

Choosing a Defensive Handgun

Copyright © 2006 Bruce N. Eimer, Ph.D.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Is the gun going to be for concealed carry, home defense or both?
2. If the gun is for concealed carry, how do I want to carry it?
3. Is the weight of the gun an important issue?
4. Is the size of the gun an important consideration?
5. Do I want a revolver or a semi-automatic pistol?
6. Do I want the handgun to feature a manual mechanical safety so that I can neutralize the gun and carry it on safe?
7. Do I want the gun to also have a magazine safety disconnect so that it cannot be fired even if there's a round in the chamber if the magazine is removed?
8. Do I care if the gun is thick or thin?
9. Do I want a pistol that takes a single stack magazine (thinner grip but less rounds capacity) or a double stack magazine (thicker grip but higher rounds capacity)?
10. Do I want a high capacity pistol (magazine holders greater than 10 rounds)?
11. Is felt recoil a big issue? Am I recoil sensitive?
12. What caliber can I handle (e.g., .38 Special, 9mm, .40 S&W, .45ACP, etc.)?
13. How often am I willing to clean the gun?
14. Do I need a light rail on the gun?
15. Do I feel the need to have a lifetime warranty from the manufacturer?
16. How much am I willing to spend to buy a gun?
17. How often am I willing to go to the range to practice?
18. How am I going to safely store the gun?
19. Do I mind a heavy long, double action trigger pull?
20. Do I want double action only, traditional double/single action, or a single action only pistol?