

Why Are Millennial Women So Into Guns?

Sarah is an attractive, petite, thirty-something mother and homemaker. She lives in a middle-class home near Asheville, North Carolina, is conservative in her politics and devout in her religious practices, and remains deeply in love with her husband, Joe, whom she has known since high school.

She also carries a handgun.

For years, Sarah disliked and feared firearms. She considered them dangerous in the home and regarded her mother as crazy for carrying a concealed weapon. "I thought she was letting anxiety rule her life."

When asked why she backed away from her anti-gun viewpoint, Sarah replies,

"Four years ago, I was in the garage area at the mall with six of my kids when a van pulled up close to our car. Seven big guys jumped out of the van, and began yelling and cursing at each other, and jumping on their car. I don't know what they were doing or what they were arguing about, but I realized that if they turned on me, there was no way I could defend my kids."

That feeling of helplessness led her to Don Guge, a firearms instructor well known in the area for his expertise and wit. After some intensive training, Sarah obtained her concealed carry permit and a 9 mm. Sig Sauer. She shoots three or four times a year, either at a range or at her parents' farm. She typically wears the pistol in the small of her back in a holster hidden by her blouse or, when wearing a dress, strapped to her thigh.

When asked whether she recommended other women carry firearms, Sarah nodded. "I do. As our instructor said, many women are smaller than men, and guns are the great equalizer. I'm small, but with the Sig I feel much more capable of protecting myself

and my children.”

Research and polls [show](#) that many other women, particularly Millennials, agree with Sarah. Though some of these women enjoy recreational shooting, all of them cite self-protection and empowerment as their primary motives for carrying concealed firearms.

And more and more women are packing heat. Female training camps are springing up around the country, and organizations like The Well Armed Woman encourage and educate women in the use of firearms. In the National Rifle Association’s December 2018 edition of America’s 1st Freedom, the only advertisement depicting someone carrying a firearm is of a young woman at a firing range. More evidence for the increase in females carrying guns can be gleaned from the websites offering gun accessories—purses, holsters, and cases—especially designed for women.

The number of crimes prevented by firearms is hotly debated—Google “how many crimes are prevented by guns” for these arguments—but there is no doubt that these weapons annually stop thousands of crimes such as home invasions, physical and sexual assaults, domestic violence, and robberies and burglaries. Most often, the mere presence of a weapon causes a perpetrator to flee or to be held at gunpoint until the police arrive.

“You can take self-defense classes and carry pepper spray,” Sarah says. “But those may not stop someone coming after you with a knife or a gun, and I can’t physically fight off some 250 pound man. We think it can’t happen to us, even when we read about it every day in the paper.” She paused, then said, “Anyway, if someone does attack me, I have a surprise for him.”

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