



# HOW TO PROPERLY STORE YOUR FIREARM

Doing research to purchase the proper firearm can be a personal investment both of time and money. There is one other thing to consider; where will you put your firearm when you are not using it or carrying it? An important consideration in owning a firearm is how to store it safely. Secure storage means finding a place where you can keep your legal weapon in a safe spot designed to be unlocked with a key, combination, or similar means that accommodates you.

Before selecting a piece of equipment for secure storage, you should first outline your goals. Are you trying to provide incredibly secure storage that protects guns from theft and fire? Or are you just wanting to keep weapons out of sight and use by children or guest in your home? By establishing your security goal, you will have fewer or easier decisions to make in creating secured storage for your firearm. There are different types of storage options, both for long-term and short-term use. The long-term options should be a place where you can put your firearm that you use for things other than home defense or daily carry; such as hunting, or competitive shooting. The purpose of the storage is to put items away from others who you don't want to have access. Additionally, to keep them in a place that is a secure environment, avoiding extreme conditions such as hot, cold, or humid environments.

Then there is the option of short-term storage. This is a place that must be readily accessible for you to retrieve your firearm and use it when needed. Here are some items to consider when looking into storage options for your firearm. Watch this short video on Proper Firearm Storage for insight on safe storage and to refresh on the rules of firearm safety handling.

## **ASP New Gun Owner Orientation (Part 2): Proper Firearm Storage**





## Gun Locks

If you have children at home, proper firearm storage is essential. There are far too many tragedies that happen when a firearm is not stored properly. It is estimated that over 200,000 firearms are stolen each year from burglaries and theft. These factors are important considerations when owning a firearm.

Since 2005, all handguns have been required to ship from the manufacturer or dealer with a “gun storage or safety device” [Child Safety Lock Act of 2005]. This usually comes in the form of a flexible padlock that can run through the magazine well and the ejection port of a semi-automatic pistol or through the cylinder of a revolver. This prevents the firearm from going into battery. While this is only required for handguns, some manufacturers of rifles and shotguns also supply a similar device. While this lock may have come with your firearm, it may not be the best device for your application. These locks may be fine for long term storage, or weapons that do not need to be accessed quickly. If you are needing temporary storage between carrying a firearm, these locks are not typically recommend. A cabinet or safe is likely a better option. If your goal is ultimate security, remember that these locks are also made in bulk by a discount manufacturer and rarely have unique or robust keys. These locks are generally considered the minimum standard in preventing the use of a firearm.

# GUN CASE

There are now many firearm cases that have integrated locks. These are sold by companies like Pelican, Plano, SKB, etc. The primary goal of these is secure transport. The Transportation Safety Administration [TSA] requires firearm cases to be locked during airline transport; some states and municipalities also require firearms to be locked while being transported. These cases can be used for secure storage at home, but with some caution. This type of storage does prevent immediate use of the firearm, but provides little security against theft. A burglar can just walk out with the whole case and defeat the lock later. Similar to pistol locks, cases are great in some aspects, but provide little security in other situations.



# LOCKING CABINETS

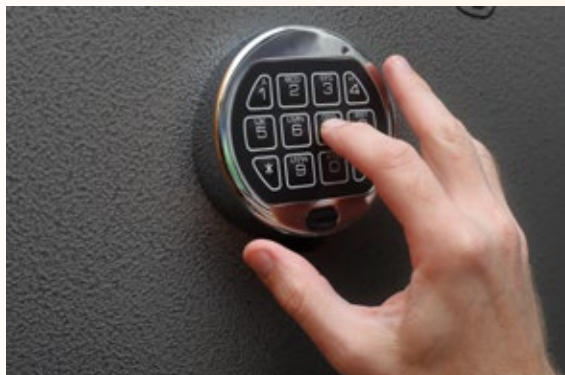
Locking cabinets and safes provide more security than cases or pistol locks. They can also store a larger number or variety of firearms and other valuables. While most safety guidelines instruct individuals to always unload firearms before storage, the reality is that many Americans want firearms [especially handguns] to be ready to use. If you intend to store a loaded firearm, do so with extreme caution. Safes and sturdy locking cabinets are the only security devices that should be considered if you intend to store weapons in “hot” condition.

There are several different types of locks on gun cabinets and safes: key, mechanical combination, digital combination, and biometric. Research which locking mechanism is right for you. Our only general advice is that “convenience” and “security” are usually opposites, so prioritize accordingly.



## CABINETS VS SAFES

While we have discussed both cabinets and safes in this section, it is important to recognize that they are not the same. A cabinet just stores firearms under lock and key, but can still be defeated by a burglar and are little to no protection against fires or floods. A safe is often much heavier (so it cannot be wholly lifted by one or two individuals), has a fire rating, and is partially air-tight. There are many lower-priced imported “safes” that have minimal fire protection and still have thin sheet-metal walls. These are more like “heavy duty cabinets” than true safes. These may fit your goal perfectly, or you may be disappointed in security of these products. Like many things, do your research, and “may the buyer beware”.



## STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

While each of these items may perform a different function, make sure you understand the capabilities and limitations of any device you use to store or disable your firearm. When storing your firearm, you should consider things such as the moisture build-up that could occur in this storage unit because rust on a firearm will make it not function properly. Often good security will mean little to no airflow, so any moisture can be trapped in with your firearm (waterproof, foam-lined cases are notorious for trapping moisture). Clean your firearms before storage, and use some sort of dehumidifier or moisture absorbing substance. This could be an electronic device, a passive device, or simply desiccant packs often found in boxes of retail goods shipped from overseas.

## WRAP UP

In conclusion, make sure you do plenty of research on what type of storage options work best for you and your firearm. Whatever your storage requirements or budget may be, there are plenty of options for you to find secure storage to secure your firearm when you are not using it.

If the day comes where you must use your firearm out to protect you and or your family, make sure that you have Firearms Legal Protection to protect you from the legal aftermath.

**PROTECT YOURSELF. WE'LL PROTECT YOU!**

**Family matters, protect them!**



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