

+ URBAN



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YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL

COMBO

THESE VERSATILE GAME-GETTING GUNS AREN'T FANCY, BUT THEY MIGHT JUST KEEP YOU FED IN AN



Photo Credit: TK

GUNS

EMERGENCY. STORY AND PHOTOS BY STEVEN PAUL BARLOW

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They are hunting implements of opportunity. Combination guns—firearms that include both a rifled barrel and a smoothbore barrel—aren't glamorous or awe-inspiring. They aren't long-range precision rifles or highly engraved and ornate museum-grade and collectable shotguns. ¶

But they are versatile, affordable firearms that most of all are very effective in getting the job done. And that job is bagging game for the table. That makes them especially handy tools to have in survival situations. ¶





The Double Badger would make an excellent survival gun capable of taking a wide range of game.

WHY A COMBO GUN?

► You never know what you're going to come across when you're out hunting. Trophy hunters sometimes look down on us lowly "meat hunters." But

as my father-in-law used to say, "You can't eat antlers." And, during a survival situation, when you're hungry and need to refuel to keep going, you're not apt to be too choosy about what's

on the dinner menu.

I remember hunting squirrels with a .22 only have a rabbit or grouse flush from cover, leaving me with the thought that I should have been carrying a shotgun.

I also have hunted with a shotgun when I came upon a sitting squirrel or rabbit and wished I had a .22 for precise shot placement to limit meat damage. I've tried carrying a .22 handgun when hunting with a shotgun as my primary firearm, but I seldom found I had the time to make the transition from one to the other.

Combination guns solve this dilemma. With such a firearm, you can have both a rifle and a shotgun immediately available to you to take down whatever game animal presents itself for a shot.



The Double Badger is a short, handy gun with excellent sights.

COMBO HISTORY

► Combination guns are nothing new—the value of such a gun has long been understood and appreciated. There have been

combination guns almost as long as there have been firearms—dating back to swivel-barrel guns of the flintlock era. As cartridge-firing firearms were developed, so were drillings that featured three barrels, typically two smoothbore tubes over a rifle barrel. There were also four-barreled vierlings, typically with two smoothbore and two rifled barrels. Handguns were not forgotten. The LeMat revolver that saw use during the Civil War featured a shotgun barrel under a revolver barrel.

Among double-barreled guns were the cape guns with their side-by-side barrel configuration and what we know today as combination guns with their over/under barrel arrangement.

I had an old Savage Model 24 years ago that had belonged to my father-in-law. It had a .30-30 rifle barrel over a 20-gauge shotgun. My father-in-law touted it as a deer hunting gun that could also keep you in camp meat.

More common these days are combo guns that feature a rimfire rifle barrel—.22LR or .22WMR—over a smoothbore shotgun barrel in either .410 or 20-gauge. I decided to test two of these to see how they'd perform.

CHIAPPA DOUBLE BADGER

► The Chiappa Double Badger is a wooden-stocked over/under with 19-inch barrels and the one I tested was the newer model with a .22LR barrel over a 20-gauge shotgun tube with a 3-inch chamber. The gun is also available with either a .22LR (Long Rifle) or .22WMR (Winchester Magnum Rimfire) barrel over a .410 shotgun.

For the small game hunter, I think the .22LR over

The Chiappa Double Badger is easy to transport discreetly. Here it's shown in a Voodoo Tactical Praetorian Lite Rifle Pack.

20-gauge is ideal. The rimfire barrel give you the ability to place precise shots without excessive meat damage, while the 20-gauge shotgun provides a much greater payload than a .410. As an example, a 2 1/2-inch .410 shell of #6 shot contains about 112 pellets of .11 caliber, while a 2 3/4-inch 20-gauge shell of #6 will have about 225 – double the amount. That's significant.

The shotgun barrel comes with a modified choke tube. The barrel is threaded to accept readily available Rem Chokes, giving you more control over your shot pattern.

Also, loading that barrel with a 3-inch 20-gauge slug, gives you effective power to take down a deer at close range. That greatly enhances the gun's capabilities.

The Double Badger is just 36 inches long overall and features blued metal with a checkered beech wood stock and forend. The forend did not mate to the receiver as well as it should have, but I find this a minor flaw in a utility gun.

A lever extends from the back of the trigger guard. You pull in down and push it forward toward the muzzle to open the action. It was rather stiff at first, but seemed to operate more smoothly the more I used it. With the action open, the gun folds almost completely over, making it a very compact 21.2



inches for discreet carry in a pack or bag that doesn't scream "gun" to the casual observer. Chiappa does offer a carry bag for the gun that's sold separately.

There are no automatic ejectors on the gun. An extractor does pop the casings up automatically on opening the action to where you can pluck them out by hand. There's a top tang safety switch that makes this gun equally handy for both right- or left-handed shooters. The firing mechanism is all internal; there is no external hammer to fumble when you need to make a quick shot.

To me, the biggest advantage of the Double Badger is that it features double triggers. The front trigger fires the .22 barrel, the rear trigger fires the shotgun. There is no need of a barrel

selector switch. That gives you instant access to firing either barrel when that game animal makes a sudden dash for its life.

The sights on the Double Badger are excellent. The front sight features an orange fiber optic insert. The rear is a fully adjustable Williams ghost ring sight with a green fiber optic insert on each side. The sight is quick to acquire, yet provides sufficient sighting accuracy. Remove the sight and the dovetail beneath might allow for the installation of a red dot sight.

I was grouping the .22 rounds between one and two inches at 50 yards. For the fun of it, I clanged a 12-inch steel plate at 100. With the sights adjusted for the .22 rounds, I fired some 3-inch slugs from the shotgun barrel. They hit about

OTHER OPTION

On the used market, you can occasionally find an old Savage Model 24 combo gun in good shape. They were offered in a greater variety of chamberings, but the price on these used guns is usually as much as a new

Model 42. The Baikal MP-94 is another solid combo gun. My brother has one in .22LR/20-gauge. They're tough to get now due restrictions on Russian imports, but you might find a used one.

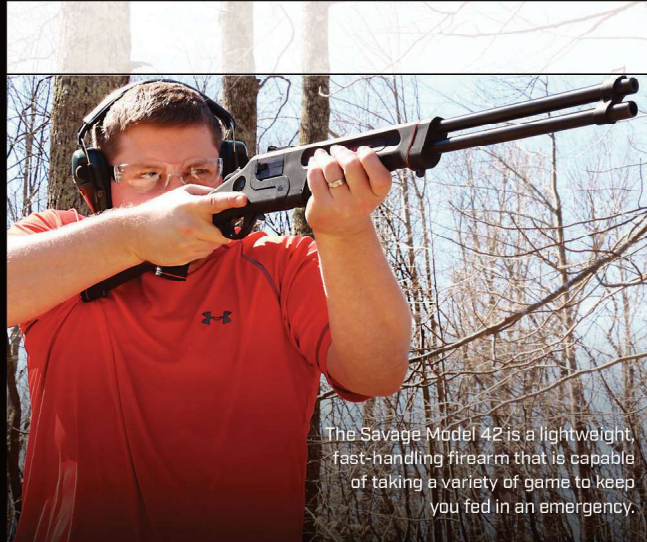
**SHOOT
HANDGUN
CARTRIDGES
THROUGH
THE CHIAPPA**

You can add even more versatility to your Chiappa Double Badger by getting the company's X-Caliber System of shotgun inserts. In the 20-gauge package, you get four barrel inserts that allow you to fire .45 Colt, .357 Magnum, .45 ACP and 9mm handgun cartridges through the shotgun barrel. The inserts can be installed or removed without tools and require no modification to the firearm.

Chiappa also makes a system for 12-gauge shotguns that features barrel inserts allowing you to shoot .380 ACP, 9mm, .357 Magnum, 40 S&W, .44 Magnum, .45 ACP, .45 Colt and 20-gauge shotgun shells.



The Chiappa X-Caliber 20-Gauge System provides inserts that allow you to fire handgun cartridges through the Double Badger, including .45 Colt, .357 Magnum, .45 ACP and 9mm.



The Savage Model 42 is a lightweight, fast-handling firearm that is capable of taking a variety of game to keep you fed in an emergency.

four inches low.

SAVAGE MODEL 42 TAKEDOWN

► Savage added a take-down version to its Model 42 series a couple of years ago. It's offered with either a .22LR or .22 WMR barrel over a .410 bore shotgun barrel. Mine had the .22 Magnum barrel.

The Model 42 features 20-inch barrels of carbon steel with a matte black finish and a black synthetic stock. It measures just 35.75 inches overall. It

weighs 6.1 pounds, but it seems lighter than that. It is 7 ounces lighter than the 20-gauge Chiappa.

To take down the gun for compact carry, you push a button under the forend, which allows you to slide the forend forward. Then, you unlock the action with the lever at the front of the trigger guard and the gun separates into two pieces, the longer of which is just a tad over 20 inches. The gun stores in the included Uncle Mike's Go Bag that has room for ammo and accessories.

The Model 42 action

opens easily. It has only a manual extractor to raise casings from the chambers, but I didn't find it to be an inconvenience at all when unloading the gun. The sights are plain black—a fiber optic one would have been nice. But the rear is fully adjustable. The sights were sufficient to allow me to fire groups ranging from 1 to 1.5 inches at 50 yards.

I found that with the sights adjusted for the .22WMR rounds, 3-inch slugs fired from the .410 barrel hit slightly high and to the left, but not enough to worry about. While a .410 slug is capable of taking down a deer at close ranges, it isn't legal in all states for that purpose. In a survival situation, you might not worry about that. Keep your shots to within typical bowhunting ranges, say out to about 40 yards, and you'll likely have venison for dinner.

I fired several 2 1/2-inch shot shells through the Savage, both #7 1/2 and #6 shot. At about 10 yards, most of the pellets were within 10

THE SPECS



The Chiappa Double Badger model that the author tested featured a .22LR rifle barrel over a 20-gauge shotgun.

**CHIAPPA
DOUBLE
BADGER**

TYPE: Over/under break-action combination gun
CALIBERS: .22LR over 20-gauge shotgun (3-inch chamber)
CAPACITY: One round in each barrel
CHOKE: Modified choke tube included, barrel threaded for Rem Chokes
BARREL LENGTHS: 19 inches each
OVERALL LENGTH: 36 inches (folds to 21.2 inches)
FINISH: Blued

STOCK: Checkered beech
SIGHTS: Williams adjustable green fiber optic ghost ring sight; front fixed orange fiber optic
SAFETY: Top tang safety
WEIGHT: 6.8 pounds
OTHER FEATURES: Double triggers; no external hammer; extractors, but no ejectors; action opens with lever integral with trigger guard; comes with sling swivel studs; carry case sold separately
MSRP: \$499 [\$429 for .410 model]

Chiappa photo

inches. The Savage has a fixed, cylinder-bore choke. An advantage of the .410 is that you can carry much more ammo, considering both size and weight.

The .410 is more versatile than ever because ammo makers are offering a wide selection of specialty ammo for handguns that fire it. Hornady's Critical Defense .410 Triple Defense load, for instance, contains a .41 caliber FTX slug and two .36-caliber round balls. Fired from your Savage Model 42, it would be devastating in last-ditch defense. In a break-action gun such as the Savage, however, you'd just have to make sure that first shot counts, although I wouldn't want to be hit with the .22WMR either.


The Savage features a single external rebounding hammer that, when at rest, is not in contact with the frame-mounted firing pins. This adds a measure of safety as an accidental blow to the hammer won't allow the gun to fire. There is a cross-bolt safety as well.



The Savage Model 42 Takedown features a barrel selector switch on the external hammer, a cross-bolt safety and a lever at the front of the trigger to open the action.

The Model 42 is a single-trigger design. There is a flipper lever on the hammer that provides the means of selecting which barrel to fire. It's easily flipped with your thumb from one position to another. In a hunting situation, I'd keep the shotgun barrel selected for a quick shot on flushing game. For sitting game, it would be more likely you'd have the ability to switch to the rimfire barrel in time to take the shot.

Keep in mind—a firearm should always be included in your survival kit or bug-out

bag. And these combo guns are good in this role. They store compactly and discreetly. With their ability to take running or flying game as well make precise shots at stationary game, their versatility allows for a better chance of not going hungry another night. 

SOURCES

Chiappa Firearms
ChiappaFirearms.com
Savage Arms
SavageArms.com



The Savage Model 42 Takedown is the latest in the company's long line of combination guns. This one is chambered in .22WMR/.410 bore shotgun.

**SAVAGE
MODEL 42
TAKEDOWN**

TYPE: Over/under, break-action combination gun
CALIBERS: .22 WMR over .410 bore shotgun (also available in .22LR over .410 bore)
CAPACITY: 1 round in each barrel
CHOKE: Fixed, cylinder bore
BARREL LENGTHS: 20 inches each
OVERALL LENGTH: 35.75 inches
FINISH: Matte black over carbon steel
STOCK: Black synthetic

SIGHTS: Adjustable, rear sight can be removed to mount scope base
WEIGHT: 6.1 pounds
OTHER: Barrel selector switch on the external hammer; one-button easy takedown; comes with sling swivel studs; includes an Uncle Mike's zippered nylon carry case
MSRP: \$499

**CHIAPPA
M-6 PROVIDES
SURVIVAL GUN
BASICS**

Another combo gun offered by Chiappa is the M6, patterned after the survival guns originally designed for use by downed pilots. It's available in .22LR or .22WMR over 12-gauge and .22LR or .22WMR over 20-gauge. This is a bare-bones firearm with skeletonized metal stock with a foam insert that has room for spare ammo and a cleaning kit. It has a carbine-style rear sight with fiber optic front sight. Picatinny rails on the top and sides allow for mounting optics, lights and lasers. Like the Double Badger, it too has two triggers and a shotgun barrel threaded for interchangeable chokes. It too folds in half for easy carry. The MSRP on the M6 is \$729.



Chiappa also offers another survival gun, the M6, tailored after the military gun that was designed to be used by downed pilots. It's available in 12- or 20 gauge over a .22LR or .22WMR barrel.

Savage photo