

LOW-LIGHT DEFENSE

5

**Weapon Light Mistakes
That Could Get You
(Or Your Loved Ones)
Killed**





According to FBI statistics, 80% of shootings happen in low-light.

Regardless of lighting conditions, *you are responsible for every bullet that leaves your pistol.* Before deploying deadly force, you need a light to assess the situation.

Carrying a handheld light is one option, but a weapon-mounted light will provide significant advantages in low-light self-defense situations.

Your weapon-mounted light could be the single factor determining whether or not you make the right decision during a potentially violent encounter. Deciding to carry a pistol-mounted light is a significant step. After making this decision, make sure you arm yourself with the knowledge and techniques to succeed with this tool.

Let's first address the 4 fundamental rules of firearm safety:

- All guns are always loaded.
- Never point your weapon at anything you are not willing to destroy.
- Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target and you've made the decision to shoot.
- *Be aware of the target foreground and background.*

With these fundamentals covered, let's get back to the issue at hand - **the dark.**



MISTAKE #1

Relying on your weapon light as your primary light source.

You operate in low light conditions coming into the basement, walking to your car in a dark parking lot, looking for your keys under the couch, or investigating a bump in the night. These are the right times to use your handheld light. Do not draw your weapon to use its light; this would violate firearm safety rule #2 and probably violates safety rule #4. By using your weapon light, you are likely to point your pistol at things and people that should not be in the line of fire.

A handheld light is appropriate, safe, and legal for everyday tasks where a weapon light may not be. It is amazing how frequently you will use a handheld light if it is available.

But a handheld light's usefulness can extend past daily administrative tasks; it may be used as the first line of defense to deter and avoid possible threats without escalating the situation. If you are approached on a dark street, you may use your handheld light to assess. This act alone may deter a criminal looking for an easy target. The vast majority of the time, the encounter will be innocent and would not justify deploying your weapon. Even worse, drawing your weapon could provoke an armed response - imagine using a weapon-mounted light on an officer or other armed citizen. *Your pistol light is not the right tool for daily use.*

When walking at night, keep your handheld light readily at hand in case you need it quickly.



While a handheld should be your primary lighting source for everyday tasks, a weapon light is still critical. A weapon-mounted light allows you two-handed control of your pistol. This provides higher speed, accuracy, and control than the various handheld light techniques. However, using a handheld light does not mean you shouldn't switch to use your weapon light.

For the situation in which you are using your handheld light and need to switch to your weapon light:

1. Discard your handheld light (drop it, or retain it with a flashlight ring such as the Switchback).
2. Perform a two-handed draw.
3. Activate your weapon light.
4. Defend effectively.





MISTAKE #2

Not using a weapon light because it gives away your position.

It's common to think that if you use a light, you are giving away your position. You are. But light gives you the power to assess and make better decisions. The benefits of using your light far outweigh potential drawbacks to carrying it. You need light to:

- Navigate.
- Assess whether or not you're facing a real threat.
- De-escalate a situation.
- Deter possible threats.
- Control and eliminate the threat if needed.

In a dim parking lot, inside your unlit house, or if the lights go out at work, the weapon light may give away your location. However, any threat can only see what you allow them to see. You control when your light is turned on/off, and where your beam is pointing. (If you have enough lumens pointed at someone's face, they may only vaguely know your general direction.) *In most cases, there is enough illumination for you to be seen anyways.* Not having a light is a weakness; you need to collect more visual data. Without it, you are in the dark (literally), and this gives an advantage to any potential threats.

Another key is to know when to use a "constant-on" lighting or a "momentary" technique. Both of these techniques have advantages and disadvantages, and the situation and your training will ultimately determine which is appropriate.

Momentary is characterized by briefly turning your light on, like a camera flash. This technique works well in completely dark environments. It can be a useful navigation technique when searching for a threat. Whether you are on the move or staying put behind cover, the main benefit is collecting visual data while keeping your position unknown. Turn the light on briefly, process data, and move again in the dark. This provides you with critical information, while potential observers may only know where you were. If there is too much ambient light, this technique may not be effective. In this case, using a "constant-on" technique can yield more benefits.

Constant-on is when you keep your weapon-light on without needing to keep a finger on the button. This technique is best if you need to navigate an environment that has some ambient light or if you need to contact a threat directly. The main benefits of this technique are:

- You have constant light for easier navigation and identification.
- You're ready to control any threat more effectively by keeping the light in their face.
- You can get a full, two-handed grip on your firearm without needing to modify your grip to activate your light switch.



Remove your weapon light from your gun, turn out the lights, and have someone shine the weapon light beam across your visual horizon from varying distances so you can experience how disorienting it is.

MISTAKE #3

Blinding yourself.

You need to be able to illuminate your surroundings without jeopardizing your night vision. This has turned some shooters against using high lumen weapon lights. They're more likely to bounce off reflective surfaces like white walls, mirrors, windows, and TVs. This "backsplash" can illuminate you and temporarily blind you. But it only happens if you let it. If you're not pointing your firearm at a threat, you can use two techniques to avoid backsplash while navigating a dark environment--even if you have a high lumen light. These techniques are Baseboard and Umbrella lighting.



Baseboard lighting is best outside or in a structure with high ceilings like a warehouse or industrial building. In this case, your light points down at the ground a couple of feet in front of you. This illuminates your immediate surroundings and allows light to bounce off surfaces without disrupting your visual horizon.



Umbrella lighting works best inside a structure with low ceilings like a house or an office building. Your light (and firearm) point upwards, so light reflects off the ceiling, diffusing the bright light, and illuminating the room.

Analyze the layout of your own home or any locations you frequent. Where are surfaces that will reflect back at you? TV screens, mirrors, glass, white walls, etc.

From either of these positions, you can navigate and search for outlines of possible threats while avoiding backsplash. You can quickly redirect the hotspot onto a threat when/if you need to. These techniques are also useful if you must use your weapon light for illumination but do not want to risk pointing your pistol at someone - for instance, when the late-night house intruder turns out to be a child or unexpected relative.

MISTAKE #4

Not having a proper holster for your gun and light.

A properly fitting holster is essential for every pistol. You need to safely carry your gun and light throughout your daily tasks without continually fidgeting with your firearm or worrying whether or not it's secure. Holsters properly locate the pistol, and cover the trigger; a holstered weapon is considered safe. There are many things to consider when selecting a holster for your particular setup and situation.

Carrying a pistol with a light does not have to be uncomfortable. With the right fitting holster, you can carry a pistol with a light more easily than a generic holster can carry a pistol alone. Because we believe the weapon light is a necessity, not a luxury, our mission at Werkz is to enable you to carry your weapon light with ease. We've identified the vital components of maximizing wearability, concealability, and draw performance.



Even if you don't carry, it's a good idea to have a holster. You don't want to be fumbling for your gun on the nightstand and negligently discharge your weapon because the trigger is exposed.



Precision-Fit

A holster that's designed specifically for your firearm will always outperform a one-size-fits-many holster. This is especially true when it comes to choosing a holster for a gun with a light. Pistols with lights require holsters with particular attention to retention, draw, and reholster performance. Just like you buy a phone case fitted to your particular phone, you should invest in a holster for your exact gun and light. We offer the largest selection of production precision-fit light-bearing holsters on the market. If something in our collection doesn't match your specific setup, we recommend that you seek a custom fit option from a reputable brand. Precision-fit should be your primary concern.



Custom Mounting Options

Your unique physical build and lifestyle will dictate your preferred style of carrying. A good holster can support you through flexible mounting options. Most shooters find that it takes a little experimentation to find the perfect mix of performance and security for their situation. If a belt clip doesn't work for you, don't just throw in the towel. Try soft loops or c-hooks. Try it with/without the concealment claw. Experiment with different carry positions. The holster and its accessories are there to work for you. Our holsters offer a variety of mounting or carrying options.



Minimalist Design

When it comes to everyday carry and concealment, less holster material and bulk is always better - as long as it still protects you and the firearm. Extra neoprene, nylon, and leather padding might seem like a good idea for improving comfort or stability, but in reality, most turn into sweaty hotspots. They also wear out fast.

Retention

Your pistol needs to stay in the holster unless you're actively drawing your weapon. You don't want to walk out of a movie theater and realize your gun is under one of the seats in a pile of popcorn, or lean down to pick up your kid and have your gun slide out and skitter across the floor. On the other hand, your firearm must be readily accessible if you need to use it to defend yourself. Adjustable click-in retention lets you dictate the balance between smoothly drawing your gun and keeping it firmly in place.



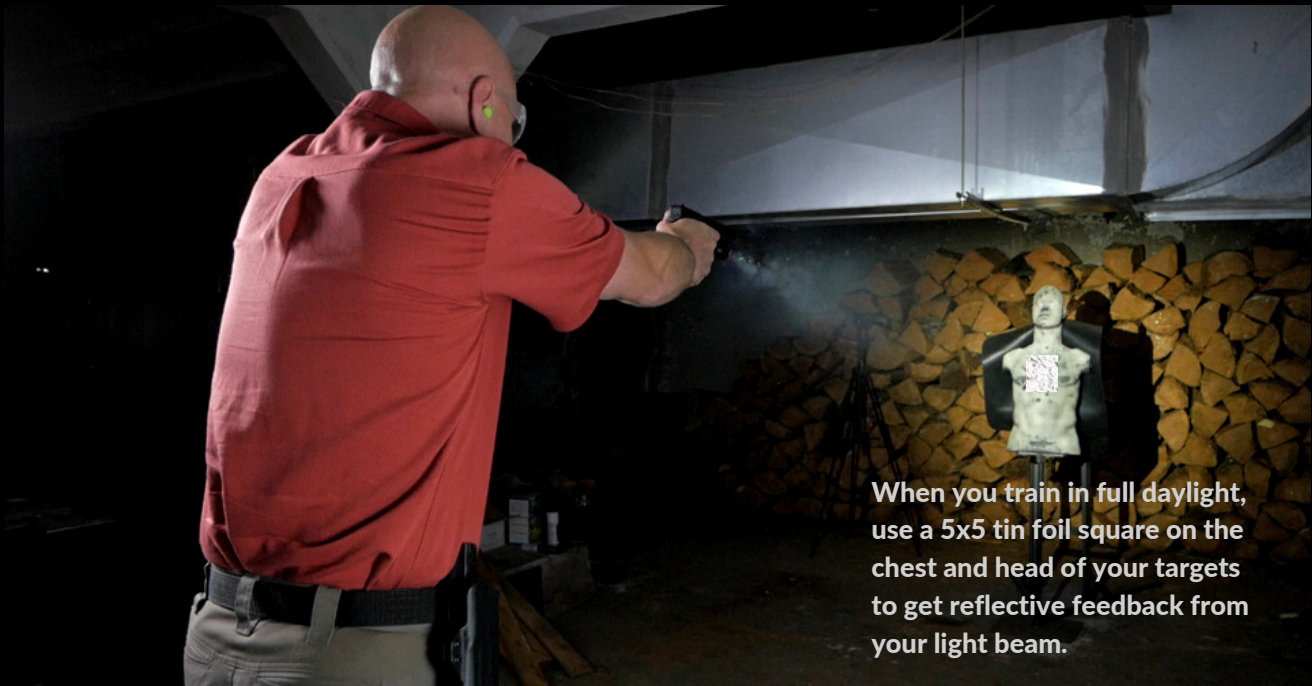
Shooting Grip

Your holster should provide you with a shooting grip. A shooter's grip is your ability to get a full hand-grip on your pistol while the firearm is holstered. This allows you to draw safely, quickly, and get on target reliably without extra holster material getting in the way.

Weapon Modification Support

If you have any weapon modifications such as red dot sight, suppressor height sights, threaded barrel, or compensator, you want to be sure you are buying a holster that will support them. Aside from the holster simply not working, you may have trouble securing your firearm safely.





When you train in full daylight, use a 5x5 tin foil square on the chest and head of your targets to get reflective feedback from your light beam.

MISTAKE #5

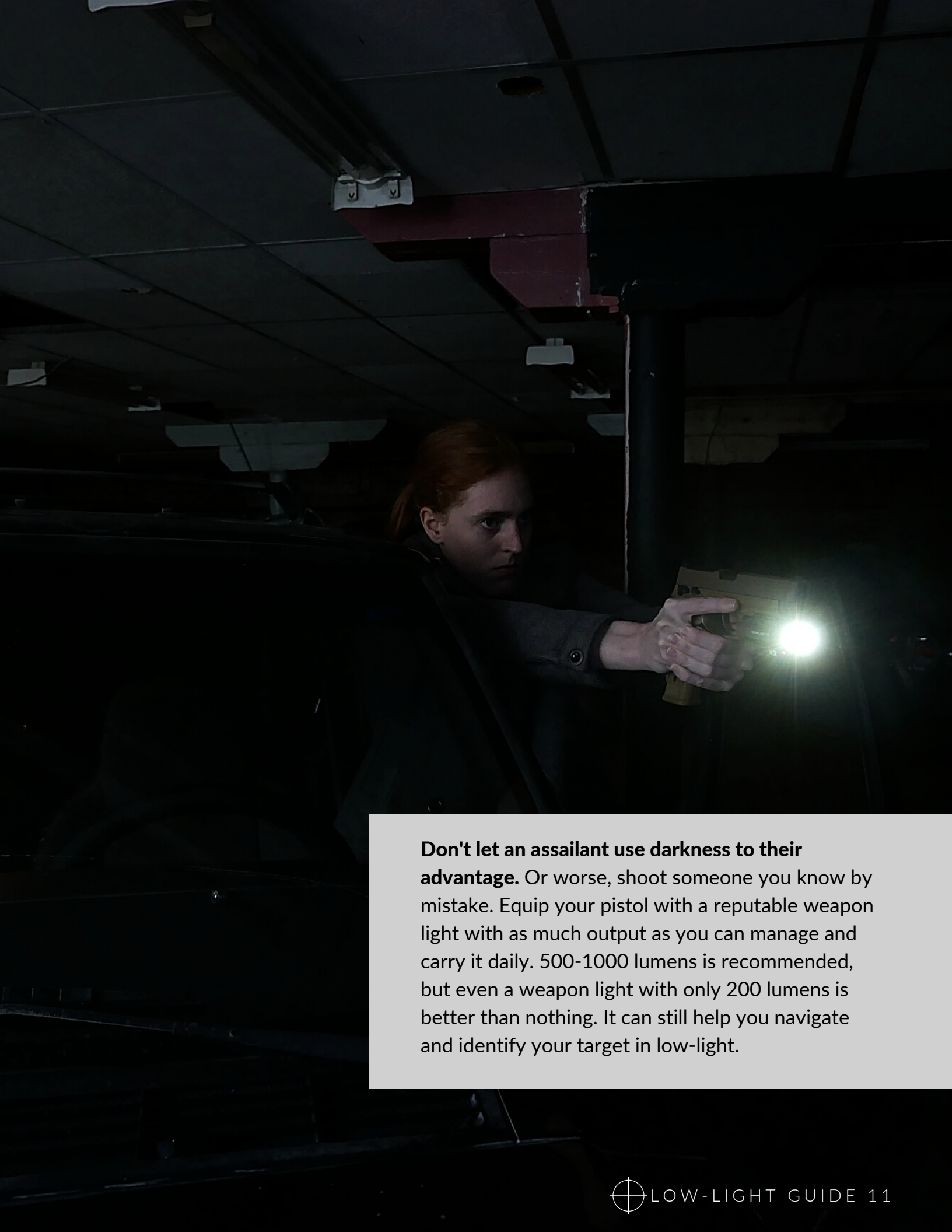
Assuming that low-light training is for professionals only.

Anyone can be attacked in the dark so training with a weapon light is necessary for every shooter but ignored mainly for the following two reasons:

1. No access to a range or a safe shooting location with low light/night conditions.
2. Not knowing what types of drills to perform with a weapon light.

There are many drills you can practice in daylight conditions, and while they won't be a substitute for an actual low-light training course, they will put you way ahead of most shooters when it comes to weapon light competency.

- Activate your light during dry fire practice.
- Shooting while activating your WML during your regular shooting drills.
- Transitioning from handheld to a weapon light.
- Momentary activation while scanning and moving.
- Remove your light from your firearm (or use a blue gun) and run mock scenarios in your home with lights out.



Don't let an assailant use darkness to their advantage. Or worse, shoot someone you know by mistake. Equip your pistol with a reputable weapon light with as much output as you can manage and carry it daily. 500-1000 lumens is recommended, but even a weapon light with only 200 lumens is better than nothing. It can still help you navigate and identify your target in low-light.



**We design and build holsters for pistols with lights.
A precision-fit holster helps you to carry with confidence,
so you're ready to defend yourself day and night.**



FIND YOUR HOLSTER

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