

The USCCA's Gun Buyer's Checklist

When you are considering the purchase of a firearm, whether it will be your first gun, a backup piece, or just another addition to your collection, there are several things you need to keep in mind. Use this checklist to make sure you don't end up with a bad case of buyer's remorse.

- ✓ **Follow local laws:** Firearms are the most heavily regulated products in the United States. Some state and local laws create a maze of regulation that you must follow to ensure you remain legal at all times. It is your responsibility.
- ✓ **Find something that fits your hand:** A gun is like a good shoe: It should feel good right from the start. If the gun you choose is uncomfortable to hold and fire, you will not train as much as you should. When the time comes, you will revert to the lowest level of your training.
- ✓ **Find something you will carry every day:** Think about things like weight and daily carry comfort. A gun that is too heavy will be left at home after the first few days of carry. Buy a gun you will be willing to carry all day, every day.
- ✓ **Choose a caliber of consequence:** Bad guys don't ask the caliber of the round you are shooting at them, but you should still carry the largest caliber you can shoot accurately. Still, you will always shoot a smaller caliber more accurately than a larger caliber.
- ✓ **Seek knowledgeable advice:** Look for a trusted source of information from a knowledgeable source. Often times the sales representative at the gun counter of your local store is not your best choice. Research far and wide before you buy. The USCCA offers several handy guides to help you get started.
- ✓ **Choose what works for you:** Never be pressured into buying a gun because someone tells you it is something you must have. This is a very personal choice; don't relinquish it to someone else.
- ✓ **Try before you buy:** Seek out the opportunity to fire several types of handguns before you buy one. Many ranges offer rental guns. If there is not such a range nearby, see if you can find a knowledgeable friend who will allow you to try out his or her pistol. There are several regional and national groups offering "first shots" programs. These are great ways for new shooters to be introduced to firearms.
- ✓ **Get good training:** Ask questions. This is very serious business and you should not enter into it based on assumptions and "things you've heard." There is a lot of bad advice out there. Find reputable trainers and check their references. Training often with a wide variety of trainers gives you different perspectives and insights. The more you know, the better off you will be.

