

## 45 AUTOMATIC (ACP)

Massad Ayoob

Introduced in 1905, designed by the same John Moses Browning whose subsequent 1911 Colt design would immediately begin to establish its reputation as a "legendary manstopper" through every war of the 20th century and on America's streets as well, the .45 Automatic Colt Pistol cartridge is still in the top 5 in popularity. There are more 1911 .45s in police holsters today than ever, ironic in a time when 14-shot polymer service pistols like the Glock 21 have their own significant share of the market.

The .45 ACP is an inherently accurate round, and many target shooters still favor it for NRA bulls-eye shooting, which has its own .45 category of competition. The classic target load is the 185 grain "softball" jacketed semi-wad-cutter at a midrange velocity of 780 fps, its recoil mild enough to make it an ideal introductory load for the caliber, though sometimes requiring a lighter recoil spring for reliable cycling.

A 185 grain JHP at 930 to 1000 fps was the most popular duty load for police in the '80s; it mushroomed well and generally stayed in a felon's body, making it still a good choice for home defense. Police sought more penetration and generally issue 230 grain JHP standard pressure at about 880 fps today, with some agencies going with 230 grain +P at 950 fps.

Because there are so many old .45 pistols in circulation that were designed around full-jacketed round-nose GI "hardball," I keep Remington 185 grain JHP on hand. Its expansion is more moderate, but it had a decent record

"on the street" and I've found it to feed in anything that will feed hardball, including open-bolt submachine guns.

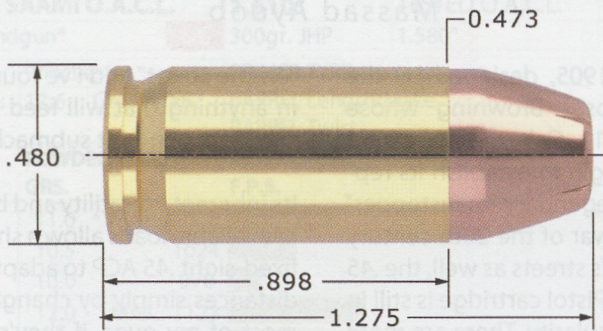
Its inherent versatility and broad choice of available loads allow a shooter with a fixed-sight .45 ACP to adapt to different distances simply by changing loads. In most of my guns, if they're sighted in for 25 yards with 230 grain standard velocity, they'll hit to point of aim at 50 yards with 185 grain at a thousand fps, and close to point of aim at 100 yards with a 185 grain JHP +P at 1,140 fps. The latter load generates 534 foot-pounds of energy.



***Mas Ayoob started shooting .45 ACP in 1960, and over the decades has carried .45 ACPs as a cop, successful competitive shooter, handgun hunter and armed citizen.***



# 45 AUTOMATIC (ACP)



Maximum S.A.A.M.I. Overall Cartridge Length: 1.275"

## BULLET CHOICES FOR THE 45 AUTOMATIC (ACP)

Sporting Handgun™	Sporting Handgun™	Custom Competition®
SPHG JHP	SPHG FMJ	CC JHP
Grain 230	Grain 230	Grain 185
		

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

The 45 ACP is a great choice for competitive shooters and plinkers alike. AA #2, W231, and AA #5 are the powders that we use most commonly in the lab.

Like most pistol cartridges, the 45 ACP headspaces on the case mouth. When loading for this cartridge, bell the case mouth just enough to reliably guide the bullet into position and then secure the bullet with a taper crimp. Using this seating and crimping technique will help ensure proper headspacing.



## 45 Auto - 185 grain

## 45 Cal. (.451")

## MAXIMUM SAAMI O.A.C.L.

1.275"

TESTED O.A.C.L.

B.C.

S.D.

Sporting Handgun\*

SHG

185gr. JHP

1.200"

0.142

0.130

CASE TYPE: Winchester

PRIMER TYPE

Fed. 150

CASE HOLDS: 19.2 Gr. WATER





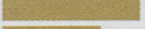
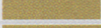
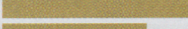



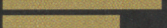
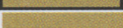
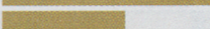
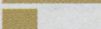








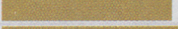







BARREL Length/Make

5" Douglas

BARREL Twist

1-16"

POWDER  
TYPEPOWDER CHG.  
GRS.MUZZLE VEL.  
F.P.S.LOAD DENSITY  
(VOLUME)

Bullseye	5.4	MAX.	840		45%
	4.9		780		41%
	4.4	*	720		36%
AA #2	6.3	MAX.	888		50%
	5.8		833		46%
	5.3	*	778		42%
Green Dot	6.4	* MAX.	908		64%
	5.9		843		59%
	5.4		778		54%
AA #5 Most Accurate Powder Tested	9.6	MAX.	924		53%
	9.1		864		50%
	8.6	*	804		47%
N320	6.2	* MAX.	938		65%
	5.7		813		59%
	5.2		688		54%
Competition	5.1	MAX.	954		52%
	4.6	*	886		47%
	4.1		818		42%
AutoComp	7.4	* MAX.	958		45%
	6.9		885		42%
	6.4		812		39%
Power Pistol	8.5	MAX.	963		59%
	8.0		921		56%
	7.5	*	879		52%
Titegroup	5.7	MAX.	980		40%
	5.2	*	916		36%
	4.7		852		33%
CFE Pistol	7.9	MAX.	1113		48%
	7.4		1047		45%
	6.9	*	982		42%

BC=Ballistic Coefficient SD=Sectional Density  
 \*Most Accurate Load Tested \*\*Compressed Load

Use Maximum Loads with Caution  
 Refer to page 79 for additional safety information

Brian Pearce has written thousands of gun related articles for all major gun magazines and periodicals. He is currently contributing editor for Rifle and Handloader magazines.



45 Auto - 230 grain

45 Cal. (.451")

MAXIMUM SAAMI O.A.C.L.		1.275"	TESTED O.A.C.L.	B.C.	S.D.
Sporting Handgun*	SHG	230gr. JHP	1.200"	0.183	0.162
Sporting Handgun*	SHG	230gr. FMJ	1.200"	0.175	0.162

CASE TYPE:	Winchester	PRIMER TYPE	Fed. 150
CASE HOLDS:	17.7 Gr. WATER	BARREL Length/Make	5" Douglas
		BARREL Twist	1-16"

POWDER TYPE	POWDER CHG. GRS.		MUZZLE VEL. F.P.S.	LOAD DENSITY (VOLUME)
WST	4.8	* MAX.	769	52%
	4.3		723	46%
	3.8		678	41%
Bullseye	5.1	* MAX.	790	46%
	4.6		730	41%
	4.1		670	37%
Hi-Skor 700-X	5.0	MAX.	800	56%
	4.5		735	51%
	4.0	*	670	45%
Titegroup	4.7	MAX.	802	35%
	4.2	*	709	32%
	3.7		616	28%
Unique Most Accurate Powder Tested	6.5	MAX.	808	62%
	6.0		753	57%
	5.5	*	698	53%
HS-6	8.1	MAX.	810	50%
	7.6	*	774	47%
	7.1		738	44%
AA #5	8.5	* MAX.	840	51%
	8.0		790	48%
	7.5		740	45%
AutoComp	6.5	MAX.	857	43%
	6.0	*	789	40%
	5.5		721	37%
Longshot	6.9	MAX.	898	49%
	6.4		835	45%
	5.9	*	773	42%
Silhouette	7.3	MAX.	916	52%
	6.8		856	48%
	6.3	*	797	44%