

# IWB Holster Selection Checklist

## For Slim Builds (28–30" Waist) and Appendix Carry

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A fit-first evaluation guide. Use this checklist during the return window of any new IWB holster. If a rig fails three or more items in any single section, return it before the window closes.

### How to Use This Checklist

1. Print or save this document.
  2. Wear the holster across one full week of normal life (work, drive, walk, errands).
  3. Check each box honestly. "Almost" does not count as a pass.
  4. Tally the failures at the end of each section.
  5. Make the keep-or-return call before day 25 of the 30-day window.
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### Section 1: Pre-Purchase Spec Check

Verify these specs before clicking buy. If the holster fails any item here, do not buy it for AIWB carry on a slim frame.

- Rigid Kydex shell (not nylon, not unreinforced leather)
- Full trigger guard coverage on all sides
- Adjustable retention screw(s)
- Adjustable cant built into the shell or clip
- Adjustable ride height
- Concealment claw or wing included or available as an add-on
- Compatible with your specific firearm model and any mounted light/optic
- Manufacturer offers at least a 30-day return or trial period
- Belt clip rated for 1.5" gun belt (not standard dress belt)

Failures: \_\_\_\_ / 9

### Section 2: Belt and Foundation Check

The belt is the foundation of the rig. Most slim-build holster failures are belt failures in disguise. Verify before testing the holster.

- Belt is purpose-built for IWB carry (reinforced leather, polymer-stiffened nylon, or hybrid gun belt)
- Belt does not roll, sag, or fold under holster weight
- Belt sits firmly without requiring painful tightening
- Belt thickness matches holster clip spec (typically 1.5")
- Belt buckle does not interfere with holster position at 12:30–1:00

Failures: \_\_\_\_ / 5

## Section 3: Initial Fit and Position Tuning

Run this on day one with an unloaded firearm. Confirm safe handling before each session.

- Holster sits at 12:30–1:00 (right-handed) or 11:00–11:30 (left-handed) without forcing
- Cant set to 5–10° forward (grip angled toward strong side)
- Ride height set so the muzzle does not dig into thigh when seated
- Ride height set so the grip does not print above the belt line standing
- Concealment claw installed and pressing against inside of belt
- Wedge installed (start thin; folded sock acceptable for testing)
- Re-holstering can be performed slowly and visually without obstruction

**Failures:** \_\_\_\_ / 7

## Section 4: The 5-Test Wear Protocol

Run all five tests across the first 7–10 days of ownership. Each test must be completed in actual carry clothing, not range gear.

### Test 1: Seated Drive (30 minutes)

- No muzzle pressure on thigh during entire drive
- No grip dig into ribs or abdomen
- Holster does not shift position during drive
- Seatbelt clears the grip without contact

### Test 2: Office / Desk (8 hours seated)

- No re-positioning needed across the full workday
- No pressure points or hot spots that develop over time
- Holster stays at original cant and ride height
- Comfortable enough to forget you're wearing it for stretches

### Test 3: Walking (30 minutes minimum)

- No shift in cant during walking
- No shift in ride height during walking
- Belt does not need re-tightening after the walk
- No visible printing under fitted t-shirt

### Test 4: Bend-and-Reach

- Tying shoes does not cause grip splay
- Reaching overhead does not lift holster out of position
- Picking up an object from the floor keeps holster anchored
- Twisting at the waist does not rotate the rig outboard

### Test 5: Concealed Drawstroke (10 reps in carry clothing)

- Cover garment defeats cleanly on every rep
- Full firing grip achieved before the gun clears the holster
- No fumbling with the claw, wing, or wedge during the draw
- Re-holstering completes slowly and visually without obstruction
- Average draw to first acceptable hit at 5 yards under 1.5 seconds (dry-fire benchmark)

Test Failures: \_\_\_\_ / 21

## Section 5: Concealment Audit

Stand in front of a full-length mirror in your most challenging carry outfit (typically the most fitted t-shirt you own).

- Grip does not print above the belt line
- Grip does not print outboard (sticking out from the body line)
- Muzzle end does not push the shirt out at the bottom of the holster
- No visible holster shell edge through the shirt
- Belt line looks natural; no obvious distortion at the holster position
- Bending forward 45° does not expose the grip from the cover garment

Failures: \_\_\_\_ / 6

## Section 6: Safety Verification

Non-negotiable. Any failure here disqualifies the holster regardless of comfort or concealment.

- Trigger guard is fully covered with the firearm holstered
- No clothing, drawstring, or holster material can enter the trigger guard during re-holstering
- Holster retains the firearm when inverted and shaken (vigorous test)
- Holster retains the firearm through running in place for 30 seconds
- Re-holstering can be performed without sweeping any part of your body with the muzzle
- Holster opening stays rigid and open after the firearm is drawn (does not collapse)

Failures: \_\_\_\_ / 6

## Section 7: The Stop-Adjusting Cutoff

After 7 days of honest tuning, ask these questions. If you check any one of these boxes, return the holster.

- I cannot achieve a clean drawstroke from concealment in my normal clothing
- The holster gaps or rotates more than 15° during normal movement
- I am avoiding wearing it because of discomfort
- The belt tension required to anchor the rig is painful
- I have to handle, re-tuck, or re-position the rig more than twice in a normal day

***If any box is checked, the rig is wrong for your body. The wrong holster cannot be tuned into the right one.***

## Final Decision

Total failures across all sections: \_\_\_\_ / 54

Failure Count	Recommendation
0–3	Keep. The rig works. Continue daily carry and re-evaluate after 90 days.
4–8	Tune further. Most failures are at cant, ride height, wedge, or belt. Spend three more days adjusting before c
9–15	Borderline. Identify which section is failing most. If it's Section 2 (belt) or Section 3 (initial tuning), fix that first
16+	Return before the window closes.

**Section 6 (Safety) failures override the table above. Any safety failure means immediate return regardless of total count.**

## Common Failure Patterns and What They Mean

**Failures concentrated in Section 2 (belt):** Upgrade the belt before judging the holster.

**Failures concentrated in Section 3 (position):** You haven't found your sweet spot yet. Try moving the holster 30 minutes around the clock face in either direction.

**Failures concentrated in Section 4 Test 1 (seated):** Ride height is too low. Raise it.

**Failures concentrated in Section 4 Test 5 (drawstroke):** Cant or ride height is wrong, or the cover garment is wrong for the rig.

**Failures concentrated in Section 5 (concealment):** Add or upsize the wedge. Check that the claw is pressing against the belt.

**Failures concentrated in Section 6 (safety):** Return immediately. Do not carry this holster live.

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## Disclaimers

**Medical and physical limitation:** This checklist provides general guidance. It does not account for individual physical limitations, prior injuries, or medical conditions. Carriers with physical limitations should consult a qualified instructor for personalized fit guidance.

**Legal:** Concealed carry laws and lawful carry locations vary by state and locality. This document does not provide legal advice. Carriers are responsible for compliance with applicable law. Consult a licensed attorney for state-specific questions.

**Safety:** All testing should be performed initially with an unloaded firearm under qualified supervision. Verify the firearm is unloaded before any dry-fire or fit testing. The publisher assumes no responsibility for injuries resulting from improper holster fit, adjustment, or carry technique.