

The Opinion: At the Gun Store – The Glock design is consistent across calibers so the handling features of Generation 3 models for the model 22, 17, or 31 will be the same. The distinguishing features of the Glock design are the boxy slide, the trigger guard front with serrations, the take down mechanism, the finger grooves on the front strap, and the non-flush magazine base plate.

The magazines will drop out when the magazine release is pressed. At least the genuine Glock magazines do. The exposed edges of the base plate make manual extraction easier than if the base plate was flush with the front and back strap.

The grip on the GEN 3 model is not designed to be adjustable. It does not have removable side panels or reversible back straps. The Glock grip reminds me of the classic “one size fits nobody”. There are however, services available that will custom trim the grip to make conform to your grip a little more. I have read about them but never used the service for anything I own.

The GEN 4 version has replaceable back straps and a different texture pattern. Pricing I’ve seen on the GEN 4 is usually at least \$50 more than a GEN 3. Since the GEN 4 came out in 2010, supplies of new GEN 3 models are probably drying up.

Another change to the GEN 4 is the internal recoil spring. Glock has switched from a single to a dual recoil spring so the feel for slide manipulation may be different.

The magazine release is on the left side and is not reversible on the GEN 3 models. Being reversible is one of the enhancements on the GEN 4 models.

The slide release is only on the left side. I would like to see an enhancement to make the slide release ambidextrous.

The take down mechanism is two serrated tabs above and in front of the trigger. I have heard another Glock owner complain about this and that leads to a reluctance to shoot (because they don’t want to have to clean it) or not clean it because the takedown is difficult. Personally I don’t have a problem with the take down.

The Glock 22 is one of those guns you have to pull the trigger to get the slide to come off. Take the magazine out. Pull the slide back and verify the chamber is empty. The slide has to be pulled back slightly and the tabs pulled down then the trigger has to be pulled if it is cocked in order to get the slide off.

The only external safety is the trigger blade. The blade in the middle of the trigger must be depressed before the trigger can move. Glock advertises their pistols as “Safe Action” and refers to internal safeties. Essentially if there is a round in the chamber, the gun will fire if the trigger is pulled.

The blade protrudes from the face of the trigger when it is pulled back to fire the gun. The blade protrusion caused a pressure point that became uncomfortable in a short time. I remember the same thing happening on the Glock 17. So either shoot it more to build up a callus on your finger or smooth it down.

I like the shape of the trigger because it is nearly straight. I can get my finger low on the trigger and it isn’t forced to ride up the face when squeezing the trigger. The break is clean and there is no pressure to reset the trigger until the slide cycles. So when you dry fire you will have to manipulate the slide to cock the gun and reset the trigger for the next pull.

The rear sight has a white “U” instead of the more typical 3 dot arrangement. I didn’t find this difficult to adapt to. The same principles apply when acquiring your sight alignment and sight picture.

The coating on the slide is very durable. The serrations on the back are not severe and the general block shape of the slide makes it easy to grasp to manipulate.

The accessory rail on the dust cover is described as a “Glock accessory rail” and it has one cross cut position. Another enhancement would be to make this a Picatinny rail.

On the Range: The finger grooves on the front strap keep the supporting fingers in a set position on the front strap. Personally I find this feature problematic and I recall the first G17 I shot. I was constantly re-gripping after each shot trying to reestablish a firm comfortable grip. The boxy cross plane shape of the grip did not align with the joints on my shooting hand.

Despite the shortcomings of the grip, I was still able to control the gun and shoot a nice string with it. When I got the model 22 I was resigned to my personal issues with the grip.

The usual assortment of target ammo from Federal, Remington, and Winchester all performed well. As with any gun used for self-defense, trials of several self-defense loads should be tested for reliability before trusting your life to them.

Because of the light weight of the Glock the difference in recoil between the .40 S&W and the 9mm Luger is very noticeable. Since I wanted students to be able to feel the difference in the same gun, I had three choices. Get a Storm Lake .40S&W to 9mm **conversion** barrel, get a Lone Wolf **conversion** barrel, or get a Glock 17.

I have experienced the Storm Lake **conversion** barrels in Smith & Wesson M&P 40 and 40c guns with great results so I went with the Lone Wolf to try something different. I was able to purchase the barrel and two genuine Glock 9mm magazine for under \$200. I had also purchased a cheap polymer magazine which turned out to not function. Lesson learned, don't waste your money on cheap parts.

The Lone Wolf **conversion** barrel was a drop in fit. Unsupported groups were as good as the original .40 S&W barrel. At 50' I did notice the point of impact was high and right about an inch.

I also wanted the Glock to be able to offer students the ability to shoot a Glock because of their omnipresence. I think of them as the Toyota's of the gun world. You may not like the styling or features but they will get the job done reliably.

In preparation for taking the NRA Personal Protection Inside the Home Instructor Course, I was practicing shooting the Ruger SR9 and Glock 22 with the Lone Wolf **conversion** barrel head to head. Groups were usually comparable but on this day, I was slightly better with the Glock setup. So I used it in the class with success.

Sometimes you should go with what works best for you even though it may not be your first choice. That's why I think it is important to live fire a gun before you purchase. Being able to shoot a gun well should be high on the list of requirements. It should be a factor in the purchase decision along with the price, aesthetics, and features.

Since the introduction of the model 17 in 1981, Glock has proven itself in International Military and Law Enforcement and United States Law Enforcement. As with cars, there are other manufactures that also produce reliable firearms so invest enough time in research and live fire to determine if a Glock is the right choice for you. Greg Poole – September 8, 2014