5-ounce P3-AT 380

KEL-TEC PF-9 9MM LUGER, $257

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Kel-Tec PF-9 9mm isn't expensive, but it still costs about $60 more than the Taurus Slim. While the Taurus outshot the Kel-Tec, that doesn't mean the Kel-Tec is out of the running for many shooters. This is a slim and trim handgun. The PF-9 comes closer to fitting in a pocket than the other handguns tested, and its double-action-only trigger provides a margin of safety when carried in a pocket. The PF-9 never failed to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. It is accurate enough for close-range defense. We would buy this handgun.



Action	Semi-auto double-action only; recoil operated, locked breech
Overall Length	5.85 in.
Overall Height	4.4 in.
Maximum Width	0.9 in.
Weight Unloaded	14.6 oz.
Weight Loaded	17.1 oz.
Barrel Length	3.1 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	(1) 7-rd. detachable box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Aluminum
Frame Front Strap Height	1.7
Frame Back Strap Height	2.6 in.
Grip	Black checked polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.0 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.0 in.
Sights	Fixed
Trigger Pull Weight	6.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	3.3 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	Lifetime to original owner
Website	KeltecWeapons.com
Telephone	(321) 631-0068

The magazine release on the Kel-Tec is buried, yet accessible—ideal for a concealed-carry handgun. The PF-9's tacky grip has been compared to the skin of a Florida alligator.









Above left: The short front post on the Kel-Tec worked well in rapid fire and for firing for accuracy. Top right: We liked the rear sight for its rapid target acquisition. Left: The PF-9 is accurate enough for close work.

TAURUS 709 SLIM 1-709031FS 9MM LUGER, $198

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (BEST BUY)

The Taurus Slim 9mm is reliable. We would buy this gun, and based on its performance, we would carry it for personal defense. That is where the score cards led us.



Action	Semi-auto single action; first-shot double action
Overall Length	6.0 in.
Overall Height	4.5 in.
Maximum Width	0.9 in.
Weight Unloaded	16.8 in.
Weight Loaded	20.0 oz.

Barrel Length	3.0 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	7-rd. detachable box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Black Polymer, Compact
Frame Front Strap Height	1.8 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.8 in.
Grips	Black Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.0 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.35 in.
Sights	Adjustable rear, fixed blade front
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.6 in.
Safety	Slide-Mounted Lever; Trigger
Warranty	Lifetime
Website	TaurusUSA.com
Telephone	(800) 327-3776



We liked the adjustable rear sight of the Taurus Slim. With 9mm loads running from 88 to 147 grains, this feature will prove useful in regulating point of aim to point of impact.



This ribbed treatment of the Taurus grip received high marks. Fired offhand, the Taurus Slim proved to be a comfortable handgun. Shooting these short-grip handguns requires a "gorilla grip" to control them.



Simple but well designed, the Taurus Slim has Glock-like features, including the takedown button and a safety lever in the trigger shoe.

ACP from the same maker, which has an overall length of 5.2 inches as well, the PF-9 offers considerable advantages with very little extra girth. The big difference is in power.

The 9mm Luger has benefitted a great deal from ammunition and projectile development, and the PF-9 might look better today than when first introduced due to this improvement. The pistol is conventional for a polymer-frame gun. The grip treatment offers good abrasion and adhesion. Compared to the nearest price leader, the Taurus Slim, we preferred the Kel-Tec treatment. The grip was small however. The sights are adequate and the slide is slim and easily holstered. The double-action trigger is smooth enough with a rapid reset. The ejection port is large enough for administrative handling.

Firing the DAO trigger is much different than addressing a single-action trigger. The movement to the rear and to the front after reset demand coordination. The pistol is fired and the trigger is given time for reset. We try to do each handgun test independently and come back and compare notes, however, when just firing one trigger action or the other and then moving to another handgun, the differences in trigger actions are very noticeable. The DAO Kel-Tec is smooth enough but not comparable in control to the single-action triggers of the other handguns. The sights are adequate for a true pocket handgun. There is no manual safety; the DAO trigger is the safety feature. The locked breech action is conventional. The takedown isn't as easy the Taurus Slim, but it nowhere near as difficult as the Remington.

To get started at the range, the pistol was lubricated and the magazines loaded with Federal Syntech 115-grain ammunition. Half of the test was done with this load and half with the American Eagle 124-grain 9mm, for 50 rounds fired. The pistol fired the 50 rounds without a single failure to feed, chamber, fire, or eject, something that was not true of the more expensive Remington

VALUE GUIDE: RECENT 9MM HANDGUN RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Ruger American Compact 8633 9mm Luger, $579	July 2017	D-	We could not complete our tests without reseating the recoil assembly multiple times.
Honor Defense Honor Guard HG9CLE 9mm Luger, $499	July 2017	B+	Admirably fills the role of a highly concealable fighting gun that's inexpensive and fun to shoot.
Springfield Armory 1911 EMP PI9229L 9mm Luger, $1220	July 2017	A	The EMP delivered accuracy and ergonomics on par with more expensive custom guns.
CZ-USA 75D PCR Compact 91194 9mm Luger, $546	May 2017	A	We like everything about the 75D except the absence of a light rail.
Tristar Canik 55 C-100 9mm Luger, $365	May 2017	C	The safety lever was so stiff as to be unusable. The double-action trigger was also heavy.
CZ-USA 75 P-01 9mm Luger, $576	May 2017	A	A Best Buy. The P-01 offers faultless reliability, smooth operation, and a good trigger action.
AREX REX Zero 1 CP 9mm Luger, $603	May 2017	B	It performed well during the combat test and had credible accuracy. Reliability was faultless.
Springfield XD Mod.2 3.0-Inch XDG9801HCSP 9mm Luger, $556	Feb 2016	A	This 9mm model offered fast recovery time, 13-round capacity, and was only 6.25 inches long.
Springfield Loaded Target PI9134LP 9mm Luger, $873	Sept 2015	A	Function of the Loaded Model was flawless. Stainless construction, nice trigger made the deal.
Springfield 1911 Range Officer PI9129LP 9mm Luger, $704	Sept 2015	A	An easy-shooting 1911 with first-rate fit, finish, and barrel-to-slide fit. Excellent adjustable sights.
Glock 43 Subcompact PI4350201 9mm Luger, $499	Aug 2015	B+	If you can carry a larger pistol, you should, but the Glock 43 is a good slim line pistol.
Walther Concealed Carry Pistol CCP 5080300 9mm Luger, $452	Aug 2015	C	The CCP had features we liked, but not enough to overcome its complicated takedown and failures.
Bersa Thunder Ultra Compact Pro 9mm Luger, $405 (Used)	June 2015	A	Trouble free, capable of delivering MOA accuracy and adaptable to any size shooter.
Heckler & Koch VP9 9mm Luger, $630	March 2015	B	Ergonomics are excellent. Hand fit can be customized with more extra panels than other handguns.
Walther PPQ M2 Navy SD 2796082 9mm Luger, $576	March 2015	B	Mag release was too light for a defensive handgun. Sights were not well regulated for 115-grain ammo.
SIG Sauer P320 320F9BSS 9mm Luger, $579	March 2015	B	Lack of an easily changeable grip strap and heavy trigger were demerits. Also the heaviest.
Ruger LC9s Standard #3235 9mm Luger, $339	Feb 2015	A	Best Buy. We found the Ruger to be reliable and accurate enough.

Log on to **Gun-Tests.com** to read complete reviews of these products in the designated months.
Highly-ranked products from older reviews are often available used at substantial discounts.

R51 and the SIG P938, regardless of the causes. There were no failures of the pistol to cycle or of the slide to lock back. As a caution, however, be certain the hands do not ride the slide with this pistol. It is easy to do with the short-slide 9mm and that factor is a common cause of malfunctions of pistols this size. During the combat course, the PF-9 gave a good account of itself, and while the groups were not as tightly centered as the other pistols, they were adequate for personal defense, with none straying from the high-scoring zones.

Just the same, this handgun is more difficult to control than the heavier pistols, which is to be expected. Inexperienced shooters might find it difficult to control. The single magazine of +P loads were not markedly more difficult to control in the PF-9 because we were already gorilla-gripping the pistol. During accuracy testing from the bench rest position, the Kel-Tec PF-9 was fired with two personal-defense loads and a single FMJ loading. The pistol has more recoil than the others tested. This keeps bringing us back to the light weight of the PF-9. The DAO trigger is long, but smooth, and demanded our attention in firing. The Kel-Tec PF-9 gave reasonable results, with the single-best group with the 124-grain Hornady V-Crown coming in at 3.0 inches at 15 yards. Most groups were larger, with the majority running over 4 inches.

Our Team Said: The pistol never malfunctioned and gave a credible showing. It is a true 9mm pocket pistol. We rated the PF-9 down a half-grade based on accuracy. Just the same, this is a desirable defensive handgun and a good buy. The Kel-Tec has a rail mount for a combat light as well, but many of the lights we had on hand were not practical with the short rail.

Taurus 709 Slim 1-709031FS
9mm Luger, $198

This was our price from CheaperThanDirt.com. The Taurus Slim is the least expensive handgun tested. It is supplied with a single magazine, which is understandable at this price level. The pistol is 6.25 inches long and 4.5 inches high. Slim is a fitting nickname. The Taurus 9mm weighs 19 ounces, less than the two more expensive handguns but 7 more ounces than the Kel-Tec. The sights are adequate for a concealed-carry handgun, and they were also easily lined up and picked up due to the three-dot set up.

The ribbed treatment of the grip offers an excellent hold. The cocking grooves in the slide are well designed, and the pistol was rated the easiest of the four pistols to rack. The magazine holds 7 rounds. The slide lock, magazine release, and manual safety were positive in operation. The loaded-chamber indicator in the top of the chamber is a good touch. The fit and finish of the pistol are good, better than expected for the price. The trigger action is single action, although it is often referred to as a double action. The trigger breaks cleanly at 5.2 pounds. The feel of the trigger is difficult to explain. When the slide is racked, the pistol is cocked and the



The Taurus 709 Slim 9mm is the best buy of this test.

trigger breaks at 5.2 pounds, simple enough. But there is a long take up with some resistance, or at least movement felt, and then the trigger races to a stop and breaks abruptly. It is superior to the Remington, a more conventional trigger, but demands acclimation. It took some dry fire and a bit of firing before we felt we were in control of the trigger.

It isn't recommended that this handgun ever be carried without the manual safety engaged. It is, after all, a single action, and it would be the same as carrying a 1911 handgun cocked and unlocked. There is another facet to the trigger action. Once the trigger is fired, and the slide isn't racked by firing or in dry fire to cock the hammer, the trigger may be pressed again and a longer double-action press will fire the handgun. This second strike feature breaks at 5.75 pounds. This feature doesn't hurt anything and offers a re-strike in case of a faulty cartridge. Had we been able to invest more time in the trigger, we feel combat accuracy may have been better. As it stands, accuracy was overall pretty good.

During the combat course, we used a combination of the two Federal Cartridge Company FMJ loads at 5, 7, and 10 yards. In combat shooting, the pistol was comparable to the Remington but with slightly better results due to the good trigger action. The SIG bested the Taurus in rapid fire by a margin. The difficulty in properly engaging the Taurus trigger was the reason the SIG bested the Slim, we felt. The Taurus ran through the combat course without any type of malfunction.

In the accuracy sequence of the test, we fired the same three loads used in the other handguns. The Taurus generated the greatest velocity and energy of the four pistols tested. We were particularly impressed that the SIG Sauer 124-grain V-Crown, a standard-pressure load, exhibited 1142 fps from a 3-inch barrel. The pistol wasn't as accurate as the Remington or the SIG with two of three loads, while exhibiting excellent accuracy with the light-recoiling Hornady 100-grain load. The Taurus Slim finished the test with no malfunctions and credible performance.

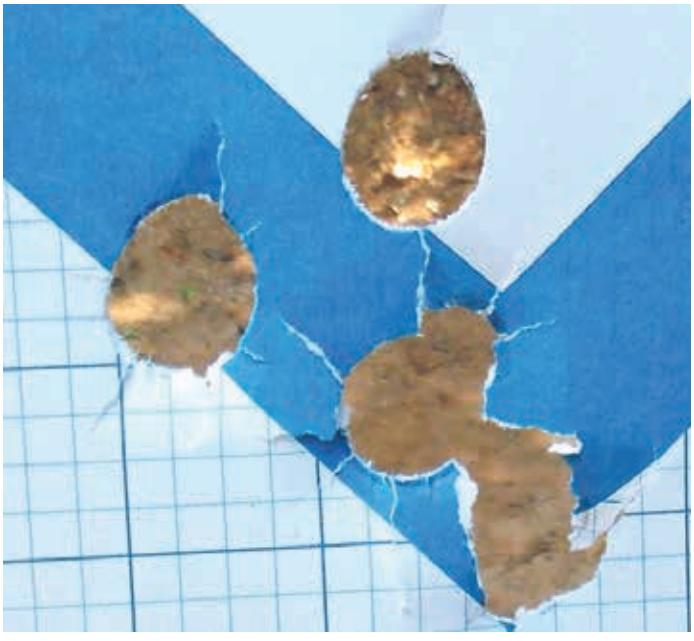
Our Team Said: As we neared the end of the test, the score card began to favor the Taurus. Reliability was equaled by the Kel-Tec PF-9, but the Taurus Slim gave better results on the combat course and in absolute accuracy. Takedown was easier. The Taurus also cost less than the Kel-Tec. The absolute accuracy results were better than the Kel-Tec, and the difference between the Taurus and the other two handguns was mostly conversational in value. In short, the pistol gave good performance not only in its price range but also compared to much more expensive handguns. The Taurus 709 Slim 9mm is the best buy of this test.

Written and photographed by Bob Campbell, using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

Slugs For Self Defense: These Shotgun Rounds Rock...

On both ends, we found. If you're looking for a home-defense slug to pair up with some buckshot choices, Federal's Tactical hollow point is a good-shooting choice, among several.

Not long ago a reader asked for a feature on shotgun slugs. He asked for a report on not only the usual fare found in most sporting-good shops, but also the most powerful slugs for personal defense. The standard for many years has been the 1-ounce (437.5 grain) slug at 1500 fps or so. Then the reduced-recoil slugs were introduced for police use and found much popularity among civilian shooters. Some slugs are designed to limit penetration, and there are slugs intended for use in a situation when extra penetration is needed. There are areas in which only shotguns are allowed for hunting, and it is good to have a choice among slugs for long range and large animals. We focused on slugs for home defense and animal defense. As such, there was necessarily a dual rating system, which we noted in each segment. Limited penetration is desirable in most home-defense situations. For use against bears, the greatest penetration is needed. Some of these slugs are accurate well past 50 yards, even 100 yards in a rifled slug barrel. In a proper rifled shotgun barrel, we feel that Lightfield's claims of accuracy to 150 yards would be borne out.

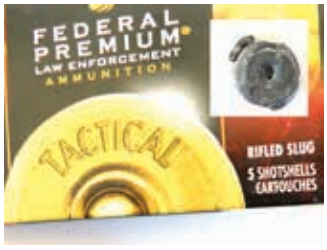


This is a target reproduced very close to actual size. These big projectiles produce big holes, of course, but they also make small groups when fired from the right shotgun.



We feel that for home defense, the Federal Tactical is the most viable load. It offered a winning combination of modest recoil and good stopping potential.







The Lightfield Commander IDS Plus was the heaviest Lightfield slug tested at 600 grains. There is a lot of power in that big shotshell slug.

These are big chunks of lead. They produce a considerable wound track whether they expand or not. We took a hard look at these slugs and found interesting performance. We also found a great deal of recoil. As an example, the strongest Lightfield slug measured a 933 power factor. We debated including PF, as it isn't the same thing with a long gun as a handgun, but kept the figures because they are useful for comparing recoil. The heaviest slugs have nearly twice the recoil of the average full-power 30-06 rifle load. Keep this in mind. The test ended with sore shoulders, one broken nail, and quite a bit of use of penetrating ointments! Most folks will not go to the range and fire 40 full-power slugs from a riot gun in one morning. As our former police firearms instructor noted, it isn't about putting down a lot of lead, but you can do that with the reduced-recoil

slug. If you need to stop one of the big cats, a feral dog, or a bear, then you need to get on target and make every shot count. The level of energy these shotgun slug loads displayed is impressive.

During the research, we also consulted some who had faced big bears, including grizzlies. One correspondent had not shot a grizzly, but as a young man was given the task of skinning one that has been taken down by Canadian authorities. He told us that they are nothing like a moose or a brownie. The attachment of the sinew, the ligaments, he noted, simply wore out knives and cleavers. It was quite a chore. Large, aggressive animals are very dangerous and very tough. While shotgun slugs have their place against a grizzly, a 375-caliber or larger rifle might be the better choice. Just the same, these slugs gave good performance. For personal defense, the reduced-recoil loads are excellent, while the full-power loads would be effective against cougars and brown bears, not to mention the ever-dangerous feral dog and, the most dangerous, criminals. As for our choice of shotgun for testing, the pump action shotgun is used by many of us for home defense. It is the type of shotgun that would be kept in a light plane in Alaska or the back of a truck just in case. The 18-inch riot gun delivered good performance, we felt, and while the recoil of some of these loads were doubtless more than many would like to handle, the performance on target was also impressive. Velocity was less than the rated velocity of most slugs, as they are designed for use in a 24- to 28-inch barrel hunting shotgun. As one of the raters noted, both the Remington 870 shotgun and a 165-pound rater were fighting out of their weight class firing some of these slugs.

Here's what our shooters and the water jugs said about each round.

Federal Premium Law Enforcement Tactical 12-Gauge Hydra-Shok 1-oz. 2.75-inch Rifled Slug LEF127RS

These were sold for $4.27/5 at Ammodepot.com. The Hydra-Shok rifled slug is a hollow-point slug. After firing, the hollow point was quite hollow from one end to the other of the slug. This load averaged 1199 fps. Recoil was not objectionable as a full-power load, but velocity was sufficient to instigate some expansion. Expansion is more like flattening, but it certainly exists. And there is an appreciable difference between 0.75 inch with no expansion and 0.99 inch with modest expansion. The recovered slug weighed a solid 1 ounce. Penetration was nine inches. We feel that for home defense this is the most viable loading tested with a good combination of modest recoil and good wound potential. Accuracy was good and recoil manageable. We rated this load the best buy for personal defense. It is not suited for defense against large animals.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A BEST BUY (PERSONAL DEFENSE)



For our slug testing, we used the iron-sighted Remington 870 at the bottom, but these rounds would work in any of these 870 pump actions.



The Monolit is reliable, accurate, and, based on penetration without deformation, one of the two best choices tested for animal defense. It is far too penetrative for home defense, in our opinion.

DDupleks Monolit 32 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 1.125-oz. Flat-Nose Solid Steel Slug AM1934

We bought these for $6.95/5 at SGAmmo.com. This slug was designed in Latvia to give those limited to shotgun hunting good performance. The slug is all steel and is contained in a sabot. The Monolit 32 uses a 495-grain slug at 1357 fps recorded velocity. The Monolit 32 penetrated 36 inches of water. There was no deformation of the projectile. Accuracy is comparable to the other slugs. This slug is reliable, accurate, and, based on penetration without deformation, one of the two best choices tested for animal defense. It is far too penetrative for home defense, in our opinion.

The DDupleks Monolit 32 incorporates steel and polymer in its construction. This steel slug is safe for use in all shotguns due to the construction and use of polymers to ensure minimal friction as the slug passes through the barrel and allows it to be used with a rifled, Improved, or Modified choke. Not recommended for use with Full choke.

The lighter-weight construction gives this slug a higher muzzle velocity and less drop at 100 yards than traditional lead slugs. For more information, log on to DDupleks-USA.com.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

12-GAUGE SLUG PERFORMANCE DATA

Gun: Mossberg Cruiser Pump Shotgun w/18.5-inch barrel	Average Velocity (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Average Accuracy (in.)	Power Factor (pf)	Expanded Width (in.)	Retained Weight (gr.)	Penetration In Water (in.)
437.5-gr. Federal Hydra-Shok LEF127RS	1199	1396	1.5	525	0.99	437.5/100%	9
437.5-gr. Federal Vital Shock TruBall PB127	1170	1331	1.5	512	0.87	429/98%	18
437.5-gr. Remington Man. Recoil 20290	1113	1203	1.2	487	0.75	437.5/100%	33
437.5-gr. Winchester Segment S12PDX1S	1390	1878	2.0	608	Fragments	310/71%	18
437.5-gr. Hornady American Gunner 86231	1480	2129	1.3	648	Fragments	360**/82%	18
465-gr. Lightfield Bucks, Boars and Bears	1320	1798	1.8	613	Fragments	Fragments	12
495-gr. DDupleks Monolit 32 AM1934	1357	2023	2.5	671	0.75	495/100%	36
495-gr. DDupleks Broadhead Hexolit 32	1472	2381	2.9	728	0.75	389	24
547-gr. Lightfield Max. Exp. Sabot	1550	2917	2.0	848	Fragments	Fragments	18
547-gr. Lightfield Hybrid EXP	1206	1766	1.4	660	1.1	450/82%	14
600-gr. Lightfield IDS Commander	1555	3220	1.5	933	Fragments	390*/65%	18
602-gr. Brenneke Black Magic	1470	2888	1.2	885	0.90	602/100%	48

Notes: ● *To collect accuracy data, we fired five shot groups off a bench rest. Distance: 25 yards. We recorded velocity with a Shooting Chrony Master Chronograph. The first sky screen was 10 feet from the muzzle. *All shards, average of three shots. ** Three pieces. We fired three three-shot groups with each load.* ● *To calculate IPSC power factor, multiply bullet weight in grains by the velocity in fps, then divide by 1000.* ● *The retained-weight column shows the recovered bullet weight, then that weight as a percentage of the unfired bullet weight.*



The Winchester PDX1 12-Gauge Defender features a 1-ounce segmented slug designed to break up on striking a soft target—ideal for personal defense.

Winchester PDX1 12-Gauge Defender 2.75-in. 1-oz. Segmented Rifled Slug Shotshells

We bought these for $19.49/10 at BassPro.com. This loading features a 1-ounce segmented slug. The slug is designed to break up on striking a soft target. For this reason, the slug is ideal for personal defense. The segmenting slug should do more damage than a hollow-point slug. Those favoring the greater accuracy potential of a single slug over buckshot will like the segmented slug. One of the shards exited the line of water jugs. One was found at about 16 inches of penetration, and the other bounced off the wall of a jug, denting it but not exiting, at 18 inches.

The effect of this slug would be enough to stop a threat, we believe. This is a load for personal defense, but not for use against larger animals, such as bears. It is entirely possible the segments would miss a vital organ deep in an animal, even if you aim true.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Brenneke Black Magic Magnum 12-Gauge 3-in. 602-gr. Slug SL-123BMM

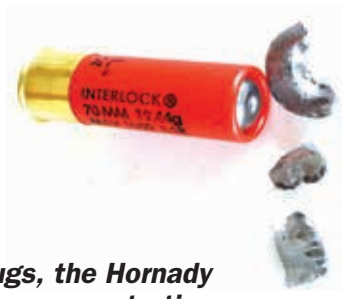
We bought this for $10.63/5 at CheaperThanDirt.com. This slug maintained a good portion of its advertised velocity of 1560 fps in the Remington riot gun, breaking 1470 fps. Accuracy was excellent, better than the shotgun would do justice to. All loads tested are more than accurate enough for defense or hunting use. The Brenneke exhibited the greatest penetration of any load tested. To gather the penetration data, we went through several errors, with water jugs blown about and the slug not recovered. Finally, we managed to load the water jugs into a large trash can and carefully arrange the water jugs on an old antique ironing board (wooden top) in the folded position to keep the water jugs equal and to duplicate the line up used with the other slugs. The effect was tremendous. After the last test, the ironing board was no longer useful as a household item because the boards were cracked and there were gaps blown into them. In two cases, the slug penetrated to 48 inches and was found spent just before penetrating the ninth jug. In the third test, the slug penetrated the ninth jug but only slightly. Overall excellent performance. This is the top-rated slug for animal defense. This level of penetration would not be good for home defense, however.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A
(OUR PICK DANGEROUS GAME)

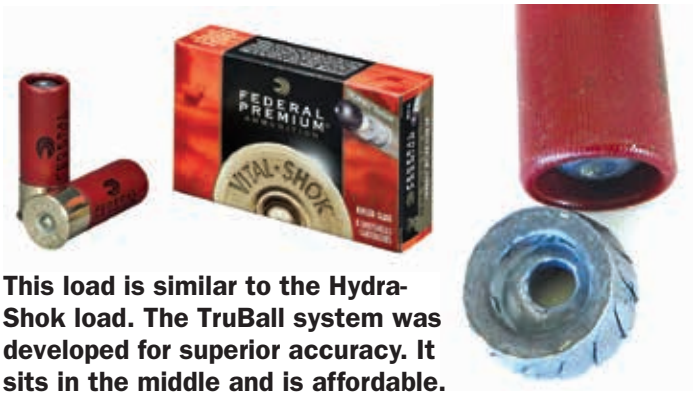


The Brenneke Black Magic Magnum was our Best Buy pick for dangerous game. Testing proved difficult because of the power from the rounds knocked the water jugs out of place and we could not recover the slugs for further investigation.





Like some of the other slugs, the Hornady broke up on impact. However, penetration was 18 inches. This is on the long end for personal defense, but ideal for facing felons who are heavily clad. We feel that this is an excellent load for personal defense in many situations.



This load is similar to the Hydra-Shok load. The TruBall system was developed for superior accuracy. It sits in the middle and is affordable.



During testing we found that Hybred EXP expanded and provided plenty of energy. Expansion was good, with actual expansion rather than flattening. While the load is heavier than most would care to manage for home defense, it isn't out of the question.

Hornady American Gunner 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 1-oz. Rifled Slug 86231

We bought this for $10.50/5 from Hornady.com. This is a full-power slug rated at 1600 fps in a standard hunting shotgun. Surprisingly, our 18-inch-barrel riot gun exhibited 1480 fps. Like some of the other slugs, the Hornady broke up on impact. However, penetration was 18 inches. This is on the long end for personal defense, but ideal for facing felons who are heavily clad. Also, the shards were not found in the jugs but were thrown out of the water jugs, as evidenced by exit holes in the #2 and #3 jugs. We had to place the water jugs in a large plastic waste can to capture the fragments. We feel that this is an excellent load for personal defense in many situations. Despite the full-power velocity, recoil was not excessive. For those favoring 18 inches of penetration to be certain of reaching the vitals, this is the load. We would rate it an A for personal defense and a B for animal defense.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Federal Premium Vital-Shok 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 1-oz. TruBall Hollow Point Rifled Slug

We bought these in five-round boxes for $4.19 from CheaperThanDirt.com. This load is similar to the Hydra-Shok load tested. A low-recoil loading, the TruBall hollowpoint breaks 1175 fps with a 1-ounce slug. Control is good and so is accuracy. Compared to the Hydra-Shok, recoil is subjectively the same. In water testing expansion is less—not that 0.87-inch average is a poor result. The Vital Shock slug penetrates 18 inches of water. Some will like this performance. This is service grade, suitable for police use. The TruBall system was developed for superior accuracy. Our tests cannot confirm this out beyond our test distance, but the slug is accurate. The slug kept its weight and drove straight, which some prefer to the Winchester segmented load. It isn't as ideal for personal defense as those with less penetration, nor as good as the slugs with more penetration for animal defense, but it sits in the middle and is affordable.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Lightfield Hybred EXP 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 1.25-oz. Sabot Slug LF-12

We bought boxes of five for $12.99 at Cabelas.com. This load breaks 1206 fps on average, but the slug weighs 547 grains. Recovered weight was 450 grains. The slug expanded and has plenty of energy. While advertised at higher velocity, we were using a riot gun with an 18-inch barrel. A 28-inch barrel would likely perform better in terms of fps and energy. Expansion was good, with actual expansion rather than flattening. Penetration was 14 inches. Water is hard on soft lead slugs, as we have discovered. Recoil isn't difficult to control and accuracy was good. While the load is heavier than most would care to manage for home defense, it isn't out of



This is the Remington Express Managed Recoil 12 Gauge 2.75-in. 1-oz. Rifled Slug 20290. We liked the Remington Managed Recoil, which was by far the easiest slug to shoot well, our shooters said.



The Bucks, Boars, and Bears load from Lightfield is a fast load with too much recoil for home defense, although wound ballistics would be superior.



We felt the punch while testing the Hybred-Elite rounds. This is dynamic penetration and expansion and should prove deadly against thin-skinned game.

the question. For hunting thin-skinned game, this is a credible loading. It would also serve for defense against all but the smaller bears.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Remington Express Managed Recoil 12 Gauge 2.75-in. 1-oz. Rifled Slug 20290

We bought these for $5.29/5 at Brownells.com. We really liked the Remington Managed Recoil slug. As one of the raters noted, what is not to like? This was by far the easiest slug to shoot well. At 1113 fps average velocity, this slug still threw a ball with 1203 foot-pounds of energy and penetrated 33 inches of water. This load uses two fiber wads in the shell. Interestingly, the first fiber wad was found in the third jug at 18 inches and the second in the fourth jug at 24 inches very consistently. This load isn't fast and doesn't deform, but it seems to have plenty of penetration for defense against most animals, save, perhaps, for the largest bears. It would be too much for home defense, we feel. We rated it down based on penetration. If considered for animal defense, it is short on energy compared to the other loads, but penetration is clearly there.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Lightfield Bucks, Boars and Bears 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 465-gr. Sabot

We bought this for $13.10/5 at Tarhunt.com. It penetrated 12 inches and fragmented. Velocity is 1320 fps. This is a fast load with too much recoil for home defense, we believe, although wound ballistics would be superior to the lighter loads for animal defense. The soft lead slug left large shards in the water jugs. Accuracy is good. We rated it down for animal defense based on penetration.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Lightfield Hybred-Elite 12-Gauge 3-in. 1.25-oz. Sabot Slug

The Lightfield 3-inch saboted slug has "Maximum Expansion" as part of its box description. This is marked for use in rifled barrels, but it's safe to use in smoothbores. We bought the shells for $12.99 at Brownells.com. This 547-grain load breaks 1550 fps. Recoil is certainly there in our 18-inch riot gun. Penetration was right at 18 inches, and the slug fragmented. Although there were some shards in the water, we could not find a piece of lead larger than a few grains. This is dynamic penetration and expansion and should prove deadly against thin-skinned game. Unless you're looking for this kind of fragmentation, we think there are better choices above.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Lightfield Commander IDS Plus 12-Gauge 3-in. 1.375-oz. Sabot Slug LFCP3-12

We bought the Lightfield Commander IDS Plus for $13.99/5 at Tarhunt.com. This is the heaviest Lightfield slug tested at 600 grains. Velocity was high at 1555 fps. Energy was the highest of any load tested at a surprising 3220 foot-pounds. There is a lot of power in that big slug. Penetration was 18 inches. The water jugs, including the ones backing the first four or five, were thrown about









The Lightfield Commander IDS Plus Sabot Slug is the heaviest Lightfield slug tested at 600 grains. Velocity was high at 1555 fps. Energy rang the bell at 3220 foot-pounds. Penetration was 18 inches, even though the slug fragmented, with a heavy load (as shown on scale, middle) of shards of lead found in the third jug.





The Hexolit slug travels through the bore in a sabot-like carrier, the yellow polymer. This protects the bore from steel-on-steel contact.



The 495-grain Hexolit slug, far right, is similar to the Monolit in appearance, but with the additional component of a ring of six shard-like projectiles sheathed in a polymer housing on the nose.



like nothing we have ever seen. The slug fragmented, with heavy shards of lead found in the third jug. It was consistent to find an average of 390 grains of lead in the third water jug. It is the strongest Lightfield slug and earned an A for penetration and energy. We rated it down a grade based on fragmentation.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

DDupleks Broadhead Hexolit 32 12-Gauge 2.75-in. 495-gr. Expanding Steel Slug

We bought this for $9.95/5 at SGAmmo.com. This all-steel slug is designed to offer greatly improved wound potential and limit ricochet. The 495-grain Hexolit slug is similar to the Monolit in appearance but with the additional component of a ring of six shard-like projectiles sheathed in a polymer housing on the nose of the slug. The slug travels through the bore in this sabot-like carrier. Average velocity is 1472 fps. Accuracy is good, but not on the level of the other loads, with a three-shot 50-yard group of about 5 inches. (All slugs were tested at 25 yards for accuracy. If we had a sufficient supply, some were tested at 50 yards.) This is acceptable since the Hexolit is intended to be used at moderate range; one of the other slugs would be better suited to long-range use. When fired into water, the Hexolit slug demonstrates the loss of the nose section. The manufacturer, DDupleks of Latvia, claims that the six metal pieces of the nose will be pulled away from the main slug in a radial pattern with a hard impact, and radiate from the nose in other situations. Per our testing, the nose of the slug did shed the petals in every instance. As an example, in the first test firing, there were holes in the second and third water jugs from the petals, but only one petal was actually found in the water jugs. Average penetration was 24 inches. The Hexolit slug demonstrates impressive wound ballistics. We feel that of all slugs tested, this slug offers excellent wound potential for personal defense and for use against light-skinned animals. We rated it down a grade on accuracy. It might not have the ideal penetration for home defense, as it is a little on the long side, and recoil is greater than the reduced-recoil slugs. However, this slug, for some reason, had less apparent recoil than the power factor would indicate.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Written and photographed by Bob Campbell, using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

Surplus 9mm Pistols From Star and Beretta: Worth the Cash?

These surplus pistols are inexpensive, and some look worse for the wear, but they still have teeth. Are they worth chasing to add them to your collection? In a couple of cases, we think so.

The idea of what constitutes a "surplus firearm" has different meanings depending where you are in the world. Surplus firearms in the U.S. means extra on hand or dated equipment. In other countries, it could mean one step away from scrap metal. We try to avoid the latter, but we are always on the lookout for a diamond in the rough, and thought we'd look at a few surplus 9mm Luger and 9mm Kurz (380 Auto) pistols. We wanted to look at these pistols through the lens of an inexpensive pistol that would be suited as a sand pit plinker, but in a pinch, it perhaps could be called on to defend the ranch. The problem with older surplus pistols is the lack or scarcity of spare parts, including magazines. By definition, all surplus weapons have been used, and some used more than others.

We chose four pistols that are fairly common and easy to find online to go bargain hunting: Two are Berettas, a Model 92S and Model 85F, made in Italy by P. Beretta S.P.A., and two are Star pistols, made in Spain by Star Bonifacio Echeverria, S.A., a Model Super B and Model B. The Star Model Super B looks like it is ready for the scrap yard and the older Model B looked well used, but as we found out, both still had some teeth. The Beretta 92S is a second-generation 92, which evolved into the 92FS. The 92S is a lot more of a European gun than the 92FS, which definitely has US influence. The Beretta 85F is a smaller version of the 92FS and is the most modern of the pistols tested.



All four pistols ran exceptionally well. We had no failures using an assortment of bullet types from full metal jacket to jacketed hollow points. In our opinion, the Beretta Model 92S and Model 85F are more suited for the modern shooter. The Star Model Super B and Model B are unique, but dated designs. We'd be okay protecting the home with three out of the four.

In past issues we have tested some old-school combat pistols and found them lacking, which makes sense. A horse worked a century and a half ago; but now we (can) drive Hummers. Accordingly, we had to make some accommodations for these guns' age. Since these are older pistols, we did not test with proofing loads or +P+ loads. These pistols were not designed for that type of high-pressure ammunition, and we had no desire to taste Italian or Spanish steel. Not that we are implying these are substandard pistols. These pistols are safe when used with ammunition originally intended for them. What we did want to find out was if different bullets types would impact performance. For instance, the Star pistols were manufactured before hollow-point bullets were popular, and we figured they might choke on hollow-point ammunition. We also wanted to see if different bullet weights would cause a stovepipe jam or failure to eject. We used off-the-shelf 9mm Luger ammo consisting of Hornady American Gunner with 115-grain XTP jacketed hollow points ($47/75 rounds), Aguila 124-grain FMJs ($17/50), and SIG Sauer 115-grain FMJ ($18/50). We found all three ammo types cycled flawlessly through the pistols with no issues. In the Beretta 85F, we fired 91-grain FMJs from Tula, 90-grain Speer Gold Dot hollow points, and Hornady Critical Defense 90-grain XTPs, which feature a hollow-point bullet with a polymer insert to facilitate expansion.

RANGE DATA

Hornady American Gunner 9mm Luger 115-gr. XTP	Beretta Model 92S	Star Model Super B	Star Model B
Average Velocity	1110 fps	1110 fps	1138 fps
Muzzle Energy	309 ft.-lbs.	309 ft.-lbs.	331 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.6 in.	2.6 in.	2.0 in.
Average Group	1.8 in.	3.2 in.	2.3 in.

SIG Sauer 9mm Luger 115-gr. FMJ	Beretta Model 92S	Star Model Super B	Star Model B
Average Velocity	1103 fps	1134 fps	1296 fps
Muzzle Energy	316 ft.-lbs.	328 ft.-lbs.	429 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.9 in.	2.5 in.	2.3 in.
Average Group	3.0 in.	2.8 in.	2.7 in.

Aguila 9mm Luger 124-gr. FMJ	Beretta Model 92S	Star Model Super B	Star Model B
Average Velocity	1055 fps	1085 fps	1080 fps
Muzzle Energy	307 ft.-lbs.	324 ft.-lbs.	321 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.2 in.	1.9 in.	3.0 in.
Average Group	1.7 in.	2.0 in.	3.2 in.

Beretta Model 85F 380 ACP	Tula 91-gr. FMJ	Speer Gold Dot 90-gr. GDHP	Hornady Critical Defense 90-gr. XTP
Average Velocity	866 fps	993 fps	943 fps
Muzzle Energy	152 ft.-lbs.	197 ft.-lbs.	181 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.2 in.	1.4 in.	1.6 in.
Average Group	1.4 in.	1.7 in.	1.7 in.

Notes: *To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 25 yards with open sights. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph set 15 feet from the muzzle.*

For accuracy testing, we placed the pistols on a bench rest to fire at targets set at 25 yards. In speed-firing exercises, we shot at targets at 7 yards, performing both Bill Drills and Mozambique Drills. The object with the Bill Drill is to fire as fast and as accurately as possible to hit an 8-inch zone. The Mozambique requires two fast shots to center of mass and a one to the head. All must be within their zones to be successful. This is what we found out when we exercised these old pistols.

Beretta Model 85F 380 Auto, $350-$375

While the Model 92S showed its age due to features, the Model 85F was similar to a Model 92FS except in a smaller package. That's because the Model 85F was designed to mimic the 92FS. The 85F was manufactured in 1990, and our example is an Italian-made surplus police pistol. It was in very good condition, with finish missing from sharp edges, but otherwise the pistol looked like it was not fired often. When 380 Auto pistols began to be made with polymer frames in subcompact sizes, the larger 85F lost favor. In our opinion the 85F is no pocket pistol, but it does offer better shootability than a subcompact pistol. The trade-off is a larger pistol that is less concealed-carry friendly.

The receiver of the 85F is metal, aluminum alloy, with serrations in the front and rear grip straps. The controls on the 85F were also large and easy to manipulate. The ambidextrous safety clicked on and off precisely. The plastic grip panels had plenty of checkering for a secure grip. In hand, the 85F feels like a full-size pistol. There is no need to curl your small finger under the butt. The magazine release was located near the thumb of a right-hand shooter, so it was easy to work the small 85F. The pistol used a single-stack steel magazine. The sights were fixed and had a white dot on the front blade and a white dot below the notch of the rear sight. Align the dots vertically to aim. Team members liked these sights compared to the 92S; more user friendly and more contrast. We would have liked more serrations on the slide to make the slide easier to manipulate.

Rotate the frame-mounted safety up in the Safe position, and the trigger moves freely but does not engage the sear and the slide cannot be manipulated.

Flick the safety down for the Fire position. In DA mode, the trigger had a 8.5-pound press. In SA mode, there was some slack to take up before the trigger broke at 4.8 pounds. The 85F was fast and simple to field strip, like any Series 92 from Beretta.

At the range, the 85F showed some excellent accuracy, even with the inexpensive Tula 90-grain FMJ ammo. One tester was able to shoot a five-shot group that measured 1.2 inches. With Hornady 90-grain XTPs, our average five-shot group measured 1.7 inches. With Speer Gold Dot ammunition our average five-shot group measured 1.6 inches. The 85F was a capable shooter. With a subcompact 380 Auto pistol with diminutive sights and smaller grip, we would not have the same accuracy results. We did feel recoil with the 85F, more so than the 92S, since the 85F is lighter. This small Beretta operated flawlessly.

Our Team Said: There are smaller 380 Auto pistols available at the same price point, and pistols chambered in 9mm that are the same size or smaller than the 85F at a higher price point. We liked the accuracy of the 85F and its ease of use. Recoil was manageable, even though the pistol was lightweight. In our opinion, the cost was reasonable and we would not hesitate to use this pistol as a concealed-carry piece.

Beretta Model 92S
9mm Luger, $280-$310

The Model 92S is basically a precursor to the Model 92FS. The original Model 92 was introduced in 1976 and had a frame-mounted safety similar to the current Taurus 92 pistol or a 1911-style pistol. Police and military officers in Italy wanted a slide-mounted safety, so in 1977, Beretta introduced the 92S, the second generation 92, and started to sell these pistols to police and LE agencies around the world. Where the 92S differs from the 92FS is in the grip, hammer pin, receiver shape, and magazine release, among other details. The 92FS has an enlarged hammer pin to stop the slide from flying off the receiver if it cracks. This was done at the request of the

BERETTA MODEL 85F 380 AUTO, $350-$375
GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The 85F is very shootable due to the grip size. It felt like a shrunk 92FS. We liked the accuracy and ease of use.



Action Type	Blowback
Overall Length	6.8 in.
Overall Height	4.7 in.
Maximum Width	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	23 oz.
Weight Loaded	25.4 oz.
Slide Material	Steel
Receiver Material	Aluminum alloy
Front Strap Height	3.7 in.
Rear Strap Height	2.2 in.
Barrel Length	3.2 in.
Pistol Grip Material	Checkered polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.3 in.
Magazine	8-round steel
Rear Sight	Steel, fixed, white-dot
Front Sight	Steel, fixed, white-dot
Sight Radius	4.9 in.
Trigger DA Mode	8.5 lbs.
Trigger SA Mode	4.8 lbs.
Trigger Span DA	4.5 in.
Trigger Span SA	3.1 in.
Safety	Ambi., 2-pos. lever
Warranty	n/a
Telephone	(800) 237-3882
Website	Beretta.com
Made In	Italy



The controls were full size, so the small 85F felt and operated like a full-size pistol.



The magazine release was where we expected it, under the thumb of a right-handed shooter's firing hand. Worked great.



Field-stripping the 85F was like any other Beretta 92 series pistol—simple and straightforward.

BERETTA MODEL 92S 9MM LUGER, $280-$310

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

The 92S is pure European. This is a very shootable pistol for hundreds less than a new Beretta.



Action Type	Short recoil, falling locking block
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	36.3 oz.
Weight Loaded	42.3 oz.
Slide Material	Steel
Receiver Material	Aluminum alloy
Rear Strap Height	2.2 in.
Barrel Length	3.2 in.
Barrel Length	4.9 in.
Pistol Grip Material	Checkered polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.4 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.8 in.
Magazine	15-round steel
Rear Sight	Steel, fixed notch
Front Sight	Steel, fixed post
Sight Radius	6.2 in.
Trigger DA Mode	11 lbs.
Trigger SA Mode	4.6 lbs.
Trigger Span DA	2.7 in.
Trigger Span SA	2.3 in.
Safety	2-pos. lever
Warranty	n/a
Telephone	(800) 237-3882
Website	Beretta.com
Made In	Italy



That button is the magazine release, which took some getting used to our team members said.



The 92S did not have any front or rear gripstrap serrations. They were missed.



That U-shaped hole in the magazine means it will function with magazine butt-release pistols. Many current-manufacture 92 magazines have this cut out.

U.S. military after testing the 92S with high-pressure loads. The 92S has the safety lever mounted in the slide. Rotating it up puts it in the Fire position and exposes a red dot and readies the pistol to go bang. Rotate it down into the Safe position and the trigger is disengaged, but the slide can still be manipulated. The hammer cannot be cocked manually. With the pistol cocked, rotating the lever to the Safe position allows the hammer to safely move forward. The safety is not ambidextrous.

The receiver has a rounded trigger guard, and the magazine release is located in the butt. Press and hold the button and the magazine falls free. If you have ever fired a pistol in snow or tall grass, you will understand why the magazine release was located here. Using the support hand to manipulate the magazine-release button drops the empty magazine into the palm of the support hand, where the magazine can be withdrawn. The magazine-release button works like a brake, so a user needs to remove the magazine. This is a European trait of the 92S. Here in the US, we are accustomed to dumping the empty magazine and while it is falling insert a fresh magazine. Testers unaccustomed to the butt-release magazine were at a loss when the slide locked back, but with training and practice, we could replace the magazine efficiently. Most magazines made for the 92FS are compatible with the 92S, so finding extra magazines—both factory and aftermarket—is simple.

The front and rear grip straps are smooth, and there was a lanyard loop attached at the butt. The 92S feels rounded in hand, different than the 92FS. The plastic grips were checkered on the bottom portion but not the top, which we thought was odd. We would have like fully checkered grips to better adhere our hand to the pistol. Field-stripping was like any other Beretta Series-92 pistol—fast and simple.

The example we tested showed signs of holster wear but little actual firing wear. The bluing was worn,

and we would rate this pistol 80-75 percent by NRA standards. The slide had no wiggle. It was tight. The trigger measured 11 pounds in DA mode and felt like it. In SA mode, there was a lot of take up and a bit of a mushy trigger. Not a show-stopper by any means, just a typical service pistol. The sights were small, fixed, and without contrasting dots or lines. On a dark background, the sights could get lost.

All ammunition cycled flawlessly through the 92S. Magazines seated easily. We would have liked more slide serrations to make the pistol easier to cock.

Bench-rest accuracy was good, averaging about 2 inches for five rounds at 25 yards. One team member consistently grouped five shots at about 1.22 inch with the 124-grain FMJ Aguila ammunition. The Hornady American Gunner ammo with a 115-grain JHP was no slouch either, with average groups measuring 1.8 inches. We did notice the 92S had a pleasant recoil. The pistol magazine release took some getting used to and slowed us down when it came to rapid reloads.

Our Team Said: The 92S is no modern-day 92FS Beretta pistol, but it still provides an excellent example of Beretta's 92 series performance. The 92S is about half the cost of a new 92FS. We wouldn't hesitate to use this as a defense weapon.

Star Model B 9mm Luger, $220 to $240

The Star Model B was manufactured from 1931 and 1983. This design was used on a limited basis by German police and some military units during WWII. Our sample was built in 1977. The Model B design was a knock-off of the Colt 1911-style pistol. The slide stop looks and acts like a slide stop on a 1911, as does the thumb safety and magazine release. In fact the Model B has been used in numerous movies and TV shows as a stand in for the 1911. The reason for using the Model B in lieu of the 1911 in 45 ACP is because the Star cycles on blanks and looks like a dead ringer for the 1911. The Model B operates similarly

STAR MODEL B 9MM LUGER, $220-$240

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

The Model B was accurate and had a well-broken-in trigger. The slide did not lock back all of the time.



Action Type	Cammed locking lug
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	39.6 oz.
Weight Loaded	42.8 oz.
Slide Material	Steel
Receiver Material	Steel

Front Strap Height	3.7 in.
Rear Strap Height	3.2 in.
Barrel Length	5 in.
Pistol Grip	Checkered polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.8 in.
Magazine	8-round steel
Rear Sight	Steel, fixed notch
Front Sight	Steel, fixed blade
Sight Radius	6.2 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	5.3 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Safety	2-pos. lever
Warranty	n/a
Telephone	n/a
Website	n/a
Made In	Spain



The rear grip strap does not have a grip safety, and the arched grip is machined into the receiver.



From the left side, the Model B looks like a Government 1911; the slide-stop lever, magazine release, and thumb safety are similar.



The Star Model B features an external extractor.



The Star Model B features a barrel bushing similar to a 1911A1. Field-stripping the Model B was similar to a 1911A1.

STAR MODEL SUPER B 9MM LUGER, $290-$320

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Super B was pleasant to shoot and operate and gave good accuracy. The trigger was good and recoil mild. This would make a good addition to a historic 9mm pistol collection and could still protect the home with no worries.



Action Type	Cammed locking lug
Overall Length	8.0 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	36.6 oz.
Weight Loaded	39.8 oz.
Slide Material	Steel
Receiver Material	Steel
Front Strap Height	3.7 in.
Rear Strap Height	3.2 in.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Barrel Length	5 in.
Pistol Grip	Checkered polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.8 in.
Magazine	8-round steel
Rear Sight	Steel, fixed notch
Front Sight	Steel, fixed blade
Sight Radius	6.2 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	4.8 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Safety	2-pos. lever
Warranty	n/a
Telephone	n/a
Website	n/a
Made In	Spain



The slide-stop lever (arrow) works like the slide stop on a 1911 but it is captured. We would rate the Super B tested at 60 percent, according to NRA standards. There was some bluing left and the checkered plastic grips looked a bit faded.



This is the enhancement made to the Model B, a captured takedown lever. Rotate it down to field strip.



The receiver has an arch machined into the rear grip strap. The Super B also does not have a grip safety like a 1911.

to a 1911, with a few differences. The trigger pivots rather than slides, there is no grip safety on the Star, the receiver is machined with an arch to look like the arched mainspring housing on a 1911A1, and the front strap flares out. Earlier Model Bs had a straight front strap like a 1911.

Our sample pistol would rate 70 percent according to NRA standards. Bluing was worn at sharp edges. The hammer showed some case hardening. One grip panel was plastic while the other was wood. The trigger had a bit of take up and broke cleanly at 5.3 pounds. It actually seemed less. The checkered spur hammer offered good purchase when cocking it. The Model B field-stripped like a typical military 1911.

There was a bit of rattle when we shook the pistol. The slide-to-receiver fit was fairly tight. It came with one 8-round steel single-stack magazine that was rusty and worn. It looked like someone fussed with the feed lip using a pair of pliers. We doubted the Model B would operate with the magazine, but were largely proved wrong. In hand, the Model B was skinny and easy to grip. The fixed sights were similar to those on a 1911A1.

From a rest at 25 yards, the Model B proved to be quite accurate for an old-timer. We averaged 2.5-inch groups with five shots. With Hornady American Gunner, one team member shot a 2-inch group. Within the first magazine, we found the slide did not lock back. We squirted the Model B with CLP and worked the slide, and problem still plagued us at times. If we owned this pistol we'd give a detail strip and thorough cleaning, as well as buy—if we could find them—more magazines.

Our Team Said: The Model B was inexpensive but did not operate as designed—the slide did not lock back. We liked plinking with it, but we would choose the Super B over the Model B if we wanted a 1911-style pistol to both plink and protect.

Star Model Super B
9mm Luger, $290 to $320

The Star Model Super B was

manufactured from 1946 and 1983 and is an enhanced version of the Model B. The Super B was used by Spain's military. Like all Star B–series models, the Super B continued to look and operate like a 1911 pistol but with enhancements. The slide stop looks and acts like a slide stop on a 1911, but it also functions as a takedown lever. The thumb safety also looks and operates like a 1911 thumb safety. While the Super B does look and operate like a 1911, it actually has a trigger that pivots. It uses a cammed lug on the barrel. The Super B also has features that are seen in current 9mm pistols, like a captured takedown lever and loaded-chamber indicator.

Our example looked long in the tooth and ready for the scrap yard. We would rate the Super B tested at 60 percent, according to NRA standards. There was some bluing left and the checkered plastic grips looked a bit faded. A blast of CLP and the Star was ready for action. As mentioned, the trigger pivots; it does not slide like a 1911 trigger. It broke cleanly at 4.8 pounds, which we liked. The receiver has an arch machined into the rear grip strap, giving it the appearance of arched mainspring housing in a 1911A1 pistol.

The Super B also does not have a grip safety like a 1911. The spur hammer was checkered and gave good purchase. The Star field-stripped like a cross between a 1911 and SIG P226. The bushing at the muzzle is rotated to relieve tension on the recoil spring, like a 1911, then the slide stop is rotated down to allow the slide assembly to move forward and off the receiver. The process was easy and required no tools. If you have issues depressing the recoil spring, you can use the corner of the magazine to depress it to allow the bushing to be rotated. The Star came with two steel single-stack magazines. The 8-round magazines were easy to load. The magazine release button is the same as a 1911. Magazines drop free like those from a 1911.

In hand, the Star felt thin and comfortable. The fixed sights were larger than those on a Government Issue 1911A1. The rear sight was knocked to one side, so we assumed the pistol would not shoot to point of aim. It did shoot to the left, but a brass punch and hammer cured that issue. The slide serrations were similar to a 1911A1 and offered enough surface to grip comfortably.



In hand, the Star Super B felt thin and comfortable.

At 25 yards, we found the Super B performed like a super star—for a surplus handgun anyway. The trigger pull and sights were adequate, allowing one tester to shoot a five-shot group that measured 1.8 inches with the Hornady American Gunner loaded with 115-grain XTP bullets. We assumed the Hornady American Gunner ammo would trip up the Star. Not a chance. The Super B chewed through all the ammunition without any issues. We were surprised. Lesson: Don't judge a pistol's performance by its finish, or lack thereof.

Our Team Said: The cost of the Star was reasonable for a plinker. We liked shooting this pistol since recoil was pleasant, the trigger broke cleanly, it fired inexpensive 9mm ammo, and the sights were usable. Replacement parts could be an issue. Our pistol was so reliable that we would use it as a house gun, but would opt for the Beretta 92S over the Super B due to the magazine capacity and availability of parts.

Special thanks to Eastern Outfitters of Hampstead, North Carolina (EasternOutfitter.com) for their assistance. Written and photographed by Robert Sadowski, using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

GUN TESTS

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

1. To Change Your Address

If you are moving, please attach your present mailing label to this form, and enter your new address here:

Name

Company

Street

City

State Zip

2. To Order/Renew

To order, or extend your current subscription, enter your name and address above, and check the subscription term you prefer:

__ One year: $49
__ Two years: $98
__ New subscriber
__ Renewal

These rates are good in U.S. and Canada only. For all other countries: 1 year $72 (air), 2 years $144 (air).

3. To Give a Gift Subscription

Enter your name and address above and your giftee's name and address below. The subscription rates stated above apply to gifts.

__ Send a One-Year Gift
__ Send a Two-Year Gift

Name

Street

City

State Zip

Return this coupon (or a photocopy) to:

GUN TESTS
P.O. Box 8535
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

Ruger Recalls Most Mark IVs

The company says on its website that any Mark IV pistol produced before June 1, 2017 has "the potential to discharge unintentionally if the safety is not utilized correctly."

Ruger has issued a wide recall of all Mark IV and 22/45 models because of a problem with the safety and sear and has told owners that the pistols should not be used.

The issue is: In some cases, if the trigger is pulled while the safety lever is midway between the "safe" and "fire" positions and not full engaged in either, the pistol may or may not fire when the trigger is pulled.

If the gun doesn't fire when the trigger is pulled, it may fire if the user then pushes the safety to the "fire" position without the trigger being activated.

Here's a statement from a Ruger press release on the company's website:

"Although only a small percentage of pistols appear to be affected and we are not aware of any injuries, Ruger is firmly committed to safety and would like to retrofit all potentially affected pistols with an updated safety mechanism. Until your Mark IV pistol has been retrofitted or you verify that it is not subject to the recall, we strongly recommend that you not use your pistol."

Ruger says they have received a "small number" of reports from the field indicating the problem exists. Additional testing confirmed the issue and the recall was issued.

While the company has not given a time-frame for the retrofitting, they have made the recall fairly easy for Mark IV owners to navigate.

They may simply go to the Ruger website and enter the serial number of their pistol to determine if it is included in the recall. If it is, the site will prompt you to enter your name and address. When Ruger is ready to fix your gun, the company will send out an empty box with the appropriate return label.



Mark IV pistol

Since the problem exists in parts contained in the grip frame assembly, that's all that has to be sent to Ruger for repairs. That part is not serialized, meaning it can be shipped via regular methods like UPS without going through an FFL.

However, you don't need the website to know if your gun is safe or not.

If the serial number begins with "401" or "WBR," the gun has been recalled. If the serial number begins with "500" it has not.

Any Mark IV or 22/45 pistol that has already been retrofitted will display a letter "S" in the white dot that is visible when the safety is engaged.

The company urges Mark IV owners NOT to send their frames in for retrofitting until they receive a return box.

Though Ruger can't say when it will begin shipping the return boxes, they have promised to "return your grip frame assembly within one week of receiving it."

The website also says that Ruger will return repaired grip frame assemblies to owners with a free magazine as a "thank you for your participation." Customers in states with magazine restrictions will receive a ShopRuger gift certificate in lieu of a magazine.

The 22 LR pistol was introduced in 2016 as a successor to the company's first pistol, the Ruger Standard Model, first made in the 1950s and the Mark I, Mark II, and Mark III models followed.

The Mark IV represents the most drastic of design changes from the previous pistols in the series, with reworked internals allowing for a vastly simplified disassembly process, solving a major gripe about previous models. The Mark IV has been offered in hunter, target, and competition versions and as three models in the company's 22/45 configuration as well.

In other Ruger news, the company has introduced a new 10mm pistol, a new target revolver, and a new stainless-finish rifle.

The SR1911 in 10mm Auto will likely make hog hunters and aficionados of major power-factor cartridges happy. This full-size, stainless-steel SR1911 10mm Auto features the same Bomar-style adjustable sights as the SR1911 Target model. It also has a tight-fitting, bushingless bull barrel, a first for Ruger. The ramped barrel is black-nitride coated to reduce the wear associated with hard-hitting 10mm Auto ammunition. Another first for Ruger, this model also utilizes a full-length steel guide rod for the recoil spring. The SR1911 in 10mm Auto has rubberized grip panels for extra control and comfort.

Ruger's American-made, CNC-machined SR1911 comes with upgraded features like Ruger's classic Series 70 design, a lowered and flared ejection port, titanium firing pin, and a precision-machined bull barrel. The 10mm SR1911 features an integral



Ruger SR1911 10mm



Ruger Match Champion 357 Mag.

plunger tube, beavertail grip safety, extended magazine release, oversize thumb safety, skeletonized hammer, and skeletonized aluminum trigger.

The new Ruger SR1911 in 10mm Auto features a 5-inch barrel and weighs 40.4 ounces with an empty magazine. It ships with two 8-round magazines and a cable lock.

The company's new Ruger SP101 Match Champion is a five-round revolver designed with the competitor in mind. Chambered in 357 Magnum but capable of firing 38 Special, the Match Champion has a full-lug, 4.2-inch barrel with an 11-degree target crown for competition accuracy, a chamfered cylinder, and custom Altamont hardwood grips with stippled and checkered sides. The Ruger SP101 Match Champion has a number of other interesting features for the competitive shooter, including polished springs and a polished hammer strut, combined with trigger and hammer shims for a target-quality trigger pull.

The adjustable rear sight combines with a fiber-optic front sight to create a sight picture for both plates and targets, and the polished trigger guard allows for smooth shooting on long strings.

There's also a new long-gun entry from Ruger, the American Rimfire Stainless. The stainless-steel configuration of this popular rifle comes in three chamberings: 22 LR, 22 WMR, and 17 HMR.

These new Ruger American Rimfire models feature a 416 stainless-steel barrel, bolt, and receiver. Hand-buffed, the satin finish is highlighted by the contrasting black thread protector, bolt release, stock, and one-piece Picatinny scope base. The 18-inch cold hammer-forged barrel free-floats in the lightweight synthetic stock and is finished with a ½-28 threaded muzzle.

The Ruger American Rimfire rifle also features the integral bedding system, Ruger Marksman Adjustable trigger and rotary magazines. The modular stock system helps to adjust the rifle fit to the shooter by allowing for different comb heights and lengths of pull. These new models ship with a high comb, standard length-of-pull module installed.



Ruger's American Rimfire Stainless comes in 22 LR, 22 WMR, and 17 HMR chamberings.

Kahr Introduces Two New "S" Series 9mm Models

Kahr Arms's first two pistols in the new "S" Series are 9mm pistols, the S9093 and the ST9093. The new "S" Series features a redesigned magazine base and grip, a limited lifetime warranty, and ships with two magazines.

The S9093 model features a 3.6-inch barrel with conventional rifling, an overall length of 5.9 inches, and a height of 4.5 inches. This pistol is similar to the CW9093, but this new "S" Series model has the added features of white 3-dot sights, front serrations on the slide, an accessory rail, and an ID tag on the grip. Capacity is 7+1 and the pistol is shipped with two 7-round mags. MSRP is $477.

Also new in the "S" Series is the ST9093. This pistol features a 4-inch barrel, has an overall length of 6.5 inches, and a height of 5.08 inches. Like the S9093, it too has white 3-dot sights, front serrations on the slide, an accessory rail, and an ID tag on the grip. Capacity is 8+1, and the pistol is shipped with two 8-round magazines. MSRP is $456.

Both pistols operate with a trigger



Kahr Arms "S" Series S9093, above, and the ST9093, below.



cocking DAO, "Safe-Cam" Action, lock breech with "Browning-type" recoil lug and a passive striker block with no magazine disconnect. The frames are black polymer with matte-stainless steel slides.

Springfield Armory Announces Free-Float Saint

Springfield Armory is now offering a Saint 5.56mm AR-style rifle with a free-float handguard. The patent-pending free-float handguard system



accepts almost unlimited M-Lok customization. It has a pinned low-profile gas block that improves upon set-screw blocks. The elevation-adjustable flip-up front sight and dual-aperture flip-up rear sight can be folded down or utilized to co-witness with optics. An nickel-boron-coated single-stage GI trigger is said to deliver a grit-free break.

North Dakota Highway Patrol Adopts SIG Sauer P320

Newington, New Hampshire-based

GUN TESTS
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

SIG Sauer, Inc., announced that the North Dakota Highway Patrol (NDHP) has selected the striker-fired P320 as the agency's sidearm of choice.

"The North Dakota Highway Patrol looks forward to the transition to the SIG Sauer P320," said Captain Thomas Iverson. "After a thorough testing process, we are confident the new weapon will serve our agency well."



The P320 was introduced in January 2014. Earlier this year, the U.S. Army selected a variant of the P320 as its next service pistol. The P320 is a striker-fired design. The serialized trigger group is interchangeable, allowing the shooter to transform the size and caliber of the pistol. Full size, Carry, Compact and Subcompact frames are available. Grip frames are further divided into small, medium, and large to accommodate any hand size.

The NDHP boasts more than 150 sworn officers who are assigned a wide array of tasks, ranging from driver examinations to protecting the northern border. Before selecting the SIG P320 in 9mm, the NDHP utilized P226 pistols chambered in 357 SIG.

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- **Revolver Holsters:** Alien Gear Cloak Tuck IWB, Garrity Gunleather IWB Standard Holster, Galco Carry Lite, Tagua Gunleather Paddle Holster, DM Bullard Combat Holster, Jeffrey Custom Leather R1 Ranger, Banshee IWB, Tauris Holsters Semi High Ride (Practical Carry), Barber Leather Works Pancake, Gunmate Hip Holster, Jason Winnie 121, SWAPRIG Holsters Cargo Pocket Holster, Lobo Deep Cover Holster, Lobo Gunleather Pocket Holster.

- **Four Compact 9mm Handguns**: Glock 43, $445; Honor Defense Honor Guard, $449; Walther PPS,$451; and the Smith & Wesson Shield, $395.

- **Revolver Special Reports:** Chiappa 1873 SAA 22 Buntline SAA1873-22 22 LR, $339. Nagant M1895 Revolver: Unusual Relic from the Russian Empire, $200 to $400. Smith & Wesson Performance Center Model 929: An 8-shot 9mm wheelgun option for competition shooters.

GUN TESTS
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

Customer Service Contacts

If you have a problem with your magazine subscription, damaged or missing issues, need to change your mailing or email address, or renew your subscription, visit Online Customer Service at:
Gun-Tests.com
Click "Contact Us"

CALL TOLL FREE: 800-829-9084

SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT
Gun Tests (US)
P.O. Box 8535
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

Gun Tests (Canada)
Box 7820 STN Main
London ON
Canada N5Y 5W1

QUANTITY REPRINTS
Reprints of **Gun Tests** articles are available.
Minimum Order: 1,000.
Contact:
GunTestsEditor@icloud.com

EDITORIAL OFFICES
Gun Tests *welcomes letters or email concerning our articles. Please include your name, telephone number, and hometown.*

We will respect your request not to publish personal information. Email comments to GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.

Because of daytime testing requirements, the writers and editorial staff can't answer phone inquiries. But the staff responds to email. If you have a question or comment about Gun Tests evaluations, please email individual writers at: GunTestsEditor@icloud.com. Thanks for your understanding.