

Holster Harmony!

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Matching Your Firearm to the Perfect Carry Solution.

Okay everyone (*who is reading this*), sit up and holster your... anxieties! Today we're diving deep (not *too* deep, we're talking waistlines, not cavities) into the wild and wonderful world of handgun holsters. Choosing the right holster is like choosing the right dance partner - you want someone reliable, comfortable, and who won't make you trip and fall in front of everyone. But with more options than flavors at a gourmet ice cream shop, it can be a tad overwhelming, and I know because I have a box of "*the best holsters ever*" sitting unused right next to my box of the "*best rifle slings ever*"!



Fear not, intrepid firearm aficionados! We're here to break down the five most common holster types, dish out the pros and cons, give you our insight and maybe share a chuckle or two along the way. Think of this as your holster cheat sheet.

Holster Heroes: A Guide to the 5 Common Types

Well, you've got your trusty sidearm (*responsibly and safely of course*), now you need a comfy and secure home for it when it's not busy making holes in paper targets or... uh... defending your garden gnomes from rogue squirrels? Whatever your reason, a holster is essential and here are the usual suspects:

1. Inside the Waistband (IWB) Holsters: The Undercover Agent

- **What it is:** IWB holsters live *inside* your waistband, nestled between your pants and your body. Think of it as your gun getting a VIP pass to your personal space (with consent, of course, from your waistline).
- **Pros:**
 - **Concealment King:** IWB holsters are the undercover agent of the holster world. They excel at keeping your firearm hidden from prying eyes, making you look less "tactical" and more "average person going about their day... who *might* be packing heat, you'll never know!".

- Relatively Comfortable (Sometimes): Okay, "comfortable" might be a *strong* word depending on your body type and holster material. But generally, they can be more comfortable than some other options, especially for smaller firearms.
- Versatile Placement: You can usually adjust the position (appendix, strong side, etc.) to find your personal sweet spot (or less sore spot).
- **Cons:**
 - The 'Poke' Factor: Depending on the gun size and your... *ahem*... build, IWB holsters can sometimes feel like you're constantly being poked by a plastic pineapple. Sitting down can become an Olympic sport of strategic torso angling.
 - Re-holstering Can Be Tricky (Initially): Especially under pressure (like, say, if you *actually* need to draw it - which hopefully you won't for those garden gnomes), re-holstering smoothly takes practice. Don't be surprised if you feel like you're playing Twister with your belt loops at first.
 - Clothing Considerations: You might need to size up your pants slightly or wear a slightly looser shirt to comfortably conceal and avoid looking like you're smuggling a brick.
 - Sweat: Yes, sweat and moisture can get inside some of these holsters and start to cause the dreaded "rust" so be cautious of this potential based on the material of the holster, the environment and your...um, *body conditions*.

2. Outside the Waistband (OWB) Holsters: The Cowboy

- **What it is:** OWB holsters are worn *outside* your waistband, attached to your belt. They're like the opposite of IWB - they're saying, "Hey world, I *might* be carrying a firearm, but I'm also super comfortable and have easy access!" (subtext optional).
- **Pros:**
 - Comfort Champion: OWB holsters generally win the comfort battle. Your gun is outside your pants, no poking, no prodding, just sweet, sweet firearm freedom (on your hip, that is).
 - Fast Draw: Accessibility is their superpower. Drawing your firearm from an OWB holster is usually quicker and smoother than from IWB, especially for beginners. Think of it as "draw speedrun" mode unlocked.

- Re-holstering? Piece of Cake: Re-holstering is usually a breeze. No awkward angles or belt loop gymnastics needed. Just slide it back in, easy peasy lemon squeezy.
- **Cons:**
 - Concealment? Not So Much: OWB holsters are less about concealment and more about... well, carrying a gun visibly (or at least potentially visibly). You'll need a longer jacket or an open-carry state mindset to truly make this work for concealed carry. "Accidental flashing" becomes a very real concern if you're not careful.
 - Bulkier Profile: OWB holsters generally stick out further from your body than IWB, making them less streamlined and potentially more prone to bumping into things (doorways, unsuspecting toddlers, etc.).

3. Shoulder Holsters: The Dirty Harry

- **What it is:** Shoulder holsters sling across your torso, with the firearm typically positioned under your opposite arm. Think of it as your gun getting a first-class ticket on the "Comfort Cruiser" line, nestled against your ribcage.
- **Pros:**
 - Weight Distribution Wizard: Shoulder holsters are great at distributing the weight of heavier firearms across your shoulders and torso, making them surprisingly comfortable for larger pistols (like that D.H. 44 Magnum), especially if you're going to be seated for long periods (like driving).
 - Seated Comfort is King: Drawing from a shoulder holster while seated is generally easier than from waist-worn holsters. Driving, piloting a helicopter, or holding court as a benevolent dictator (*if any of these should happen to apply to you*)? Shoulder holster might be your jam.
 - The "Cool" Factor (Debatable): Let's be honest, shoulder holsters have a certain... *je ne sais quoi*. They exude a certain "I watch action movies and take myself very seriously" vibe. Whether that's a "pro" or "con" is entirely up to your personal style and tolerance for looking like you're about to burst into slow-motion gunfire.
- **Cons:**

- Concealment? Major Challenge: Concealing a shoulder holster requires a bulky jacket or coat, and even then, printing (the outline of the gun showing through clothing) can be a real issue. Unless you live in Alaska year-round, concealment might be... optimistic.
- Slow(er) Draw (Typically): Drawing from a shoulder holster is generally slower than from waist holsters and requires more deliberate movements. Think of it less as a "quick draw" and more of a "carefully considered extraction."
- Sweeping Hazard (Potential): Drawing from a shoulder holster can, depending on the design and your technique, involve sweeping your muzzle across your body or even bystanders behind you if you're not extremely careful. Practice, practice, practice (with an *unloaded* firearm, naturally)!

4. Ankle Holsters: The Backup

- **What it is:** Ankle holsters strap around your ankle, typically on the inside of your non-dominant leg, and hold a small firearm near your... well, ankle. Think of it as your gun getting relegated to the "emergency backup" seating on the leg express.
- **Pros:**
 - Deepest Concealment Possible (Almost): Ankle holsters offer unparalleled deep concealment. Unless someone is actively examining your ankles (awkward!), your firearm is practically invisible. Think "James Bond on a tuxedo mission" level of discreet.
 - Backup Weapon Bonanza: Ankle holsters are primarily designed for carrying a backup firearm. If your primary weapon goes down (unlikely but hey, preparedness!), you have a secret weapon (literally) stashed away.
 - Good for Certain Situations: If you're wearing specific clothing that makes other holster types impractical (e.g., formal wear, very tight clothing), an ankle holster *might* be an option (though clothing restrictions often hinder ankle holsters too).
- **Cons:**
 - Slowest Draw in the West (Probably): Drawing from an ankle holster is... deliberate. Like, "bend down, hike up pants leg, carefully extract firearm" deliberate. In a fast-paced self-defense situation, you're relying heavily on that *backup* part of "backup gun." Think "drawing while under molasses."

- **Accessibility Challenges:** Accessing an ankle holster requires bending down and reaching... down there. Not exactly graceful or speedy. And forget about drawing while running or standing in a crowd without looking like you're about to propose to your shin.
- **Comfort Can Be... Ankle-oying:** Depending on the holster, firearm, and your footwear, ankle holsters can be uncomfortable, prone to shifting, and may even rub or chafe. "Ankle chafing: The concealed carry edition" is a real possibility.

5. Pocket Holsters: The "Just In Case" King (For Tiny Guns)

- **What it is:** Pocket holsters are designed to be carried loose in your pocket, typically in a front pants pocket or jacket pocket. Think of it as your gun getting a "no-frills, economy class" ticket to your pocket lining.
- **Pros:**
 - **Utter Convenience:** Pocket holsters are the epitome of grab-and-go convenience. Just slip your firearm into the holster, drop it in your pocket, and you're good to go. No belts, no straps, no fuss. "Holster? What holster?" is practically their motto.
 - **Great for Tiny Guns:** Pocket holsters excel with small, lightweight pistols and revolvers specifically designed for pocket carry. Think "*mouse guns*," not "*hand cannons*."
 - **Discreet (Sometimes):** With the *right* firearm and *right* pocket holster, pocket carry can be reasonably discreet, especially in looser clothing.
- **Cons:**
 - **Trigger Safety Concerns (Major):** Carrying a firearm loose in your pocket without a holster is a *major* safety no-no. A *good* pocket holster is essential to protect the trigger from accidental discharge. Don't skimp on quality here – your leg skin will thank you.
 - **Limited Gun Size:** Pocket holsters are limited to very small firearms. Trying to pocket carry a full-size S&W? You'll look like you're smuggling a brick and likely rip your pants.
 - **Pocket Printing and Shifting:** Even with a holster, a firearm in your pocket can print, shift around, and generally be less secure than other holster types. And lint. Oh, the lint.

Some Honorable Mentions:

Obviously, that does not cover every type of holster out there, but we do want to give a shout out to a couple of other types:

- *Belly Band Holsters* – These are essentially wide elastic bands that wrap around your waist. They offer a unique blend of comfort and versatility, and you can carry your handgun, magazines, keys, wallet...
- *Drop Leg Holsters* – This type of holster is designed to be worn on the thigh and is attached to the leg with straps and allows for quicker access when wearing bulky body armor or other tactical gear.
- *Tactical Holsters* – These are designed to be robust and secure while providing quick access and come in many, many different configurations to address the many, many different needs.

Conclusion: Holster Up!

There you have it, folks! Your crash course in holster-ology is complete. There are many many holster makers out there – each with their own strengths and some better than others so do your research!

Choosing the right holster is a matter of personal preference, like finding the perfect pair of jeans – it takes experimentation, consideration of your lifestyle, and maybe a few awkward moments in fitting rooms (or, you know, gun ranges).

Ultimately, the "best" holster is the one that you'll actually wear consistently, that allows you to safely and comfortably carry your firearm, and that suits your individual needs and preferences – not the one that ends up in your box of "*the best holsters ever!*" Don't be afraid to try out a few different types, ask experienced carriers for advice, and remember – practice, practice, practice with an *unloaded* firearm to get comfortable with your chosen holster.

And hey, if all else fails, just remember that even a *slightly* awkward holster situation is better than no holster at all. Now go forth, be holstered, and may your draws be smooth and your re-holstering even smoother. Remember the right holster is like an old reliable friend that is always with you. Happy holstering!