



# PICKING YOUR HOLSTER

■ By Michael Ware

**Holsters... Where do I start?** You wouldn't think so much care and time go into something like that, but just like a cowboy is picky about his saddle, lots of folks are picky about their holster. For good reason, I might add.

Generally speaking, people looking for holsters fall into two basic categories. The first contains the half of us who either don't carry much or use an OWB (outside waist band) holster for our purposes. Folks carrying their trusty Ruger Blackhawk deer hunting, or maybe their S&W 617 trapping, along with those who carry their PDW (personal defense

weapon) on their belt with a shirt or vest covering it would likely be those who don't get too worried about their holster

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configuration. The other half typically own as many holsters as most folks have

pairs of shoes. They've got a carry holster for every occasion, wardrobe, and weapon they own. Holsters are like shoes in this

regard and some will work and function inherently better than others, so this too is valid for consideration.

There are a few basic types of construction when it comes to holsters. The three most common are leather, Kydex or some plastic polymer, and nylon material. There

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are also hybrids that contain some of two or more materials. Kydex holsters are generally formed around the weapon and offer a means of retention due to the fact the weapon is 'sandwiched' in between the Kydex itself. Considering Kydex is somewhat flexible, you can essentially draw or insert your weapon thousands of times with no ill impact on the holster. The leather holsters aren't much different in basic concept or function. While many of both have additional methods of retention such as various clips, straps, whiz-bangs, and other gadgets, you can visualize how they work.

The hybrid holsters combine Kydex and leather. The hybrid holster is typically used in IWB (inside waist band) applications. When I choose to carry somewhere that I can't un-tuck my shirt, where a sport jacket or vest isn't appropriate, or loose fitting clothing won't do, I employ one of these. In most cases the use of some fancy clips that wrap up over your pants waistband and into your belt. The Kydex rides against the inside of your pant, and the leather portion against you. Thus, the holster and weapon are sandwiched between you and your pants, held in place by your waistband and belt, and when your shirt is tucked in and over this, all you can see is two small clips over your belt. 99.9% of people don't even notice things like that, so this method is very concealable. The fact that they allow leather against you makes them a bit more comfortable than plastic too, which explains their appeal.

Can't you just use an all leather holster for this? Sure. However, the handy part about Kydex is how it manages to keep the form of your weapon all while resisting collapse. In turn, this makes those types of holsters much easier to draw from and a great deal easier for insertion. After all, who wants to fumble around with a

loaded gun on your hip trying to holster it? Not me. Keep in mind that adding two to five pounds of gun and holster to a pair of pants dictates that you cinch up your belt a bit. The easier you can insert and draw your weapon, the better off and safer you'll be.

Nylon holsters are typically very generic. Considering they are technically a type of fabric, few are made to one model of weapon. Many are simply described as small, medium, large, etc. Drop leg holsters like those used in tactical situations, competition, etc. are often constructed of nylon. Some of the plain old black nylon fifteen-dollar specials are used for OWB carry too. They don't cost much, are very forgiving, and do a great job for general purposes.

## THE HANDY PART ABOUT KYDEX IS HOW IT MANAGES TO KEEP THE FORM OF YOUR WEAPON ALL WHILE RESISTING COLLAPSE.

There are tons of other methods of carrying and many other types and kinds of holsters. Boot holsters and ankle holsters won't usually forgive a large gun, but small guns can be carried this way. We've even helped many women carry. They can be especially hard to aid considering their daily dress. Women's clothes are often more snug than men's and we have to work harder to achieve concealment for them in some cases. While I don't advocate carrying a weapon other than on your person, holsters for inside your purse exist. I consider this a carry method of last resort. We even have bra holsters for small weapons. Yes, you read that correctly. The perks of owning a gun shop never end...

I'm constantly asking my customers what they intend on doing with the purchase 90% of the time. When they can answer that question sufficiently, we can make some very fitting recommendations. You'll have to apply the same notion to your holster shopping. If you do, you'll be on track to pick up what you need and that will make all the difference. Stay safe friends, and carry often. 🤠



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