GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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22 LR HANDGUN SHOOT OUT

Looking for a way to improve your defensive-handgun skills and not break the bank? A rimfire training pistol or conversion from Colt, Beretta, Smith & Wesson, or Tactical Solutions may be a viable answer. ● Page 6









22 LR Pistol Value Guide ● Page 13



BARGAIN HUNTER

We put three veteran 357 Magnums from Smith & Wesson, Colt, and Ruger in the crucible of our range testing trials and found one we'd buy new or used. ● Page 15

Revolver Value Guide ● Pages 18-19

BOLT-ACTION RIFLES GO HEAD TO HEAD

When we looked at four rimfires, we found much to like. Tested: the Savage Mark II F 26700, $231; the CZ-USA CZ 455 American 02110, $400; the Marlin XT 22RZ 70763, $220; and the Savage Mark II BTV 28750, $390. ● Page 22





DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● SHORT SHOTS: 29 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

A PIECE OF 'GUNMAGEDDON' CHALLENGED



Todd Woodard

The California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA) and several individual plaintiffs have filed an important Second Amendment lawsuit challenging California's newly expanded Assault Weapons Control Act (AWCA).

The suit, *Rupp v. Becerra*, seeks to have the courts declare the AWCA unconstitutional because it infringes on the right to keep and bear arms under the Second Amendment.

The AWCA makes it illegal to manufacture, sell, transport, import or transfer hundreds of popular and commonly owned semi-automatic firearms the state tags as "assault weapons." This means it is illegal for owners to transfer or sell these firearms to anyone in California, including to their own children or heirs upon death. And owners themselves will be violating the law by continuing to possess their firearms unless they register them as "assault weapons" with the state.

The Rupp case was filed in direct response to a number of anti-gun-owner laws, including the expanded "assault weapon" statute, which were signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in July 2016. Collectively, those new gun bans have become known as "gunmageddon" among California's roughly 10 million gun owners.

● At the time of this writing, an interesting bill in the Keystone State was moving through the General Assembly. HB 671 would toughen existing law to ensure that firearms and ammunition laws are consistent throughout the state. It's needed because many local governments have enacted gun-control ordinances in violation of the current preemption law. There aren't penalties for disobedience in the current preemption statute, so officials are free to create a patchwork of regulations that could ensnare citizens in local restrictions they didn't even know existed. Legislation similar to HB 671 was signed by former Gov. Tom Corbett in 2014, but was struck down by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court last year for a violation of the "single subject" rule for legislative process.

● In New Jersey, a decorated Marine veteran facing a mandatory three years behind bars on a gun charge will not be going to prison after all. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie commuted Marine Sergeant Hisashi Pompey's sentence in April. Six years ago during a visit to New Jersey, Pompey was charged with unlawful possession of a handgun, which was legally registered in Virginia. Pompey had lost an appeal and was set to surrender to authorities when Gov. Christie threw Pompey a lifeline. However, the commuted sentence does not expunge the arrest from Pompey's record; it simply removes the punishment that resulted from the arrest. **GT**

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9mms: Just in the Nick of Time

Reader Jeff got what he needed, when he needed it, with our compact 9mm pistol match in May. And Readers Matthew and Stephen are pining for M1 Carbines they've wanted for years.



Re "Compact 9mm Pistol Shoot-Out: We Test Canik, CZ, and Arex," May 2017

Great article, and just in time for me as I had been considering the P-01. I appreciate it. **—Jeff**

Re "Downrange: Army Chooses SIG P320 Pistol," March 2017

The SIG is an excellent pistol. I have most of the models in SA/DA mode and love them! I did not become a Glock/striker fan until last year, though I have owned them through the years. I could never manage the trigger until I spent about five hours working with my G19. I'm sure the SIG has a better trigger, so proper training should negate any problems with the switch. I am planning on obtaining a P320 to round out my SIG collection. Good job, Army!
—Stephen

The military, with shooters of all abilities, should not have picked a striker-fired weapon, in my opinion. They should have paid a little more and picked the P226 or something along that line in a DA/SA configuration and a decocker. The history of the Glock should be enough to make them shy away from the accidental discharges associated with striker-fired handguns.
—Donald



Re "Full-Size 10mm Pistols from SIG, Glock, and Rock Island Arsenal," May 2016

Great article! I really liked the comparison of three 10mm pistols with different philosophies at work: a 1911, a striker-fired Glock, and a SIG. One thing that I don't understand after reading the comments and the article is how an evaluator in a consumer magazine wouldn't consider factors like price. It seems like testers were dissatisfied with the SIG's rating. Some justification for the B grade might be the lower capacity, high bore axis, higher weight, and how the price is more than double that of other competitors with comparably performing pistols. I thought the article included that

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.

information adequately. I would love to see some additional evaluation of other 10mm options also, like some of the EAA Tanfoglios, the Delta Elite, the Kimber, Iver Johnson, etc. I used this article before purchasing my 10mm pistol; it was much appreciated in drawing comparisons between a Glock, which is commonly available to rent, and others which are not.

—Michael

I, like other readers, appreciate the unfettered comments and prejudices of the GUN TESTS staffers. Heck, after all, they are the ones testing a gun for our knowledge and perusal. I find your reviews helpful when I am considering the purchase of a gun. However, I do not think a gun should be downgraded or criticized for its price. Just my personal thoughts, guys and gals. **—Ben**

Re Honor Defense Pistol Reviews

I can't find any reference on the GUN-TESTS.com website to a mention of this American-made pistol. Have you considered doing a review, or am I just missing it? —David

No, we haven't covered this line as yet. But we do have upcoming tests of a couple of Honor pistols in the works. —Todd Woodard

Re "Downrange: Some Guns Not 2A Eligible," August 2016

Apparently, the Constitution does not mean what it says it means, even when there are provisions written in plain English. The Constitution does not and never has guaranteed anyone any rights, as proven over and over by the Supreme Court. It is the Supreme Court, not the Constitution, that grants you your rights or takes them away, and the court acts many times according to public opinion and political ideology. Reading the justices' reasoning in their rulings is proof they have little regard for what the Constitution says or means, or what they believe was the Founding Fathers' clear-cut intent. The two groups of Supreme Court justices always vote along party lines, and they blatantly twist the Constitution according to whom has the majority in the Court. In the Heller decision, it came down to exactly one vote by Antonin Scalia that would have completely trashed the Second Amendment, in spite of its very clear-cut meaning. In conclusion, the Constitution does not mean what it says it means, it means what the Supreme Court's twisted ideology claims it means—no matter how asinine or outrageous the rulings are. And there is nothing that any citizen can do about their rulings. End of story. **—Jerry**

The Constitution does not limit citizens' ownership of weapons to those "in common use"—even if it did, the only reason that there aren't millions of people with sub-machine guns, select-fire carbines, etc., is that the government has made it impossible for most of us to own them because of burdensome regulations and choking off the supply. Most of our courts are staffed by [judges] who read the Constitution to say what it would have, had they written it, rather than judges who take it for what says (and doesn't say). There was originally no restriction on the sort of arms and artillery anyone might own, and there's no reason for it now—other than government trying to increase its power over us. Changes to the Constitution are made by amendment, not legislation, regulation, and court rulings. **—Tom**

Re "Short Shots: Cabot Pandemonium Pistol," August 2016

The Cabot 1911 is a departure from the norm. It brings a new dimension to firearms engraving. I can say that it is gorgeous. I would like to see more engraving in that style. Wish I could have some of this art in my collection. **—Jack**

Re "308 Win. Bolt Guns: Ruger's Precision Rifle vs. Tikka T3 CTR," April 2016

Though Ruger doesn't offer a warranty, their customer service is very highly rated. Last week, I received a revolver, made in the 1970s, back from them with an eight-day turnaround time. The previous owner used a coal chisel to adjust the front sight. Ruger replaced it at no charge. **—Yankee Clipper**

Re "9mm and 45 ACP XD Mod.2 Subcompacts Go Head to Head," February 2016

I currently carry a Taurus PT-145 Millennium Pro 45 ACP and am really leaning toward the XD Mod.2 after closely looking at the Smith & Wesson M&P. The grips on that one are too narrow for my hands, and the XD feels right at home, somewhat like a 1911, which I am very fond of. I'm also considering buying the XD in 9mm, in part because the Taurus seems to rock too much in my hands, even with gloves. Follow-up shots are a bit slow because of target reacquisition and with a concealed-carry gun, that can be a huge liability. Thank you for this review!

—Ramon

Re "Reproduction M1 Carbines: We Test Auto-Ordnance and Inland," February 2017

I have been in lust for one of these M1 carbines since you could get one for thirty bucks when I was a kid. Of course, thirty bucks was a day's pay for my dad, and an unachievable amount of money for a grammar-school kid. Since we lived in New Jersey, parental attitude certainly precluded having a gun in the house as well. Kudos for a great article on these fun little shooters, and thanks for talking me out of the money for a new one. **—Matthew**

I have longed for an M1 carbine for many years and am about to pull the trigger. There is much talk of the current stock of new manufactured M1 carbines and it appears that the Fulton Armory version is a better quality firearm than either the Inland or Auto-Ordnance. This article would have been complete and

comprehensive had you included a carbine from Fulton Armory. I understand about availability and deadline issues and empathize with your challenge in getting an article published, but I am still flinching on pulling the trigger because I don't feel fully informed. Do you have any plan on following up with an evaluation of the Fulton Armory M1 carbine?

—Stephen

Hey Stephen: We tested the Fulton back in December 2009, and the beautiful thing about these historical rifles is, they don't change much. Here's what we had to say:

"The carbine you can buy today from Fulton Armory features all of the attributes of the test rifle but one. Today's Fulton carbine has a new barrel, made to G.I. specifications by Fulton. All the rest of the parts are genuine G.I., all tested and matched and carefully fitted as the gun is built. There's a 30-day money-back guarantee if you are dissatisfied in any way. You can add various accessories, including a hand guard with scope mount, extra magazines, bayonet, and many more. Also, Fulton has a full line of M1 carbine parts, if you should need anything to repair your own. Check their website for details (www.Fulton-Armory.com).

"While $1,300 for a carbine will open some eyes and close some pocketbooks, what you get will not require any replacement parts, or retesting, or special fitting, nor will it require a better-grade stock. The bolt will stay open when you push down on the little button, unlike many arsenal-redone carbines. The finish will be crisp, clean newly done Parkerizing, and the whole thing will not only work to perfection, it won't take a back seat to any carbine, old or new, with the possible exception of some museum specimens. You're paying for the careful hand fitting done by the folks at Fulton Armory, and you can take that to the bank.

"The test gun came with a sling, oiler, and a magazine in a heavy, well-padded cardboard box. The flawless walnut stock had a linseed-oil finish. The operation of the weapon was noticeably slicker and crisper than any of the other three carbines. The test gun was fitted with the milled rear sight, and a bayonet lug. The magazine noted many collectors like to display the carbine with a bayonet attached. They said they've also commonly seen the two-magazine pouch on the stock. A 30-round magazine inserted into a carbine set up with the bayonet and two spare mags makes an impressive display.

"Our Team Said: We could not fault the Fulton M1 Carbine, despite its high price." —tw

Re "9mm Luger Snubnose Revolvers: Ruger LCR versus Taurus 905," March 2016

I bought a used Taurus Model 905 with a blued finish that came with ten moon clips. The moon clips do take some getting used to, and I think it is a good idea to frequently check them for bending. As noted in the article, a bent moon clip can keep the cylinder from turning. That said, I found my Taurus 905 a joy to shoot. It was very accurate in single-action fire and surprisingly accurate in double-action fire. I bought my pistol used, so the previous owner may have swapped out the original factory hammer spring for a lighter aftermarket version. In any case, head shots on a target were a certainty out to at least 20 yards. With a slow trigger pull, head shots on a target were still close to 90 percent at that range. I've had the gun less than a month, but I am quickly growing fond of it for its intended purpose.

This owner ups the rating of this handgun to an "A" based upon his personal experiences. **—Robert**

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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.

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22-Caliber Handgun Shoot-Out: Smith, TacSol, Beretta, Colt

Looking for a way to get less (recoil and expense) from your training? Then a rimfire pistol may be the way to go, saving wear and tear on your body and keeping dollars in your wallet.

In this installment, we are looking at some of the best 22-caliber pistols for all-around target shooting and training for marksmanship and personal-defense practice, with an emphasis on viability for personal-defense training. Some handguns are just fine for general plinking, but the modern shooter demands the ability to train with combat lights or even a red-dot sight. All 22s do not allow this type of versatility. Let's look at four 22-caliber handguns and see how they stack up as modern trainers.

The 22 self-loading handgun is a great firearm that every handgunner should own at least one of. The 22 is a great trainer, and it is also a good small-game handgun, and it is even useful in some forms of competition. The absence of recoil and muzzle report compared to centerfire handguns is often touted, but recoil and muzzle blast are there, simply in easily manageable portions. The shooter is free to concentrate on trigger press, sight picture, sight alignment, and grip. Practice in offhand fire, combat practice, firing for extreme accuracy from a solid rest, clearing malfunctions and hunting game are just some of the practice that may be accomplished with the 22 pistol. For small-game hunting, excellent accuracy is demanded. For combat practice—and this is an important point—the handgun should be similar to the centerfire defense gun in accuracy. In that manner, the shooter isn't given a false sense of security by a 22 that is much more accurate than the 9mm or 45 they use for personal defense. When practicing with the 22, the serious shooter should use the same grip and trigger press that he or she uses when mastering the 9mm or 45. Using a lighter grip or shooting fast just because the 22 is so controllable doesn't cross over into personal defense skills; it is simply shooting for fun.

We collected two 22-caliber handguns and two 22-caliber conversion units for comparison. One of



Top to bottom are the Colt 22 Conversion, Smith & Wesson Victory 22, Tactical Solutions 22 Glock Conversion, and the Beretta Neos.





Here are two looks at the rimfires we chose for this test. Top is the Colt 22 LR conversion unit, which looks like a plain ole 1911. Bottom is the S&W Victory 22, an entire pistol that competed against the Beretta Neos.

RANGE DATA

CCI Velocitor 40-gr. Copper-Plated HP	**Smith & Wesson Victory**	**Beretta Neos**	**Glock Model 22**	**Colt 1911**
Average Velocity	855 fps	872 fps	866 fps	884 fps
Muzzle Energy	64 ft.-lbs.	67 ft.-lbs.	66 ft.-lbs.	69 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.5 in.	1.4 in.	2.6 in.	2.3 in.
Largest Group	2.2 in.	2.0 in.	3.1 in.	2.8 in.
Average Group Size	1.9 in.	1.8 in.	2.9 in.	2.5 in.

Fiocchi HV 40-gr. Lead RN	**Smith & Wesson Victory**	**Beretta Neos**	**Glock Model 22**	**Colt 1911**
Average Velocity	1090 fps	1110 fps	1055 fps	1068 fps
Muzzle Energy	105 ft.-lbs.	109 ft.-lbs.	98 ft.-lbs.	101 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.4 in.	1.2 in.	2.8 in.	2.0 in.
Largest Group	2.0 in.	1.95 in.	3.7 in.	2.6 in.
Average Group Size	1.7 in.	1.6 in.	3.2 in.	2.3 in.

Winchester Super X 37-gr. Plated HPs	**Smith & Wesson Victory**	**Beretta Neos**	**Glock Model 22**	**Colt 1911**
Average Velocity	992 fps	1035 fps	1018 fps	954 fps
Muzzle Energy	81 ft.-lbs.	88 ft.-lbs.	85 ft.-lbs.	75 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.5 in.	1.3 in.	3.0 in.	2.7 in.
Largest Group	2.3 in.	2.0 in.	3.8 in.	3.3 in.
Average Group	1.9 in.	1.7 in.	3.4 in.	3.0 in.

Notes: *To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups off a solid bench rest. Distance: 25 yards. We recorded velocities with a Competition Electronics Chrony Chronograph. The first sky screen was set 10 feet from the muzzle.* ***Ammunition notes:*** *We purchased the CCI Velocitor for $6.49/50 from Slickguns.com; the Fiocchi HV for $4.81/50 from Centerfireguns.com, and the Winchester Super X for $20/100 from LuckyGunner.com.*

the handguns is a new model and the other, a relatively new and often overlooked pistol. The firearms tested included the Smith & Wesson Victory 22, Beretta Neos 22, Tactical Solutions' Glock conversion unit, and a Colt 22 Ace conversion unit.

Training Considerations

Another consideration for new shooters is the ability to mount both a red-dot sight and a laser light on the handgun. (Not necessarily in tandem.) The laser may be defense related, or it may be used in training to help gauge the shooter's success in mastering the trigger. A red dot that bounces all over the wall when the trigger isn't pressed properly is a great aid in marksmanship training.

We chose a MeoRed Dot for use with the handguns. The MeoRed has an MSRP of $520, so it is pricier than most sights that will be mounted on the 22. Visual clarity and function of this reflex sight cannot be faulted, so it made a good test optic for the pistols.

The mini red-dot or reflex sight for pistols is a new idea, but one that works well for us in practice. If the unit were delicate, however, it would not be a great idea, but the Meopta MeoRed has given us good service on



Our test rounds for this quartet of 22 LR handguns included, from top, the CCI Velocitor copper-plated hollow point 40-grain, Winchester Super X 37-grain hollow point Super Speed HP, and the Fiocchi High Velocity Performance 40-grain round.

several handguns. With the Smith & Wesson and Beretta available for red-dot scope mounting, the field is interesting and viable. The problem is that if you do not practice with the red dot, you will not be as fast as with iron sights and not fast enough for personal defense or competition. The red dot requires the pistol be aimed while the handgun is brought into action, while conventional sights are brought to the eye largely by feel, then aligned. As an example, when practicing with the 22s, one of our raters, new to the red dot, lost the red-dot aiming point every time he fired and had to reacquire the dot and aim again.

Lasers and red dots are available for less than the MeoRed that would offer good training. We found that the laser sight, by comparison, isn't useful for training in open sunlight on the range. The laser is a short-range proposition even in dim light. The laser is pretty neat at short range when firing from around corners in the home, we felt. For marksmanship training, the laser is a great trainer for using the trigger properly. If you use a red-dot-equipped defense pistol, the red-dot-mounted 22 is an option.

Smith & Wesson Victory 22 22 LR, $341

The Smith & Wesson Victory is a fresh design that isn't similar to the previous Smith & Wesson SW22 pistols, nor is it based on the super-accurate and expensive Smith & Wesson Model 41. The Victory features a straight blowback action and a single-action trigger. The barrel is 5.5 inches long in a bull-barrel configuration. The barrel crown is well cut, and the barrel seems well balanced. The sights are excellent target-grade units with fiber-optic inserts. We like the sight design. During firing, there was no shifting of the zero, and the fiber optics did not become loose, which has been a concern with some sights of this type. The sights are fully adjustable. The fit and finish of the handgun are good. The grips are ergonomically designed hard plastic that fit all hand sizes

SMITH & WESSON VICTORY 22 22 LR, $341

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Smith & Wesson has much to offer. It is accurate and reliable and looks good. Hand fit is excellent and disassembly for cleaning and maintenance is easy. The fiber-optic sights are a big plus for most shooting chores.

Action	Blowback Single-Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	9.2 in.
Overall Height	5.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	35 oz.
Weight Loaded	36.75 oz
Barrel Length	4.5 in.
Barrel	Steel, 1:16 Twist
Magazine	10-rd. detachable box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.8 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered plastic
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Adjustable



Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	3.75 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.4 in.
Safety	Left side lever
Warranty	1 Year
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	USA



This photo is taken in a dim room, and you can see the forward fiber optic is still pretty bright. The front fiber optic is a good addition to the pistol.



Right: To mount a red dot, remove the rail holding the Victory's rear sight and mount a supplied Picatinny rail.

Left: We found fit and finish to be excellent in the Smith & Wesson Victory. Disassembly was easy, and the number of components testifies to the simple, elegant design.



COLT 22 CONVERSION 22 LR, $500

GUN TESTS GRADE: B-

The Colt is a good conversion, but in this case, we feel there are self-loading 22s in the 1911 format that are a better choice. This conversion is pricey, and there are good alternatives. Finding spare magazines is tough.

Action	Blowback Single-Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	38 oz.
Weight Loaded	39.75 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	Steel, 1:16 -Twist
Magazine	10-rd. detachable box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered plastic
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Fixed



Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	6.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Slide lock safety, grip safety
Warranty	None
Telephone	(800) 962-COLT
Website	Colt.com
Made In	USA



The Colt conversion is well finished and proved accurate. The Colt conversion is mounted on a WWII GI frame.



What looks like a two-piece barrel is a floating chamber. This was developed to allow good function with a steel slide versus an aluminum slide.



Left is a Colt magazine, which we found to be unavailable at the time of the test. Instead, we bought a GSG M-1911 22 LR 10-round magazine, right, $31, which offered some functionality in our conversion. This magazine may or may not function with your 1911 Colt conversion.

well. They are secured by Torx-head screws. Both the front strap and the rear strap have good checkering. It isn't deep but works well. The safety is positive in operation and easily reached by the firing-hand thumb. The controls are standard, with a slide lock that is easily manipulated, and the Browning-type magazine release works well. There is an adjustable trigger stop in the face of the serrated trigger. The trigger breaks very cleanly at 3.75 pounds. The pistol breaks down easily by backing out a hex-head screw that holds the receiver and barrel together. The bolt is then simply pulled from the rear of the receiver. This makes for quick and easy cleaning, and the zero is retained when the pistol is reassembled, as long as the barrel is properly tightened. The barrel may be changed for a longer one, if desired. The rear of the bolt is serrated for better grip.

The pistol was fired with four loads. For training evaluation, each pistol was fired with 200 rounds of Winchester's M22 40-grain load. This loading was designed primarily to burn cleanly and function in AR-15-style 22-caliber rifles, and it works equally well in the pistol. For accuracy testing, we used the Winchester Super X, Fiocchi HV, and CCI Velocitor. The pistol fired the 200 rounds on the target-training-small game course without any problem. Accuracy was good in offhand-fire combat shooting and also when fired from a braced barricade position. All raters enjoyed firing the Victory 22. Accuracy from a solid benchrest position at 25 yards was excellent. The Velocitor load grouped five shots into 1.5 inches, the Winchester into 1.45 inches, and the Fiocchi into 1.35 inches. Considering that it shot the best groups and was very consistent, the Fiocchi loading was also considerably faster than the other loads. At this point, the pistol had given an excellent overall performance for a new design. There are very few handguns we test that a pair of raters could have comfortably fired 200 cartridges so quickly with such good results.

Next, we tested the viability of the Victory with the red dot. Not long ago, a special mount attaching to the receiver was required to mount such a sight, or the shooter could use a mount attaching to the grips, or a rail could be mounted on guns drilled and tapped for a rail, or some other custom solutions. Today, a new generation of pistols allows easier mounting. The Victory isn't exactly red-dot ready, but it is easily made ready. The rail holding the rear sight is removed, and the supplied Picatinny rail is then mounted. It isn't difficult. However, if the rear elevation screw is screwed down into the receiver, it must be screwed out to remove the rear sight. This means the pistol will have to be re-zeroed.

With the Meopta red dot added, the pistol remained lively in hand and fast on target. The pistol was well balanced and handled well. The pistol proved fast on target and useful as an understudy for training for centerfire competitions using the red dot sight. During the test, the pistol never failed to function in firing 500 22 Long Rifle cartridges. Perhaps 100 were fired with the red dot attached, so the weight of the sight did not impede function.

Our Team Said: The pistol gets an A rating as a viable 22-caliber handgun. But as a red-dot-equipped pistol, it was rated a B. This is because of the greater difficulty than the Neos in mounting a red dot. We would not have rated the pistol down a full grade had the Victory been returned to zero after remounting the sights, but this wasn't the case. The Smith & Wesson is a good system, but this grading was based on a comparison to the Neos. Just the same, the Victory is a good 22 pistol, and we think it is a good addition to the Smith & Wesson line.

Colt 22 Conversion Unit 22 LR, $500

The Colt 22 conversion is all over the board in price, depending on condition and vintage. It isn't unusual to see them priced north of one thousand dollars. The price listed is the average for a shooter grade conversion that may not have the original box. The first mark in the

BERETTA NEOS 22 LR, $298

GUN TESTS GRADE: A- (BEST BUY)

The Neos was the most accurate handgun tested and the one that departed most from the conventional. Reliability was faultless. The performance of the handgun is good. It was the easier of the two pistols tested to accept a red-dot sight.



Action	Semi-Auto
Overall Length	10.0 in.
Overall Height	5.1 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	34.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	35.75 oz.
Barrel Length	6.0 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	10-rd. detachable box
Slide	Stainless
Frame	Plastic
Frame Front Strap Height	2.75 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.25 in.
Grips	Plastic
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Sights	Adjustable
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Manual
Warranty	2 years limited
Telephone	(800) 237-3882
Website	BerettaUSA.com
Made In	USA



While the pistol's controls were different, they worked well for all shooters.



The Neos is easily field stripped. A plunger is pressed to release tension on the barrel nut, which is turned clockwise, and the barrel lifts off the frame.



Mounting a red dot was simple with the Beretta. The light rail for mounting optics runs the length of the receiver and barrel. Some felt that the rail was a distraction when using the pistol's iron sights.



Here's the Neos in the shooter's left hand. If you're a righty, then training your non-dominant hand with a rimfire can save money and develop important skills.



Some say the looks of the Neos make it appear like a "space gun," and it is certainly has nonconventional cosmetics. But the basics are also there—good trigger, nice handfit, easy optical-sight mounting.



This is the Victory, being imaged from a downrange unmanned remote camera. Like the others, it offers realistic handling so the shooter can train in likely self-defense scenarios.

notebook against the Colt conversion was the price. This conversion is intended for Colt pistols and will fit and function well on most Series 70 pistols. Series 80 pistols with a firing pin block may require the conversion be modified. This conversion does not affect the trigger action. There is no firing pin block or drop safety.

The conversion unit is well made and well finished. This conversion uses the famous Colt floating chamber. This was developed to allow good function with a steel slide versus the aluminum slide used on some conversions. The floating chamber gives the slide a little kick and ensures function. The Colt conversion is sometimes prone to leading. The floating chamber should be lubricated with STP motor oil. This ensures good function, in our experience. The conversion is mounted on a Colt military frame with the long trigger. The trigger action is 6.0 pounds, even and clean. When firing the Colt 22 conversion unit, recoil was greater than the other handguns by design. The floating chamber is intended to give a little kick to the slide, which not only helps in function with the light 22 Long Rifle cartridge, but also simulates recoil to an extent. It is still 22 recoil, but it is stronger than the other pistols. The conversion was supplied with a single magazine. We were able to fire 400 cartridges in the Colt combination without a single malfunction of any type, but it was slow going loading a single magazine for most of the test. That brings us to the greatest drawback of the Colt 22 conversion. There are three types of magazines we are aware of: Colt, Metalform, and Triple K. We were unable to secure a single spare magazine after looking for more than a week through the usual sources and digging further through specialty suppliers. There were no magazines for sale we could find. While some Colt magazines were listed as high as $90 for shooter grade magazines—and certain areas demand even more—we were unable to find one actually in stock. Instead, we bought a GSG M-1911 22 LR 10-round magazine (GERMM1911, $31 from CheaperThanDirt.com). This magazine may or may not function with your 1911 Colt conversion, but it fit and functioned in our conversion, except when loaded with the slide down. The magazine catch was so tight it could not be actuated. The magazine demands a slap to seat and could only be removed with the slide locked back. Not ideal, but it got us through the final day without a malfunction.

Moving to bench testing, the single magazine was less of a handicap. The 22-caliber conversion was quite accurate at 25 yards, with groups as small as 2.0 inches and an average with the Fiocchi HV load of 2.3 inches. The fitting and well-made barrel added up to excellent accuracy potential. The pistol fired 3 inches high and 3.5 inches right, the latter of which would require drifting the rear sight to fix the windage.

Our Team Said: When considering the 22 conversion and its overall utility, we believe that in this case a shooter would be better served with a separate 22 caliber handgun or a modern SIG or Kimber 22 conversion. The fixed-sight Colt conversion is a great understudy for a fixed sight 45, and the kick of the slide, by design, helps in learning recoil control. The expense of the unit doesn't match its utility, we felt, and the scarceness and expense of the spare magazines are even more discouraging. We rated the pistol down a grade based on expense and another grade based on the spare magazine situation.

Beretta Neos 22 LR, $298

The Beretta Neos has quite a different appearance from the other handguns. It has been called a "space gun." The Beretta features a 6-inch-long barrel. The Neos exhibited the highest velocity and energy of any of the handguns tested—important for small-game hunting—and also the greatest accuracy. The accuracy advantage over the Smith & Wesson was slight, but still evident in test firing.

Despite the radical grip design, the Neos is comfortable, and all raters liked the fit and feel of the Neos. The fit and finish of the handgun are excellent. The trigger breaks cleanly at 4.25 pounds. There was no discernible creep in the Neos trigger, and the break was clean, although

not as light as the Smith & Wesson Victory 22. The Neos was not only the most accurate handgun, it was also the most consistent in accuracy. The Fiocchi load was the fastest of the three and the most accurate in the Neos. The Neos is geared toward top accuracy, and it isn't quite as fast handling as the Smith & Wesson Victory. The pistol sits well in hand, and it is a good firing platform versus a handgun designed for dynamic missions. The sights are top-grade adjustable designs. There is a light rail for mounting optics that runs the length of the receiver and barrel. The raters were divided on this. Some felt that the rail was a distraction when using the pistol's iron sights. In the end, the consensus was that in slow fire, when striving for the greatest accuracy, the pistol's rail did not interfere as much as when firing quickly off hand. In other words, the rail worked as expected for what it was designed to do.

The magazine release is located in front of the right-hand grip panel. It is easily actuated by the forefinger. It is different, but it works well. The slide lock is conventional. Some, but not all, of the raters found manipulating the slide lock to be a challenge from the firing grip. The safety was a more serious concern. The safety is pressed down for on Safe and then up for Fire, which is the opposite of most handguns. When achieving a full firing grip with the safety on, most of the raters felt that the safety bumped into the web of the palm. Although, with the thumb down, this wasn't noticeable, and it depends on the firing grip taken. This would not be a problem for a simple target gun, but we are reviewing the pistols with an eye toward combat-shooting practice. The safety isn't a huge concern, but it is something to be aware of. Field stripping is simple. A plunger is pressed to release tension on the barrel nut, which is turned clockwise, and the barrel lifts off the frame.

The pistol was subjected to the same firing test as the Smith & Wesson Victory. Results were excellent in

TACTICAL SOLUTIONS GLOCK 22 CONVERSION 22 LR, $332

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Tactical Solutions 22 conversion is well made, is very well machined, and is reliable and accurate enough. Spare magazines are available and affordable. A must-buy for Glock owners.

Action	Blowback semi-auto, DAO
Overall Length	8.0 in.
Overall Height	5.1 in.
Maximum Width	1.25 in.
Weight Unloaded	35 oz.
Weight Loaded	37.25 oz.
Barrel Length	4.5 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	15-rd. detachable box
Slide	Blue Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.4 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Grips	None
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in
Grip Circumference (max)	5.9 in.
Sights	Fixed



Trigger Pull Weight	5.8 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.8 in.
Safety	Manual Safety
Warranty	1 year limited
Telephone	(866) 333-9901
Website	Tacticalsol.com
Made In	USA



Both the conversion and the magazine gave faultless performance.



This is the TSG 22 front sight—identical to the Glock pistol with standard sights.



Ditto that on the TSG rear sight. If you have a basic Glock pistol and you want to train with the equivalent of your stock sights, this is helpful.



TSG magazines are affordable and available, in contrast to the short supply of Colt mags.

VALUE GUIDE: 22 LR SEMI-AUTO PISTOL & CONVERSION RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Ruger 22 Charger Pistol 4917 22 LR, $309	Oct. 2015	A	Ruger definitely did a good job enhancing the new 22 Charger with more features.
Magnum Research Picuda MLP-1722 22 LR, $600 (used)	Oct. 2015	A-	The Picuda was well made, offered superb accuracy, and had great balance. Hard to find.
Mossberg 715P Autoloading Pistol 37235 22 LR, $308	Oct. 2015	B-	The 715P is a fun-to-shoot plinker, but the magazine release was a two-hand operation.
Ruger 22/45 Lite 3908 22 LR, $515	May 2015	A	Its 1911-like grip makes it essentially the same size as big 45s.
High Standard Supermatic Citation 10X 22 LR, $1275	June 2014	A	Easy to maintain, the 10X had a slight edge over the Model 41.
Smith & Wesson Model 41 22 LR, $1000	June 2014	A	The Model 41 is an excellent pistol and was better for those familiar with modern defense pistols.
Ruger 22/45 Lite No. 03900 P45MK3ALRPFL 22 LR, $499	Feb. 2014	A-	We liked the suppressor-mounting system. Fun to shoot.
Smith & Wesson Model M&P22 122000 22 LR, $419	Feb. 2014	B+	If you've got an M&P centerfire pistol and want a rimfire trainer, then buy this one.
Walther Arms P22Q QAP22522 Tactical Pistol 22 LR, $440	Feb. 2014	C	It was small, handy, and fun to shoot. It just malfunctioned too much.
Colt Walther Umarex 1911 Gold Cup Trophy 2245708 22 LR, $455	May 2012	A-	It shot the best groups, showed no malfunctions, was easy to adjust the sights on.
Browning 1911-22A1 051802490 22 LR, $509	May 2012	C	The downsized Browning is an interesting concept with substantial execution problems.
ATI/GSG M1911 GERG2210M1911B 22 LR, $365	May 2012	D	We fed the GSG a range of ammo, and it malfunctioned with everything we tried.
Walther P22 WAP22003 22 LR, $375	May 2010	A	If you are current Walther owner, the P22 might serve well as a lower-cost practice gun.
ISSC M22 M111000 22 LR, $400	May 2010	B	Any gun can have a preference for certain ammo, but we felt the M22 was too fussy.
SIG Sauer Mosquito MOS-22-B 22 LR, $390	May 2010	F	We had to cancel the full regimen of testing for the Mosquito due to safety concerns.
CZ Kadet Adapter No. 01610 22 LR, $412	Feb. 2010	A	We'd highly recommend the Kadet to owners of the CZ handguns that accept it.
Kimber Rimfire Target Conversion Kit (Silver) 22 LR, $330	Feb. 2010	A	Any owner of a single-stack could put the Kimber Target Conversion to good use.

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.



The Meopta red dot offers accuracy-enhancing benefits on the pistols that accept it.

offhand fire. We feel that the slightly longer barrel had something to do with this, but the Neos handled and fired with accuracy. In firing for bench rest accuracy, the pistol was incrementally more accurate than the Smith & Wesson Victory, but not by a great enough margin to declare a resounding showing. It was more accurate, however, with three out of three of the loads tested.

The red dot sight was easily mounted. Simply slip it into the rail and tighten it. And when it is removed, the sights remain zeroed, as they have not been moved. It is easy to quickly sight the red dot in and begin using. The Victory Model isn't a bad system for red dot use, and it eliminates the interference of the rails in the offhand sight picture. There is also a fiber optic component. For combat training, the Victory sights are better, but most raters liked the Neos system better for absolute accuracy. The accuracy of the pistol is excellent.

Our Team Said: We had no malfunctions of any type. The Neos costs less than the Victory, and it is easier to mount a red dot. Accuracy, velocity, and energy are better. We liked the safety location, but not the operation. We rated the Neos down a half grade based on the safety, but the pistol otherwise earned a Best Buy notation.

Tactical Solutions Glock 22 Conversion 22 LR, $333

The final price of the conversion and a spare magazine was more than that of either of the 22-caliber handguns tested. The Tactical Solutions conversion unit is an upper end—barrel, slide, and recoil spring assembly—for the Glock pistol. Since this is a caliber-for-caliber conversion, the ejector is also designed into the unit. This steel slide conversion is well made and shows good fit and finish. The slide fit the Glock Model 22 frame as designed. The sights are identical to Glock factory sights with the same white outline.

The sights may be changed for night sights or any other type as desired with any sight designed for the Glock handgun. The Tactical Solutions conversion unit is supplied with a single magazine. We ordered a spare magazine from Brownells.com for $28. The Tactical Solutions 22-caliber conversion requires lubricant in three places unlike the Glock pistol, which requires a single drop of oil. Keeping the conversion properly lubricated will result in good function. Documents for the conversion recommend using CCI Blazer and CCI Mini Mag. We had neither on hand. The conversion worked well with the same ammunition as the other pistols fired.

The determining factor with the trigger action is the frame the Tactical Solutions conversion is fitted to. As an example, the Glock 22 receiver we used demonstrated a 5.5-pound trigger action. However, the force needed to reliably crack rimfire primers is greater than that needed to crack off centerfire primers. So, the striker may require more force. The trigger action with the Tactical Solutions conversion parts in place broke at 5.8 pounds.

Reliability was faultless when firing the pistol. We fired the same 400 cartridges in the Tactical Solutions conversion as we had fired in the other handguns. We stopped before benchrest accuracy testing and cleaned the pistols. They required no further attention. It is unusual to fire 1,600 rimfire cartridges without a single feed malfunction or failure to fire. The heel-based 22 Long Rifle bullets sometimes get bent off the center line in feeding, and rimfire priming simply isn't as reliable as centerfire priming. This was the greatest amount of 22 LR ammunition that the raters can recall testing without a single feed or ignition problem and is something of a Gun Tests record.

When testing the Glock conversion unit, we used a TruGlo TruLite combination combat light and red laser. ($75, Glockmeister.com) This combination features a red laser and a bright combat light. Settings allow the use of the light, the laser, or both. This combination is often used on an individual rater's personal defense handgun, the Glock Model 22 40 S&W, so it seemed wise to test it with the 22 conversion unit.

The conversion unit proved a viable training resource for the Glock pistol. With the same frame and trigger action, the feel of the unit was identical to the original configuration. The light was mounted during the combat shooting phase. We like this utility. The raters are sometimes split over whether a separate 22 pistol should be chosen over a conversion unit. After all, with a 22 pistol, you have two handguns rather than a single firearm. In this case, we feel that Glock pistol owners are better served for training purposes with this conversion of the centerfire pistol that with a separate 22-caliber handgun.

Our Team Said: The Tactical Solutions conversion unit is an excellent option, we felt. Glock shooters will find it especially viable, and the use of the pistol with a laser gives good utility in training to use the trigger action.

Combat accuracy was good. The shooters were careful not to go too fast and outpace the results possible with the centerfire unit, as this isn't a good training decision. Fired for bench-rest accuracy, the Tactical Solutions conversion was the least accurate unit tested. However, even the worst average of a 3.0-inch group at 25 yards was viable for training.

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

Good Buys, or Goodbyes? We Test 'Experienced' Wheelguns

The 357 Magnum cartridge is one of the best rounds ever designed—if it's launched from a reliable, accurate platform. We test three veteran products to see if they're worth your money.

Before law enforcement changed over to semi-automatic pistols, most officers carried a 357 Magnum revolver. Though some write off revolvers as the firearms equivalent of rotary phones, many of our staff consider the revolver to be a simple-to-operate self-defense firearm with built-in safeties and no magazine to lose. We also like the 357 Magnum cartridge. In addition to self-defense use, some team members have used the round to hunt medium-size game, so power isn't an issue.

Because a good revolver stands the test of time and usage well, but also depreciates enough to become affordable for more folks, we assembled three used revolvers from what was once the big three of U.S. revolver manufacturers—Colt, Smith & Wesson and Ruger. In general, we would rate the condition of these revolvers from 80 to 90 percent by NRA standards—we could tell they have been used, but we could not see where they had been abused. All samples were chambered in 357 Magnum, and all were designed for self-defense with barrel lengths that ranged from 2.15 inches to 4 inches and double-action/single-action trigger modes. Safeties are built into these three revolvers. The S&W uses a hammer stop, while the Ruger and Colt use hammer transfer bars.

From that starting point, this pack then diverged, with each offering characteristics that ranged from thumbs-down to thumbs-up for our shooters. Some incorporated an excellent grip that helped tame the felt recoil of the 357 Magnum; some were slim and more easily carried concealed, and some were equipped with large, easy-to-align sights.

With any used revolvers, we have a process of testing the chamber-barrel alignment with a range rod, and we found all were aligned. We also check the timing to see how the cylinder rotates in DA mode and SA mode to ensure the chamber is aligned with the bore of the barrel. They were. We also look at the gap between the front of the cylinder and the forcing cone or rear of the barrel. We use a feeler gauge and expect to have .006 clearance. Any less and there is a chance the cylinder may bind after shooting as fouling builds up. Any more and the user might experience splatter from burning gases escaping from the gap. We also look for forward and rearward play in the cylinder when locked in the frame. These revolvers were tight and stood as good examples of the revolver manufacturers' art and science.

We tested accuracy at 25 yards, which pushed the envelope of these revolvers' capabilities, depending on the user. We also found these revolvers had good accuracy. In close-range testing, some of these revolvers



The Ruger Security Six (top) had good accuracy due to the larger sights, which, unfortunately, also made it bulky. The Colt Lawman Mk III (middle) was large and had a very heavy trigger and small sights. The Smith & Wesson Model 649 (bottom) offered an excellent compromise of concealed carry-appropriate size, good enough sights, suitable round capacity, and recoil management. We would opt for the Smith & Wesson over the others and would also consider buying it as a new gun, if we wanted to pay more.



From top are the Ruger Security Six, the Colt Lawman Mk III, and the Smith & Wesson Model 649. In this image, the difference in the size of the grips is obvious. In our opinion, the S&W's grip was a good compromise of a size suitable for concealed carry while still offering full control of powerful 357 Magnum loads.

could get lead downrange fast and in good groups. Test ammunition consisted of Winchester PDX1 Defender 357 Magnum with a 125-grain bonded jacket hollowpoint, Aguila 357 Magnum with a 158-grain semi-jacketed hollowpoint, and SIG Sauer 38 Special +P, loaded with a 125-grain jacketed hollowpoint.

We had no issues with any of the revolvers. They all performed in DA and SA mode and loaded and ejected empties if we did our part and used gravity to our advantage. We did find that the S&W had the advantage as a concealed-carry revolver, but the Ruger and Colt were quite capable. Here's what we found out about these handguns after the brass cooled.

Smith & Wesson Model 649 357 Magnum, $500-$525

The Model 649 is built on a J frame, which limited this 357 Magnum to a five-round capacity. The model is a variation of the Model 49 Bodyguard and is still currently produced. There is a reason for its longevity.

The finish was bright stainless, and even with the 2.125-inch barrel, the 649 had some heft. If it were lighter, no doubt the revolver would have battered our palms. In our opinion, the Model 649 offered a good compromise on size, round capacity, sights, weight, and bulk. The barrel had a full underlug that shrouded the ejector rod. The hammer was shrouded, so there was no hammer spur to snag on clothing during a draw, but the knurled hammer still allowed the revolver to be cocked and fired in single-action mode. The 649 had, by far, the best double-action and single-action trigger strokes of the three revolvers tested. The sights were small, like on the Colt, but had better contrast. The front-blade sight was blued steel and pinned and could be replaced to match a certain load. We like this feature. The rear sight was a groove in the top strap of the bright stainless steel frame and offered good contrast compared to the Colt.

The grip was made of rubber with finger grooves, and felt thin, which

SMITH & WESSON M649 357 MAGNUM, $500-$530

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The 649 was lightweight, thin, and concealable. It offered the ability of single-action or double-action operation in a snag-free exterior. Even with 357 Magnum loads, recoil was tolerable.



Action Type	Double Action
Overall Length	6.6 in.
Barrel Length	2.125 in.
Sight Radius	3.8 in.
Overall Height	4.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	22.2 oz.
Weight Loaded	26.3 oz.
Cylinder Gap	.008
Capacity	5
Frame Finish	Bright stainless
Barrel/Cylinder Finish	Bright stainless
Frame Front Strap Height	2.2 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.5 in.
Grip	Checkered rubber/finger grooves
Grip Thickness (max)	1.0 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.7 in.
Front Sight	Ramped pinned blade
Rear Sight	Fixed groove
Trigger Pull Weight (DA)	13 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (SA)	3.3 lbs.
Safety	Internal hammer block
Warranty	Limited warranty
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	USA



The hole in the end of the ejector rod aligned with a pin in the ejector rod shroud that locks the front of the cylinder.



The grip of the 649 was thin and long, which allowed the shooter to get a firm hold on the handgun.



The contrast between the black front blade and rear groove in the bright stainless offered good contrast.



As shown, the J-frame Model 649 holds only five rounds of 357 Magnum. Though we tested a used gun, this model is still currently produced and has a list price of $729. There is a reason for its longevity.

made it easier to conceal but also inflicted more felt recoil, although it was tolerable with 357 Magnum loads in our test.

At 25 yards while shooting off a bench, the S&W was slightly easier to shoot than the Mk III, even with the smaller sights and smaller grip. We attribute this to the better trigger. The S&W had the best trigger, with no stacking and a smooth, consistent DA pull. The SA pull was light and crisp. We also liked the snag-free exterior of the 649. This revolver could be drawn from a pocket smoothly, unlike the Ruger and Colt. It was also thinner, so it was the easiest of the trio to carry in an IWB holster. The thinner grip also helped concealability. Felt recoil was the most severe with the S&W compared to the other revolvers, shooters said.

Our Team Said: The 649 was the best compromise of concealability, shoot-ability, and firepower. The trigger was superior, and there were aftermarket grips available if owners want to change out the grip. As we mentioned above, the Model 649 is still being offered as a new product (163210), so if you don't like buying used, then spend more and buy it new.

Ruger Security Six 357 Magnum, $400-500

The Security Six model was produced by Ruger from 1970 to 1985 and was known as a ruggedly built revolver. Ruger revolvers are designed to be field stripped into a few components, unlike the S&W and Colt. To access the action mechanism with the S&W and Colt, tools and patience are needed. The ability to be field-stripped was what helped separate Ruger revolvers from the others. In our opinion, the ability to field strip the Ruger is a positive trait, though most S&W and Colt revolvers do not need to be disassembled for a normal cleaning.

There is nothing slim or trim about the Ruger, and that heft did translate into less felt recoil. The grip size was between the larger Colt and smaller S&W. The area behind the trigger guard looked like it would jam up our fingers in recoil, but we found the

COLT LAWMAN MK III 357 MAGNUM, $450-$525

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Lawman is a full-size revolver, so it was less concealable. It offered pleasant recoil as a result, However, the double-action trigger pull was too heavy, and the sights were too small.



Action Type	DA/ SA
Overall Length	9.3 in.
Barrel Length	4.0 in.
Sight Radius	5.2 in.
Overall Height	5.3 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	32.4 oz.
Weight Loaded	32.8 oz.

Cylinder Gap	.003
Capacity	6
Frame Finish	Blue
Barrel/Cylinder Finish	Blue
Frame Front Strap Height	2.2 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.0 in.
Grip	Checkered wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.5 in.
Front Sight	Ramped blade
Rear Sight	Fixed groove
Trigger Pull Weight (DA)	15 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (SA)	5.3 lbs.
Safety	Internal transfer bar
Warranty	N/A
Telephone	(800) 962-2658
Website	Colt.com
Made In	USA

The cylinder face was inset so the cartridge sits flush. Our shooters found that cartridges dropped easily into the chambers, and ejecting empties was effortless.



The sight picture was small and offered what we gauged was only an adequate sight picture.



The former owner bobbed the hammer to make the Colt more concealed-carry friendly.



VALUE GUIDE: REVOLVER RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Smith & Wesson Military and Police 38 Special, $300	Feb. 2017	A	Best Buy. Large enough to soak up the recoil of +P loads, but light enough for fast handling.
Ruger SP101 5718 KSP321X 357 Magnum, $450	Feb. 2017	B	Good as a combination of carry and home defense. For those with small hands, a very good choice.
Smith & Wesson Model 19 357 Magnum, ~$500	Feb. 2017	C	A specialist's handgun, and one most of us will find too expensive for the performance delivered.
Taurus Public Defender Polymer M4510PLYFS 410/45 LC, $514	Oct. 2016	A-	The Public Defender offers versatility along with good accuracy.
Charter Arms Bulldog Classic Model 34431 44 Special, $436	Oct. 2016	B-	The Bulldog had good accuracy for such a small revolver. The wood grip fit was loose.
Charter Arms Pitbull Model 64520 45 ACP, $509	Oct. 2016	D	The Pitbull had a good finish and functioned as expected, but the barrel was not fully seated.
Charter Arms Off Duty 3811 38 Special, $404	June 2016	A-	The Off Duty started off with a gritty trigger but soon slicked up.
Rossi Model R35102 38 Special +P, $390	June 2016	B	Best trigger and the most comfortable and largest grip. Spurred hammer could get hung up.
Rock Island Armory Model 206 51289 38 Special, $320	June 2016	B-	The Model 206 gave good accuracy for a DAO revolver; the grip was dated.
Ruger LCR Model 5456 9mm Luger, $532	March 2016	A-	Buttery-smooth trigger. Grip design stands out from traditional snub-nose revolvers. Light weight.
Taurus 905 Model 905SS2 9mm Luger, $528	March 2016	B	The 905 was faster to reload than a traditional 38 Special and performed well.
Smith & Wesson Model 325PD 45 ACP, $700-$925	July 2015	B-	The 325PD makes sense if you need a hideout revolver chambered in 45 ACP.
Smith & Wesson PC M625-10 45 ACP, $1200-$1400	July 2015	F	A cracked frame forced us to eliminate it from consideration for safety reasons.
Smith & Wesson PC M627 170133 357 Magnum, $1079	April 2015	A	Well-made, nice-shooting revolver. Ball-detent lock up, chamfered chambers, excellent sights.
S&W Model 686 357 Magnum, $600-$850 (Used)	April 2015	A	Well-designed six-shot revolver. Testers liked the slender 686 even though it had less capacity.
S&W Performance Center M327 170245 357 Mag, $1309	April 2015	B	Needed a different grip to be concealed carried. Short ejector rod hindered fast reloads.
FN Barracuda 357 Magnum 3-inch, $450-$750 (Used)	March 2015	B+	On the edge of "snubbie." Would have moved up a grade if the 9mm cylinder had been included.

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.

VALUE GUIDE: REVOLVER RANKINGS CONTINUED

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Smith & Wesson PC M629-8 44 Magnum, $900-$1000	Nov. 2014	A	Ported 3-inch barrel, compact grip made this a concealable N-frame our testers really liked.
S&W M329PD Alaska Backpacker IV150545 44 Mag, $750-$900	Nov. 2014	B	Most pleasant of the 44 Magnums to shoot; nice compromise of weight and firepower.
Smith & Wesson PC M657-5 41 Magnum, $750-$850	Nov. 2014	B	A snappy shooter in 41 Magnum, its 2.6-inch barrel showed less recoil than the 44 Magnums.
Smith & Wesson M60 #178013 3-in. Barrel 357 Magnum, $799	Sept. 2014	A	Light and thin but packs plenty of power. Adjustable night sights are helpful for carry.
Ruger SP101 Model #5718 357 Magnum, $659	Sept. 2014	A	Traditional snubnose. Felt solid in hand, wore a glare-free finish, was snag-free and accurate.
Ruger SP101 #5759 (3-in. barrel) 327 Federal Magnum, $600-$800	Sept. 2014	A-	Added capacity and adjustable rear sight. Limited ammo availability must be a concern.
Ruger LCR No. 5401 38 Special +P, $529	Nov. 2013	A-	Polymer skin is a leap from a traditional DAO. Trigger was smooth and easy to use. Recoil was nil.
Smith & Wesson M42 150502 38 Special +P, $700	Nov. 2013	B-	Difficult for many shooters to shoot well. Easy to hide, though.
Smith & Wesson Model 638 Airweight 163070 38 Sp., $459	March 2013	A-	Smaller, narrower grip, but a good choice as a backup due to light weight and small size.
Charter Arms Pitbull 9mm No. 79920 9mm Luger, $465	March 2013	A-	Largest of the revolvers in the test and most accurate. Operates without moon clips.
Smith & Wesson 940 9mm Luger, $595 to $671	March 2013	C+	Doesn't offer single-action firing. Required moon clips to eject the rimless 9mm Luger rounds.
Charter Arms Police Undercover No. 73840 38 Special, $402	March 2013	D	Almost a copy of the Pitbull, so the Undercover felt good. Had no grooves in the barrel, however.
Chiappa Rhino No. 200DS 357 Magnum, $800	Dec. 2012	C+	Suffered three failures to fire. Lacks a true rear sight, so we struggled getting shots on target.
Charter Arms Bulldog 14420 2.5-in. 44 Special, $414	July 2012	A-	Tight lockup, slim grip. Flat-black finish. We'd like even smaller grips for concealment.
Taurus Ultra-Lite M445B2UL 2.0-in. 44 Special, $508	July 2012	B+	Looks great. Comfortable to shoot with the hottest loads. Basically a small handgun with huge grips.
Smith & Wesson Governor 45 ACP/45 LC/410/2.5 in., $679	Aug. 2011	A-	Probably the biggest "snub-nose" handgun ever with a 2.5-inch barrel.
Taurus Judge 4510TKR-3BUL 3-In. 45 LC/410-Bore, $620	Aug. 2011	B+	Serious use of .410-bore shotshells is the main reason for this design.

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.

RUGER SECURITY SIX 357 MAGNUM, $430-$450

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

The Security Six had good accuracy with user-friendly sights; recoil was mild due to its bulk, which also made it less suitable as a concealed-carry choice.



Action Type	DA/SA
Overall Length	7.8 in.
Barrel Length	2.7 in.
Sight Radius	4.7 in.
Overall Height	4.8 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	32.2 oz.
Weight Loaded	27.12 oz.
Cylinder Gap	.003

Capacity	6
Frame Finish	Blue
Barrel/Cylinder Finish	Blue
Frame Front Strap Height	2.2 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.7 in.
Grip	Checkered wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.4 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.6 in.
Front Sight	Ramped pinned, red insert blade
Rear Sight	Adjustable
Trigger Pull Weight (DA)	12 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (SA)	4.4 lbs.
Safety	Internal transfer bar
Warranty	None written
Telephone	(928) 541-8892
Website	Ruger.com
Made In	USA



The Ruger has large sights that made aiming easier, but they also made the revolver bulky in terms of overall height.



Though the grip was smaller, recoil was still manageable. We liked shooting the Ruger.



The rear of cylinder is not inset like the Colt; empties ejected freely using gravity.

revolver pleasant to shoot. It had a blued finish and mostly smooth wood grips. The grip had a palm swell and felt very comfortable in the hand.

The Security Six was equipped with large sights. Sight acquisition was simple, and it showed in our accuracy testing, with 5-shot groups averaging about 1.6 inches. The front sight is pinned so the blade could be replaced, depending on the load you choose. The blade also had a red insert—the predecessor to fiber optics—which made the front blade easier to pick up on a dark target. Not as helpful as a fiber optic, but better than plain black. The rear sight is adjustable, but we found no need to adjust it. It shot dead on out to 25 yards.

All three revolvers use a different method to open the cylinder. The Ruger uses a latch that is squeezed; the S&W latch is pushed, and the Colt's is pulled. We could work all latch systems with confidence and speed, though most liked the S&W latch the best. The ejector rod of the Security Six is enclosed in a shroud under the barrel, which can make re-holstering the revolver easier. A pin in the ejector shroud snaps into the front of the ejector rod. We liked the six-round capacity.

The DA trigger was smooth and felt lighter than the 12 pounds it measured. We liked this trigger almost as much as the S&W's.

At 25 yards on top of a rest, the Security Six produced 5-shot groups that averaged 1.6 inches. It liked the Aguila with the 158-grain bullet the best. Our best group averaged 0.8 inches—not bad for a snubnose revolver. On the downside was its bulk. It was taller and heavier than the S&W, but smaller than the Colt. Wearing the Security Six in an IWB holster means buying pants a size larger to accommodate it.

Our Team Said: Several traits made the Security Six worth a look: Six shots, the heft to handle the recoil of 357 Magnum loads, and large sights, which offered a good sight picture. But the Ruger was not concealed-carry friendly—there were lots of sharp edges to snag on clothing. Even so, we would

RANGE DATA

SIG Sauer 38 Special +P 125-gr. JHP	Ruger Security Six	Colt Lawman Mk III	Smith & Wesson Model 649
Average Velocity	920 fps	936 fps	910 fps
Muzzle Energy	235 ft.-lbs.	243 ft.-lbs.	230 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.0 in.	1.4 in.	0.9 in.
Average Group	1.5 in.	2.0 in.	2.4 in.

Aguila 357 Magnum 158-gr. SJHP	Ruger Security Six	Colt Lawman Mk III	Smith & Wesson Model 649
Average Velocity	1155 fps	1208 fps	1107 fps
Muzzle Energy	468 ft.-lbs.	512 ft.-lbs.	430 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.8 in.	1.5 in.	1.6 in.
Average Group	1.4 in.	2.2 in.	2.3 in.

Winchester 357 Magnum PDX1 Defender 125-gr. JHP	Ruger Security Six	Colt Lawman Mk III	Smith & Wesson Model 649
Average Velocity	1136 fps	1118 fps	1082 fps
Muzzle Energy	358 ft.-lbs.	347 ft.-lbs.	325 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.1 in.	1.9 in.	1.8 in.
Average Group	1.6 in.	2.4 in.	2.3 in.

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

not hesitate to keep the Security Six in the nightstand drawer or carry it where open-carry is legal.

Colt Lawman Mk III 357 Magnum, $470-$525

The Lawman Mk III was produced from 1969 and 1983 and evolved from Colt's Trooper model. The Colt, like the Ruger and S&W, used a coiled main spring. We noticed stacking on the Colt. On the Smith & Wesson 649, we noticed none of that, and on the Ruger, only a very slight amount.

In fact, the trigger was the downfall of the Lawman. It was too heavy, near 15 pounds in double action, and the single-action trigger movement required more than 5 pounds of pull. Not a good trait for accurate shooting.

This example was modified by a previous owner, who bobbed the hammer. We would have a new hammer with a spur installed so we could easily fire the revolver in SA. We still tested for accuracy in SA mode, though the hammer needed to be pulled rearward by our support-hand thumb. The revolver had a nice blue job, though it was worn from use at the sharp edges and muzzle. The large wood grips were checkered and filled a user's hand to comfortably distribute the felt recoil. The Colt was much larger than the Ruger and S&W and heavier as well, but the Lawman had fewer sharp edges than the Ruger. Part of that was due to the smaller sights on the Lawman. The front sight was fixed to the barrel, and rear sight consisted of a groove in the top strap. The ejector rod was also not fitted into a barrel shroud, but in fact was milled under the barrel to reduce the space between the top of the ejector rod and the bottom of the barrel. The Colt looked old school for sure. Like the Ruger, the Colt has a six-round capacity.

At 25 yards on top of a rest, the Lawman Mk III produced 5-shot groups that averaged 2.4 inches. It was pretty consistent with all ammo tested. Since the sights were smaller, they were less effective. The sights were also black on black, and on a dark background, the sights were lost to some users. Ejecting empties was effortless. Cartridges dropped easily into the chambers. The serrated trigger had a very heavy DA pull of about 15 pounds with stacking. We did not like it. In SA mode, the pull was over 5 pounds. Clearly, the Lawman needed a better trigger. If we owned this revolver, we'd send it back to Colt to install a new hammer with a spur and lighten the trigger pull.

Most found the Lawman revolver was easier to conceal carry in an IWB holster, though the large grip printed pretty obviously, depending on the concealing garment.

Our Team Said: There was less to like about the Lawman Mk III. The fuller grip made shooting pleasant, but it was a liability in concealed carry. The Colt performed, but it was harder to shoot it well due to the small sights and heavy trigger pull.

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**

22 LR Bolt-Action Rifles: We Test CZ, Savage, and Marlin

When we looked at four bolt-action rimfires starting in price from just over $200, we found much to like. Our pick: The Savage Mark II BTV, but our team also chose the CZ 455 as a Best Buy.

The 22-caliber rimfire bolt-action rifle owns a warm sport in the heart of many shooters because they were often the first rifle that many of us fired. Many pleasant hours are spent with such a rifle. The experience unites shooters across a spectrum of lifestyles. But in the present, the bolt rimfire can also be an economical, accurate, and reliable firearm for plinking, small-game hunting, and informal target practice. The bolt action rifle has a reputation for superior accuracy over the self-loader, and, overall, our testing proves this out. In this report, we test a quartet of entry-level and higher-end rifles to see what it takes to get our money's worth, however that is defined. Our test guns this round included:

- the Savage Mark II F 26700, $231;
- the CZ-USA CZ 455 American 02110, $400;
- the Marlin XT 22RZ 70763, $220; and
- the Savage Mark II BTV 28750, $390.

Accuracy testing was conducted with three loads. Winchester's M22 loading came from SportsmansGuide.com ($75/1000); MidwayUSA.com supplied the CCI Velocitor ($7.40/50); and Fiocchi's HV rounds ($6.50/50) originated from Bulkammo.com. We also conducted side tests with low-velocity subsonic loads, including the CCI Segmented load. For offhand shooting, we used Winchester M22 rounds to gauge the rifles' smoothness and handling in firing at targets at known and unknown ranges.

There were no defects that made any rifle less desirable, when the price points were considered. The two inexpensive rifles gave a credible performance. For small-game hunting at treetop height and out to 25 yards, there would be little reason to spend a lot. In fact, you'd have to go out to 50 yards to see the Savage BTV was the most accurate rifle. In more detail, here's what we thought about each rifle:



The CZ 455 (being fired) was the most accurate rifle with a conventional stock, but it was shaded in accuracy by a small but noticeable amount by the Savage Mark II BTV. We gave the Marlin high marks as an economical suppressor-ready rifle. The Savage Mark II F economy rifle is an okay performer that supplies open sights the others lacked. But when scoped, it acquitted itself well at the shooting range, we found.



Above, top to bottom, are the CZ-USA CZ 455 American, Marlin XT 22RZ, Savage Mark II BTV with thumbhole stock, and the Savage Mark II F, which comes with open sights the others lacked.

CZ-USA CZ 455 American 02110 22 LR, $400

The CZ 455 is the latest generation of the CZ bolt-action rimfire. The 455 model will eventually consolidate all of the receivers currently used in the 452 line into one common platform. This, combined with the new interchangeable barrel system of the CZ 455, will allow the user to easily change the stock configuration

as well as the caliber of the rifle. The 455 retains the accuracy and quality of the adjustable trigger, hammer forged barrel, and billet-machined receiver from the CZ 452.

Also worth noting is the CZ 455 American Combo Package is now available. The package features the new CZ 455 in 22 LR and a 17 HMR barrel, along with everything you need to make the caliber change. The CZ 455 eliminates the need to spend the extra expense on a second rifle when you want to add another quality shooter to your rimfire battery.

The CZ 455 is a traditional rifle in styling, with a well-figured wood stock mated to a nicely finished receiver and barrel. The wood stock showed excellent figure and was chosen from a number of rifles on the rack. While the figure and appearance did not enhance accuracy, pride of ownership was enhanced. The stock configuration represents a true adult-sized 22-caliber rifle. The action is smooth and very short and was arguably the smoothest action tested. Fit, finish, and final polish of the metal parts were all topnotch. The barrel channel and stock inletting are excellent. The polished bolt features dual extractors. There is no problem with scope clearance.

The rifle was fitted with a Vanguard 3-9x40mm riflescope, the same scope used in several other Gun Tests rimfire articles (Vanguard RS 41240 BDC, $360 from OpticsPlanet.com.) This is an expensive scope, perhaps, compared to the rifle, but it always gives good results. The 455 models feature an integral 11mm dovetail for scope mounting and a 5-round magazine.

With the action separated from the stock, you may adjust the trigger-action pull weight. The bolt cannot be operated when the safety is on. The trigger action was smooth enough as delivered at 3.5 pounds; we adjusted the action to 2.5 pounds for the test. The safety is mounted on the bolt shroud. The operation is opposite from the other rifles, with Safe being forward. This simply demanded attention to detail. We are more used

CZ-USA CZ 455 AMERICAN 02110 22 LR, $400

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (BEST BUY)

The CZ 455 exhibits European quality. It is also a rifle that features a distinctly American appearance, which was the intent. The rifle has great appeal for its fit, function, accuracy, and smooth operation. The CZ 455 is our pick as the best all-round, go-anywhere, do-anything bolt-action rifle. It is noticeably more accurate than the inexpensive rifles tested, and was bested by the Savage BTV by the slightest margin. But the stock configuration and handling of the CZ 455 make it the more practical rifle.



Overall Length	38.2 in.
Barrel Length	20.5 in.; 1:16 twist
Overall Height w/Scope	5.0 in.
Length of Pull	13.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	5.9 lbs.
Weight Loaded	6.1 lbs.
Weight Scoped	7.1 lbs.
Magazine Capacity	5; 10 rounds optional
Action Finish	Black

Action	Bolt; integrated 11mm dovetail on top of receiver
Barrel	Cold Hammer Forged Steel; Black Finish
Stock	Turkish walnut
Trigger Pull Weight	2.5 lbs. (adjustable)
Warranty	1 year
Telephone	(800) 955-4486
Website	CZ-USA.com
Made In	Czech Republic



The CZ 455 features a well-finished stock of Turkish walnut. Fitting is excellent.



The CZ455 was topped with a Vanguard scope. Results were good with this optic.



The safety (arrow) is mounted on the bolt shroud. The operation is opposite from the other rifles, with Safe being forward.

MARLIN XT 22RZ 22 LR $220
GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Marlin is delivered without sights. It has the advantage of a barrel threaded for suppressor use. The Marlin is accurate for the price, more accurate than the economy grade Savage rifle, but not as accurate as the two more expensive rifles tested. The Marlin is a credible rifle.



Action	Bolt; receiver drilled and tapped	Metal Finish	Blued
Overall Length	41.0 in.	Magazine Type	Detachable box
Barrel	22.0 in. long; Micro-Groove rifling, 1:16 twist; ½x28 muzzle thread, with cap	Stock	Black synthetic w/palm swell; molded-in swivels; stippled grip areas
Overall Height w/Scope	4.8 in	Trigger Pull Weight	2.9 lbs.; Pro-Fire adjustable
Length of Pull	13.5 in.	Safety	Thumb lever, right rear receiver
Weight Unloaded	6.5 lbs	Warranty	5-year limited
Weight Loaded	6.6 lbs.	Telephone	(844) 700-0870
Weight Scoped	7.8 lbs.	Website	MarlinFirearms.com.
Capacity	7+1	Made In	USA



The cocking bolt shows a red ring (arrow) when the rifle is cocked and ready to fire. The safety is mounted on the receiver and operates in the same manner as the Savage, forward for Fire and to the rear for Safe.



The Marlin trigger allowed us to set it for a 2.5-pound let off. The rifle is marked to chamber 22 LR only, so of course we tested the rifle with 22 Short cartridges and found they would not feed.



The grip area had texturing that provided a sure grip on the rifle.



The XT comes with a threaded barrel, which gives it a big leg up if you plan to add a suppressor. This is a smart feature to add.

to the American standard of Safe to the rear and Fire forward.

We ordered several 10-round polymer magazines ($32 from Brownells.com) to make the test go faster. During firing tests, the rifle exhibited excellent balance for most shooters. The rifle was smoother than the others in offhand fire and delivered hits on call. In the strictest mechanical sense, the Savage BTV is more accurate. The CZ 455 is just as accurate in offhand fire and was a bit easier to use well and was faster with follow-up shoots due to the traditional stock design. When fired off the bench rest, the CZ455 demonstrated excellent accuracy. The rifle is more than accurate enough for small-game hunting and target practice. While the Savage MK II BTV was slightly better in the accuracy department, the difference was small.

Our Team Said: In the end, we liked the CZ-USA 455 American rifle a lot. It is accurate, smooth in operation, and offers good appearance. For most shooters, this will be the rifle to buy.

Marlin XT 22RZ 70763
22 LR, $220

This was our price from GanderMountain.com. The Marlin rifle is similar in appearance to the Savage. The Marlin isn't supplied with sights. There is an advantage in the Marlin's threaded barrel, so if you are planning on adding a sound suppressor, this rifle is about as affordable a choice as you can find the feature. At an average price of $240 across several retailers, if you are going to use a suppressor, this is the better buy than the Savage. If not, and you want to use a rifle with iron sights and not ante up to add a scope, the Savage would have more appeal, in our estimation.

Looking closely at the rifle, the Marlin's stock has molded in, rather than removable, sling swivels. They will always be there, and they won't rust or snag as much as metal swivel attachments. We found the fit to be good. The magazine holds seven rounds, two more than the Savage

SAVAGE MARK II BTV 28750 22 LR, $390

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Savage BTV is a racy-looking rifle. The action is rock solid and proved smooth in operation. We like the safety and the adjustable trigger. The stock was surprisingly comfortable and was an aid in getting accurate fire off the bench. The Savage MKII BTV is the most accurate rifle tested. The only downside is the thumbhole stock, which in offhand fire, limited fast follow-up shots.



Action	Bolt	Capacity	5+1
Overall Length	39.75	Metal Finish	Satin Blued
Barrel	21.0 in. long; carbon steel; 1:16 twist	Magazine type	Detachable box
		Stock	Wood laminate, right-handed
		Trigger Pull Weight	2.5 lbs.; adjustable Accu-Trigger
Overall Height w/Scope	4.8 in.		
Length of Pull	13.0 in.	Warranty	1 year
Weight Unloaded	6.5 lbs.	Telephone	(413) 568-7001
Weight Loaded	7.05 lbs.	Website	SavageArms.com
Weight Scoped	7.9 lbs.	Made in	Canada





The Savage thumb hole stock took some getting used to. Most raters agreed it helped slow fire accuracy.





The short action of the Savage BTV took some getting used to compared to centerfire rifles. It was the most accurate rifle tested.

The rifle features a five-round magazine. While the BTV is marked for 22 Long Rifle cartridges only, the action functioned with 22 Shorts.





The front-end treatments on our two favorite rifles appear above. Top is the Savage BTV, which is thicker, vented, and equipped with double swivel studs to accommodate a sling and bipod. The CZ 455's classic forend, bottom, is what most hunters would expect to find on a field-grade rimfire.

economy rifle. The bolt action is smooth enough. The safety is mounted on the receiver and operates in the same manner as the Savage, forward for Fire and to the rear for Safe. There is no red dot to indicate the safety's position. The cocking bolt, however, shows a red ring when the rifle is ready to fire.

The Marlin trigger allows setting the trigger for a light let off. We chose to put the trigger at a 2.5-pound let off and tried to stay close to this trigger-pull weight with all of the rifles. The rifle chambering is marked for 22 LR only. So of course we tested the rifle with the 22 Short cartridge and learned it would not feed properly. When loaded in the magazine, the round looked okay, but when the bolt was pressed forward, the 22 Short cartridge jumped out of the magazine and out of the ejection port. Is this a demerit for a bolt-action rifle purchased for economy and versatility? Not really. But it would be handy just the same, even though few shooters will be able to find 22 Short ammunition.

We mounted a 6x vintage Redfield on the Marlin. This is the type with the old TV-screen-shaped objective lens. We like this scope, and while it was overpowered for the task at 50 yards, it gave very good results. It isn't feasible to mount one optic on all four rifles, although this levels the

SAVAGE ARMS MARK II F 26700 22 LR, $228

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Savage rifle is smooth in operation, and we liked the action better than the Marlin's. As delivered in the box, the Savage rifle provided an excellent trigger and could have been adjusted even more. The Savage feeds 22 Short ammunition, which may be important to some shooters. It suffered in accuracy compared to the more expensive rifles.



Action	Bolt	Receiver	Satin blued carbon steel, drilled and tapped for scope mounts
Overall Length	39.75 in.	Barrel	Satin blued carbon steel
Barrel	21.0 in. long, 1:16 twist	Stock	Synthetic
Length of Pull	12.8 in.	Trigger Pull Weight	2.9 lbs. adjustable AccuTrigger
Weight Unloaded	6.0 lbs.		
Weight Loaded	6.1 lbs.	Warranty	1 year
Weight Scoped	7.2 lbs.	Telephone	(413) 568-7001
Capacity	10+1	Website	SavageArms.com
Magazine type	Detachable box	Made In	Canada





This rifle comes with adjustable leaf sights atop a black synthetic stock in the rear (top) and a simple post in front (bottom). Though we shot several 1.5-inch groups, the F rifle was the least accurate of the four tested.



The 5-round magazine comes out of the action by pressing the magazine release (arrow) to the rear. The magazine loads easily, and the F would function with 22 Shorts, 22 Long CB Caps, and 22 Long Rifle ammunition.



At 6 pounds, the F would be a good squirrel rifle. The length of pull is slightly shorter than on the Marlin, and our smaller raters liked that.

playing field—and vastly increases the time needed to pull together data because we fire the rifles as a set and turn them over to the next rater. Each rifle was fitted with a scope that could be used by an individual purchasing the rifle for a specific task with a specific budget.

Fired off-hand, the Marlin handled well. The operation was smooth enough. After the test and with the rifle's performance fresh in their minds, the raters preferred the action of the Savage, however, because it was not only smooth, there was less effort on closing than with the Marlin rifle. The Marlin proved more accurate than the Savage off the bench rest. The difference was not great, but it clearly exists.

Our Team Said: The Marlin is worth its price, and we would purchase the Marlin for use with a suppressor first, but our shooters preferred the performance of the more expensive rifles.

Savage Mark II BTV 28750 22 LR, $390

At $390 and change from CheaperThanDirt.com, this is the second-most expensive rifle tested—and easily the most distinctive. The Savage MKII action is the same here as on the less expensive Savage, but this rifle features a heavy barrel—the "V" in the name is for "varmint," according to Savage's nomenclature. As such, this rifle tipped the scales at 8.0 pounds with a Nikon scope. The rifle features a five-round magazine. Though the rifle is marked for 22 LR only, the action functioned with the 22 Short cartridge as well.

The thumbhole stock is attractive wood that is well finished and which was very nicely fitted to the action. The thumbhole stock proved to be surprisingly comfortable, and it afforded an excellent platform for viewing the scope. We think the thumbhole stock is a bit slower when firing off hand and making follow-up shots, but that isn't what this rifle is about. The BTV is for shooting accurately from a braced position.

The rifle was fitted with a Nikon Buckmasters 4.5-14 40mm rifle scope

RANGE DATA

CCI Velocitor 40-gr. Copper-Plated HP	Marlin XT 22RZ	Savage Mark II F	Savage Mark II BTV	CZ-USA 455 American
Average Velocity	1425 fps	1380 fps	1480 fps	1439 fps
Muzzle Energy	180 ft.-lbs.	169 ft.-lbs.	194 ft.-lbs.	183 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.0 in.	1.7 in.	0.9 in.	0.8 in.
Largest Group	2.0 in.	2.5 in.	1.2 in.	1.3 in.
Average Group	1.5 in.	2.1 in.	1.0 in.	1.1 in.

Fiocchi HV 40-gr. Lead RN	Marlin XT 22RZ	Savage Mark II F	Savage BTV Mark II BTV	CZ45540 455 American
Average Velocity	1280 fps	1262 fps	1297 fps	1268 fps
Muzzle Energy	145 ft.-lbs.	141 ft.-lbs.	149 ft.-lbs.	142 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.6 in.	1.5 in.	0.7 in.	0.65 in.
Largest Group	1.9 in.	1.7 in.	1.0 in.	1.2 in.
Average Group	1.7 in.	1.9 in.	0.9 in.	1.0 in.

Winchester M22 40-gr. Copper-Plated RN	Marlin XT 22RZ	Savage Mark II F	Savage BTV Mark II BTV	CZ455 455 American
Average Velocity	1219 fps	1201 fps	1227 fps	1234 fps
Muzzle Energy	131 ft.-lbs.	128 ft.-lbs.	133 ft.-lbs.	135 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.7 in.	2.1 in.	1.0 in.	1.2 in.
Largest Group	2.3 in.	2.5 in.	1.4 in.	1.6 in.
Average Group	2.0 in.	2.3 in.	1.2 in.	1.4 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups off a bench rest. Distance: 50 yards. We recorded velocity with a Competition Electronics Chrony Chronograph. The first sky screen was set 10 feet from the muzzle.

Ammunition details and sources: *CCI Velocitor ($7.40/50 at MidwayUSA.com); Fiocchi HV ($6.50/50 at BulkAmmo.com), and Winchester M22 ($75/1000 at Sportsmansguide.com).*







The CZ's stock configuration represents a true adult-sized 22-caliber rifle. Our shooters could fire it well from either side. The CZ 455 is just as accurate as the BTV in offhand fire and was a bit easier to use due to the traditional stock design. When fired off the bench rest, the CZ455 demonstrated excellent accuracy. The rifle is more than accurate enough for small-game hunting and target practice.

($108.57 from CheaperThanDirt.com). This scope affords excellent clarity. While we feel that testing a 22-caliber rimfire rifle at 50 yards is ideal, the Nikon and Savage combination, along with the CZ 455/Vanguard duo, were also fired at 100 yards in a side test. The powerful rifle scopes afforded excellent results out to that distance. The Savage trigger was easily set to a crisp 2.5 pounds.

We put 50 rounds through the rifle in offhand fire and learned that it tracked well and gave good results; however, it is slower to make a follow-up shot with than the conventionally stocked rifles, we thought. Fired from the bench, the Savage gave superb results. The heavy barrel and nice trigger, along with good optics, made for an accurate combination. When fired from the bench, the Savage rifle was more accurate than the two economy rifles, as expected, but it also shaded the CZ 455 in accuracy, which wasn't expected.

Our Team Said: The heavy barrel of the Savage BTV is a real advantage in accuracy. Along with the stock and nice trigger, the rifle

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is a great choice for longer-range accuracy. However, be certain you are willing to accept the weight of the rifle and the handling of the thumbhole stock to gain that advantage.

Savage Mark II F 26700 22 LR, $231

This was a recent retail price from CheaperThanDirt.com. The Savage MKII is an entry-grade bolt-action rifle. This rifle is supplied with standard leaf adjustable sights. The stock is black synthetic. The stock fits the rifle action well. The stock was scuffed up out of the box, below and behind the bolt, but this did not affect its shooting quality. A large oval of the metal receiver is fitted into the action, and it accepts a five-round removable box magazine. The stock features checkering on the forend and pistol grip. The butt plate is removable. The Savage emblem is featured on the pistol-grip's bottom. Metal swing swivel studs are screwed into the stock. The safety is mounted on the receiver. Press the safety to the rear for Safe and forward to Fire. The bolt action is very short and fast, which is to be expected with a 22 rifle.

The five-round magazine comes out of the action by pressing the magazine release to the rear. The magazine loads easily. We found the Savage rifle would feed, chamber, fire, and eject 22 Short, 22 Long CB Cap, and 22 Long Rifle ammunition. We feel that one reason the 22 bolt action is desirable is that the rifle does not rely on high-speed ammunition to function, such as some semi-autos require. Also, by removing the magazine, you have an easy-to-use single-shot rifle for training purposes.

The rifle had a crisp 2.9-pound trigger out of the box. We did not adjust it, as our shooters found the trigger to be quite good. The magazine was easily loaded with five cartridges. The rifle fired high at the initial sight-in range of 25 yards. We were able to adjust the sights using the leaf, and had no trouble switching from 25 to 50 yards. The crisp trigger and good sights gave good results on small targets out to 25 yards.



The two less expensive rifles, the Savage F on top and the Marlin below, produced credible firing results, in part, we think because of their excellent triggers. The F broke at 2.9 pounds, and we set the adjustable Marlin Pro-Fire trigger to 2.5 pounds.

At 6 pounds, the rifle is the lightest in the test. It handles well and would be a good squirrel rifle or all-round plinking rifle. We did not have enough 22 Short for a firing test, but we confirmed that the rifle would feed these short cartridges just fine.

As noted, we fired the rifle for accuracy at 25 yards with the supplied sights, but to keep a level playing field, we added a Simmons 3-9x riflescope for the 50-yard firing evaluation ($50 at AcademySports.com). The nice trigger and clear optics gave good results; however, the light weight and thin barrel may have played against the Savage. While we recorded several 1.5-inch groups with it, the F rifle was the least accurate of the four tested. Still, it is more accurate on average than the semi-automatic rifles we have tested in the past.

The length of pull is slightly shorter than on the Marlin XT, and our smaller raters liked this, although they handled all the rifles easily enough.

Our Team Said: We rated the rifle down based on its trailing accuracy numbers, but we think the Savage rifle is worth the money.

Written and photographed by Bob Campbell, using evaluations from GUN TESTS *team testers.* **GT**

Browning Adds Five New Pistols to Black Label 1911-380 Line

Other early-2017 introductions include Heckler & Koch's subcompact 9mm VP9SK, two new M&P rifles from Smith & Wesson, and a new Compact pistol from 1911 maker Ed Brown.

Browning has added new offerings to the Black Label 1911-380 pistol line.

The new Black Label 1911-380 Medallion Pro will be available in Full Size and Compact versions. These new pistols will feature an aluminum-reinforced composite frame and slide with a blackened stainless steel finish with silver brush-polished flats. Grips on this new model are checkered rosewood with a gold Buckmark logo. The pistol comes with two magazines. The Full Size model barrel length is 4.25 inches and the Compact barrel length is 3.625 inches. Both the Full Size and Compact versions are available with steel three-dot sights or steel night sights. Suggested Retail price with the 3-dot sights: $800. Suggested retail price with night sights: $880.

Browning is also adding three Compact models to the 1911-380 line in 2017. The Black Label 1911-380 Compact has the same features as the Black Label 1911-380 Full Size but with a 3.625-inch barrel. This model has composite black grips and includes fixed combat sights. Suggested retail: $670.

Browning is also adding Compact models to both the Black Label Pro and the Black Label Pro with Rail. Both of these models have 3.625-inch barrels and are available with either steel three-dot sights or steel night sights. The Black Label Pro Compact has a suggested retail price of $800 for the three-dot model and $880 for the night-sight model. The Black Label Pro Compact with Rail and three-dot sight has a suggested retail price of $830, and the railed night sight model has a suggested retail price of $910.

More information on these Browning products is available at Browning.com.



Above: The new Black Label 1911-380s include the Compact, top, and the Medallion Pro BPT17 051913492. Right, top to bottom, are the Medallion Pro Full Size Pistol BPT17 051912492, Pro Compact Pistol BPT16 051910492, and the Pro Compact with Rail Pistol BPT16 051911492.

HK Introduces the VP9SK

Heckler & Koch's striker-fired VP9SK 9mm subcompact is now available. The new pistol has characteristics of larger-frame VP models in a more compact design. MSRP: $719.

A small-scale version of the adjustable VP grip feature—consisting of interchangeable backstraps and lateral grip panels—appears in the compact grip frame of the VP9SK. This allows the pistol to be modified to fit any individual user. Molded finger grooves allow for more control of the small handgun.

"The VP9SK handgun is the right combination of compact size and firepower for a subcompact—and it's loaded with unique Heckler & Koch features like our adjustable ergonomic grip—the only grip in the industry that can be customized to fit any shooter," said Michael Holley, HK-USA vice president for



commercial sales and marketing.

The VP9SK has ambidextrous controls, including slide releases and a paddle-style magazine release. HK's charging supports, introduced on full-size VP pistols, are also present on the VP9SK. The charging supports are polymer inserts that are mounted on each side of the rear of the slide and provide better gripping leverage for racking the slide rearward. The charging supports speed reloading and make operating VP-series handguns easier to operate for shooters with reduced hand strength.

VP9SK pistols have an abbreviated Picatinny MIL-STD-1913 rail molded into their polymer frames for mounting lights and accessories. A proprietary captive flat recoil spring helps VP9SK pistols reduce felt recoil.

VP9SK pistols can use a variety of HK magazines, including compact double-stack 10-rounders with flat or hooked, ergonomic floorplates. New 13-round and 15-round magazines with magazine sleeves that replicate the grip profile of the full-size VP will also be available later in the year.

VP9SK pistols ship from HK's Columbus, Georgia facility. The VP9SK is made in Germany and carries HK's Lifetime Warranty.

Smith & Wesson Now Shipping New M&P15 Sporting Rifles

Smith & Wesson Corp. is shipping the newest additions to its expanded M&P rifle series. The M&P15X and M&P15T rifles retain the original look and operating features of the company's M&P15 rifle line, enhanced with the Magpul M-LOK modular lock system mounting platform.

The M&P15X rifle features the new M&P aluminum, carbine-length handguard, while the M&P15T rifle features the 13-inch M&P slim modular free-float rail system.

Jerry Miculek demonstrated the M&P15T's capability during Industry Day at SHOT Show in January. A packed crowd was on hand to witness Miculek's new speed record, which was set using the new M&P15T rifle, firing 10 shots on three targets in 1.59 seconds. Miculek said, "Attempting speed records is never easy, but using the right equipment improves my chances. I really like what Smith & Wesson has done with the M&P15 rifle."

M&P15X with M-LOK features:
- **New M&P Slim, Aluminum Carbine-Length Handguard with Magpul M-LOK**
- **2-inch M-LOK Aluminum Picatinny-Style Rail Panel Included**
- **Picatinny-Style Top Rail**
- **Forged, Integral Trigger Guard**
- **Armornite Finish on barrel interior and exterior surfaces**
- **Chromed Firing Pin**
- **S&W flash suppressor**
- **16-inch Barrel, 1-in-8-inch twist with 5R rifling**
- **30-round PMAG magazine**
- **MSRP, $1239**

M&P15T with M-LOK features:
- **13-inch M&P Slim Modular Free-Float Rail System with Magpul M-LOK**
- **5R Rifling for Superior Accuracy and Easier Cleaning**





- **Magpul MBUS Sights**
- **Forged, integral trigger guard**
- **Armornite Finish on barrel interior and exterior surfaces**
- **Patented S&W flash suppressor**
- **16-inch Barrel, 1 in 8-inch Twist**
- **30-round PMAG magazine**
- **MSRP, $1190**

Ed Brown Releases Compact 1911

Ed Brown Products, Inc. of Perry, Missouri, has added the Compact 1911 to their lineup of traditional custom 1911s. The Compact comes



with an Officer's-sized frame for ease of concealment and is fitted with a 4.25-inch slide for a longer sight radius and reliability. The Compact comes standard with fully-machined premium components, a lifetime written warranty, and a list of options available to personalize the pistol.

John May, sales and marketing director for Ed Brown Products, said, "It is always exciting to add new models, and the new Compact 1911 really shows our customers that we are working to meet their needs." For more information on the new Compact 1911, visit EdBrown.com.

Savage Arms Introduces Model 10 GRS

Savage Arms is offering serious long-range shooters a new secret weapon with the Savage Model 10 GRS. Shipments of these firearms are currently being delivered to dealers.

The Model 10 GRS houses the full suite of accuracy-enhancing Savage features fitted to a GRS stock made of 15% fiberglass-reinforced Durethan with 65% glass bedding material.

The stock's slimmed-down dimensions and textured rubber surfaces provide a better grip in wet



The Savage Model 10 GRS stock is made of 15% fiberglass-reinforced Durethan with 65% glass bedding material, offering a stable platform for the action.

conditions, while its length-of-pull can be adjusted to fit any shooter. The Savage action, button rifling, fluted heavy barrel, and user-adjustable AccuTrigger have proven themselves in previous Gun Tests evaluations.

The length-of-pull adjusts from 33.5 to 36.5 cm. The muzzle comes threaded at ⅝-24, and the rifle ships with a 10-round AICS-compatible magazine, flush cup sling loops, and a sling mount for bipod use.

The 22596 model chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor with a 24-inch barrel has an MSRP of $1449. The 22599 model chambered in 308 Win. has a 20-inch barrel and an MSRP of $1449

Savage Arms is a brand of Vista Outdoor Inc. To learn more about Savage Arms, visit SavageArms.com.

Colt Announces the New Gold Cup Trophy

Subscribers to Gun Tests who shoot competitive handgun events may be interested to hear that Colt has released its next generation of Gold Cup Trophy pistols.

The new Gold Cup Trophy is available in 9mm (SKU: O5072XE) and .45 ACP (O5070XE), and has an MSRP of $1,699.

Mark Redl, Team Colt Shooter and product manager for Colt, said, "We started the development of the new Gold Cup Trophy when I decided to compete in the Bianchi Cup. Everything about this pistol was designed to make it an affordable option for the professional competitor to engage in the most elite shooting match in the world."



He said, "We started with our standard Gold Cup Trophy and upgraded it in the same ways that many enthusiasts and professionals do as they ship their beloved firearm around the country for costly specialty services. Now, for the cost of perhaps one or two of these services, you can buy a brand new Gold Cup with the upgrades right from the factory."

This new Gold Cup features Colt's competition ergonomics, including an undercut trigger guard and upswept beavertail grip safety, and Colt's Dual Spring Recoil System for improved recoil mitigation. Factory 25-LPI checkering on the front and rear strap of the grip, along with Colt-branded blue G10 grips, complete the package. The firing system has changed to the Colt Series 70 design, which reduces the number of moving parts in the trigger assembly, as well as reduces the length and weight of the trigger pull.

"Another big change for this model is that along with the traditional .45 ACP, it's also available in 9mm," said Redl. "The whole package makes this a really appealing handgun."

Beretta APX Striker-Fired Pistol Is Shipping

Beretta began shipping the APX pistol in April after recently announcing its launch in the U.S. market. As a modular pistol, the internal chassis of the APX is serialized, allowing grip-frame housings to be customized or exchanged without affecting the serialized part.

Beretta has reduced the bulk of the chassis and has built in a high grip position, which offers better control and easier sight tracking. An oversized magazine baseplate helps fast loading and extraction, and full-length slide serrations make slide manipulation easier, especially when wet. The flat-faced design of the trigger promotes a straight rearward trigger press with minimal interruption of sight picture. Ambidextrous, reversible controls accommodate almost all hand sizes.

Beretta has manufactured semi-automatic pistols since 1915 and is now one of the very few manufacturers to offer full-size polymer and metallic-framed handguns in both hammer- and striker-fired operating systems. The APX is available in 9mm and comes with two 10+1 magazines.



FN Announces the FN 509

FN America, LLC has launched the FN 509, an all-new 9mm striker-fired pistol. The FN 509 was born out





of the company's effort to produce a contender for the U.S. Army's Modular Handgun System (MHS) competition.

"When the requirements for MHS were released, our team of engineers immediately went to work, taking the successful elements of the FNS Compact and further developing those to meet the needs of the U.S. Army's solicitation for a new, full-size pistol," said Mark Cherpes, president and CEO of FN America, LLC. "Between the submission of MHS and the commercial release of the FN 509, we have worked with law-enforcement agencies throughout the U.S. and captured feedback that we used to further optimize the pistol."

Built on the architecture of the FNS Compact, aesthetic changes to the platform include the aggressive cocking serrations, enhanced grip textures, guarded controls, and recessed target crown on the barrel.

The FN 509 is currently shipping to FN distributors in two commercial SKUs. Other options, such as manual-safety models, are coming, the company says.

- **Safety: Internal passive safeties**
- **Sights: Fixed 3-dot luminescent**
- **Operation: Striker; DAO**
- **Trigger Pull: 5.5 to 7.5 pounds**
- **Capacity: 10 or 17 rounds**
- **Weight: 26.9 ounces**
- **Barrel Length: 4 inches**
- **Overall Length: 7.4 inches**
- **MSRP: $649**

Compiled by Gun Tests *staff.* **GT**

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

● **Mouse Gun Shoot-out:** Love them or despise them, mouse guns—very small pocket pistols—are an important part of the self-defense landscape by virtue of their sheer numbers. The North American Arms Mini Revolver 22M, $220, is a popular handgun that has created a niche all of its own. The PTAC Bull Frog is a copy of the NAA revolver in some ways, but is mechanically different in others. We also added a small automatic pistol—the Beretta 950 25 ACP handgun, a widely used pistol and a standard among pocket pistols. The 25 ACP isn't as powerful as the 22 Magnum chambering for the NAA and PTAC, but will any work as a last-ditch last-choice defensive handgun?

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