Some time back, Mark Pixler and I were trying to come up with a list of new handguns that were compact and concealable, chambered for an adequate defensive caliber, had a decent magazine capacity and, above all, were affordable. That last requirement was the deal killer. There are a lot of good semiautos on the market, but unless you want to search for used guns, about $400 or more is your starting point.

Several weeks ago, I received a press release about a new 9mm semiautomatic pistol from an outfit I’d never heard of, SCCY (pronounced “Sky”) Industries. The gun looked like your standard compact 9mm, polymer frame, steel slide, double-action-only, 10-round magazine, etc., etc. It’s 4” high, 5.7” long, 1” wide, 3.1” barrel, and weighs 15 oz. unloaded. Nothing out of the ordinary here. Then I saw the price… $299 MSRP for the basic black model. In real life, that usually translates to an over-the-counter price of $250-$275. That got my attention, and I ordered one.

Usually, when you see a handgun going for that price, it’s either used, made in some place that ends in –stan or looks like a brick with a handle. The SCCY CPX-2 is none of the above. It’s brand-new, made on CNC equipment in a modern 21,000 square foot factory in Daytona Beach, Florida, and looks and feels quite nice indeed.

The CPX-2 comes with two 10-round magazines with finger extension bases installed, plus two extra flat bases in case you want the extra concealability these offer. The obligatory “child-resistant safety lock” is actually the best one I’ve ever seen. It is precisely fitted to cover the entire trigger guard area.

The three-dot sight system is highly visible, and the rear sight is adjustable for windage with a locking screw. You can see just enough daylight on either side of the front sight to make sight acquisition almost instinctive.

There is no manual safety on the CPX-2. If you want such a thing, you can order the CPX-1 model, which costs more. Quite frankly, I’ve never seen the need for a manual safety on a pistol with a nine-pound double-action trigger pull, but some people thrive on needless complexity. Go figure.

I took the CPX-2 to the range with a box of Winchester 115-grain FMJs, a box of Remington 115-grain JHPs and a ziplock bag of assorted odds.