

ESTES PARK GUN AND ARCHERY CLUB

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**"IF YOU ARE NOT
PREPARED TO USE
FORCE TO DEFEND
CIVILIZATION, THEN BE
PREPARED TO ACCEPT
BARBARISM"**

--Thomas Sowell

Guns 101 -- Will You Be a Successful Defender?

Dave Jiles, EPGAC Member

Accessories and modifications available for your personal defense firearms are plentiful. There is a never ending parade of products and ideas to make it faster, more accurate, and of course, more "tacticool". As always, this is my opinion and I am not an expert or a lawyer. I have however spent many years studying the work of, training under, and listening to people who are experts, and lawyers. The purpose of this edition is to talk about the various questions you may have about what is good, and what is bad when it comes to the tools we keep for personal defense.

Modifications to your gun are often touted as a necessity to make you a successful defender. While some are good, in reality you should be able to pick up about any modern firearm right out of the box and be effective with it, if not, the issue is you, not the shortcomings of the gun. Modifications can be made to enhance your ability to see the sights quickly, to grip the gun firmly, and to make your trigger press as smooth as possible, but getting carried away with customizing a gun you plan to use for personal defense can be problematic. An extended magazine release or a custom 2.5 pound trigger may be great for a high speed competition gun, but under the stress of a real defensive situation you may accidentally release the magazine, or send a round into the floor, or worse, with a negligent discharge. Keep your concealed carry and home defense guns simple so that under stress, the manipulation of the gun comes naturally.

In the legal aftermath of a defensive shooting, your gun will become evidence. It will be examined by an armorer that will document anything that is not factory stock. You may need to be able to articulate good reasoning for replacing any manufacturer designed part. Once again, better sights, enhanced grip, and a smoother, but not necessarily lighter trigger, can be justified as helping to assure that every round fired goes where it was intended rather than wildly into space endangering everyone in the area.

Decorative accoutrements meant to make it look macho like a "punisher" symbol or other such markings can set you up for some uncomfortable questions in court. Don't give them ways to present you as a trigger happy gun nut.

Many, if not most modern pistols come equipped with a rail system under the barrel, for mounting high lumen lights that allow you to keep a good two handed grip on the gun and still be able to illuminate an intruder in your house. The rail can also hold a laser sight that makes it much easier to take aim, particularly when you may not be in a position to get a good sight picture. There are combination laser/light systems as well that provide both the white light and laser sight in one unit.

I am not a fan of weapon mounted lights for concealed carry, for two reasons. If you use it to illuminate someone to determine if they are a threat or not, then you have already pointed a loaded firearm at them. That is illegal, and in some jurisdictions can get you a charge of assault with a deadly weapon even without having fired the gun. Rather than that, get a good quality, high lumen tactical light and carry it in your support side pocket. (continued next page)

WATCH IT

Back to Basics (7:38)

Jeff Gonzales

New gun owners- this is the first video in a series you should watch.

(Click WATCH IT to open the video)

"MATURITY IS REALIZING HOW MANY THINGS DON'T REQUIRE YOUR COMMENT"

--Unknown



[View Range Rules on website](#)

Guns 101 - continued from page 1

That allows you to illuminate a possible threat, temporarily disorient him with the light in his eyes and determine if he is an armed threat, an unarmed beggar, or just some poor guy walking to his car like you. Also, your dominant hand is still free to pull your weapon if needed. The tactical light is a good idea to have on hand at home even if you have a weapon mounted light. Remember gun safety rule #4: be certain of your target and what's behind it. That shadowy figure in the kitchen at night may be your teenage daughter sneaking in past curfew, the family pooch, or your drunken brother that needed a place to sleep it off. Always identify your target.

If you plan to carry concealed, then find a good carry method and good equipment so that it is as comfortable as a good pair of shoes. If your intention is just to keep a gun for protection in the home, find a good secure means of storage that keeps your gun out of the wrong hands, yet is easy for you to access quickly if you need it.

Give serious thought to how you would handle a stranger at your door, a loud "bump in the night", or an outright door kicking home invasion. How long will it take you to access your firearm from where you are at any given time? You could be in bed asleep, in the kitchen making dinner, on the couch watching a movie, or in your hobby room in the basement. Bad guys don't make appointments and they don't care if they are interrupting you, so you need a comprehensive plan.

As you progress from a brand new gun owner you can take your abilities to whatever level you wish. Find good equipment, but do not waste money on nonsense. Train, practice, stay alert, and always have a plan. Consider less lethal options as well, a fight avoided is a fight won.

Stay armed and stay safe.

--Dave

Also, you may have already noticed a different look in the Newsletter. We have a new editor; he has experience with other newsletters and lots of ideas to add good content to this one. He also enjoys writing so you will have something to read besides my ramblings. He is a local businessman, a long time EPGAC member and very active in the community. I am very grateful to Mark Igel for stepping up and taking on the task of making this Newsletter something that people will look forward to reading each month.

300 Yard Lane is Open

The new 300 yard lane is open for business. Our new 1" thick steel targets are in place on both the 200 and 300 yard range. Thanks to everyone that played a part in making this happen. Particular appreciation goes to Steve Clark who drove this entire project and did a good deal of the physical work, research, and planning.

New procedures are posted for the long range area, please go over them carefully and be sure you understand them before using the area.



**Thank
 you!**

..to everyone
 who helped with
"Public Day"
 this year!

We had busy days &
 we had slow days-
thanks to you,
they were all good days.

Bullet Points

A Rough Road Ahead

My parents and grandparents lived through WW1, the Great Recession, and WW2, as well as a few pandemics. They were strong and independent people who knew how to provide their own food and shelter. They also knew how to work within their neighborhood to help the neighbors that were facing hardships, and to defend their community from criminals and con men.

We may well be approaching a time when we will need to rely on those skills and knowledge again. Hyper inflation, empty store shelves, food shortages, these are very real possibilities. Without getting into any "conspiracy theories" or political back and forth, if your eyes are open, you cannot deny that there is trouble brewing.

So, are you ready to put together meals for the next two weeks without a trip to Safeway? If power goes out will you be able to heat your house, and do you have needed medications and other medical supplies for an extended period of isolation? Don't forget about the needs of your pets and livestock.

These are things our elders thought about routinely simply because they had to. They did not have the dependable utilities, emergency services, and convenient "survival food". If the power lines went down they could be without power for several days. Many had lived much of their lives without electricity so they just reverted back to the old ways.

Do you have drinking water, as well as water for cleaning, and for flushing toilets? You will need water for your animals and for watering that garden that you may now have to depend on for much more of your food.

If you don't already, get to know your neighbors, find out who are medical professionals, EMTs, or former combat medics. Get to know who is stable and dependable, and who is likely to go "off the rails" under pressure. Learn who you could trust to send your kids to in a crisis, and who could take care of your pets if you had to leave for a period of time.

Find out who may need your help as well, the elderly couple across the street, or the lady in a wheelchair down the block. Get to know these folks now and check in on them once in a while. They may be very proud people that never want to ask for help or companionship, but really need it.

If you look back at the "old days" you will find that the premise of "community" meant being a good neighbor, but minding your own business. People prepare for the things that are most likely so that if and when it happens, you will not be helpless and a burden to others who have their own problems.

Think back to the flood in September 2013, or even the fires of last year. Some had a plan and adapted quickly, others were devastated when they found themselves in the midst of something they were certain only happened to "other people". Be ready for anything, and the ho-hum days of normal life will be that much sweeter.