What Are the Best Concealed Carry Guns for Women?

Women could be at home, work or practically anywhere in public and quickly need a way to defend themselves. With so many firearms on the market, what's the right choice?

Here's how to determine what concealed carry weapon is best for you. These 10 options detail the ideal handguns based on size and effectiveness.

1. SIG Sauer P365

The first gun on the list is the P365 from Sig Sauer. This micro-compact pistol is among the most popular for women, especially those with small hands. It's a tiny gun that packs a punch. Best of all, it's accurate and easy for beginners. If it sounds fitting for you, take it to the shooting range and see for yourself how it handles.

Another benefit of the SIG Sauer P365 is the aftermarket upgrades you can choose. Some people find this weapon too tiny, even for small-handed people, so they use an XL slide to better their grip on the gun. Other P365 owners opt for a flat trigger because it improves the pull. You'll need more control on a small gun to get an accurate shot, so these aftermarket upgrades are ideal.

2. Glock G19

The next firearm is a tried-and-true favorite. Glocks have been a staple of gun owners for over 40 years. They're known for their reliability and power despite their lightweight nature, especially handguns like the G19. This model is one of the most popular concealed-carry handguns for women because of its performance and is the gun of choice for many police and

military professionals worldwide.

This gun is comparable to the G17 but is smaller. The double stack makes it slightly heavier but allows you to carry more ammunition. Glock G19s have a 15-round clip, exceeding the maximum you typically see in a handgun. They have a slightly bigger grip than other pistols, so it may take some time to get used to handling one.

3. Glock G43X

Glock also offers the G43X model, which is slightly smaller than the G19. Unloaded, it weighs in at 16.4 ounces, about five ounces lighter than the G19. Small hands will enjoy the G43x as its grip is approximately 0.3 inches smaller around.

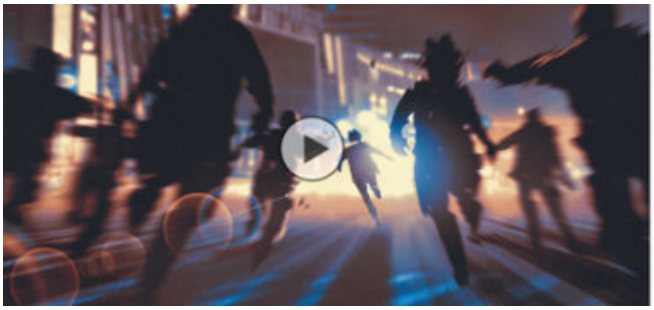
You'll also notice a slimmer frame and a narrower grip with the G43X. The short trigger gives people with smaller hands an advantage. The gun is thin but slightly longer, improving the accuracy. It's lightweight and small, making it easy for gun owners to conceal carry. Despite its small width, the magazine capabilities of the G43X come as a pleasant surprise for its operators.

4. Heckler & Koch VP9

Heckler and Koch has been in business for nearly 75 years, and its firearms are used by U.S. Navy SEALS and German special forces. The VP9 model is relatively new to the market, having been released in 2014. It has an excellent design for beginners and those who want an accessible handgun.

One aspect gun owners applaud about the VP9 is its ergonomic handle. It's comfortable and allows for an extended time at the shooting range without hand fatigue. Another handy feature of the VP9 is the high-capacity magazine. Magazines start at 10 rounds and go all the way up to 32. The VP9 is a good one

for beginners, but you may have trouble with its paddle magazine if you don’t have much experience with it.



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5. Smith & Wesson M&P Shield 2.0

Proven firearm manufacturer Smith & Wesson has plenty of options to satisfy your tastes. Start with the M&P Shield 2.0. Smith & Wesson designs this pistol for tactical use by the military and police, hence the M&P name. It gives you flexibility with compact and subcompact models.

The subcompact version is smaller, with a barrel length of around 3.6 inches. You can conceal it easily, as it’s one of the smallest handguns on the market. However, the small size is deceiving because it packs power like a full-sized pistol. The subcompact design makes it easy for those with smaller hands, and its ergonomics make it comfortable to hold for longer than other handguns.

Your other option with the M&P Shield 2.0 is the compact version. This edition has a 4-inch barrel and a 15-round magazine, compared to 12 on the subcompact. The Shield has slightly improved accuracy because of its design. The sub-compact and compact versions have anti-recoil features because their barrel bore axis is low. Both types weigh about 24 ounces, so it all comes down to your preference.

6. Smith & Wesson M&P 9 Shield EZ

The Shield EZ from Smith & Wesson is similar to the Shield 2.0, as both handguns are 9 mm. However, there are some differences. The Shield EZ is a striker handgun that Smith & Wesson designs to be easy for any gun owner. The company separates the EZ from its other guns by reducing the slide tension. The EZ's hammer is inside, making a better trigger for those firing off bullets.

The EZ is also beginner friendly because it's easy to load and reload. The load-assist features mean you won't need any speed-loader mechanisms to help you reload at the shooting range. Overall, the Shield EZ is a solid handgun because it's easy to control for those with small hands and has a low recoil. However, it does have limitations. For example, the clip only holds eight rounds, although you can easily upgrade it with a magazine.

7. Smith & Wesson 642

The third Smith & Wesson gun on the list is the 642, one of the smallest handguns you can find on the market. The 642 turns 30 in 2023 and has been a popular revolver since its release. Gun owners like the 642 because of the 38 Special design and the fact that it's easy to conceal.

The 642 is ideal for self-defense because of its tiny frame, enclosed hammer and low weight. The 642 clocks in at just over 14 ounces, and you'll need to find +P rounds for the ammo because of the 38 Special design. The 642 has a five-round capacity, typical for revolvers. The double-action gun means the trigger will be slightly heavy, but it's ideal for small hands. The grip can make it feel uncomfortable, although aftermarket solutions improve this feature.

8. Hellcat Pro

If you're looking for a gun with critical acclaim, look no further than the Hellcat Pro. This model from Springfield Armory won Handgun of the Year from American Rifleman magazine. Try the Hellcat Pro and you'll see why it's popular. This handgun is larger than others on the list, but you can still readily conceal it. The Hellcat Pro offers a preferred balance of performance and compact size for those with small hands.

This 21-ounce weapon weighs slightly more than the average handgun and has a self-indexing compensator, leading to reduced recoil despite its power. This model offers upgraded features compared to its predecessors. The Hellcat Pro has a 15-round capacity but still keeps its slender frame. Some Hellcat Pro owners struggle with the flat-faced trigger with a stiff break, but it depends on your preference.

9. Ruger MAX-9

The biggest competition for Smith & Wesson is Ruger. The MAX-9, one of its featured pistols, provides solid performance. This micro-compact handgun weighs 18.5 ounces and its slim frame is ideal for concealing in a holster. It's only 4.5 inches tall with a 3.2-inch barrel length, so the size is suitable for someone who doesn't want a large handgun. Another popular feature of the MAX-9 is its 12+1 capacity.

One aspect that separates the MAX-9 is its sights. The handgun has tritium fiber-optic sights, increasing your accuracy no matter how much lighting is present when shooting. The MAX-9 also has forward slide serrations. This feature makes it easy and safe to access the chamber with only a press check required. Some MAX 9 owners have trouble with the recoil, but the grip is solid with its textured frame.

10. FN 509 Compact Tactical

FN’s 509 Compact Tactical is slightly heavier than most of the guns on this list. This handgun may be for you if you don’t mind the weight. It weighs just over 26 ounces, so it packs some pounds and punches. However, it’s still concealable. It has a 12-round mag, but you can upgrade it to 24 rounds.

Small hands will enjoy the slide lock on either side of the 509 Compact Tactical. FN is known for its Optics Mounting System, which you’ll see on this handgun. This mechanism allows you to install numerous sights to fit what you like the most. A distinct feature of the pistol is how much grip it has. You’ll maintain a solid handle even if your hands are sweaty or it starts to rain.

Choosing the Right Gun

It’s vital to protect yourself by any means necessary. If you’re in the market for a handgun, research as much as possible to see which one you’re the most comfortable with. There are numerous options for those with small hands, so test them out at the shooting range and see which one is for you.

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