

Glock Alternative Pistols for CCW Carriers

A GunCarrier.com Comparison Guide

The Glock 19 Gen 5 is one of the most carried defensive pistols in America. But it is not the only option. Whether you are switching platforms, buying your first carry gun, or evaluating the new Gen 6, this guide gives you the specifications, carry system considerations, and honest tradeoffs you need to make the right call.

Inside this guide:

Full specification comparison across 6 pistols

Carry method recommendations by platform

Price and value tier breakdown

Switching checklist for Glock 19 Gen 5 owners

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01 How to Use This Guide

This guide is built for one purpose: helping responsible CCW carriers make an evidence-based decision about their carry platform, not a brand-loyalty decision. Every pistol in this comparison was selected because it competes directly with the Glock 19 Gen 5 in the compact 9mm CCW segment.

The comparison is organized around what actually matters for defensive carry: dimensions and concealability, capacity, trigger system, optics readiness, carry method fit, holster ecosystem depth, and price. Sport shooting performance, competition modifications, and open-carry configurations are outside the scope of this guide.

Switching carry platforms is not a neutral decision. Every new platform resets your drawstroke, your holster, and your malfunction-clearance muscle memory. Budget a minimum of 1,000 rounds of verified function testing before any new pistol becomes your defensive carry gun. The comparison below assumes you are willing to make that investment, not just the purchase.

02 The Baseline: Glock 19 Gen 5 vs Gen 6

Before evaluating alternatives, it is worth understanding what changed between the Gen 5 and the Gen 6 that Glock released in January 2026. These are convenience and ergonomics upgrades, not reliability corrections. The Gen 5 remains a fully capable defensive platform.

Feature	Glock 19 Gen 5	Glock 19 Gen 6
Trigger face	Curved (standard)	Flat-faced (standard)
Optics system	MOS plate (opt. model)	Direct-mount ORS (all)
Trigger guard	Standard	Factory undercut
Beavertail	Standard	Enlarged, fixed
Palm swell	None	Integrated
Grip texture	nDLC stippling	RTF6 dual-texture
External dimensions	Unchanged	Unchanged
Holster compatibility	Gen 5 ecosystem	Fits Gen 5 holsters
Magazine compat.	Gen 3/4/5	Gen 5 mags fit; barrels do not
MSRP (2026)	\$499-\$699	\$699-\$745
Aftermarket depth	Massive, mature	Growing

Bottom line: if you already own a Gen 5 that passes a function test, you do not need the Gen 6. If you are buying new at equivalent dealer pricing, the Gen 6 is the rational choice.

03 Full Specification Comparison Chart

All specifications are manufacturer-published figures. Carry weight is unloaded unless noted. MSRP ranges reflect 2026 dealer pricing.

Specification	Glock 19 Gen 5	Glock 19 Gen 6	S&W; M&P; Shield Plus	Taurus GX4C	Ruger Security-9	SIG P365 XL
Caliber	9mm	9mm	9mm	9mm	9mm	9mm
Capacity	15+1	15+1	13+1	13+1	15+1	12+1
Barrel length	4.02"	4.02"	3.1"	3.06"	4.0"	3.7"
Overall length	7.36"	7.36"	6.1"	6.1"	7.24"	6.6"
Width	1.34"	1.34"	1.10"	1.06"	1.33"	1.14"
Height	5.04"	5.04"	4.6"	4.17"	4.87"	4.8"
Unloaded weight	23.6 oz	23.6 oz	20.0 oz	18.5 oz	23.7 oz	20.7 oz
Optics ready	MOS opt.	ORS std.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Manual safety	No	No	Opt.	No	No	No
MSRP (2026)	\$499-699	\$699-745	\$450-520	\$330-380	\$420-480	\$549-599

* SIG P365 XL capacity with standard 12-round flush magazine. Extended 15-round magazine available.

04 Pistol Profiles

Each profile includes carry method recommendation, key advantages, and known tradeoffs. The Glock 19 Gen 5 is the baseline; every profile is written relative to it.

S&W; M&P; Shield Plus

\$450-\$520

Best for: AIWB and deep concealment carries. Narrower profile and lighter weight make it the most concealable full-capacity option in this comparison.

Strengths

- + Slimmest width in the group at 1.10 inches
- + 13+1 capacity despite sub-compact footprint
- + Optics-ready standard on current production
- + Flat-faced trigger standard
- + Well-established holster ecosystem

Tradeoffs

- Shorter grip may require grip extension for larger hands
- Less aftermarket depth than Glock platform
- Recoil slightly sharper than full-size grip pistols

Carry note: First choice for AIWB. Grip length accommodates most hands without extensions. Strong-side IWB also viable.

Taurus GX4C

\$330-\$380

Best for: Budget-conscious first-time CCW buyers who need an optics-ready compact without compromising capacity.

Strengths

- + Most affordable optics-cut compact 9mm in this comparison
- + 13+1 capacity
- + Aggressive grip texture improves retention
- + Integrated rail for light attachment
- + Improving holster ecosystem as platform matures

Tradeoffs

- Thinner review history than Glock or S&W; platforms
- Holster options fewer than Glock ecosystem
- Long-term durability data still building

Carry note: Viable for IWB strong-side and AIWB. Verify holster fit with your specific variant before carry.

Ruger Security-9

\$420-\$480

Best for: Shooters who want a familiar full-size grip in a carry-appropriate package at a lower price point.

Strengths

- + Full-size grip aids control and concealment for larger hands
- + 15+1 capacity matches Glock 19 Gen 5
- + Established reliability record
- + Budget-accessible without sacrificing proven track record

Tradeoffs

- No factory optics cut on standard model
- Thicker profile limits deep concealment options
- Less aftermarket support than Glock platform

Carry note: Best suited for strong-side IWB and OWB. Full-size grip may print in AIWB depending on body type.

SIG P365 XL**\$549-\$599**

Best for: Experienced CCW carriers who want the industry benchmark for optics-ready subcompact-to-compact carry.

Strengths

- + Industry-leading optics integration
- + Flat trigger standard
- + Compact footprint with 12+1 standard, 15+1 with extended mag
- + Deep and mature holster ecosystem
- + Exceptional out-of-box trigger quality

Tradeoffs

- Premium price point
- Smaller grip than Glock 19 for large-handed shooters
- Magazine extension needed for full 15-round capacity

Carry note: AIWB and IWB strong-side both well-supported. The most holster-ecosystem-deep alternative to the Glock in this guide.

05 Carry Method Recommendations by Platform

Your carry method should drive your platform decision, not the reverse. The table below rates each pistol across the four most common civilian CCW carry positions.

Pistol	AIWB	Strong-Side IWB	OWB	Pocket
Glock 19 Gen 5	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Not recommended
Glock 19 Gen 6	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Not recommended
S&W; Shield Plus	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Possible (large pocket)
Taurus GX4C	Good	Good	Good	Not recommended
Ruger Security-9	Marginal	Good	Good	Not recommended
SIG P365 XL	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Possible (large pocket)

Ratings assume a proper holster molded to your specific pistol variant. A generically-fit holster degrades any carry method rating. Verify trigger coverage and retention before carrying any new platform.

06 Price and Value Tiers

Budget Tier | Under \$400

Recommended: Taurus GX4C (\$330-\$380)

Best entry point for an optics-ready compact 9mm with competitive capacity. Improving reliability record. Holster ecosystem still building. Appropriate for first-time buyers willing to invest in verification testing.

Mid Tier | \$400-\$550

Recommended: Ruger Security-9 (\$420-\$480) | S&W; M&P; Shield Plus (\$450-\$520)

The strongest value band in this comparison. Both platforms have established reliability records, meaningful aftermarket ecosystems, and proven carry track records. The Shield Plus is the recommended choice for most buyers in this tier.

Premium Tier | \$550+

Recommended: SIG P365 XL (\$549-\$599) | Glock 19 Gen 6 (\$699-\$745)

Factory-optimized optics integration and ergonomics. Both platforms are the benchmark in their respective size classes. The SIG is the more concealable option; the Gen 6 provides the deeper holster and aftermarket ecosystem.

07 Switching From Your Glock 19 Gen 5

Before you switch, answer these four questions. If you cannot answer yes to all four, the problem is not your platform.

Q1 Does your Gen 5 pass a function test?

Load two magazines of your carry ammunition and fire all rounds. Zero malfunctions is the standard. If it fails, diagnose the cause before concluding the platform needs to change.

Q2 Is your carry system the actual problem?

A holster that has lost retention, a carry position that does not suit your body, or a drawstroke that is inconsistent are carry system problems, not platform problems. A new pistol does not fix them.

Q3 Do you have a specific capability gap?

Identify the precise feature driving the switch: slimmer profile for AIWB, factory optics integration, different trigger geometry. If you cannot name it, you are likely reacting to marketing, not need.

Q4 Are you prepared to rebuild your carry system?

Holster, spare magazines, carry position re-training, and 1,000 rounds of verification testing are the minimum cost of a platform switch. Budget time and money for all of them before deciding.

08 Platform Switching Checklist

Use this checklist before your new platform becomes your carry gun. Every box must be checked before the pistol goes on your body.

Before Purchase

- Identify the specific capability gap driving the switch
- Dry-handle candidate pistols at a dealer for ergonomic fit
- Confirm holster availability for your specific variant and carry position
- Confirm magazine availability and pricing
- Review current owner reliability reports from forums and editorial sources

After Purchase, Before Carry

- Function-test with 200 rounds of mixed practice ammunition
- Function-test with 50 rounds of carry ammunition, zero malfunctions required
- Verify optic mounting if applicable (check screw length and seating)
- Confirm holster trigger coverage and retention are correct
- Run 20 dry-fire drawstroke reps from concealment in carry garments
- Confirm drawstroke is consistent before live-fire drawstroke practice

First 1,000 Rounds

- Log round count from first range session
- Inspect extractor and recoil spring assembly at 500 rounds
- Verify carry ammunition still feeds and ejects reliably at 750 rounds
- Run timed drawstroke drills to rebuild speed from concealment
- Run malfunction clearance drills to build automaticity on new platform

Carry Readiness Gate

- Zero malfunctions across 50 rounds of carry ammunition
 - Consistent drawstroke from concealment in your actual carry garments
 - Correct holster retention confirmed
 - Round count logged and service intervals established
 - Previous carry pistol stored safely or transferred per local law
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Make Your Decision With Confidence

GunCarrier.com publishes evidence-based gear reviews, state CCW law guides, and responsible ownership resources for everyday carriers.

Visit [GunCarrier.com](https://guncarrier.com) for more resources.

This guide is provided for educational purposes only. All specifications are manufacturer-published figures as of June 2026 and are subject to change. Prices are estimated retail ranges and will vary by dealer. Verify all specifications before purchase. GunCarrier.com is not responsible for decisions made based on this guide. Carry laws vary by state and jurisdiction.

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