GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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BIG-BORE SEMI-AUTOS

The Colt and Smith & Wesson pistols prove the 1911 platform is well suited to the 10mm Auto cartridge. The Coonan hits hard with the 357 Magnum revolver chambering, also in a 1911 design. ● Page 6



PRECISION RIFLES

We test a trio of 6.5mm-caliber chamberings to find the best combination of cartridge and carbine for a variety of uses. Winner: The Desert Tech SRS-A1 is accurate and handy—but expensive. ● Page 14

38 SUPER LOADS

For self-defense, Buffalo Bore's jacketed hollowpoints offered top-grade accuracy, deep penetration, and excellent expansion. ● Page 22







10 MISCONCEPTIONS

If you have to use a gun in self-defense, will you make a mistake that might send you to jail? ● Page 27



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DOWNRANGE

AFTER LAS VEGAS



Todd Woodard

The first dreadful pieces of news coming out of Las Vegas on Sunday, October 1, coalesced into yawning horror that would grip a nation and sadden our world. Fifty-nine people were dead and hundreds injured at the hands of a lone sniper, who had secreted more than 20 rifles and handguns on the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. From that perch, the shooter had uninterrupted views of the Las Vegas Strip and the Route 91 Harvest Festival, a three-day country music concert, that kicked off at the Las Vegas Village, a venue across the Strip from the Luxor hotel and the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

People who own guns — people who love the freedom and responsibility that accompanies firearms ownership — are every bit as appalled and shocked as the non-gun-owning public.

We love the traditions, the history, the technology of firearms, and we grew up with the sense of deep responsibility owning guns brings. We gun owners have a deeply held belief in gun safety, instilled by our parents and our grandparents. Owning a gun means living by a set of sternly ingrained rules. Those rules belong to us. We live by them. And when someone breaks those rules, we feel betrayed, appalled, and angry. We mourn the dead and injured people in the Las Vegas shooting as Americans — not as gun owners or non-gunowners. Concertgoers, people on the street, entertainers, were all potential targets in the deadliest mass shooting in modern American history.

The call for stricter gun control in this environment is inevitable and has already begun. These discussions will go on for some time. But for now, Gun Tests magazine chooses to focus on the immediate and the practical. First, as we all know, guns are a fact of life in this country, and to "ban" them will never work. But we do need to have a good-faith conversation amongst ourselves about the essence of gun control. Live by the simple rules passed down from parents to children to grandchildren. Remind yourselves of the responsibilities we share and we cherish.

In particular, along with the debates in this country about gun control comes a debate about mental illness — and the absolutely essential requirement that dangerous objects like guns be kept well away from those who would use them in the commission of a crime. We gun-owning individuals are the first line of defense.

Investigators found at least 19 additional firearms, thousands of rounds of ammunition and the chemical tannerite, an explosive, at the shooter's home in Mesquite, Nevada. They also found ammonium nitrate, a chemical that can be used in bomb-making.

It is up to each one of us to observe, counsel, and, most of all, befriend loved ones who may be contemplating crimes you can scarcely begin to imagine. The debates will rage around us, and we'll of course pay close attention to the outcomes. But today, the opportunity to save someone's life, begins with you and me. GT

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A Special Revolver for 45 LC?

Reader Walter thinks the market is ready for a wheelgun strictly chambered for the powerful and effective 45 Long Colt. Reader Andy wants to know how to buy surplus 1911s from the CMP.

Re "Combo Gun and Ammo Tests: .410 Bore Self-Defense Choices," July 2017

Editor: I read with interest your article about .410-bore ammo tests. Your pictures clearly show that the 45 Colt expands far better than the 45 ACP! The gun manufacturers are asleep. They should make a 45 Long Colt revolver with 4-,6-, and 8-inch barrels. Bet this would rival the 357 Magnum in knockdown power without the recoil! **— Walter**



Likes the Package

Todd and Company, Greetings! I have been a subscriber for several years now and just wanted to write and say thank you for all that you do. The magazine is a great resource and has, in my view, unmatched and unbiased consistency, with testing criteria. I also like that your firearms-test articles have ample technical data for the professional, but are written in such a manner that even the novice gun enthusiast can understand them and learn from the reviews.

I especially look forward to reading Downrange, in which you cover current events relating to firearms, gun owners, the Second Amendment, politics, etc. All in all, it's a great package and a superb value, and I plan to subscribe until the end of time. **— Arthur**

Re "Downrange," September 2017

Love your mag! Now, thanks for the update on the surplus 1911s. However, you left out the who/what/where/when/why of obtaining one. I know your letter stated they "might be back," but I would like to know when this might be approved and what the process is. Even an educated guess on when/where to look would be appreciated.

— Andy

Hey Andy: The first paragraph said the pistols might be available through the Civilian Marksmanship Program. According to the website, theCMP.org, "The Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) is a national organization dedicated to training and educating U.S. citizens in responsible uses of firearms and airguns through gun safety training, marksmanship

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.

training and competitions. The CMP is a federally chartered 501(c)(3) corporation that places its highest priority on serving youth through gun safety and marksmanship activities that encourage personal growth and build life skills." So, navigate to theCMP.org page, select the "Sales" tab, and you can see what the agency offers in terms of firearms, including the possibility of 1911 sales included in an amendment passed with the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). But when I spoke to a highly-placed NRA official on October 4, he said that because of the Las Vegas shooting, Congress planned to pull back any pro-firearms legislation for the rest of this year. — Todd Woodard

Re "22-Caliber Handgun Shoot-Out: Smith, TacSol, Beretta, Colt," July 2017

Sirs, I am a two-tour Vietnam Vet and a retired (25 years, 1973 to 1998) municipal law-enforcement officer. In addition to a BS in Criminal Justice Administration I have attended eight (8) different Armorer Schools as well as a number of shooting schools, to name only a few, Gunsite, Chapman Academy (3 times), FBI Academy, LFI (attended several and assisted as a range officer in several), S&W Academy, etc. I was in charge of firearms training for my agency for 22 years, and for the Northwest Arkansas branch of the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy (ALETA-NW) for five years. I said that to say this:

This is not a criticism of your magazine, just the result of some



experience beyond your testing. In 1995 I and another firearms instructor attended the Beretta Armorer Training Program in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Consequently, I purchased a Beretta Tomcat DA 25 ACP semi-automatic pistol. My friend also purchased one and sold his to me unfired. I still own both pistols. The FBI called having DA for the first shot "First Shot Liability Insurance," and I agree with them. The concept of the tip-up barrel appealed to me as a safety feature in loading and unloading. However, as with many things in life, experience taught me that there was a trade-off.

The Beretta does not have an extractor. I had several brands of ammo, but a problem developed with the American Eagle ammo (purchased a case in 1976). When fired, the cartridge case of two or three cartridges per magazine would split, and then the split case would not extract (no extractor) or eject. The split case would be stuck firmly in the chamber, requiring that the split case be pried out or a rod be inserted from the muzzle and the case pounded out. I have not fired all of the brands of 25 ACP ammo on the market, but I do recommend that if one intends to carry the Beretta in a serious way, that one fires enough of the duty ammo to be really confident in its reliability!

On December 21, 1975, an officer from a local municipal agency was abducted on a road stop, handcuffed with his own handcuffs, taken to a secluded area, and shot in the head with his own 357 Magnum revolver. Shortly after this, I and another officer purchased Fraser 25 ACP Autos, a stainless-steel copy of the "Baby" Browning. We had short-recoil problems, and the magazines were crap. I replaced the recoil springs and magazines with parts for the Browning 25 Auto, and thereafter, we had no problems. I carried that pistol in a wallet for the rest of my municipal law-enforcement career and I still own it. It is very accurate. I can keep all shots somewhere in the black of a standard B-27 target at 50 yards, and although some cases did split, they were all extracted because the pistol had an extractor.

I also own a North American Arms 22 Magnum mini-revolver with a second cylinder in 22 Long Rifle. I aim it by setting the front sight on top of the rear of the frame, sort of like shooting a shotgun with a bead sight. It is a quality firearm, in my opinion. The second cylinder in 22 Long Rifle will also fire 22 Long and 22 Short cartridges, which means that one tends to fire it more often than one would if only 22 Magnums could be fired. Sincerely,

— Lt. Mikel D. Lott
Rogers Police Dept., Retired

Lt. Lott: Thanks for passing along those insights about these smallbore firearms. — tw

Re "Worth the Money and Trouble? A Trio of Unusual Revolvers," September 2017

Sirs, I am a many-year subscriber, and having just read your article on "Unusual Revolvers" in the September 2017 issue, I noticed — again — that you selected Remington "Thunderbolts" among the 22 ammo to test in your firearm. Over the years, whenever you have tested a 22 rimfire rifle, pistol, or revolver, you have frequently chosen to test it with Remington ammo, typically Thunderbolts or Golden Bullets, among others. Based on my own experience and that of many others, reflected on hundreds of reports on RimfireCentral.com — the most authoritative source of rimfire information on the web, or anywhere else for that matter. It reflects the experience and knowledge of many thousands of rimfire enthusiasts — you could make far better choices! And that doesn't necessarily have to include Eley Match or Tenex, or Lapua Midas. CCI, Federal, SK, and Wolf, for example, all offer much better options at reasonable prices.

On RimfireCentral.com, Remington rimfire ammo is viewed (with rare exceptions) as the poorest ammo one could choose, with an



unacceptably high rate of "duds," e.g., failure to fire and/or obvious wide variance in velocity shot-to-shot. Net, net, unreliable, inconsistent, and inaccurate, as well as dirty. Thunderbolts are usually referred to as "Thunderturds"; Golden Bullets are not viewed any more favorably. While Remington may make some quality centerfire ammo, it seems their attitude towards rimfire is that the lowest common denominator commodity is good enough. Certainly, many people who shoot 22s for plinking only don't know and don't care — they buy the cheapest stuff they can get. I don't think that is what Gun Tests is all about. On a different but related point, I'd like to see more tests of rimfire firearms — there are many out there — but without Remington ammo included.

— Doug

Hey Doug: Thanks for passing this along, and I take your point. Oftentimes, we select ammunition simply based on what retailers tell us are the top-selling brands by volume. So, those low-price brands you mentioned keep reappearing because they are what people actually buy, warts and all. From our perspective, it's a win-win. If a brand of ammo malfunctions or is in accurate in all of a set of test guns, then the ammo gets called out as crappy. If it only malfunctions or doesn't shoot in a particular gun, then we've found an anomaly that is likewise worth reporting. — tw

Re "Firing Line," October 2017

First, simplify your grading scale to into just three categories: Especially Good, Good Enough, and Buy Something Else. Of course, everyone would prefer the standouts, but knowing which guns are also worth considering — and which aren't — is good information to have. This really is the bottom line, and it avoids the temptation to give a slightly higher grade to the gun that is most satisfying so it wins the test, even if all the guns basically behave and shoot the same. The author's personal favorites can be discussed in the write-up. This also makes it much easier to compare results from different articles.

Second, I would like to see Gun Tests put more emphasis on cost when comparing guns. For example, in the July 2017 edition ("American Made Nines"), a $1220 Springfield 9mm was tested against a $499 Honor Defense and a $579 Ruger. No surprise, the Springfield got the only A. But at twice the price, it should be the best. I have to wonder if the second runner-up, which got a B+, would have received an A if it wasn't being compared to the Springfield. Of course, it's interesting when there's a modest-price gun that keeps up with the expensive guys, but when I'm researching a purchase, I have a budget and I'm looking for guns in a particular price range. The most useful reviews for me are those that help identify which of those guns I should be looking at; comparisons to guns in other price brackets aren't that helpful and possibly skew the results. I recommend that when devising your tests, in addition to pairing up guns by purpose or feature, you include the criterion of broadly similar price: High-end, average, and budget. All this is grist for your mill, so I hope it helps. I do appreciate the work you and your writers do, and wish there were more like you.

— Jack

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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.

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

Big-Bore Autos: Two More 10mms and One 357 Magnum

Of the Colt and Smith & Wesson 10mms, the former proves the 1911 platform is well suited to the cartridge. The Coonan offers a hard-hitting revolver chambering in a 1911 platform.

Other than the 45 ACP, a big-bore automatic means a pistol chambered in 10mm Auto or a less-common caliber. In the recent past, we have tested a few new 10mm pistols and found we liked what they offered. For this test we went to Colt, one of the original manufacturers of the 10mm in the 1911 platform, and acquired one of the company's new Delta Elite pistols. We also went back in time to the early 1990s when the FBI determined they were under-gunned and opted for the 10mm round. We found a used Smith & Wesson Model 1076, which is similar to the FBI Contract Gun, and shot it side by side with the Colt. Then we added a Coonan, which has been around for a number of years, with its claim to fame being a 1911-style platform chambered in magnum revolver calibers. We acquired one of the latest models, the Classic 1911 chambered in 357 Magnum, to pit against the two 10mms from Colt and S&W.

Bottom line is, these are expensive pistols with expensive ammo appetites, but that wouldn't stop us from owning any of these three tested pistols. Any of these pistols are well suited for short-range hunting and personal defense. These pistols are all full-size models with heavy steel receivers, and that is a good thing when firing hot 357 Magnum and 10mm loads. In addition to their weight, another similarity were locked breech actions, where a lug or pair of lugs on the barrel locked into grooves cut on the inside of the slide, similar to a 1911 set up. They also had single-stack magazines and fixed three-dot sights. The triggers on the Coonan and Colt were exceptional. The S&W was heavy, but it still kept pace with the newer pistols.

We tested for accuracy using a rest at 25 yards and found these pistols were well matched in accuracy. Accuracy averaged about 2 inches for five-shot groups. We also practiced double taps at targets set at 10 yards. During that round, we found the 10mm pistols were easier to control than the 357 Magnum pistol.

For ammunition, we used SIG Sauer V-Crown 180-grain jacketed hollow-point bullets and SIG Sauer full-metal-jacket 180-grain bullets. We also used Armscor USA



Right, top to bottom: When we added up the scores, we found that the Colt Delta Elite was the top big bore, with the used S&W Model 1076 10mm and Coonan Classic tied for a very close second place.

RANGE DATA

SIG Sauer 10mm 180-gr. FMJ	Colt Delta Elite	S&W Model 1076
Average Velocity	1239 fps	1170 fps
Muzzle Energy	614 ft.-lbs.	547 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.46 in.	1.70 in.
Average Group	1.98 in.	2.00 in.

SIG Sauer V-Crown 10mm 180-gr. JHP	Colt Delta Elite	S&W Model 1076
Average Velocity	1213 fps	1121 fps
Muzzle Energy	588 ft.-lbs.	502 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.15 in.	2.00 in.
Average Group	1.77 in.	2.25 in.

Armscor USA 10mm 180-gr. FMJ	Colt Delta Elite	S&W Model 1076
Average Velocity	1129 fps	1081 fps
Muzzle Energy	510 ft.-lbs.	467 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.08 in.	1.81 in.
Average Group	1.54 in.	2.00 in.

SIG Sauer V-Crown 125-gr. JHP 357 Mag.	Coonan Classic 1911
Average Velocity	1459 fps
Muzzle Energy	591 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.04 in.
Average Group	2.34 in.

Aguila 158-gr. SJHP 357 Mag.	Coonan Classic 1911
Average Velocity	1346 fps
Muzzle Energy	636 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.00 in.
Average Group	2.42 in.

Winchester PDX1 Defender 125-gr. JHP 357 Mag.	Coonan Classic 1911
Average Velocity	1319 fps
Muzzle Energy	483 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.44 in.
Average Group	1.68 in.

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

rounds loaded with 180-grain FMJs. The Armscor clocked about 100 fps less than the SIG ammo. We've noticed that SIG is loading 10mm ammo hotter. Many factory loads in 10mm are light and do not bring out the true potential of the 10mm round. The 357 Magnum rounds consisted of SIG Sauer V-Crown 125-grain JHPs, Aguila 158-grain semi-jacketed hollow points, and Winchester PDX1 Defender 125-grain JHPs. We had issues with the Winchester ammo in the Coonan, which we will get into below. Here are details about how each gun performed.

Smith & Wesson Model 1076 10mm Auto, $800-$825

The Model 1076 was the only used gun in the test. It was produced from 1990 through 1993, with 13,805 guns made. This is also the pistol the FBI adopted for use with the 10mm cartridge, though the 1076 was short lived with the FBI due in part to the recoil of the 10mm Auto round. The 1076 lasted with the FBI for about five years before being replaced with 40 S&W pistols with more round capacity and less recoil.

The Model 1076 is based on the S&W Model 1006 but features a 4.25-inch barrel, a bobbed hammer, and a decocker similar to a SIG P220 located on the left side of the



Left to right are the disassembled states of the Colt Delta Elite, S&W Model 1076, and Coonan Classic. Nothing remarkable in these 1911-style designs, except, perhaps, the Smith lacks a barrel bushing.

receiver. S&W referred to the 1076 and other semi-autos of the time as Third Generation pistols. One way to tell if your Model 1076 is what is referred to as an FBI Contract Gun is the magazine disconnect. If your gun has a disconnect, it is a commercial model and not an FBI Contract Gun. FBI guns also had a palm swell grip. The grip of our 1076 was flat.

Our used pistol would grade about 80 percent according to NRA grading system. Nonetheless, it was a shooter for sure, and we are glad because we liked this pistol in 10mm. The Model 1076 features a full metal receiver so it is heavy; this is a good thing when firing the 10mm. It is all stainless construction and has a similar grip angle to a 1911, which we liked. The wraparound polymer grip is well textured without feeling like a cheese grater. It is also rounded and smooth, so there is no discomfort from sharp edges during recoil. The front grip strap is coarsely checkered, allowing testers to secure a good grip. On the left side of receiver is a black decocker lever. We found we could not reach the button with the thumb of our shooting hand, but we could easily decock the pistol with the thumb of the support hand when in a two-handed hold.

The decocker button is just below the slide stop and is easily distinguished by feel, so there was no confusion between the controls. Pressing the magazine button forcefully ejected the magazine. The front of the trigger guard was checkered like many other pistols manufactured in this era. It looks cool, but with current grip technique, it serves no useful purpose.

The slide-to-receiver fit was tight. The slide does not use a muzzle bushing like a 1911; instead, the barrel is flared at the muzzle and fits into a bushing set into the front of the slide. There was no wiggle between the muzzle bushing and barrel. On the top side were three-dot night sights that had long since lost their glow. They were large and we liked them, though the back side was not flush with the rear of the

SMITH & WESSON MODEL 1076
10MM AUTO, $800-$825
GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

If you are in need of a compact 10mm pistol, a used 1076 is an excellent choice. The trigger could have been better in both double action and single action.



Action	Locked Breech, SA, Semi-Auto
Overall Length	7.9 in.
Overall Height	5.8 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	32.75 oz.
Weight Loaded	41.15 oz.
Barrel	4.75 in.
Capacity	9+1 (single stack)

Slide	Matte stainless steel
Frame	Matte stainless steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Grips	Checkered polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.75 in.
Sights	Fixed, low profile, 3-dot night sights
Slide-Retraction Effort	15 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight DA	12 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight SA	6.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.1 in.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.7 in.
Magazines	1; Stainless Steel
Safety	Decocker
Warranty	NA
Made In	USA
Website	Smith-Wesson.com



At the business end, the belled barrel mates up to the muzzle bushing. There was no wiggle.



The front grip strap and trigger guard had a coarse checkering that gave the user a better grip on the 1076 while still being comfortable during recoil.

Plenty of beavertail protects the shooter's hand. The bobbed hammer makes the 1076 snag free. The 1076 is a large, heavy pistol, yet is similar in size to a Commander 1911.



COLT DELTA ELITE O2020XE 10MM AUTO, $1099

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The latest Delta Elite is an excellent example of a full-size 1911 platform chambered in 10mm. We liked the trigger, sights, and grip.



Action	Locked Breech, SA, Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.25 in.
Weight Unloaded	35 oz.
Weight Loaded	43.4 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in.
Capacity	8+1
Slide	Matte stainless steel
Frame	Matte stainless steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered composite
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Fixed, Novak, 3-dot night
Slide-Retraction Effort	19 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight SA	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Magazines	2; stainless steel
Safety	Thumb, beavertail grip
Warranty	None
Made In	USA
Website	Colt.com



The trigger is aluminum with three holes. We liked the trigger due to the crisp break.



The extended thumb safety worked precisely and was easily manipulated with the thumb of a right-handed shooter.



The Delta uses a dual recoil spring. It still uses a square cut out to avoid cracks in the receiver.

slide. The fine slide serrations were only located at the rear of the slide, and it took about 15 pounds of effort to rack and cock the hammer. The hammer was bobbed, so the first shot is fired double action. The top of the hammer was coarsely serrated so you could depress the trigger and thumb back the hammer or decock the hammer and thumb it back. The external extractor is typical S&W on guns of this era — very reliable.

The single-stack magazine was built of stainless steel and had a polymer floor plate. It was easily loaded and held a total of nine cartridges, one more than the Colt. Spare magazines are easy to find and relatively inexpensive (such as from MidwayUSA.com; $34).

In hand, the 1076 was comfortable to grip, and we did not have to reach for the trigger. We liked the ergonomics of this older pistol. Though the trigger-pull weight was 12 pounds in double action, it was smooth and consistent. In single action, there was a lot of take-up, but the break was clean and consistent. It was a trigger, we felt, that was well suited for self defense.

Going hot with the 1076, we found the pistol offered mild recoil and smooth cycling. Yes, it is noticeable and a bit faster and snappier than a 45 ACP. Accuracy with all ammo tested was between 2.0 and 2.25 inches. Our best group came with the SIG FMJs, which made a five-shot 1.7-inch group. The Armscor ammo was a close second with a 1.8-inch group. The SIG V-Crown's best group was 2 inches. Clearly, this pistol was an accurate shooter even with the heavier trigger. In rapid-fire testing, the 1076 was controllable, allowing us to place two fast shots in center mass of the target.

Our Team Said: We hope S&W's Classics program reissues the Model 1076. We liked this gun, save for the trigger, yet we were still able to get good accuracy out of the pistol. Recoil was pleasant. It would make a good trail gun in black-bear country. If you run across a used 1076, it is worth taking a look at its condition to get easy entry into the 10mm Auto world.

Colt Delta Elite O2020XE 10mm Auto, $1099

The Colt Delta Elite was the first 1911 pistol chambered for the 10mm cartridge, and this new variant is an excellent example of the design. The fit and finish were excellent, the sights are big and well defined, the trigger was crisp, and the grip was void of any sharp edges.

In our opinion, the trigger on the Colt was excellent, measuring about 4.5 pounds on our Lyman digital scale. The trigger is matte-black aluminum with three holes. The rest of the pistol wears a matte-stainless finish and the iconic composite checkered grip with the red delta medallion. The sights are genuine three-dot Novak Low Mount Carry sights. The top of the slide has a more textured matte finish to reduce glare and the sights are matte black. The back side of the rear sight is flush with the rear of the slide. Excellent sights, in our opinion. Can you say easy sight acquisition?

The grip safety is long with a good speed bump so even with a less-than-perfect draw, the grip safety is deactivated. The beavertail protects the web of the hand well, which we expected. The manual thumb safety was extended. Both it and the slide stop worked as we expected. Noticeably missing from the front grip and rear straps was checkering. The Delta Elite came with two stainless-steel magazines that were easy to load without busting our thumbs.

Disassembly was like any other government 1911. A bushing tool helped to depress the recoil spring guide. There was a little wiggle between the bushing and barrel, but the slide-to-receiver fit was tight. The slide racked smoothly. The slide featured angled slide serrations at the rear of the slide, so manipulating the slide was easy and simple and took about 19 pounds of effort to rack it and cock the hammer.

In hand, the Colt grip did not have any sharp edges to cause discomfort when shooting. Shooting the Colt was a pleasant experience. The best accuracy at 25 yards across

COONAN CLASSIC 1911 NO. 100000-000 357 MAGNUM, $1540

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Coonan is comfortable to shoot, accurate, and was reliable with all but one brand of ammo. This is a pistol worth experiencing if you like the 357 Magnum cartridge. We liked the Coonan.



Action	Locked Breech, SA/DA, Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.3 in.
Overall Height	5.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	42.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	48.0 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in., linkless

Capacity	8+1 (single stack)
Slide	Brushed stainless steel
Frame	Brushed stainless steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.9 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.5 in.
Grips	Smooth black walnut
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.75 in.
Sights	Fixed, 3-dot
Slide-Retraction Effort	19.0 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	3.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.9 in.
Magazines	2; steel
Safety	Thumb
Warranty	Lifetime
Made In	USA
Website	CoonanInc.com



The trigger pivots and breaks at about 3 pounds.



The beavertail offered plenty of protection against hammer bite. Even though the front strap is smooth, it was easy to handle the Coonan during recoil. In hand, the Coonan felt slightly larger than a Government 1911.



The grip safety is smaller than the typical 1911. The extended thumb safety was low profile, yet allowed for fast manipulation.



From the shooter's point of view, the Colt's sight picture was large and easy to find and read.



Though the glow has long since dissipated from the S&W's night sights, they were still very serviceable. A replacement rear night sight (MidwayUSA.com; $120) and front night sight (MidwayUSA.com; $61) are available.



Here's the Coonan's front sight from a shooter's point of view. Yes, it's large and very easy to use.

all ammo ranged from 1.08 inches with the Armscor to 1.46 inches with the SIG FMJ ammo. This pistol could shoot. We attribute this to the sights and trigger as well as to the comfortable grip. The Delta uses dual recoil springs to help dampen recoil. All ammunition cycled flawlessly through the Delta Elite.

Our Team Said: Recoil was comfortable, and accuracy was superb. For a 1911 platform, the Delta Elite is an excellent option. We'd own one in a heartbeat, even though the cost is slightly more than other 10mm 1911s available. Colt got this 10mm right.

Coonan Classic 1911 No. 100000-000 357 Magnum, $1540

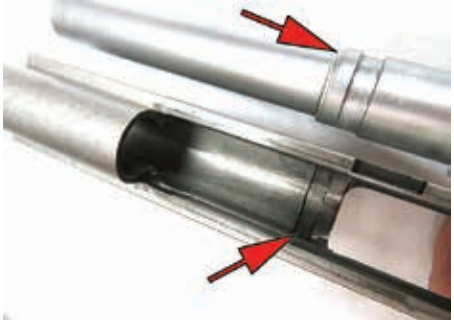
The Coonan Classic uses a 1911-style platform reconfigured to fire the 357 Magnum revolver cartridge. The Classic comes in a soft case with two stainless magazines and two recoil springs. The 22-pound spring came pre-installed and is used for shooting 357 Mag ammo with 125- or 158-grain jacketed bullets. The 10-pound spring is used for jacketed 38 Special +P ammo. The owner's manual states that mild lead loads will not function in the pistol. A break-in period of 250 to 500 rounds of 357 Mag ammo should be fired, according to the manual and we put about 400 rounds through the Coonan.

This pistol exudes precision, from the well-executed brushed stainless finish to the slide and frame fit, which was fairly tight. The barrel-to-bushing fit was tighter. The top side of the slide had a matte no-glare finish and fixed, low profile three-dot sights. The rear sight was flush with the rear of the slide for maximum sight radius. The sights are well suited for self defense. The Coonan uses a long external extractor and about 2 inches of angled slide serrations. It took about 15 pounds of effort to rack the slide. The receiver uses a grip safety that is shorter than the typical 1911 grip safety. The beavertail was long and protected ham-fisted shooters from hammer bite. The manual thumb safety was extended, yet low profile, as was the slide stop. The magazine releases similar to a 1911; a checkered round button that lets magazines free fall when pressed. Where the Coonan deviates from a 1911 is in the trigger. The Coonan trigger pivots, whereas typical 1911 triggers slide. The Coonan trigger face was wide and smooth, and the trigger broke at a clean 3 pounds. It was a nice trigger that we thought would be well suited for hunting. The receiver uses a full-length dust cover, which adds weight to the pistol, which in our opinion is needed since the pistol generates noticeable recoil when firing the 357 Mag round — more recoil than the 10mm pistols. The grip is also noticeably larger to accommodate the length of the 357 Mag cartridges. In hand, it felt like a slightly larger 1911. The front and rear grip strap had no texture.

Shooters accustomed to the 1911 platform needed little ramp up time with the Coonan. Right-handed shooters could grip the Coonan similar to a 1911 and ride the controls. What we liked about the Coonan was the attention given to rounding the sharp edges of the metal. The grip was smooth, and during recoil, we did not experience discomfort. And if we didn't mention it already, the Coonan does have some kick to it. In fact, touching off 357 Mag ammo caused a flame to spew out of the muzzle. The Coonan is a fire breather. Still, even without texture on the grip straps, the Coonan was easy to control for experienced shooters.

We had no issues with the SIG and Aguila ammo, and our best groups with these two cartridges average about 2 inches. When we tried the Winchester ammo, we ran





Above Left: The 1076 has a lug on the barrel (bottom arrow) that locks into the slide (top arrow), similar to a 1911. Note the belled barrel (right arrow) that locks into the muzzle bushing in the front of the slide. Above Right: On the Coonan, note the lug where the slide and barrel lock up.

VALUE GUIDE: 10MM & 40 S&W HANDGUN RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
EAA Tanfoglio Witness 10mm Auto, $665	May 2017	A	Best Buy. Relatively compact and accurate, plus it is affordable.
Dan Wesson Bruin Bronze 1881 10mm Auto, $2194	May 2017	A	If you are in need of a 10mm hunting pistol, the Bruin is an excellent choice, despite its expense.
Kimber Custom TLE II 3200347 10mm Auto, $1028	May 2017	A-	Excellent version of a full-size 1911 platform chambered in 10mm. Grips chewed up our hands.
SIG Sauer P226R Factory Certified 40 S&W, $725	June 2016	A+	The pre-owned SIG P226R turned in as-new performance. Reliable and fast handling.
Beretta Model 96 Vertec Inox 40 S&W, ~$600 Used	June 2016	A	Accuracy was good, if not outstanding. The pistol was reliable and we liked the safety features.
Ruger SR40 3470 40 S&W, $569	June 2016	B	The pistol exhibited more felt recoil than the others; however, it was also lighter.
CZ-USA CZ 75B 01120 40 S&W, $580	June 2016	B	The CZ 75 was accurate, reliable, and combat worthy. Lacked decocker and accessory rail.
Glock G20 Gen4 10mm, $687	May 2016	A	This G20 offered the most DIY customization, was the softest shooter and was accurate,
Rock Island Armory TAC Ultra FS 10mm, $819	May 2016	B+	This 10mm offered lots of custom 1911 features and great accuracy at a good price.
SIG Sauer P220-10 Match Elite 10mm, $1417	May 2016	B	Diehard SIG fans liked this pistol. It was refined and pleasant to shoot, but very expensive.
Smith & Wesson M&P40c 109203 40 S&W, $480	Jan. 2015	A-	Credible handgun with good design, reliability, and combat-shooting performance.
Beretta PX4 Storm JXS4F20FC 40 S&W, $511	Jan 2015	B	The Storm isn't the lightest 40-caliber subcompact, but it is among the easiest to fire.
FNH-USA FNP-40 40 S&W No. 47832, $450	July 2013	B+	Clean ergonomics in the grip, smooth and easy use, simple takedown.
SIG Sauer SP2022 E2022-40-B 40 S&W, $570	July 2013	B	The grips had the best texture, but we preferred the overall ergonomics of others.
Walther PPQ No. 2776481 40S&W, $680	July 2013	C+	Tricky takedown method and unusual magazine release made it stand out good and bad.
Springfield XDM 3.8 Compact XDM9384CSHC 40 S&W, $769	Oct. 2011	A	As a high-capacity house gun or a 12-round concealment piece, this gun is hard to beat.
Glock 29 10mm, $637	Oct. 2011	A-	Accuracy and power in a surprisingly controllable package.

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.

into issues. The Coonan magazine is like a 22 LR magazine on steroids. It uses a follower pin that can be slippery if your hands are sweaty. Coonan includes a loading pin that fits into the follower so you can get more leverage. These magazines take longer to load than the typical 45 ACP magazine. We found that the bullet profile was rubbing on the inside of the magazine body and not allowing the spring to push the cartridge up. We only found this to be a problem with the Winchester ammo, so we manually ran the ammo through to collect test data for that ammunition. The Winchester ammo, though it did not run in the Coonan, gave us the best accuracy, with the smallest group measuring 1.4 inches. This is an example of the need to try ammo in your gun prior to carrying it or hunting with it. We docked the Coonan a half point due to the issue, but it was obviously due the Winchester ammo.

Our Team Said: Recoil was controllable due to the weight of the pistol, but was still noticeable. Accuracy was excellent due to the sights and trigger. The price of the Coonan is easily $500 north of the other pistols. We liked the performance and would not hesitate to own this pistol if price was not an issue. We would also try a variety of ammo and stock up on the best performing loads. If you have a need to own a pistol in a revolver cartridge, this is a good option.

Special thanks to Eastern Outfitters (easternoutfitter.com) of Hampstead, NC, for their assistance.

Written and photographed by Robert Sadowski using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

VALUE GUIDE: 10MM & 40 S&W HANDGUN RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Glock G23 Generation 4 40 S&W, $649	Oct. 2011	B+	The biggest improvement from "Gen 3" is when the gun is used without the supplied grip panels.
Ruger SR40 BSR40 40 S&W, $525	Oct. 2011	B	Score it higher if a natural point is your first priority, Prefer better access to the thumb safeties.
Heckler & Koch P30S V3 40 S&W, $1005	Oct. 2010	A-	Fastest shooter. Offers a modular grip, multiple safeties, and a refined single-action trigger.
Glock G22 Gen4 40 S&W, $649	Oct. 2010	B+	The Gen4 grip system should make this gun more appealing to a wider variety of shooters.
Springfield XD Service Bi-Tone XD9302HCSP06 40 S&W, $605	Nov. 2009	A-	A lot of value for the money. Shot well, decent trigger, and we liked its safety features.
Kahr PM40 No. 4043 40 S&W, $786	Oct. 2009	A-	Not a blindingly fast pistol, but precise and powerful. A best bet for ankle carry.
Walther PPS No. WAP10002 40 S&W, $713	Oct. 2009	A-	For summertime carry or as a matching backup piece, the PPS may be hard to beat.
Smith & Wesson M&P40 No. 209200 40 S&W, $495	Oct. 2007	A-	It gets a lot of things right. The beavertail, sights, and slide cuts were excellent.
H&K USP Compact 40 V 1 40 S&W, $799	Dec. 2006	A	Rated "Our Pick," at this price it should be the best. Finished first in accuracy and speed.
Kahr P40 40 S&W, $707	July 2005	A	Rated "Our Pick," we liked the look, feel, and especially the rapid-fire potential of the P40.
Smith & Wesson Model 610 10mm, $833	May 2004	A-	Handles more powerful 10mm rounds and 40 S&W rounds with exceptional accuracy.

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Options in Precision Rifle: We Test Desert Tech, Howa, Ruger

We test a trio of 6.5mm-caliber chamberings to find the best combination of cartridge and carbine for a variety of uses. Winner: The SRS-A1 is accurate and handy—but very expensive.

Trends in firearms sales reflect the needs and interests of the buying public. Whereas the AR-15 or "black rifle" market has slowed down considerably, the popularity of rifles that are capable of accuracy beyond the 300-, 600-, or even 1000-yard range is still going strong. Referred to as precision rifles, the traditional configuration of a barreled action bedded into a wood or fiberglass stock are being challenged by aluminum and synthetic chassis rifles. What's more, the 6.5 Creedmoor cartridge is rapidly becoming a favorite round. In this test, we decided to review three different types of rifles chambered to propel 0.264-inch diameter bullets that represent options to satisfy the long-distance enthusiast.

In this test, the traditional bolt-action rifle was represented by a new offering from Ruger that has, to the best of our knowledge, received virtually no press. Our $1139 6.5 Creedmoor Hawkeye MkIV Varmint Target boasted a 28-inch-long barrel, the longest tube we've heard of in quite some time. Howa's $1450 HCR (Howa Chassis Rifle) was next up, featuring a fully adjustable buttstock from LUTH AR. Finally, we tried a unique design by Desert Tech. The $4995 Stealth Recon Scout (SRS-A1) lives up to its name by offering a 26-inch-long barrel packed into a compact profile.



We usually pack our DU-HA Tote roller cabinets into the truck bed with just one or two rifles plus chronograph, ammunition, support bags, writing tablet, and a small cooler. But we decided to pack four rifles instead. Top to bottom are the Ruger Hawkeye, Howa HCR, Desert Tech SRS-A1 and the Alexander Arms Overwatch (not tested here) for good measure. The new improved Tote with improved hinges and locks costs $379 from Du-Ha.com.



The Desert Tech SRS-A1 is a 26-inch-barrel sniper-grade rifle of approximately the same length, if not profile, of an AR-15 carbine. This reaffirms its name Stealth Recon Scout. The Desert Tech is a system rifle, in that it was purchased in two segments. The chassis, consisting of a polymer structure containing buttstock, grip, forend, magazine well, trigger, and bolt housing, cost $3395, to which the barrel, bolt, and magazine of chosen caliber was added. Our 6.5 Creedmoor conversion kit cost an additional $1600. Pricey, but installation, maintenance, and operation was extraordinarily simple and shooter friendly. Also available in left-handed configuration, barrels/calibers could be changed without the services of a gunsmith. We consistently shot smaller groups than half-minute-of-angle with a variety of ammunition.

For optics, our rifles shared a Steiner 4-16x50mm Predator Extreme scope. We also took turns looking down range with a Kahles 3-12x50mm scope supplied by Desert Tech. We painstakingly took time to break in the barrel of each rifle and then fired from the 100-yard line at American Shooting Center in Houston to collect basic accuracy data. For shots of record, we chose Winchester 140-grain Match, Hornady 143-grain ELD-X Precision Hunter, and the new 147-grain ELD Match rounds. We also shot a variety of rounds left over from previous tests to perform break in and for general comparison. What were the strengths and limitations of these three different platforms? Let's find out.

Desert Tech
Stealth Recon Scout SRS-A1
6.5 Creedmoor, $4995

Whenever one test gun costs much more than the other firearms in a given test, we have to wonder how the price tag is going to be justified. When it comes to precision rifles touted for accuracy, buyers are going to want to see a big difference in the size of groups per dollar. Bear in mind that a jump in accuracy from, say, 1 minute of angle (1-inch groups at 100 yards) to 0.70-inch groups is a lot easier to achieve than an improvement from 0.6-inch-wide groups to the half-inch mark. Then again, there are many other factors to consider in terms of what the firearm brings to the shooter. A very good case in point is the Desert Tech Stealth Recon Scout, SRS-A1.

When we first became interested in the SRS-A1, we didn't realize it was not necessarily a specific model but rather a system-based build. The first component to choose from was the chassis. Whereas the term chassis generally means a buttstock, grip, fore end, and action housing, in this case the Desert Tech's polymer chassis included virtually every component except for the barrel, caliber-specific bolt, and magazines. So for a starting price of $3395, you are purchasing a platform consisting of receiver, stock, and trigger system that can be converted to multiple calibers. The first option was color. We chose FDE (flat dark earth) for the receiver and stock, but other choices were black/black and black/FDE. The next option was optics, if so desired, including a $12,320 AN/PVS-27 MUNS (Magnum Universal Night Sight), or a Kahles K624i ($3290) built on a 34mm tube. Then we chose a 26-inch-long barrel chambered for 6.5 Creedmoor at a cost of $1,600, including dedicated bolt and magazine. The threaded muzzle was fit with a single-port DT muzzle brake. Other choices for the SRS-A1 platform were 26-inch-long barrels chambered for 260 Remington, 300 Win. Mag., 308 Winchester, 338 Lapua Magnum, 6.5x47 Lapua, and 7mm Winchester Short Magnum. A

DESERT TECH SRS-A1 6.5 CREEDMOOR, $4495

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Test results proved the SRS-A1 is at the top of the pyramid. Compact overall length, user serviceability regarding takedown, and change of caliber makes its price point competitive because of its utility.



Action Type	Bolt, telescopic, 60-degree throw
Overall Length (min/max)	37.0 in.
Barrel	26.0 in. long, 1:8 in. twist, stainless steel
Overall Height w/o Scope	7.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	11.4 lbs.
Weight Loaded (6+1, 140 grain)	12.25 lbs.
Sight Radius	NA
Action	FDE finish, flat-top Picatinny
Barrel	Matte-black stainless steel, fluted w/ported muzzle brake
Magazine Capacity	6
Magazine Type	Detachable box, single column
Buttstock	FDE Polymer, adj. rubber buttpad, adj. cheekpiece, rear monopod
Buttstock Length of Pull	15.4 to 16.4 in. (adj.)
Handguard	Modular free float
Trigger	2.95 lbs. pull, adj. for travel, creep, location, weight
Safety	Sliding, ambidextrous
Warranty	3 years; half-inch MOA guarantee
Telephone	(801) 923-6425
Website	DesertTech.com
Made In	U.S.A.



Given its short overall profile, observers could easily underestimate the long-distance capabilities of the Desert Tech SRS-A1 rifle.



The Desert Tech's bolt was a hefty component that moved smoothly within a sleeve that trued its path within the buttstock.



Access to the chamber was achieved by removing the buttpad and its accompanying spacers. The pad and each individual spacer was fit with a tab that released it from the seating lugs along the edges.

RANGE DATA

Winchester 6.5 Creedmoor 140-gr. Match BTHP	Howa HCR	Ruger Hawkeye MkIV VT	Desert Tech SRS A-1
Average Velocity	2673 fps	2717 fps	2686 fps
Muzzle Energy	2221 ft.-lbs.	2294 ft.-lbs.	2242 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	0.65 in.	0.70 in.	0.45 in.
Hornady 6.5 Creedmoor 143-gr. Precision Hunter ELD-X	**Howa HCR**	**Ruger Hawkeye MkIV**	**Desert Tech SRS A-1**
Average Velocity	2567 fps	2619 fps	2607 fps
Muzzle Energy	2092 ft.-lbs.	2178 ft.-lbs.	2158 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	0.80 in.	0.40 in.	0.65 in.
Hornady 6.5 Creedmoor 147-gr. ELD Match	**Howa HCR**	**Ruger Hawkeye MkIV**	**Desert Tech SRS A-1**
Average Velocity	2570 fps	2643 fps	2656 fps
Muzzle Energy	2156 ft.-lbs.	2280 ft.-lbs.	2302 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	0.80 in.	0.60 in.	0.55 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from the prone position. Distance: 100 yards. We recorded velocities using a LabRadar Doppler chronograph.



The Desert Tech single-port muzzle brake was fit to the ¾x24 threaded barrel. Brakes for larger calibers offering up to four ports are also available. Note the stainless-steel washer and fluted barrel.





Above, left: The left side of the Desert Tech's buttstock was where the magazine release (arrow) was located. The comb was adjustable for height, and there was a sturdy monopod integrated seamlessly into the lower profile. Above right: The buttpad was effective and the monopod proved to be stable. Note the bolt-stop plug (arrow) seated ahead of the buttpad assembly. One of three supplied buttstock spacers is in place in this photograph. Right: A 6-round single-column magazine was standard, but a tall 10-round mag was also available. Thanks to the single-column construction, Desert Tech magazines tend to be tall. Note the space to the rear of the magazines ready to accommodate longer cartridges. Rounds were slid into place from front to back.



22-inch-long 308 Win. conversion kit was also available, and each model, including the more compact SRS Covert rifle, can be configured for the right-handed or left-handed shooter.

Our rifle arrived completely assembled, but a demonstration on YouTube showed us how easy it was to assemble or rebarrel the Desert Tech rifle. Insert the barrel downward through the forend with the notch in the chamber end facing 6 o'clock to the bottom of the rifle and make sure it seats into the receiver. If the barrel doesn't rotate, then it is properly in place. Using a 5mm hex bit mounted on an 80-inch-pound torque wrench, tighten the barrel-lug screw located on the left-hand side immediately above the trigger. Then tighten the



Where else should the DT safety be located but directly above the trigger for easy access? The four bolts above the trigger/grip area played a part in barrel seating. The trigger was adjustable. Our trigger operated with refinement, breaking at just a hair less than 3 pounds on average. We thought the grip helped provide trigger control.



Desert Tech can also provide optics and mounting components as part of the build. The Kahles scope mounts are $365. The scope has its windage adjustment on the left side and the scope mount has an integrated bubble level. Machined for 34mm tubes (30mm inserts are available), it was sturdy and mounted willingly on the Picatinny rail.

four barrel-retention screws found on the right-hand side of the rifle located above the trigger guard, and you are done.

At the range, our first concern was how would we remove the bolt and clean the barrel to perform a barrel break-in routine, even though a Desert Tech representative assured us break-in was unnecessary. The manual said just run a bore snake through the chamber when accuracy erodes, but we also wanted to check the chamber and make sure the bore was clear before firing. We soon found out the buttpad and bolt stop were a cinch to remove. The buttpad and its three supplied spacers were each fit with their own individual release tabs. In the case of long-action chamberings, the face of the innermost spacer acted as bolt stop. Our short-action 6.5 Creedmoor model was fit with a plug inside the bolt channel to act as a bolt stop. The bolt was operated via a long handle with large balled end. The stock also had an adjustment to raise the comb, the surface of which was very comfortable. There was a monopod seamlessly integrated into the lower section of the stock that was adjustable by rotation. The base of the bipod was circular, measuring about 1.7 inches across with knurled edges. The threaded stem of the bipod was 0.75 inches wide and quite sturdy. The wide base did a good job of keeping the gun level.

Another surprise for our team was how quickly we adapted to operating the bolt, positioned as it was behind our right hand and directly above the magazine. We really didn't think anything of it after a few shots. Magazine-release buttons were located on both sides of the stock, but behind the strong hand, so that was a little awkward. The ambidextrous two-position safety was situated directly above the trigger so the index finger could easily slide it forward for Fire and rearward for Safe. The grip filled our hands pleasingly, and in our view lent much to controlling the rifle and indexing the trigger. While the SRS Covert model was designed for shorter barrels and offers a limited amount of forend and rail, our SRS-A1 had room for a 21-inch-long Picatinny rail at 12 o'clock, with two additional sections of 3-inch rail supplied and ready to bolt on where desired.

A six-round magazine was standard with an option for 10-rounders, which were tall thanks to the single-column design. Loading the mags required depressing the follower and sliding rounds in from the front. The bolt action was like so many things about the Desert Tech. Not fancy, it just plain worked without a hint of difficulty. The SRS-A1 preferred feeding directly from the magazine and did not like being single-round or top loaded unless you pushed the round forward into the chamber. The trigger was flawless, presenting a consistent 2.8 to 3.1 pounds of resistance.

Desert Tech suggested we try the SRS-A1 in combination with add-ons and supplied a Harris Bipod and bipod (rail-to -stud) adaptor, and the Kahles 3-12x50mm scope mounted using Desert Tech's special $365 mount system that offered six mounting screws per ring and an integral bubble-level. But it didn't really matter if we shot the SRS-A1 using the $3200 Kahles or the $1000 Steiner. We printed consistent sub-MOA groups with little effort. The 143-grain Hornady ELD-X rounds produced an average of about 0.65 inches across for five-shot groups. The 147-grain ELD Match rounds were better, producing an average of 0.55 inches. Our best groups ranging in size center to center from about 0.35 inches to 0.55 inches were fired after loading the Desert Tech SRS-A1 with Winchester's 140-grain boat-tail hollow-point Match.

Our Team Said: The Desert Tech proved to be shooter friendly despite our initial apprehension. The integral monopod was voted the best such component we've used. The trigger was a dream



The $1450 Howa Chassis Rifle, or HCR, drew a lot of attention at American Shooting Centers public range. For our team, it wasn't just the multi-cam anodized finish or the Cerakote barreled action. Consisting of a 6.5 Creedmoor Howa barreled action and Accurate-Mag chassis, the HCR had a very solid feel and an air of simplicity. The LUTH-AR buttstock was comfortable and adjusted quickly and easily. Accuracy with the 140-grain bullets was in the 0.6-inch range.

to shoot, and operating the safety proved instinctive. If the initial cost was high, it was not out of line with other high-end rifles, and you'll never need to pay a gunsmith to change caliber, replace a worn barrel, or change to a different barrel length to suit a specific task. In terms of accuracy, we've come to expect small groups from this cartridge, but its performance shooting every brand of commercial 140-grain Sierra BTHP bullets we tried will put many handloads to shame. We especially liked the Desert Tech scope mount for its ease of mounting. Portability was unmatched for a fixed-stock rifle prepared for long-distance shooting.

Legacy Sports Howa HCR HCRL92502MCCFDES 6.5 Creedmoor, $1450

Legacy Sports of Reno, Nevada offers several different caliber barreled-actions by Howa that are ready for the stock of your choice. The Howa Chassis Rifle, or HCR for short, consisted of a Howa barreled action seated in a Sportrac Chassis from Accurate-Mag of Monroe, Connecticut. Available calibers for HCR include 243 Winchester and 308 Winchester, but our choice was a 24-inch-long barrel chambered for 6.5 Creedmoor, and it was as striking in appearance as any do-it-yourselfer could imagine. The one-piece aluminum chassis offered a multi-cam anodized finish and matching FDE Cerakote on the barreled action. This combination never failed to get a reaction at the public range.

The chassis was extremely rigid, including the receiver, buttstock lead, and forend, which floated about 0.28 inches from the outer diameter of the No. 6-contour barrel. Bedding was accomplished by a V-block utilizing the original action screws plus a substantial recoil lug. The barrel measured about 0.82 inches in diameter at the muzzle, which was not threaded but did offer a recessed crown. The magazine well was integrated as well, offering a vertical paddle-release lever directly in front of the trigger guard. The vertical pistol grip was a plastic component typical to the AR-15/AR-10 platform and featured a beavertail

LEGACY SPORTS HOWA HCR HCRL92502MCCFDES 6.5 CREEDMOOR, $1450

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

Marred by a feeding problem that should be fixable, the HCR should grade higher based on its ergonomics and simplicity.



Action Type	Bolt, 2 lugs	Stock	Aluminum chassis
Overall Length	43.5 to 47.5 in.	Bedding	V-block
Barrel	24.0 in. long, 1:8 in. twist	Buttplate	Plastic
Overall Height w/o Scope	7.0 in.	Length of Pull (standard/set)	13.6 to 17.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	10.25 lbs.	Receiver Scope-Base Pattern	W'by Vanguard
Weight Loaded	11.3 lbs.	Trigger Pull Weight	2.75 lbs.
Sight Radius	NA	Safety	2-position lever
Action	Cerakote 6061-T6 aluminum	Warranty	None written
Barrel	Cerakote Steel	Telephone	(775) 828-0555
Magazine	10-rd. detachable box	Website	LegacySports.com
Buttstock	LUTH-AR MBA-3, adj. height & LOP	Made In	Japan/USA



The HCR takes design cues from a number of different rifles. The buttstock support tube was structured like an AR-15/AR-10 adjustable buffer tube. The grip was also an AR component. The magazine-release paddle was much like an M14 or M1A. The one-piece 20-MOA scope mount ($70 from EGWguns.com) shared its mounting-screw pattern with the Weather Vanguard series of rifles.



The LUTH-AR buttstock was adjustable for length of pull at the mock buffer tube and by loosening the rearward locking wheel. Fine grooves in the mating surfaces enhanced lockup. The buttpad itself could be lowered, raised, or cast to one side by threading the mounting screws through different reliefs on it rack-like design. The matching reinforced nylon buttpad was standard, but we shot with the black rubber pad for greater comfort. Comb height was adjusted with the forward locking wheel. There was also a Picatinny rail on the bottom for connecting a stabilizing device, such as a monopod, and the forward surface was contoured to work with a support bag or the web of the shooter's support hand.



Cerakote-finished to match the barreled action, the two-lug bolt was easy to operate.

RUGER HAWKEYE MARK IV VARMINT TARGET 17980
6.5 CREEDMOOR, $1139
GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

Maybe we should ding its grade further due to its rough bolt action, but in terms of accuracy, the Hawkeye deserved an A.



Action Type	Bolt, 2 lugs
Overall Length	48.0 in.
Barrel	28.0 in. long, 1:8 in. twist, matte stainless steel
Overall Height w/o Scope	5.75 in.
Weight Unloaded	9.5 lbs.
Weight Loaded (147 grain)	9.75 lbs.
Sight Radius	NA
Action	Matte stainless steel; milled in scope base
Magazine	4 rds., internal box
Stock	Black laminate one piece; rubber buttplate
Stock Length of Pull	13.5 in.
Stock Bedding	Direct to wood free float
Trigger Pull Weight	3.0 lbs.
Safety	3-position lever
Warranty	None written
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
Website	Ruger.com
Made In	U.S.A.



Ruger laminate buttstocks are time proven to be as strong as they are handsome, not to mention much less prone to warping than solid wood. Our Hawkeye VT featured a black-laminate stock with a wide, flat forend ideal for benchrest shooting.



Most Ruger rifles, including the Mark IV, Model 77, and Mini semi-automatics offer a scope base integrated into the receivers. Our Hawkeye VT was shipped with matching proprietary rings, but we preferred mounting a $33 Burris Ruger-to-Weaver adaptor for greater flexibility in terms of ring choice and eye relief. Scope alignment was more complex, however, because each base was windage adjustable.



The Hawkeye rifle utilizes a Mauser-type controlled-feed bolt action. Lockup was very strong but we found loading from the internal box magazine to be difficult. Top-loading single rounds was smooth in comparison.

extension across the web of the shooter's hand. We liked the way the grip was smoothly integrated into the receiver. The bolt-lever handle was one-piece with the lever itself and slightly oversized. The trigger was black in color, and so was the two-position safety lever that rocked only about 0.25 inches rearward to its Safe position. The bolt-release lever was a small sheet-metal tab on the left side of the receiver. Our HCR did not ship with a scope mount, so we purchased a 20-MOA one-piece Picatinny rail from EGWguns.com for $70.

The supplied stock by LUTH-AR mounted on an AR-15/style tube that offered five positions altering length of pull. Loosening the locking wheel and extending the buttpad added an additional 1.1 inches. A second locking wheel allowed the operator to raise the comb about 0.8 inches. Adjustments remained true thanks in part to fine grooves on the mating surfaces, even when the locking wheels were not completely tight. The comb was comfortable to use, and there was a thumb-hook profile at the front face of the buttstock. The bottom ridge of the buttstock offered a Picatinny rail for attaching a monopod. Like the rest of the unit, the buttstock pad was constructed of glass-filled nylon but offered adjustability for height, as well as offset to the right or left. This was achieved by a series of horizontal channels, or a rack so to speak, through which the mounting screws could be secured. Whereas military and police often wear body armor that coincidentally absorbs recoil, we opted for the rubberized version of the buttpad from LUTH-AR aftermarket supply. This made quite a difference in shooter comfort.

At the range, we found that the sub-3-pound trigger stroke began with a take-up that did not subtract from trigger-pull weight. In our view, it should not be considered a two-stage trigger. We also found that the magazine would not seat high enough to allow rounds to be extracted from the magazine by the oncoming bolt.



The $1139 6.5 Creedmoor Ruger Hawkeye MK IV Varmint Target rifle was adept at benchrest shooting. The Ruger featured a heavy laminate stock with wide forend and a 28-inch-long barrel. Loaded with Hornady's 143-grain ELD-X Precision Hunter rounds, we were able to narrowly outshoot the much more expensive Desert Tech SRS-A1 rifle.

Inserting the magazine with a good slap on the bottom cured the problem, but only for the first round. Whenever the magazine dropped away, we had to push upward on the base pad while working the bolt to get the rounds to feed. The problem persisted regardless of whether the 10-round magazine was full or held only the last round. We quickly ordered a second magazine directly from Accurate-Mag.com, ($66). The new magazine seemed to fit tighter, but the problem was not solved. We think changing the magazine catch would be the next step.

Even with the distraction of single-round shooting, we were able to land some tight groups. Final averages measured 0.8 inches, firing both Hornady's 147-grain ELD Match and 143-grain Precision Hunter rounds. Most impressive of all was a 0.65-inch average for a five-shot group firing the Winchester 140-grain Match.

Our Team Said: Marred by a feeding problem, the HCR had an extremely solid feel mixed with a sense of simplicity. Its 10.25-pound base weight was evenly distributed, making it surprisingly portable. The LUTH buttstock offered adjustability that was quick and sure. We had expected the stock to feel cheap and plastic, but it proved to be neither, and, in our view, the synthetic construction helped absorb recoil. The rubber buttpad was certainly a plus as well. We were impressed with the strength of the chassis system and thought we had only scratched the surface of the HCR's accuracy potential.

Ruger Hawkeye MkIV Varmint Target 17980 6.5 Creedmoor, $1139

The first time we covered a Varmint Target rifle from Ruger was in the September 2008 issue of Gun Tests. It coincided with the introduction of a new cartridge, the 204 Ruger, and we had time to shoot it at prairie dogs in North Dakota. The subject of this evaluation features another newish round, the 6.5 Creedmoor, which has also been championed by Ruger, especially in the Ruger Precision Rifle. Nevertheless, our test rifle was a bit retro in comparison, utilizing a Mauser-type controlled feed action instead of Ruger's new American action. Our Hawkeye Mark IV VT rifle was based on a heavy laminate stock and featured a 28-inch-long barrel, the longest barrel we've seen on a rifle in some time. Measuring 48 inches in overall length made finding a suitable carrying case a little bit of a challenge.

There was nothing trick about this rifle. It had a four-round internal magazine and hinged floorplate. The barrel was not threaded, but did offer a recessed crown. The stock was black laminate, not camouflaged. The action was listed as matte stainless, but some people think of it as Ruger gray. The action was topped with machined lugs to fit Ruger's proprietary rings. It had a brief rubber buttpad and a three-position safety that allowed the chamber to be emptied by working the bolt while the trigger was disabled. One thing this rifle had that the 2008 model did not have was a trigger with little or no free take-up. The trigger traveled in a smooth arc, letting off at 3.0 pounds every time.

In mounting our Steiner scope, we decided to apply a Burris two-piece Ruger-to-Weaver Zee Ring Adapter (Brownells.com 118-410-990WB, $33). Bear in mind there is nothing wrong with the proprietary rings and you can order the height and inner-diameter rings you want with the rifle. But we've had this base on our 2008 Ruger for about nine years and prefer the versatility it brings in terms of ring position and therefore eye relief. However, the first time you install the mount you have to be mindful of the mounting screws that lock in via a push-pull motion that can interfere with windage alignment. We used Brownells' Sleeved alignment rods (080-918-000WB, $65) to make sure the rings were straight. At the range, we learned that the bolt action was rough, and rounds weren't always eager to feed from the internal magazine. Removing the bolt for cleaning was also full of resistance. Oiling the bolt-release lever (found on the left side of the action) did help, but no amount of lubrication in lieu of break-in or hand fitting was going to improve the bolt action. We finally decided we didn't want to be distracted by fighting with the bolt, so we top-loaded rounds for the remainder of our accuracy session. The big rifle, with its nice, wide flat forend, liked this routine. Once chambered, rounds were securely locked into place. The trigger was a pleasure to work, and we were rewarded with groups worthy of rifles costing three times as much. Measured center to center, our five-shot group average measured 0.7 inches with the Winchester 140-grain ammunition, but our best effort measured 0.55 inches across. Firing the 143-grain and 147-grain Hornady rounds, we landed 0.40-inch-wide groups, but the 147-grain ELD Match rounds also produced groups measuring just less than three-quarters of an inch. Groups fired with the 143-grain Precision Hunter rounds varied little from a measurement of 0.40 inches center to center.

Our Team Said: We weren't impressed with the Hawkeye's sticky feeding or balky bolt release, so we limited our shooting to top-loading individual rounds. But we were impressed with this rifle's accuracy. Once a round was loaded, the lockup was solid, and the trigger was remarkably consistent. This is not a tactical or a patrol rifle. But for shooting from a bench on the open range or at a match, this gun is a flat-out bargain.

Written and photographed by Roger Eckstine, using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

VALUE GUIDE: RECENT BOLT-ACTION RIFLES

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Thompson Center Compass No. 10071 22-250 Remington, $399	Feb. 2017	A	Simple, straightforward, and inexpensive. Delivered sub-minute-of-angle groups with all rounds tested.
Browning X-Bolt Micro Midas 035346209 22-250 Rem., $860	Feb. 2017	B+	This is a super-handy rifle for the whole family, and it can fit just about anywhere.
CZ USA 557 Sporter Short Action 04806 243 Winchester, $792	Feb. 2017	B+	The 557's refined looks belied its rugged durability, but its heavier weight did not seem to tame recoil.
Legacy Sports Howa Mini Action HMA90622MCC+ 6.5 Grendel, $855	Feb. 2017	C	This otherwise top-grade rifle was spoiled by weak magazine retention.
Ruger Precision Rifle 18008 6.5 Creedmoor, $1599	Nov. 2016	A	This is another solid effort by Ruger. They took an already good gun and made it a touch better.
Savage Arms Model 12 LRP 19137 6.5 Creedmoor, $1252	Jan. 2016	A	The Model 12 LRP shot the smallest groups of the test with every round we tried.
Ruger Precision Rifle 18005 6.5 Creedmoor, $1399	Jan. 2016	A-	Adjustability and AR-15 ergonomics make this rifle appealing and easy to shoot
Howa 24-Inch HB 6.5 Creedmoor, HKF92507KH+AB $1000	Jan. 2016	B+	Many of the benefits of a heavy-caliber hunting rifle with very little of the punishing abuse.
CZ-USA 527 Varmint 03066 17 Hornet, $725	Feb. 2014	A	Highly accurate hot or cold, with standard and set triggers that didn't vary in pull weight.
Ruger K77/17-VHZ 7212 17 Hornet, $969	Feb. 2014	A-	This is a smooth, rapid-cycling full-size rifle with a crisp single-action trigger.
Browning T-Bolt Target/Varmint No. 025176270 17 HMR, $799	Sept. 2013	A-	The T-bolt is almost as fast as a semi-auto. It is a classy rifle that is fun to shoot.
Ruger K77/17VMBBZ No. 7027 17 HMR, $969	Sept. 2013	A-	Shot every load tested to 1 MOA or better. Full-length barrel maximized velocity and power.
Weatherby Vanguard 2 Deluxe 257 Weatherby Magnum, $1149	April 2013	A	The Vanguard has the same stock design as the Mark V and it works just as well.
Howa Hogue Youth 2N1COMBO No. HWR66204+ 243 Win., $641	April 2013	A	Trouble free, capable of delivering MOA accuracy and adaptable to any size shooter.
Thompson Center Dimension No. 8402 243 Win., $679	April 2013	A-	This gets a high grade based on accuracy and a remarkably simple procedure for caliber changes.
Ruger American No. 6904 243 Winchester, $449	Feb. 2013	A	The Ruger American delivered performance that was worthy of a much more expensive rifle.
Mossberg 4X4 No. 27657 243 Winchester, $471	Feb. 2013	A-	The Mossberg 4X4 recoiled less or at least was the more comfortable rifle to shoot.

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.

38 Super Loads: We Like Buffalo Bore's Jacketed HPs

In what some would consider to be a boutique round for self-defense, these loads performed really well, offering top-line accuracy, deep penetration in water, and excellent expansion.

The 38 Automatic Colt Pistol Super cartridge isn't our most popular handgun cartridge, but in the loyalty of a small following it is unique. The 38 ACP Super must be understood as to its potential. All modern loads are marked 38 ACP Super +P, but all loads are in the same pressure range of safety demanded by the SAAMI, despite very different performance. Many are loaded below the potential of the cartridge. The 38 ACP, introduced in 1900, is no longer in regular production. This is because the original 38 ACP, introduced in 1899, was later upgraded to the powerful 38 ACP Super. Though the cartridge-case dimensions are identical, the Super is the much hotter cartridge. Modern SAAMI standards called for the 38 Super to be labeled 38 ACP Super +P, which is confusing. While some of the modern loads are hotter than others, all are safe for a 38 ACP Super handgun in good condition. The old double-link Colt 38 ACP self loaders should never be fired with Super loads. The 38 Super was once a handloading proposition for maximum performance. Using 9mm JHP bullets and sometimes heavy hard-cast 38 Special lead bullets, handloaders upgraded the 38 Super. The 115-grain JHP was jolted to 1400 fps or beyond. Today Cor-Bon, Buffalo Bore, and Double Tap offer high-performance loads rivaling some of the hotter handloads of yore. The 38 Super may be enjoying an upsurge in popularity as both Federal Cartridge Company and SIG Sauer have introduced new JHP loads for it. We were able to find 12 personal-defense loads and four FMJ loads. For all the testing, we fired the rounds out of a Rock Island Armory 1911, a reliable and affordable 38 Super launchpad. It's a standard Government Model steel-frame pistol with 5-inch barrel.

First, we tested the full-metal-jacket loads for use in competition and general shooting. We recorded basic accuracy, velocity, and energy for these rounds, but as you'll see in the accompanying table, their widths, weights, and penetration readings are all the same. The FMJs didn't expand, didn't shed weight, and shot through our water-jug lineup, putting them at +24 inches, penetration beyond what we recommend for self-defense.

The Fiocchi 129-grain FMJ cost us $22.25/50 at Luckygunner.com and proved to be the most accurate by a margin, with a clean burn and excellent overall performance. It is the Best Buy for accuracy and economy. The SIG Sauer 125-grain FMJ loading ($23/50



Buffalo Bore's 115-grain JHP load provided excellent performance. We had yet to see the XTP bullet fragment, but the 1421 fps load did just that.



We preferred the Buffalo Bore 124-grain JHP to the other Buffalo Bore loads. Expansion with the 124-grain bullet was excellent.



The Buffalo Bore 147-grain XTP raised interesting possibilities concerning the 38 Super and heavy bullets. The 147-grain JHP expanded well and drove to a deep 24 inches of water.



38 SUPER LOAD PERFORMANCE DATA

Gun: Rock Island Armory 1911 with 5-inch barrel	Average Velocity (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Average Accuracy (in.)	Power Factor (pf)	Expanded Width (in.)	Retained Weight (gr.)	Penetration In Water (in.)
SIG Sauer 125-gr. FMJ	1190	393	2.2	148	.357	125/100%	24+
Fiocchi 129-gr. FMJ	1155	382	1.9	149	.357	129/100%	24+
Winchester 130-gr. FMJ	1160	388	3.0	150	.357	130/100%	24+
Prvi 130-gr. FMJ	1189	408	4.0	154	.357	130/100%	24+
Cor-Bon 100-gr. Pow'RBall	1336	396	3.0	134	Frag	30/30%	10
Cor-Bon 115-gr. JHP	1371	479	2.5	158	.68	99/86%	13
Cor-Bon 125-gr. DPX	1260	440	2.2	160	.62	125/100%	18
Buffalo Bore 115-gr. JHP	1421	515	2.25	163	.55	100/87%	18
Buffalo Bore 124-gr. JHP	1290	458	1.9	160	.64	124/100%	19
Buffalo Bore 147-gr. JHP	1099	394	2.2	161	.54	147/100%	24
Double Tap 115-gr. JHP	1419	515	2.6	163	.50	55/48%	13
Double Tap 115-gr. TAC	1366	476	2.4	157	.63	115/100%	18
Double Tap 125-gr. JHP	1402	545	2.1	175	.81	124/99%	16
Federal AE 115-gr. JHP	1198	366	2.25	137	.55	Frag 84/73%	9
SIG Sauer 124-gr. V Crown	1203	398	1.9	149	.60	124/100%	14
Winchester 125-gr. Silvertip	1190	393	2.4	149	.62	122/98%	16

Notes: *Average Velocity and standard deviation readings were obtained by firing four five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. Ambient temperature: 86 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. ● The accuracy figures are the average of two five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 15-yard target. ● To calculate IPSC power factor, multiply bullet weight in grains by the velocity in fps, then divide by 1000. ● The retained-weight column shows the recovered bullet weight as a percentage of the actual bullet weight.*

at Ableammo.com) was close behind the Fiocchi loading, with little real difference other than price. While the Prvi Partizan 130-grain FMJ was less expensive ($20.75/50 at Bulkammo.com), it did not burn as cleanly nor was it as accurate. The Winchester 130-grain FMJ was the most expensive at $31/50 from TargetsportsUSA.com, and it was middle of the pack in terms of performance. Accordingly, we'd rate the Fiocchi as an **A**, the SIG an **A-**, the Prvi Partizan a **B**, and the Winchester a **B-**.

We looked for what we always look for in personal-defense loads. This is reliability first, then accuracy, a clean powder burn, and a good balance of penetration and expansion. We prefer a load that penetrates and expands over a load that fragments. In the 38 Super, there were loads that penetrated well but also fragmented, and we had to give them a passing grade based on penetration. The full-power 38 Super is similar to the 357 Magnum with 110- to 125-grain bullets, but the Super is much more controllable and has less muzzle blast and recoil. Relatively small charges of fast-burning powder create less recoil energy than larger charges of slow-burning powder. Even the fastest loads did not create muzzle flash and blast as sometimes seen with the 357 Magnum. The 38 Super isn't in the class with the 357 Magnum as far as heavy hunting loads, and the Magnum at its best will beat the 38 Super, but with factory defense loads, the two are comparable, with the 38 Super having the advantage in some cases. For your convenience, we have added the 357 Magnum results panel from earlier this year so you can compare the loads.

We were able to test three loads from Buffalo Bore. These included 115-, 124-, and 147-grain loads. All of these used the Hornady XTP bullet, a proven projectile for obtaining excellent penetration and expansion. These bullets were designed for the 9mm Luger, and things get interesting when the bullet is supercharged by 200 fps. As an example, one rater noted he was no enthusiast concerning the 147-grain load, but that was before it was tested. Here are the results round by round:

Buffalo Bore 115-gr. JHP

We bought this for $28.79/20 rounds at Buffalobore.com. This load came out of the Rock Island's 5-inch barrel at an average of 1421 fps. Muzzle signature was limited and function was excellent. This load penetrated an average of 18 inches with good expansion. We saw something we have never seen before with the XTP bullet, including running a 90-grain 9mm XTP at 1600 fps in a 38 Super handload. The XTP bullet core and the jacket separated in two of three water-jug tests. Penetration, however, was not compromised.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Buffalo Bore 124-gr. JHP

We bought this for $28.79/20 rounds from Buffalobore.com. The 124-grain XTP never fragmented or separated.

357 MAGNUM LOAD PERFORMANCE DATA

Gun: Smith & Wesson Model 66 with 4-inch barrel	Average Velocity (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Average Accuracy (in.)	Power Factor (pf)	Expanded Width (in.)	Retained Weight (gr.)	Penetration In Water (in.)
Cor-Bon 100-gr. Pow'RBall	1433	456	2.0	143	FRAG	60/60%	9
Cor-Bon 110-gr. JHP	1373	460	1.3	151	0.66	107/97%	15
Winchester 110-gr. JHP	1260	388	1.8	139	FRAG	70/64%	9
Black Hills 125-gr. JHP	1370	520	0.9	171	0.72	125/100%	14
Buffalo Bore 125-gr. TAC	1293	464	1.3	162	0.73	125/100%	14
Hornady 125-gr. FTX	1318	482	1.3	165	0.72	125/100%	12
Federal 130-gr. Hydra-Shok	1480	632	1.0	192	FRAG	78/60%	10
Buffalo Bore 140-gr. TAC	1243	480	1.0	174	0.73	140/100%	16
Hornady 140-gr. FTX	1380	592	1.2	193	0.64	140/100%	17
Winchester 145-gr. Silvertip	1290	536	1.0	187	0.69	130/90%	16

Notes: *Average Velocity and standard deviation readings were obtained by firing four five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. Ambient temperature: 68 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. ● The accuracy figures are the average of two five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 15-yard target. ● To calculate IPSC power factor, multiply bullet weight in grains by the velocity in fps, then divide by 1000. ● The retained-weight column shows the recovered bullet weight as a percentage of the actual bullet weight.*

Function was good and accuracy was the best of the test for these high-performance loads. The balance of expansion and penetration is ideal, with a solid 19 inches of penetration. While the 115-grain Buffalo Bore loading is a good, strong 38 Super loading, we liked the performance of the 124-grain better. Accuracy is as good as any of the other high-performance loads and better than most.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A



Right: We used the Rock Island Armory 1911 38 Super for the majority of testing.

Buffalo Bore 147-gr. JHP

We also bought this at Buffalobore.com for $28.79/20 rounds. This is the heaviest load in the test. While high velocity is exciting, a 147-grain bullet at 1099 fps is interesting. This is about 100 fps faster than most 9mm loads in this bullet weight. A valid comparison one rater made is that the 9mm is a 38 Special, while the 38 Super is a 357 Magnum. The 38 Super isn't a Magnum, but the cartridge actually has more velocity and energy than many 357 Magnum personal defense loads, particularly when they are fired in personal-defense handguns with abbreviated barrels. The 147-grain XTP load penetrated a deep 24 inches in water. This is the greatest penetration of any load tested. For those living in a climate in which heavily clothed attackers are the rule, this heavy 38 Super has much promise. We would choose a 124-grain for most needs, but for what the 147-grain load is designed to do it cannot be faulted.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A



When velocity and energy are compared, the 38 Super in a 5-inch-barrel pistol and the 4-inch-barrel 357 Magnum are comparable.



The 38 Super should never be fired in a 38 ACP handgun such as this one. The double links may break and cause injury.

Cor-Bon 100-gr. Pow'RBall

We bought this round for $15/20 at Surplusammo.com. We were able to test three Cor-Bon loads. The first was the 100-grain Pow'RBall. This is a hollowpoint with a polymer ball in the nose. This bullet is designed to feed in any handgun that will feed ball ammo. The polymer

ball is driven into the bullet to instigate expansion. Our senior rater has written three books on the 1911 and regards the 38 Super as more feed reliable than the 45 ACP or 9mm 1911, and the Pow'RBall load does not detract from that opinion. This load isn't as fast as the last lot we tested. At 1336 fps, it is in 9mm territory. Control was good. Penetration was short at only 10 inches. We rated this load down based on poor penetration and because of its only fair accuracy. More penetration is needed for personal defense, in our opinion. For our shooters, there would have to be a particular need for frangible performance to choose this load.

GUN TESTS GRADE: C



Cor-Bon's Pow'RBall load is a light-recoil load, pleasant to fire, but it came up short on penetration.

Cor-Bon 115-gr. JHP

We bought this for $16.74/20 at CheaperThanDirt.com. The Cor-Bon 115-grain JHP broke 1372 fps on average. The bullet fragmented in 13 inches of water. Accuracy and feed reliability were good. We would have preferred this load not fragment. Just the same, this is a powerful loading with plenty of energy. The Cor-Bon 115-grain JHP offers power to maximize the 38 Super for personal defense and is superior to the average 110-grain 357 Magnum loading.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B



Cor-Bon's Pow'RBall loading will always feed due to the polymer round-nose design.

Cor-Bon 125-gr. DPX

This cost us $37.95/20 at a Cabela's, making this the most expensive load by a mile. It was also the most accurate Cor-Bon load and one of the most accurate tested. The all-copper bullet expanded well, maintaining good penetration. At 1260 fps, the Cor-Bon load penetrated 18 inches of water and gave good expansion. There is nothing to fault at that level of performance. It is an acceptable defense loading compared to the other loads and is an excellent all-round 38 Super loading. No 9mm +P equals this level of performance. It is expensive like all loads using the Barnes X Bullet.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A



Cor-Bon's 115-grain JHP is a credible design with high velocity. It fragmented, but penetration was a solid 13 inches on average.

Federal American Eagle 115-gr. JHP

We bought this for $23/50 at Ableammo.com. This is a recent introduction offered in 50-round boxes at a fair price. This is a great all-round practice load. Accuracy and economy are good. While anyone would be well advised to get out of the way of a 115-grain JHP at 1200 fps, this load is really in 9mm territory. We rated it down a grade based on low velocity and energy. However, you can curve it back up to an A if you want a training load. It isn't as expensive as some ball ammunition, but if pressed into service, it offers 9mm performance for personal defense.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B



We were impressed by the steady, consistent expansion of the Cor-Bon DPX loading.

Double Tap 115-gr. JHP

We bought this for $25.42/20 at Doubletap.com. We had to shake our heads and double-check the chronograph

on this one, but the figures were correct. The Double Tap load averaged 1419 fps, while the Buffalo Bore load averaged 1421 fps, very close, but with different bullet designs and performance. The DT load has plenty of power and accuracy. The bullet fragmented and did not penetrate as much as some of the other loads, but it depends on the mission and preference. We noted something with this bullet. While other bullets that fragmented left a shard of jacket hanging in the water when the jugs were examined, the Double Tap bullet fragmented and some of the jacket shards were stuck in the side of the water jug. Some claim to like a fragmenting bullet because secondary shards are created that do damage beyond the bullet path. If you want that kind of performance, then this is your round.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Double Tap 115-gr. TAC JHP

We bought this for $29.95/20 at Doubletap.com. This TAC load breaks 1366 fps. The all-copper bullet, due to its design and less weight for the bullet length, rides a bit deeper in the cartridge case than the standard JHP bullets and cuts into powder capacity. A good strong 9mm +P may break 1300 fps with a standard 115-grain JHP and 1200 fps with a TAC-type bullet. The DT TAC load offers an excellent balance of expansion and penetration. This is a viable personal defense choice many will prefer.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Double Tap 125-gr. Bonded JHP

We bought this for $25.42/20 at Doubletap.com. This load breaks an average of 1402 fps and offers the greatest energy of any load tested. Expansion of the recovered bullet was also greater. Recoil was greater than the other loads. Accuracy was good and penetration and expansion good as well. For those wanting the most from their 38 Super, this load cannot be faulted. The bullet stayed together and expanded to more than .80 caliber after penetrating 16 inches of water.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

SIG Sauer Elite 124-gr. V Crown JHP

We bought this for $16/20 at Ableammo.com. SIG Sauer has recently entered the ammunition business, and the loads are making a hit with the public. This loading features the SIG V Crown hollow point and nickel-plated cartridge cases. Feed reliability and accuracy were good. This was the most accurate personal-defense load tested. The V Crown load breaks 1213 fps from the 5-inch-barrel RIA pistol. This is a good load for most uses, but it is not as strong as some of the other loads. Along with the best accuracy laurels, the SIG Elite load was the most affordable loading tested. We rated it down based on what was really 9mm +P performance compared to the other loads.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B





DoubleTap's 115-grain JHP fragmented. But the 115-grain TAC load with the all-copper Barnes TAC bullet, right, provided good results, driving deep and expanding well in this DoubleTap load. The copper petals of the TAC bullet expanded well at this 38 Super load's velocity.





The DoubleTap 125-grain bonded JHP offered the greatest expansion and also the greatest energy of any load tested.





The Federal American Eagle's best attribute was the fair price for 50 cartridges. The 115-grain JHP fragmented.



The SIG Sauer Elite 38 Super 125-grain JHP gave very consistent accuracy and expansion.



Winchester's 125-grain Silvertip gave consistently good expansion while throwing off a few shards of jacket.

Winchester 125-gr. Silvertip

This cost us $49.70/50 at Ableammo.com. While this is a 50-round box, this ammunition is expensive, although at $24.85 per 25 rounds, it isn't as expensive when broken up and compared to everyone's else 20-round box. The Federal American Eagle load is much less expensive, as an example. The Winchester Silvertip is a standard 38 Super load that has been around a long time. Accuracy and feed reliability are good. Recoil is modest. This load uses a heavier bullet than the 9mm 115-grain Silvertip and velocity is perhaps 30 fps higher. It isn't up to the full potential of the 38 Super, but some would prefer this load for control and accuracy.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Written and photographed by R.K. Campbell, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.*

10 Things Gun Owners Get Wrong About Their Self-Defense Rights

We usually focus on what guns to buy, but there are also legal consequences for the use of firearms that defenders should know about. Here are some of the most important concepts.

By Michele Byington

For six years, I was an attorney for a national firearms legal-defense program. I represented gun owners who acted in self-defense and traveled the country speaking on firearms issues. I've taken countless questions regarding a person's legal right to self-defense. Over the years, I started to see a pattern — people have the same questions. From your brand-new gun owner to the seasoned carrier, the questions and misconceptions were the same. I've heard it all, and nothing catches me off-guard, so I've drawn on these experiences to put together the top 10 misconceptions gun owners have when it comes to their self-defense rights.



Attorney Michele Byington specialized in self-defense cases for six years. She points out that most gun owners, many law-enforcement officers, and quite a few district attorneys and judges don't know important elements of self-defense law.

1. Drag The Body Into The House

Please don't. Tampering with evidence is a crime! Do not remove or manipulate anything that could be considered evidence. Evidence is any physical material or intangible information relating to the incident that will be used to ascertain the truth. A body, gun, witness statements/testimony, or video/audio surveillance are all considered evidence.

A defensive use of deadly force outside of the home is not automatically an illegal act. Violent crimes occur every day in public places where defensive deadly force may legally be used. The underlying issue is whether the person using deadly force acted reasonably, given the specific set of circumstances. If it comes to light that evidence was manipulated, not only is that a separate crime, but it makes a person look unreasonable and not justified in their use of deadly force.

Why is this a common misconception? It may be because of the popular legal concept called the Castle Doctrine. Virtually every state has its own version of the Castle Doctrine, which justifies a homeowner's use of deadly force against an unlawful intruder entering his or her home. In any use of force or deadly force scenario, a person must act reasonably. In Castle Doctrine situations, where an intruder unlawfully enters an occupied habitation, the homeowner is given a powerful presumption of reasonableness. This is an incredible legal protection because prosecutors are hesitant to pursue criminal charges against a homeowner who uses deadly force against an intruder. Plus, it will be hard to find a jury who will convict a homeowner who used deadly force to defend his or her family. Prosecutors hate losing cases.

With that said, people find themselves the victim of violent crimes outside of the home and are legally justified in using deadly force in self-defense. There is absolutely no need to touch or drag anything anywhere!

2. The Only Time a Gun Should Be Displayed Is If You're Going To Shoot It

Many in the gun community disagree with this statement. In my legal opinion, if a person draws his or her weapon, there is no requirement to shoot. There is a big difference between a display and a discharge, both practically and legally. Legally speaking, a display is typically considered the use of force, as opposed to the use of deadly force. For instance, under Texas law, if a person displays a firearm with the sole intent of creating apprehension in another person to deter further action, Texas considers this display to be the use of force — not deadly force. However, there are several states, such as Virginia, that say the threat of deadly force, such as a display of a firearm, is considered deadly force under the law. Every state's law is different,

so be sure to check your state's specific stance on this issue. A discharge of a firearm in the vicinity of another person, whether the intent is to scare, injure, or kill, will likely be considered the use of deadly force under the eyes of the law in any state.

Depending on the situation and state law, a person may be justified in using force, but not deadly force. In other words, it could be perfectly legal to display a gun in self-defense to deter a potential attack, but a crime to pull the trigger. Every day, violent crimes such as robbery, sexual assault, and aggravated/armed assault are deterred by the mere production of a gun. Once that gun is pulled in self-defense, the likely result (hopefully) is the perpetrator will think twice before continuing an attack. The goal is simple — to stop the threat.

There is no legal difference between a display and brandishing of a gun. Different states use different terms of art. Both terms describe the presentation of a gun to another person in a threatening manner. Whether a person pulls his shirt up to reveal a concealed handgun, pulls a gun from a holster and points the barrel towards the ground, or points the gun at another person, it will likely be considered a display/brandish of a firearm. The takeaway here is that if a gun is pulled in self-defense, there is no requirement to pull the trigger.

3. Make Sure There Is Only One Side of the Story

Absolutely not! This statement advocates for unjustifiable murder. Potential attacks may be deterred by the display of a gun. A successful defensive display does not end in death. There will be the law-abiding gun owner's story versus the perpetrator's story — two sides. If I had to take a wild guess, those two stories will be vastly different. The credibility of each individual will be evaluated throughout the duration of the legal process. First, the police will make their own judgments, right or wrong, about a person's statement regarding the sequence of events. Second, a prosecutor and defense attorney will evaluate these statements. Finally, a judge or jury will be the ultimate arbiter of credibility and determine whether they believe a person acted reasonably in displaying or discharging their firearm in self-defense.

Even if deadly force is used and the perpetrator dies, there may be witnesses to the incident. This means there could be several versions of the same story even without the perpetrator's version. If there is a witness or witnesses who corroborate your story, the more credible you become to law enforcement, lawyers, and potentially a jury.

Not convinced? Take the 2014 murder conviction of Byron Smith in Minnesota. Two teenagers broke into his home. Smith set a recorder on a bookshelf to capture the incident. Three shots ring out, leaving one teen dead. Next, several more shots are fired, wounding the second teen. As she is screaming, Smith follows with another shot killing the second teen. When the teen was wounded and no longer a threat to Smith, no further force or deadly force could be legally used. The final "kill shot" was a life sentence in prison for Smith. This case may have turned out differently if there would have been "two sides of the story."

4. It's Legal to Shoot a Trespasser

The exact opposite is true. It is illegal to shoot a trespasser. Many people believe this is a situation that the Castle Doctrine covers. If you learn nothing else from this article, learn this: The Castle Doctrine does not apply to trespass on property, but rather to an unlawful entrance into the occupied habitation. See the difference?

A trespass occurs when someone unlawfully enters or stays on property. For example, a person who walks past a "No Trespass" sign and enters the property is committing a trespass. Or, a person enters property lawfully and subsequently is told to leave. If the person remains on the property, they become a trespasser. It is not lawful to use deadly force in either of these scenarios. A lawful property owner may be able to physically eject a trespasser from his or her property, or call law enforcement to handle the situation completely. Many times, a threat to involve law enforcement will have the intended consequence of terminating the trespass.

If the facts are changed, legal rights change. If a trespasser pulls a crowbar from a backpack and begins to charge toward you, does that make them more than a trespasser? Yes! They are a trespasser, plus an attempted murderer. That is a completely different scenario than



Byington emphasizes that it is illegal to shoot a trespasser who doesn't pose a threat of death or serious bodily injury.

someone unlawfully occupying property. If a trespasser charges toward you with a crowbar in his hand, it is reasonable to believe that individual is going to either put you 6 feet under or in the hospital. If that is the case, you may use deadly force to protect yourself. But, remember, this is someone committing more than a trespass. With a trespass alone, deadly force is not lawful.

5. Invoking the Right to Remain Silent Will Cause the Police to Think You Are Guilty

If the police are suspicious that a crime has been committed, they will have those suspicions whether a person invokes his or her right to remain silent or not. The Bill of Rights delineates ten individual liberties that this country was founded upon. Wars have been fought and lives lost over these rights. Use them! As Americans, we covet the First and Second Amendment, but let us not forget about the Fifth. The Fifth Amendment protects against self-incrimination. In 1966, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled a person must be apprised of their ability to speak with an attorney before and during questioning by law enforcement while under arrest. This is known as the Miranda warning. If a person is under arrest, plus the person is being interrogated, police must Mirandize the person by stating he or she has the right to remain silent and the right to consult with an attorney before making any statements.

Most law-enforcement officials will agree that people talk themselves into an arrest. If a statement is made that does not match the physical evidence or contradicts another witness statement, an arrest is likely. It is law enforcement's duty to secure the scene and collect evidence. They will punt the collected evidence over to the District Attorney's Office, who will determine whether charges will be brought. Police do not make the ultimate determination of charging an individual with a crime; they only have the power to arrest. What happens subsequent to an arrest is completely up to an assistant district attorney. Law enforcement simply advises the assistant district attorney on which route to take. Sometimes the assistant district attorney listens; sometimes the ADA doesn't. The main takeaway is that you may get arrested. However, being arrested is not the same as a conviction. It is safer to keep your mouth shut rather than having to explain "what you really meant" a year later in trial.

After using deadly force, the human body undergoes several physiological changes. Adrenaline dumps into the blood system, causing tunnel vision, loss of feeling in extremities, uncontrollable shaking, and temporary memory loss. Immediately following an incident is not the time to give a detailed statement. Especially a statement that a person is going to be married to for the duration of the investigation and criminal legal process. Many law-enforcement agencies have a policy for their officers not to give a statement for 48 hours following a police-involved shooting. A person is not doing anything that a police officer wouldn't do themselves by invoking the right to remain silent.



As Americans, Byington says, we covet the First and Second Amendment, but sometimes forget about the Fifth Amendment, which protects against self-incrimination.

6. Shooting to Wound Is Better Than Shooting to Kill

This statement is cringeworthy. As noted above, when the trigger is pulled in the vicinity of another human with the intent to threaten, that act will likely be considered the use of deadly force under the law. A person must be in a situation where they would be legally justified in using deadly force in response to the perpetrator's action. Whether the discharge results in a complete miss, an injury, or a death, it will probably be considered the use of deadly force. It all comes down to whether the shooter acted reasonably in discharging the firearm in self-defense. A judge or jury will be the ultimate decider that determines this issue. If a person is shooting to wound, they shouldn't be pulling the trigger at all.

7. Criminals Get Arrested; Not Good Guys

This statement is half right. Criminals do get arrested; however, good guys can be arrested as well. In my experience, it is as easy as one contradicting statement from another witness, usually a third party bystander with no relationship between the shooter and the shot. The bystander will give a statement to police that goes something like this: "Yeah, I saw Person A shoot Person B. He just shot him out of nowhere." The bystander has no knowledge of the events leading up to the defensive response Person A took, or any other surrounding circumstances that went into Person A's decision to use deadly force. Based upon that one statement, police may decide to arrest Person A. I've seen it happen.

Police must have probable cause to arrest an individual. Probable cause is a somewhat low legal standard and is very wishy-washy. It is described as articulable facts that lead law enforcement to the belief that a crime has been committed. In other words, one statement can land another in the county jail.

It is important to remember that just because someone is arrested does not mean he or she is guilty of a crime. As mentioned, it takes probable cause for a person to be the subject of an arrest. To be convicted of a crime, a jury or judge must find beyond a reasonable doubt that a person committed a crime. These are two very

different legal standards. The "beyond a reasonable doubt" standard is the highest legal standard in American jurisprudence, while the "probable cause" standard is more toward the bottom of the list.

8. Gun Modifications and Choice of Ammo May Cause More Legal Liability

No, not really. A lighter trigger pull, night sights, or a tactical flashlight are all popular modifications. These modifications can make a gun more comfortable and more effective defensive tools. Loading a handgun with full-metal-jacket bullets as opposed to jacketed hollowpoints does not make someone blood thirsty. Gun owners should not lose sleep stressing about the "increased" legal liability of a modified handgun or the type of ammo used. It is not outside the realm of reality to imagine a prosecutor stating, "Your client is a killing machine waiting to happen with that 3-pound trigger pull!" In a self-defense scenario where an individual used a modified handgun to protect himself, as an attorney, I would not be bothered by that fact. There are several safeguards that may be utilized to attempt to keep that information from the jury during trial. The argument made to a judge prior to the jury being seated is that the modified handgun had absolutely nothing to do with why the defendant used deadly force. The focus must be on the circumstances surrounding why the defendant used deadly force — not the tool used. Whether it be a baseball bat, a knife, or a gun, the only question that must be answered is: Did the defendant act reasonably, thus justifiably, in using deadly force in self-defense? It's the use of deadly force that is on trial; not the gun.

Even if it does come out to the jury that a person used a modified handgun, there may be gun owners on the jury who have made similar modifications to their own self-defense tools. Or, an expert may testify to the efficiency and other benefits of a modified handgun. At the end of the day, choose the weapon and ammo that is best for you and your hands.

9. A Person Cannot Be Sued Civilly for Acting in Self-Defense

This statement is laughable. Of course a person can be sued civilly! Anyone with a little bit of time and a filing fee can file a lawsuit. The United States has an "open court system," meaning anyone can bring a lawsuit for any reason. Civil lawsuits are typically brought by a plaintiff to recover monetary damages from the defendant.



Civil suits often follow self-defense shoots, even when the gun owner is justified in his or her use of force, Byington says.

There is not a gatekeeper at the civil courthouse tasked with determining which lawsuits are frivolous versus legitimate ones. This means a person will have to answer the lawsuit, usually with a general denial of liability, and attend a hearing before the court.

There is some good news. Many states have a civil immunities clause protecting individuals who were justified in using deadly force; i.e., in self-defense or defense of others. This civil immunities protection stops plaintiffs from being able to recover monetary damages from a defendant. It does not stop a potential plaintiff from filing a lawsuit, as mentioned above. Hopefully, the case will land in front of a judge who understands the civil immunities protection, and who will dismiss the case quickly.

10. Warning Shots Are a Great Idea

Nope. Too many well-intentioned gun owners learn the hard way that warning shots are a terrible idea. Many find themselves in handcuffs and very confused as to what they did wrong. Shooting to scare in a scenario where deadly force is not justified will end in a conviction — a felony conviction. A felony conviction means a person can kiss his or her gun rights goodbye. A pardon or restoration of gun rights after such a conviction are extremely hard to come by unless, perhaps, you have friends in the upper echelons of politics.

Warning shots may unintentionally aggravate a bad situation. For example, Person A fires a warning shot at Person B for refusing to leave Person A's property. (Remember, deadly force cannot be used to terminate a trespass.) Person B, in fear that Person A is trying to murder him, pulls his handgun, shoots and kills Person A. This is probably not the outcome Person A anticipated. Alternatively, a neighbor sees Person A shoot Person B. Neighbor intervenes and pulls her gun on Person A in defense of Person B. Person A is held at gunpoint until responding law enforcement arrives to arrest Person A. It is very doubtful that Person A foresaw this scenario as a consequence of firing a warning shot.

As the adage goes, what goes up, must come down. Where does that projectile land? In the ground? In the perpetrator? In you? Or in a girl scout? You see where I am going with this. It could result in not only criminal liability, but also civil liability. The injured, innocent third-party bystander is going to, rightfully, attempt to recover damages such as medical costs, loss wages, or even emotional distress damages from your pocketbook. On day one of gun-safety training, it is taught to know your target and what is beyond that target. This rule confirms warning shots are a bad idea not only legally, but tactically as well. Where that bullet lands is purely the responsibility of the shooter.

Michele Byington specialized in self-defense cases as an attorney in Houston. She has a Texas License To Carry and prefers Glocks. **GT**

Savage Introduces the 10/110 Stealth Evolution in Six Calibers

The chassis rifle is chambered in the all-new 6mm Creedmoor. Also, Brownells is offering custom slides for Glock pistols, and Browning has introduced a new Sporting Clays o/u shotgun.

Savage has introduced the 10/110 Stealth Evolution chassis rifle chambered in six popular long-range calibers, including the all-new 6mm Creedmoor. The rifle is available in both right-hand and left-hand models. Shipments are currently being delivered to dealers.

The 10/110 Stealth Evolution pairs a heavy fluted barrel with a monolithic aluminum chassis finished in rugged bronze Cerakote. The polymer-ceramic coating enhances resistance to abrasion, corrosion, and impact. The rifle also sports a factory-blueprinted 10/110 action, zero-tolerance headspacing, user-adjustable AccuTrigger and 5R button rifling. The company claims the rifle will produce sub-MOA accuracy at extreme range right out of the box.

Other features include a full-length top-rail, Magpul PRS Gen3 adjustable buttstock, and a heavy fluted barrel with muzzle brake. The available chamberings will include:

- 22859/10 Stealth Evolution 223 Rem., $1,799
- 22865/10 Stealth Evolution (LH) 223 Rem., $1,799
- 22862/10 Stealth Evolution 6mm Creedmoor, $1,799
- 22868/10 Stealth Evolution (LH) 6mm Creedmoor, $1,799
- 22861/10 Stealth Evolution 6.5 Creedmoor, $1,799
- 22867/10 Stealth Evolution (LH) 6.5 Creedmoor, $1,799
- 22860/10 Stealth Evolution 308 Win., $1,799
- 22866/10 Stealth Evolution (LH) 308 Win., $1,799
- 22863/110 Stealth Evolution 300 Win. Magnum, $1,999
- 22869/110 Stealth Evolution (LH) 300 Win. Magnum, $1,999
- 22864/110 Stealth Evolution 338 Lapua Magnum, $2,149
- 22870/110 Stealth Evolution (LH) 338 Lapua Magnum, $2,149



Savage Arms 10/110 Stealth Evolution Chassis Rifle

Brownells Releases Custom Slides For Glock Pistols

Brownells has released drop-in slides for popular models of Glock handguns. Made to fit Gen3 frames in both Glock 17/22 and Glock 19/23 sizes, Brownells touts the Glock slides as easy to rack and press check and also allow the option of adding an electronic sight. The slides fit both stock Glocks and the Polymer80 80% Glock frames, also available at Brownells.

The slides feature special serrations and cuts, and come with the choice of a slot for a Trijicon RMR or similar sight. Some slides have a window cut in the top to aid cooling, enhance appearance and lighten the gun. Machined out of stainless steel, the slides have a Nitride coating that resists heat, wear, and abrasion. The slides are stripped and will require additional parts to complete.

Brownells slides for Gen3 Glock include:

- RMR Slide, Glock 17. #078-200-001, $230.
- RMR Slide w/Window, Glock 17. #078-200-003, $230.
- Iron Sight Slide, Glock 17. #078-000-366, $200.
- Iron Sight Slide w/Window, Glock 17. #078-000-368, $210.
- RMR Slide, Glock 19. #078-200-002, $230.
- RMR slide w/Window, Glock 19. #078-200-004, $230.
- Iron Sight Slide, Glock 19. #078-000-367. $200.
- Iron Sight Slide w/Window, Glock 19. #078-000-369, $210.





Above: Brownells RMR Slide w/Window, Glock 17; below, Brownells Iron Sight Slide w/Window, Glock 17

Browning Introduces New Citori 725 Sporting Golden Clays Shotgun

Browning is adding a new model to the line of shotguns tailored to the sporting clays shooter. For 2017, the new Citori 725 Sporting Golden

—continued from page 31



Clays Sporting Clays over-and-under shotgun's receiver features a silver nitride finish with gold-accented engraving. The stock and forearm are carved from grade V/VI walnut with close radius pistol grip and palm swell and features a gloss oil finish.

The steel low-profile receiver houses a Fire Lite Mechanical Trigger System. The barrels have hammer ejectors, ventilated top and side ribs, and are ported with a high-post top rib. On top are a Hiviz Pro-Comp fiber-optic sight and ivory mid-bead. Internally, the barrels employ Vector Pro lengthened forcing cones and five Invector-DS extended choke tubes. The safety is a top-tang barrel selector style, and the buttstock is finished with an Inflex recoil pad.

The new Citori 725 Sporting Golden Clays will be offered with 30- or 32-inch barrel lengths with a suggested retail price of $5,350.

Written by Gun Tests Staff

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- **New Full-Size 9mm Striker-Fire Pistols:** Ruger American Pro Duty, S&W M&P 9 M2.0, and Springfield Armory XD MOD.2 4 Service. The S&W M&P 9 M2.0 and the Ruger American Pro Duty are refined striker-firers that offer customizable features. The Springfield Armory XD MOD.2 4 Service lacks a customizable grip but still feels good in hand and offers some excellent enhancements.

- **Bigger Bores for the AR Platform.** Alexander Arms' Overwatch rifle might be your next deer rifle and the CORE30 TAC II could be a 3Gun winner. HK's MR762A1 was the bully on the block.

- **Guns of the Year.** We survey a full year's worth of rifles, pistols, shotguns, revolvers, ammunition, and accessories to pick out the truly top-shelf products you need to remember just before the holidays. Maybe Santa will bring all gun owners a small sample of the best of the best.

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