

# Shooting the Bull: Hooked on Talon Grips

RICH SIMPSON For the Times-News Aug 4, 2016 0



COURTESY OF RICH SIMPSON

Adhesive rubber and granulate grip panels help shooters keep purchase of their long guns and handguns.

From the days of the very first hand cannons, firearms have traditionally been stocked in wood. Even in this age of synthetics and miracle polymers, a number of hardwood species still prove eminently suitable for this task. With the exception of the higher-grade walnut species, hardwoods are still plentiful, the wood is easily machined — which facilitates cost-reducing mass production — and properly protected and maintained wood will serve generations of shooters and hunters.

For all of its virtues, wood's primary vice is its very nature. Wood is hydrophilic; in other words, wood loves water and given the opportunity will absorb as much moisture from the environment as it can. Left unprotected, your stock will swell, warp and in time soften, destroying its ability to safely secure your gun's action while continually playing havoc with its accuracy.

To overcome this shortcoming, gunsmiths, hobbyists and manufacturers effectively seal the wood against moisture with oils, varnishes, shellacs, paints and polymers. While these materials do effectively prevent moisture absorption by your stock and grips, they, in turn, make your firearm as slippery as a D.C. politician — particularly if you're in inclement weather or have sweaty hands.

While decorative hand-cut, machine-cut and laser-cut checking patterns are used to good effect to help maintain your grip on wooden stocks, plastic (polymer) stocks have frictional checking patterns molded right in during their manufacture. A recent trend popular with the polymer pistol gang (primarily the Glocksters) is to use a wood-burning tool to melt holes (stipples) into the gun's plastic frame. By arranging the spacing, depth and shape of the stipples, you can create custom frictional surfaces for your weapon. Downside: Slips and mistakes are permanent, and the stippling could hurt your firearm's trade-in or resale value.

Good solutions all, but it was the ingenious application of gritty sandpaper (skateboard tape) to the slippery surfaces of their skateboards by some unnamed teens that lead to the development and refinement of today's featured products: Talon Grips.

Company founder Derik (the company's website gives no last name for him) found that a wrapping of this skateboard tape helped him keep his grip on the slick polymer handle of his Glock 19 in Arizona's sweltering heat, where he served as park ranger and boat sheriff. When his law enforcement buddies offered to pay him to make hand-cut versions for their Glock 19s, an idea evolved into a company. Now led by college buddy Mike Morris, Talon Grips sells its American-made handgun, long gun, blue (inert practice) gun, magazine extension and Taser grips, as well as cell phone grip panels and coasters for Yeti mugs, from its mountain home in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

In a nutshell, Talon grips are 0.5 mm gritty granulate or pebbly rubber grip panels that self-adhere — like a second skin. Though formerly hand- and then die-cut, today's Talon Grips are laser-cut with mirror-like precision to conform exactly to your firearm's grip contours.

Many of us find this indispensable for keeping a firm grip on our smaller concealed-carry guns, like my diminutive Kahr CM9, a Springfield XDS and particularly with a newer slick-sided Glock 43. What many shooters really appreciate about their Talon grips is how effectively they take the bite out of the recoil with overly aggressive molded grip serrations (like the Kahr and Springfield XDS). Believe me, this is a real plus during high-volume shooting sessions.

Talon grips are being cut for more than 200 firearm platforms from 22 foreign and domestic manufacturers. Odds are very good that there is a Talon grip available for you (in either granulate or rubber) whether you shoot an AR or AK, Glock, Smith and Wesson or Walther. Here's the amazing part: all Talon grips retail for an affordable \$17.99, no matter the make or model. Every registered Talon grip is covered by an outstanding warranty.

Check out the company's website ([talongungrrips.com](http://talongungrrips.com)) to view its entire product line, sign up for its newsletter, post to its gallery or view how-to videos and printable instructions.

---

Rich Simpson may be reached at [rsimpson29@hotmail.com](mailto:rsimpson29@hotmail.com).