

# METHODS OF CARRY

Carrying a firearm is a right and an awesome responsibility. Your first response should be to avoid conflict, but having a firearm on hand gives you the ability to defend yourself IF a life-threatening situation occurs. Still, carrying a firearm is not enough. Effective training is critical to a proper response to a deadly threat.

## ON-BODY OR OFF-BODY

In most situations, on-body carry is preferred. Having a firearm on your person allows you to better control the gun. Simply put: It is your responsibility to assure that your gun is not taken away from you. However, in some cases, transporting or carrying a weapon on your body is not practical or preferred. Long guns, for example, are typically carried in a padded case because of their size. In some situations, handguns are also carried off-body. BLACKHAWK® Diversion® line of carry packs allows a weapon to be carried off-body while keeping it protected and out of sight.



## HOLSTER BASICS

Your firearm must be under your control at all times. A handgun should be on or about your person. It should never be left unattended. A holster allows you to keep your handgun secure on your person. It also keeps your gun clean and protected. Just like choosing a gun, finding a holster is a personal choice that should be based on your particular needs.

### HOLSTER MATERIAL

**LEATHER:** Leather is a traditional gun holster material. Leather holsters are durable, hold their shape and are comfortable. However, they can be damaged by continued exposure to moisture and can become worn.

**RIGID SYNTHETIC:** Plastics and polymers are becoming increasingly popular options for both duty and concealment holsters. These plastics are strong, durable, lightweight and waterproof. They can be molded to a very exacting shape to offer excellent retention, and many include a retention device. However, the material is hard and might not feel as comfortable against your body.

**NYLON:** Nylon holsters are typically not a molded design. They offer a more universal fit, usually tailored to an overall handgun size or barrel length. They are lightweight, flexible and inexpensive. They are easily cleaned, but they might become worn more quickly than other holsters if they are used for everyday carry.

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Strong Side:** The same side of your body as your primary shooting hand
- **Support/Weak Side:** The opposite side as your dominant hand
- **Crossdraw:** When drawing, you will use your dominant hand to draw from your weak side
- **Cant/Rake:** The angle at which the gun sits in the holster
- **Ride:** Where the holster sits on the belt (usually in relation to the grip)
- **SOB:** A holster or carry designed for the center (or just off-center) of the small of your back
- **Carry Position:** Usually defined by clock positions where 12 o'clock is your belly button
- **Appendix Carry/AIWB:** A carrying position in the front of your body, just off-center from your belly button at about 1 or 2 o'clock
- **Thumb Break:** A strap that will retain the gun with a snap or a button to release
- **Retention Screw:** A screw that adjusts how tightly a holster pinches your gun
- **Open Top:** A holster with no retention strap
- **Pancake Holster:** A holster made of two pieces of material with the gun sandwiched between them

### Hip Holster

Hip holsters are attached to the belt and can be worn on the strong or weak side with various rides. They generally provide the quickest draw.



### Inside-the-Pant

An IWB holster sits inside the waistband of your pants against your body. The holster has a clip, or loop, that attaches to your belt to keep the holster from slipping. They are ideal for concealed carry because they ride closer to the body than traditional hip holsters.

### Inside-the-Pocket

An inside-the-pocket holster offers protection and concealment for smaller handguns. It provides comfort from sharp edges and protects the gun from debris in the pocket.



### Ankle Holster

Generally worn on the offside ankle. Ankle holsters secure your gun and keep it under wraps.



### Shoulder Holster

Designed for crossdraw, shoulder holsters require an open front garment for drawing from concealment, or can be worn for open carry. They offer a way to distribute the load of heavier handguns and can be designed to either hold the gun horizontally or vertically.



### Paddle Holster

Paddle holsters are hip holsters that are held in place with a paddle attached to the holster that slides inside the pants and is held in place by belt tension. Their main advantage is their quick-on/quick-off ability.



## THE FOUR BASIC FIREARM SAFETY RULES

1. Treat every gun as if it is loaded.
2. Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire.
4. Be sure of your target and beyond.

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