

BLACKHAWK! DUTY GEAR: Made from Nytek, a nylon composite material, BLACKHAWK!'s duty gear offers a traditional leather look but without the weight of traditional leather. Some advantages are, high strength, will accept polish, can be disinfected with a bleach solution, is breathable and won't fade, crack or dry-out and remains flexible in cold weather.



SUZI HUNTINGTON

BLACKHAWK! SPEED CLASSIC: Part of BLACKHAWK!'s leather line, the Speed Classic is their take on the famous Berns-Martin design. It's wet-molded for a perfect fit, and the front edge of the holster is heavy-duty elastic, which helps hold the gun in place, yet allows you to draw through it. A dandy holster for \$45; it also comes in brown.



TUFF PRODUCTS POCKET-ROO: The "Pocket-Roo" (made in the USA) offers a safe, secure pocket holster and a special holster for a "QuickStrip" spare ammo strip. It's slick on the inside and sticky on the outside so the holster should stay put during a draw. Models to fit small-frame revolvers and autos are available.



CARRY CHOOSING THE RIGHT OPTIONS RIG

The title says it all — there's a sea of styles and materials to choose from. Your options include different levels of retention; the rake; leather, nylon or plastic (often referred to as Kydex, which is a proprietary name, like Xerox); at the waist, drop or swivel. Most agencies have specific policies regarding what's approved, so always consult your policies and procedures before making any purchase.

For cops working undercover, in detective or SWAT units, the options increase. Now your choices include inside the waistband, belt, shoulder and ankle holsters (good for uniformed patrol too), thigh rigs, fanny packs and purses. There are plenty of other ways to carry, but I think you get the point.

In patrol, chances are agency policy will dictate the holster you carry. How the holster rides on your belt is well within your control. If you're short in the torso, a slight drop keeps the gun from sitting right under your armpit. And for ladies, a slight outward cant of the holster keeps the gun out of your rib cage. Motor officers also do well with drop holsters that swivel because the riding position on the bike tends to push the gun into their sides.

You can also adjust the rake of the holster. Most holsters are made with a straight up and down rake because they're designed for the average user. A good way to increase the speed of your draw is to go with a forward rake (the barrel of the gun sits forward and the butt tilts rearward). Your wrist is already in proper alignment as you draw the gun, but a drawback to this holster position is the discomfort it causes while you're seated in a car.

A rear rake (barrel sits rearward and the butt tilts forward) helps alleviate pressure on your hip, but drawing is arguably a bit slower

because of the angle your wrist must be in to draw the gun.

Don't Cheat

For those no longer in uniform, your carry choices are as varied as the units you may work. The clothing you wear is the biggest determining factor in the holster you use. However you choose to carry in plainclothes, it's incumbent on you to practice — a lot — with *each* method you use.

Wear your normal work clothes, maybe a suit, for qualification shoots. If you wear a suit jacket, learn to sweep it back before you draw your gun; and re-holster without getting all tangled up. If you carry a shoulder holster, you'd better know how to draw your gun without sweeping everyone around you; same for re-holstering.

UC (undercover) guys like to qualify using thigh rigs; that's okay if they're *only* serving warrants or making entries all the time. More often than not, they're carrying concealed, so they should qualify that way too.

Finally, any time you change holsters, you must practice, practice, and practice some more. Never simply slap on a new holster and hit the field, you're asking for big trouble should you get into a shooting. And replace your holster before it turns into a soft, gun-coozie. Don't be like the guy who shot himself in the thigh as he put on his seatbelt. His worn out holster had literally molded into the triggerguard of his gun and the slight pressure of the seatbelt running across it caused the gun to fire. The design of the holster was *not* the problem; the holster should've been replaced long before this happened.



For info: www.americancopmagazine.com/product-index for a comprehensive listing of all companies featured.

CROSSBREED SUPERTUCK: The SuperTuck rewrote the book on IWB rigs and everyone who buys one says it's the most comfortable IWB rig they've ever worn. It's adjustable for ride depth and cant, has a premium leather backing, and each holster fits all barrel lengths of that particular model handgun (all 1911s or all Glocks). There are models to fit virtually any handgun in common use today and they make belts, mag pouches and other goodies.



UNCLE MIKE'S REFLEX: The Reflex Holster retains your duty gun using I.R.T. (Integrated Retention Technology), which features a retention lug on the outer wall of the holster in combination with a press arm on the body side of the holster. It offers a medium level of retention and is perfect for off-duty or concealed carry applications.



GALCO TUCK-N-GO: The open top allows a fast draw, once the covering garment is swept aside. The reinforced holster mouth also allows 1-handed re-holstering. Galco's patented Generation III tuckable J-Hook hooks over the pants and behind the belt, only showing a small piece at the bottom. A tucked-in shirt will completely conceal your carry gun.

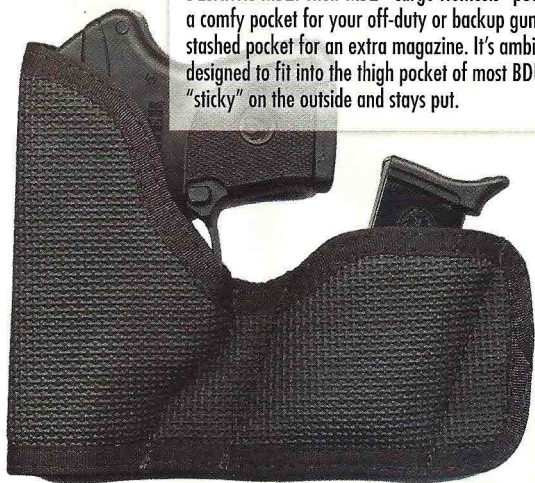


BOBBY MAC SN-1: Made by Bobby Mac's, the "Snubbies-Only" guy, this IWB rig can handle J-frames and the Ruger LCR. Designed for appendix position carry, it's comfortable and thin, but stiff enough to hold its shape. It's \$95 and a real custom holster.



CCW BREAKAWAYS: Basically, a dedicated pant design (shorts and denim too), which has a built-in system that holds a concealed carry handgun, below the waist level. No need for an untucked shirt, vest or cover jacket, there's no "printing" and you don't look like you're wearing your SWAT pants to the mall. You can sit, squat, run or just about anything, yet just by slipping your hand into your pocket and "breaking" the snaps, you end up with a fast, fluid draw.

DESANTIS M52: Their M52 "Cargo Nemesis" pocket holster combines a comfy pocket for your off-duty or backup gun, and a cleverly stashed pocket for an extra magazine. It's ambidextrous and designed to fit into the thigh pocket of most BDU or cargo pants. It's "sticky" on the outside and stays put.



BIANCHI 101 FOLDAWAY: Essentially, the simple flap uses the outside of your belt as the inside back of the "holster" pouch. The amazing thing is, it only takes two "fits" to handle just about any common auto out there. That's a Rohrbach R9 in the fan one, and a full-sized 1911 in the other. At \$15 retail, even you can afford it. That cool belt is from Purdy Gear, and doubles as a money belt, with a hidden flap on the rear to stash your cash.



ETHICAL PROBLEMS AT THE TOP

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