



SAGA Snippets

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Should You Carry Your Gun with an Empty Chamber?

by Jim Wilson
3 April 2023

Some folks still persist in carrying their defensive auto pistol with an empty chamber. I suppose that some of them do this because an older family member with military service told them that was the way it was done. Perhaps someone with little defensive knowledge - and less gun knowledge - told them that this was the safe thing to do. The fact is that defensive pistol training has come a long way in the past 50 years. Beyond a doubt, carrying with an empty chamber is a bad idea - so bad an idea, in fact, that it could get you killed.

First of all, carrying with a round chambered is not a safety issue if you have purchased a quality defense gun from a reputable manufacturer.

Further, it is not a safety issue if you have taken that quality defense gun and enrolled in a professional defensive school where you are taught to manage and handle your gun in a safe manner. Quality guns don't go Bang all by themselves. It is nearly always the untrained individual who is holding it that is responsible for the negligent discharge.

If you are going to carry a defensive gun, buy the best quality you can afford and learn to handle it properly.

You must also realize that the most dangerous criminal attacks occur at very close range and happen very quickly. So quickly, in fact, that you

simply might not have time to chamber that round and defend yourself. This is not idle speculation on my part because there have been a number of documented cases in which armed citizens were killed before they could get that round chambered in time. Look them up on the internet if you feel like getting depressed.

The quickest way to chamber a cartridge is to use both hands. But the simple fact is that you might not have both hands available when you most need them. One or the other of your hands, or arms, might be held by one of your attackers. Or you might have already sustained a wound in your appendage. And, yes, there are ways to chamber a round one-handed, but these require more time and some additional skill. And time, particularly, is something you won't have a lot of during a criminal attack.

Semi-automatic handguns are quite popular today for personal defense, and many other shooting disciplines, but they may not be the best choice for a particular individual. If, after receiving professional training, a person still doesn't feel safe carrying with a chambered round, their best move might be to go to a double-action revolver. DA revolvers have been doing a yeoman's job as personal defense guns for over 100 years. However, a person still needs professional training in order to safely and effectively use one for personal defense.

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April 2023

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Continued...Should You Carry Your Gun with an Empty

This business of carrying with an empty chamber comes from people who, while they might mean well, really don't know what they are talking about. They clearly don't have the experience or knowledge to be discussing the subject at all. The sad news is that if you carry with an empty chamber, you have very likely lost the fight before it ever started.

Get a good gun and some good training to go with it. And, finally, learn to fight smart.

You won't regret that you did.

<https://www.nrafamily.org/content/should-you-carry-your-gun-with-an-empty-chamber/>

6 Survival Items You Should Carry Every Day (Only 1 is a Gun)

<https://www.nrafamily.org/content/6-survival-items-you-should-carry-every-day-only-1-is-a-gun/>

by Shane Jahn

20 March 2023

The topic of "EDC," or "everyday carry," has really taken off in recent years. Recently I got to thinking about all the "stuff" I have on me as I go about my daily life. Most of these items have multiple uses; they can be used to perform simple jobs or pressed into defensive situations should the need arise. These are the things I need, or might need, in order to make my life easier and safer...and what I recommend for a beginner to the world of self-defense.



1. Gun

If, when and where you can legally carry, do it. Period. Your defensive handgun, no matter how big, small, old-school or fresh-off-the-assembly-line, will absolutely neither do you nor anyone else any good if you are not wearing it when it is needed. The 9mm versus .45 ACP debate will not matter the slightest if your handgun is in the safe at home when you find yourself in the middle of an active shooter situation while out running routine errands. No place is immune from danger. Don't believe it? Just watch the news or read "The Armed Citizen."



Continued...6 Survival Items You Should Carry Every Day



2. Knife

I cannot go about my daily business without at least one sharp knife. Most days I have two, one medium-sized, sturdy one for everything that might come up from opening the mail to cutting hay strings and numerous other utility needs. The second, smaller one is for important tasks like slicing an apple, cutting off a piece of dried sausage for a snack, etc.

Knife considerations depend largely on what you intend to do with it and where you live. Much of the time I carry a knife in a scabbard on my belt. In rural America a knife on your belt is pretty normal, at least where I live. In some downtown metropolis it might be suspect and very much out of place and could even be illegal. Be sure to know the law applying to knives in your area.

3. Flashlight

Years ago I started wearing a small, clip-style flashlight above the third button of my shirt. It's hardly noticeable yet very handy. I know, your cell phone has a light. That's for minor illumination needs, okay? Not real or potential defensive situations. It doesn't have to be big, but it does need to be bright. A flashlight must have the ability to provide sufficient light for target identification. Temporarily blinding the bad guy in a confrontation is an added bonus. If you don't already carry one, you will find all sorts of handy uses for a compact, bright flashlight during your daily activities, even in the daytime. There are many options out there that are small and light enough to comfortably carry in a shirt or pants pocket.

4. Cell Phone

I miss the days when the only possible way to carry a cellular phone was in a vehicle! We are well past that, as virtually everyone has at least one cell phone. Society has evolved to a need, be it real or self-imposed, to be in constant cellular communication. Make sure you have yours charged-up and with you in case you really need to call 9-1-1 in an emergency situation.

5. Cash

While we're on the topic of daily essentials, carry some cash with you. Credit cards are wonderfully portable, but one electrical glitch or major power loss, and it might be very beneficial to have a few real bills on you. (And, believe it or not, there are still places that will not accept credit cards!)

6. Multi-Tool

The multi-tool can really get you out of a jam. I have used them and seen them used to repair vehicles, fences, administer first aid—you name it. I try to keep one handy at all times, if not on my person, then at least the truck console, or in my backpack while hunting, hiking and ATV-ing.

Recognizing Transition Zones



<https://www.nrawomen.com/content/recognizing-transition-zones/>

by Jo Deering
28 December 2022

Criminals looking for victims need specific circumstances for the best chance of success. They need people present, obviously, because people = potential victims. But an area with too many people will not work, because someone might interfere with the crime in progress and because there will be many witnesses. Think about it: A mugger isn't going to hang out in an empty field in the middle of nowhere looking for victims, because there aren't any around. And he isn't going to lurk in the produce aisle at the local supermarket ready to mug someone over the asparagus, because there are just too many people around. What he needs is a place where there are just a few people, preferably where those people are distracted.

Transition zones or fringe areas present the ideal circumstances criminals need for a quick assault. A transition zone is a place people are generally passing through on their way to somewhere else. No one spends much time there, everyone there is concentrated on getting to where they're going, and there's often only one person around at a time.

Parking lots and garages are the best example of transition zones, and the ones that most of us encounter most frequently. Whether you're leaving the store or just arriving, you must pass through the parking lot—but you're not spending any significant amount of time there, there aren't too many other people there at the same time you are, and anyone

who might happen to be around is on a mission to get to where they're going.

Stairwells, ATM vestibules, alleys (especially after a big event ends and people are leaving), isolated public restrooms, gas pumps at night, and, to an extent, bus stops and subway stations can all be transition zones as well. You already get that weird feeling when you have to walk down a really long hallway to a far-off ladies' room at the mall, don't you? You feel uneasy because you have sensed that you're in a transition zone, and a particularly vulnerable one at that.

Transition zones aren't automatically dangerous places, but they do present the best circumstances for a criminal attack, and thus it's important that you are in condition yellow when you recognize that you're in a transition zone. Pay particular attention to your surroundings.

Keeping Yourself Safe in Transition Zones

Aside from staying in condition yellow and getting about the business that brought you to the zone and will get you out of it in short order, the best way to keep yourself safe in an area like this is to be on the lookout for unusual behavior. Again, you already inherently know what this is. Think about it: What do normal people do in stairwells? They climb the stairs on their way to wherever they're going. No one stands around in a stairwell, lurking, unless they're having a private phone conversation or possibly taking a quick mental-health break, in which case their body language (head in hands, rubbing their shoulders, etc.) will clue you in. Once in a while a smoker might loiter in a stairwell, especially an outdoor one, enjoying a cigarette—but be cautious. Although this is pretty normal behavior, smoking is also a great way for a bad guy to hide the fact that he's loitering somewhere people normally don't stand around.

What's normal behavior in a parking lot? Walking, either toward the store or toward a specific car. People leaving a store and entering a parking lot will either look lost

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Continued...Recognizing Transition Zones

because they forgot where they parked or they will look like they know exactly where they're headed. They don't meander aimlessly and they don't suddenly change their course to intercept you. They don't stand around by themselves, and if they loiter in groups, it's because they're having a conversation, and it generally doesn't last very long. They're not looking around them; they're focused on each other.

If a person is loitering near the door of the store, it's because they're smoking or waiting to be picked up or some similar reason. People who are doing this innocently will stay put; if someone is loitering by the door but starts following you into the parking lot as you leave the store, that's abnormal behavior.

If you see someone lurking in a parking lot for no apparent reason, the reason might just be nefarious. It's abnormal behavior. The same holds true for alleyways and those long hallways leading to out-of-the-way public restrooms. No one hangs out in those hallways, and seeing someone loitering outside the ladies room at the end of that hallway should immediately flip you to condition orange. Back out.

Transition zones like bus stops and subway terminals are a little trickier, because loitering there is normal as people wait for the bus or subway to arrive. Still, certain behavior is expected when people are waiting like this. They don't crowd each other more than necessary. They generally are reading a book or their phone. The smart ones will be paying attention to their surroundings, but you can usually tell the difference between someone in condition yellow and someone who is picking out potential victims.

Again, don't be paranoid when entering a transition zone, but do be aware when you're entering an area where a few people are passing through, focused on their destination. These are the conditions a criminal looks for, and you should be on the lookout for any behavior that's out of the ordinary for the circumstances. Pay attention and stay safe.



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+P Ammunition: What it Means to You

<https://www.nrafamily.org/content/p-ammunition-what-it-means-to-you/>

by NRA Staff

15 March 2023

You'll see the term deployed in gun reviews and discussions about using handguns for self-defense: "+P."

You can tell from the context of the conversation and the plus symbol that ammunition marked that way has "something extra" to it, but what, exactly, do people mean when they're talking about it? To boil the discussion down to its simplest elements, that "P" refers to pressure, and the plus indicates (you guessed it) that there's more of it than usual. Of course, there's more to it than that, and there are some elements of firearm safety that it's important you understand.

In general, factory ammunition is loaded to pressure levels standardized by the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI). However, there are "+P" versions of some handgun cartridges that operate at 10 to 20 percent higher pressures. What this extra pressure does is produce greater velocity and muzzle energy, which is of particular importance when discussing handgun ammunition designed for self-defense. Greater velocity and muzzle energy translates to more kinetic energy behind the bullet, and better terminal performance.

However, these loads are intended for use only in firearms designed to handle those higher pressure levels. The "+P" designation of these loads is usually found on the ammunition box and the cartridge headstamp. Firearms designed for such ammunition normally have a "+P" marking on the barrel, slide or frame.

Cartridges you're likely to encounter "+P" versions of include: .38 Spl., 9mm Para and .45 ACP. (Note: To emphasize the pressure difference between the .38 ACP and the .38 Super Auto, all current .38 Super Auto ammunition has the "+P" designation.)

To prevent firearm damage and possible injury, +P ammunition must be fired only in those firearms certified for it.

Finally, it's important to mention that, for some cartridges, reloading manuals often contain both standard loads for older firearms as well as higher-pressure loads for stronger, more modern firearms. For example, reloading data for the .45-70 Gov't. cartridge often comes in three varieties: loads for 1873 Springfield rifles, somewhat heavier loads for the Winchester Model 1886 lever-action, and even heavier loads for the Ruger No. 1 and No. 3 rifles, as well as other modern guns of similar strength. Some reloading manuals also list loads of different pressure levels for the .30-40 Krag.

Higher-pressure loads for modern firearms must never be fired in older firearms, to avoid firearm damage and/or shooter injury.



How Do Guns Work? Revolver Trigger Types



<https://www.nrafamily.org/content/how-do-guns-work-revolver-trigger-types/>

by NRA Staff

10 April 2023

When you read articles or hear gun experts talking about revolvers, you'll hear a lot of confusing terminology being thrown around. The facts are actually rather simple. Here are the three basic types of revolver trigger systems.

Single-action-only (SA)

This type is the oldest of the systems and requires that the hammer be manually cocked by the shooter for each shot. While slow, it offers a light trigger pull that is conducive to accuracy.

Single-action revolvers such as the Colt Single Action Army were popular in the American West and remain so today among cowboy action competitors and traditionalists.

Double-action/single-action (DA/SA)

This system is so named because pulling the trigger will cock and release the hammer. Most double-action revolvers can also be fired in the single-action mode as well. When

fired in the double-action mode, most revolvers offer a long, heavy trigger pull that is not conducive to accuracy. For this reason, most double-action shooting is done at close ranges in self-defense scenarios.

Most modern revolvers are of double-action/single-action design, such as the Colt Python, Ruger SP100 and S&W Model 29. This includes even large-bore models that will seldom, if ever, be fired in the double-action mode.

Double-action-only (DAO)

In this system, pulling the trigger cocks and releases the hammer. There is no provision for single-action operation. This system is found commonly on small revolvers intended mainly for concealed carry. Most examples have the hammer spur removed for added concealability, while others employ an integral hammer.

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