

5 main types of locking devices and where to purchase them

Safe storage devices: which one is right for you?

There are dozens of devices to lock your handgun and other firearms. Many experts recommend using lock boxes, safes or gun vaults with a push button, combination, or digital keypad lock.

No matter what security device you choose, make sure that it meets the California Department of Justice safety standards. Check the [Approved Firearms Safety Devices](#) website for a list of approved firearm safety devices.

Five main locking devices

Lock boxes

Gun vault or safe

Cable lock

Trigger lock

Personalized lock

Where to purchase safe storage devices

Firearm locking and storage devices can be purchased wherever guns or firearm accessories are sold including gun stores, sporting goods stores, firing ranges, and locksmiths. Many discount stores also carry safe storage devices.

A simple online search using "firearm safe storage" or "firearm lock" as keywords can help you locate additional purchasing information and find a large selection of online retailers.

Visit the California Department of Justice's online roster of [Approved Firearms Safety Devices](#) for a list of certified firearm safety devices. We encourage you to do your own research on individual safes and locking devices concerning the levels of security they provide before making a purchase.

Lock boxes

What it is: A small safe designed to store a handgun.

How it works: Your handgun is locked inside the box. A push-button, combination, digital keypad, or key opens the lock.



Features: Most models have holes in the bottom to allow permanent mounting. Some have lighted locks for access in the dark. Most have padded interiors.

Price: \$40 to \$200+

Advantages:

- Quick access if the lock is push-button or digital.
- Difficult to steal if permanently mounted.
- May allow storage for more than one handgun.
- Keeps gun out of sight.

Disadvantages:

- Costs more than trigger locks or chamber locks.

Cable lock

What it is: A device that blocks the chamber to prevent a cartridge from being fired.

How it works: Chamber locks are inserted in or through the magazine well or chamber, or are inserted through the gun barrel and chamber to block a cartridge from moving into position. A combination lock or key opens the lock.

Features: Metal cylinders, vinyl covered wire cables, or other designs. Locks may be “universal” or may only fit certain revolver or pistol models. Some models have anti-tamper alarms.

Price: Free to \$20+

Advantages:

- Long cables may be threaded through several guns.
- Inexpensive.

Disadvantages:

- Thin cables could be cut.



Trigger lock



What it is: A two-piece lock that fits over the trigger guard.

How it works: A rigid cylinder fits behind the trigger so the trigger cannot be pulled. A push-button keypad, combination, or key opens the lock.

Features: Some models have battery-operated locks, lighted keypads, and anti-tamper alarms.

Price: \$5 to \$35+

Advantages:

- Inexpensive.
- Widely available.
- Quick access (keypad models).

Disadvantages:

- Some models will not prevent access by older children or teens.
- May not prevent theft, as some locks may be removed later.
- May break easily.

Personalized lock

What it is: A safety device permanently installed on a gun by the maker or owner.



How it works: These types of locks vary. Some have a built-in key or combination lock. Others are guns specially designed with a magnetic or electronic lock that only the owner can fire while wearing a special ring or bracelet. Some personalized firearms use fingerprint recognition technology.

Features: Locks are a part of the gun by design or as an after-market add-on. They may contain magnetic or electronic components. These locks are somewhat new and usually costly. For more information, talk with a federally licensed firearms dealer or a gun manufacturer.

Gun Vault

What it is: A safe in a variety of sizes designed to store long guns, handguns, or other valuables.

How it works: Your firearms are locked inside the vault. A push-button, combination or digital key pad opens the lock.



Features: Varies by type and model.

Price: \$100 to \$3,600

Advantages:

- Allows storage of numerous long guns and handguns.
- Difficult to steal.
- Allows storage of other personal items.
- Usually fire resistant.
- Keeps valuables out of sight.

Disadvantages:

- Costs more than chamber locks or lock boxes.
- Heavy and difficult to move.
-

Where to purchase safe storage devices

- **Firearm locking and storage devices can be purchased wherever guns or firearm accessories are sold including gun stores, sporting goods stores, firing ranges, and locksmiths. Many discount stores also carry safe storage devices.**
- A simple online search using "firearm safe storage" or "firearm lock" as keywords can help you locate additional purchasing information and find a large selection of online retailers.
- Visit the California Department of Justice's online roster of [Approved Firearms Safety Devices](#) for a list of certified firearm safety devices. We encourage you to do your own research on individual safes and locking devices concerning the levels of security they provide before making a purchase.

