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**Dedicated to my father.**

**Before cleaning, disassembling, making any modifications to a shotgun, or installing any accessories or upgrades, make sure that your shotgun is UNLOADED.**

**Check the chamber and magazine tube, making both visual and touch verifications. INTRODUCTION: THE COMBAT MINDSET**

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**AFTERWORD**

**RECEIVE BONUS**

**INTRODUCTION: THE COMBAT MINDSET**

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That awful moment when you realize you have failed; the moment when you understand you have been. You have been in denial all this time. You failed to *get* ready because you thought you *were* ready. People always over estimate their own capabilities because they cannot face the truth. You are not physically prepared just because you think you are. You believed you had instinct, when in reality instinct is a learned reaction. You must be taught how to react. How would you know how to counter an attack if you have never encountered one before? You thought instinct was part of the will to survive. Your only defense is wishing you had trained and listened better. Even if you do survive the situation, you have shattered your confidence. You have just seen your true self; reality hurts, and it may ruin you. You feel shame and horror, and worst of all you feel helpless.

### **It Is a Mindset**

First, no matter how good you are in combat situation there is *always* someone better. Someone faster and better trained someone who will never underestimate the enemy. Someone who knows they will always rise to the level of their training, training that goes on every day. They do not speculate on how good you are. They naturally assume you are as good as they are, so they never take anything for granted. They are efficient and they do not think about the mechanics of what they need to do; muscle memory takes over. They fully understand their own capabilities and will never be in a situation where they are left wishing they had trained better. They live because they come to the fight prepared mentally as well as physically.

Anyone can train, but it takes a combat mindset to *use* that training. You have to be able to pull the trigger at the critical moment. Hesitation is fatal; your life and the lives of others are in jeopardy if you hesitate. Training gives you the mechanical skills to use a weapon but you need to be able to *pull the trigger mentally*.

### **People**

There are predators, humans that prey on other human; people that have no empathy for the suffering of others. They attack without provocation and never have remorse for their actions. There are those that would rather avoid confrontations; they have never struck another human in anger. They go to work every day and hope they never meet an assailant because they know they cannot defend themselves against such aggression. These upstanding citizens see the good in everyone and many, if not most, will never have to deal with a human predator.

Then there is the person who does not seek out others to hurt, but will do what it takes to defend themselves and their families. They will confront a predator, a killer, at the risk of their own lives to save the lives of family members or even strangers. They help balance the scales and many never realize who they are or that this type of person even exists. They must have a capacity for violence but also have a love for their fellow humans, and will avoid hurting anyone without a good cause - a combat mindset. They know when to use lethal force and when not to; there is no hesitation. There is no desire to hurt just for the sake of causing pain. They train, and they know they will do what it takes when the time comes because they can pull the trigger mentally as well as physically. They do not question themselves; they just do what

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Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics has to be done.

## CHAPTER 1. SHOTGUN MYTHS

Unfortunately, too many would-be shooters get their firearms training from movies and various online videos. Others may have been brought up with firearms and naturally pick up habits from family members who have picked up their training and habits from their own family members, and so on. Keep in mind: just because you were trained a certain way does not necessarily mean you were trained the right way. No doubt, everyone has the best intentions, but before we realize what's happening bad habits have a way of becoming the norm because that's what we've been taught to do. Bad habits become "truths," and myths get started because of this. This article will discuss some of the more common myths associated with shotguns and try to explain the facts and misconceptions.

**Myth: The racking of a shotgun will cause an intruder to run off.**

Stop and think about this for a minute. If you are only chambering a round just as you spot an intruder then you are behind the game. Your home defense shotgun needs to be at the ready-to-fire position prior to encountering an intruder so that you are ready to Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics act immediately.

The racking of a weapon, while a very distinguishable sound, is not really much of a deterrent; before you rack it a weapon cannot be fired, and if someone hears you racking they may choose to shoot at Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics you because they know you can't retaliate until the cycling is complete. In movies you will often see someone emphasizing their commands by cycling the weapon while they hold it on someone. In that type of situation your weapon would make a more effective club because you would Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics not be able to fire it until it was cycled. Additionally, the sound of racking your weapon would give away your position. Your weapon is not meant to be used for intimidation purposes; this will get you hurt. By the time you see an intruder your weapon had better be ready to shoot!

**Myth: You do not have to aim a shotgun.**

This myth came about because in years past many shotguns were called "scatterguns." The guns were loaded with anything that could inflict harm including nails, pebbles and rock salt. The barrels on older weapons, known as a blunderbuss, were funnel shaped to help spread the shot as it left the muzzle's end. While the shot did expand, it was only enough to injure more than one person if everyone was within a few feet of the muzzle, meaning it was still very important to aim before firing.

Shotguns loaded with slugs need to be aimed just like a rifle or revolver. The muzzle has to be pointed at the target, because the round inevitably follows the muzzle. You can expect shot to spread as it exits the barrel at approximately 35 to 40 yards. Close quarter combat is just that: close quarters. Close quarters are usually measured within just a few feet and most shots fired are at ranges of 3 feet or less. There is no spread, and the weapon must be aimed.

**Myth: Load birdshot, buckshot and then slugs; if the birdshot doesn't do the job then you have buckshot and slugs as backup.**

Some people say 3 feet and 3 seconds are the typical range and Become a Better Shotgunner,

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Part 1: Basics length of time of a non-military firefight, while others say the average firefight lasts 7 seconds at 7 yards with three shots fired. Whether 3 Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics feet and 3 seconds or 7 feet and 7 seconds, the point is that the first shot better count, Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics meaning it needs to have stopping power. Whether or not the first shot is lethal it at least needs to incapacitate the assailant long enough for you to get control of them and their weapon. Birdshot can stop a person, but buckshot and slugs leave no doubt; therefore, there is no point in mixing rounds in the magazine. Having to keep track of the amount and type of rounds you have in the chamber and magazine may confuse you and if you have to knock down a charging Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics bear or human you need your first shot to be the best that you have.

## CHAPTER 2. 12 GAUGE VERSUS 20 GAUGE SHOTGUNS

Both Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics 12 and 20 gauge shotguns are very popular; each are used for hunting, skeet shooting, competition shooting and for home defense. There are several models available in both gauges such as a double barrel, single barrel and over-and-under.

### **12 Gauge**

The 12gauge is the larger of the two, with a bore diameter of 0.73 inches/18.5 millimeters. The range is usually longer and it will have greater recoil. The 12 gauge is chosen for migratory bird hunting and skeet shooting because of its range.

While recoil can be considerable for anyone Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics when using certain shells, physically smaller individuals in particular may find the recoil is not tolerable on this gauge; this is something that must be considered for extended hunting trips. People that seem able to tolerate recoil on a practice range may find it becomes more difficult as the hunting trip gets longer and as they use various sized loads.

If there is more than one person in the home that may use a shotgun as a home defense weapon you must consider the recoil. Young adults and others need to Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics be able to tolerate the recoil of a 12 gauge, or you will have to make a 20 gauge (or both weapons) available for use.

Because the loads in a 12gauge are heavier, the damage done to small game such as rabbits and squirrels Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics will be greater. Heavier loads may very well destroy an animal to the point where they cannot be used as a food source and the skins would be unusable.

The standard 12gauge load is 1 1/8 ounces of shot. You can load 1 1/4 for longer ranges and heavier birds, but once again the recoil with the heavier load will be considerable for some individuals. Because the heavier loads carry more pellets, avid bird hunters tend to choose the 12gauge as more pellets mean more contact with the target.

### **20 Gauge**

The bore diameter of a 20gauge is 0.615 inches/15.6 millimeters. This weapon is commonly used for bird hunting, hunting in general and for skeet shooting. According to Become a Better

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Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics some, this range is more than adequate for bird and duck hunting. This weapon is also an ideal home defense shotgun as typically range is not a critical factor in such situations. Many hunters will choose a 20gauge over a 12 gauge based on the recoil and lightweight, especially when they expect to cover a lot of terrain.

The standard shot load for Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics a 20gauge is 7/8 ounces and you can load shots up to 1 ounce. A 1 ounce load in a 20 gauge will have less range than in a 12gauge. For home defense, many use the heavier loads in Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics their 20 gauge for the stopping power without the recoil associated with the 12gauge.

### **Type of Actions**

Both the 12 and 20gauge shotguns come Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics with various actions, including a single shot that is loaded manually, bolt action, pump and semi-automatic. The 20gauge is traditionally the less expensive of the two, but prices will vary depending on the model and manufacturer.

## **CHAPTER 3. PUMP ACTION SHOTGUNS**

### **Become Become a Better Shotgunner, Part 1: Basics A Better Shotgunner Part 1 Basics**

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