

## FIELD TESTS

### *Building a Better Yardstick*

As shooters become more sophisticated, gunfit becomes more important. When I had only one gun, I didn't know what gunfit was and I adapted to the gun. I was a new shooter and lucky to hit a barn from the inside, so I wasn't too demanding. Over the years I accumulated a number of shotguns and began adapting them to fit me. That meant measuring

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The Shotgun Combo Gauge can be used to measure everything from length of pull and drop to pitch.

stocks. I used a crude combination of yardsticks, rulers and squares. The gorgeous mahogany-and-brass measuring sticks were bulky and costly, whereas the cheap gauges were no better than my yardstick. There had to be a better way—and now there is.

The new Shotgun Combo Gauge hits that sweet spot of functionality, quality and price (suggested retail is \$118.95). It looks and functions like a large aluminum caliper about 28 inches long. A gunstock's length of pull and drop are easily measured in inches or centimeters. The stock drop is measured anywhere along the comb by a sliding metal ruler attached between the jaws.

A plastic protractor also is included, to measure pitch in degrees, but frankly it's easier to stand the butt flat on the floor with the top of the receiver against the wall and measure the distance from the muzzle to the wall as inches of pitch. Or you can do it the British way and use the gauge to accurately measure from the trigger to the heel, from the trigger to the mid-butt, and from the trigger to the toe. The gauge does not measure cast as such, but it may be helpful in estimating it.

For side-by-side guns with swamped ribs requiring gauge alignment from muzzle to breech, the Shotgun Combo Gauge is available with an easily attached optional extension to lengthen

the gauge to 48 inches. A small supermagnet on the extension holds the gauge on the rib hands-free. If you just measure over/unders and flat-rib repeaters, the extension isn't strictly necessary. For side-by-sides or increased ease of use, you'll want it.

Functional, accurate, compact, well-made and priced right, the Shotgun Combo Gauge is a neat piece of gear that is handy for the amateur and essential for the pro.

For more information, contact the Robert Louis Co., 31 Shepard Hill Rd., Newtown, CT 06470; 800-979-9156; sales@shotguncombogauge.com; www.shotguncombogauge.com.

—Bruce Buck