

SHOTGUNS FOR HOME DEFENSE

by Paul W Abel

Shoot-N-Iron Practical Shooting & Training Academy

A few nights ago I read an article regarding a person's criminal and civil liabilities should you use a custom, eighteen-inch barreled scattergun, equipped with a magazine extension, sling and having a black composite stock, in defense of your home or business. Yeah, this fellow, a well known writer and so-called "gun regulation expert", was talking about a shotgun that the news media says is an "assault weapon".

I'll agree with the writer in as far as the gun I just described can most certainly be called an assault weapon. But so can any other shotgun. For that matter, anything that is used to assault someone is an assault weapon. This includes bricks, bottles, chairs, automobiles, knives, and even pens and pencils.

I realize that in some states, especially on the eastern and western coasts, some kooky lawyer out to make a buck, might holler "foul". He or she might even file a lawsuit if the shotgun that you used to save yourself and family happen to fall into the category designed by the media and anti-gun weirdo's as an "assault weapon", although I don't believe it is apt to happen here in Oklahoma.

I do not see a real reason for a person having to purchase an expensive, police type shotgun for self defense. I also feel that if you are more comfortable with this configuration of firearm, by all means buy one. In reality the bad guy won't know if he gets shot with a new Remington 870 riot gun or the faithful old side by side double barreled bird gun that has provided so many hours of pleasure in the hunting fields. This bad bird will certainly get the message from either.

There is no better home or business defensive firearm. Handguns are more easily carried and can be produced a little quicker. Pistols however are not as easy to hit with. Handguns require a mite more practice for someone to become proficient. My old friend, the late Bill Jordan of the U.S. Border Patrol and N.R.A., once called the shotgun "the world's greatest equalizer". How true.

There is a very wide range of ammunition for the shotgun. Most folks recommend #00 buckshot for home defense. I agree that buckshot will certainly do the job. Buckshot however has a couple of drawbacks. If the person using the shotgun happens to be a petite lady she stands to have the hell kicked out of her. A lot of ladies are afraid of this round. Buckshot and slugs both have great penetration power and will go through several sheetrock walls. One might wish to use a lighter powered load such as #6 to #8 birdshot. The lighter shells do not kick nearly as hard and the penetration dissipates more rapidly. Even #8's will do the job across any room in the house. The anti-gunners also can not yell that you were just waiting, with an assault shotgun loaded for bear with magnum #00 buckshot, to ambush and kill someone. Of course the anti-gun idiots won't consider the fact that the bad guy was a threat to the lives of you and your family in your own home. If asked, the light loads were just the stuff that you hunted with or shot at the trap range. Not "KILLER AMMUNITION". At the short ranges that you may have to defend yourself, the size of shot really won't matter.

The writer that I referred to earlier said something about "you should run out of your house if threatened and just let the intruder have what he came for". "Bull Cookies". What are you going to do if the intrusion is at 3:00 AM and children or folks that can't run are present? As for me I'm too damned old and slow to run. My wife is in the same boat. We are going to fight back.

Oklahoma law recognizes two types of defensive force. NON-DEADLY force and DEADLY force. Oklahoma law makes no stipulation as to the type or how much force a person can use to defend their home if it is occupied at the time. The law does however require any act of violence used in defense to be qualified by the question, WAS IT REASONABLE and WAS IT NECESSARY? I doubt if one would want to shoot some eight year old kid that is in your house busting your piggy bank.

Thank God that in Oklahoma we do not have to adhere to some of the stupidity written into laws that are so prevalent in some of our sister states. Our Legislature keeps a very close watch on most of our rights and has taken action to preserve our rights. I don't always agree with the lawmakers on some of the things that are or are not passed. They did pass a bill a few years ago that protects us from liability suits when we have to defend ourselves. This law is entitled "The Make My Day Law". It simply says that if a court finds you not guilty of a killing for reasons of self-defense or justifiable homicide, then you can not be sued in state court civilly. This is a good law.

If you should ever find yourself in a situation that requires drastic and even lethal response to thwart an intruder in your home or business, a handgun is something I would not want to be without. I make it a practice to never be very far from my pistol. I do adhere to some advise I was once given. I would never take on a bad, armed person with a handgun if I could lay my hands on a good shotgun.

You ask, "why not a rifle?" Good question. We'll talk about that another time.