

## PRODUCT REVIEW

# S&W M&P9 SHIELD PLUS

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## SUBCOMPACT SELF-LOADING PISTOL (9X19MM)



The Smith & Wesson Shield Plus (c. 2021) is a higher capacity version of the subcompact Shield (c. 2012). It uses a semi-staggered 10 round magazine rather than the single stack 7 round magazine in the Shield.

There are a wide range of M&P9 series pistols in a variety of sizes and calibers, but the most popular for concealed use have been the subcompact Shield and Shield Plus. The grip on these subcompacts is tall enough for people with small hands to get all their fingers on the grip (unlike the Glock 26), but can be fitted with a longer 13 round magazine for people with larger hands who want a full grip, or the Pearce Grips PG-MPPL magazine baseplate grip extension.

It lacks a dedicated mount on the frame, though some can be fitted by bolting them to the trigger guard (like the Streamlight TLR-6).

The Performance Center version has a longer 4" barrel and slide which provides a longer sight radius and better ballistics over the standard Shield Plus (3.1" barrel), but it weighs markedly more (23.8 vs. 16.9 ounces), though the added weight makes it easier to shoot well.

The single-action (SA) type mechanism used in striker fired pistols like this provides a short trigger pull for every shot, much like conventional SA pistols like the Colt 1911 but without the need for an external hammer. The striker (firing pin) is partially cocked when the slide is moved fully rearwards, as occurs when chambering a round, while pulling the trigger completes the cocking process and releases the striker to fire the chambered round.

It has been proven to be very reliable and durable, in large part due to their simplicity, tough corrosion

resistant finish, and shock absorbing polymer frame.

If it is not carried in a holster it is best to leave the chamber unloaded if not fitted with a heavier 10 pound trigger if you have the version without a safety catch (not recommended as it is too small and not ambidextrous), while users need to ensure their finger is outside the trigger guard when drawing it from a holster or pocket (and reholstering) to prevent an accidental discharge.

The +P pressure civilian rounds and similar pressure mil-spec NATO rounds are best, not standard (SAAMI) pressure civilian rounds as this can result in malfunctions due to a weak grip, due to an injury, an awkward firing position, or environmental contaminants like sand or mud getting inside the pistol.

I recommend the proven CCI 124 Grain Gold Dot +P load used by the NYPD.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Shield Plus has proven to be very reliable and durable and one of the few subcompacts with a heavier trigger pull option (along with the outstanding Glock 26).

### RECOMMENDED ACCESSORIES

#### Handbook

Safety & Instruction Manual For S&W and M&P Shield Plus. [Smith & Wesson]

#### Log Book

Firearm Usage & Maintenance Log Book. [Blackheart International]

#### Cleaning Kit

BoreSnake Soft Sided Cleaning Kit (34002 for .357/38/9mm handguns). [Hoppe's]

#### Dry Fire Rounds

A-Zoom 9mm Luger Snap Caps. [Lyman Products Corporation]

#### High Visibility Sights

DXW2 Big Dot Yellow—S&W. [XS Sight Systems]

#### Holster

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

#### Tactical Light

E2T-MV Tactician. [Streamlight]

### HOT TIP 1

Some people who have the version without the safety catch carry it empty chamber (Israeli style) if the heavier 10-lb trigger is not fitted.

### HOT TIP 2

Training magazines can suffer metal fatigue to their springs so don't use them for combat.