



Heckler & Koch

Story and Photos by Duane Thomas

The Heckler & Koch P30 is HK's latest evolution of the well-established USP-pattern family of auto pistols. Many features on this gun will be old hat to anyone familiar with HK USPs, some will be new and interesting. In this article, I'm just going to hit the real high points in my verbiage and let the photos tell the rest of the story.

The most impressive thing to me about the P30 is its interchangeable side panels/backstrap system. Experienced shooters know it's extremely important how the gun fits their hands, that it points well so that, when bringing it up to eye level during the draw, the sights are ON, no deviation to right or left, up or down, with no effort on the shooter's part. This saves immense amounts of time hunting for the sights. Also, if the gun points naturally it will have much less tendency to "bounce" out of alignment in recoil and be aimed at a dif-

ferent point afterward, but instead just come right back down to the same spot. This all has to do with the size and shape of the grip frame. The HK P30 is the first gun, other than the 1911, that allows the shooter to adjust the size and shape of the grip in the areas of the backstrap AND side panels to get it to point naturally.

In the past several years we've seen several guns introduced featuring an interchangeable backstrap system, which is certainly a positive thing, as the size and shape of the backstrap really affects how the gun points for elevation. The HK P30, however, has not just three interchangeable backstraps (marked Small, Medium and Large), it also comes with interchangeable left and right grip panels (likewise S, M and L), each size up incorporating more material and curvature to the parts, which allows us to customize the grip for windage, as well. Actually there's no law that



The author was impressed with the Heckler & Koch P30, especially its innovative and useful interchangeable side panels/backstrap system



1. Heckler & Koch's P30 is the latest evolution of the well-established USP family of auto pistols.



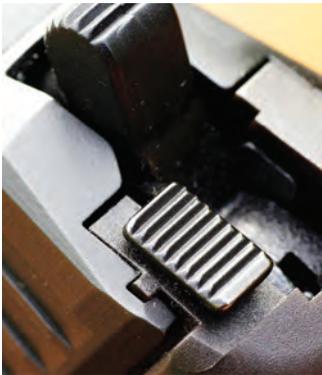
2. The P30 is a medium-sized auto pistol (think in terms of a Glock 19).



3. The P30 comes complete with two magazines, a key for its integral lock system, three backstraps (Small, Medium and Large) and likewise (S,M and L) left and right side panels.



7. The P30's controls are fully ambidextrous, including the slide stop. The author wishes the P30 had retained the smaller slide stop of previous USP-pattern autos, as this elongated design was depressed by his straight thumbs grips resulting in failures to lock open when empty.



8. The decocking lever on this DA/SA auto pistol is located to the left of the hammer, and pushes down to operate.



9. Shown is the P30's grip stripped of side panels and backstrap. To custom fit the gun to the shooter's hand,

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