

# Quick tips for clearing your house with a shotgun

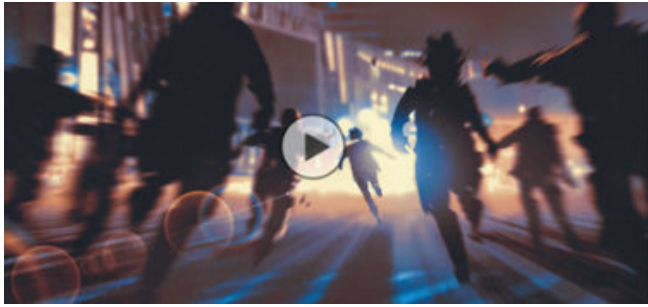
*As a responsible gun owner, you often have to ask yourself, how prepared are you? To survive an emergency such as a home invasion or a burglary, you need to master the fundamentals of doing a clean sweep, or in simple words, you need to know how to clear a house using your firearm.*

In some instances, you may not have the time to call the police or be able to do so. However, with the aid of your shotgun, you can clear your house and take the time to call 911 afterward. Here are some pointers to prepare yourself and be ready for when the moment comes.

## Clearing the house

Using your shotgun to clear the house makes good sense for many folks. It's a good choice if you happen to live in a subdivision and your neighbors' homes are in close vicinity because you have the option to select ammo with less penetrating power. Your shotgun provides excellent stopping power, and ammo selection offers the peace of mind that your shots won't leave the house.

Getting proper training from a firearm instructor with a solid background in firearms safety and shooting skills involving a shotgun becomes a must. After you receive the training you require, you will have to keep practicing what you learned regularly. The time you spend at the range is, in my opinion, time well spent.



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Before the day comes when you have to put your training to the test, you need to make sure you have a pre-established plan for clearing the house and, most importantly, that every family member knows about it. For example, if you leave your wife in a room to watch the kids, your spouse should know not to go to that room until they receive a clear signal from you or the police.

## Practice to perfection

A firearm instructor once told me that people are not used to moving around their homes in the dark, which becomes a significant disadvantage for them during a home invasion situation. That being said, it becomes mandatory to practice your house sweeping drills in the dark. Only if doing so will you be able to learn the layout of your home without having to see it.

Remember that certain things often have a different appearance in the dark, and you don't want to shoot at the coat rack because it may look like an intruder. Getting scared by a lamp in the corner that looks like someone may be standing there will only make you give away your position once you fire that first round.

One tip we can give you when you clear the house in the dark is to use the fencer's step. For those unfamiliar with this movement, it implies deliberately placing one foot down solidly and then move the next foot to maintain a solid base at all times. Rather than lifting your feet high, glide them on the ground.

Walking in such a manner helps you maintain your balance, and you will create less noise, while at the same time, you will have a solid base in case you have to discharge your firearm. Always keep a low center of gravity and avoid firing your gun when you are off-balance.

Also, you should avoid leaning on something because it will throw you off balance, and you will let your presence be known to the intruder(s).

## **Gun in hand**

Practice with a gun in hand and make sure it's unloaded. It will help you get used to the feeling of carrying your shotgun while cleaning the house. A shotgun adds extra weight compared to your handgun, and it's also bulkier. Also, it would help if you learned how to use your shotgun with only one hand.

Two shotgun carriers are recommended for clearing the house.

Keep the firearm on your shoulder and cheek glued to the buttstock. With your other hand, hold the forearm grip. Always point the barrel in the direction you are looking. You want to avoid finding the treat by turning to look because your shotgun will not be in position.

Also, keep that low center of gravity we talk about by bending your knees slightly and bending at your hips.

The second hold becomes useful when you need to free a hand to open a door or use a phone. Hold the pistol grip part of the stock and align the buttstock with your forearm. Turn the gun sideways a bit, so the back of your hand is facing the ceiling. Holding the weapon in such a manner will make its heavier front drive the buttstock upward into your arm. Some folks will have a little bit of trouble handling the shotgun's weight, but they can bend their elbow to make it less heavy. Bringing the gun closer to your torso will help you support

the weight.

In both cases, it should go without saying that you need to keep your finger on the frame and move it on the trigger only when you are ready to fire the gun.

## **Working the room**

A good clean sweep of the house requires making a plan because preparation is essential. Without preparing yourself for such a scenario, the adrenaline rush you will experience when the dreadful day comes may hinder your rational thinking, and you may end up making mistakes that will cost you.

Start by looking at the overall layout of your house and start breaking it down room by room. Entering a room is perhaps the most dangerous thing you can do during a home invasion, and by looking over the layout of each room, you will identify high-risk areas and the best place in that room where you should position yourself.

You will be able to figure out the natural places where the intruder may take cover or the areas that provide hiding places.

When you enter a room, you have to consider the possibility that you may very well expose your back to the intruder that may come out of a room you haven't checked yet. Breaking down the layout of each room will help you spot the safe and dangerous zones in your homes. Doing so is mandatory because your life may depend on it.

## **Quick tips**

1. Move through doorways quickly because if you take your time, chances are the intruder may grab your shotgun, and you will be in trouble.
2. Keep a wall to your back when entering a room and check

your blind spots. By doing so, you will lower your chances of being surprised by a sudden attack.

3. Be aware of furniture that may act as cover for you or the intruder. This may work in your favor in certain situations, but it can also create blind spots since the home invader may be hiding behind such covers and wait for you to enter the room.
4. Don't walk in front of windows if possible. Light from outside, from street lights, will frame your silhouette, and everyone inside the room will be able to pinpoint your location and act upon this information with dire consequences.
5. If you believe you have the intruder cornered, the best thing to do is hold him there and call the police. Be careful and be ready to act because desperation can lead to unpredictable actions, and just like a cornered animal, the home intruder will probably do anything in his means to escape.
6. If and when you do discharge your weapon in the house, be prepared for dealing with an impaired hearing. Also, keep in mind that your hearing will be significantly compromised, and when the police arrive, you might not hear it.
7. Change your body position whenever possible. For example, if you're standing in a room or the hallway and feel or hear an intruder approaches, you should kneel. By doing so, you will alter how you enter the intruder's field of vision.
8. In my house, we developed the habit of leaving doors opened, so I recommend you do the same if possible. If you do so, you will eliminate the need to open and go through them when you face a home invasion scenario.
9. Remember that the best option in a home invasion scenario (if available) is to call the police and let the professionals handle things while you barricade yourself in a room, watching over your kids and spouse.

# Concluding

Clearing your home with a shotgun is no simple matter, and there's a lot of prep you need to do to make an effective and safe sweep. Besides having to train using your shotgun and putting in the hours at the range, you also have to be sure you're within your rights to use the firearm for self-defense in a home invasion should the need arise. Your local and state laws should provide you with the options to keep your house and your family is safe from harm.



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