

Gandalf's thoughts on firearm stances.

It should be pointed out that these are my thoughts based upon my shooting and influenced by the following individuals: Massad Ayoub

There is a lot of debate in regards to stances: Isosceles vs. Weaver.

I personally agree with Massad "I'm more convinced than ever that no one stance is ideal for all people in all shooting situations. The variables are many: the surface you're standing on, the angle of that which you must shoot at, and the individual capabilities of that practitioner at that time."

The Weaver is an aggressive, "boxer-type" stance. Assume it by bringing the support-side (non-shooting side) foot forward 8 to 10 inches with the toes pointing toward the target, with the strong-side (shooting side) toes canted 45 degrees outward. The gun is presented to the target in a two-hand hold, with the strong-side arm not fully extended. That elbow should be unlocked and angled slightly outward. The support arm has the elbow bent downward at a 45-degree angle. The support hand pulls into the shooter while the strong hand pushes outward and the support-side shoulder leans into the gun. This creates a very rigid grip on the gun. While the Weaver offers advantages, it also has drawbacks. One is in the area of recoil control. With both elbows unlocked, recoil forces are largely taken up by the wrists.



The original Isosceles Stance is the most natural and easy-to-assume two-hand stance a shooter can use. All that is required is to face the target squarely with the feet spread shoulder-width apart, and bring the gun up directly in front of the

eyes with a two-handed grip and both arms at full extension. This keeps the head fully upright and allows maximum peripheral vision while naturally centering the pistol with the eyes. Its weakness: with the feet spread equally at shoulder width, it provides the least amount of recoil control.



There is a modified stance called the Chapman Stance uses the same aggressive foot position as the Weaver, but the support-side foot doesn't need to move quite as far forward, and the support-side shoulder doesn't drive toward the gun. The stance is more relaxed and the major difference is the strong-side arm is now fully extended. While there is some pull back from the support arm hand, the strong arm exerts only minimal forward push. Recoil control is another major plus for the Chapman Stance. With the strong arm locked, and the support-arm elbow bent in a supporting position, a lot of the recoil is transferred from the wrists to the upper body and shoulders where body mass helps soak it up better than flexible wrists can.



Also you can basically combine all three into a stance that has many names, I prefer to it as a defensive. This combined stance was developed in the military in the community. It's also a great technique for civilian shooters. In this stance, the shooter is square to the target. His feet are shoulder width or slightly wider and

the firing side foot is slightly behind the support side foot. A good landmark is for the toe of the shooting foot to be at the instep of the support foot. This offsetting of the feet eliminates the forward-rear balance issue of the Isosceles Stance. The knees are flexed to absorb recoil and to act as shock absorbers when moving in any direction. The shooter leans slightly forward and extends the arms straight out, bringing the sights to the eyes. The head is kept level to maintain balance, especially when moving.



Once again: I personally agree with Massad “I’m more convinced than ever that no one stance is ideal for all people in all shooting situations. The variables are many: the surface you’re standing on, the angle of that which you must shoot at, and the individual capabilities of that practitioner at that time.”