



REALITYCHECK™

Clint Smith

FIRST-PERSON
THOUGHTS ON
SURVIVING IN
THE REAL WORLD

100 Rounds

The number 100 seems to have a nice ring to it, like 100 bucks in your pocket, 100 points on the score board, 100 mph on the radar screen, and you can fill in your own favorites.

I have another idea to put that 100 to. "What drills should I practice when I go home," is a question I'm often asked. So here is a simple perspective of what I think you should do with 100 rounds at the range.

Pick a distance you can actually hit stuff at — remembering everyone has the potential to be a good shot short range. Start close and work your way back until you start to miss. Now you know that limit.

The Drill

Targets

I would be absolutely elated if my students could hit a standard white paper plate to 15 yards on all exercises. If you get better than that make the plate smaller — or move farther away.

Timers

I'm not opposed to timers, I've just never seen one in a fight. If you are shooting and missing slow down or move closer. When you start to hit each time, move back and adjust the mental rheostat in your head to deliver the shot in a more timely fashion. Shoot well, not fast. In the "real world" every round leaving your barrel will have a lawyer attached to it.

Marksmanship

From ready, gun in hand, muzzle directed between you and the target, fire 10 singles — slowly placing them all on your chosen target. Use the safety each time you come off the target. Put your finger straight and come off the target between each shot.

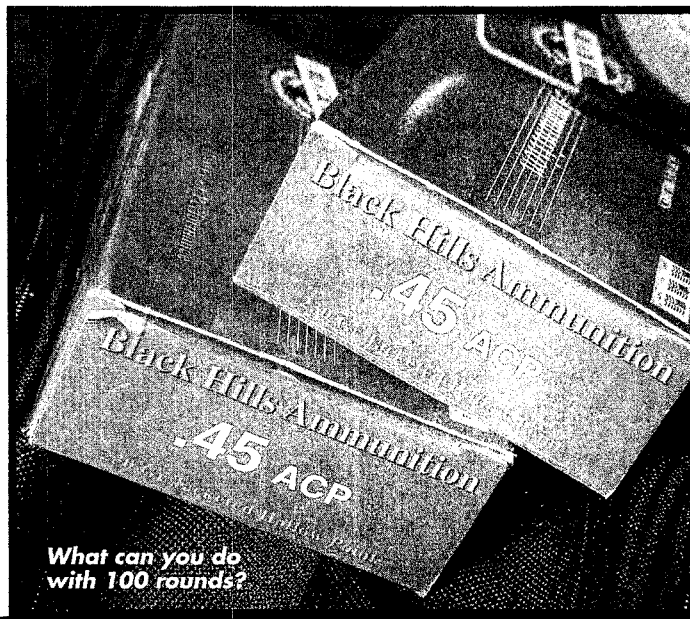
Many folks are scared of the trigger. Don't be. An easy solution is to remember: muzzle on the target, finger on the trigger; muzzle off the target, finger off the trigger. If my sights are on the target my finger should be on the trigger and whether or not I shoot will be based on what the threat does not what I'm doing.

Next, from ready fire five, sighted pairs; not hammers, double-taps, split-hammers or whatever. Look at the sight and press, look at the sight and press. Practice trigger reset as appropriate to your handgun action type and try to not "bounce" your finger off the trigger between shots.

Loading

Put one round in the handgun, fire, when the gun goes empty keep the muzzle on or in the area of the target and reload. Historically, empty guns are treated like the pox. An empty gun is not bad luck, it's simply a reality of being in a fight. The bad luck comes from what I do with the gun when it is empty. Keep the gun between you and the target and reload.

The thought comes to mind of a tactical load, the saving of ammo or equipment from being dropped on the ground. In a fight



What can you do with 100 rounds?

you will most often shoot until you win, or the gun goes empty. If the fight is over or contained, I'm not sure taking a working gun apart in this volatile environment is a good idea. Three rounds in the gun are better than seven or 15 in a pouch. Don't fix stuff that is not broke, and it's easier to reload by empty load than it is by tactical load. I practice empty loads. Do this drill 10 times.

Non-Compliant Threats

Humans have three places of natural armor — attack these. An "A" response is center of mass. The "B" response is the head and "C" includes a plan A and B but adds the pelvis. Handguns are a poor choice of tools to fight with, anticipate that what you shoot will not work. This drill addresses that issue. You can shoot the body and pelvis at a certain speed, and remember, the head is not smaller, it's just different.

Slow down to hit the head since whatever else you have fired is not working. If you are shooting paper plates use two big plates stacked on top of each other and a 3"x 5" card above the two plates.

From ready shoot two on the center plate and one on the card. Do this two times. Shoot three on the center plate and one on the card. Do this two times. Shoot two on the center plate, two on the lower plate, one on the card. Do this one time.

Drawing

Practice your drawing stroke smoothly, speed comes from practice. UNLOADED, draw 10 or 15 times correctly and smoothly, following through to include a sight picture and hammer fall.

Load, draw and fire 10 singles, holstering between shots. Use the safety and keep your finger off the trigger while holstering. If you have the draw down correctly, draw — and while drawing — take one step back as you do, and fire one round. Do this 10 times.

Distance is your friend, practice stepping back, as it programs withdrawal. You'll like it and so will the jury. It shows your willingness to create distance and allow the threat an out if they choose to take it. Work on movement as your skills

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Legendary Reliability...

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progress. Withdrawals and lateral movements are both good skills to have, but they are acquired over time.

Malfunctions

The better your gun works the more you should practice malfunctions. Fights and family vacations have something in common — they rarely come out the way they were planned.

Setups for this are simple.

1. Leave the magazine unseated, round in chamber and fire when ready.
2. Stick a piece of brass in the top of the ejection port.
3. Set up a double feed.

The response is always the same, when the gun does not fire, tap the magazine hard on the base, rack the slide harder, and attempt to fire. If it does, good; if it doesn't, remove the magazine from the gun place it behind your strong hand little finger, rack the action two or three times, reload the gun and fire if you have a target.


It's simple. Everything you do normally you just do it now. If you were loading, you would tap the magazine into place and rack the action and fire as required. If you were unloading you would pull the magazine and rack the action. Run variations five times and after clearing, fire one round to complete the cycle of operation in your head. Go slow and do it correctly. You have 21 rounds for this portion.

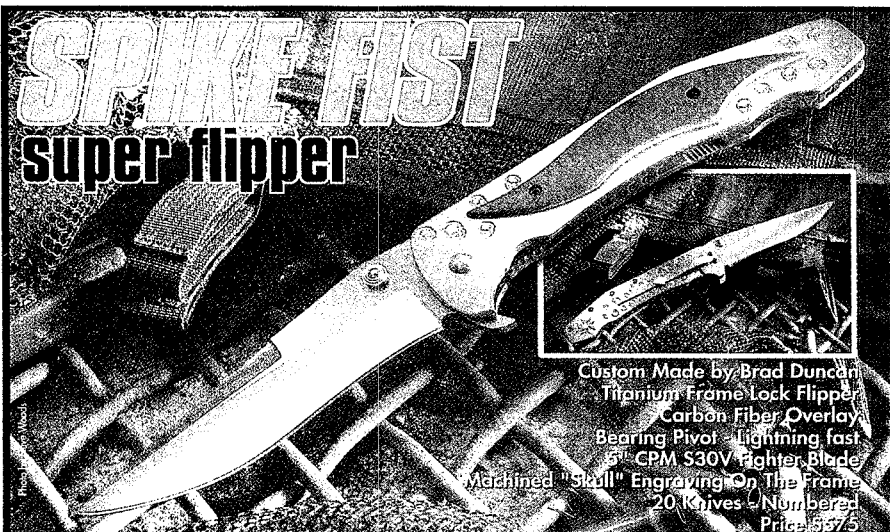
Strong & Opposite Hand

Practice shooting five singles — with the strong hand only — from ready. Carefully transfer the gun to your opposite hand and shoot five singles. If you are not up to a level to do all parts of this exercise, then do the ones you can. Shooting, in my opinion, is like swimming. You should do it with a buddy. They can see and assist you and you can do the same in kind.

Go slowly and carefully and speed and skill comes with time — and practice.

The thought passes though the mind of some that 100 rounds is not much shooting. Then again, some folks base the quality of their day at the range on the number of rounds they fired — quantity. I'd prefer quality, myself. More isn't always better. Then again if you have unlimited ammo, guns and range time your choices may be different.

One-hundred rounds is pretty good practice. You may not like the shooting practice, but just maybe, 100 rounds of perfect practice could make for skills that will save your life. Or, you could go to the movies and watch Raquel Welch in *100 Rifles* take a shower in the train water tank chute. Either one can be fun, and I'd recommend both. 



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