



BUYING YOUR FIRST GUN SAFE

Gun safes are considered the most secure form of firearm storage, as they not only conceal your firearm but also help prevent unauthorized access to it. There are hundreds of options on the market today to fit a wide range of needs. Here are some important things to consider when it comes to purchasing a gun safe for your home.



SIZE

The size of the safe will determine how many guns you can secure. Several companies sell small lockboxes designed to fit just one handgun. These are the most maneuverable and affordable options, as they cost as little as \$25. If you want to store multiple guns, you'll need a larger gun safe.



LOCATION

The safe should fit in a location that provides quick access but is far away from children's rooms and play areas as well as windows, doors, and other entry points. This is why most people keep safes in the closets of their primary bedrooms. Garages and basements are less than ideal, as they are farther from your control and may contain power tools that can be used to break into the safe.



ANCHORING

Choose a safe that can be securely anchored to the structure of your home, such as the floor or a wall stud, to prevent a thief from fleeing with the safe.

Do not leave the safe unanchored or tethered to furniture that is easy to move.



STEEL

For larger safes or those designed to hold more than one gun, look for a minimum of 10-gauge steel for the body and a heavier, thicker door because that will be the primary target for someone trying to break into it. Single-pistol lockboxes will be in the 14- to 16-gauge range. Anything higher, such as 20-gauge steel, is thin and easy to pierce.



LOCK TYPE

The most affordable safes use mechanical locks that open with a key, dial, or combination. Most electronic keypads allow you to program multiple combinations, and biometric locks open seconds after scanning an authorized fingerprint. Some safes will also unlock after coming into contact with an RFID-tagged item. Safes also typically have redundant opening mechanisms, so if one fails, you'll have other avenues for gaining access.



OTHER FEATURES

To protect your guns and valuables, look for a fireproof safe that can withstand heat of at least 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit on the outside, while keeping the interior at or below 350 degrees, for at least 30 minutes. You may also want a protective lining, an interior light that turns on when the safe is open, waterproofing, and a dehumidifier.