

## **Podcast #191 Transcription: One-Handed Shooting With Jeff Anderson**

It's one of the reasons that I don't enjoy going to the live fire range as much anymore. Walking past the line of shooters who are preparing for a gunfight, with a static paper target hanging a healthy seven to ten yards away, frankly just makes me shake my head and fear for their safety, because this is not how real gunfights happen. Therefore, it's not how you will actually engage an attacker.

I've reviewed the analysis of over 6,000 gunfights, watched over 250 videos of real gunfights and run hundreds of force-on-force drills with students. More importantly, I've been in combat with bullets whizzing by my ears just praying that I don't soil my drawers. I can tell you that it's a whole other level of pucker factor when you're truly fighting for your life.

One of those factors that you need to know, that's so critical for a close combat gunfight that hardly anyone ever trains for, is the reality of shooting with only one hand. Why you need to master one-handed shooting, and how, is what we're going to discover right now.

Hello, everyone. This is Jeff Anderson, Editor for *Modern Combat and Survival Magazine* and Executive Director of the *New World Patriot Alliance*, with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot.

I'll tell you, one-handed shooting is a topic that I've been wanting to cover for a long time now. But honestly, I never see other instructors teaching the same way that we have. So I decided to take this one on myself. However, I always love to hear what other tactics other shooters are doing and other instructors are doing. So please feel free to post your own feedback and comments on our blog over at [ModernCombatandSurvival.com](http://ModernCombatandSurvival.com).

To get things started, let's talk about why one-handed shooting is so critical to training for self-protection. In fact, there are four reasons why. One is the most obvious, which is that you could be injured. You could not be the first one to get off a shot, or somebody can stab you, or it could be drive by, it could be an active shooter. Whatever reason, your primary shooting hand, or your arm or whatever, needs to be mobile for you to be able to draw your weapon and engage an attacker. You could be injured and that arm could be entirely taken out of commission. That could even be your support hand. It doesn't even necessarily have to be your strong hand. It could be your support hand as well, where you still have only one hand that's available.

The second reason is your other hand might be being used in some other way for self-protection. So that could be navigating obstacles in your home or in public, like in a parking lot. It could be opening doors, to be able to either clear rooms or



get out of the house. In any case, your other hand is being used for that. You could be using it for fighting off an attacker. So you might actually be in close distance where you are struggling to be able to either hold onto your weapon, retain your weapon, pushing this person off, whatever it is. You could be fighting with that hand.

Or you could be holding your kid's or spouse's hands. That's the third reason is that you have other family members, and in order to know where they're at, in order to protect them, you might have that hand on them to be able to put them behind you. It could be an executive protection scenario, where you have a client, where you're guarding them and you need to know where they're at in relation to your body so you know how to cover them.

Or it could be if you have a child you could be holding them in your arms, or you could be holding them by the hand and guiding them as you're trying to safely get out of your home or out of a situation. But that hand could be held on tightly by another family member as well.

Then the fourth reason is that in our analysis in all of these scenarios, in the analysis of over 6,000 gunfights, in watching real videos of people caught on camera, actual attacks happening and how people engage the attacker with a firearm, I can tell you that the number of times that I've seen a shooter use two hands on the gun and a perfect stance, you can count that on your fingers and toes. In fact, we counted them. In our analysis we counted 12 when we were keeping count.

So the fact is, no matter how much you train your natural reaction in a gunfight is going to be to shoot one-handed. It just happens. It's the way that your body instinctively—typically—I'm not going to say a hundred percent of the time, because there are those people that train, train, train, train, train. We're talking high level operators that this becomes second nature. But that does not account for 90 percent—even probably more than that—95 percent of the people out there, the way your body is going to react in an attack is going to be far different than the way that you're training, no matter how much you're training.

Those are the reasons why this is a topic that you really need to pay close attention to and train for. So what I want to do is give you the ways of how to do this. So let's first talk about the fundamentals of one-handed shooting. That starts with how you carry your weapon. So if you do not yet have your weapon drawn, or you're using your hand—let's say you're walking with your spouse and you're holding hands, like you should be. Let's face it. Come on. Show some love, man. Show some public displays of affection. You should be holding hands, but it shouldn't be your primary gun hand.

This is just a side tip here. But you should always at least set yourself up where your primary drawing hand, to be able to get to your weapon, is not the one that



you're using to hold your spouse's hand, or your girlfriend's hand, your husband's hand, your partner's hand, whatever. Or even your kid's hand. You always want to keep your primary hand open. But nonetheless, when an attack happens you can find that that person that is scared and in that ambush attack is going to clench down on your hand, and you might not have that hand available there.

So that's one thing is you want to make sure that you do have your hand available. But where you carry your weapon is also important, to be able to get to it with one hand. Can you reach your weapon with your other hand that's not your primary hand? Regardless, can you get to that weapon with only one hand, even if it is your primary hand?

So that does take into account placement, as well as the draw stroke. If you're used to only drawing with two hands, then you're going to be challenged when you try doing it with one hand. But you can practice that out. But when it comes to where you carry your weapon, are you able to reach it with your other hand? So if you're carrying it at—let's say you've got an inside the waistband holster, and you're carrying it back on the 3:00 or 3:30 position on your body, a lot of people can't reach around—we're talking about maybe a few too many cheeseburgers and beers. You might not be able to reach around your body to be able to get to that weapon with your opposite hand. So that's one thing.

That doesn't mean you have to change entirely how you carry, but you can come in with a backup that is easier to get to. So if you're only carrying one weapon a better placement could possibly be you checking out an appendix carry, because you can reach in front of you with both hands. Or it could be an ankle carry, because again, you can reach down with both hands and be able to get to that weapon. So those are easier places for you to be able to get to. Perhaps even the old school shoulder holster. If you've got that as well, you might be able to reach that with one hand. It really comes down to what's comfortable for you and what you're going to actually use.

But another way to bypass this is to carry your secondary—your backup weapon—whether that is a pocket pistol or something like that, in the other side that you have. So if it's a pocket pistol, if you're right-handed and you carry on the right side of your body, maybe the left-hand side, you actually put the pocket pistol in your left-hand pocket. Or you can carry a backup pistol in appendix carry, or on an ankle holster as well. So that is another way to get around that. But it is something that you should really look at doing. Personally, I carry a Glock 19 as a primary and I carry a Glock 26 as a backup. But it's entirely up to you what you're going to use. So those are the carry conditions.

Now let's talk about the grip. This is where things really start to change when it comes to one-handed shooting, because it's not just a matter of grabbing the weapon with only one hand and using it that way. There's actually more to it,



because it's all about managing recoil in order to be more accurate with that weapon.

Obviously one of the reasons why you use a support hand is for accuracy. But in a close quarters ambush, you're going to be using that hand perhaps for other reasons, and your accuracy is going to be down because you don't have that as a stabilizing hand. So we need to look at how you grip the handgun when it's only one-handed. Since shooting one-handed is a natural reaction that your body is going to fall back to, so too are the body's mechanics that you're going to use to extend the weapon toward the threat.

Here's how I want you to look about it, because we really are dealing with natural instinctive reactions here. So I want you to think about how you would punch somebody center mass in the chest. We're just going to use center mass right here as the example. How would you punch somebody if you were going to punch them in the chest? You wouldn't do it the way you would normally hold a handgun with two hands, where the handgun is facing directly vertical up and down. You wouldn't punch somebody with a totally vertical fist.

The one caveat to this is those of you that take Wing Chun Kung Fu there is a—it's kind of a vertical punching and close quarters, things like that. So that is the way—but those are not power punches. If you think of it in terms of—if you really haul off and just slug somebody with as much power as you can, how is your fist going to be when you do that?

In fact, you can do it right now. Go ahead and pretend you're punching somebody in the chest and then stop at that point of impact. How is your hand positioned? Is it straight up and down? For 99.9 percent of you the answer is no. It's not going to be that way. You're going to find that your hand is slightly tilted, typically about 20 to 45 degrees. That's what you're going to find. So that's the natural power move of your body in positioning of your wrist for power at the point of impact. That's important. That's your body's natural reaction when you're going to put your hand out there to strike somebody.

Therefore, when we're talking about recoil management that is—when you're talking about one hand, you don't have a support hand there, that is your hand's placement for the most power that you're going to have. Your body instinctively knows that. Therefore, we need to go with that when it comes to how you're going to position the handgun for engaging your threat. So you want to make sure that when your hand is out there it's tilted at about 20 to 45 degrees in a natural movement there. So your palm is going to be facing more down.

But here's where things change a little bit too. What I want you to do is, if you have your firearm go ahead and make sure that you unload it. You check it. There's no round in it. Clear it. Do everything you need to. Then hold the weapon out in front of you, pointed obviously in a safe direction. What I want you to do is



hold your weapon out there, or an inert gun, like a training gun, or an airsoft gun, or blue gun, or something like that, a SIRT pistol. Hold it out there in the way that I just told you. In managing the recoil the thumb placement is really important here, and how your hand's structure is going to manage that recoil.

So here's what I want you to do. You're gripping the handgun. I'm going to assume that your thumb is wrapped around the handle now. Obviously if you had your support hand up there, it would be on top of your support hand. But nonetheless, you're typically right now naturally just grabbing onto the pistol. What I want you to do is, not moving your other fingers, take your thumb and now raise it up toward the sky. So it's going to basically go above where the slide is on the weapon. You don't have to grip the weapon with it. I just want you to raise your thumb right now.

When you do that, you'll notice that there are these two tendons that are going to pop up there, right where your thumb meets the wrist. This whole area of your hand, from the webbing, and all the tendons and ligaments and everything that connect the muscles of the forearm to the hand, this is what we call the anatomical snuff box. This is a very, very important part of your hand as far as structure, because it's where your thumb meets with the hand. But also, it's where it brings in all the muscles of your forearm for where your grip is.

So there's all these different tendons and ligaments, more specifically those ones that pop up, your EPL tendons, your Extensor Pollicis Longus or whatever it is. Forgive me if I butchered it. I know there are some doctors out there, or some whatever. But those tendons right there are what are going to be really important. Because when your thumb is raised what it does is it strengthens the hand-wrist-forearm muscles connection that are there, and what it does is it creates a much more solid platform to manage recoil.

So what you've got to get used to is that when you are shooting one-handed, you want to go ahead and raise your thumb up in your grip. It's not going to take away from the actual hold that you have on it. All it's going to do is just increase the strength of the platform that you're using to be able to be able to manage the recoil when you're actually shooting. So that's how you're going to grip the handgun. You can practice with that.

Now we get into the practical application of these tactics, which brings us to the actual engagement factors. So the first thing you're going to need to know is that you need to get distance. You need to get distance from your attacker, because as we talk about in our close combat shooting program, which is over at [CloseCombatShooting.com](http://CloseCombatShooting.com), most gunfights are going to happen as a result of escalated arguments or it's going to be an ambush attack. So you're not going to have that warning. Somebody is going to be right up in your face and you are not going to typically have the space to be able to get to your weapon. So you need to get distance. If you're drawing with one hand, which is what we're talking about



with one-handed shooting, it means you're going to be in that bad breath zone and it's going to be really easy for somebody to strike you.

So what I want you to do—first I have to empty your glass, because there's traditional training out there—and you find this even in a lot of tactical training schools, where there's this push draw technique where you take one hand and you are striking your attacker at the same time as you're drawing your weapon. I can tell you that most times that is not going to happen. That is not going to take place.

If you think about it, it just doesn't make any sense. Right? If your attacker has their hands free or they're busy attacking you, whether it's stabbing you, punching you or shooting you, or whatever, you're not going to have the mental wherewithal to be able to fight off with one hand. Nor are you going to have the physical strength to be able to fight off with one hand. Your body is going to go into survival mode and it's going to say naturally, "Hey, you better use both of your hands to fight this guy off because he is battling you." So forget any notion that you're going to be able to hold off a bigger, stronger attacker with one hand while you're drawing your weapon.

The other thing is the rock method, where you are somehow going to draw with your one hand, and then it's going to be down at your hip and then you're going to rock back into this sort of arching of your back to shoot. I don't know whoever came up with that. Sorry, folks. You need your balance in close quarters combat. That is a position of no balance. It makes no sense whatsoever.

So again, these are some of the things that frustrate me when it comes to "traditional" training out there that people are using for close quarters combat training, especially when it comes to a firearm.

So you need to go ahead and first get the distance. The way to do that is to use both of your hands to push first and draw second. How you do that, this is one of the techniques we teach even in our hand-to-hand combat classes, is to take both of your hands and essentially take that person's head off of their shoulders. Forget about the weapon. Forget about what it is. You need to attack that person's head with both of your hands. Even if they're a bigger, stronger attacker you're going to have enough leverage and stability there. Where the head goes, the body will follow.

All you're trying to do is to get their body thinking on defense, gaining their balance. So you need to get them off-balance. How you do that is with all of your might, two hands. Just put your hands together. You can either just push the face, like you're going to take their head off their shoulders, or get underneath the chin and push up at the same time and do that. What that's going to do is, I don't care how big that person is, you are going to be able to go ahead and get them back



off-balance and you're going to be able to draw your weapon. So you need to first get distance, then you draw your weapon.

Now we're going to say that you have your weapon drawn. Again, we're going to look at the—you might have gained enough space that you can use two hands. So that is preferable, because now you will have more accuracy there. But again, if instincts kick in and you are just one-handed, or you're really that close still and you need to shoot one-handed, let's talk about where you're going to aim.

So if you are close enough, then a contact shot is potentially going to be your best shot. We teach this a lot in our close combat shooting courses. A contact shot is basically where the weapon is up against the body. The benefit of that is one, your targeting is down because you don't have that movability factor, where your hand might be going around or the person is moving. If you're in contact with the person you know where their body is. You shoot into the body. Not only do you get the path of the bullet, but you also get the blast that comes out of the end of the gun that can do more damage on the surface of their body. That can just be a more devastating shot there. So a contact shot is really powerful.

I can tell you that if you are using a semiautomatic pistol and you push in too much, you don't want that because if you're really shoving it into their body it can keep the slide from coming back forward. It can basically jam a round. You might not get a second shot. If that happens there are ways to go ahead and clear that round, even just using one hand. You can basically just rack the slide using their body. Even if you're locked up with them, you can just shove basically the sights of your pistol in and rack it against their body. It's a way to use their body. You just have to be very careful about not pushing in too far. But a contact shot is really powerful if you are that close.

When it comes to targeting for this, whether it's a contact shot or you are aiming, my choice is the pelvic area, rather than center mass. There's a few reasons for that. One is that the pelvic bones are a larger area for you to be able to hit, rather than an organ in center mass of the chest. What that does, with a pelvic structure there, if you're able to get the bullet in and it breaks that bone it takes away their structure.

This person cannot fight you. They cannot fight back if they are unconscious, obviously. If they're dead, even more obvious. If their central system is disrupted—in other words, if there's an overload to their central nervous system, either pain or internal shock and trauma to the central nervous system, that can be a psychological stop. It can be a physical stop that does make them unconscious. Or if their structure is lost. So if they don't have structure, yes they can shoot back at you. But if they are not able to stand, then they can't stab you or run after you or fight back.



So what this does is—there are organs down there. You can get a psychological stop. They can bleed out. There's a lot of important arteries and stuff in the pelvic area. But what you're trying to do here is use their pelvic region to be able to take away their structure, so that you can just get away. It gives you a much better target of success than trying to hit—whether it's the heart or something like that. So I like the pelvic area as a targeting structure.

Also what this does is it gives you a much wider area in front of you, to be able to use your other hand to fend off an attack. So it allows you to see an attack coming and it allows you to counter a physical attack with your other hand. So this makes it also really instinctively easy to plan for targeting. Because what I want you to do is think doorknob.

Why would I ask you to think doorknob? Well, essentially if you stand up next to any door you're going to find that your pelvic region is right there, right where the doorknob is. You reach for a door how many times during the day? You reach for a doorknob all day long. So it's instinctive for you to do that. That is right about the pelvic region. So when it comes to aiming, you draw your weapon, if you can turn a doorknob you know how to aim your gun. You know the exact aiming location to be able to shoot at.

So let's talk about your other hand. What should your other hand be doing? Well, your other hand will be doing something else. It might be holding onto a family member or things like that. So you want to make sure that you keep this hand—when you're training, initially you want to keep it up at your chest and at the ready. So what this does, if you do have a free hand available, it forces you to train to keep that hand in front of you, either for blocking, trapping, striking. Whatever you might need to be able to do, you want to keep that up at your chest and at the ready so that you can use it. So that is how you engage an attacker at close quarters using one hand.

Now let's talk about how you train for this. I have four tips for you in how to train for one-handed shooting. Number one is going to be just familiarizing yourself with using one hand. I can tell you that most people, the vast majority of people that I talk to, have never trained for this, whether at the live fire range or dry fire. So what I want you to do is just familiarize yourself using dry fire with the one-handed draw stroke, using either a safe weapon—with your weapon obviously cleared, no ammo in it. Ammo in the next county, whatever. I know a lot of people, they're really into safety. So you just want to make sure you follow all the factors of making sure that there is no round inside your weapon.

What you want to do is just carry it the way you normally would. I want you to practice the one-handed draw stroke. Don't use your other support hand. You just grab your close with one hand, yank it all the way up, and then come down and grab the weapon. See how that feels for you. How are you going to draw it? How does it change where you're going to holster your weapon? What are you going to



do with your other hand? Bring it up to your chest. Get used to doing that. Can you reach your weapon, where you'd normally have it holstered, with your opposite hand?

So this is going to help you just familiarize yourself with, do you have the right placement for a worst case scenario where you're using one hand? Should you change how you holster your weapon—where you carry your weapon? What factors are going to go into it? You just want to get yourself used to it using dry fire. You can do this at home. You don't even need to go to the range for this.

Training tip number two is where you start playing at the live fire range. Again, I'm a huge fan of dry fire way more than I am when it comes to live fire ranges. But this is where you start to get used to how to use one hand with actual recoil. So you want to see the differences with shooting with the firearm straight up and down, versus tilted at that 20 to 45 degrees, whichever feels natural for you. You want to practice with shooting it thumb down versus thumb up, both straight up and down and tilted, so you can see the difference there.

You really want to start to see the differences with these simple changes, going from the dry fire that you did in tip number one, both with draw stroke and in just the placement of your grip and everything. Now you want to start taking it and sending bullets downrange, just so you can see—don't worry about accuracy and things like that. You just want to see how it feels for managing recoil using those tips.

So the next level that you go to, number three here, is where you start doing force-on-force training. You want to make your training as realistic as possible. Of course you're going to use an inert gun for this. Either dry fire pistol—I prefer to use airsoft, because with a blowback version of your handgun you have some sort of recoil there. It's not a true simulation of the recoil that you'd have from an actual firearm. But it does give a projectile if you want to use it. Or you can basically tape down the slide release, and you can use it just with compressed air. It basically gives you the sense of the airsoft gun without a projectile, is a way that you can do it as well. But with force-on-force you're going against something or someone in front of you as an attacker to make it more realistic.

This is something you can do at home. Obviously, you're not going to do this at a live fire range. It doesn't look good. People might mistake it—who knows? But this is the type of training that we do in our force-on-force type training, where we actually use things like blanks. We use BOB training dummies, so that you have a realistic looking person. If you don't know what the BOB training dummy is, that's that punching dummy that looks like the torso of a real person. So it works out really well. We use that a lot because you can push the head away. You can simulate hand-to-hand training and firearms training all with the BOB training dummy. So I like that a lot. You can also use a heavy punching bag hanging from



a chain, so you can do this solo for that as well. You can also do this simulation with a friend.

So with the BOB training dummy or heavy bag, all you're getting used to doing is getting yourself distance. So using the two-handed push method push the person back. Simulate that you're getting distance there. Then draw your weapon. Get used to doing it—you can try it with two hands first. Then pushing and then doing it with one hand, while you keep your other hand up at the ready if you need to. That all depends on the distance that you actually get. If you get a lot of distance, you push this person down to the ground, you can use both hands to be able to get to the weapon.

So practice both ways, one where you get yourself enough distance that you can at least get to it with one hand, but you need your other hand out there to be able to strike the person. Or you continue striking them until you do have the distance available. You have to practice with a bunch of different things here.

If you do have a friend that you are practicing with, one of the ways that you can do that is to pad up and just to safely be able to strike them, or let them strike you as you're trying to get to your weapon so you can practice retention. Getting to your weapon. What is it like when somebody is punching you at the same time? You can do that. Or you can start off a little bit milder than that, where you just have—we like to use those pool noodles where they have those, those long Styrofoam things.

We have a few people—when we're doing a class, we just basically start hitting you. We have the person in front of a BOB training dummy. Everyone else is just pummeling you with the Styrofoam noodle. What this does is it just creates a little bit more chaos, mental chaos, that you've got to fight through to be able to strike this person in front of you there. Or they can be padded up and striking you with pads too.

So both of those ways work really, really well. But it does help create a little bit more mental chaos there for you to be able to get the adrenaline going and be able to fight back. So really that's the ultimate level there for force-on-force, short of actual projectiles and Simunition training and stuff like that.

But one of the other things that you can do here—this is tip number four for training. One of the reasons for learning how to shoot with one hand is that you could be injured in your strong hand, or your strong arm, which means that you have to shoot with the opposite hand. Most people are not training for that. Or if they are training with the opposite hand—I don't know why, I've seen people do this—but they actually use two hands to support using the other hand.

There aren't too many cases where you would do this. I know in the Center Axis Relock method—which we do have a course. In fact, I'm going to a Center Axis



Relock training course out in California here in another week. Actually, I think it's coming up this weekend. Anyway—but that does use a method for if you're going around an opposite corner of a building, or you're in your home, you would switch hands to be better placed to go around that corner. So there are ways that you could do that. But when we're talking about one-handed shooting, you are not going to have your other hand to be able to support you there. So this is an area where most people aren't training their weaker hand, if you will. But when it comes to one-handed shooting you have to.

I'm going to tell you. There's a very easy way—obviously you can do this at the range. You can do a dry fire. You can use your hand that way when you're practicing these. And you should do that. Again, at the live fire range do the same thing. Use your opposite hand. But one of the simple things that you can do ahead of time—that you can also use to train at home, or at work, or anything—is to choose one day out of the week and vow to use your weak hand for everything that you do.

You're going to find that there are a lot of different ways that you use your one hand, your strong hand, that you've got to kind of train yourself not to. Whether it's showering, brushing your teeth. I'm right-handed, so one day out of the week I'll brush my teeth with my left hand. I will shower using my left hand. I will open doors with my left hand. Holding your phone, hold it with your other hand.

Even writing notes to yourself. Obviously you're not going to write with your weaker hand for notes that other people have to read, because it's not going to look very good. But you want to go ahead and—even just jotting down notes to yourself. Just scribble. Use your hand and just draw doodles, if you will, with your left hand. Doodling with your left hand is perfectly fine.

The thing that I like the most is—if you use those Chinese exercise balls, which is one of the things that we talk about with dry fire training, one of the things you can do for fingertip control is to use those small metal metallic balls that you find in Chinatown, or you can get them online at Amazon and things like that. But those work really well for fingertip control. Doing that with your left hand, or with your opposite hand, is going to help you get that fingertip control also. It's going to work really, really well. You can do it even at work. Hey, if you want to go all woo-woo on it, it hits those meridians in your hand that are for Chinese health and whatever.

So in any case, it's a really good training tool that you can do, that doesn't even require your weapon to be able to do it. But these are things that you do want to train with.

So there we've gone over the whys, the hows of engaging and training for one-handed shooting in a real gunfight. Again, I would like to really know what are tips you have for one-handed shooting and for close quarters combat shooting. You



can go ahead and leave your comments in the blog for this episode. Don't forget to pick up the free show notes for this episode, including the handy dandy little cheat sheet that we have for it. All you have to do is go on over to [www.MCSMagazine.com/191](http://www.MCSMagazine.com/191) and pick that up for free.

Until our next *Modern Combat and Survival* broadcast this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train and survive.