

In Defense

**A Basic Guide to carrying a
Concealed Handgun for Personal Protection**

By Jack Lawson

Introduction

This manual is not a legal guide to Justifiable Use of Deadly Force nor am I an attorney. What I discuss in this manual is my opinion, not that of any state licensing agency or others, and concentrates mostly on carrying a handgun and the use of it for Justifiable Deadly Force as a counter to a Deadly Threat.

I will concentrate most on trying to give the reader a sense of what is Justifiable Use of Deadly Force and safety, more than the mechanics of shooting. There are stories in this manual of situations that I have created as an illustration to help the reader understand the Use of Deadly Force. These stories are intended as a guide to develop in the reader a State of Mind of when and when not to use Deadly Force... when and when not to use your handgun.

This manual is intended as a basic guide. Two other books I highly recommend that go into much more detail on handgun carry, functions of handguns and combat shooting written by Firearms Experts are **The Concealed Handgun Manual** by *Chris Bird* available at www.PrivateerPublications.com for about \$22.00 and **Armed Response** by *David Kenik* available at www.Amazon.com/books for about \$19.00.

Restrictions on where Concealed Handgun License holders can carry their handgun are made by State Laws, County, Parrish, City/Local Laws and or United States Codes (Federal Law). Because the Florida Concealed Handgun License you are applying for is honored in other States, you have to know the State, County and Local Laws in the jurisdiction in which you carry your handgun. These State's Attorney Generals have given **guest privileges** to you in carrying a Concealed Handgun in their State. Don't abuse that privilege! **Carrying your Handgun in these other States is governed by the Concealed Handgun Laws of the State and Local Government you are in.** You have to be familiar with the State and Local Laws of where you carry your handgun, whether it's your residence State or you are visiting that State!

All State Laws regarding Firearms and Concealed Handgun carry are different and are best described in **The Traveler's Guide to the Firearms Laws of the Fifty States** by Attorney J. Scott Kappas, probably the number one expert on State Firearm Laws. Kappas's book is available at www.GunLaws.com.

These books have a wealth of information and are well worth your investment in them. The NRA website at www.NRAILA.Org also has some of the best resources available to further educate yourself on handguns and firearms.

Knowledge, the best Weapon

Read this carefully. **Visualize different situations in which you could find it necessary to use your handgun.** Take moments in everything you do during the day, train your mind to create an imaginary situation and then visualize your response to that situation. **Think these situations through and how you would react.** When and where you could have a threat, and how you would react? Imagine threats to you in the most impossible places at the most inopportune time and your reaction. **Describe those situations to an NRA Certified Instructor and ask them if you would have reacted properly in that situation.**

IN ADDITION to reading this manual, I recommend you seek training from a competent firearms instructor. Preferably, a National Rifle Association (NRA) Certified Instructor, trained in Firearm Safety, Home Firearms Safety and Personal Protection.

A Firearms Instructor who knows what he or she is doing will show little bravado or macho attitude regarding using a firearm against another human being. If your instructor is testosterone or estrogen riddled, he or she should not be instructing and you should move on to someone responsible who preaches restraint. Just like the great Martial Artists, a good firearms instructor will teach restraint above all else. **A good instructor will teach you that the best fight is the one that you avoid!**

Training that emphasizes restraint, respect for others, humility, turning the other cheek if possible and Sanctity of Life, are issues that are paramount in your Personal Protection firearms instruction. You will be a far better person to remove yourself from a Deadly Threat situation, if possible, than to take another human's life. Far better is the confrontation where all walk away.

Can you take another person's life?

Carrying a Concealed Handgun for Lawful Self-Defense is a tremendous responsibility. **A License or Permit to carry a Concealed Handgun does not give you a License or Permit to use your handgun!** I trust that you share my hope that you will never find it necessary to use your handgun in Self-Defense. The

use of a handgun in Self-Defense will subject you to Laws that will only protect you if you have acted within your legal right.

In the profound words of one State Licensing Director, *“If you do choose to arm yourself with a handgun you should also be armed with the most indispensable weapon of all... knowledge. Only you can provide the wisdom, restraint and good judgment that the Law demands of those who possess the ability to take another human life.”*

The controversy in the use of lethal and non-lethal force rages on. Technology has advanced sufficiently to provide some reliability in using non-lethal force items such as Taser type devices in some Self-Defense situations. **Explore alternative Self-Defense methods other than a handgun also.** But in this manual, only the use of a handgun and Justifiable Deadly Force is explored.

Jennifer’s world gets turned upside down...

“Damn, it’s almost 2:00 AM again!” Jennifer Grant murmured to herself as the elevator slowed to the parking garage level adjoining the Atlanta Georgia PharmCor office complex. The tiring thought of the 30 minute drive home ahead of her she’d made a couple of thousand times before racked her exhausted brain. Numbers were still sloshing around in her mind like the mental radio that plays the well worn tune in your head... you know, the song that you can’t shut off, don’t know where it came from and that won’t go away.

“Ron is going to do his nut!” Jennifer thought. It was a frightening thought to her. She’d been married to him for eight years, but he still didn’t understand her job. He would blow up at her when she tippy-toed into the bedroom or lay cold and unemotionally by her in bed. But even in his sleep she could sense his growing anger towards her. She hoped he wouldn’t confront her. She was too worn out to take it tonight.

Regardless, Ron would wake tomorrow, shower, shave, dress in his patrolman’s uniform and quietly leave without kissing her or saying goodbye. That’s what had been happening lately and the thought was tormenting her again. It hurt her deeply. She began to wonder why she’d become an accountant.

“Tell them to go screw themselves!” he’d told her yesterday morning. “This is the fourth night this week Jennifer that you’ve worked after midnight. You look like crap. Four and five hours sleep a night. You can’t be doing any good for anyone working 18 hours a day!”

“Yeah, Ron! I’ll tell PharmCor to go screw themselves, just don’t throw the Employment Opportunities section of the newspaper away!” she replied facetiously, “PharmCor will be a great reference on my resume. I can put a note next to them saying, ‘I’d rather you don’t call this previous employer who fired me because their annual Stockholder’s Financial Statement wasn’t finished on time!’ That would be great! I could look into working at the Speedy Mart down the road. They don’t care about those kinds of things and that’s about the only kind of job I’ll be able to get as a CPA after that! Running a cash register!”

“Well at least then I’d maybe see you once and a while... unlike this. What are the words in that song... two ships passing in the night! I may as well be single, Jennifer. I’m going to be sitting by myself at dinner tonight. Friday night! The rest of our friends with their wives and me by myself!” Ron Grant snarled at her through lips of that chiseled face she loved so much. She couldn’t bear to be at the breakfast table hearing the man she loved speak to her like that and she ran to the bedroom crying.

The elevator door opened, breaking her thought and rush of hot humid Georgia air hit her face like she’d opened an oven door. It temporarily turned her thought away from her marital problems. A tall statuesque blonde, she strode out of the elevator into the dimly lit parking garage. The garage was almost empty of cars, with just the cleaning crew’s and hers remaining.

Even in the dim light, Jennifer was a striking woman. Like a Barbie Doll. Shapely, long legs, full breasts, long neck... just the thing that drew Ron’s attention so many years ago. She still had that look and it was tearing her apart that her job was getting between her and her husband. Ron hadn’t touched her all week.

But another man had been thinking about her every moment of his waking thought. Those long slender legs disappearing from the knees upward into the light gray skirt, created a lust of curiosity. She looked especially enticing tonight with her jacket draped over her left arm and her ample breasts enticing imagination from under her white sleeveless blouse. Her long blonde hair bounced with each step she took, projecting the impression of freshness and energy, revealing little of the exhaustion she felt.

As tired as Jennifer Grant was, she sensed something wrong soon after stepping out of the elevator. She’d walked some distance towards her car but felt it in the air. Then she saw a slight movement in the shadows just past her car. What Ron Grant had taught her and packed into her head... “be alert of your

surroundings... and avoid!" Jennifer was definitely alert now. Someone who shouldn't be there in the parking garage at 2 AM... was!

Ron had often come home telling her how he'd sensed trouble as a cop and he was usually right. He and his partners had avoided trouble and even saved each other many times with what normal people considered this strange sense from fear. He'd told Jennifer we all have it. It's primal.

Ron had lectured her to practice being alert to her surroundings and push everything out of her mind. Practice it, practice it, practice it! Practice until it turns on automatically like a knee jerk reaction. Especially when out in an area accessible by the public. We don't practice it because most of us are too preoccupied with other thoughts, he'd said.

Along with the shooting Ron and her did now and then on the weekend, she'd become as proficient in developing this sense from being alert as she had been with hitting the bull's-eye on the target. Jennifer had her car keys in her hand also, her finger on the alarm button just as Ron had told her to do as soon as the elevator door opened.

Jennifer had hated guns. She had until she'd met Ron. Being a cop and teaching his wife personal safety had gone hand in hand. They fought and argued about this many times until she relented. Jennifer now loved to go out shooting at targets. It gave her a sense of safety, control over her environment and she had become addicted to making the holes in the paper silhouette target close together, or a 'tight group' which measures a shooter's control with their handgun.

Ron had taught her the basics of firing her Taurus .38 caliber revolver at close range. Three to seven yards. Since most shootouts, robberies and the like happen at that distance or less, that's how Ron had taught her to shoot... to hit the target at close range. Hit 'Center of Mass'. The chest area. Keep your eyes open and pull the trigger. Fire three or more times into the target until the threat had stopped.

She now slowed her walk and slipped her free hand into a compartment in her purse. She had the handgun securely in her hand as she looked out of the corners of her eyes. Jennifer was now butt wide awake... and scared. She estimated the distance back to the elevator door twice as far as the distance to her car. She also knew that the elevator door had closed and would have to be summoned... and she'd be just as alone and unprotected standing in front of the elevator as standing in the middle of this garage.

She decided the best option was to continue onward to the relative safety of her car. Without being obvious while approaching her car, she looked at the space underneath and approached from the rear so she could see both sides. No one was there and there was nothing but the ominous black area of the shadow made by the concrete garage column to the right front of her car.

Jennifer Grant's mind was on overdrive from adrenaline. Every sense in her body was screaming. Her eyes were dilated, her heart was beating wildly and her hands were cold and sweaty. As she walked along side her car and pushed the key button unlocking the driver door, she'd glanced into the back seat of her car to see that no one was hiding there. The lights of her car flickered as she pushed the unlock button.

The man who'd been thinking in-human thoughts about her all week... actually for months, moved at a speed that was almost in-human. He was very muscular blonde haired young man wearing a red tank top T-shirt and denim jeans. She could clearly see the blade of a knife protruding from his right hand. Before she knew it, he was out from behind the concrete column coming towards her.

She did not hesitate. She pushed her car alarm button, her hand still on the handgun in her purse. The blaring horn and flashing lights seemed to only make the man move faster around the front of her car. The shrill blast of the horn and this pleasant looking, almost handsome man moving towards her made her heart pound faster and filled her mind with confusion.

She looked into the man's eyes as he moved around the front of her car. There was a wild determination in them and they were fixed on her! She moved back as he lunged towards her. Her hand still on her handgun, she fired through her purse once. He kept coming towards her as if she'd completely missed him.

She quickly pulled out the handgun and desperately fired twice more. He slowed and staggered. In the flashing lights from her car, she could see bone fragments, bits of flesh and tissue that had fallen out of the back of his tank top T-Shirt into bloody clumps on the shiny floor. Her shots had gone right through him. The high powered bullets had cavitated through his chest, tearing and sucking parts of his spinal column and flesh out as the three bullets went in the front of his chest and exited through his back.

He staggered backwards slipping slightly in the blood and parts of his own body that littered the floor. She'd hit him, stopping him. He feebly walked backwards, turned and slumped against the waist high concrete wall of the garage in front of her car, then slid to a seated position.

His hands dropped to his sides and the knife clattered onto the floor as his hand opened. He sat there staring at her with a defeated, stunned, almost angry look on his face while he labored breathing. She'd hit him three times in the chest. Jennifer had not missed as she thought.

The red tank top turned crimson colored as the distinct color of blood seeped out of the holes in his chest. She stood paralyzed pointing her handgun at him for what seemed like an eternity as he watched her. His breathing went from shallow to barely visible. The life still in him was holding him upright as he sat, but as that departed he slid sideways falling onto his side lifelessly onto the shiny garage floor.

Only the blaring of her car horn, shrill in the heavy night air, brought her to her senses and she fumbled to shut it off.

She wheeled around pointing her handgun in the direction of the sound of the footsteps running towards her. It was Jonesy, the night security man.

"Hey! Don't shoot! Security." he said as he stopped dead in his tracks raising his hands.

"Oh thank God! She yelled, "This man came after me with a knife! He was going to attack me. I shot him. I think he's dead!"

Jonesy walked to the man and knelt down feeling for a pulse on his neck.

"He's dead alright, Missus! Very dead! I'd better get the Police over here. Are you okay?"

"I'm still shaking, but I'm alright."

You sit down over here now, ya hear?" Jonesy said as he opened the front door of her car and gingerly helped her into the driver's seat.

Jonesy quickly checked the surrounding area with his flashlight for other assailants while he called the Atlanta Police Department on his cellular phone, his only means of defense other than his Pepper Spray and nightstick.

While he called the police, Jennifer Grant started crying. Not tears of fear, but tears of sorrow. Lying on his side, the man's eyes were still open. Even in death, his eyes were still fixed on her... staring at her. He was as handsome as her friend Jack Jenkins in accounting. She got sudden cold chills.

She looked at the flesh and blood on the garage floor that looked like the leftovers in a butcher shop, but that she knew were human. She suddenly felt like throwing up. She'd just killed another human being and she felt sick to her stomach. As she stared out her car windshield at him dead on the floor, the flash of an image of him in a suit came into her mind. She felt sick. Even though she'd watched him with her very own eyes, she couldn't picture him doing what he'd just done. He was going to attack her with that knife!?

Anger overwhelmed her for a moment. Anger towards this dead man for forcing her to shoot him... anger at herself for working to an hour that helped create this situation... anger over having that handgun in her purse...anger towards her boss for this deadline she had to make. Anger.

Then suddenly she felt so alone. She wanted Ron here. She needed to have him hold her. She felt so empty. She wept and wept, torrents of tears flowing down her cheeks on to her white cotton blouse... leaving a light gray path where they'd soaked in.

She had killed another living, breathing person! Pangs of guilt stabbed at her mind and pierced her soul. She felt like any goodness in her was invisibly flowing out of her like the blood still flowing out of her attacker and pooling on the garage floor...Jennifer stared at the dead man and he stared back at her... she'd never forget that stare...

Back to our world

If you can't handle the thought of taking a life like I've described above in defense of your own life or people you love, then put this manual down and do not carry a Handgun! This manual is not a legal guide to Justifiable Use of Deadly Force nor am I an attorney. You should consult an attorney in the jurisdiction in which you carry a handgun regarding the legalities of Concealed Handgun Carry. You will need an attorney if you violate the restrictions of a Concealed Handgun License or if you discharge your handgun, injure or take another's life with it. You may be judged by a jury of your peers in a Criminal and or Civil Trial if you injure or take another's life whether you were right or not.

On the Civil and Criminal Trial aspect, every criminal has a mother, regardless of how long their arrest record is and however violent they have been. Now draw a mental picture of this... Attorneys will come out of the woodwork to make you out the person who's taken that grieving mother's child life from her. One of those attorneys *is* going to try to make you look worse than Attila the Hun or Adolph Hitler.

The emotional ups and downs you will go through being labeled the wrong doer will be more intense than any roller coaster ride you've ever taken. Anything and everything you've done in your private life will be laid in front of a jury of your peers. From your spats with spouses to you smoking grass at college, it will all be laid out for the whole world to see.

Be clear about this... once a life is taken, that act cannot be undone. You will have to live with the Civil and or Criminal consequences of your actions in addition to the financial costs and the mental trauma of what you have done. I again give you a chance to put down this manual and to not carry a handgun.

Violence

If you are still reading this, I don't have to explain to you why you continue to read or have come to read this manual in the first place.

Our society has driven you to this manual. America, like all countries, has violence and you fear being a victim. You want the ability to protect and defend yourself and your family. You want some control over your environment. You want the sense of security a handgun provides because you know the police can't be everywhere.

Be an individual and speak your mind. The threat of the demise of your right to defend yourself and family is on the horizon... even if that defense of yourself is in your home. It is every citizen's duty to fight to keep those rights. But it *is* still our right to defend ourselves in most of America, so let's proceed.

Deadly Threat

The issue of what is a Deadly Threat must be explained upfront so you can relate to it as you read on.

What is a Deadly Threat? **A Deadly Threat is a danger or an act that can result in your death or great bodily harm being done to you.**

When I say you 'MAY have the right' it doesn't mean that you do have that right. All situations are different. If you shoot and wound or kill a person, your use of Deadly Force will be scrutinized. USE AS MUCH RESTRAINT AS HUMANLY POSSIBLE! The use of your handgun in Self-Defense is treated as a Homicide and you will be arrested regardless of your justification. **You have the right to make a statement through your attorney regardless of the pressure from police. They are not on your side!** **Keep your mouth shut to the police until your attorney can speak for you NO MATTER WHAT!**

A woman swinging her purse at you may not be a Deadly Threat, her swinging a baseball bat probably is IF... she is big or strong enough to make that baseball bat a danger to your life or an act that can result in great bodily harm to you.

A man kicking the side of your car is not a Deadly Threat, kicking you when you're down on the ground may be. If he is big or strong enough to make those kicks a danger to your life or an act that can result in great bodily harm to you.

If either of those persons is leaving the scene, the threat has most likely gone and **you do not have the right to shoot at a retreating person.** If there is any thought of revenge or anger in your mind, you must not use your handgun!

If you're in your car and a man has beaten the hell out of your car with a tire iron and is walking away, you DO NOT have the right to use your handgun. If that man has broken your windshield and is now trying to break your driver's window to get at you, you MAY have that right depending on the circumstances.

If he breaks your driver's window, tries to open your car door to pull you out of your car, you MAY have the right to use your handgun.

A handgun is not a tool to get even with; it is a tool to protect your or other's lives from a Deadly Threat. **When the threat is gone, the use of your handgun is gone!**

Damage to your property such as dents or broken glass in an automobile or Broken windows of your house does not justify taking a life.

If you use your handgun in defense of yourself or another after a heated argument or violent confrontation, you will most likely go to jail. **You must avoid an argument that CREATES a Deadly**

Threat situation to yourself! You are the person capable of taking a life or causing injury to another with your handgun. Be man or woman enough to walk away! Using your handgun in anger will be an act that you live to regret for the rest of your life!

A Deadly Threat must be something you can see, not what you think. The person following you may just be that... someone following you because you are going in the same direction they are going. A Deadly Threat is an act you can see, not the profanity and threatening words of another. **Again, if you have any doubts about issues of carrying a Concealed Handgun, do not carry one until you take the training necessary to make you competent to carry your Concealed Handgun.**

The HOT and COLD Measure

If you are HOT under the collar, angry: You DO NOT touch your handgun!

Anger is danger with a 'D' in front of it (Danger) and if you're angry, hot or heated, remove yourself from the situation you're in or ask for assistance from others to help you leave... DO NOT display your handgun, mention you have a handgun or touch your handgun! Retreat and remove yourself from the confrontation!

If you have engaged others in an argument, you have helped to create a situation that will be extremely difficult to justify if you use your handgun in Self-Defense. Think about it! You are party to an argument and in the heat of it have to use your handgun. You have created an unjustifiable situation! **Don't apply for a Concealed Handgun License if you have problems controlling your temper!**

If you are COLD, clammy feeling and scared: You 'may' have justification to use your handgun

The human body goes into the Fight or Flight condition when fearful. 'Tunnel vision' overtakes you. Your hearing ability can decrease or shut off. Adrenalin is secreted into your bloodstream and blood starts to concentrate around the major organs. Your muscles react quicker and with more intensity than normal.

If you feel cold, clammy, scared for your life and you cannot retreat from a Deadly Threat, you most likely are in fear of your life and MAY have justification to shoot in defense of your life, but only if you have a Deadly Threat and cannot remove yourself from that threat.

Children and Handgun Safety

Handgun safety is one of the first issues I will cover. Because of the importance children are to us and their vulnerability to the Self-Defense Tool this manual discusses, the handgun, this must be described first.

Of particular concern is where you store your handgun when not carrying it. Most States and the Federal Government have laws against underage children (generally 18) having access to firearms. Some States, Counties and or Cities require installation of a trigger lock or locked storage of Firearms anywhere where children could have access to them.

Obviously, the recent United States Supreme Court ruling on Second Amendment Rights stated the rapid access of a firearm in Self-Defense is a necessity and essentially voids the use of trigger locks or locked storage by law. Your Local or State government and or a Civil attorney may still take you to task on your violation of this in the death or injury of a child by your negligence of these methods of safety and this may create civil liability for you.

Regardless of the law, the safety of children is of paramount importance. They are precious... they are our future. No one wants the death or injury of a child from their handgun on their conscience if it can be prevented. The ability of your children or visiting children getting hold of your handgun, whether you have educated them or not to not touch your handgun, is an evaluation you must make.

Trigger locks, unloading the handgun and storing ammunition separately and in an entirely different place from the handgun, locking handgun boxes and safes are methods that ensure children will not be harmed by a child having an accidental discharge. But these very methods of securing your handgun safely can also delay your use of it in time of need.

The Safety/Threat Evaluation Time Check

So you have to ask yourself some hard questions. You must do a Safety/Threat Evaluation. You must weigh and reach a balance of the following:

- What is your threat level or the probability of danger to you and your family, and
- The method you will use to secure your handgun, and

- The ability of children accessing your handgun by that method of storage.

I suggest you perform a practice rapid retrieval of your handgun by the safe storage method you use. A Safety/Threat Evaluation Time Check. Timing yourself in seconds as to your response time with your handgun to an imagined threat. Imagining the human threatening you and chasing to attack you in your own environment or home... can you have your handgun ready to defend yourself in that time?

While performing this Safety/Threat Evaluation Time Check be careful if you go to the ultimate of the test by loading your handgun or chambering a cartridge, so as to not have an accidental discharge. This Safety/Threat Evaluation Time Check should be done many times to simulate being under pressure of a real threat. God forbid, but if the real situation occurs, you'll be amazed how little fumbling you'll do. Time constraints testing simulates pressure.

An alternative, but less secure method of child safety is hiding your handgun up **WITHOUT** your children knowing where you hide it! Above a shelf, bookcase some place far out of their reach, but a place that's convenient for you if a threatening situation develops.

DO NOT attempt Child Safety by hiding your handgun anywhere a child can crawl, walk to, climb up to or dig around in. Put your handgun up and away, do not just hide it! Children can find the best hiding places and are especially curious of handguns. Put your handgun up! Out of reach of them! In this storage method your handgun should be unloaded with the magazine by it or if your handgun is a revolver, a 'speed loader' next to it (speed loaders hold cartridges for easy mass insertion into your revolver's cylinder).

REMEMBER, CHILDREN CAN FIND ANYTHING, ANYWHERE THEY CAN GO!

The evaluation of the need for your firearm at home, in your vehicle, in your purse or at your work must be thought out carefully. Firearms should be locked in a storage box when the handgun is stored in your vehicle. In the trunk away from passenger access if your vehicle has one and you have kids in your car.

Studies have shown that programs such as the National Rifle Association's 'Eddie Eagle' program educate children of this 'curiosity' and how to react responsibly when around a Firearm or discovering one when adults are not around. The Eddie Eagle Program teaches children:

If you see a gun: STOP! Don't Touch. Leave the Area. Tell an Adult.

This education of your children should take place early. But you must assume that other's children do not have that education. It is ultimately up to you to be the leader of safety in your home and workplace. The NRA website at www.NRAILA.Org has some of the best resources available to further educate yourself.

Teenagers and handguns

Secure your handgun **AND ALL OTHER FIREARMS** from your teenagers. The alternative that I hope you use is that you take your kids out shooting and teach them a healthy respect for firearms.

We are all aware of the problems of shootings in our Public Schools. I'm not talking gang violence. That's a totally different box of apples. I'm speaking of the middle class kid who loses it and kills or wounds his classmates.

Most of these shootings have a common thread connecting them. The firearm was either stolen or taken from a parent's home by their young adult or someone their young adult knows... sometimes the shooter.

Contrary to the thought that the 'school shooter' would kill more of his classmates with his better accuracy, I believe more maturity and respect for firearms and people comes from hunter and firearms education and a special bond will grow between the parent and child who get involved with shooting sports.

In the Dark of the Night

You must have a plan for a threat that takes place in your home, especially at night. Order the book *'The NRA Guide to the Basics of Personal Protection in the Home'* before you stumble around your home in the dark of night and accidentally shoot a member of your family or a friend. Go to www.NRAILA.Org

Women and guns and purses!

A woman who carries a loaded and ready handgun in a purse creates four issues of concern:

- Children or unauthorized persons accessing the handgun
- Your purse being snatched and your gun along with it
- Accidental discharge of the handgun

- The ability to access your handgun rapidly when you need it

How many times has your child opened your purse and dug around in it? Kids dig in mom's purse without thinking. Them finding your handgun and out of curiosity handling it could be a disaster. Educate your children about your handgun being in your purse and not to touch it.

The type of purse you carry is important

Although some may not be ultra fashionable, there are purses for women that are less likely to be easily taken by a purse snatcher and indeed look good on you. At least I think they would look good!

If a purse snatcher gets your gun, you will have made his day! *"There are too many guns on the streets in criminal's hands... be part of the solution, not part of the problem!"*

I recommend a purse with a strong carry strap that is slung across the shoulder opposite the side the purse hangs on. Much like you would wear a Mexican bandolier.

If you wear your purse strap on your shoulder on the same side the purse hangs on it's easy for a purse snatcher to simply grab your purse strap and then knock you down. The last thing you'll be worried about is your purse... you're going to be trying to cushion your fall while he runs off with your purse. With your purse strap over your shoulder the opposite of the side it hangs on, it would be very difficult for him to get your purse off you.

I have seen purse snatchers in action. They are very quick and very violent. They will pick an easier target than you if you have a purse as I recommend and carry it 'bandolier' style.

Even more suitable to the woman with a Concealed Handgun License is the purse of this type that is made specifically with a concealed handgun compartment. This purse has a zipper or Velcro opening compartment usually on the body side of the purse. It allows for quick access to your handgun.

With any other purse except a 'fanny pack' or carrying your handgun in a 'body band holster' you're asking for trouble from purse snatchers, whether you carry a concealed handgun or not. Let the purse snatcher zero in on Angie, the triple latte, double mocha Starbucks Queen, not you.

For many women their purse is a 'black hole'. Put something in it and you may not ever see that item again. Check books, make up, cigarettes, tampons, car keys, etc. have women dumping their purse on a table in frustration to find what they're looking for. If this is your situation, can you find and retrieve your handgun when you desperately need it?

If you carry your handgun 'loose' in a purse you need a holster to encase your handgun. The holster should have a closed end for the barrel and cover the trigger guard. Or put your handgun in one of the internal compartments and put nothing else in that compartment.

The holster should cover the trigger guard to prevent an accidental discharge from objects in your purse tripping the trigger. This can happen if you carry your automatic handgun with a round chambered, or your revolver, should the hammer accidentally become cocked to a fire position. Also, your handgun in a fully enclosed holster or separate compartment will help keep foreign objects from interfering with the action or lodging in the barrel. I RECOMMEND that you buy the purse with a separate quick access compartment for your handgun such as I describe here. On the internet go to www.GunGear.com who has an excellent selection of Concealed Handgun purses.

Accidental Discharge from your purse

Accidental discharge of a handgun can get you jail time or worse. What if you injure or kill some innocent bystander? What if they were your child? Or someone else's? What if you fatally shot yourself? It is your responsibility to carry your handguns safely!

The type of handgun you carry in your purse can make a difference in purse safe carry.

Handguns and your purse in your workplace

Check your employer's personnel and office rules if you take you handgun to work in your purse. If your employer says no, that means no! If you can take him or her out shooting and demonstrate your proficiency of use and safe practices, maybe they will change their mind.

If your employer is not paralyzed by the thought of lawsuits and attorneys and you're allowed to take our handgun to work, lock your purse someplace securely at work such as a desk drawer. Do not tell anyone that you carry a gun in your purse.

Guns are like currency. Most decent handguns cost from \$500 to \$1000 on average. Would you broadcast around the office that you have \$500 to \$1000 in your purse? I doubt so. *“There are too many guns on the streets in criminal’s hands... be part of the solution, not part of the problem!”*

Jim’s world REALLY gets turned upside down...

It was early morning and he knew something was wrong as soon as he walked up to the door of his house. The door was open and Jim never left it open. He’d lived by himself for years and no one else had access to his house. Jim’s house had been burglarized three times in the last two years. This Phoenix, Arizona neighborhood had been burglarized so many times in the last year; the residents had formed a neighborhood watch. But it had done little to stop the home break in problem.

Jim saw that his front door had been kicked in. He was suddenly furious.

“Son of a bitch!” he muttered to himself, “I’ll kill those bastards if they’re in there!”

He ran back to his car and took his handgun out from under the seat. Cautiously he entered his house and could hear someone rummaging in the back bedrooms and went to investigate. As he walked through the front room of his house, a strange man appeared in the bedroom doorway.

“What the hell are you doing in my house!?” Jim pointed his handgun and roared at him.

The stranger froze, put his hands up and said “Don’t shoot!”

Within seconds, another man appeared in the same doorway. Startled, Jim shot him dead. The first man ran back into the bedroom with Jim after him. As Jim went through the bedroom door, the man hit Jim in the head with a hammer and ran out of the house. Jim was knocked down and bleeding but grabbed his handgun got up and ran out of the house after the guy.

The burglar ran down the side walk with Jim after him. Jim fired twice missing him, but caught him square in the back with his third shot as the man was getting into his car.

The reported gunfire brought the Phoenix Police to the scene as the neighbors were now gathering around. The neighbors were congratulating Jim for his actions. Maybe these were the guys that had broken into so many of their homes.

Jim put his handgun in his pants pocket and stayed at the scene with the dead man on the sidewalk. The Police immediately disarmed Jim. Ignoring his right to make a statement only with his attorney present, Jim went on to tell the Police officers that he’d shot one man in his house and chased this one down the sidewalk and shot him. Jim was oblivious to what he had done. He thought he was right. Later it was discovered, both of them were burglars with prior arrest records, were responsible for the burglaries in this area and Jim had caught them in the act of burglarizing his home.

Paramedics tried to resuscitate the man, but he died at the scene. The Police arrested Jim and put him into the back of a squad car while the neighbors booed them for arresting Jim and taking him to jail.

At his court trial, Jim was prosecuted for manslaughter. The entire neighborhood was there for Jim’s support. He may have been within his legal right to shoot the burglar in his home, but the burglar running away was a retreating threat. Jim was given a two year jail sentence for killing this man. What did he do wrong? He was angry when he used his handgun and the threat was retreating!

There’s a derogatory term from the Code of the Old West that labeled you wrong if you were “A back shooter”. Beware! You could also be labeled “An angry retreating threat shooter!”

Back to our world

A burglary feels like a desecration of your home, property and a violation of your person. The statements people make after a burglary or robbery are very similar to what rape victims say.

However, regardless of how upset and furious a burglary makes you, it does not give you the right to chase after people and shoot them if you find them ransacking your home. When they run off, they are a retreating threat. **When the threat is gone, the use of your handgun is gone!**

Burglars, thieves and your handgun

“There are too many guns on the streets in criminal’s hands... be part of the solution, not part of the problem!” One of the prizes burglars are after when they break into a home, car or workplace are firearms... especially handguns. Along with illegal drugs, firearms bring top dollar in the back alley bizarre of underground America. Don’t be a supplier to this underground arms trafficking by leaving your handgun where it can be easily found during a break in.

A break-in of your vehicle will usually amount to a 'smash and grab' by a thief breaking a window and accessing the passenger compartment. The thief will steal everything in sight and then rapidly disappear. They will pop your locked glove compartment open in a second! The trunk of your vehicle is usually safe from break-in. Lock boxes are available that are quick to open by push button combination and can be bolted to the floor of your trunk or passenger compartment, if you store your handgun in your vehicle.

A friend of mine created a great hiding place in his home for his handgun by cutting through the drywall on the inside wall of his closet just around and to the side of the closet door. Watching for electrical wiring, he used a keyhole drywall saw and cut the hole about five feet up from the floor just between the wall studs. The piece he cut out was about one foot by one foot. He cut the bottom at a 90 degree angle, the sides at a 45 degree angle towards the center of the piece and the top was a reversed 45 degree angle to 'lock' the piece in so the piece wouldn't fall out from the top. He stuffed newspaper down this hole between the wall studs and topped that off with a old folded towel.

It was easy to get to and burglars are usually in and out of a home so quickly that they would never see this when opening the closet door. When he was done, I had to back into the closet to see the cut piece. It was far enough off the floor a child would have trouble getting to it. He keeps his handgun and ammunition in there ready to rock and roll if need be.

General Firearms and Handgun Safety Rules

Basic safety rules when handling a handgun (or any firearm) are:

- **Keep the barrel pointed in a safe direction**, barrel pointed up, pointed down or pointed down range.
- **Keep your finger off the trigger**, outside the trigger guard until you're ready to shoot.
- **Keep the firearm unloaded** until you are ready to shoot.

Other Common Sense Safety Rules

- **Show your gun is unloaded.** Open the cylinder on a revolver or lock back the slide on an automatic to show the unloaded chambers.
- **Make it your habit.** Check that your gun is unloaded each time you handle it. I always check my handgun to be unloaded EACH TIME I PICK IT UP. This is my habit. I'd rather look stupid periodically checking that my gun is unloaded, than have it accidentally go off and be a complete fool, hurt myself or someone else.
- **Know your target and what is beyond.** Be absolutely sure you have identified your target. Equally important, be aware of the area beyond your target. This means observing your prospective area of fire before you shoot. Never fire in a direction where there are people or any other potential for mishap. Think first. Shoot second.
- **Know how to use the gun safely.** Before handling a gun, learn how it operates. Know its basic parts, how to safely open and close the action and remove any ammunition from the gun or magazine. Remember, a gun's mechanical safety device is never foolproof. Nothing can ever replace safe gun handling.
- **Be sure the gun is safe to operate.** Just like other tools, guns need regular maintenance to remain operable. Regular cleaning and proper storage are a part of the gun's general upkeep. If there is any question concerning a gun's ability to function, a knowledgeable gunsmith should look at it.
- **Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.** Only BBs, pellets, cartridges or shells designed for a particular gun can be fired safely in that gun. Most guns have the ammunition type stamped on the barrel. Ammunition can be identified by information printed on the box and sometimes stamped on the cartridge. Do not shoot the gun unless you know you have the proper ammunition.
- **DO NOT shoot military loads** such as +P and +P+. These are designed for military weapons such as submachine guns and may ruin your handgun or blow it apart. Buy quality American made ammunition.
- **Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.** Guns are loud and the noise can cause hearing damage. They can also emit debris and hot gas that could cause eye injury. For these reasons, shooting glasses and hearing protectors should be worn by shooters and spectators.
- **Never use alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription or other drugs before or while shooting.** Alcohol, as well as any other substance likely to impair normal mental or physical bodily functions, must not be used before or while handling or shooting guns. Go get blitzed with you pals afterwards.

- **Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.** Many factors must be considered when deciding where and how to store guns. A person's particular situation will be a major part of the consideration. Dozens of gun storage devices, as well as locking devices that attach directly to the gun are available. However, mechanical locking devices, like the mechanical safeties built into guns, can fail and should not be used as a substitute for safe gun handling and the observance of all gun safety rules.
- **Cleaning.** Regular cleaning is important in order for your gun to operate correctly and safely. Taking proper care of it will also maintain its value and extend its life. Your gun should be cleaned every time that it is used.
- **Directly clean from storage before using.** Push a cleaning rod through the barrel. You may be surprised what comes out! A gun brought out of prolonged storage should be cleaned before shooting. Accumulated moisture and dirt, or solidified grease and oil, can prevent the gun from operating properly.

I am astounded how many times I have found my firearms loaded when I didn't think they were. I cannot emphasize this enough... always check that your handgun is unloaded! Before cleaning your gun, **make absolutely sure that it is unloaded.** CHECK IT MULTIPLE TIMES. The gun's action should be open during the cleaning process. Also, be sure that no ammunition is present in the cleaning area.

Police are given authority to use their handgun... you are not!

Understand that Law Enforcement Officers are reacting to a situation of danger. Where most attorneys would take hours, days or weeks to make a decision on how to react, the Officer is faced with making decisions within a split second. Life and Death decisions. While the Offender can escalate their actions without justification, the Officer cannot. He must wait and react.

The Officer is generally exempt from prosecution for Manslaughter, First or Second Degree Murder charges when using Deadly Force in the performance of his duties to protect others... YOU ARE NOT!

Just like you, once the threat is retreating, the Officer cannot use Deadly Force. An exception is that the Officer, under certain conditions such as the fleeing Offender being a definite Deadly Threat to other Citizens, may shoot to kill. **When the threat is gone, the use of your handgun is gone!**

You are not a Police Officer

When confronted with protecting others than yourself and family and or not being on your property, BEWARE! You may face Criminal or Civil charges for simply discharging or using your handgun though you believe you did so in Self-Defense to protect another and even if no one was harmed.

Your Concealed Handgun License does not make you a Law Enforcement Officer or give you a license to use your handgun, so do not act as if your Concealed Handgun License gives you the right to use it. Do not get involved in disputes of others.

You may THINK you know what is transpiring between others; however, situations are seldom what they appear. Is one of the people in a confrontation you walk upon a plainclothes Law Enforcement Officer? Or if not, who is right and who is wrong? Let Law Enforcement sort it out! Your Concealed Handgun is for your personal protection and I strongly recommend you not draw your handgun until you know what's going on and who is who. Call the police.

Encounters with Law Enforcement

Most State and Local Laws require you to advise Law Enforcement that you have your Concealed Handgun on you if your vehicle is stopped by an Officer or you are involved in a situation where they are present. Regardless of the Law, I think it is the first thing you say to the Officer when stopped. Let Law Enforcement remove it from your purse or person, if they require possession of your handgun.

If you are forced to use your handgun, calmly and slowly put it down on the floor or ground beside yourself in view of others when the threat is gone before Law Enforcement arrives. Be very aware that Law Enforcement Officers responding to a trouble call may mistake you with your handgun for a "BAD GUY" and shoot YOU. YOU may know you're the "GOOD GUY", but when Law Enforcement Officers are confronted with a person in civilian clothes with a Firearm, they immediately go to the highest level of the 'Force Continuum' and are now faced with their own Deadly Threat situation and will automatically go into a 'Shoot or No Shoot' mode of thought. This happens between uniformed and plainclothes police at times.

Do not turn with your handgun towards a police officer or make any sudden movements. ANY movement or gesture can cause them to shoot. Go over this scenario with your local Law Enforcement and In Defense

or a competent NRA Certified Personal Protection Firearms Instructor on what to do before you find yourself in this situation.

The 21 foot Rule

Other than a firearm as a threat, the next most common Deadly Threat comes from a knife, straight razor or box cutter blade. Most composition bullet proof vests worn by Law Enforcement Officers can be cut with a knife like butter and a stabbing knife will go right through them. Only special vests afford cutting or stabbing protection, such as those worn by Prison and Correction Officers.

Law Enforcement Officers have The 21 Foot Rule beaten into their heads from the first day of their training and it is no wonder. I've seen videos from the California Highway Patrol regarding an attacker with a knife and the damage he can do before he can be stopped.

In the video, a highway patrolman is standing 21 feet from an attacker with a knife. Considering that an attacker hit with multiple shots still has enough blood to function for about another 10 to 15 seconds and adding up the reaction time of the Officer plus the time it takes the Officer to draw his handgun and fire at the attacker, the attacker has moved in and stabbed the Officer.

There is no defense against a knife other than the use of Deadly Force with your handgun to stop it. Whether the person is within 21 feet of you is something you would have to weigh in your own mind at the time of the threat. Officers will not hesitate to shoot to kill if the person is within that distance and won't drop the knife. They have the legal right to shoot to kill... **you do not!**

The Human Hunter-Predator (HHP)... don't be a sheep

As part of my training for our Police Department Use of Force Review Board and again for that Department's oversight Citizen's Committee, I listened to a presentation by a Veteran Police Detective that thoroughly impressed me. Probably more so than the other board members because I'd lived in Africa and had witnessed what he spoke of firsthand. He put into words a simple truth of the interaction between Human Prey and what I call the Human Hunter-Predator, or HHP for short. It went something like this...

"Humans are no different than the wildlife in Africa. A human criminal intent on attacking another human will stalk his human prey like a lion stalks a gazelle. The criminal, maybe not even very intelligent or high on drugs, will take his time and is shrewd and cunning. He, like the lion, will sense the weak ones of the herd. He will watch the way they walk, how observant they are to danger, their age, their apparent strength, try to find one that's wandered from the herd, measure their position to the cover he needs to move close in to surprise that prey. The lion will slowly position himself for this attack. It will be a total surprise to the victim. The attack will be quick and it will be deadly."

The cunning and shrewdness of the Human Hunter-Predator is astounding. This Human Hunter-Predator mindset is in every criminal... it's in every mugger, thief, purse snatcher, rapist and killer. If you project any weakness. You will be their prey! The Human Hunter-Predator will usually only go after easy prey. That's you, if you let yourself look vulnerable.

The LOUD Voice and the HHP

It is up to you to project an image of strength. Let's say you are out for your evening walk. Suddenly you hear someone following you. You turn and look. You don't recognize this person. You cross the street only to hear their footsteps behind you again. Then you cross back again to the other side and they do also. You then cross again and reverse your direction only to find them still following you. You have a problem. This is someone following you for a reason. Most likely not for your good will.

What do you do? You ready your handgun, stop, turn towards them and USING THE LOUDEST VOICE YOU CAN... YELL AT THEM "What are you doing? You're following me! I'm armed!"

Being bold and projecting a combative attitude will most likely cause the person to turn and walk the opposite way or give you wide berth and pass you by. A loud voice creates the illusion of strength in this HHP's prey... you. The warning that you're armed will cause them to stalk another... or you're ready to battle.

Is a HHP watching you... has he been in your home?

Almost every rapist caught has admitted to stalking their victim. Some for months. Watching and evaluating. Finding the strengths and weaknesses of the victim before making their move on the victim. Knowing their home floor plan as well as them.

Do you leave your patio door unlocked and open? When does your boyfriend or husband leave the house? Do you have an alarm system? Is it on when you're alone? Are there kids in the house and if so how many and where are they? Do you have a dog and what kind? When you drive your car into the garage how long do you leave the garage door open before you close it? Do you watch that the garage door closes completely before you go into the house? Are there bushes an attacker can hide in next to the front door?

I've read statistics that show that if you are a victim of violence, over 85 % of the time it will come from someone you know or whom you've met.

The amazing security gap victims have created, that is usually discovered after rapes, robberies, burglaries and murders is that these people were attacked by criminals who have walked through a real estate agent's Open House, criminals who helped install a spa, done landscape work or painted the victim's house. Criminals who were in or around the house and are familiar with the security system, the floor plan of the home, the occupants, what valuables are in the home, when you go to work and what kind of and where your dog is.

Do they have the word 'criminal' tattooed on their forehead? Of course not! Most look just like anyone else. These people are sometimes hired by companies who do little or no background check. Criminals take these low paying jobs after getting out of prison because it's about the only kind of job they can get. Most employers like them because they, on the surface, look the perfect worker. They are used to following commands and doing what they are told without question. But if they're in or around your home the temptation may just be too great. The temptation to take without asking and or to brutally hurt or kill.

Real Estate agents who don't check out their buyers or who host an open house can help create these problems for a home owner. I do not recommend that you ever hold an Open House. You don't know anything about the person who walks through your front door. If it's a burglar or rapist, they will know everything they need to know about getting to your possessions... or getting to you and or your children.

Looking NASTY to the HHP

A key element in the prevention of an attack on you is visual deterrence. Visual deterrence is projecting an image of strength or the ability to inflict injury on a would be attacker. It should be something that can be seen from a distance. That image will cause the Human Hunter Predator to realize that he may have more to lose than gain if he attacks. Thus he is deterred.

For example: Two types of deterrents when walking are; carrying a night stick or walking a dog that is big enough to make you look like a victim to bypass. The HHP must think he will have his hands full if he comes after you because you can counter-attack.

Handicap signs on your car can invite trouble. National Rifle Association stickers on your car window may also deter carjackers and attackers. However, on the flip side, they may invite a break-in of your vehicle and Law Enforcement in Anti-Gun States may single you out and stop you to search your vehicle for firearms. If your State or Local Government is in a 'Red State' such as California, Massachusetts, or New York (just three of the Anti-gun States), look out!

Dress down when you go for walks and if you think you're going to impress others with flashy jewelry, you may or not impress most... but you will certainly impress an HHP and make yourself a target!

Jack's world ALMOST gets turned upside down

I am in the habit of walking and running 3 to 4 miles every day. I used to do this every evening and I used to carry a black wooden military police night stick with me. It was a great visual deterrent. Who would you go after if you were the HHP, the yuppie in his Speedos or the older guy with the night stick?

The night stick worked great for years and I never had a problem. But it was clumsy to run with. So I got this great idea that I'd buy one of those fanny packs with the concealed handgun compartment. Have my handgun with me and run with ease and leave the nightstick home.

I live in an upscale part of town. I think one of the nicest areas of town. I must have looked the perfect target to those two gang banger types. An older guy out running at 9 PM who looked easy prey. Running towards them on a sidewalk that wound through the trees in this upscale restaurant area bordering a extremely busy street of my neighborhood. It was getting dark and I was in the perfect ambush area. But that was the last old guy they tried to rob, I'm certain. The first one tried to tackle me, running at me from a short distance. I side-stepped this guy, then hit him knocking him backwards into the bushes.

I turned towards the second guy who was putting his hand into his pocket. When he first put his hand down into his pocket, I whipped my handgun out from the Velcro quick access compartment in my fanny pack and pointed it at him. By that time I saw the handle of a folding knife start to come out and said to him loudly... "Go for it pal!"

Scared out of his mind at the sight of my .380 handgun pointed at him and my loud threatening voice command, he dropped the knife back into his pocket and put his hands up. Holding my handgun on this guy, I moved slightly to the edge of the sidewalk so I had both of them in front of me if his partner re-appeared. His pal abruptly came to and out of the bushes ready to fight and seeing me with my handgun pointed at his friend, also put his hands up. They made threats to me to remember their faces and then off they went yelling... "He's got a gun, he's going to kill us!" to the valet attendants and patrons leaving the restaurant.

Why didn't I shoot the one pulling the folding knife from his pocket?

- *I saw him put his hand into his pocket and this was the signal for me to pull my handgun. I doubted he was reaching for a pocket version of the King James Bible. When I saw it was a knife I saw only about a third of the handle before he dropped it back in his pocket when he raised his hands.*
- *In my opinion, the threat level was not quite there. It was very close, but not fully there. The threat level would have been there had he exposed the knife blade and I would have fired.*
- *The threat had retreated when he and his buddy put both their hands in the air and they ran from me.*

Again, most use of Deadly Force with a handgun happens within a very short distance of you. The one pulling the knife was no more than 10 feet from me and that's why I'm confident I wouldn't have missed at that range. BUT, THE THREAT NEVER FULLY MATERIALIZED, HAD DIMINISHED AND WAS RETREATING. Some Law Enforcement officers have argued with me that I had justification to shoot because they are taught the 21 Foot Rule.

While talking to a Police Lieutenant friend a few months later, I explained the incident. He advised me to file a report, but him not knowing the full extent of the situation, also asked me why I hadn't made a Citizen's Arrest. I had my cellular phone with me, why didn't I make a Citizen's Arrest?

- *They were retreating from me and my attempt to arrest them at gun point may have escalated into my unnecessary and difficult to justify use of Deadly Force.*
- *Because I had my daughters living with me, I didn't want these guys to know my name and home address, which goes on the Incident Report of the Police Officer who would have taken them into custody. They and or their attorney would have a copy.*

What bothered me more than anything after I thought about it was my behavior when the threat started to materialize. Part of me thought that guy trying to tackle me was horsing around. That's what scared me the most. I hesitated in recognizing the beginning of a Deadly Threat situation that could have been the end of me. They could have just as easily knocked me down, jerked off my fanny pack and cut me up or stabbed me through the heart when I resisted. In combat you're ready for an attack... in civilian life, the attack comes out of nowhere because we are not mentally prepared for it!

What also bothered me was that I quickly realized that I had unknowingly encouraged this incident. These HHPs saw a guy running with a fanny pack and nothing else. They didn't know I had a gun in it. The VISUAL DETERRENT was not present. My nightstick was playing hooky at home, not with me. I may as well have pasted \$100 bills to my T-shirt or worn an expensive Rolex watch inviting them to attack.

*I firmly believe if I had been running with my nightstick I would have little memory of passing two young Hispanic guys on that sidewalk Easter Sunday four years ago. **When the threat is gone, the use of your handgun is gone!***

Back to our world

What makes a car load of young men stop their car, rob and beat to death a man out walking, when they drove past other people walking the same sidewalk?

*Their victim **didn't look armed** with anything. He wasn't. They bypassed two other people who were carrying sticks with them. Remember pepper spray cannot be seen in your pocket.*

MAKE YOURSELF A VISUALLY COMBATIVE TARGET! Cause the HHP to go elsewhere. Walk softly and carry a Big Stick! Or walk a Big Dog!

I have never gone walking since that incident without my new, telescoping police baton, but I also carry my concealed handgun. That baton looks NASTY!

‘Tune in’... be ALERT and AVOID

As a bodyguard in Africa, I met an old hand at the trade. I remember him most for what he once told me. “Be ALERT for trouble... then AVOID it!”

So true. You can almost never go wrong being **alert** and to then **avoid** the trouble. The most important aspect of personal security is to BE ALERT and BE AWARE of your surroundings. If you sense a threat to your security or something just ‘out of place’ or odd, treat it as a threat and, AVOID the threat. If you are always ALERT and always AVOID, you should always be able to avoid a problem.

The problem with most of us is when we are out of a secure environment, such as walking to our car after work, our minds are full of everything else and are not ‘tuned in’ to our surroundings. When you’re a combat soldier in a war, you are on some level or other of a ‘constant alert’ for trouble. We civilian folks, not in a war zone, think we are secure and let down our guard against danger.

Most people who experience a mugging or attack say afterwards, “It just happened... he came out of nowhere!” Like in a science fiction movie where people appear through a ‘wormhole’ in time, a Human Hunter Predator will seemingly appear from nowhere.

The primary reason for this is the victim’s preoccupation with anything and everything else but what’s going on in their surroundings. **“Tune in” your mind to concentrate on your surroundings when you’re not in a safe or secure environment.**

Along with this goes such things such as varying your routes and routines, the time you take them and the vehicle you go in. Not making yourself so predictable. If you think someone is following you home, don’t drive straight there, go past your home, turn on to side streets and if that same vehicle is still behind you... you most likely have a problem. In such case call your police department and tell them what’s going on and where you’re headed, then go to the nearest police station or go to a public place where lots of people are present and ask for help.

I’m not saying to live in fear or on the edge constantly, just ‘Tune In’ to your surroundings. Practice this. You’ll be amazed at what the primal sensory instincts will reveal to you.

Carl’s life ALMOST gets turned upside down... or did he go to Jail?

Carl was in a pretty good mood driving down River Rouge Avenue even though traffic was heavy and the road work had backed up cars for almost a half a mile. For a man in his mid 60’s, Carl felt good that he was out of the rat race of business he’d been in for more than forty years. Retired now with all the kids grown and off in life, he and his wife were just tying up loose ends before they would leave his crime ridden hometown city of Detroit permanently for Phoenix, Arizona. Crime in Detroit had gotten so bad that Carl had obtained a license to carry a concealed handgun. He had begun carrying it every opportunity that he could and had his 9mm handgun in his waist holster now.

It was a beautiful spring day! Another week, he thought, and I’ll be out of here!

Suddenly, a jacked up, four door, four wheel drive ‘muscle’ pickup with huge tires came roaring up the road on the gravel edge of the highway trying to get ahead of everyone in line.

“What a jerk!” Carl growled. Some pricks just think they’re better than everyone else, he thought angrily as the loud thumper music blared from the passing pickup.

Some five minutes later, Carl was next to this pickup again in the slow crawl of the traffic. The drivers in front of Carl had not let the truck into line and the pickup driver was getting angry. He was trying to force his way into line by heading the nose of his pickup inches from the cars ahead of Carl. Before Carl knew it he was next to the pickup and the driver had run into Carl’s right front fender.

“You son of a bitch!” the burly pickup truck driver yelled at Carl as he climbed out of his pickup. This driver looked to be in his 30’s. His goatee, shaved head and muscular build made him menacing looking.

Carl got out of his car and walked around to inspect the damage. Carl’s auto was drivable, but this jerk had smashed his fender in, right over the top of the wheel. There was no damage to the grill and rock guard on the pickup. Just the paint from Carl’s car on it.

Carl could barely hear the guy yell at him, the music was so loud with the pickup door open... “You shit head! You hit my truck!” he yelled.

“Hit your truck? You stupid bastard, you ran into my car!”

“Ran into your car!? Get back in your car, old man!” he screamed angrily at Carl, his face only inches from Carl’s face.

Carl felt his temper flare at being described as an 'old man' and this guy ordering Carl to get back into his own car, but he checked his anger and went back to the driver side of his car.

Carl yelled and pointed at the pickup driver, "You damaged my car!" as he got in and closed the door. He dialed 911 on his cell phone and reported the accident to police. The police dispatcher assured Carl an officer was on the way.

By now, a number of the motorists stopped behind Carl's car were gathering by the accident scene. They were staring at the pickup driver who had been yelling and in a frenzy of anger had now pulled a baseball bat out from behind the seat of his pickup.

"Hey, guy! Come on, put that away!" one of the onlookers yelled at the bat wielding pickup driver, "It's just an accident! There's not that much damage!"

The pickup driver gave an intimidating look to that guy and then turned on Carl's car.

"There's going to be a lot of damage in a few seconds!" he yelled as he began smashing the headlights, denting the hood and beating in the fenders of Carl's car with the bat.

Ending A...

Carl was trapped in between cars and couldn't drive away. He blew his car horn and rolled his window down yelling for the guy to stop. It only made the pickup driver angrier as he worked his way around to the driver's side of Carl's car smashing every square inch of the car as he went.

When he smashed a hole in Carl's windshield, Carl lost it!

"You bastard!" Carl yelled as he got out of his car.

The pickup truck driver went back to his pickup, threw the bat into the truck bed of his pickup, turned to Carl and said, "Now there's some damage you can talk about, you asshole!"

"You son of a bitch!" Carl yelled, drew his handgun and fired three times into the driver as the driver mounted the step to get into his pickup. His shots hit home. The pickup driver bent backwards in agony and collapsed onto the gravel. He was dead.

The crowd, scared out of their wits, started running back to their cars. Carl stood there stunned.

"What the hell did I just do!?" he muttered to himself with a quizzical look on his face. Suddenly, everything felt so wrong. A horrible feeling of despair washed into his mind. He was frightened like he'd never been. He'd just killed a man over damaging his car. The car could be fixed, but the driver, couldn't.

The first officer to arrive, slammed on his brakes and exited his patrol car with his gun drawn.

"Put the weapon down!" he yelled at Carl.

Still stunned over what he'd done, Carl started to turn towards the cop, his handgun still in his hand.

"Freeze!!" the cop yelled, "Drop your weapon or I'll shoot!!"

An entirely different feeling of fear came over Carl as he froze in place and dropped his handgun.

As the cop moved quickly up behind Carl, he called to police dispatch on his shoulder microphone that there had been a shooting and an officer needs assistance. He then slammed Carl down onto the front of his car and handcuffed him.

"He was hitting my car with a baseball bat!" Carl said, in a lost sounding monotone voice to the cop.

The cop called for an ambulance, but it was too late. The pickup driver had no pulse.

A year later Carl stood in the courtroom to hear the judge pronounce the sentence on his manslaughter conviction. Witness after witness had told a jury how Carl lost it and started firing his handgun at the unarmed man as he was getting into his pickup to leave. Regardless of how crazy the pickup driver had acted and the damage he'd done to Carl's car, they thought that Carl was wrong to shoot him.

Carl received a 10 year sentence. He was to serve his time at the Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility, located in Ionia, Michigan. He had the possibility of parole for good behavior in 6 years, but the pickup driver's grieving widow vowed to protest at every parole hearing he had.

Carl's wife was devastated. She and their children had been in court every day but she couldn't stop crying after she heard the sentence read.

"I just lost my temper that day! I wish I could turn back the clock. I wish that guy was alive, I wish..." Carl said standing there handcuffed, choking on his words and tears in his eyes over the mental anguish of killing that man and now seeing his wife crying uncontrollably. Carl gave her one last kiss as he was taken out of the courtroom to start his prison sentence. He'd be 76 years old if he was released after spending his full sentence in prison... but he would die of a massive stroke less than a year after being behind bars.

As he was led to the prison bus in leg irons and handcuffs for the long ride to Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility with common criminals, one of them snarled to Carl, "Get to the back of the bus, old man!" It was a sunny spring day in Michigan. It was beautiful outside.

Ending B...

Carl was trapped in between cars and couldn't drive away. He blew his car horn and rolled his window down yelling for the guy to stop. It only made the pickup driver angrier as he worked his way around to the driver's side of Carl's car smashing every square inch of the car as he went.

Carl started to open the door to get out, but the man struck it so hard it flew closed. Startled at the animal behavior of this madman, Carl locked his door just as the man smashed his windshield.

Carl was scared out of his wits. He pulled his handgun from the holster under his shirt with his right hand and grabbed his cell phone with his left hand, quickly redialing 911.

"Hey!" Carl yelled into his phone at the operator, "Get an officer here now! I've got a guy after me with a baseball bat! He's destroying my car!"

"I'm going to beat you senseless, you fucking old man! Run into my truck, will you? You asshole!" the pickup driver yelled at Carl.

"Yes, the accident I just reported on River Rouge, the 2900 block! Hurry, I think this guy has gone crazy!" Carl yelled at the operator.

"I'm armed! Get away from me!" Carl yelled at the man.

As Carl started rolling up his driver's window, he raised his handgun with his right hand pointing it at the man with the bat. The pickup truck driver was about to smash out the window Carl had just wound up. He froze when he saw the handgun. A grayish pale color immediately replaced the blood red color of his face. He dropped the bat, ran to his truck and sped away through the road ditch and onto a side road.

"That guy is nuts!" yelled one of the onlookers. "Are you okay man? I got his license plate number," the onlooker yelled at Carl through his rolled up window.

After taking statements from Carl and the witnesses to this incident, Detroit Police later arrested the pickup driver on assault and battery charges and malicious damage to another's property. The statements the pickup driver made that he was going to beat Carl senseless were recorded by 911. With that and with Carl's statement and those of the witnesses, the pickup driver got two years jail time, was ordered to pay for the damage to Carl's car and had to attend Anger Management Classes for a year.

Carl was shaken and embarrassed over this attack. He was also proud of himself that he'd used restraint in not shooting the man out of anger. But Carl also knew that if the man had smashed out his driver's window and reached into get at him, or swung to hit him with that bat, he would have fired his handgun to stop what would then have been a deadly threat. Property damage would have turned into a threat of great bodily harm to Carl if his driver's window would have shattered or the man had swung that bat to hit him.

Carl's car was totaled by the insurance company and Carl and his wife drove to Phoenix in the comfort of a brand new Lincoln Town Car.

A year later Carl received a letter from the pickup truck driver apologizing for his behavior. It was almost the last letter that was forwarded by Carl's Detroit area Post Office to his new address. At first, Carl didn't know how sincere the man was. But in reading on, the pickup driver seemed to be expressing genuine regret over what he'd done to Carl. A breaking marriage and the potential loss of custody of his kids had driven him over the edge that day.

"He doesn't know how close he came to dying that day!" Carl said to his wife while she read the letter.

Carl laid back on the lounge chair by the pool and felt good that he'd not shot the man. It was almost overwhelming, the powerful feeling that filled Carl's mind as he muttered again, "He doesn't know how close he came to dying that day!" It was another sunny day in paradise.

If you are HOT under the collar, angry: You DO NOT touch your handgun! Don't apply for a Concealed Handgun License if you have problems controlling your temper!

If you are COLD, clammy feeling and scared: You 'may' have justification for use of your handgun if you cannot retreat from the threat. When the threat is gone, the use of your handgun is gone!

Places you are not to carry your Handgun

Restrictions on where Concealed Handgun License holders can carry their handgun are made by State Laws, County, Parrish, City/Local Laws and or United States Codes (Federal Law). You have to be familiar with all Federal, State and Local Laws of where you carry your handgun!

I again recommend **The Traveler's Guide to the Firearms Laws of the Fifty States** by Attorney J. Scott Kappas on State Firearm Laws available at www.GunLaws.com.

Even with a Concealed Carry License, all handguns (and Firearms) are, by Individual State's Concealed Carry Laws, unlawful to carry into certain premises: public and private schools and areas around them, churches, bars, casinos or gambling houses, and Federal, State, County or Parrish, Local/City buildings, State and Federal Parks, Voting Areas and all Post Offices. The carry of or transportation of a handgun in a vehicle, public transportation system, railway, boats and ships, buses and certainly on airplanes also has restrictions. In addition to those restrictions, businesses have the right to prohibit handguns on their premises, which if you violate that right of the business, you in essence violate that State's Law.

The rule is that you be aware of where you are going carrying your handgun just as you teach yourself to be aware of who is around you. Violate in these areas and it will result in a fine, confiscation of your handgun, probable jail time, attorney's fees and suspension of your Concealed Handgun License.

Carrying a Concealed Handgun is prohibited in and on all United States Government owned buildings and land, and in and on most State, County and Local buildings and land. **This includes National Forests areas, Federal Land and most State Parks!**

Other places Firearms are prohibited include Government meetings, the Post Office, voting and polling places, Police Stations, bars, casinos, courtrooms or arbitrations. Most State and Local Authorities prohibit you from carrying handguns in and around Schools, Universities and other Public Institutions and property.

The Federal Government, each State, County and Local Authority has different Laws regarding Concealed Handguns and it is your responsibility to know those Laws. Violations of these Laws are severe and may get you prison time or cause you to lose your Concealed Handgun License. Leave your handgun at home or in your car if you think you may be violating the Law.

Many private businesses prohibit carrying a handgun on their premises and your employer may also have a policy of prohibiting a handgun at your workplace. Inquire before you carry your handgun to work or into a business. It is their right to make their premises Handgun Prohibited even though it may actually make a more dangerous workplace if there is no competent armed security there. Watch for signs at the entrance to businesses that advise that handguns are prohibited and obey them.

Do not carry your handgun to meetings or sporting events such as basketball, football games, etc., where emotions run high. If you carry your handgun into a place where you or others are consuming alcohol you are violating the Law in most States. If you carry your handgun while taking drugs, whether prescription or not, you are courting disaster. Never carry your Concealed Handgun to any meeting or place where you believe you may lose your temper! **Unless you educate yourself to become knowledgeable on carrying a handgun and you can be competent and responsible about it, do not carry a handgun!**

Leaving your Handgun in your Vehicle

If you ever leave your handgun in your vehicle keep it locked in the trunk if possible. When out of sight of others, remove your handgun from your person and wrap a small towel around it while inside your vehicle so thieves don't see what you put in your trunk.

I recommend a lock box if you habitually store your handgun in your vehicle. There are a number of 'lock boxes' that can be fastened to the floor of your vehicle or inside your trunk that will allow you to rapidly access your handgun if you leave it in your vehicle, but make it very difficult for a thief breaking into your car from removing it. Some have key locks and others have button combinations that can be opened rapidly.

Showing or displaying your Firearm will get you Jail Time

Threatening people while displaying your handgun will definitely get you arrested and you will probably serve time in jail. **Never display your handgun when angry.** The best rule is not to display or point your handgun at anyone at anytime unless faced with a Deadly Threat that has you ready to use it. It is your

decision whether to inform others that you are carrying a handgun or not. My position is that I do not reveal to co-workers or others that I possess a Concealed Handgun License or carry a handgun.

Like shoes, a handgun must be COMFORTABLE

A handgun, (sometimes referred to as a 'pistol', 'automatic' or 'revolver') properly fitted for size and to the comfort of a person and that person taught well marksmanship, the handgun's mechanics, safe operation and carry, is the most popular and one of the best suited defense tools to counter Deadly Threats to you from another human and especially multiple humans. I am not going into much detail about handguns and shooting techniques as this manual primarily deals with Justification in the Use of Deadly Force. However, I will touch on some aspects because I've seen way too many people ill-fitted to their handgun.

Like shoes, a handgun must fit your hand, be comfortable and must be chosen for the purpose.

Look at a handgun like you're getting a pair of shoes. It must fit. Handguns are primarily one of two types:

- a revolver, which has a revolving cylinder that holds multiple cartridges.
- an automatic handgun, which has a detachable magazine that holds multiple cartridges.

The selection of a handgun is an issue that you must go over with your Instructor and the people at your gun store. The Key Word in this section is 'COMFORT'. You must be physically and mentally comfortable with your handgun.

Your handgun must fit your hand: People have different size hands. You must have a handgun that FEELS COMFORTABLE IN YOUR HAND. If the handgun doesn't fit your hand, this will drastically affect your accuracy. You must be able to take the safety off with one hand easily and reload with ease.

Your handgun must fit your mind: Your handgun must also be mentally comfortable. By that, I mean that you must feel at ease that you know how to reload it, fire it and know how it functions by reflex. You must be intimate with the functioning of your handgun and it should almost feel like an extension of your hand... like it is a part of you.

I RECOMMEND for a woman something similar to the Taurus Protector Model Revolver M651 .38 caliber revolver which has a hammer shroud that virtually eliminates the accidental cocking of the hammer. Automatic Handguns should be hammerless such as the Glock Model 28 in .380 caliber, small lightweight and compact. The Glock Handgun series have excellent reliability and safety systems built into them.

Your handgun must be fired by you before purchasing it: I strongly suggest you fire your handgun, or a type like it, before purchasing it. There are gun stores with ranges that will let you fire the particular handgun you are purchasing or one similar to it. Purchase what you FEEL comfortable with AFTER firing it, not what someone else thinks is good for you. Gun Store owners sometimes have more interest in your money than your welfare.

This is where a Certified Firearms Instructor comes in. They are usually a third party and realize no gain from what you buy. They will most probably have your interests in mind.

Purchasing a handgun should be done after working your way up from a smaller caliber with a Firearms Instructor. All Self-Defense handguns worth carrying have a powerful cartridge and have some kick. Don't persuade yourself not to have a Self-Defense handgun by starting with an all powerful cartridge. Start your introduction to handguns with a Instructor and a .22 caliber handgun first.

Your handgun must fit your purpose: Handguns fire cartridges (also commonly referred to as 'bullets', 'rounds', 'shells'). Cartridges consist of the projectile (bullet), case, powder and primer all assembled into one. The diameter of the bullet is referred to as caliber. The bigger the caliber usually means a more powerful cartridge. If you are target shooting for pleasure, a .22 caliber is great. For a Self-Defense handgun, a .22 caliber, a .25 caliber or .32 caliber are a poor choice.

Self-Defense carry requires, in my opinion, a minimum of a .38 caliber for a revolver or a .380 (9mm short) for an automatic. What is termed 'stopping power' or 'shock effect' comes into play here. You want as much stopping power from your handgun as is comfortable for you to fire.

Your handgun must be light weight: Carrying a handgun all day will make you realize that a fully loaded handgun can be fatiguing to carry. Composite automatic handguns and light weight titanium revolvers are good choices. The time proven Glock for automatics and Smith & Wesson or Taurus revolvers are reliable, safe and great personal defense handguns.

Holsters and Handgun Carrying

There are scores of methods for carrying a concealed handgun. Everyone has their idea of what is best. I recommend you have two or three different carry methods and alternate them to minimize the fatigue of carrying your handgun. It is a good idea to remove your handgun and put it on your car seat or a place readily accessible in your vehicle if your carry method is other than a shoulder holster or cross draw holster.

Holster Material

Probably the best material for a Concealed Carry Holster is Kydex or one of the high impact plastics such as the Fobus Holster Company produces. Properly fitted to your handgun, these holsters allow you to snap your handgun out of them quickly, but the holster still holds your handgun securely.

There are also good quality leather holsters, leather/plastic combination, nylon and nylon/plastic combination holsters. Whatever handgun carry method you use, these issues must be weighed:

- Is it comfortable?
- Does it allow you to access your handgun quickly and remove it with ease?
- Is it noticeable?
- Does it hold your handgun securely?

Comfort: Most fully loaded handguns weigh over a pound. That doesn't sound like much weight until you carry it for 8 to 12 hours a day. If your carry method isn't comfortable, make it so or you will sooner or later have the discouraging attitude "I think I'll leave my handgun at home today... or maybe in my car!" The purpose of a carrying a handgun for Self-Defense is to have it fully loaded and have it when and where you need it.

Quick access: The ability to draw your handgun in enough time to defend yourself goes without saying. Think about this when choosing a carry method and limitations that come from your daily activities such as when in a car with your seat belt on. Can you draw your handgun when you need it?

Is it noticeable: You shouldn't want your handgun to be noticeable by others. Handguns make most people uncomfortable and I don't like people to know I have a handgun on my person.

To counter my position on this though, I have friends who like the bulge at their waist under the shirt they wear over their handgun. Their attitude is that it's a warning without displaying their handgun. A visual deterrent. To each his own.

Does it hold your handgun securely: Part of Handgun Safety is that your handgun doesn't fall out in an altercation or during normal carry. Your handgun should be held securely by your holster, yet come out with just a small tug when needed.

Handgun Carry for Women

The Purse: The purse with a strong over-the-shoulder-strap and special handgun compartment I have described here is the best carry method for a woman, in my opinion.

The Body Band: Women can wear a 'body band' holster as an alternative. A body band holster is a holster that is sewn over the top of an elastic girdle type garment. The holster is usually the same type of material as the rest of the body band.

Depending on what you're wearing, the body band holster can delay you pulling your handgun when you need it. In cold weather, this type of holster can be almost impossible to use. In hot weather, it may become uncomfortable. But this type of holster also has its good points. Your handgun is ALWAYS with you and if your purse is snatched, your handgun won't be.

The Waist Band Holster: A type of holster that a woman could wear would be a 'paddle holster'. This holster is independent of the belt. A paddle, curved to the pelvic area, fits inside the pants and the attached holster sits outside the belt. This method, with the holster at the waist and blouse hanging out over it loosely is a great carry method if your dress allows it.

Handgun Carry for Men

Waist Band Holsters, Paddle Holster: A popular holster for most men is a waist band holster. I prefer this method of carry, in particular I prefer a 'paddle holster'. This holster is independent of the belt. A paddle, curved to the pelvic area, fits inside the pants and the attached holster sits outside the belt. I wear this type on the right hand, which is my gun hand.

Belt Holsters: This type of holster fits on your belt. Your shirt would hang out over the handgun or your jacket would cover the handgun. These holsters are very comfortable to carry a handgun in. You need a heavier belt than normal with this type of holster that is made specifically for handgun carry.

Cross Draw belt Holsters: This type of holster fits on the opposite side of your waist line than your gun hand. If you shoot with your right hand, the holster would fit on your left side and you would pull your handgun out of the holster with your right hand. Your shirt would hang out over the handgun or your jacket would cover the handgun. This is a good carry method if you are seated in a car driving much of the time.

Shoulder Holsters: This type of holster hangs from a shoulder harness under the arm pit on the opposite side as your gun hand. If you shoot with your right hand, the holster would fit under your left side arm pit and you would pull your handgun out of the holster with your right hand. This is also a good carry method if you are seated in a car driving much of the time.

Shoulder holsters are excellent when driving and wearing winter clothes or if you wear a suit jacket constantly. The opposite side of the harness your handgun hangs from usually has a magazine or extra ammunition pouch which helps balance the load. Shoulder holsters usually take some time to get used to wearing because of the weight.

Many shoulder holsters carry the handgun horizontally. Horizontal carry makes drawing the handgun easier but can create more danger for those around you if you ignore safety first.

Pocket Holsters: This type of holster fits inside your pocket and holds your handgun upright for quick draw. It is nothing more than a handgun 'scabbard' that fits the lining of the pocket.

Back of the belt or small of the back Holsters: This type of holster fits at your waist line in the small of your back. It is unbearable to carry your handgun this way if you drive or expect to sit in a chair much. These holsters are usually worn in open carry. When you get to your gun store, you will most likely see the owner and employees wearing this type of holster.

Methods I do not recommend for handgun carry

Open Carry: Again, handguns make most people uncomfortable and I'm not into letting people know I'm carrying a handgun unless that person is intent on doing me damage. Even if you live in a State that allows open carry, you most likely will be questioned by Law Enforcement if you carry your handgun openly in a holster. Don't open carry.

Ankle Holsters, Inside the Belt and Crotch Holsters: I do not recommend ankle holsters, 'inside the belt' waist band holsters or 'Crotch' holsters. These become very uncomfortable after carrying a handgun for very long and make it very difficult to access your handgun quickly.

Hit the 'Center of Mass'

The Center of Mass is the area of human anatomy that contains the most vital organs. The chest area from the waist up to the beginning of the neck and in between the arm pits. If you are intent on stopping a human attacker, striking this area is the recommended target.

If you pull your handgun, be mentally prepared to use it... and to use it to hit Center of Mass... to stop the threat to you. **You have to be mentally prepared in that process to take another human's life... to kill. If you cannot do that, do not carry a handgun or it may be taken away by the person threatening you and used on you. If you are intent on shooting to wound, don't carry a handgun. A deadly threat is just that... a deadly threat and there are no 'niceties' when you have to use Deadly Force against such a threat. You increase the chance of that threat being successful against you if you wound your assailant. If you try to wound your assailant, you will probably miss hitting altogether.**

Every cartridge fired has kinetic energy usually measured in Foot Pounds. The point is to transfer as many Foot Pounds energy from the bullet of that cartridge into the Center of Mass. To do so requires a large enough caliber and a heavy bullet. Further, the use of a bullet that expands once it hits the Center of Mass is desirable. The more Foot Pounds of energy transferred into the target, the more stopping power because of Shock Effect. Frangible ammunition breaks into pieces after it enters the human body and probably is the most effective ammunition to use for Self-Defense.

A .22 caliber round will most likely go right through a human unless it hits bone. Therefore, it doesn't transfer much Kinetic Energy and may have little Shock Effect. Your assailant may become just that... an assailant that just keeps coming after you. A further danger is that you may kill innocent people behind your

assailant if your bullet goes through your target and hits those people or goes through walls behind your target and hits innocent people.

If you're a lefty learn to shoot right handed

If you're going to learn to shoot properly, learn to shoot with your right hand and train your right eye to be dominant. God wasn't fair when he made us, but most of us are right handed and so most handguns are designed that way. Adapt to this EVEN IF YOU'RE LEFT HANDED!

If you are left handed and shoot most automatic handguns, the first time you get hit in the forehead or eye with a hot shell case that ejected, you'll know what I mean. As many Instructors as there are that will argue this point with me, I believe I'm correct in telling you this. Train your dominate eye and the hand you shoot with to be your right hand. My left handed daughter shoots with her right hand now and shoots well.

It is always good to know how to shoot with both left and right hands. This simulates your being wounded or incapacitated in some manner and forced to use your handgun with your other hand. Also learn how to SAFELY reload with one hand.

Be cool under fire... Simulating firing under pressure

As much as TV has taught us the 'quick draw', rapid fire and canting your handgun sideways like a gang banger when the good or bad guys are shooting it out is the way it's done, that's hogwash.

I best describe this part of how to fire under pressure to the duels of the 18th Century. The duelers, intent on killing each other because one ravished the other's wife and or his honor in doing so or whatever they so foolishly fought over, stood back to back, then walked 10 paces. At ten paces they turned and fired one shot at each other, since most handguns of the day were not repeat firing handguns.

The winner was usually the man who took careful aim and squeezed off his one and only shot while the other dueler fired first and fired wildly missing his opponent. Most of the time the shooter who took his time was the winner.

The gunfighters of the Old West did not draw as quickly as TV would make their contests seem. Most used their sights and took aim. However, they learned to do that quickly. So the point is to reach a compromise in accuracy and speed.

My God, you ask! How do I do that?

The military has used simulation drill exercises for centuries. They do their military exercises and shooting drills over, over, over and over again against the clock so when the real thing happens their reactions take over naturally.

You become proficient with accuracy and speed by going to a shooting range and simulating the experience by putting yourself under a Time Constraint, SAFELY! Shooting and reloading with yourself up against the clock. Just like your previous Safety/Threat Evaluation Time Check, shooting under the pressure of time simulates a threat situation the best that it can be done. Time Constraint testing simulates pressure.

Shooting at multiple targets, reloading and shooting again against the clock, maybe with some distractions thrown in like a malfunction of your handgun or knowing that someone is going to set some firecrackers off or fire another firearm in a safe direction during your simulation, is great training and lots of fun.

Hearing Protection

Other than the 'kick', what will put most people off shooting a handgun is the noise. Especially women. What will certainly damage anyone's hearing is the noise from a powerful handgun shot. Wear hearing protection! Repetitive handgun noise will damage your high frequency hearing. Once your hearing is damaged in this range by small arms or high decibel noise, it is gone forever! Along with good ear protection goes eye protection. Talk to your Instructor or the people at your gun store about this. You don't want constant ringing in your ears called 'tinnitus'. I know, I have it from jet engine noise of the flight line while in the Air Force. Loss of hearing and tinnitus causes communication problems, relationship issues and depression amongst other issues.

You must be competent

Carrying a Concealed Handgun must be done safely to avoid accidental discharge and the possibility of causing injury or death to others. Like any other task in life, "practice makes perfect". You should at least

demand of yourself that “practice makes competent” with your handgun. **You must be competent with a Concealed Handgun or do not carry it!**

You must know how to differentiate between situations that can be handled without the use of your handgun. It is up to you to take additional training to make yourself competent and to educate yourself **before** you carry your handgun. Get involved with you community and develop an interest in firearms, the legal right to use them and read anything and everything on the subject of carrying a Concealed Handgun.

If you have to use your Concealed Handgun in Lawful Self-Defense you must be aware of the innocent people behind and in the vicinity of the threat you may be firing at. Think about the innocent people that maybe behind an adjoining wall or on floors above or below you that can be accidentally hit. It’s not like the movies, and most types of bullets can pass through an assailant or a wall and still have enough force to kill or injure other people. You may stop the threat to you but you also may, in the process, injure or kill an innocent bystander.

Practice makes perfect and YOU may even find shooting sports FUN

I recommend monthly target practice and an annual refresher course in Personal Protection and Safety. If you like anything that tests your skill, or if you are competitive, you will like the sport of shooting holes in paper targets or shooting at steel plates. It’s fun and can grow to be addictive. The best part is that you can do it by yourself once you have learned the rules of firearms safety and proper shooting techniques and can be your worst at it by yourself without others to judge you. It is a good idea to have an instructor periodically review your shooting stances, grip, sight alignment, trigger pull, safety and evaluate your performance.

For shooting to become fun to those who have never fired a handgun before, start with a small caliber handgun, wear hearing protection and eye protection. Noise, recoil or ‘kick’ create a fear in most people. So start with a small caliber handgun and work up.

Learn Safety first, then the mechanics of the handgun. For safety, I suggest for a minimum of the first hour or two in learning the mechanics of your handgun, **DO NOT HAVE ANY AMMUNITION IN THE VICINITY** to prevent the accidental loading of your firearm. No ammunition should be around when you are learning the functioning of the handgun, sight alignment, trigger pull and shooting stances. Work up to the process of firing **SLOOOOOWLY** so your learning is an enjoyable experience.

People who shoot for sport are some of the most pleasant people I’ve met. They’re non-judgmental, accommodating, fun and yet take their shooting sport serious at the same time. A good instructor will never laugh at you no matter how poor your performance is. He or she are more interested in you learning as a measure of their ability to teach. Remember, your instructor learned just like you are learning.

I shoot now and then with an Air Force Special Operations Senior NCO friend when he visits from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I have yet to best him when shooting the ‘El Presidente’. When you are competent with handling your handgun safely, ask your instructor to show you what this shooting exercise is. It is exciting and great fun! I want Mike to know that he will eventually lose to me.

Our Right, Your Right

I just wish one of the 32 students killed at Virginia Tech had been disobedient and had taken a handgun into class that day and I wish he or she would have killed that lunatic shooter to protect the innocent. But, none did. I didn’t hear the following item on the news. My son, who served as a Marine Corps sniper in Iraq, called me and angrily told me about it. I looked it up myself to verify it and sadly it’s true.

Little is has been reported by the News Media on the Legislative attempt in Virginia to pass a law that would have allowed anyone... students, professors, janitors and visitors to carry their handgun on any Virginia Campus if they held a valid Concealed Handgun License. This was defeated by the Scared-D-Cats and Politically Correct just 4 months before this mass slaughter of the innocents. Good, idealistic kids trying to learn something to better themselves and the world.

Rumor has it that the President of Virginia Tech was instrumental in the defeat of this law. I cringe at the statement Virginia Tech’s Public Relations Director made after the defeat of this proposed law in the Virginia Legislature around January 2007. It went something like this... *“Students and parents of those students now know that they can attend classes for higher education in safety.”*

The liberals want you to be sheep for the slaughter. What frightens me more than violence is the apparent willingness to 'stand in line' for slaughter without putting up a fight. Maybe the end time for America as we have known it as a land of individuals is here when people respond to threats like that.

The 2nd Amendment of the United States Constitution is an **Individual Right** like the other **First Ten Inalienable Rights** of the Constitution of the United States. The recent decision by the United States Supreme Court has verified this individual right to bear arms. It is interesting to note that the Right to Bear Arms is not the 4th or 9th Amendment... but the 2nd, right behind the most important Amendment... the 1st... the Freedom of Speech. An individual right, just like the 2nd Amendment.

Democracy does not transmit from mother and father to the child through blood. Democracy is not transmitted in the genes. We are born into this world struggling to survive. We are born into society as selfish beings. Democracy, concern, caring and respect for others are learned.

Forefathers of the Constitution knew that wave after eternal wave of their successor's contrary interests would wash against that one document they designed to govern and to keep each of us from experiencing the unjustness that they had lived through. The Founding Fathers meant that the 2nd Amendment of the United States Constitution and your Right to Bear Arms was the ultimate protection against those with interests contrary to your wellbeing and to protect the rest of that critical document... the Constitution of the United States of America.

Ever man and woman of our armed forces have fought for these rights in struggles against tyranny for over 200 years. Many have died. Honor their memory by joining the National Rifle Association to help keep the flame of these rights alive! For \$35 a year, there's no better bargain! Practice with your handgun and read everything you can get your hands on about carrying a Concealed Handgun. Most importantly, practice good safety!

Good luck, be responsible and be safe!

Jack Lawson

About the author

Jack Lawson, the pseudonym for the author, has been involved in shooting sports for over 45 years. A Life Member of the National Rifle Association, he is an NRA Certified Range Safety Officer, Personal Protection, Firearm Safety Instructor, and Instructor in the Weapons Disciplines of Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun.

For four years he served on a Metropolitan Police Department's Use of Force Review Board. This Review Board judged Police Officer's justification in shootings and the Use of Deadly Force. He is presently a member of that Police Department's oversight Citizen's Review Board for 2007-2009.

He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1967-71. From 1977-79 he was an American International Volunteer member of the 1st Battalion, Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI), Support Commando and later attached to 'C' Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service (SAS) in the anti-Communist Counter-Insurgency war in Africa. During this time he was attached to South African RECCE Commando as a mine laying specialist on operations in Mozambique. He took part in extensive Fire Force anti-terrorist operations in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe, Africa) and commando raids on terrorist camps in Zambia and Mozambique.

He is a graduate of South African Airborne School, Demolitions, Survival, Urban Warfare, Close Quarters Combat Shooting and Unarmed Combat Schools and received the RLI Top Marksman Award, the Best Commando Graduate Award, the Combat Infantryman Badge and South African Parachute Wings. During his off duty time, he worked as a bodyguard for farm owners of remote farms through the Mashonaland Farmer's Cooperative.

Jack was a consultant on Rhodesian Fire Force operations in 1999 to Major Jon Custis, USMC. a combat veteran of Marine Corps heliborne-operations and the former project manager of the Marine Corps Programs Office, Naval Air Warfare Center-Training Systems Division in their study of Irregular Warfare Helicopter Vertical Envelopment tactics.

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