

## Lethal Weapons in the Home

Picture this. It's late at night and you hear a noise at the back door or a window inside your home. You get up to investigate and find an intruder breaking into your home. What would you do?

The first answer is to call the police, but in the time it takes for them to arrive, a criminal may harm you or your family. Chances are the home invader will be armed with a knife or a gun, so the job of defender may be left entirely up to you.

### Owning A Gun

While it's always wise to do everything you can to safeguard your home from a break in, if a criminal is intent on getting into your house, chances are they will. This frightening concept causes home owners all over the country to purchase firearms and keep them easily accessible. Simply having the gun can make people feel safer, but if you own one it is vital to learn how to properly handle, maintain and fire the weapon.

The seriousness of owning a gun must never be forgotten. Every year people are killed by accidental gunfire. It is a deadly instrument that should be treated with care and respect. There are many classes in which new gun owners can learn to handle and fire it correctly. These courses also teach people to clean and maintain their weapons to keep them in top working order.

### When Children Are Involved

Make no mistake, there are hazards to keeping any lethal weapon in the home, and when children are present the danger is multiplied. All children are naturally curious, and a gun is something that can easily peak their interest, especially when they see them prominently displayed in television shows and films. Adults who own any type of deadly weapon must take every precaution to keep it out of the hands of young kids.

Storing a gun in a locked drawer or cabinet and keeping the key with you is an ideal solution. This will help to ensure that a child can not get to it for any reason. It is also advisable to keep the gun unloaded, just in case. That way if a young one is able to find the weapon, at least it will not be a danger. Try to find places for the firearm and the bullets that are secure but also easily accessible in case you need to get to them in a hurry.

At some point you may feel your kids are old enough to learn about the gun you keep in the home. When this time comes, express how important it is to be very cautious when handling a weapon and how dangerous they are. Have your kids take a gun safety course when you feel they are old enough to handle a firearm on their own.

### Before Purchasing A Gun

Every state has laws that govern gun use and ownership. You will need to find out what they are, and make sure you have the proper permits to legally own a firearm. The laws can vary depending on whether you are attempting to buy a handgun, shotgun or other type of firearm. Most of these weapons have a mandatory waiting period before you may bring them home, and during this time a background check will be conducted to make sure you do not have any **felony convictions and/or domestic violence convictions** and can legally own a gun.