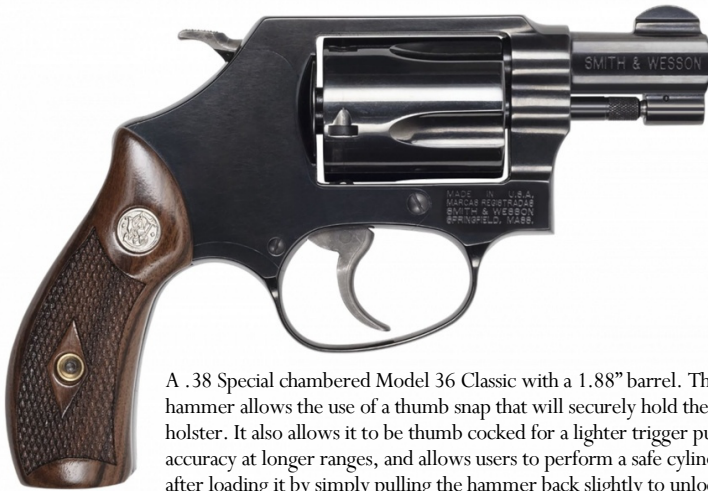


## WEAPON GUIDE

# S&W MODEL 36

SMALL ARMS REVIEW TEAM

### COMPACT REVOLVER (.38 SPECIAL)



A .38 Special chambered Model 36 Classic with a 1.88" barrel. The external hammer allows the use of a thumb snap that will securely hold the revolver in a holster. It also allows it to be thumb cocked for a lighter trigger pull for more accuracy at longer ranges, and allows users to perform a safe cylinder rotation check after loading it by simply pulling the hammer back slightly to unlock the cylinder.



Bianchi Speed Strips



HKS Speedloader Model 36-A

The S&W Model 36 "Chief's Special" (c. 1950) is a small J-frame revolver which uses a steel frame. The latest variant, the Model 36 Classic (c. 2025), does not have an Internal Lock frame that previous variants had from 1996 until the Classic was introduced, which is highly desirable as these locks can fail, and when they do they lock the gun up. If you want to lock it when in storage then simply place a padlock through the frame or use a Master Lock Gun Lock.

If you want a pocket gun a lighter internal hammer S&W Centennial (like the Model

442 with an aluminium frame) and Ruger LCR are best, but at the cost of increased recoil. The heavier steel frame Model 36 is better suited to use with high performance +P loads, though its weight and external hammer make it best suited to IWB or waistpack type holsters, not pockets.

In addition to being easier to shoot well, a steel frame revolver like this is inherently more robust and better suited to use as an impact weapon than aluminium and polymer frame revolvers.

The Model 36 Classic comes with small grips like those used on the original Model

36, which are best replaced with modern ergonomic grips to aid rapid fire control, such as the Secret Service Grips from Eagle Grips.

The .38 Special round is best in a small frame revolver as it has the best mix of stopping power and controllability, with a huge range of loads to choose from, including shotshell loads for snake defense.

We recommend the Hornady 38 Special 90gr FTX Critical Defense Lite load and (for the recoil sensitive) the Federal Personal Defense 38 Special 110 Grain Hydra-Shok Low Recoil load.

### SUMMARY

A strong steel frame revolver, suitable for use with +P loads, the Model 36 is an excellent choice for concealed carry in an IWB or waistpack type holster.

### ACCESSORIES

#### Log Book

Firearm Usage & Maintenance Log Book.  
[Blackheart International]

#### Cleaning Kit

BoreSnake Soft Sided Cleaning Kit (34002).  
[Hoppe's]

#### Speedloader

HKS Speedloader Model 36-A.  
[HKS]

#### Dry Fire Rounds

A-Zoom Snap Caps.  
[Lyman Products Corporation]

#### Ear Plugs

EarPro EP3 or EP4.  
[SureFire]

#### Wood Grips

Secret Service Grips.  
[Eagle Grips]

#### Belt Holster

BHYCS-TB Inside the Waist Scabbard with Thumb Break.  
[Black Hills Leather Store]

#### Waistpack Holster

Stealth Pac.  
[Coronado Leather]

#### Tactical Flashlight

G2X LE.  
[SureFire]

### HOT TIP

Have a gunsmith give it an action job for a smoother and more consistent trigger pull to aid accurate shooting.