There is a belief among many serious self-defense oriented shooters and instructors that the vast majority of training to speedload an auto pistol should entail shooting the gun to slidelock first. This is based on the concept that in a real fight you’re probably not counting rounds, the first clue you’ll have that your gun is getting low on ammo is when it stops firing because the slide has locked back. If we accept that (I’m not here to debate it one way or the other), this begs the question: What is the best technique for dropping the slide after we’ve gotten a fresh mag in the gun?

There are two commonly accepted ways. (1) After inserting a fresh mag, come over the top of the gun, grab the rear of the slide in your fist, pull it backwards, release it to go forward, then reacquire your two-handed grip. (2) After mag insertion depress the slide stop with your support hand thumb. Which is best, I think, depends on how much you’re willing to practice. The advantage of yanking the slide is that it requires less practice to master the technique. It’s a sad truth that most people, even those paying good money for a firearms training class, are never, or very rarely, going to practice what they’ve been taught. For such people, yanking the slide is the technique of choice.