



# H I D D E N *in plain sight*

main and inset: Neatly tucked behind a family photo, a firearm hides within easy reach of the homeowner.

## CONCEALING WEAPONS IN THE HOME

[ BY STEVE FARMER ]

***Whenever I tell someone I have a gun in every room of the house except my children's bedrooms, I get that shocked look, even from guys at the range.***

**D**on't get me wrong, I don't go around telling this to everyone I know or meet, but most of my friends are aware of it. Some see me as paranoid, while others see me as prepared.

Before I go any further, let me explain. I have worked in law enforcement or corrections for nearly 25 years. During that time, I've had my share of threats including criminals who have promised to find me when they are re-

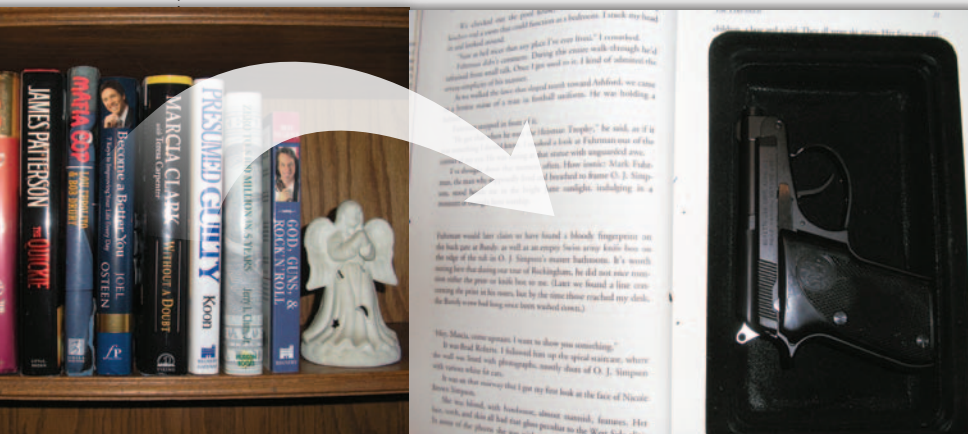
leased. I take those threats seriously, especially since I have a wife and two children at home, and we live in a rural location. The closest police officer may be a 45-minute wait. I could care less about any belongings should someone break in, but my family, as I'm sure with most people, is my world. I love my wife, daughter, and son more than anything.

Perhaps you can understand and relate.

I've been wrestling with the idea of writing this column for years. Do I really want to tell people I have guns throughout my house and possibly alert a burglar? Of course not. But given the fact this article will appear in a magazine that caters to people who believe strongly enough in concealed carry to buy a subscription, I'm probably safe.

Some of you may read this and not believe what I do is also necessary for your life. That's fine. Everyone has to assess their situation and the factors that could make them more of a target. Do you work in a job that angers people? Are criminals the people you anger? Do you live in a remote location, a rural

below: A hollowed-out book forms a great hiding place, provided you have other, similar books nearby.



## Where can you buy ordinary household objects designed to conceal a gun?

The Sportsman Guide  
[www.sportsmansguide.com](http://www.sportsmansguide.com)

- Hollowed out book: \$21.97
- Octagon gun clock: \$39.97
- Hide-a-gun picture frame: \$39.97
- Between-the-studs wall safe: \$29.97



above and right: This bread box has a secret, and provides a readily available firearm in the kitchen.



setting or in the city? Do you have children at home who are mature and stable enough to have loaded guns easily accessible? These are factors you need to consider.

While I'm about to tell you ways to hide guns around the house for easy access, I would be wrong to not mention the number one rule when it comes to guns, which is safety. You have to make sure—above anything else—that you take care of safety. While you're preparing yourself, could you possibly be creating a situation where your child shoots a friend? What about your friends? What would one of them do if they found a hidden gun? These are

not only personal questions you must consider, but questions that could have very serious legal consequences should something terrible happen.

My first advice is to err on the side of caution. When my children were younger I was a lot more cautious. Now that my children are young adults with hundreds of hours at the range, and most importantly a thorough knowledge of gun safety from me harping on them, I feel a lot more comfortable having guns hidden around the house. It gives me a sense of security. This, however, is a personal question you have to answer after weighing many factors including the likelihood a child or some-

one else will find one of your guns at some point. It will be easier for some to answer, but the first consideration for everyone is the same: safety.

Since I've made the choice to have guns throughout my house (on top of other security measures), I'll give you some ideas on how I make my guns accessible. First, I didn't want to put all my eggs in one basket, or in this case, all my guns in one place. I have three levels to my home. Should I be stuck in the basement with home invaders on the ground floor the gun upstairs in my bedroom will not do me any good. I began placing guns by putting one on each level of the home in places or ob-



*Out of sight, but not out of reach:  
guns can be hidden from burglars,  
but within easy reach for self-defense.*

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jects to provide a hiding place instead of leaving a gun out in the open.

I also wanted to have at least one gun in my bedroom in case a home invader tried to break into the house while I slept. My wife and I spend a lot of time in the kitchen, so that became another place to hide a gun. Your decision on where to place guns depends on the floor plan of your house and the rooms where you spend the most time. A room you spend little time in may not be a good location unless you can retreat to that room to get the gun.

With that said, let's take a tour of my house.

Entering my house through the front door you will notice all the fixtures of a normal house as you stand in my foyer. I even have nice artwork on the walls, but that's where the difference begins. Behind one of my pictures is a gun safe that's home to my 9mm Glock model 19. I can't think of a better way to greet a home invader.

Before I leave the house each day I stop by that safe to grab my gun. After all, you wouldn't leave home without pants, why should you leave home



*above: A locking gun safe hides behind artwork in the family living room, allowing the homeowner to lock up his firearm discreetly out of sight.*

*right: When it's time to defend yourself, a gun behind the clock might be handy.*



without your gun? Remember, the number one rule in concealed carry is to always make sure you have a gun. The safe also is the first location I stop at when I arrive home each day. I cannot stress enough: if you make the commitment to carry you need to make a commitment to safety. If you live alone, congratulations, but most of us don't. You need to take steps to avoid a tragedy by making sure a child or irresponsible person does not end up with one of your guns. That means the first thing you do when you take off your gun is

put it away. Don't go through the mail, return phone calls or watch television. Put the gun away if it poses a danger.

A big advantage to having a gun near the front door is that it is a common entry point for an intruder. That includes someone who tries to bust in as you answer the door, so remember, first know who's behind the door before you open it—which may allow you to avoid using the gun in the first place.

Now, onto the next room, my kitchen. My kitchen probably looks a lot like your kitchen with a stove, refrigerator,



*main and inset: On the nightstand near the bed, a fully functional clock radio stands ready to do double duty in alarming circumstances.*

table, and coffee mug sitting on the counter near the breadbox. But my breadbox isn't just a breadbox. Sure, you'll find bread in it, but inside the top is a 9mm Beretta 92FS. I can't make a sandwich with it, but if a burglar busted in it would be exactly what the baker ordered.

Leaving the kitchen, you enter my living room where I have the furniture you'll find in most houses including a built-in bookcase where some of my favorite books rest, including one I would turn to in a heartbeat should a home invader bust down my door. Inside the book is a hollow center that holds another Beretta chambered in .22 LR caliber. As the old saying goes, don't judge a book by its cover—especially in my house.

Just off the living room is a half bath that includes an old oak octagon clock to make sure I'm always on time. What I like best about the clock is its interior is hollow with a face that swings open so I can reach my .40 caliber Glock model 23. Like a clock itself, my Glock will always be on time if a home invader busts through the door.

As we leave the bathroom on the way to the master bedroom, a painting on the hallway wall catches your eye. What you don't realize is it too has a hollow back, so it can hold my 9mm Glock 26.

Take a few steps and you're in my bedroom. You can be sure I have some-

thing special there since I spend eight hours a night sleeping in that room. On the nightstand next to my bed, easily accessible if a home invader chooses my house is a

fully functional radio alarm clock that doubles as a quick-access gun safe that opens to reveal my Glock model 36 chambered in .45 caliber. How would you like to be the home invader who sees muzzle flash from this gun?

Do you think I worry too much or I'm just prepared? I'm frequently asked why I have a gun in nearly every room. As I said, my family is the primary reason, but there's another. Victims of a home invasion never have the option of asking the goons to leave. They also don't have the option of sitting behind a bulletproof barrier armed with a 12 gauge shotgun while wearing a bullet-proof vest and a ballistic helmet, with police pulling into the driveway. Home invasions are heart-pounding, high-pressure, fast-paced events that scare you beyond anything you can imagine. You need to react in seconds and it's those seconds you saved by being prepared that can save your life and the lives of your family. You will not have the choice of picking a room where the scumbag attacks you. Having a gun nearby, instead of running through the house or worse, being cut off by the home invaders before you get to your gun, may be your only chance. By having a gun in every room you'll be as prepared as you can be. The only thing better would be to constantly have a gun on you, which is not always possible, especially when you sleep or take a shower.

Now what do you think? Are you like I used to be when I kept all my guns locked in my gun safe? Think about how you would react to a home invasion. Do you have a gun close by and easily accessible to protect your family? If you answered no, you may want to rethink your strategy, but please remember before you go placing guns around the house to ask yourself whether everyone living inside is mature enough for that. I can't tell you what's best for your home. You know your house better than anyone and you probably know where the vulnerable entry points exist. Do what you can to solidify those, and think about how you would handle a home invasion. Run every "What if?" scenario you can think of through your head and ask family and friends to come up with scenarios which may help you address something you didn't think about. The better you have planned, the better your chance for survival should you wake to find your worst nightmare is a reality playing out in your home.

I hope my article gives you some ideas on how to be prepared. I also hope it shows you how you can conceal guns throughout the house, with each weapon hidden, but easily accessible. Even after reading this article, if you choose not to take the same measures as me, you still can take steps to be prepared for a home invasion and come up with a plan should you find yourself in that situation. If you do, you have a tactical advantage and are one step ahead of most people.

I also hope this article makes you think, and motivates you to reassess your home protection plan. Your life and the lives of your family are too valuable to not be prepared. ★