

# The Circuit

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For Security And Protection Specialists

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# TACTICAL FIREARMS

## SELECTING FIREARMS FOR CLOSE PROTECTION DETAILS

I hear people talking about the best firearms for close protection details, and 90% of what I hear is complete BS.

I recently had some gun store commando in Europe trying to push the benefits of the 12-gauge Saiga shotguns on me over say a regular AK-47. Something to do with the kinetic energy of a 12-gauge slug at 100 meters. Saiga shotguns are very nice guns, but I take it they were all this guy had used or could sell due to the restrictions on semi-auto rifles in his country. Some unwitting buyers could easily take this gun shop owner and 'firearm expert's' advice and buy something for hostile environments that were unsuitable and overpriced. Not to mention the difficulty in trying to buy effective ammunition, spare magazines, and source replacement parts locally.

If you are undertaking armed close protection or security details, there are a few questions you need to ask yourself before you start spending money on firearms.

### Legality

First, find out if you can legally work armed and what permits are required for you to possess and carry. If you need to import firearms, you will need a lot more paperwork to purchase, export, and

import the guns and ammunition. Also, there are restrictions on what security personnel and private citizens can possess and carry in many locations.

### Firearms Availability

In many states in the US, firearms are available to non-felons and those with the required permits. But in many other locations in the world, firearms are very restricted, and availability can be very limited. There is no point in having a sexy FN Five-seven pistol or a .300 Blackout AR-15 if you can't get the ammo or spare parts for them. So, consider; What firearms do you have access to? How can you buy the required firearms and where from? Do you have the required licenses and permits to buy the firearms and ammunition?

### Budget

Guns and ammo cost money, so you really need to work out what firearms, magazines, ammo, licenses, and permits you will require and price it accurately. In many cases, you might want to have an FN-SCAR and a dozen magazines, but due to legal restrictions and budget, you end up with a Chinese shotgun and a half a dozen shells. ►

If you are lucky enough to have access to the firearms and ammo you want and the funds to buy them, you need to consider a few other things before spending your money. You will need to think about what you will be using the firearms for, close protection, residential security, valuable asset escorts, maritime security, hostile environment details, or workplace violence prevention? All of these situations are different and will influence the types of firearms you require. You also want to think about what threats you are likely to encounter, such as street criminals, burglars, activists, organized criminals, and terrorists.

If you provide close protection services in a 'nice area,' a compact 9mm pistol and a spare magazine might be more than adequate. However, if you are escorting valuables in a hostile environment, then an AKS-74U and few spares mags might be more preferential. The main things to

consider when buying firearms for close protection and security details are familiarity, simplicity, reliability, accuracy, caliber, and capacity. Let's take a closer look.

#### **Familiarity**

Is the end-user familiar with that particular weapon system - have they been trained on them and used them before? These days, everyone seems to think they are an expert, but I have seen plenty of so-called experts not knowing how to use or shoot a wide variety of firearms. Usually, this comes down to a lack of familiarity with differing safety mechanisms and having no experience with different weapon systems - rifles, shotguns, revolvers, etc.

#### **Simplicity**

A defensive firearm should be a simple firearm. The design needs to be as simple as possible, because the more working parts there are, the more there is to go wrong. Make sure your team members are practiced in working the slides

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if they are using semi-automatic pistols. Trigger pulls should be smooth if using revolvers. And of course, everyone should be able to strip and assemble the gun; these might sound like basic concepts, but they are essential for shooting and cleaning purposes.

#### **Reliability**

You need firearms that are going to work when you need them to work. The best way to find out about a firearms reliability is to look at reviews in magazines and ask reputable professional firearms instructors and dealers for their opinions. Additionally, look to see what firearms law enforcement and military forces use. These days, law enforcement units and the military put their firearms through strenuous tests for reliability, accuracy, and stopping power before issuing them to their personnel. I generally do not buy or recommend guns that have not been on the market for at least two years, this is usually enough time for all faults in the guns to be discovered and hopefully rectified.

#### **Accuracy**

You need a firearm that will hit what you are aiming at. If you are buying



secondhand guns, make sure you check the barrels to be sure they are clean, and there are no dents or imperfections. One of the primary reasons guns do not shoot straight is because the barrels have not been cleaned or maintained correctly, especially if the shooters have been using cheap ammunition. If you think the sights on your weapon

are off, then get a second opinion, it may just be the way you're shooting. The sights on new guns will be set at the factories. I tend to go for fixed sights for defensive purposes; at close quarters, we do not use the sights anyway.

### Caliber

There are many opinions on what is the best caliber for tactical applications,

and a lot depends on the ranges you might need to shoot at and if you're going to need the rounds to penetrate cover or not. Remember, others' opinions are nothing more than hot air! You want to choose calibers that you and your team can shoot accurately and comfortably. For example, in a handgun, .357 magnums have excellent stopping power but also have a lot of recoil, especially when fired from a snub-nosed revolver. If someone is not used to shooting this type of firearm, they could easily miss their target, even at close quarters, and a powerful .357 bullet can travel a long distance. .22s are considered too small for defensive purposes by many, but they are light on recoil, accurate, and a favored assassin's weapon. A .22 in the brain will kill a person immediately.

### Capacity

You will need to consider how many rounds you want to carry in your firearms. Revolvers have capacities of 5 to 8 rounds, and semi-automatic pistols have capacities or anywhere from 5 to 32 rounds before they need re-loading. Pump-action shotguns 5 to 8 shells, and with assault rifles, the magazines can go from 5 to 100 rounds. Where you're working and what you are doing will influence how many rounds you will need in your firearms and what spare ammo and magazines you need to carry.

This is just a short article with some very basic information, but hopefully, it will give you some ideas on what you have to consider when planning armed security and close protection details.

*Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.*