

The Opinion: At the Gun Store: The Smith & Wesson Military & Police 9 M2.0 rendered in Flat Dark Earth is an eye catching pistol. The full size frame with a 5" barrel looks like a serious gun and it's performance matches it's good looks.

The 5" barrel is stainless steel externally coated in Armornite for wear and corrosion protection. It has a 1:10" twist rate.

The long slide over the 5" barrel gives you a sight radius of 7.25" inches and an overall length of 8.03". There are fish-scale serrations on the front of the slide. They are only on the widest part of the slide immediately above the dust cover. They will assist those who "press check", but are not distracting from the clean sculpted cut along the side of the slide.

The texture on the frame of all the M2.0 guns is more aggressive than the original. It is rough like skate board tape or a field of little spikes. It may seem overly aggressive in the gun store, but it translates to a solid grip even outdoors in Florida.

There are four grip panels included with the M2.0 Compact: S, M, ML, & L. The Medium is installed at the factory. It uses the same removable guide rod system to pin them in place as the original M&Ps.

The frame's dust cover is that same length on all versions of the M&P 9 or 40 SKUs (Stock Keeping Units). There are three Picatinny slots. I haven't heard back from Smith & Wesson product development yet about my idea to mate a 5" barrel and slide on the compact frame. I did the mix and match with a M&P 40 M2.0 Compact and it worked flawlessly without the need for adapters to fill the gap on the longer slide.

There is no extended projection above the web between your thumb and finger to protect from "slide bite". But there is plenty of ledge and unless your hands are in the "Beefy" category it should not present a problem.

The stainless-steel chassis has been extended in the front to reduce flex and torque when firing. The original M&P 9 slide rails were .41" long both sides front and rear. The M2.0 has the same rear dimension, but the front is significantly lengthened to 1.07".

Two 17 round magazines are included with the FDE base plate. Standard 17 round magazines from the original M&P 9 work as well. The 18 degree grip angle is the same.

The slide stop now has a detent instead of a spring. When you pull the slide back with a cartridge in the magazine the slide will push the stop down so the slide can travel forward. In the original a spring pulls the slide stop down out of the way.

According to the marketing from Smith & Wesson the trigger on the M2.0 versions has been improved to provide less travel, less pressure and shorter reset. The pull weight on the gun tested was a steady 5 pounds.

The gun's weight is 29.9 ounces with an empty 17 round magazine and the M-L size palm-swell.

The magazine release is still reversible.

The trigger still uses the joint that blocks the movement of the trigger until the lower portion is pressed.

The sights are standard three dot in dovetails for drift adjustments.

The takedown mechanism is a lever that gets rotated 90 degrees when the slide is locked back. The disconnect lever under the breech face still needs to be pulled down when the slide is locked back to disengage the sear. This mechanism negates the need to squeeze the trigger during takedown and possibly prevent a negligent discharge by the oblivious.

An ambidextrous thumb safety is an option. Check the SKU of the configuration before purchasing to make sure you are getting the feature you want, or don't want.

The slide release is still ambidextrous.

The back of the slide has the same fish scale serrations that make for a positive grip when manipulating the slide.

On the Range: The rough texture of the grip really showed its value on the outdoor range. Following a string of warm but low humidity days, My brother and I hit the range on the first really humid day of May. No slip and slide even while shooting one handed.

The M&P 9 M2.0 FDE reliably handled the 115gr FMJ from Winchester, Remington and Federal including the Aluminum and Steel case ammo. I did experience a couple of FTL's with the Federal Brass Case but we chalked that up to a limp wrist on my part as my Brother didn't have that problem and the 30 rounds after didn't have a problem.

Test several brands of self-defense (hollow point) ammunition to be assured of reliable function. You should do that with any gun. This advice is not unique for Smith & Wesson.

The best 3-shot group measured .635" at 45'. I consider effective range for a gun to be the ability to place 3 unsupported shots on a standard 9" round paper target. I was consistently able to do that at 25 yards. I could probably have gotten a little further but that was the back wall of the range on testing day.

At the outdoor range session I shot a 174 towards the Winchester/NRA Distinguished Expert Pistol.

The rougher texture improves grip so I am not constantly having to adjust because the gun is not shifting in my hand shot to shot.

The FDE MSRP of \$599 represents a \$30 increase over the standard model. More barrel, more slide, more color.

The package includes the gun, two 17 round magazines, four grip palm swells, instruction Manual, cable lock, and a black plastic storage box.

- Greg Poole, May 6, 2018