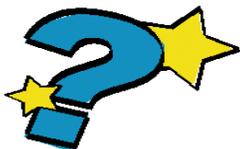


What Kind of Pistol Should I Buy?

"What kind of gun should I buy?" What do you mean, "What kind of gun should you buy?" I mean exactly what I said. "What kind of gun should I buy?" I don't know. What kind of gun do you want to buy? I don't know. That's why I asked you!



I can't tell you the number of times I've been asked that question. So, since I've been asked that question so many times, I thought I'd offer some insight on how to determine what type of handgun to buy.

Why would you buy a gun?

The first thing you need to do is to figure out why you want a gun. If you can't answer that, then why would you buy one? Just to have it? That's an awesome amount of responsibility just to have a gun. An awesome amount of responsibility you say? What do you mean? If you think about it, a gun, if not properly used or secured, can take a life. Is that something you're willing to be responsible for? If not, you had better think twice about buying a gun.

I always use a saying I heard in the more recent *Spiderman* Movies when I teach Firearms Classes "With great power comes great responsibility." Well, what do you think a gun is? Chopped liver? A gun, in fact, any firearm, can take a life if you're not careful, so if this is the case, why buy a gun? Just to have it? You ought to think twice about why you want a gun.

Once you determine why you want the gun, then you begin to figure out the best type of gun for the reason. Do you want a gun for target practice, competition, sport, hunting, collecting, or personal protection? There will be guns that will be best fit for each reason. It will be difficult to come up with one gun that might be best for all reasons.

Revolver or Semi Automatic

"Whew, that was a tough decision. "I now know why I want a gun," you think

to yourself. Have I got a news flash for you! You're not halfway through the selection process yet. Now that you have your reason, you need to determine what type of action will you feel most comfortable and confident with.



Will it be a revolver or a semi-automatic? Each has its disadvantages and advantages, just as does just about everything in life. Once you determine the type of action that you want, you need to determine a price range that you're willing to spend for a firearm.

Once you figure out how much you are willing to spend for a gun, you're ready to begin shopping. Many gun dealers have excellent selections of new and pre-owned guns. So you make a B line to the nearest gun shop thinking that you've got your plan in place. Well, Whoa Nellie! There's a lot more than just what you've decided thus far.

Once you get to a gun dealer, you might be tempted to just browse, maybe even ask to pick up a pistol. You carefully look at the pistols and price tags. You see some guns with nice shiny polished silver surfaces or black surfaces. Then you look at the price tag. Ugh! Too expensive, so you look at others.

Get a grip.....

Before you go too far in falling in love with a gun because of it's looks or it's price, you really need to take into account how it fits your hand. Grip or control of the gun and where your trigger finger rests on the trigger is of the most important factors in buying a gun. It won't do you or anyone around you any good if you can't control the gun when you're shooting it.

Ask to hold a few of the pistols. Try each gun on for size. If your trigger finger does not rest correctly on the trigger, you shouldn't think about buying that particular gun unless there are grip modifications that can be made to accommodate your grip, no matter how

good the deal or how beautiful the gun is. If you like it just because of the price or how beautiful it is and you plan on using it and you can't control it, you're in for a rude awakening. Your gun will eventually get scratched, just like new cars get scratched and you may even cause an accident if you can't control it, just like you might get into an accident in a car if you can't control it. Then, when something does happen, you think to yourself, if only, or I should have, or I would have or I could have.

Mom always told me....

Mom always told me "it is better to be safe than sorry." Make sure the gun fits your grip! Now you're ready to continue your shopping. So shop and don't compromise on your grip. As you shop, and hold each firearm, ask if you can dry fire the gun. If you can't, ask for some snap caps to use. Find out how long the rigger pull is. See how much force it takes to pull the trigger. Does the gun have a single or double action or both? What kind of sights does it have? If it's pre-owned, does it look like it's in pretty good condition or does it look like it was abused? Do you think it's a reliable gun? How easy will it be to clean and maintain?

At the end of the day, you're still responsible for your gun! Don't let anyone give you the hard sell or sell you anything your not sure of!



About the author: Mike Burchman is a Massachusetts State Certified Firearms Instructor, a Utah State Certified Concealed Firearms Instructor, and a NRA Certified Instructor and Range Safety Officer. If you're a Massachusetts Resident and would like more information on firearms safety courses or instructions on how to use a firearm, please contact Mike Burchman at 508-361-4554 or visit www.homegunsafety.com.