



# NOVEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

## DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2023 we will be running a Drill of the Month in each edition of the newsletter. The goal is help motivate folks to get to the range and actually shoot their defensive weapons, and to have some fun in the process. Each month we'll post a drill or a short course of fire. You are encouraged to go to the range, shoot the drill, and then post your thoughts and a photo of your target on the Rangemaster Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rangemaster/> .

## 2/2/1 Drill

For this drill you will need an RFTS-Q silhouette, an IALEFI-Q silhouette, or an IDPA cardboard target.

10 points for any hit inside the 8 inch circle in the chest, or inside the head ring. 5 points for any hit inside the silhouette but outside the circles.

Drill- Begin with the weapon holstered and concealed, loaded with two rounds, only. On signal, draw, fire 2 rounds to the chest, conduct an empty gun reload, fire 2 more rounds to the chest, then one to the head circle. 5 rounds total. Record the time for the string.

Fire the drill at 5 yards and record the time.

Fire the drill at 10 yards and record the time.

10 rounds total. 100 points possible. Add the times up.

Total points divided by total time = score.

Par score = 6 Goal is a score of 6 or higher.

This drill covers a concealed presentation from the holster, fast accurate shooting, an empty gun reload, and a transition to a smaller target. It also requires a timing shift when changing from 5 yards to 10 yards. This integrates a number of important skills in one fairly quick, low round count exercise.

In a recent Advanced Instructor Course, two accomplished shooters, Lon Etchison and Sean Martin, both were consistently shooting the 5 yard stage of this drill in 3.5 seconds.

The Apache Solutions crew made a demonstration video of this drill for you so you can see what it looks like. See [https://youtu.be/by6kGXGb\\_es](https://youtu.be/by6kGXGb_es)

## **Ammunition Choice Can Matter**

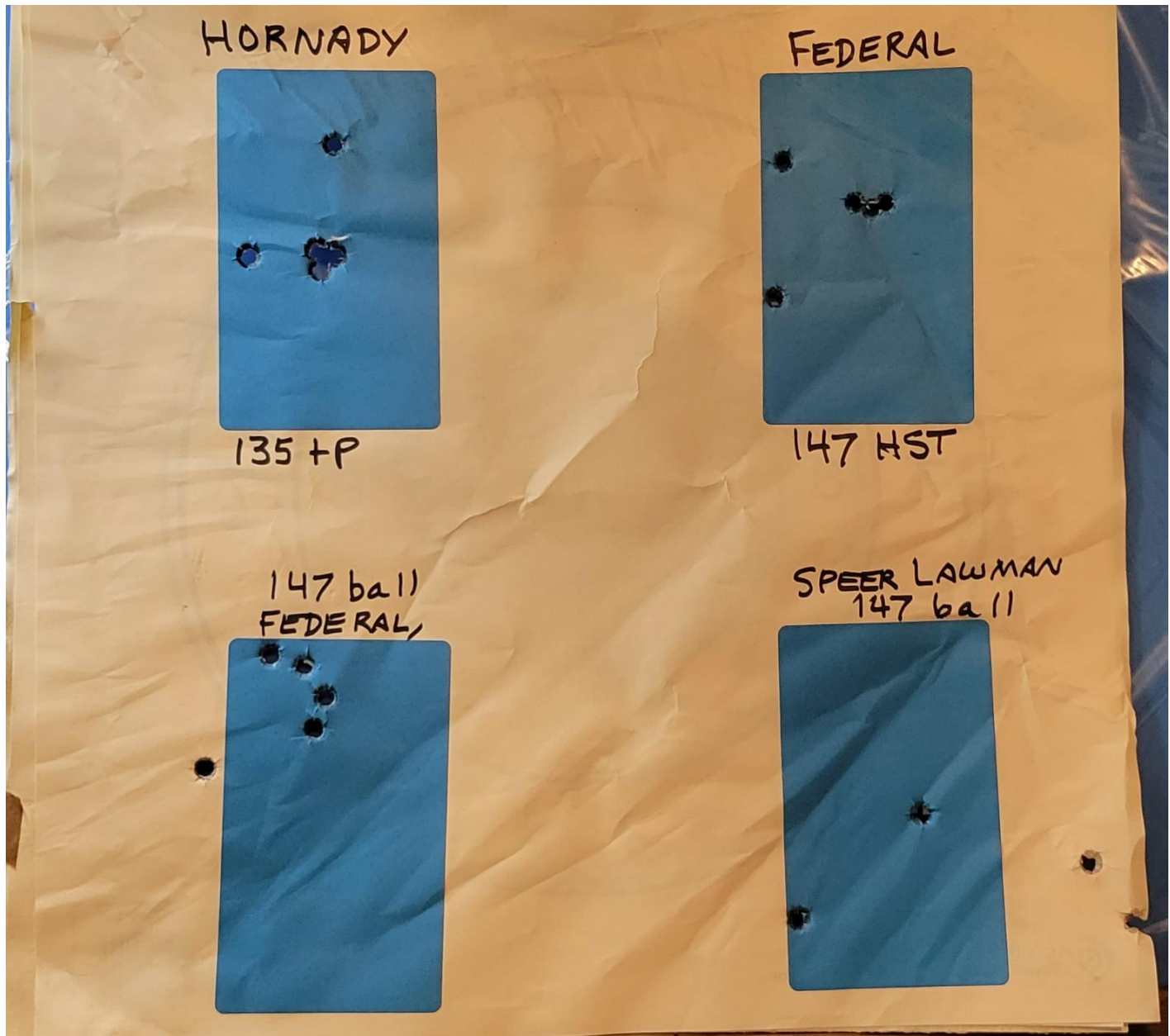
For close range general practice, just about any commercial ball ammo will probably do fine. However, if I'm going to shoot a scored bullseye course as part of a class, I want ammo that shoots tight groups and hits to the sights. Likewise, I want my carry ammo to be very accurate, and as importantly, have point of aim and point of impact coincide.

With that in mind, I periodically check new batches of ammo to see if it meets my accuracy and POA/POI requirements. Recently I set up such a test with four 3"X5" labels on a blank sheet of paper. I used my carry S&W M&P 2.0 aluminum 9mm, shot standing, no support, at 15 yards. See photo

The first load was Hornady 135 grain +P Critical Duty. This is the FBI's current issue load, and two of my students have used it in shootings with outstanding results. It shot very well, and right on the sights. I next tried Federal 147 grain HST, a load with a well established street record. It also grouped very well, right on the sights.

Practice ammo was next. First was Federal 147 grain flat nose ball. This was NOT the older truncated cone bullet, which has always been laser accurate in my guns. This was the newer version with rounded ogive and flat point. It shot very well. Last was 147 grain Speer Lawman. This was a disappointment. The group was large, and low right. These are electroplated bullets, and none of my guns shoot them as well as regular jacketed bullets.

The time to find this out is in practice, not when you need the gun for some serious purpose. Be sure to check your ammo out carefully.



## Competing in Class?

I use a small amount of competition in classes for several reasons. Competing for a coin or other award induces stress, gives the student a chance to perform under a bit of pressure, and have some fun. The fun part is important, as people learn better

and retain the information better when it is a positive emotional experience. That does not mean that class is all about competing with the other students. Steve Havey is a Rangemaster certified Master Instructor and frequently assists with various classes, Here are some of his thoughts on the subject.

### **Are you attending class with the right mindset?**

#### **Or “Class is not a Competition.”**

Having attended and assisted in numerous classes, from gateway through the Master Instructor IDC, there is a common theme that runs through all of them. Some students are overly focused on competing vs. learning. At times it is detrimental to the student’s development, disruptive to class and develops bad habits. Now before I discuss some examples of what I mean let me clarify that I am talking about classes focused on defensive gun use and yes, there are portions of many classes where there is a competition within the class for coin, or other award. That is great, gets a little competitive stress going, but I submit that competing against your fellow students should not be the focus in class.

Here are the issues I see in just about every class:

#### **Overly focused on how you stack up against others instead of your own improvement.**

Beginners worry about looking bad, experts want to see how the other experts did, etc. The real focus should be on the concepts and techniques being taught and your personal improvement by applying them.

#### **Bringing unrealistic gear to class.**

Concealed carry applies to everyone including off duty law enforcement. Yet we see battle rigs, open carry, mag holders that are impractical for EDC, and don’t get me

started on trigger modifications. In every class Tom always has a full-size pistol and two spare mags on him but you would never know it until he does a demo. What you bring to class should mirror what you carry.

### **Three bad habits:**

- Consistently unrealistic hand positions. Other than on the range, do you ever see anybody standing there with their hands folded in the “I’m gonna show you my one second draw from AIWB” position? Me neither. Use normal hand positions and alter them. Be able to consistently draw the weapon from various start positions.
- Low ready that is not low enough. Low ready should be aimed below the target’s feet or at a 45 degree down angle, which ever creates the most space between your muzzle and the target. Pointing your gun at any part of a potential threat before the decision to shoot is a bad habit, not to mention illegal.
- Touching the trigger while in low ready. This one really gets under my skin. Trust me, the trigger is right where you left it. Quit violating the 3<sup>rd</sup> rule of gun safety in some misplaced desire to get a jump on the drill. It is very bad practice.

### **Disrupting class**

Learning to use a firearm to defend yourself is serious business and being an instructor is a solemn responsibility. That does not mean you cannot have fun, compare your group size after a drill with your buddies or have a quip here or there, just keep it to a minimum. People talk about changing gears and situational

awareness, yet I see them annoy the instructor needlessly with their lack of focus simply because they are not paying attention to the warning signs and cannot change gears when it is time to shut up and get back to the task at hand. Walk the talk.

In conclusion, everyone in the class will benefit if they bring the right mindset to class. That includes using their EDC gear, focusing on their personal improvement, and treating both the instructor and their fellow students with the seriousness and respect that this subject deserves.

## New Swift Belt from Wilderness



When you want speed and simplicity getting dressed or geared up, but you don't want to give up micro-adjustability in size, you'll get hooked on our new Wilderness **Swift Belt** the first time you wear it. It features the classic hook-and-loop adjustment of our

other belts to get that perfect sizing, but it buckles with with a proprietary hook engineered by Tom Kelley of Dark Star Gear.

The buckle incorporates a small 5° relief to better follow the natural angle of the hips and make closure more...swift! Slipping the hook down into the 1.5" wide belt's securing loop is instant and secure. After you initially adjust the belt to fit, you may never have to use the Velcro closure again -- at least until Thanksgiving.

Our Swift buckle is laser-cut from premium 7075-T6 aluminum for toughness and light weight. This stronger alloy allows the buckle to be very thin and reduce its metal detector signature dramatically, making your life easier. The buckles are then tumbled to soften the edges, and finally anodized black.

This flat and narrow Swift buckle is super low-profile for concealed carry, but can also be used in "tunnel" style MOLLE/PALS warbelt sleeves and belt pads since access to the hook and loop fastener isn't required each time you put it on.

The Swift Belt body uses the same durable and comfortable custom webbing as our other time-tested belts. It is available with all of the expected Wilderness options, including choosing your belts stiffness with standard 3-stitch (more flexible), enhanced 5-stitch (more vertically rigid; the most popular option), or heavy-duty CSM (polymer-lined Combat Shooters Model). We offer both every-inch specific sizing or Easy-Fit sizing, hook or loop lining inside, and Black, Wolf Grey, Coyote, and Ranger colors.

I have been wearing a pre-production sample for a couple of months now and I love it.



# Effective Dry Practice

by Tom Givens

“Dry firing” or “dry practice” consists of practicing firearms manipulations without the presence of any live ammunition. There are a couple of excellent reasons for engaging in this practice. For one thing, the rising cost of ammunition and the time burden of traveling to and from a live fire range often limits the amount of practice we can get. More practice equals more skill. Dry work can be accomplished in your own home and with no expenditure of ammunition, so there is zero cost.

Second, dry work is actually a better way to ingrain many skills. Without live fire, the shooter does not have the noise of a weapon’s discharge, the noise of other shooters’ guns firing, flying brass, reciprocating slides and the myriad other distractions on a typical firing range. Quiet, mentally focused dry work is an excellent way to learn the feel of your trigger, for instance, or to perfect your presentation from the holster.

Since you will be handling a real gun in your home there are certain precautions you will need to observe. Here is a checklist for you. Make a ritual out of going down this checklist every time, and before long these will be habits.

1. Dry practice should only be conducted in one designated, established area, and nowhere else in your home. That area should have a “safe wall”, that is a wall that will actually stop bullets in the event of an unintended discharge. A brick exterior wall or a stone fireplace can work, or you can use a body-armor vest as a back-stop. Do not dry fire toward an interior drywall.

2. When you enter the dry fire area, clear the gun and remove ALL live ammunition from the area. This includes loaded magazines or speed-loaders, rounds in your pocket, or rounds in the desk drawer. Take all live ammunition to another room, then come back and clear your gun again.
3. You will need a target, which is simply an object to aim at while you dry practice. You can use an actual commercial target, a hand drawn reduced scale target, or something similar. Don't use an expensive or important item or the house pet! Remember to place the target on the safe wall or body armor backstop.
4. A session of mentally focused practice should probably not last more than ten to fifteen minutes. If you try to stretch the session out, you will tend to get bored and sloppy. Sloppy practice is worse than no practice. Remember our goal is to rack up a huge number of correct repetitions over time, to build reflexive skills. "Muscle memory", kinesthetic programming, conditioned reflexive responses, and habit all actually mean the same thing. All are born of consistent repetition.
5. If you get interrupted during the session by a phone call or other distraction, start all over again, back at step 1. Failure to do this is an invitation to disaster, unintentionally using a loaded gun for dry work.
6. There are two points in this process where there is actually a danger of an unintended discharge. Those two points are the very beginning and the very end of the session. Failure to clear the gun, move all ammo out of the room, and then clear the gun again can result in an unwanted discharge.

The most common error seems to be finishing the session, loading the gun, and then saying, "Just one more rep." When the session is over, say out loud to yourself, "This session is over. No more practice." Leave the dry fire area for a while. Later, go back, load the gun and say out loud to yourself, "This gun is now loaded." At that point, it can be safely put back in the holster, or wherever you keep it.

Make this check-list a ritual and follow it religiously and you will not have an unwanted discharge inside your home.

The keys to using your skills well under duress are Primacy, Recency, and Repetition. Dry practice fulfills the need for both Recency and Repetition, making your odds of success under pressure much better. Do the work.

## TACTICAL TIPS FOR SEARCHING A BUILDING

1. Move with your weapon at the ready! Do not dangle your sidearm. Be prepared every moment to actually find an adversary! Expect to find an enemy in every place you look for one. If there's nothing to it, don't bother to look.
2. Stay out of doorways! "Doorways are the picture frame of your death. Stay out of the picture!" Always check beyond a doorway carefully.

3. Stay away from corners! Corners are death traps. Stay as far back from a corner as possible and "cut the pie", playing the angles.



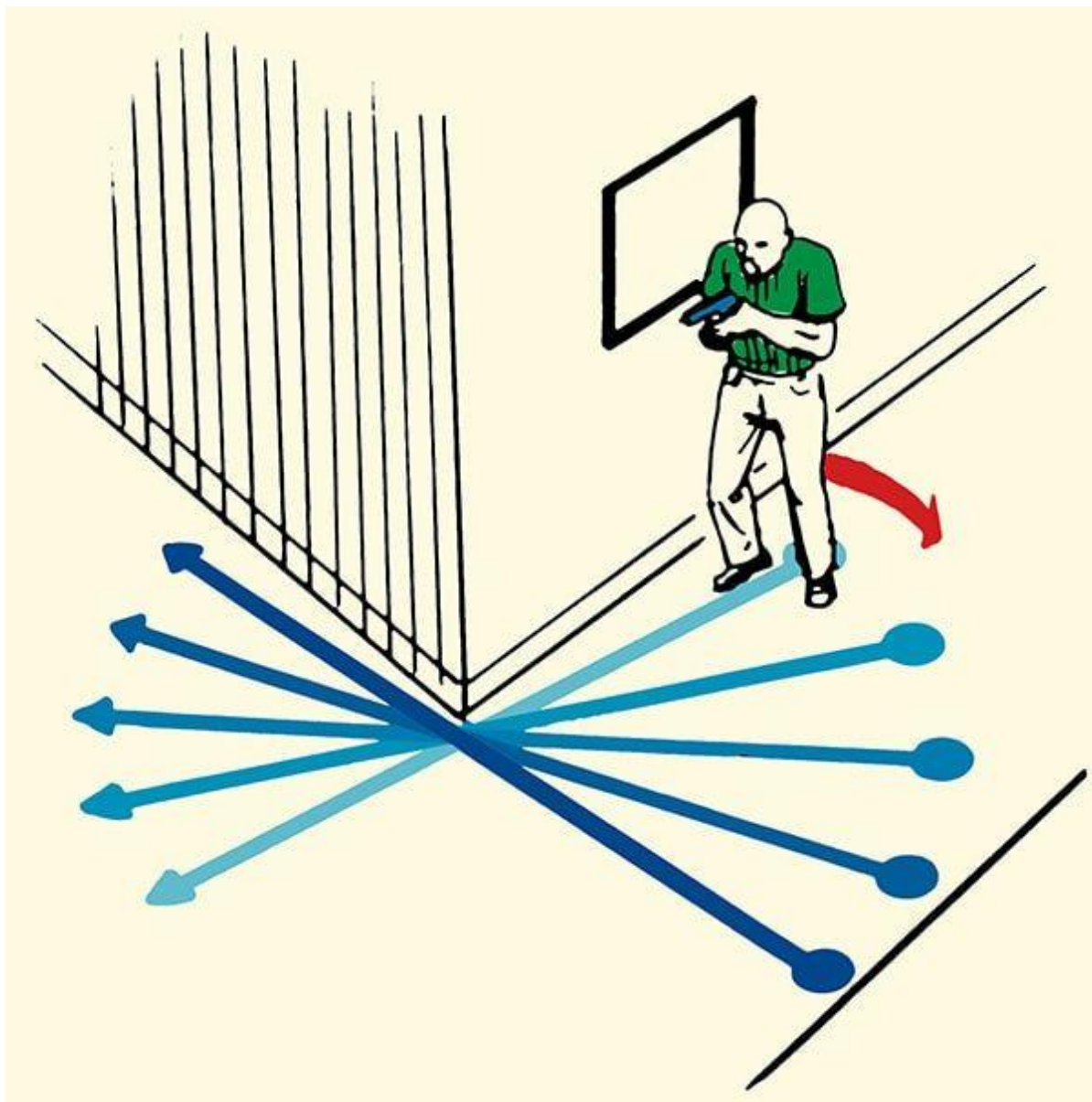
4. Search in rays, not bands! Vision band searching has a strong tendency to become fixed at one particular distance. If a potential attacker hides at any other distance and simply remains still, searching in bands will often cause you to miss seeing him. Shift your visual focus in and out, moving the rays
5. laterally at a gradual pace as you search. Remember to look up and down, not just side to side.
6. Control noise! Move carefully to avoid bumping into things. Do not let equipment jangle. Do not drag your feet. Do not drag your back against the wall.
7. Maintain your balance! Do not cross legs while moving. Maintain a balanced, poised fighting posture at all times. Don't walk the beam.
8. Maintain light discipline! If you use a flashlight, use it sparingly. While your flashlight is on, it is a lead magnet – drawing fire from any direction.
9. Use all of your senses! Particularly in low light environments, use your senses of hearing, smell, and touch. People have distinct odors, especially under stress. Be alert for odors, colognes, gasoline or grease, body odor, and even the smell of waste. Listen for heavy breathing or any noise that is alien to the environment.



10. In tight places, use a weapon retention position to avoid being disarmed! Keep your weapon in high and tight. Be conscious of the likelihood of a

close contact encounter. Do not lead with your weapon around corners, doorways, etc.

11. Take your time! The natural tendency is to rush. This is not a race. Search carefully and thoroughly. Never turn your back on any area you have not checked. Do not pass by doorways without checking them.



## **Improving Situational Awareness**

**It has been said that situational awareness is often situational dominance. I know, because I said that. Here is an excellent article on how to put this principle into action and improve your odds of seeing and responding to a possible threat.**

**<https://spotterup.com/how-to-improve-your-situational-awareness-skills/>**

## **Why I Love Buckshot**

When it comes to a buckshot stoked scattergun, there are three reasons I really, really like that combination.

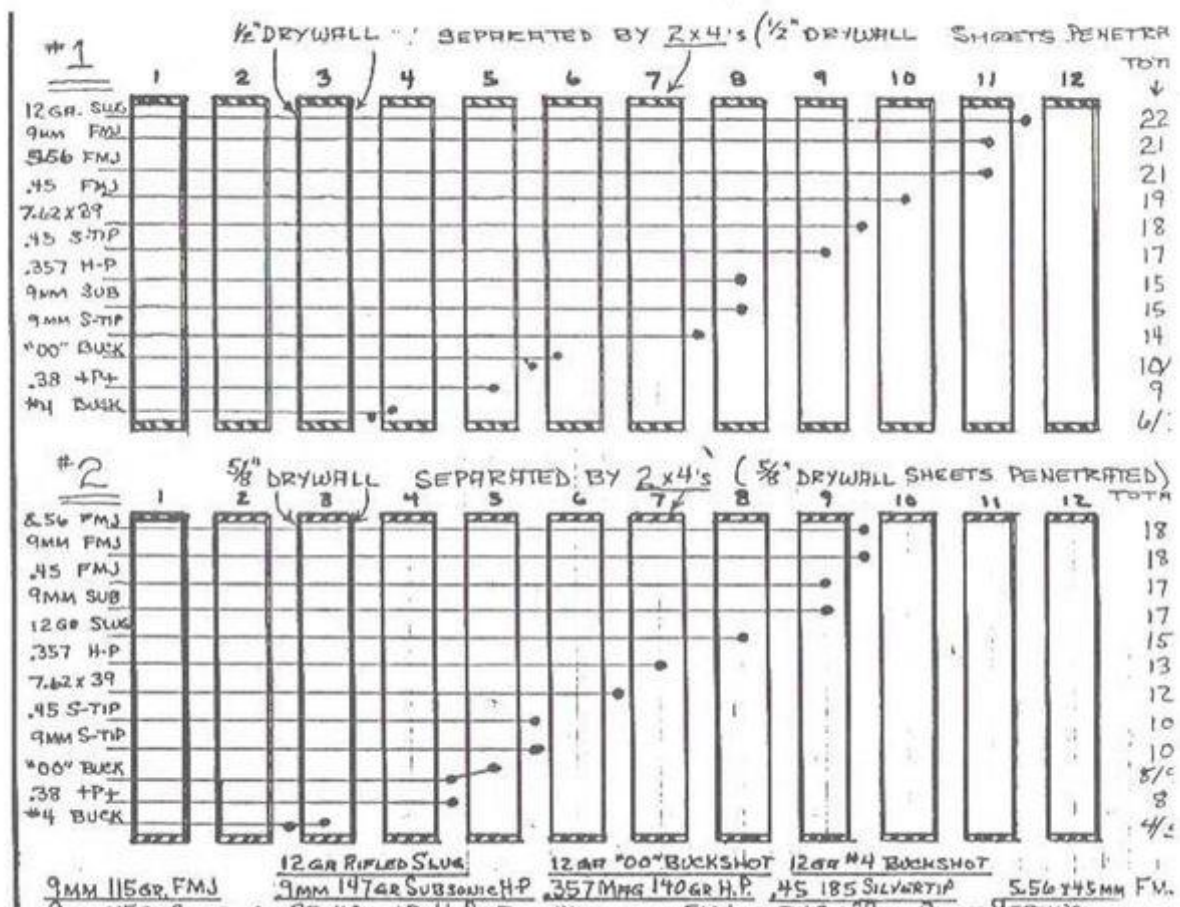
First, an 8 or 9 pellet charge of 00 is like hitting someone with a full single column magazine of pistol bullets simultaneously. Nothing you can stand on your hind legs and shoot will put an intruder down faster or more reliably than a charge of 00.

Second, we live and work in an urban environment, and home defense involves a battle space surrounded on all sides by homes occupied by innocent people. Pistol bullets will travel a mile or a bit more at certain angles, and .223 will carry almost 3,000 yards. A solid shotgun slug will

carry just over a mile. On the other hand, 00 Buck will only travel about 700-900 yards (depends on muzzle velocity, full charge or low recoil), at it's maximum angle. Pointed straight ahead at shoulder height, buck will only go about 300 yards before it hits the ground. This greatly compresses our downrange danger zone.

Finally, buckshot will penetrate fewer interior walls than will 9mm or .223. See the chart below. If you strain 00 through an intruder first, it is very unlikely to leave the room you are in. Important!

Sgt. G. Zagurski #18311



# UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS

**JOHNSTON, IOWA NOV 18-19 Advanced Instructor**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-381473165507> (indoors)

**Nashville, TN Dec 8-10 Professional Pistolcraft Instructor**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/professional-pistolcraft-instructor-tickets-456542981347> **sold out**

**Jan 12-14, Shotgun Instructor Shreveport, LA**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-defensive-shotgun-instructor-course-tickets-688848714047?aff=oddtcreator>

**Jan 26-28 Pistol Instructor Lakeland, FL**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-646548783817?aff=oddtcreator>

**Feb 17-18 Advanced Instructor**

**Royal Range, Nashville, TN (indoors)**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-688808955127?aff=oddtcreator>





Sig P365 Macro lower with XL upper. Neat!

