



## Appendix Carry

*By Will Farrugia - Director of Training. Florida Firearms Training*

The question is asked on a regular basis, why FFT does not allow appendix carry in our classes. I wrote this a few years back and try to post it once a year to remind everyone.

The following is just MY humble opinion, based on carrying pistols professionally and teaching firearms and tactics (specific to close-quarter combatives) with a pistol for over 30 years. I am sure some are going to disagree and have reasons why they or you should carry appendix and why I am wrong. That is okay. At no point am I demanding the world agree with me on this. I just ask that you consider **all the facts**, then it is up to you.

Appendix carry is certainly not new, but it is very much in vogue nowadays, in part thanks to the many on Social Media promoting it. First, I will admit that **I HAVE** carried appendix. In fact, I carried "appendix" before it was called "appendix carry" in various locations around the world, for various situational and work-related reasons over the years. Note: at that time. it would have been a double-action revolver with a long trigger pull or a single-action semi-automatic with a manual safety. Since then holster systems and carry gun sizes have evolved in a way that negate it's necessity for concealment. And knowing what I know now based on extensive research and range time, **I would never do it again with any handgun**. Below is MY logic on this issue.

### **First let us look at the facts:**

- A firearm, by its very nature, is a dangerous tool. People, by nature, are imperfect and capable of mishandling those tools, even when our intentions are good and training is extensive.
- A large percentage of unintentional self-inflicted gunshot wounds happen when drawing or holstering a pistol. This can, of course, happen with any form of carry rig, but the risk is greater when the muzzle is oriented so close to the femoral artery.
- Most CWFL holders will not put the time, efforts and 10,000's of repetitions needed to become fully subconsciously-competent with their firearm manipulation.
- The average CWFL holder is not stress-inoculated to overcome the body's natural reactions, unlike combat-proven professional gunfighters, like Delta, SEALs, SAS, etc (Please see Lt. Col. David Grossmans Books "On Killing" and "On Combat" for more info in that regard.)
- We are HUMAN and as such we make mistakes, ESPECIALLY when under stress.
- Statistically, most gunshot wounds are not **attended to by medical professionals** for **AT LEAST 8 - 10 minutes**.
- If the femoral artery is severed it will take anywhere from **2-5 minutes to bleed out**. Bleeding would be heavy the first minute or so, after which one would pass out and the flow would go down, because of the drop in blood pressure. But after 4-5 minutes, one would have lost so much blood as to have irreversible shock (due to exsanguination) and eventually die.
- Even with self-aid or buddy-aid it is almost impossible to stop bleeding in the arterial groin area (with or without a tourniquet).

- Most police academies, FLETC, Federal Agencies and MANY shooting schools etc. (including ours) now forbid carrying appendix for safety concerns.
- Most handgun sports (IDPA, PPC for example) now forbid carry forward of the hip for the same safety concerns. Yep, even high-speed professional shooters can make mistakes under stress.
- If it were, in fact, the best “gunfighter” way, then why does NO military / tier one or Special Forces unit endorse or use it?
- We at FFT have some open-enrollment classes with multiple different-skill-level shooters with upwards of 200 draw strokes and **re-holsters in each day** (as such, the possibility of a mistake is too great for us to allow appendix carry).

### Now Opinion:

Pro-appendix carriers will site “correct technique and correct equipment” as solutions to negate the possibility of a Negligent Discharge (ND). Now I agree that training and repetition will solve MOST problems, but it does not take into account the “Human Factor.” We are human and most likely to make mistakes when we are tired, scared, under duress, in a fight / confrontation / flight environment OR in multi-tasking high stress environments (such as in training where we are pushing the skills envelope); and one’s fine motor skills degrade. (Again, please see Lt. Col. Grossman’s Books “On Killing” and “On Combat” for more info in that regard.)

Some will say “Well if the main reason you don’t like it, is because you might shoot yourself, then train more, train harder and DON’T shoot yourself.” Now believe it or not, I DO, in fact, like that answer / logic and to some extent agree with it. However, that statement makes me revisit the FACTS that I previously listed! **Facts** opposed to opinions. Opinions are great until reality kicks it in the arse!

Ask yourself if you have ever dropped your house or car keys? Tripped while walking or bumped into an inanimate object? Did that happen because you do not have enough “repetitions” walking or not had enough training in holding / carrying your keys? Of course not, but maybe, just maybe is it because **we are human and we make mistakes**, especially when we under extreme stress, multi-tasking or preoccupied with other things going on around us!

Lt. Col. David Grossman put it this way, “Unintentional Discharges are fairly common under stress, shoot leg, foot, or if lucky ground etc. With appendix carry, the Unintentional Discharge is far more likely to impact the femoral and cause death. When you add the impact of effects from the Sympathetic Nervous System to appendix carry, I believe it is an unacceptable risk. I, therefore, do not recommend appendix carry or allow it on-range when I am teaching.”

It does not matter what Navy SEAL, Special Forces, Secret Squirrel, DELTA, CIA or special super Ninja you are / were or were trained by...we all and I mean **ALL**, make mistakes! A simple mistake while appendix-carrying could be the last one you EVER make! We don’t want that for you. **So, it is not something I or FFT as a training company want to promote, recommend or have on our range.**

### In summary:

After reviewing and understanding the perceived benefits of appendix carry, then looking at the facts associated with it; I firmly believe the risks associated with this form of carry greatly outweigh the benefits.

Stay safe. See you on the range soon!  
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