GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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PACKABLE PISTOLS

Tested: CZ-USA's 2075 RAMI B, the Glock 43 Limited Edition ProGlo from TALO, and the Steyr S9-A1. All deserve some consideration by shooters, but we think one is a Best Buy. **— Page 6**





COMPACT 45 ACP PISTOLS

Tested: S&W, Glock, and Springfield. All were reliable and fill a need, but the M&P45 Shield beat out the G36 and XD-S on most scorecards. We liked the Shield's size, handling, and safety. **— Page 12**

ENHANCED, OR NOT?

Ruger has released an Enhanced Precision Rifle. Are the new features worth another $200? **— Page 18**



FIVE-WAY SHOOT-OUT

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DOWNRANGE

NEW 'NOT OUR PICKS' GUIDES



Todd Woodard

At this magazine, we do something that a lot of other magazines and websites do — recommend firearms that our readers might like to buy. We also do something else that most other outlets would never consider — telling our readers what guns not to buy. On the first point, we regularly run Value Guides, which are compilations of firearms that, generally, our test teams have lauded. In this issue, I'm launching what I think of as "Anti-Value Guides," that is, collections of firearms we would not buy, which we'll call "Not Our Picks," for the simple reason that guns in these collections did not fare as well as others we've tested.

Based on correspondence with readers over the years, I've been told repeatedly that when a firearm comes up with a B or lower grade, it really doesn't matter what the grade is. The winning gun sets the pace for the test, so readers usually say, "Why would I buy what Gun Tests says is a second-ranked gun?" That logic is hard to refute. So, when you're at the gun counter and are trying to find a rifle, shotgun, or handgun you might like, it's helpful to know what to buy, of course. But sometimes a well-meaning retailer will offer a second choice if the store doesn't have your A-ranked model. That's when a periodic reminder of which firearms were "Not Our Picks" might come in handy.

Also, conversations with readers are often peppered with questions about firearms that aren't listed in the Value Guides. These I term the "What About?" inquiries. Because we have made a point of compiling firearms that generally do well in tests, the lower-ranked firearms just drop off the radar, because, well, who would want a Grade B self-defense handgun? These lower-ranked products have niggling problems that our testers don't like, or they have big problems that everyone wouldn't like — malfunctions or bad designs, to name two flaws. The information on the lower-ranked guns is available to subscribers on the website, of course, and is searchable by name, product number, SKU, or caliber, but the natural inclination is to be reading a Value Guide and wonder "What about the X?" firearm. So a gallery of "Not Our Picks" will point out what make Gun Tests different — our willingness to be fulsome in our praise, or criticism, of various firearms because we aren't indebted to any maker for ad dollars or other considerations.

Of course, we regularly publish reader criticisms of firearms they own, so I hope to hear about your own dislikes, aka, "Not My Picks." Nothing makes a shooter crankier than a gun that doesn't work, and oftentimes there's no way to find that out except to plunk down your hard-earned dollars and head to the range. Hopefully, our positive reviews of firearms reduce the frequency of misses in your own gun-buying excursions, or at the minimum, you know what you're getting into if you go ahead with a purchase against our advice. So if you've got a story about a gun that didn't run or had other problems, tell your fellow gun-buyers why it should be on a "Not Our Picks" list. GT

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Selecting Magazines Is Tough

Reader and trainer Dave Freeman sees the irony in his most expensive 1911r being the most finicky. Also, when it comes to shotguns, Reader Chuck will pay extra for 'made in the USA.'



Re "1911 Mags: Some Are Good, And Some Should Be Avoided," October 2016

Thanks for the evaluation of 1911 mags. It was quite comprehensive and good information, as usual. I own five 45 Commanders and two Government models, and I have settled on the Colt 8-round magazines as a standard for all. I picked those primarily because of the flush base. I love having nine rounds in the carry gun, but I don't like an extra quarter inch or so extending beyond the grip. Previously, I used Wilson Combat mags because all the guys coming through my classes that shot Kimbers said they had to use Wilson mags with them to make them work reliably. Funny, huh?

I never thought of a drop test. I did drop a couple of my Colt mags yesterday and nothing popped out. By the way, I'm using the Ruger/Polycase ARX rounds, and so far I have had no feeding issues except one in the S&W 1911 SCE Commander. The most expensive 1911 I've got, and it's the one that sometimes hiccups.

— David Freeman
Texas Gun Pros,
TexasGunPros.com

Re "Home-Defense Shotguns: We Compare Three Pump Actions," October 2016

Gentlemen: As always, it is such a pleasure to read your publication each month. I would like to add a comment about your recent article on defensive pump guns. Being a professional sporting clays instructor, I prefer the shotgun to have only a bead and no rear sights.

Adding a rear sight and a front post are nice and definitely an advantage for longer-range stationary targets. However, I am convinced that if I need my shotgun for personal defense, the target will probably be close and possibly moving. So that's a factor to consider as well.

Aiming, instead of pointing, at a dynamic moving target is not ideal. Also, the idea of adding a red-dot sight for self-defense is not something I would recommend. You are now dependent on a mechanical device



and a battery. Murphy's Laws always come into play. Keep it simple and you'll live to fight another day.

I do not at all disagree with your findings, and we could discuss my opinions for hours. There is no "absolute" when it comes to self-defense. However, there is one thing I feel you did overlook: The Remington

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.

870 is made in the US of A. I will pay extra for that! Great magazine, best regards. **— Chuck**

Mr. Woodard: I just received the October issue and immediately devoured every page, as usual. I noted in the article on Home Defense Shotguns where a comment was made about having to endure, "Fun isn't the word when firing full-power buckshot," and that the extensive testing and firing was done over a couple days due to the effects of sharp recoil over and over.

I have a recommendation for your testers. Buy a Buffalo Arms (BuffaloArms.com) recoil pad [see photo below]. It is wonderful in greatly reducing felt recoil with heavy loads and is available in small, medium, and large sizes to fit various chest sizes. A friend of mine and I were shooting my reproduction 1876 Winchester in 45-75 back a few months ago, and with the rifle's curved steel buttplate, recoil is nasty. With the Buffalo Arms pad, I can run through 20 rounds without fatigue or anticipating the severe recoil. I shoot a Remington 375 H&H at the range occasionally, and even THAT beast is subdued.

All three sizes are $45 plus shipping, and well worth, it in my experience. You folks who have to run dozens upon dozens, or even a few hundred rounds, through test firearms really should have these available for your testing! They work! I am pushing 75 and am a tad more sensitive to recoil, but now I can blast away for a couple hours with no soreness or discomfort at all. Keep up the terrific work!

— Bill



Bill, that is a super tip. Thanks for the lead. — Todd Woodard

Interesting article, but I'll still take my old Winchester Model 1300 Defender (reviewed in April 1997) over any of the three guns reviewed. I alternate 00 buck and slug loads in the 7-round magazine, using Remington's reduced-recoil Tactical ammo. If the buckshot doesn't stop Billy BadGuy, the 12-gauge slug sure will. Love the magazine; keep up the good work.

— Dave



Dave, you are right, the 1300 is a fine piece of machinery. For the folks who may not have been reading Gun Tests *back then, here's a recap of that review:*

The Winchester Model 1300 Defender is a 12-gauge pump action shotgun intended for personal protection. It is available with a wooden or synthetic stock and a 18- or 24-inch barrel. Either barrel has a 3-inch chamber, a cylinder bore and a bead front sight. The gun's extended magazine holds seven 2.75-inch shells or six 3-inch shells. Suggested retail price of this model $290.

For this test, we acquired a Model 1300 Defender with a wooden stock and an 18-inch barrel. Excluding the white bolt, all of its steel parts had a blued finish with a medium polish. The aluminum alloy receiver was a matte black, while the black plastic trigger guard had a low-glare finish. The barrel was held securely in place by the screw-on magazine cap. The rotary bolt locked solidly into the barrel. A small to moderate amount of play was noted in moving parts.

Of the shotguns in this test, the Winchester was the lightest, the shortest and the most evenly balanced. Consequently, we thought target acquisition was the fastest and pointing was the easiest. Shouldering was quick and natural.

We found the relatively wide comb afforded a comfortable cheek-to-stock fit with a good view of the sight. Shooters with large hands said the grooved 6-inch-long by 2.07-inch-wide forend seemed a bit short, but it provided sufficient gripping area and was slip resistant. Establishing a firm, comfortable grasp on the 1.44-inch-wide pistol grip wasn't a problem. Although this model's felt recoil was milder than that of a standard 12-gauge pump shotgun, recoil was the heaviest of the test.

This Winchester functioned flawlessly throughout the test. Inserting shells into the tubular magazine through the loading port in the underside of the receiver didn't present any difficulties. Despite one hitch toward the end of the action's rearward movement, the action cycled smoothly and easily. Fired hulls were consistently ejected about 4 feet to the right of the shooter.

Movement of the grooved 1/4-inch-wide trigger was, in our opinion, clean but heavy. After about 1/8-inch of slack, it released with 8 pounds of rearward pressure and had very little overtravel. The heavy pull weight made accurate slug placement harder, but it was of no consequence when firing buckshot.

For sighting, the Model 1300 Defender had a large brass bead without a base on the front of the barrel and a serrated 8 5/8-inch-long by 3/8-inch-wide groove on the top of the receiver. Our shooters felt this arrangement provided an adequate sighting reference when using buckshot, but slugs impacted about 6 inches higher than the point of aim at 25 yards.

As we mentioned, this 12-gauge shotgun was equipped with a cylinder

bore choke. Using Federal Classic 00 (9 pellet) buckshot, it yielded well-distributed shot patterns that were more than satisfactory for defensive work. Three-shot groups produced with Remington 2 3/4-inch magnum Slugger 1-ounce rifled slugs averaged 3 3/4 inches at 25 yards. See the accompanying Performance Table for more information.

Bottom Line: We thought the Winchester Model 1300 Defender's workmanship, handling and functioning were satisfactory for a defensive shotgun that sells for under $300. Our shooters gave this one a thumbs up. — tw

Slide-Racking Effort

You probably get this question a lot, but I'm a new (first-year) subscriber and haven't seen an answer. Is there any reliable way to measure the amount of force needed to rack the slide on semi-automatic pistols? New shooters — like my wife — frequently have trouble with the strong springs used on certain manufacturers' products, and a good method to measure this and publish the results would be welcome. Thanks, and you have a great magazine. It has been very helpful in deciding what guns and accessories are the best for us! Regards. **— Dan**

Hey Dan: We've struggled with this, but I believe the simplest way is to buy a small C clamp with leather shields on it, affix it to the serrated portion on the back of the slide, and use a fish-weighing scale to measure the effort. I've got two in my desk, one of which measures up to 25 pounds, and if the slide-racking effort is too much for that scale, then I'd give up. — tw

Re "Big-Bore Snubnoses Around $500: Charter Arms and Taurus," October 2016

I enjoyed this article and thought I'd throw in my two cents worth. I own a Charter Arms Bulldog 44 Model #64420 and find it to be quite accurate. The standard grip was changed to a Crimson Trace Laser



Grip, which effectively softens the recoil of hotter ammo. One problem I've noticed with mine — which I also saw in a video about this revolver — is that unless the trigger is allowed to fully reset, the hand will spin the cylinder past the next chamber. Other than that, not a bad little gun, and less than $400! **— Dan**

Inquiring About Canik

Do plan on doing a test on the Canik TP9SF? Or have you had one in an issue that I don't have? If so, could you point me to it or let me know if you plan on doing an in-depth story. Thanks for your magazine. I enjoy the material. Your friend in arms,
— Daniel

Sorry, we haven't tested that Canik. We have tested the TP9SA, which is manufactured by Samsun Yurt Savunma, a Turkish gun maker, and imported by Century Arms of Delray Beach, Florida. The TP9SA and many of its accessories are marked "Canik," for the Canik 55 division of the manufacturer. —tw

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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**

Modern 9mm Subcompacts: CZ-USA, Glock, Steyr Compete

Tested: CZ-USA's 2075 RAMI B, the Glock 43 Limited Edition ProGlo from TALO, and the Steyr S9-A1. All deserve some consideration by shooters, but we think the Steyr is a Best Buy.

It goes without saying that compact and subcompact pistols chambered in 9mm Luger are a highly desirable form of personal protection. The 9mm offers acceptable ballistics without harsh recoil, and 9mm pistols from a quality maker are famously reliable. Also, 9mm compact pistols are often based on service-size handguns in the best renditions. The action and spring rates, and making certain slide travel and barrel tilt are compatible with the compact size, is important engineering. When done correctly, compact pistols are as reliable for practical use as any full-size pistol. Accordingly, our readers often ask us for reviews of certain pistols they've come across and may want to buy, if testing proves them to be worthwhile. So, this time, we line up a set of reader requests to go head to head at the range.

The first contestant was CZ-USA's 2075 RAMI B 91750 9mm Luger, $530. The RAMI is similar to the original CZ 75 but represents considerable engineering changes to accommodate the short slide and frame. The CZ 75 slide rides in the frame inside the frame rails, a design feature that some feel adds to the pistol's accuracy. This engineering lowers the bore axis as well, resulting in less muzzle flip compared to most double-action first-shot pistols. A tradeoff is that the slide is sometimes difficult to grasp and rack.

Next up was the Glock G43 Limited Edition ProGlo TALO Edition UI4350501, available for $489 from Slickguns.com. TALO is a wholesale buying cooperative that was started in 1965 by fishing and hunting wholesalers in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma. TALO commissions limited editions of firearms from Smith & Wesson, Colt, Glock, Ruger, and North American Arms and distributes them to stocking sporting goods dealers across the US. Shooters who want one of these special editions will need to contact their local dealer and ask him to order the special edition firearm from a TALO wholesaler. TALO firearms are often specially designed products with top-end accessories. An example came in 2006 with the Ruger John Wayne Vaquero. The first edition of 3500 units was featured as an American Rifleman's Magazine editor's pick. On this Glock 43, the pistol's slide is standard save for the sights, which are made by AmeriGlo and feature a brilliant orange post around a white-insert tritium front. The rear sight features a U-notch for rapid target engagement. The rear face of the rear sight is serrated to reduce glare.





Above, left: Combat firing tests are an important part of our evaluation. Contributing Editor Bob Campbell is handling the RAMI in this drill. Right, top to bottom, are the Steyr S9-A1, the CZ 2075 RAMI, and the Glock 43. All were perfectly reliable during our tests.

The Steyr S9-A1 9mm Luger, $483 at BudsGunShop.com, isn't particularly more difficult to conceal then the RAMI, but it is not a pocket gun as the Glock 43 is. The Steyr S9A1 is a double-action-only handgun with a trigger action more Glock like than anything. The Steyr barely came in as the least expensive pistol tested. This is the largest pistol tested, but it is lighter than the RAMI due to the Steyr's polymer frame. More effort is needed to cock this pistol due to a combination of the slide design and a heavy recoil spring.

In accuracy testing from the bench at 15 yards, we used three loads. The Speer Gold Dot 124-grain +P Short Barrel hollowpoint load cost us $23/20 rounds at MidwayUSA.com. The Black Hills Ammunition 115-grain EXP ran us $14.57/20 rounds, also from MidwayUSA.com, and Winchester's 115-grain USA Forged steel shellcase FMJs came to us from Cabelas.com (prior to the buyout by Bass Pro) and cost $36 for 150 rounds. Following is how the pistols fired those rounds, along with comments by our hands-on testers.

CZ-USA 2075 RAMI B 91750
9mm Luger, $530

The 2075 RAMI B lists at $614, but had a retail price of $530 at TombstoneTactical.com and $551 at DamascusGunShop.com. However, most stores seem to be out of stock, so you may have to contact CZ-USA to find a dealer who has one.

The RAMI is a double-action-first-shot pistol. After the initial long trigger press, the slide recoils and cocks the hammer for subsequent single-action fire. The pistol is what is known as a selective double action pistol. The manual safety may be applied only when the hammer is cocked. While this allows cocked and locked carry, the purpose of the safety, we believe, is to allow the pistol to be moved to a safe position during tactical movement after the first shot is fired. The selective-double-action pistol demands that the hammer be carefully lowered as the trigger is pressed. While some prefer the selective-double-action-firing mode, CZ also offers a decocker version (BD) that operates with a frame-mounted decocker. There is no question that handling is easier with the decocker version.

The frame is anodized aluminum. The magazine release is a flat design that is easily manipulated and which locks the magazine in a positive manner. The front strap is lightly stippled. The rear strap features tall striations. Coupled with the checkered rubber grips, the pistol's surface offers good adhesion when firing. A feature we appreciate is an indentation on the left side of the frame to shield the slide lock and manual safety. It is common for shooters firing light pistols to allow the support-hand thumb to find its way into these controls. The RAMI engineers wisely chose to shield these controls. (The decocker version does not have this scalloped section in the frame.)

The pistol is supplied with a 10-round and a 14-round magazine. The 14-round magazine is supplied with a sleeve that neatly fits over the magazine and gives an excellent feel to

CZ-USA 2075 RAMI B 91750 9MM LUGER, $530

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The CZ RAMI is a reliable and accurate pistol. Like many handguns with a single-action trigger, the pistol is combat accurate. The double-action first shot feature is useful at moderate range. The pistol isn't difficult to use with the short grip, but it is even easier to use well with the extended 14-shot magazine. Most shooters will prefer a more modern handgun with a decocker lever, and one is available.





We feel that the extended magazine and sleeve are a great addition to the pistol. You must decide how it affects your concealed-carry footprint. Below is the 10-round magazines for comparison.





The RAMI came on target quickly and gave good results in combat firing.

Action	Locked Breech DA/SA Semi-Auto
Overall Length	6.5 in.
Overall Height	4.75 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	26 oz.
Weight Loaded	32 oz.
Barrel Length	3.0 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	10-Rd. Double Stack 14-Rd. Double Stack
Slide	Blue Steel
Frame	Black Polycoat 7075 T6 Aluminum Alloy
Frame Front Strap Height	1.8 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.75 in.
Grips	Rubber
Grip Thickness (max)	1.25 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Sights	Fixed
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.6 in.
Safety	Manual Safety; Safety Stop on Hammer; Firing Pin Block
Warranty	5-Year Limited On Internal Parts; 1-Year Wood & Finish
Website	CZ-USA.com
Telephone	(800) 955-4486



The front post isn't very large, but it was easily acquired during rapid fire.

GLOCK G43 LIMITED EDITION PROGLO TALO EDITION UI4350501 9MM LUGER, $489

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The best thing about the Glock, past the baseline reliability, was the addition of AmeriGlo sights for combat shooting, but accuracy was less than stock Glock sights. The pistol is a good one for deep concealment.

Action	Double Action Only
Overall Length	6.25 in.
Overall Height	4.25 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	18.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	22.5 oz.
Barrel Length	3.4 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	6-Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.0 to 2.25 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.6 in.
Grips	NA
Grip Thickness (max)	0.9 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.25 in.
Front Sight	Green Tritium Lamp Inside Orange Outline
Rear Sight	Alloy Steel, Nitride Finish; Round U Notch, Serrated
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.6 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.55 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	1 Year
Website	TaloInc.com

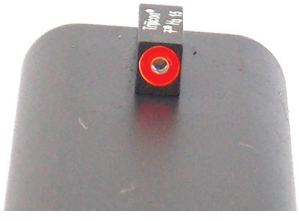




The pebble-texture grip and flat magazine release earned good grades from our raters.



The Glock is a credible performer. Intrinsic accuracy is good.



The big front sight of the Glock 43, an AmeriGlo design, gave excellent overall results.



The AmeriGlo sight's big orange dot really made a difference in rapid fire with the Glock 43. We got on target quickly.

the pistol. Firing characteristics were gauged with the compact 10-round magazine in place for fairness to the other pistols. As an example, with the 14-round magazine, the pistol grip felt as good as the Steyr's, but with the short magazine, the pistol was much easier to conceal. So, combat firing and accuracy testing were done with the short magazine in place. We will also comment on the larger mag.

During the combat evaluation, we fired 80 rounds of ammunition in each handgun. We used a handload using the Montana Gold 124-grain JHP and enough Titegroup powder for a 1060-fps average from the three pistols. Firing at 5, 7, and 10 yards, we drew from a Barber Leatherworks Chameleon belt slide and found the RAMI pistol comes on target quickly. The double-action trigger was smooth and good hits were registered out to 7 yards. More effort was required to achieve consistent hits in the DA mode at 10 yards. You have to slow down to get hits with the double-action trigger at this range, our shooters said. The pistol allows only two fingers to be held on the grip strap. One of our raters managed to crunch his average-size hands onto the frame, but the rest of us had a small finger dangling.

Once the transition to single-action fire was made, the CZ RAMI gave the best combat groups of any of the pistols tested. As long as the shooter properly grasped the pistol, the groups were centered. The combination of a crisp single-action trigger press and good sights gave good results. The double-action trigger breaks at about 12 pounds, while the single-action trigger break measured a clean 4.5 pounds.

The pistol never failed to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. The CZ RAMI was the most accurate handgun tested. The best group of the day was a 2.3-inch effort with the Black Hills 115-grain EXP load. The sights are high-visibility units with three-dot inserts. These sights are easily acquired in rapid shooting and rated the best of the three pistols for accurate fire. The front sight is

solidly dovetailed in place. The rear sight may be adjusted for windage after loosening a set screw.

Our Team Said: The CZ RAMI offers excellent combat ability and concealment. The feel of the pistol is robust. This is the heaviest pistol tested and was the most comfortable to fire, although the Steyr was very close in comfort. However, the pistol should have a decocker for most shooters. We also did not like the short grip.

Glock G43 Limited Edition ProGlo TALO Edition UI4350501 9mm Luger, $489

The Glock 43 is a single-column-magazine pistol. It is considerably smaller than the other handguns and the lightest pistol tested. We wished to see how much performance is given up by going to a subcompact. As it turns out quite a bit, but then you may slip the Glock into your front pocket. The cocking serrations make racking the slide easy enough with this pistol. The frame is standard textured Glock 43. The pistol is supplied with two six-round magazines. The magazine catch is flat and easily manipulated with speed. The slide lock is protected by a raised portion on the frame. One magazine features a finger rest, while the other rides flat. The finger rest was appreciated. The Glock 43's double-action-only trigger broke at 5.6 pounds. The grip cross-section is thin, and this resulted in the greatest felt recoil, although not uncomfortable. Muzzle flip degraded combat scoring. During combat drills, the pistol was fast on target as a result of the big-dot front sight and wide-notch rear sight. Repeatable accuracy was less impressive, however. Still the first two or three shots in a gunfight may be the most important. In our August 2015 test of the regular Glock 43, the sights were standard Glock, with a white outline rear and white dot forward. They proved adequate for combat firing and reasonably good for accuracy work at 15 yards and were properly regulated for 115-grain loads at 15 yards. The Glock did not come with additional front-sight posts. The pistol fired low with the

STEYR S9-A1 9MM LUGER, $483

GUN TESTS GRADE: A & BEST BUY

When working with this handgun, we had to keep reminding ourselves that this was the least expensive of the three pistols tested. Performance was good by any standard. The trapezoidal sights, however, take some getting used to, whether regarded as good or bad.

Action	Double Action Only
Overall Length	6.5 in.
Overall Height	4.8 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	27 oz.
Weight Loaded	33 oz.
Barrel Length	3.6 in.
Barrel	Steel
Capacity	10+1
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.25 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.75 in.
Grip Frame	Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.25 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.65 in.
Sights	Fixed Trapezoidal
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.6 in.
Safety	Manual Safety (for storage)
Warranty	1 Year

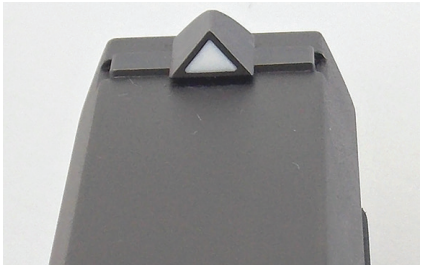




Website	SteyrArms.com
Telephone	(205) 417-8644



The Steyr features a lock that allows for securing the action for storage.



The trapezoidal sights take some getting used to, but they offer good accuracy. Be certain it is something you are willing to master before you buy.



The Steyr featured a modern, even rakish, appearance. It alone had a light rail.



The Steyr quickly racked up points during the firing stages.

RANGE DATA

Black Hills 115-gr. EXP	**CZ-USA Rami**	**Glock 43 TALO Edition**	**Steyr S9-A1**
Average Velocity	1123 fps	1150 fps	1138 fps
Muzzle Energy	321 ft.-lbs.	337 ft.-lbs.	330 ft.-lbs.
Average Group Size	2.3 in.	2.9 in.	2.4 in.
Speer 124-gr. Gold Dot +P	**CZ-USA Rami**	**Glock 43 TALO Edition**	**Steyr S9-A1**
Average Velocity	1150 fps	1168 fps	1144 fps
Muzzle Energy	364 ft.-lbs.	375 ft.-lbs.	334 ft.-lbs.
Average Group Size	2.4 in.	3.2 in.	2.6 in.
Winchester USA 115-grain FMJ	**CZ-USA Rami**	**Glock 43 TALO Edition**	**Steyr S9-A1**
Average Velocity	1077 fps	1101 fps	1090 fps
Muzzle Energy	296 ft.-lbs.	330 ft.-lbs.	303 ft.-lbs.
Average Group Size	2.6 in.	3.0 in.	2.8 in.

Notes: Average velocity readings were recorded by firing five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first sky-screen. Ambient temperature: 45 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. The accuracy figures are the average of three five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 15-yard target.

Ammunition sources: Black Hills Ammunition 115-grain EXP Jacketed Hollow Point (MidwayUSA.com, $14.57/20); Speer 124-grain Gold Dot Short Barrel Hollow Point +P 23611 (MidwayUSA.com, $23/20); Winchester USA 115-grain brass-jacketed lead core FMJs (Cabelas.com, $36/150).

95-grain loads, but slightly high with 124-grain loads.

Recoil is heavier than the other pistols and the combat groups were not on a par with the two other handguns. In accuracy testing off the bench, recoil was more noticeable, approaching uncomfortable with the +P load. The best group of the day with the Glock was a 2.3-inch effort with the Speer Gold Dot load, which had the heaviest recoil.

Our Team Said: The best thing about this pistol is the sights. They are good combat sights that offer real speed. The pistol is completely reliable. However, down and dirty accuracy was inferior to the heavier pistols and benchrest accuracy as well compared to the other pistols in this test and an original G43.

Steyr S9-A1 9mm Luger, $483

The Steyr has a racy look that the raters liked. The pistol is supplied with two identical 10-round magazines. The Steyr slide has well-designed cocking serrations. The slide rides comparatively low in the frame. The slide features cocking serrations that are proportionately larger than the other handguns. The frame features modest finger grooves. The slide and the magazine release are well designed and offered positive manipulation. A combination of a stippled front and rear strap and pebbled grip area gave good adhesion in all firing conditions. Indentations on either side of the grip frame allow for a shorter trigger reach.

The firing grip is excellent. The double-action-only trigger breaks at a clean 5.0 pounds. Even the Glock and CZ fans among the raters had to admit that the Steyr grip was the most comfortable tested.

The primary concern with the pistol is the trapezoidal design sights. These sights are a unique design. The front post is centered between an inverted rear sight that encloses the front sight and supposedly affords a superior sighting plane. It is true that there is some difficulty in acclimating to a new system, but our raters did not like these sights. The most experienced raters felt that it was difficult to judge precise vertical impact location. Whether geometrically advanced or not, considerable time and effort would be needed to learn to use these sights to the best advantage.

Just the same, during the combat firing stage, the Steyr held its own with the CZ RAMI. The RAMI may have turned in slightly better combat results, but this is more difficult to rate than absolute accuracy. The impression was that the Steyr shooter took more time for the same results. Nevertheless, the pistol offers excellent control and combat accuracy. Reliability is faultless. The Steyr was the least tiring pistol to fire for extended periods. Since only one type of magazine was supplied, there was no need to decide which magazine to use for concealed carry.

In firing off the benchrest for accuracy some raters did better than others with the trapezoid sights. In the end the Steyr was more accurate than the Glock but did not equal the benchrest groups of the CZ RAMI. Accuracy was acceptable for most uses, however. The pistol has a rather bulbous dust cover, but this dust cover houses a light rail.

Our Team Said: When all the features are added up, it came down to the Steyr or the RAMI. Each is reliable. The combat shooting was equal. Bench-rest accuracy was comparable, but the RAMI had an edge. The Steyr, however, is the more modern pistol and features a light rail. However, some of the raters wanted to rate the piece down a half grade based on the sights. The majority ruled, so the top grade stuck. The Steyr is a Grade: A handgun and a Best Buy.

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

NOT OUR PICKS: 9MM LUGER HANDGUN RANKINGS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
SIG Sauer MPX-P 9mm Luger, $1700	Oct 2016	B	It would be difficult to fit a suppressor, and the action didn't like subsonic ammunition.
Taurus 905 Model 905SS2 9mm Luger Revolver, $528	March 2016	B	The trigger and sights on this wheelgun weren't great.
Smith & Wesson Model 908 103882 9mm Luger, $350 (Used)	June 2015	B	The design of the slide resulted in a higher bore axis than the Bersa; lacked an ambi safety.
Walther PPQ M2 Navy SD 2796082 9mm Luger, $576	March 2015	B	Mag release was too light for a defensive handgun. Sights were not well regulated for 115-grain ammo.
SIG Sauer P320 320F9BSS 9mm Luger, $579	March 2015	B	Lack of an easily changeable grip strap and heavy trigger were demerits. Also the heaviest tested.
Walther PPQ WAP00Q90 9mm Luger, $729	March 2012	B	Comfortable to hold and easy to aim, the pistol's ergonomics did not translate to recoil control.
Diamondback Firearms DB9FS 9mm Luger, $265	March 2016	B-	It suffered a short cycle. Accuracy was poor. The magazines were difficult to load.
Beretta BU9 Nano JMN9S15 9mm Luger, $369	Feb 2015	B-	We rated the pistol down for its small sights, heavy trigger, and worst-of-group accuracy.
Walther PPX M1 No. 2790025 9mm Luger, $450	Oct 2013	B-	It's big, it lacks the interchangeable backstraps of the PPQ, and we'd like better sights.
CZ-USA CZ P07 Duty #91186 9mm Luger, $575	Oct 2010	B-	The magazine did not drop free. In reassembly, the P07 taxed the patience of our raters.
Walther Concealed Carry Pistol CCP 5080300 9mm Luger, $452	Aug 2015	C	The CCP had features we liked, but not enough to overcome its complicated takedown and failures.
IWI Mini Uzi Pro UPP9S 9mm Luger, $999	Oct 2016	C	The Mini Uzi is not something we would wish to own or use.
Ruger LC9 9mm Luger, $443	April 2011	C	It weighs 2.5 ounces more and costs $110 more than the similar design by Kel-Tec.
Diamondback DB9 9mm Luger, $490	March 2012	C	Accurate under favorable conditions, our testers said the DB9 was painful and difficult to shoot.
Smith & Wesson M&P Compact 9mm Luger No. 209304, $656	Feb 2009	C-	A trip to the factory for repair of the sights failed to fully fix an accuracy problem.
Smith & Wesson M&P Compact 9mm Luger No. 2009004, $624	April 2007	D	It suffered repeated malfunctions when the slide would lock back with one round in the magazine.
SIG Sauer P938 Extreme 9mm Luger, $823	March 2013	F	The P938 was a compact and powerful package that we really liked. Too bad it didn't work.

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Highly-ranked products from older reviews are often available used at substantial discounts.

Compact 45 ACP Shoot-Out: Glock, S&W, and Springfield

All were reliable and fill a need, but in the end, the M&P45 Shield beat out the G36 and XD-S on most range scorecards. In particular, we liked the Shield's size, handling, and safety.

The compact self-loading pistol is easily the most popular personal-defense handgun in America. Shooters realize that small-bore handguns may not have sufficient potential for personal defense. The 9mm Luger is the baseline for personal defense in most shooters' eyes. The 40 S&W isn't as popular due to the stout recoil it produces in compact handguns. After all, many 9mms and 40s are built on the same frame. The 45-caliber compact is slightly larger, and the lower-pressure 45 ACP gives a hard push in recoil rather than the sharp jolt experienced with the 40.

To see how our shooters rated a trio of smallish 45s, we acquired three handguns based on the service-size Glock 21, Springfield XD, and S&W M&P handguns.

● From Glock comes the single-stack polymer-frame G36, which is popular, reliable, and well suited to personal defense. The Glock G36 PI3650201FGR 45 6R FS, $561, isn't the most popular Glock by a long shot, but a number of Glock fans, as well as 45 ACP fans, like the Glock 36 handgun for its simplicity and ease of use.

● Another gun in the test was Springfield Armory's XD-S, a downsized XD with a slim single-stack grip. The Springfield Armory XD-S 3.3 XDS93345BE 45 ACP, $419, is even more compact than the Glock, with a short grip frame and a five-round magazine.

● The latest arrival in the polymer-frame 45 single-stack scene is the Smith & Wesson M&P45 Shield 180022, $399. The Shield series have been popular and well accepted by concealed carry handgunners, so making a 45-caliber version of it is a natural choice.

We test-fired the pistols with a total of five loads. The first was a handload with Magnus Cast bullets (#803 225-grain Flatpoint) and 4.8 grains of Titegroup powder. Our other test loads came from CheaperThanDirt.com. One was the HPR 230-grain JHP 45230JHP ($38/50 rounds), a Hornady 200-grain XTP ($15.28/20), a Hornady 230-grain XTP +P 9096 ($16.25/20), and a Fiocchi 230-grain Extrema JHP 45XTP25 ($17.24/25). We fired the handload during the combat firing test stage, shooting 50 cartridges in each pistol. We also fired a magazine of the Hornady 230-grain +P in these stages to evaluate recoil in each handgun. The HPR 230-grain load, the Hornady 200-grain load, and the Fiocchi 230-grain Extrema were used in accuracy testing. During the course of our testing, the three pistols never failed to feed, chamber, fire or eject, so reliability isn't an issue.





When loading the Smith & Wesson M&P45 Shield's magazine, top, be certain the cartridge is seated well to the back of the magazine. Raters wondered if the shorter grip of the XD-S, bottom, would make a difference in concealing the handgun for most people.

As may be expected, these compact 45s are popular with fans of each company's full-size 45s. But that isn't the whole story. As we discovered, fans of the full-size Glock may prefer the XD-S and our Springfield XD fan preferred the Glock 36 compact, and so it went. The primary difference was in handling, we found. Here are our findings.

Springfield Armory XD-S 3.3 XDS93345BE 45 ACP, $419

This was a current price listed by BudsGunShop.com. The Springfield XD-S is an attractive handgun with good features. We really like the fiber-optic front sight, and the rear sight offers a good sharp sight picture. Yet the fiber optic isn't so large that it overpowers the sight picture. For precision shooting, the sights are good, but they are also very fast getting on target for rapid combat shooting.

The pistol is short at only 4 inches tall, and the frame is an inch wide. It is the most concealable handgun tested, in our view. The magazine release is ambidextrous, a good feature. There is a spare backstrap included. All raters used the supplied backstrap with good results. The magazines are stainless steel and are well made. They were very tight to load, with a strong magazine spring, but they must be to maintain reliability with a short slide and the resulting slide velocity. One magazine features a grip extension. The XD-S has the lowest magazine capacity with five rounds, giving the shooter a total of six rounds in the pistol. This is a tradeoff between the short grip frame and capacity.

The pistol weighs but 21.4 ounces unloaded. The trigger action is the new Safety Assurance action. It was heavier than the pull on a full-size XD we had on hand, breaking at 8 pounds versus 6.5 pounds for the full-size XD 45. We like the grip safety. The grip safety does not allow the pistol to fire unless the grip safety is depressed, yet the grip safety is pressed without thought as you grasp the handgun. The safety locks the slide, which is

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD-S 3.3 XDS93345BE 45 ACP, $549

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

The XD-S is reliable, but required considerable effort to master. While compact and powerful, there are better choices. We did not enjoy firing the XD-S due to the aggressive grip frame.

Action	Locked Breech Semi-Auto
Overall Length	6.3 in.
Overall Height	4.4 to 5.0 in.
Maximum Width	1.1 in.
Weight Unloaded	22.6 oz.
Weight Loaded (6 rds. 185-gr. hp)	26.4 oz.
Barrel	Melonite-Finished Steel; 3.3 in.; 1:16 twist
Magazines	Stainless Steel; (1) 5-Rd. Flush Fit; (1) 6-Rd. Mid-Mag X-Tension
Slide	Melonite-Finished Forged Steel
Frame	Black Polymer
Front Strap Height	1.7 in.
Back Strap Height	2.1 in.
Grips	Waffle Textured Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.0 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.5 in.
Rear Sight	Dovetail; Two White Dots



Front Sight	Dovetail; Red Fiber Optic
Sight Radius	5.8 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	8.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.9 in.
Safety	Trigger Safety; Grip Safety
Warranty	Limited
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	XDSPistol.com
Made In	Croatia



The loaded-chamber indicator is a good feature. The bar tips up when a shell is in the chamber.



We liked the fiber-optic front sight. It made target acquisition faster, our shooters said.



The waffle-like grip finish gave good abrasion but could be downright painful.



Here's what the aftermath of shooting the XD-S looked like. The waffle pattern transfers its shape to the shooter's hands. But it gave good control of the firearm, we thought.

RANGE DATA

Fiocchi Extrema JHP 230-gr. 45XTP25	**Glock G36**	**Shield M&P45**	**Springfield XD-S**
Average Velocity	770 fps	752 fps	767 fps
Muzzle Energy	302 ft.-lbs.	288 ft.-lbs.	300 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.0 in.	1.9 in.	2.5 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.6 in.	3.5 in.
Average Group Size	2.3 in.	2.3 in.	3.0 in.
HPR JHP 230-gr. 45230	**Glock G36**	**Shield M&P45**	**Springfield XD-S**
Average Velocity	785 fps	760 fps	770 fps
Muzzle Energy	314 ft.-lbs.	294 ft.-lbs.	302 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.4 in.	2.5 in.	2.9 in.
Largest Group	2.8 in.	3.2 in.	3.6 in.
Average Group Size	2.6 in.	2.8 in.	3.3 in.
Hornady XTP 200-gr.	**Glock G36**	**Shield M&P45**	**Springfield XD-S**
Average Velocity	860 fps	840 fps	852 fps
Muzzle Energy	328 ft.-lbs.	313 ft.-lbs.	322 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.0 in.	2.3 in.	2.9 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.9 in.	3.7 in.
Average Group Size	2.4 in.	2.6 in.	3.4 in.

Notes: Average velocity readings were recorded by firing five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first skyscreen. Ambient temperature:45 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. The accuracy figures are the average of three five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 25-yard target.



Lead bullet loads are essential for economical practice. Each handgun performed well with these loadings.



Concentration is demanded when firing these short 45s off hand. This is the Shield in action. Its longer grip made the pistol more comfortable to fire than the XD-S, we thought.

nice when holstering the pistol in a tightly fitted holster. The lever in the trigger also aids against lateral discharge. The pistol features a roughly textured grip frame that really leaves an impression. We mean that — when firing this little 45, the pistol must be grasped tightly and the frame rally digs into the hand. With such a short grip, there is no other way to do this, and the grip design is necessary for good control. The pistol is controllable, but it was the least comfortable of the pistols fired, in our view. It was not simply recoil, but extra pain transferred to the palm by the abrasive grips.

During the initial firing stage, we found the XD-S firing low at 7 yards, so our shooters had to reappraise the grip. Many polymer-frame pistols with a steel slide and light frame fire low, and the pistol's short grip and substantial recoil were a challenge. The raters took a stout grip and kept the frame pushed up by pressure with the support hand. Recoil was not bone jarring, but it was brisk, and the grip texture dug into the hand after a few magazines. Considerable effort was required to produce acceptable results. However, after the shooter got used to it, the pistol did exhibit good combat results. With the extended-finger-grip magazine, things went easier. This pistol received an extra 50 rounds of the 225-grain handload so we could get the measure of the handgun the old-fashioned way, through practice. Firing a single magazine of 230-grain XTP +P loads (824 fps), the pistol recoiled more, but was controllable. Function was fine, and getting the 45 ACP to +P territory raised velocity more than 70 fps. As for combat shooting, drawing the pistol from a Galco Stow-N-Go IWB holster gave good results. The pistol is fast on target. It is follow-up shots and double taps that are slower than the big guns, but that is understandable. Draw the XD-S and get a bead on the target, and you get a hit. After that, it is all about control.

Control is easier with the 9mm, of course, but the 45 ACP is more likely to stop an attack with a minimum of well-placed shots. If you do not intend to practice diligently and master this handgun, then a smaller caliber is called for. We feel the small 40s are more difficult to handle than this 45. Just the same, of the three

GLOCK 36 45 ACP, $549

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Glock is reliable and accurate enough for any conceivable chore. The sights could be improved, however, which is why there are so many aftermarket Glock sights. The fat grip is manageable, but not ideal. We feel that the Smith & Wesson Shield is the better gun when you look at all the features.

Action	Double Action Only
Overall Length	7.1 in.
Overall Height	4.7 in.
Maximum Width	1.2 in.
Weight Unloaded	20.1 oz.
Weight Loaded	27 oz.
Barrel Length	3.8 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	6 Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	1.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.6 in.
Grips	NA
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 In.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.0 in.
Sights	Fixed



Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.9 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	1 Year
Website	Glock.com
Telephone	(770) 432-1202

The Glock's rear sight offers good utility at short range. The sights appeared blockier and less well suited to precise shooting than the others, but the Glock turned out to be the most accurate pistol.



The Glock's finger-groove grip frame is liked by some, and others feel that the grip frame is simply too large. The grip shape does put the bore axis relatively low, which may have helped accuracy and the lessened perception of felt recoil.



The Bar-Sto conventionally rifled barrel was used when firing lead bullets. The Glock's polygonal rifling isn't suited to firing lead bullets, so the owner puts in the Bar-Sto for economical practice.



pistols tested, the XD-S was the most difficult to control and the least comfortable to fire. For a change, it wasn't the wrists that were sore, but the palms. The smallest gun tested really requires dedication to making good shooting skills.

Firing for accuracy, we did not attempt a 25-yard group, instead moving to 15 yards. The results were interesting. We really think that the slowest load tested, the Fiocchi, may have been most accurate primarily because it generated the least recoil and required less shifting of the grip between shots. The best 15-yard group was 2.5 inches, but this was not the average. Most loads put five shots into 3 inches or a little more, and you have to work for it. The pistol will hit a target in the center every time at 15 yards in the hands of a skilled user.

Our Team Said: We found the XD-S to be reliable and concealable. We rated it down a full grade because of the heavy recoil and fair accuracy.

Glock G36 PI3650201FGR 45 6R FS 45 ACP, $561

This, too, was a recent counter price from BudsGunShop.com. Carrying the same MSRP as the Springfield, the Glock is the most proven of the three handguns tested and has been in service the longest. As such, it is a known commodity. The Glock is the bulkiest of the three pistols, in our estimation. The Glock has the common firing pin block and hinged trigger safety of the others, but no manual safety. Some may prefer this, but we prefer a safety when we can get it.

The sights are OK for close-range use, but they appeared blockier and less well suited to precise shooting than the others, it seemed. However, the Glock was the most accurate pistol. The Glock trigger action was steady at 5.5 pounds with the typical Glock let off. Reset is rapid. Polymer magazines hold six cartridges. The Glock came out of the box running and never failed to feed, chamber, fire, and eject. The owner, one of our raters, uses the Glock as his carry

SMITH & WESSON M&P45 SHIELD 180022 45 ACP, $399

GUN TESTS GRADE: A & BEST BUY

The Shield has features we like, including a manual safety and the best grip design of the three. This grip not only fit most hands well, the pebble grip allowed good purchase without abrading the palm.

Action	Striker-Fire Double Action Only
Overall Length	6.5 in.
Overall Height	4.9 in.
Maximum Width	1.1 in.
Weight Unloaded	20.5 oz.
Weight Loaded	27.4 oz.
Barrel Length	3.3 in.
Barrel	Stainless Steel; Armorlite Finish
Magazine	6 & 7 Rd. Stainless Steel
Slide	Stainless Steel; Armorlite Finish
Frame	Polymer; Compact Slim
Frame Front Strap Height	2.125 to 2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 to 3.6 in.
Grip Thickness (max)	0.9 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.25 in.
Front Sight	Steel, White Dot
Rear Sight	Steel, White Two Dot



Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	6.0 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.6 in.
Safety	Manual Safety
Made In	USA
Warranty	Lifetime
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Telephone	(800) 331-0852



The Shield's grip texture provided good adhesion and didn't cause skin abrasion like the XD-S did. The slide features small forward cocking serrations and well-designed main cocking serrations.



The Shield is halfway between the XD-S and the Glock in size. We liked its balance, and the pistol gave excellent results on the combat range.



The Smith & Wesson Shield features the usual hinged trigger. The trigger breaks at 6 pounds and has a cleaner break than either the Glock or the XD-S, our shooters said.

gun. For practice with lead-bullet loads, he uses a Bar-Sto Precision barrel, conventionally rifled for lead bullets as Glock's polygonal rifling isn't suited to lead. Figure the need to purchase jacketed practice loads into the Glock purchase. On the other hand, the polygonal rifling gave slightly higher velocity than the other loads, par for the course with the Glock. Many feel the Glock chamber doesn't support cartridge-case heads as well as other pistols. While it appears that way on examination, all +P loads showed normal case expansion.

Hand fit was an issue because the Glock 36 has a fairly fat grip. However, in another trade-off, the bore axis of the Glock 36 is relatively low. Recoil was modest for a 45-caliber compact pistol. Half of the raters reported a tingle in the trigger finger on firing, common with harder-kicking Glock handguns.

In fast combat firing, the pistol gave excellent results with the lead bullet handload and Bar-Sto barrel (Barsto.com) The pistol was drawn from the same Galco holster as the Springfield (actually ordered for the Glock) and speed was excellent. We felt the red fiber-optic front sight and relatively small grip of the Springfield gave an advantage to gaining an accurate first-shot hit. After the first shot, recovery was faster with the Glock, and the piece more comfortable to fire as well. With a single magazine of +P loads, the pistol was not uncomfortable to fire, but the shooter knew he had upped the ante.

Our Team Said: The Glock was not as controllable in rapid fire as the Shield, we thought, which gave a good showing on the combat range. In benchrest accuracy, the Glock 36 gave the best accuracy results of any of the handguns tested, including a number of groups of 2 inches or less, although the average was lower. We rated the pistol down a half grade based on hand fit.

Smith & Wesson M&P45 Shield 180022 45 ACP, $399

The Shield features the lowest MSRP, but also was purchased



The Galco Stow-N-Go holster provided yeoman service with several handguns. Here it's cradling the Springfield Armory XD-S, noticeable by the waffle pattern on the exposed grip.





The XD-S, top, is very different from the original XD 45 ACP, below. The XD was the original design, originally called the HS2000. It was designed for the Croatian military and initially imported by HS-produkt and Springfield Armory distributed the line. The HS2000 was only available in 9mm Luger. The XD-S originally was only available in 45 ACP with a 3.3-inch barrel, but now it's chambered in 9mm and 40 S&W as well. There's also a 4-inch long-slide version in both 9mm and 45 ACP.





The XD-S single stack is a slim pistol that packs easily. Its ergonomics can be tailored to the shooter with two interchangeable backstraps.

for less than MSRP at South Carolina Gun Company (SCGunco.com). For comparison's sake, the price listed is from Bud's. The introduction of the Smith & Wesson Military & Police Shield 45 spurred this report. The Shield has been upgraded and redesigned in this big-bore offering. The Shield is comparable in size to the XD-S, save with a longer grip. This long grip made the pistol more comfortable to fire and Smith & Wesson achieved excellent adhesion in the firing grip without resorting to the aggressive checkering of the XD-S.

The Shield is well finished in a rugged dark color. The slide features small forward cocking serrations and well-designed main cocking serrations. The sights are good examples of combat sights, not as easily picked up as the XD-S in rapid fire but more precise than the Glock, we thought. The pistol is supplied with two magazines. Both are six rounds, one with an extended base pad. We liked the advantage in magazine capacity over the XD-S. The trigger breaks at 6 pounds and cleaner than either the Glock or the XD-S. The Shield handles well. The longer grip really made a difference in firing. On the combat course, the pistol gave excellent results. We did not experience the personal break-in period demanded of the XD-S, but the pistol came out of the box firing and gave excellent results from the beginning. Recoil was more noticeable than the Glock due to the Shield's thin grip profile. But it was not punishing.

The Shield is more comfortable to fire and use than the XD-S, and it smaller and more concealable than the Glock 36. The Shield's positive safety is appreciated. This manual safety is easily manipulated and may be used or ignored as the user sees fit. Some of us prefer a pistol with a safety, particularly a handgun as small as this one carried so close to the body. The Shield is halfway between the XD-S and the Glock in size, not a bad place to be. Balance is good, and the pistol gave excellent results on the combat range. We felt that the Shield's combat shooting was a better show than the Glock's performance.

In slow-fire accuracy testing, the pistol beat the XD-S squarely and beat the Glock with one load. The Shield does not have the ambidextrous magazine release of the XD-S. The Shield's safety isn't ambidextrous, but then it does have a safety the others do not. A quirk of the magazines was that at the beginning, we could not load the magazines to full capacity. We could load only two or three rounds. Each cartridge must be pressed completely to the rear to allow loading the magazine. This is done by tapping the magazine against a table. This is a trade off for the use of a pistol with such a small magazine and thin grip.

Our Team Said: In the end, the Smith & Wesson M&P45 Shield's middle-of-the-road size and solid, comfortable range performance earned it a solid A and a Best Buy nod from our testers.

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

We Like Ruger's Enhanced 6.5 Creedmoor Precision Rifle

Since our January 2016 test of bolt-action rifles chambered for 6.5 Creedmoor, Ruger has released an Enhanced version of its Precision Rifle. Are the new features worth another $200?

In the January 2016 issue we published a test of bolt-action rifles chambered for 6.5 Creedmoor, including a Howa Austrian Brown Cerakote, a Savage Arms Model 12 LRP, and a Ruger Precision Rifle. All three rifles were impressive, but since then Ruger has released an Enhanced version, so we thought we'd better get one and see if the new features were worth the extra $200.

The model number for the (original) 6.5CM Ruger Precision Rifle previously tested was 18005. The Enhanced version is number 18008. Both rifles utilize a 24-inch-long medium-contour cold-hammer-forged barrel with a 1:8 twist. It is attached to an adaptation of the Ruger American action fed by a 10-round removable box magazine. The fully adjustable butt stock was the same, and so was the adjustable trigger. Our earlier test gun came trigger-pull weight adjusted to 2.6 pounds, with variation measured to be 1.4 ounces. Despite the owner's manual claiming that the adjustable range was 2.25 pounds to 5.0 pounds, our Enhanced rifle arrived with a 2-pound trigger with variation of only about 0.8 ounces. We left the pull weight as set for fear of losing the overall feel of the trigger that we thought was clearly articulated.

The 18008 (Enhanced) rifle weighed about 0.1 pound more, even though the Samson Evolution Key Mod handguard was replaced by Ruger's trimmer RPR Short-Action handguard, which also does away with the integrated top rail. We guess that whatever weight the 18008 gives up in top rail it gets back plus a little more by adding Ruger's proprietary Hybrid Muzzle Brake plus Ruger's Billet Aluminum Bolt Shroud, which replaced the plastic shroud.



The Enhanced Ruger Precision Rifle added a billet aluminum bolt shroud to replace the plastic component, a proprietary design handguard, and muzzle brake. These are three key parts that were commonly being replaced aftermarket. Given the Enhanced rifle lists for $1599 versus $1399 MSRP for the original model, buying the Enhanced could save the shooter about $150 or more.



The original-issue rifle came with a threaded barrel that was capped for protection. Some shooters added a suppressor, but given the legal hoops the shooter must jump through to own those, muzzle brakes are more popular. The Ruger Hybrid Muzzle Brake was not as loud as some and did a good job of keeping the rifle still, which helped us stay on target. Muzzle brakes can cost anywhere from $100 to $200.



One of the first aftermarket components available for the Ruger Precision Rifle was replacement of the plastic shroud at the tail end of the bolt. The Enhanced RPR features a bolt shroud made from billet aluminum. Similar items ring up at about $60 plus installation from catalogs such as Brownells and LongRiflesinc.com.

On our second range day with the 18008, we discovered several other RPR shooters, each with aftermarket upgrades of their own applied to the original-issue rifle. The addition of a muzzle brake was common, so were aftermarket bolt shrouds and handguards. To compare the difference in cost between the suggested retail price of an RPR Enhanced with common upgrades purchased aftermarket, we visited the RPR Pro Shop at LongRiflesinc.com. We found a bolt shroud for $60 and a muzzle brake for $180. Brownells offered handguards

starting at $175, so the enhanced model did offer a discount. But how did it shoot compared to the original model 18005?

For recording accuracy data, we were able to fire two of the three rounds used in our earlier test. They were Hornady's 120-grain A-Max and the Hornady 129-grain SST. Hornady's 143-grain ELD-X Precision Hunter rounds were fired in place of the 140-grain A-Max ammunition we shot in the first test. After a careful break-in consisting of 50 rounds, we mounted a Steiner 5-25x56mm Military Scope with Horus Reticle and recorded the groups fired from the 100-yard bench at American Shooting Centers (amshootcenters.com). Called bad shots were counted. Firing the 120-grain and 129-grain resulted in widest groups of 0.93 and 0.95 inches respectively. We still managed to record average groups measuring less than 0.75 inches across because the smallest groups for the 120s measured 0.60 inches and the SST rounds delivered a 0.57-inch-wide group. The 143-grain rounds showed the most consistency, with groups measuring between 0.45 inches and 0.6 inches.

One of the reasons why 6.5 Creedmoor is becoming popular is its relatively flat trajectory. Moving to the 200-yard line, we decided to shoot from the prone position. Required adjustment in elevation was only 0.4 mil, which was miniscule in our view, especially when the Steiner was ready to offer multiple revolutions of the dial. We put away our Caldwell Dead Shot bag and mounted an Atlas bipod up front and attached an AccuShot monopod to the Picatinny rail integrated with the buttstock. Firing 5-shot groups, we averaged 1.4 inches shooting the 120-grain ammunition, but our best group was actually less than 1.1 inches across. The 129-grain SST rounds averaged 1.5 inches, and the 143-grain ELD-X ammunition produced an average of about 1.25 inches. What was also impressive was the consistency in terms of velocity. The 120-grain rounds ranged from 2801 to 2824 fps, but the 129-grain SST rounds and the 143-grain rounds

RUGER PRECISION RIFLE 18008
6.5 CREEDMOOR, $1599
GUN TESTS GRADE: A

This is another solid effort by Ruger. They took an already good gun and made it a touch better. The add-ons work great, but you may want to accessorize it yourself.



Action	Bolt, 3 Lugs, Parkerized Finish
Overall Length (min/max)	43.25 in./46.25 in
Folded Length	35.60 in.
Barrel	24.0 in. Long, 1:8 Twist, 5 Grooves Parkerized Finish; Fluted, 5/8"-24 Threads RPR Hybrid Muzzle Brake
Overall Height (w/o Scope)	7.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	10.75 lbs.
Weight Loaded	11.25 lbs.
Magazine	2 10-Rd. Magpul PMAGs
Buttstock	Adjustable, Folding; Anodized Aluminum
Bedding	Modular Free Float
Buttplate	Rubber, Adj. Cant
Length of Pull (standard/set)	12.0 in./15.5 in.
Handguard	RPR Short Action
Receiver Scope-Base Pattern	Picatinny
Trigger Pull Weight	2.0 lbs.
Safety	Rotating Thumb
Warranty	None Written
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
Website	Ruger.com
Made In	U.S.A.



The bolt action of the Ruger Precision Rifle showed three heavy lugs. The bolt is proprietary and mates with Ruger's American rifles.



The folding stock helps with transport, as well as providing step one in removing the bolt. The hinge was sturdy, but it had no provision to lock open.



Ruger's proprietary handguard subtracted the top rail but still left facility for adding sections of rail where desired. We used some of the supplied rail to make room for attaching the superb Atlas bipod. Then we added a Bravo Company keymod flashlight mount.

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RANGE DATA

Hornady 6.5 Creedmoor 120-gr. Hornady A-Max 811492	**Ruger Precision Rifle Enhanced 18008**
Average Velocity	2815 fps
Muzzle Energy	2111 ft.-lbs.
Average Group 100-yard bench	0.73 in.
Average Group 200-yard prone	1.40 in.

Hornady 6.5 Creedmoor 129-gr. Hornady	**Ruger Precision Rifle Enhanced 18008**
Average Velocity	2879 fps
Muzzle Energy	2374 ft.-lbs.
Average Group 100-yard bench	0.74 in.
Average Group 200-yard prone	1.5 in.

Hornady 6.5 Creedmoor 143-gr. Hornady	**Ruger Precision Rifle Enhanced 18008**
Average Velocity	2565 fps
Muzzle Energy	2089 ft.-lbs.
Average Group 100-yard bench	0.52 in.
Average Group 200-yard prone	1.25 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired 5-shot groups from a sandbag rest. Distance: 100 yards. We recorded velocities using a CED chronograph, with the first skyscreen set 12 feet from the muzzle.



each registered pairs of identical velocity readings.

Our Team Said: After the maker has had time to review its initial work, Ruger likely thought, "We think we can do this a little bit better." The change from a plastic to an aluminum bolt shroud was a no-brainer. The muzzle brake was not as loud as others and definitely helped keep the rifle from moving upward or torqueing away from point of aim. A comparison on the accuracy chart shows the Enhanced wins out. Maybe not by a lot, but we think more accurate results were easier to achieve. If you should miss the Picatinny top rail, one can still be attached. We used the Keymod system to experiment with adding weight to the rifle, but hog hunters might like to add lights, etc. Several shooters are attaching barricade lugs for the new action shooting series for precision rifles that the RPR seems to be fertilizing by making it affordable. To answer the question as to which rifle is a better buy, it's probably a question of how much you want to modify the rifle. Costwise, the Enhanced certainly has a leg up versus aftermarket costs, and there's always something to be said for buying a second-generation product.

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

Bigger 9mms Handguns: SIG, Arsenal, and Beretta Go At It

Five guns are tested: SIG Sauer's classic P210, the P226 MK25, the relatively new P320, Beretta's recently updated M9A3, and the new Strike One from Arsenal. There's a surprise winner.



Looking for a bigger 9mm pistol? Well, you've come to the right place. Herein, we test five pistols — three SIG Sauers, one Beretta, and one from Arsenal. The SIGs tested are the relatively new P320, shown at right, the classic P210 (top left in the lower group), the P226 MK25 used by the U.S. Navy SEALS (top right below), Beretta's recently updated M9A3 (bottom left below), and the new Strike One from Arsenal (bottom right below).

As noted earlier in this issue, 9mm auto-loading pistols are among the most commonly purchased firearms in America for pleasure, competition, and defense. These guns are offered in many styles and price points, ranging from a few hundred to several thousands of dollars. While the handguns in this comparison are not top-end, highly customized pistols costing thousands of dollars, they are generally marketed as being well above average quality in fit, features, and capabilities.

In this comparison, we test five pistols, three of which were built by SIG Sauer, one by Beretta, and one newcomer from Arsenal. The SIGs tested are the classic P210, the P226 MK25 used by the U.S. Navy SEALS, and the relatively new P320. The Beretta tested is the recently updated M9A3. The fifth gun is the new Strike One from Arsenal.

For our evaluation, we used three different 9mm loads from three different manufacturers in two different weights and two different bullet styles. As always, the guns in question were shot by multiple testers (this time three men and three women) of different backgrounds.

We did our accuracy testing at Boyert Shooting Centers, an indoor range in Houston, and followed the standard accuracy protocol of collecting five 5-round groups at 25 yards from a rest for each pistol/ammunition combination. For this test, we also performed a speed drill. The speed drill involved starting from a low-ready position, shooting twice to the chest and once to the head of a silhouette paper target. This test was performed at 7 yards by one experienced tester with large hands. The speed test was performed after the familiarization shooting, but before the accuracy testing. The tester was given only one opportunity to perform the test. As these pistols are supposed to be superior to the average offering, our team expected above-average results and graded accordingly. Though all five pistols turned in good results and had their fans, the testing yielded one clear surprise winner.









Arsenal Firearms AF1 Strike One AWP 9mm Luger, $750

The Arsenal Strike One is a polymer-frame short-recoil-operated striker-fired semi-automatic pistol introduced by Arsenal Firearms of Italy in 2012. The Strike One is a little

different than the standard Browning short-recoil-operated pistol in that it uses the Bergman operating mechanism first developed for the Bergman-Bayard pistol in 1903. This results in a lower bore axis relative to the firing hand. The frame also has unusually long rails. While the testers didn't notice a difference in felt recoil, several noted that muzzle flip was noticeably reduced. This effect was particularly noticeable by non-shooting observers when watching the shooter alternate between the Strike One and the other pistols.

This design difference also means the cleaning procedure is slightly different from the norm. This process is well described in the manual and requires no tools. In summary, one ensures the pistol is clear of ammo and then pulls the trigger. While holding the slide and frame in your dominant hand, push the takedown pin out with the non-dominant finger, then pull the captive pin out with the nail of the thumb. Push the slide assembly forward and off the frame. Now remove the recoil spring assembly, locking block, and barrel. The pistol is now fully field-stripped for cleaning. The pistol comes in a locking hard case with two magazines and a cleaning kit.

Our sample was the full-sized AWP (All Weather Pistol) model with a flat-dark-earth Cerakote coating. The coating was not consistent in color, had a couple of marred areas, and had a tendency to fill in some of the engraved areas. The testers had varied opinions on the looks of the gun. Some thought it looked very modernistic, and others thought it looked "insectoid" or like a toy. As beauty is in the eye of the beholder, we trust our faithful readers will decide for themselves whether to favor the looks, or not.

Despite having the second-longest barrel at 5 inches and a middle-of-the-pack overall length of 8.3 inches, the pistol was second lightest at 26.5 ounces, with a slight muzzle-heavy bias. The slide-to-frame fit was very tight and smooth.

The Strike One has a Picatinny

ARSENAL FIREARMS AF1 STRIKE ONE AWP 9MM LUGER, $750

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Strike One is effective tool for those it fit. But we graded it down a notch because of flaws in the finish. The reduced muzzle flip is an advantage.

Action Type	Semi-Auto DAO Striker, Short Recoil
Overall Length	8.3 in.
Overall Height	5.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	26.5 oz
Barrel	5.0 in., FDE Steel; Target Crown Bergmann-Style Low-Profile Locking Block
Magazines	2, 17-Rd.
Magazine Release	Round Button, Left, Reversible
Slide	FDE Steel, Ambidextrous Release
Frame	Polymer, FDE Cerakote w/Rail
Grip	FDE Checkered Polymer
Front Sight	1 Dot Post
Rear Sight	2 Dot
Trigger Weight	5.7 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Sight Radius	7.3 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	1-Year Limited
Website	ArsenalFirearms.com
Telephone	(702) 643-2220
Made In	Italy
California Compliant	No
Massachusetts Compliant	No





Above: The Arsenal came well appointed in a hard case with two magazines, an owners manual, and a cleaning kit.



The Arsenal uses a mechanism first developed for the Bergman-Bayard pistol in 1903. Upside: Lower bore axis in the firing hand meant that muzzle flip was noticeably reduced. The long and skinny grip size, shape, and texture was not universally liked, however.







The All Weather Pistol's Cerakote coating wasn't consistent. The big Picatinny rail accepted a lot of accessories.

BERETTA M9A3 JS92M9A3M 9MM LUGER, $1099

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Beretta worked well for shooters with larger hands and it was fast in the speed drills. However, it wasn't that accurate, and shooters with smaller hands didn't like it.

Action Type	DA/SA Short Recoil Semi
Overall Length	8.7 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	33.3 oz.
Barrel	5.1 in., 1:9.8 RH, 6 Grooves, FDE Steel; Threaded Crown; Tilting Lock
Magazines	3, 17-Rd.
Magazine Release	Round Button, Reversible
Slide	Steel, FDE Cerakote over Bruniton; Left Release
Frame	Anodized Alum. w/Rail
Grip	FDE Checkered Polymer
Front Sight	1 Dot Tritium Post
Rear Sight	2 Dot Tritium
Trigger Weight DA	10.3 lbs.
Trigger Weight SA	5.6 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Sight Radius	6.3 in.
Safety	Slide Mounted, Ambidextrous
Warranty	1 Yr + 2 Years w/Registration
Website	Beretta.com
Telephone	(800) BERETTA
Made In	USA
California Compliant	No
Massachusetts Compliant	No







Above: Our pistol came in an ammobox-style container that contained the pistol, three magazines, lock, and spare grip, all secured in foam cutouts.



Three of the Beretta's upgrades are obvious here: a three-slot Picatinny rail, replaceable sights, and a threaded barrel. It had an evenly applied finish with two shades of flat dark earth coloring on the slide and frame. The sturdy sights were bright Trijicon night sights that could be drifted for windage. Made for the Army, available to citizens.



With the M9A3, Beretta tried to provide the U.S. Army with an improved version of the M9 based on 30+ years field experience. Our shooters with larger hands found the Beretta's controls very easy to use. Smaller-handed shooters did not.

rail and a very effective magazine funnel. The magazines were a little sticky for one tester in the beginning, but quickly broke in and gave no further issues. The protective ridge interfered with one tester's ability to quickly use the magazine release, but none of the other testers complained. The long and skinny grip size, shape, and texture was not universally liked by the testing team. The Strike One does not have interchangeable backstraps, as is becoming common in more recent designs.

The striker showed a white dot when cocked, and the trigger was slightly better than industry average, with a straight-back pull averaging 5.7 pounds with a little overtravel. The trigger had more grit during take up than we liked, and the trigger reset was difficult to detect. The testers agreed that the trigger was okay, but not outstanding, for a pistol that's supposed to be better than average.

The three-dot sights were not tritium, and one tester did not like the rear triangular sight. The sights did prove to be effective during the accuracy tests. The Strike One was accurate, with groups under 4 inches at 25 yards from a rest with all three loads. The Federal 115-grain hollow points grouped the best at 3.2 inches, with a best of 1.9 inches. The RWS followed at 3.6 inches, with the best group at 2.7 inches. The Sellier & Bellot trailed at a consistent 3.9 inches. The pistol placed third in the speed drills with an elapsed time of 3.53 seconds. There were no failures to function.

Our Team Said: While the test team found this pistol to be unconventional, they all agreed that the Strike One was an effective tool for those it fit. However, the flaws in the finish resulted in an overall "B" grade. Buy the Arsenal if it fits you and you like to play speed games where the reduced muzzle flip is an advantage. Otherwise, we would recommend buying a different gun in this test.

Beretta M9A3 JS92M A3M 9mm Luger, $1099

The Beretta M9 has been the U.S. Army standard sidearm since 1985.

The M9A3 was a Beretta initiative to provide the U.S. Army with an improved version based on 30+ years field experience at no additional cost. The U.S. Army declined Beretta's offer for a variety of officially stated reasons. Therefore, Beretta has made the pistol available to civilians. While the design and operation is very familiar to many shooters, some of the obvious differences to the standard M9 include a flat dark earth finish, three-slot Picatinny rail, thinner stock with two removable wraparound grips, replaceable sights, reshaped 17-round magazines, and a threaded barrel. Our example came in a very impressive ammobox-style container that contained the pistol, three magazines, lock, and spare grip, all secured in foam cutouts.

The M9A3 showed no play between the slide and frame. It had an evenly applied finish with two distinct shades of flat dark earth on the slide and frame. The sights were sturdy and bright Trijicon night sights that could be drifted for windage. The trigger was the standard double-action type with a better-than-average pull. The double-action stroke had a very smooth, but long, movement averaging 10.3 pounds with a little overtravel. The single-action stroke also had a lot of take up, but released cleanly at an average of 5.6 pounds.

The test team's opinions fell into two distinct groups when it came to using the controls. Those with larger hands found the Beretta's controls very easy to use. Those testers with smaller hands found the pistol very difficult to manipulate.

The Beretta's accuracy was tested in single-action mode and trailed the rest of the pistols in this comparison. The M9A3 performed best with the Federal hollow points at a 4.1-inch average and a best group of 2.9 inches. The RWS ammo shot an average of 4.9 inches, with the smallest group being 2.3 inches. This particular Beretta did not like the Sellier & Bellot ammo, with an average of 5.2 inches and only one group less than 5 inches. However, even shooting the first shot double

SIG SAUER P210 LEGEND 210-9-LEGEND 9X19MM LUGER, $2000

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Most found the P210 to be the nicest-looking and most finely built pistol in the test. However, you will have to pay a premium for its old-world craftsmanship.

Action Type	Semi-Auto Single Action Short Recoil
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	37.4 oz.
Barrel	4.7 in., 1:9.8 RH, 6 Grooves, Steel; Round Crown
Magazines	2, 8-Rd.
Magazine Release	Round Button, Left Side
Slide	Black Nitron Carbon Steel
Frame	Black Nitron Carbon Steel
Grip	Checkered Wood
Front Sight	Post, Windage Adj.
Rear Sight	Steel Notch
Trigger Weight SA	4.25 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Sight Radius	6.3 in.
Safety	Frame Mounted
Warranty	NA
Website	SIGSauer.com
Telephone	(603) 610-3000
Made In	Germany
California Compliant	No
Massachusetts Compliant	No





The P210 Legend has been available in the U.S. as recently as 2014, but it is not currently in the SIG catalog. Therefore, our sample was a used gun.



The team was less than enthusiastic about the plain sights riding above the barrel. They were all black with no dots and were clearly set up for daylight precision more than low-light speed. The sights showed up well on lighter backgrounds, but would be be difficult to resolve in low light. They sights clearly impacted the accuracy results in an indoor range.



The P210's Nitron coating on top of forged carbon steel has held up and extremely well. The slide moved very smoothly, to the point that our tester with the smallest and weakest hands said the slide was easy to rack.

SIG SAUER P226 MK-25 9X19MM LUGER, $1000

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The majority of the test team found the P226 MK25 to be a professional-grade tool. However, the less-than-stellar accuracy was a surprise. Our shooters expected more.

Action Type	Semi-Auto DA/SA Short Recoil
Overall Length	7.7 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	34.4 oz.
Barrel	4.4 in., 1:9.8 RH, 6 Grooves, Nitron-Coated Steel; Round Crown
Magazines	3, 15-Rd.
Magazine Release	Round Button, Left Side Reversible
Slide	Black Nitron Stainless Steel
Frame	Black Nitron Anodized Alum.
Grip	Wraparound Black Polymer
Front Sight	1-Dot Tritium Post, Windage Adj.
Rear Sight	2-Dot Tritium
Trigger Weight DA	12.0 lbs.
Trigger Weight DA	5.4 lbs.
Trigger Span	3.0 in.
Sight Radius	6.3 in.
Safety	Frame Mounted
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Website	SIGSauer.com
Telephone	(603) 610-3000
Made In	USA
California Compliant	No
Massachusetts Compliant	No





The P226 MK25 is a flat black, double-action 9mm that is claimed to be identical to the pistols issued to the U.S. Navy SEALs. It wasn't that accurate in our shooting tests.



Our gun came with three-dot SIG-Lite tritium night sights. All the testers liked them.





Top: The right side is slick with no controls to catch on clothing. Bottom: The grip texture offers good handling when wet.

action, the Beretta placed first in the speed drills with an elapsed time of 3.13 seconds.

Our Team Said: While the test team was divided on the usability of this pistol, the Beretta worked well for shooters with larger hands. The Beretta performed best in the speed drills. However, the average accuracy and incompatibility with smaller hands resulted in an overall "B" grade. Buy the Beretta if it fits you and you want an upgraded example of the standard U.S. military sidearm to add to your collection. Otherwise, we would recommend buying a different gun in this test.

SIG Sauer P210 Legend 210-9-Legend 9x19mm Luger, $2000

Our next pistol is the first of the three SIGs in our comparison. The P210 Legend is aptly named. This classic design, which has its origins in the Charles Petter 1935 pistol, was the official sidearm for Swiss army and police units from 1949 through 1975. It has been available in the U.S. as recently as 2014, but at this time is not included in the SIG catalog. Therefore our sample was a used gun. The P210 harkens to a prior era when guns were made of steel and wood. Many of the testers remarked on the very high quality of workmanship and solid feel of the pistol. For example, the two halves of the wood stock were so closely fitted that the seam could not be seen. Several of the testers felt the P210 was the most attractive pistol tested. Of course this quality has a cost and the SIG P210 was the most expensive gun in our test. Made of forged carbon steel, the P210 had an even Nitron coating and extremely crisp lines and engravings. The slide moved very smoothly. Even our tester with the smallest and weakest hands found the slide easy to rack. An interesting design feature is that the slide of the P210 rides inside of the pistol's frame. This gives increased bearing surface between frame and slide, and by some accounts, may be a contributor to accuracy. The P210 is highly respected by sport shooters due to its reputation for accuracy and the



The anchor on the MK25's slide means a lot to some shooters.

pistol's quality, weight, and feel.

While the heaviest gun of the test at 37.4 ounces unloaded, the single-stack 8-round magazines made for the slimmest grip in the test. The testers who complained about the girth of the Beretta praised the relatively svelte P210. On the other hand, the testers who preferred the double-stack magazines of the other four pistols thought the P210 grip, while usable, was a little small. We also encountered issues with the stock screw repeatedly coming loose. This was concerning since spare parts could be expensive and hard to come by. However, it could be easily resolved with some thread-locking compound.

While all the testers found the safety easy to move to the Fire position, most of the testers found it more difficult to move it back up to the Safe position. The slide and magazine releases were difficult to work for testers with smaller hands. The entire team thought the trigger was excellent, with little take-up and almost no overtravel. The crisp 4.25-pound weight almost always resulted in a surprise break.

The team was less enthusiastic about the sights. The very plain sights riding above the 4.7-inch barrel were all black with no dots. They were clearly set up for daylight precision more than low-light speed. In fact, the P210 came in last in the speed drills with an elapsed time of 4.32 seconds. The sights showed up extremely well on lighter backgrounds but could be difficult to resolve in low light or against darker backgrounds. The sights clearly impacted the accuracy results when we tested in the subdued lighting of the indoor range.

Once again, the Federal hollow points performed best with an average of 3.6 inches and a best group of 1.3 inches at 25 yards. The Sellier & Bellot came in second with an average of 3.6 inches with a best of 2.7. The RWS rounded out the test with an average of 4.6 inches with a best of 2.7 inches. Based on our outdoor familiarization shoots, we strongly believe the accuracy results would have been better in brighter light.

Our Team Said: The majority of the test team found the P210 to be the nicest looking and most finely built pistol in the test. However, the dated ergonomics of the design showed its age, resulting in a "B" grade. Buy the SIG P210 Legend if it fits you and you don't mind paying a premium for old-world craftsmanship. Otherwise, we would recommend buying a different gun in this test.

SIG Sauer P226 MK-25 9x19mm Luger, $1000

Which brings us to the next gun in our test, the SIG Sauer P226 MK25. Generally based on the design of the second generation P220, the P226 MK25 is a flat black, double-action 9mm that is claimed to be identical the pistols issued to the U.S. Navy SEALs. The P226 and the Beretta were the only two pistols to pass the U.S. Army XM9 pistol trials in 1984. According to a GAO report, Beretta won due to a lower total package cost. The P228, a compact version of the P226, was later designated the M11 and issued to investigative military police services and to troopers with very small hands. Many law-enforcement units use the P226 or one of its many variants as their standard duty sidearm. The P226 uses a modified Browning locked-breech, short-recoil-operating system with the barrel and slide locking together using an enlarged breech section and ejection port. This simple and strong action has been adopted by many manufacturers since its introduction.

The pistol field strips easily for cleaning using the take down lever on the left side of the frame. All other controls are also on the left side of the pistol and include the magazine release, slide release and a decocker lever. The right side of the pistol is slick with no controls to catch on clothing. The magazine release is reversible.

The P226 MK differs from the standard P226 in that it is marked with a silver anchor and UID panel on the left side, has a mil-spec accessory rail, and uses the black Nitron (nitride) anti-corrosion coatings on all controls and exterior and interior surfaces. Our example came with three dot Sig-Lite tritium night sights and three double-column magazines holding 15 rounds each contained in the standard SIG Sauer plastic gun case. While the MK25 was the second shortest pistol at 7.7 inches, it was second heaviest at 34.4 ounces.

The trigger is of the classic double action/single action variety. It was very smooth and predictable with a 12 pound break in double action and a 5 pound, 6 ounce single action pull. The trigger exhibited some over travel and had a fairly long but easily discernible reset. The decocker worked easily but one of the testers did not like its location. When the team first started testing the MK25, we experienced a couple of failures for the slide to lock. Since this issue quickly disappeared, it is likely that the pistol just needed to be broken in. Most testers thought the pistol and its controls were easy to work, though one tester with smaller hands noted that the magazine release is too far away and the slide release difficult to activate. This same tester could not fire the pistol in double action but found the pistol to be a natural pointer despite small hands. All testers found the slide to be the easiest to manipulate in the test. The wrap-around plastic grips were universally well received. All the testers also liked the three dot tritium night sites. While there was some play between the slide and frame, all the testers thought that the pistol gave an overall impression of good quality.

The pistol was pleasant to shoot but did not group as well as expected. The first round of most groups consistently shot high and left for all

SIG SAUER P320 CARRY 320CA-9-BSS 9X19MM LUGER, $550

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The least expensive pistol proved to be the most accurate, most flexible, and most ergonomic design in this test. With the options available, there is very little this pistol can not do.





Action Type	Semi-Auto DAO Striker, Short Recoil
Overall Length	7.2 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	26.0 oz
Barrel	3.9 in. Long; 1:9.8 RH Twist, 6 Grooves, Black Finish, Round Crown
Magazines	2, 17-Rd.
Magazine Release	Triangular Button, Left Side, Reversible
Slide	Nitron-Finish Stainless Steel, Ambidextrous Release
Frame	Black Polymer w/Rail
Grip	Interchangeable Black Polymer
Front Sight	SIGLight Night Sight, 1-Dot Tritium Post
Rear Sight	SIGLight Night Sight, 2-Dot Tritium, Windage Adj.
Trigger Weight	8.1 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.8 in.
Sight Radius	5.8 in.
Safety	Striker, Disconnect
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Website	SIGSauer.com
Telephone	(603) 610-3000
California Compliant	No
Massachusetts Compliant	No

Above: The P320 arrived in a hard case with a potfull of goodies, including two magazines, a range holster (below), and interchangeable backstraps.





Right: The tritium SIG-Lite three-dot sights were a great addition to the P320. The frame has finger indentations on both sides that make it easier to reach the trigger and mag release. Most testers liked the grip shape and stippling. Below: The frame sports a three-slot rail.



shooters. The sights were easy to use in all lighting conditions. The MK25 was the only pistol that didn't shoot best with the Federal JHP, shooting an average of 4.4 inches with a small of 3.6 and a max of 4.8. The Sellier and Bellot was inconsistent in this example averaging 5.0 inches with a small group of 2.9 and a large group of 7.4 inches. This MK25 did like the RWS ammunition showing a respectable average of 3.4 inches with the smallest group being 2.4 inches and the largest being 3.4 inches. Nonetheless, the 25 yard group averages would likely meet the design purposes of this pistol. This pistol came in fourth in the speed drills with an elapsed time of 4.24 seconds. However, almost half that time was due to the initial double action trigger pull. Cock the hammer back and this pistol is very fast in action.

Our Team Said: The majority of the test team found the P226 MK25 to be a well built, professional grade tool that should withstand anything short of outright and intentional abuse. However, the less-than-stellar accuracy resulted in a "B" grade. Buy the SIG P226 MK25 if it fits you and you don't mind paying a small premium to own the same pistol as the SEALs.

SIG Sauer P320 Carry 320CA-9-BSS 9mm Luger, $550

The P320 is also built by SIG Sauer. Our specific example is the mid-size P320CA Carry edition. A striker-fired black-polymer-framed 9mm, the P320 is the latest generation of pistol introduced by SIG Sauer in 2014. The P320 uses the same lockup system as the P226 MK25. What makes the P320 unique is its modular design. The core of the pistol is its stainless-steel receiver module, which contains the fire-control group, ejector, ambidextrous slide release, and four slide rails. It is this receiver that is marked with the serial number.

From this core, the user can change the grip frame size and color, slide assemblies, and even change to a limited number of chamberings. (The 9mm, 40 S&W, and 357 SIG calibers are interchangeable. The 45 ACP barrel assembly is not.) The

9x19MM LUGER RANGE DATA

Federal 115-gr. JHP	Sig Sauer P320 Carry	Sig Sauer P226 MK-25	Sig Sauer P210 Legend	Beretta M9A3	Arsenal Firearms AF1 - Strike One AWP
Smallest Group	2.3 in.	3.6 in.	1.3 in.	2.9 in.	1.9 in.
Largest Group	3.2 in.	4.8 in.	5.1 in.	5.6 in.	4.3 in.
Average Group	2.8 in.	4.4 in.	3.6 in.	4.1 in.	3.2 in.
Sellier & Bellot 124-gr. FMJ	**Sig Sauer P320 Carry**	**Sig Sauer P226 MK-25**	**Sig Sauer P210 Legend**	**Beretta M9A3**	**Arsenal Firearms AF1 - Strike One AWP**
Smallest Group	1.9 in.	2.9 in.	2.7 in.	2.6 in.	3.3 in.
Largest Group	5.4 in.	7.4 in.	5.5 in.	6.4 in.	4.6 in.
Average Group	3.6 in.	5.0 in.	3.7 in.	5.2 in.	3.9 in.
RWS 124-gr. FMJ	**Sig Sauer P320 Carry**	**Sig Sauer P226 MK-25**	**Sig Sauer P210 Legend**	**Beretta M9A3**	**Arsenal Firearms AF1 - Strike One AWP**
Smallest Group	1.0 in.	2.4 in.	2.7 in.	2.3 in.	2.7 in.
Largest Group	5.0 in.	4.6 in.	5.3 in.	7.6 in.	4.2 in.
Average Group	3.2 in.	3.4 in.	4.6 in.	4.9 in.	3.6 in.

grip options are reasonably priced at $47 from the SIG Store. Complete caliber conversion kits are a pricier at $400. This modular design brings the user a tremendous amount of ergonomic, economic, and operational flexibility. This can a very real advantage, in that the user can use different setups of the same firearm for recreational shooting, home defense, and concealed carry, while not having to adapt to different triggers and other controls.

The P320 design breaks down for cleaning like most SIGs. Unlike some striker-fired pistols, the user does not have to pull the trigger to field-strip the gun. This lessens the possibility of a negligent discharge.

Our P320 was a very utilitarian, all-black piece with a very even Nitron finish that closely matched the color of the frame. The frame comes with a three-slot Picatinny rail on the dust cover. The tritium SIG-Lite three-dot sights were universally liked. The SIG P320's design benefits from many years of industry refinements in ergonomics. Most of the testers liked the grip shape, size and stippled texture. The frame has finger indentations on both sides of the frame that make it easier to reach the trigger and magazine release. The triangular magazine release is nicely sized and reversible and ejected the magazines with vigor. The slide release is ambidextrous, which accommodates both left- and right-handed shooters and allows users with weaker hands to press both sides to release the slide. While the slide was a little loose, all the testers found the slide easy to rack.

The controls on this particular pistol benefited from a break-in period. The slide release was a little balky for the earlier testers, but our final tester found the slide could be released even with weaker hands. The two-stage trigger saw great improvements over time. In the beginning, the testers found the trigger to be well rounded in contour, but stiff and gritty.

By the end of testing, the trigger was much smoother and more consistent, with a very light first stage and a crisp final pull that seemed lighter than its weight of 8.1 pounds.

The testers found the P320 comfortable to shoot and it created only moderate recoil. One of the male testers found the grip a little loose in his hand, but the rest of the testers found the grip to be a good fit. One of the female shooters noted that the pistol was a natural pointer for her. The good sights, comfortable grip, and improved trigger may all have been factors in the excellent shooting results shown by the P320. This P320 was second fastest in the speed drills with an elapsed time of 3.48 seconds.

The P320 was the most accurate pistol in the test with all three choices of ammunition. The economy 124-grain Sellier & Bellot full-metal-jacket ammunition averaged 3.6-inch groups, with the largest group of 5.4 inches and the smallest group an excellent 1.9 inches. The 124-grain RMS FMJ averaged an even better 3.2 inches, with the largest group being 5.0 inches and the smallest group an amazing 1.0 inches. The Federal 115-grain JHP self-defense ammunition averaged an excellent 2.8 inches, with the largest at 3.2 inches and the smallest at 2.3 inches.

Our Team Said: Although it was the least expensive pistol in the test, the P320 proved to be the most accurate pistol of the five guns tested. It is also easily the most flexible and ergonomic design in this test. With the different options available, there is very little this pistol could not do within the limits of the cartridge. While all the pistols in this test are quality pistols and scored well, the SIG P320 is the surprise winner.

Written and photographed by David Tannahill, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.* GT

Ruger Introduces a Bevy of New Rifles and Pistols Mid-Year 2016

The products include the LCP II Lightweight Compact Pistol, the One-Button Takedown Mark IV, a Compact addition to the Ruger American Pistol line, and the Hawkeye FTW Hunter Model rifles.

Ruger Introduces LCP II Lightweight Compact Pistol

Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. has introduced the new Ruger LCP II, a new variant of the pistol that debuted in 2008, in early October 2016. The 380 Auto LCP II pistol features improved sights for superior visibility, a larger grip surface for better distribution of recoil forces, and an easy-to-rack slide with an improved slide-stop mechanism and a last-round hold-open. A short, crisp, single-action trigger has an inner-trigger safety.

"With modern styling, improved features and a modest price, the LCP II promises to raise the bar on what people have come to expect in a compact 380 Auto pistol," said Ruger President and COO Chris Killoy. "The LCP II is another fine example of Ruger's product innovation and dedication to continuous improvement of a popular product line."

The compact pistols measures 5.17 inches long and 3.71 inches tall) and comes with a pocket holster, though it will fit a variety of holsters and concealed carry options. Weighing in at 10.6 ounces and equipped to hold 6+1 rounds of 380 Auto ammunition, the LCP II could be an ideal back-up gun that's compact and light enough that you never have to leave it at home.

The American-made LCP II is built on a one-piece precision-machined anodized-aluminum chassis with integral frame rails and fire-control housing. Additional features include a through-hardened alloy steel slide; a black, one-piece glass-filled nylon grip frame; a textured grip frame to provide a secure and comfortable grip; a finger grip extension floorplate that can be added to the magazine for comfort and more secure grip, and a blued, alloy steel barrel. The LCP II ships with one 6-round magazine.

Note: Six-round LCP magazines are compatible with the LCP II, but will not activate the last round hold-open feature of the LCP II. Seven-round LCP magazines are not compatible with the LCP II.



The LCP II Model No. 3750 is not California or Massachusetts approved and has a suggested retail of $349.

Ruger Adds One-Button Takedown Mark IV

The latest development in the Mark Series pistols is the Ruger Mark IV, a line of 22 LR handguns that began with the introduction of the Standard Pistol in 1949. Since the original, the Standard Pistol has undergone a series of enhancements with the development of the Mark I, Mark II, and then the Mark III in 2005.

While the heavily redesigned Mark IV maintains the same classic outward appearance as the Mark III, it incorporates a significant improvement customers will love — a simple, one-button takedown for quick and easy field-stripping. A recessed button in the back of the frame allows the upper receiver to tilt up and off the grip frame without the use of tools. The bolt simply slides out of the receiver and the barrel can be properly cleaned from chamber to muzzle.



Several models of the Mark IV will be offered. The Target model 40101, top, will have a suggested retail of $529, while the stainless Hunter 40118, bottom, will have a suggested retail of $769.

"We are thrilled to be introducing what we consider to be a monumental improvement to this iconic pistol that has been with Ruger from the start," said Ruger President and COO Chris Killoy. "This one-button takedown alleviates the headache that our Mark III owners are all too familiar with





The heavily redesigned Mark IV rimfire looks like a Mark III, but it allows for a one-button takedown and quick and easy field-stripping. A recessed button in the back of the frame, top, allows the upper receiver to tilt up and off the grip frame without the use of tools.

and we anticipate the Mark IV pistols being some of the cleanest rimfires at the range."

Other significant improvements include a one-piece grip frame that is CNC-machined from a solid piece of stainless steel or aluminum; an ambidextrous manual safety, and a redesigned bolt stop for more ergonomic operation. The magazine drops free on release for faster reloads, and a redesigned magazine disconnect safety prevents discharge when the magazine has been removed. Internal improvements include changes to the hammer, sear, bolt and firing pin for smoother, more reliable feeding.

Specific features vary by model, but the one-piece barreled receiver and internal cylindrical bolt construction remain the same. The robust design ensures permanent sight-to-barrel alignment. The Mark IV is compatible with a variety of Mark III aftermarket accessories, including sights, scope bases, and magazines.

The American-made Mark IV pistol ships with two 10-round magazines.

New Compact Addition to the Ruger American Pistol Line

The Ruger American Pistol line now has a Compact model chambered in 9mm Luger. The new handgun is available in both Manual Safety and Pro model configurations.

Ruger polled law enforcement and military trainers throughout the country to select the form, function and features of the Ruger American Pistol. The resultant pistol combines a recoil-reducing barrel cam (which better spreads recoil over time) with a low-mass slide, low center of gravity and a low-bore axis to provide better balance, less felt recoil and less muzzle flip.

The Ruger American Pistol also features a pre-tensioned striker system, which allows for a short takeup trigger with positive reset, and a modular wrap-around grip system that adjusts palm swell and trigger reach to fit a wide range of hand sizes.





The 8635 model of the Ruger American Pistol, top, is a 17+1 capacity 9mm with a suggested retail of $579. The 8639, bottom, has a manual safety and has the same retail price.

With a 3.55-inch barrel, overall dimensions of 6.65 inches long, 4.48 inches high and a weight of 28.75 ounces with an empty magazine, the Ruger American Pistol Compact model shares all of the features of the duty-size gun in a smaller, lighter, more concealable package. It ships in a hard case with small, medium and large replaceable grip modules and two nickel-Teflon plated steel magazines (one 17-round extended magazine and one 12-round compact magazine).

The American-made Ruger American Pistol is built on a one-piece precision-machined black nitrided stainless steel chassis with integral frame rails and fire control housing. Additional features include Novak LoMount Carry three-dot sights, a stainless steel slide with non-reflective, black nitride finish, a one-piece, high-performance, glass-filled nylon grip frame, and a mil-standard 1913 accessory rail.

New 9mm Addition to the Ruger SR1911 Line

Ruger has a 9mm Luger chambering to the Ruger SR1911 Lightweight Commander-Style pistol line. Like the SR1911 Lightweight Commander-Style pistol in .45 Auto, this 9mm version features a commander-length slide and an aluminum frame that weigh almost a half-pound less than the all-stainless steel Commander-Style configuration. This model also comes with black rubberized grip panels and a gray anodized frame.

The lightweight aluminum frame, shorter barrel and commander-length slide combine with the 9mm chambering to create a lighter concealed-carry package.

Ruger's CNC machined SR1911 comes equipped with 70-type lockwork, Novak LoMount Carry three-dot sights, a lowered and flared ejection port, titanium firing pin, and a precision machined barrel with matched bushing. These pistols also come standard with an integral plunger tube, beaver-tail grip safety, extended magazine release, oversize thumb safety, skeletonized hammer



The new 9mm SR1911 is Model No. 6722, with a suggested retail of $979.

and skeletonized aluminum trigger.

The new Ruger SR1911 Lightweight Commander-Style 9mm Luger model features a 4.25-inch barrel, improved cocking serrations on the slide, a ramped barrel, and a 29.3-ounce weight with an empty magazine. This pistol ships with two 9-round magazines, a bushing wrench and a cable locking device.

Ruger Introduces Hawkeye FTW Hunter Models

Ruger's new Hawkeye FTW Hunter was designed by working closely with the instructors of the Sportsman's All-Weather, All-Terrain Marksmanship (SAAM) school at the highly regarded FTW Ranch in Barksdale, Texas.

The Hawkeye FTW Hunter features a Natural Gear Camo, laminated wood stock, and a stainless steel, cold hammer-forged barrel. The hinged, solid-steel floorplate is engraved with the FTW Logo and allows for easy unloading of the rifle without the need to chamber each cartridge. The new rifle will be offered in seven calibers, including three left-handed options.

Each rifle comes with the Ruger Muzzle Brake System, which includes a removable, radial-port muzzle brake that significantly reduces felt recoil. For times when the brake is not preferred, it may be replaced by the included dynamically-matched muzzle weight. Switching between the brake and the weight will not change the bullet's point of impact for a particular load. The included thread protector may be used if neither the brake nor the weight is desired.

The Hawkeye FTW Hunter also includes the LC6 trigger, which offers smooth, crisp performance right out of the box and increased accuracy on the range or in the field; a non-rotating, Mauser-type controlled round feed extractor, a three-position safety for easy activation that allows the shooter to lock the bolt or load and unload the rifle with the safety engaged; and an adjustable length of pull spacers and patented integral Ruger scope mount cuts into the receiver.



Hawkeye FTW Hunter

Something a Little Different from Cimarron

Cimarron Firearms, located on lovely Winding Oak Road in Fredericksburg, Texas, is offering some deals on three of its more unusual Cowboy-style firearms.

The Bisley Model 357 Magnum (No. CA604) is a 7.5-inch revolver that got its name after improvements were made to Colt's first target revolver (the 1888 Flattop). The resulting "Special Target" model of 1896, later renamed the "Bisley" because of its spectacular performances at England's Bisley Common shooting range, varies from the classic 1873 Peacemaker by its enlarged trigger guard and radically curved grip, allowing the shooter



Bisley Model 357 Magnum (No. CA604) from Cimarron Firearms.



to easily maintain the same hand position from shot to shot. Other noticeable differences include a 0.1875-inch longer frame and a low, wide hammer spur for re-cocking the gun with minimal disturbance to the position of the shooter's hand. This creates a flatter arc and reduces travel. Internally, a new mainspring with a stirrup-type of swiveling T-bar attachment to the hammer requires less pressure in cocking.

The Bisley was much more than a sport shooter's handgun, however. For the next two decades, this rakish-looking single action was used by cowboys and adventurers of all breeds. It especially became a favorite in the American southwest and in northern Mexico, in particular with Mexican Revolutionary Gen. Pancho Villa. It was also used by Canadian train robber Bill Miner, as seen in the 1982 Western The Grey Fox. The Cimarron Bisley is offered in Standard Blue finish in 4.75-inch, 5.5-inch, and 7.5-inch barrels, in either 38 Special/357 Magnum, 44 Special, 44-40, or 45 Colt. Dealer cost is set at $473.

Cimarron introduces Pietta's affordable and obtainable deep-laser-engraved revolvers with the debut of the Frontier 4.75-inch-barrel Old Silver Frame PW Laser



Pietta's deep-laser-engraved revolvers include the Frontier 4.75-inch-barrel Old Silver Frame PW Laser Eng. Poly Ivory Grip (PP410LSFI).

Eng. Poly Ivory Grip (PP410LSFI). At an affordable price point of $529 dealer, these come in nickel and old silver frame (OSF) finishes, the latter a two-tone finish where the barrel, cylinder, and grip assembly are blued and the frame is in the white — a polished steel finish.

The 1866 Carbine w/Brass Tacks (Indian Carbine) 45 Colt was originally known as the "Improved Henry," due to its patented loading gate on the side of the frame, designed by Nelson King, Winchester's plant superintendent, and the addition of a wood forearm.

The 1866 model was known as the "Yellow Boy" by the Native Americans, because of its brass frame. The '66 model was the first true cowboy lever-action and the first that adapted well to carrying in a saddle scabbard, due to its slab sided design.

With more than 170,000 made between 1866-1898 — its popularity continued long after more powerful lever guns were introduced, the '66 model was famous worldwide. The guns were used by the forces of Benito Juarez in Mexico, the Turkish army in their fight against the Russians, and in the Wild West by such notables as Sioux Medicine Man Sitting Bull, the Union Pacific's chief engineer General Grenville Dodge, and desperado Bill Doolin.

Cimarron offers several 1866 Yellowboys, such as the 24-inch barreled Sporting Rifle, a 20-inch Short Rifle (both of these models sport octagon barrels), round-barreled carbines, including the 19-inch saddle ring carbine, a brass tack-decorated 19-inch Indian carbine, and a 16-inch Trapper model.

Calibers available include 45 Colt, 44-40, 44 Special, 38 Special, 38-40, 32-20 and 22 Long Rifle, and with finishes like the Standard Blue, Charcoal Blue, or Original Finish, depending on which model you select. No. CA228G19 with a 19-inch round barrel sells for $1049 dealer. **GT**

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

● Shotgun Shootout: Pump, Self Loader, or Dual Action? After firing the three types extensively, we are impressed. Tested: Benelli Nova Tactical Pump, Mossberg 930 85320 Home Defense 85320, and the TriStar Tec 12.

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