

STARS & STRIPES AMMUNITION

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What makes a handgun cartridge a winner?

In handgun shooting, consistency is crucial for reliable cycling of automatics, especially for defense ammunition. It is also crucial for good accuracy and top velocities in revolvers. For hunting applications involving handguns it makes the difference between bagging and searching all day for a cripple being most pistols are only marginal for hunting to begin with, but there are some newer exceptions to that rule!

Hunting ammunition must be rugged enough to withstand rough handling and the extremes of the environment. Only heavily constructed premium bullets should be used for handgun hunting. Other bullets may not be designed to handle the stresses imparted by real world hunting situations and might blow up the instant they strike the target. Handgun hunting is a growing sport, and the newer magnum cartridges are placing demands on handgun bullets never before encountered in the market. All of our hunting ammunition for handgun calibers are loaded with bullets made by Barnes, Hornady, Swift, and Speer. All of the rules that apply to hunting rifle bullets apply to handgun bullets as well, and more so. Penetration and bullet integrity are key, see our section on what makes a bullet a winner to learn more.

Handgun defense loads present their own unique bullet demands. They must be able to punch through abrasive clothing, sometimes heavily layered, yet hold together if they hit bone, and yet still rapidly expand once inside. They must also retain their weight, not break up, and penetrate in a straight line through the vital areas. Sometimes this ammunition must be fired through barriers such as doors, walls, car windshields and doors, or plate glass.

We concentrate mainly on the lead core bullets for our defense ammunition, since they can be relied on to penetrate barriers and the perp. We do offer pre-fragmented loadings for those who insist upon them, but we have found that these bullets are not always as ricochet proof as their makers claim them to be, nor do they break up reliably, if at all, when they hit targets that don't have water in them, like living tissue does. Our premier defense bullet is the Speer Gold Dot hollow point. This bullet has its jacket bonded to the core at the molecular level and simply can't be separated from the core, even when fired across the sharp edge of a piece of a steel plate!

The pre-frags sometimes lack the weight to successfully penetrate heavy clothing or light barriers. The lightweight pre-frags always sport some very impressive velocities and are very lethal when all goes 100%, but in our experience no defense situation goes like the book, and those bullets lack consistency, accuracy, and penetration, and if you can't hook up and get good penetration, you could become a statistic! It is one thing for a bullet to look great in a block of ballistic gelatin, but I am more concerned with what happens in the real world, and ballistic gelatin ain't the real world when it comes to proving bullet performance!

All of our defense and tactical oriented ammunition uses nickel plated cases where available. This ammunition is also water proofed, and engineered to have as little muzzle flash as possible.

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Even our mighty 44 Magnum ammo has virtually no flash in 4 inch barreled handguns when compared to some other brands available.

Our Cowboy pistol ammunition is intended for more than Cowboy Matches. It is also perfect for informal plinking due to its very mild nature. This ammunition uses hardcast lead bullets only. Lead bullets offer minimal ricochet potential on cowboy match steel targets and are economical to shoot. Our hardcast bullets are more resistant to gas cutting and base deformation from hot, high pressure propellant gases than pure lead types, and are therefore cleaner and more accurate to shoot. This harder alloy reduces the amount of barrel leading making gun cleaning a breeze at the end of the trail.

If you choose to have your Cowboy Ammo made with blackpowder or any of the black powder substitutes, you will be pleased to know that we use only SPG bullet lube for these blackpowder loadings. SPG bullet lube keeps blackpowder residue from turning hard after firing. It is this hard as nails fouling that limits use of blackpowder cartridges and will rob you of all your accuracy after only a single shot. Due to our understanding of how to make blackpowder cartridges, our blackpowder loadings are the cleanest shooting loads possible with this propellant type. We also offer a variety of cleaning products specifically for blackpowder to make your cleanup a breeze and some will even eliminate the rotten egg smell!

Taken as a whole, Stars and Stripes' pistol ammo is competitively priced with other premium brands and gives the shooter more options and better performance than available with factory ammunition.