



SAGA Snippets

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SAGA Snippets
February 2025

Living With Your Defensive Gun

By Sheriff Jim Wilson, 4 January 2025

When visiting with folks, you often hear some poorly thought out comments about personal defense. One of my favorites is, "I have a defensive gun and I carry it when I think I need to." If you could accurately predict when you are going to need a defensive handgun, you could make a fortune selling that information. We carry all the time because we don't know when violence is going to raise its ugly head.

But I get it. When we first start wearing a concealed handgun, it feels very uncomfortable. What's more, we have the feeling that everyone around us knows we are armed, sees the bump under our covering garment and is staring at us. All of that makes us even more uncomfortable. The temptation is to avoid the embarrassment and leave the gun at home.

Col. Jeff Cooper talked about the importance of becoming one with your firearm. He said that we should live with our gun. We should wear it during our waking hours whether at home or abroad. The more we handled it, wore it and shot it, the quicker we would become familiar with it and more comfortable with its presence.

As a young cop, I quickly learned a lot about the value of a proper belt and holster. And I garnered a lot more knowledge about suitable concealment garments. It takes a little time and thought to properly match our defense gun and gear to the way we dress and to the options that

are available to us.

Dry practice also helps with the familiarization process. Minus the boom and kick, we get a better feel for the gun's pointability. We become more familiar with the grip and develop a more uniform trigger press. All of these things help us to become one with the particular defensive gun. That's what Cooper meant about living with the firearm.

None of what I am suggesting should be construed to suggest playing with the defensive gun. It is a deadly tool and should always be treated as such. Negligent discharges happen when people play with guns. For dry practice, we unload and then we check and double check to make sure that the gun is actually unloaded. Safety should always be our primary concern.

After all these years I have more than a passing relationship with personal defense and yet I still can't predict when and where I will next need to defend myself. That is why I have learned to live with a defensive handgun. It goes on in the morning with my clothes and doesn't come off until bedtime. And even then, it is close by. I have learned to properly conceal it so that most folks never know that it is there.

Given the world events of our day, learning to live with your firearm is really not a bad idea at all.

Extracted and shortened from:
https://www.shootingillustrated.com/content/living-with-your-defensive-gun/?utm_source=newsletter

Special points of interest:

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Check It Out



https://www.shootingillustrated.com/content/check-it-out/?utm_source=newsletter

by Sheriff Jim Wilson
8 February 2025

I am sure you've often seen the advice that when you obtain a defensive firearm, new or used, you should carefully check it out before relying on it. But, what exactly does this mean? The pat answer would be that it must check out to be as reliable as possible. But, again, what exactly does that mean? Well, I can tell you what that means to me and how I go about checking one out.

The first thing that I want to know is if it functions reliably with the ammo that I intend to carry for personal defense. There are too many variables for me to tell you exactly how many rounds of ammunition to run through the gun, but I would say it should be several hundred. With ammunition costs being what they are, I might start with some less expensive practice ammo and then finish up with my carry choice. Any malfunctions during this test period would be a red flag with a possible trip to a gunsmith indicated. I am not going to carry it until it functions properly with my chosen ammunition.

Next, I want to be sure that it shoots to point-of-aim (POA) with that chosen ammo. Trying to use Kentucky Windage during a gunfight is just not a good idea. Of course, if the gun has adjustable sights, dialing it in is not a problem. In the case of a fixed-sighted gun it might be a good idea to consider going to another bullet weight or even ammo brand to get it closer to POA. I want my chosen load to stay within 2 to 3 inches at 25 yards to POA.

During this breaking-in period I like to clean the gun regularly, and I use the cleaning sessions to look for further problems that might arise. Do all of the screws stay tight? Does everything that is supposed to move do it freely and properly? And is anything moving that shouldn't move?

Running into a problem does not necessarily mean that you have made a bad purchase. I once bought a very nice used gun that turned out to have function problems. It went straight to a gunsmith who tore it down completely and it turned out that the previous owner was a real fan of WD-40. Once all of the old dried junk was cleaned out of every nook and cranny, the gun worked perfectly and is still in my collection.

New or used, I want to check them out thoroughly. I try to use good-quality ammunition and make sure that it is compatible with my particular gun. And I am not afraid to seek professional help in solving problems. Once all of those things get a positive check mark then, and only then, am I willing to carry the gun for personal defense.

Focus on SAGA's 40 Year Insignia



Softshell Jacket

This quality softshell jacket is a Barron brand and is available in black with the simplified SAGA 40 Year logo embroidered on the front left chest.



The jacket has elasticated binding on the sleeve opening, front shaped panels with welt pockets, bar-tacks at pockets for added durability, inverted nylon full zip opening and an inner storm flap.

Comfortable and easy-to-wear, these jackets not only look good, but will wash well too. Available in sizes from small to 5XL.

These jackets need to be ordered - contact the office for more information.

Price: R660

Double Lock Folding Knife

This folder by Coast has an extremely comfortable nylon-handled grip, a 9.2cm long stainless steel blade with an ambidextrous opener which allows one-handed opening, a lanyard hole and a 3-position clip. The Double Lock is a patented safety switch mechanism that works in conjunction with a primary liner lock to prevent disengagement.

Lazer engraved with the simplified SAGA 40 Year logo, this strong folding knife is robust and will give years of good service.

Price: R380



PVC Patch with Velcro Backing

PVC patches are the modern equivalent to embroidered patches. Made of durable plastic they are flexible, lightweight, and weatherproof. The new SAGA PVC patch measures 6x4.2cm (length x width), and will attach to anything with Velcro from jackets, caps, backpacks and shooting bags. Price: R90

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Continued...SAGA Corporate Membership



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The SAGA office is now available on WhatsApp on our cell-phone number **066 003 9226.**



Dealing with a Dark Parking Lot

https://www.shootingillustrated.com/content/dealing-with-a-dark-parking-lot/?utm_source=newsletter

by Shelley Hill
5 January 2025

Bad guys love parking lots because there is usually not a ton of foot traffic, people are distracted, there is low lighting, and every car can provide the perfect hidey hole to sit and wait for a vulnerable target. All they must do is pick a spot where they are not easily seen, crouch and be ready to pounce.

They also love parking-garage stairs and elevators. These are uncontrolled transitional spaces that can be a benefit to the bad guy. Criminals can be at arm's lengths from you, and you don't know it until it's too late. These close quarters sever you from others, can remove the option for you to run, your screams can't be heard and the short distances between you and the bad guy can limit your response time.

Below are a handful of things that a criminal focuses on when choosing a parking lot to commit a crime.

1. Stealing a car. Statistics show that 22 to 23 percent of all cars stolen were stolen from parking lots at night or when left unattended for long periods of time.
2. Breaking into a car and stealing what's inside the vehicle. Break-ins are up 25 percent from previous years.
3. Simple vandalism
4. Carjacking your car immediately after you park, when you are getting out. They also will target you while you are getting back into your vehicle. Studies show that 19 percent of carjacking occurs in parking lots.
5. Target an individual for robbery, with or without physical assault.
6. Sexual assault. I am unable to find any stats on the percentage of people sexually assaulted in a parking lot, but I can tell you that every 68 seconds another person is sexually assaulted in the United States. I can also tell you that 1 out of every 6 women and 1 out of



every 33 men have been a victim of attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. 7. This is a bit outside the box but 70 percent of all "hit and runs" involve parked cars and most of these are in parking lots.

Now that we know what can happen, let's focus on how to avoid being one of these stats. It is easier than you think.

- * Park in well-lit parking lots
- * Park near the entrance
- * Park on "main" levels to avoid elevators and stairs. You could also consider getting some exercise and only using the parking lot ramps to get you to your destination.
- * Walk in the middle of the aisle/ramp as opposed to hugging the right or left side on the aisle.
- * Have your pepper spray, a flashlight or both in your hands as you move about
- * Stay off your phone
- * Don't listen to music and remove any earbuds
- * Are you with kids or another person that may need your attention? Have a talk with them about expected behavior and the end goal. Consider bringing another adult with you if you know you will have many distractions while in public. Two heads are better than one.
- * Be aware of what is in front of you, beside you and behind you. You can do this by just scanning the area and really look and see with a purpose.
- * Walk with determination. Keep your head up and look confident.
- * Eye contact for three seconds with another person in the parking lot is acceptable. If you move from a casual glance to a 5-10 second stare, that could invite the bad dude to challenge you.
- * Be aware of cars cruising around, passing one point over and over again. Cruising around is not normal behavior in a parking lot. If you see that same car more than once, avoid it.

Continued...Dealing with a Dark Parking Lot

* When walking around a car, pilar, corner, etc., walk wide around the corner to avoid the closer distance with an object that could be hiding a bad dude. The same rule applies to another person. Give them space.

Recently, I was visiting a family member at the hospital. I entered when it was daylight and exited when it was dark. I followed all the suggestions above (that applied) and was appalled at what I saw on my 75-yard walk to my car. I passed no less than 10 people coming and going and not one person was aware of anyone or anything. They were on their phones or had earbuds in. They were distracted, had their hands and arms packed with items and never looked around. I actually saw one person get out of their car and

stand there for several minutes with their door open while they gabbed on the phone. I told my husband that I have never felt so safe in a parking lot before because I was deselected just by looking around. All the other people were vulnerable targets. It was criminal's playground.

I am not asking you to live in fear or never get in an elevator, I am asking you to be proactive and think ahead. I have said this before and I will say it again, you do not choose when and where an assault will happen, the bad dude does. Let's ruin his day and not the other way around.

Note from SAGA: This article is based on statistics in the USA

Wildland Magazine

As part of SAGA's collaboration with Wildland here is the link to your free copy of Wildland magazine, February 2025.

Click on the link in the covering email, or copy the link below into your web browser:

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/69776366/wildland-februarie-2025>



How to Choose Eye & Ear Protection For Shooting

by Serena Juchnowski
24 February 2025

When it comes to firearms, safety is paramount, and that includes protecting your vision and hearing. Not all ear and eye protection are created equal. Simply putting on any old pair of sunglasses or earplugs does not guarantee effectiveness. Here's how to choose what's right for you.

Eye Protection

Safety glasses are worn to protect the eyes from ricochets and from other debris. Although rare, incidents can happen. Your regular eyeglasses or sunglasses may not be adequate protection, so look for ANSI-rated glasses or request a prescription set of safety glasses from your eye doctor. I use a special set of safety glasses with a frame built in that holds my prescription lenses. This allows me to see far distances while I am shooting and enhances my view of the target. Many people do not even need prescription lenses for shooting, because use of a scope amends their vision issues.

Iron sights have their own story. The front sight should be in focus while the target should be slightly blurry. I can see the front sight clearly, but not the target. Others can see the target, but not the front sight. This can be resolved by working with an optometrist who understands shooting. Formulas exist to modify a prescription to improve focus of the target or post, so many people choose to have a separate pair of glasses for use with iron sights versus optics.

If you have perfect vision, you still have other decisions to make. Colored or tinted lenses are not a fashion statement. They exist to help you see the target better and faster in varied light conditions by filtering out different light frequencies. Clear glasses are traditionally worn when lighting is poor and for shooting indoors. On sunny days you will find yourself squinting with these same lenses. This extra muscle tension in your eyes disrupts your sight picture and can have a negative effect on your shots.

To resolve this issue, many shooters have

multiple pairs of glasses, or one pair of glasses with interchangeable lenses. Wearing a hat with a brim will also help. While there are various charts online with recommendations on lens color, you will only find what works best for you through experimentation.



Ear Protection

Ear protection is just as, if not more, important. Hearing loss is a combination of length of exposure and intensity of sound. No matter what style of hearing protection you choose, pay attention to the Noise Reduction Rating (NRR).

The NRR represents the maximum number of decibels (dB) the hearing protector will reduce the sound level by when worn. Sounds above 80 dB can cause immediate and permanent hearing loss. A gun shot measures approximately 140-165 dB.

The two traditional forms of ear protection are muffs and plugs. Muffs cover the entire ear, while plugs slide into the ear canal. Fit is most important here. Improperly fitting ear-muffs or plugs, no matter their noise reduction rating, will not work. Just one shot can cause irreparable hearing loss. Even if you already have hearing loss, continued exposure to loud noises can cause further damage. Muffs can be bulky and make it difficult to obtain a proper cheek weld on a rifle or shotgun.

Universal plugs do not work for everyone, especially when improperly used. "Double-plugging" or wearing plugs and muffs simultaneously is also an option and provides the most protection. Wearing both muffs and plugs will increase the noise reduction rating to approximately 5-10 dB more than the highest NRR rating of the muffs or plugs. Some may complain that shooting is "too loud," especially young children. This is a sign that ear protection is not fitted correctly. If not remedied, hearing loss may occur.

If you have the opportunity, try different styles of muffs. Pay attention to size, headband and

Continued...How to Choose Eye & Ear Protection For Shooting

shape. There should be no break in the seal between your head and muffs while you are wearing them. If earplugs fall out, they are not correctly fitted. Audiologists can make affordable custom molds that resolve this issue.

Hearing range commands and being able to communicate with others is also important. Earmuffs with built-in microphones can filter sound to block those above a certain frequency,

allowing you to hear voices amplified, but not shots. Electronic plugs, universal and custom, also exist, that work in a similar way to electronic muffs.

Wearing ear and eye protection isn't just about following a range rule. Though most facilities require both, you should still choose to protect yourself when you are left with the choice to preserve your eyesight and hearing. Your loved ones will thank you.

Poland Makes Gun Training Mandatory in Schools

by Guy J. Sagi
7 January 2025

Polish schoolchildren will soon be receiving one hour of mandatory firearm training each week that includes safe handling, field stripping and marksmanship using laser-based systems. The course also teaches survival skills, first aid and cybersecurity. No live ammunition is used in the classes, which will be held in school gymnasiums.

The "Education for Safety" program was announced late last year in response to heightened concerns Russia will invade Poland, which is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The communist military is currently mired in the war it launched against Ukraine in 2022, although the sheer volume of troops and hardware it has amassed in the area continue to increase tension and probability of an incursion—whether deliberate or inadvertent.

The Polish Department of National Education explained in a written statement that, "For primary schools, requirements include knowledge of the local area, cybersecurity

in the military dimension, preparation for shooting training; and for secondary schools, children must know how to respond to a threat of warfare, cybersecurity in the military dimension, and participate in shooting training."

Concerns that a NATO-member nation will be attacked are underscored by Russian President Vladimir Putin's insistence that any country providing supplies to Ukraine's military is directly intervening in the war. Ukraine's efforts to join NATO stalled after the invasion, although Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has made it clear his country wants to enter the organization, which was formed in 1949, just as the Cold War heated.

The Polish military has roughly 300,000 members. A Putin decree, issued late last year, increased the size of Russia's armed forces to 2.38 million according to AlJazeera. It's the third time the communist nation has issued orders bolstering its fighting force size since its invasion of Ukraine bogged down on the ground and in the air.

https://www.shootingillustrated.com/content/poland-makes-gun-training-mandatory-in-schools/?utm_source=newsletter

Black Swans, Severity and Probability

<https://www.shootingillustrated.com/content/black-swans-severity-and-probability/>

by Chris Cypert
25 February 2025

A "Black Swan Event" is an extremely rare outlier event that gathers a disproportionate amount of attention after the fact due to its rare and unique nature.

I recently saw a post on a social media platform where an anonymous firearms influencer was drawing attention to a well-known outlier event. The influencer admonished his followers that they should focus their training on being prepared for such extreme outlier events by spending lots of time shooting at long distances with a handgun. Given the reality that the average armed citizen has limited time and a limited budget with which to practice, I'm not sure that's the best approach.

While such outlier events are compelling, they should not overshadow the importance of using the majority of your training time and budget for more probable scenarios.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is an area that is rarely discussed in the self-defense training world, but it is an essential step in a holistic approach to self-protection. Situational awareness, verbal agility, shooting skill and other self-defense skills are all solutions. To choose the best solutions in the proper proportions, we must first understand the problem. That means doing a proper risk assessment.

The central concept of a risk assessment is weighing the probability and severity of potential risks. The goal is to develop a prioritized list of risks we need to mitigate. The process begins by brainstorming and listing any and every risk one can imagine. Then we go item by item and ask ourselves, "How severe would this be if it happened?" and "How likely is this to happen?"

Formal risk assessment processes, (there is an entire industry based on this principle), apply



numerical systems and an Internet search of "risk assessment matrix" will provide probably thousands of templates you can use to assign a ranked value to the severity and to the probability of a particular risk.

For our purposes here we can just informally categorize severity as "extreme severity," "moderate severity" or "low severity." Then "extremely likely," "likely" or "not likely." Anything that is extremely severe and highly likely should be at the top of your list, and probably needs to be addressed first. Anything that isn't very severe and is not likely can go at the bottom of the list or get dropped off all together. Everything else will go somewhere in the middle based on your rankings, but the key is to perform this mental exercise as dispassionately as possible and render your judgments based on actual evidence and facts.

In the digital age, one would presume that we are more informed than ever about the world as it really is. Unfortunately, in this era of the Internet and social media, it can be extremely difficult to contextualize the flood of information and maintain perspective. The self-defense training community is no different, and so for many people there is a huge difference between what they worry about compared to what the evidence indicates they should actually be worried about. One of the areas where this is most evident is defensively minded armed citizens' pre-occupation with outlier events.

Conversely, let's examine the other end of the probability spectrum when it comes to prob-

Continued...Black Swans, Severity and Probability

lems that can be solved by armed self-defense. Generally speaking, aggravated assault/attempted murder, armed robbery (to include carjacking), abduction and rape are the crimes that can justify lethal force on the part of the intended victim. They also all generally occur at close distances, ranging from conversational distance to contact distance.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Victimization Survey reported a violent victimization rate of 23.5 per 1,000 people aged 12 and older in the US. So, in a given year the average citizen in the US has about a 23.5 out of 1,000 chance of being targeted for "routine" violent crime such as aggravated assault/attempted murder, robbery, abduction, or sexual assault.

Train for Probability

We understand that routine violent street crime is far more common than outlier events and both have the potential to make us dead.

What can we infer about the problems we most need to be able to solve given this information? Primarily that the highly severe and more probable scenarios where we will need a gun to defend ourselves or our loved ones will likely take place at close proximity to our attacker. Let's apply some good old-fashioned common sense:

For someone to get close enough to you to try to beat you with a tire iron, stab you, rob you at gunpoint, carjack you or try to abduct you, they're generally going to have to get close to you. At the furthest, that will be conversational distance, and as close as hugging distance. This is true of the overwhelming majority of violent crime, and while the possibility of needing to shoot at a violent bad guy at 40 or more yards exists, and it does happen, the probability of it is quite low.

Training for such an outlier probably shouldn't make up a substantial portion of your training until you're very consistent and skilled at solving the problems you are more likely to encounter.

For the vast majority of people, we need to prioritize the basics that we will need to survive and prevail in the type of defensive gun use scenario we're significantly more likely to encounter.

Those priorities include: A rock-solid reliable draw stroke from the holster; the ability to get the first good hit on target very, very rapidly; the ability to get additional accurate hits rapidly by managing recoil; the ability to use cover and the ability to shoot one-handed and from a retention position if you're in gun-grabbing range.

What distances should you be working at? Most people should be spending their time working on accuracy and speed from 3 to 10 yards until they can be accurate and fast on a consistent basis, cold and on demand. Then start working your way back to 15, 25, 50 yards and beyond. While it's true that if you can shoot accurately at 50 or 100 yards you can easily do so at 3 to 10 yards, at long distance most people unconsciously ignore the time aspect that is so crucial in a defensive gun use at typical conversational distances. To get fast you've got to learn to go fast, and that means starting out being accurate and working on getting fast at 3 to 5 yards, then 7 to 10 yards, 10 to 15 yards and so on.

For the average defensive-minded shooter who has taken a class or two and makes it to the range a few times a year, if you want to spend a small portion of your precious practice time shooting at 25 to 50 yards or farther, that's totally fine. Just be careful listening to somebody out there telling you that you need to abandon practicing at conversational distances so you can prepare for a Black Swan Event.

It is a good thing to build skill at longer ranges with a pistol, and I enjoy shooting at 100 yards and beyond, but for most shooters it isn't worth spending a significant amount of practice time working on skills you're extremely unlikely to need at the expense of skills are that far more commonly called for. Weigh the severity and the probability, and prepare accordingly.