

Tombstone Gun Grips

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Special Grip Fitting Methods

Grips which attach with a short screw on each panel, that screws into the gun frame, need to be used with the screw which come with your gun. Grips which are mounted with a single, through-the-handle screw usually come with a 4-40 screw and mounting hardware installed. I don't have all the unusual sizes and threads used on every kind of pistol or revolver, so I can't supply original factory screws. I do offer 4-40 threaded fillister head screws with brass knurled nut and ferrule, which I will install for you in appropriate grips, or offer as separate items for you to install.

The screws I provide are universal length, which means they don't fit anything specifically and you need to attach the grips, measure how much to cut off the end of the screw so it is flush with the nut, and then unscrew the grips and snip off the screw to that length. The best way to do that is to use an electrician's all-purpose plier which has a 4-40 threaded bolt cutter hole (among other sizes). You can use a cut-off wheel in a Dremel tool (be careful not to snap the wheel). Or you can cut it with a fine saw or a pair of side-cutters, and then sand or grind off the tip to remove the last, damaged thread. Be sure to allow for the removal of the last thread this way when you figure the length to snip off.

Grips which attach by one screw, such as the Browning 1910, Colt 1903, and certain Derringer grips, would rotate about this screw if it were not for a pin, screw head, or small spacer block fitted to a cut-out in the gun handle or a small hole drilled in the back of the grip to engage said pin or screw head. The location of the hole, or the spacer block, is important. It should be the last thing you do after the grips are shaped to the gun.

The High Standard double derringer, for instance, uses one of the functional screw heads as an index key for the grip. A shallow hole needs to be ground in the back of the grip to allow the screw head to enter it and keep the grip from turning. To do this, use an end-cutting burr in a Dremel tool. Put a dab of Marker Ink on the screw head, press the grip against the gun, and then cut out the spot where the ink marks the grips.

Some guns use a pin, rather than a screw head. A small hole in the back of the grip will let the pin lock the grip in position once the screw is snug. Another method is simply to epoxy a thin spacer on the back of the grip so it matches one of the cut-outs in the gun handle. A third method is to mark a spot on the back of the grip, looking through the handle, so that a small screw inserted at that point would have its head bear against the edge of the cut-out and prevent the grip from turning. The height of the head should be filed so it is no thicker than the rest of the gun frame, or it might drag on the magazine of a magazine-fed pistol.

The location of such a hole can be made accurately by "painting" the screw head with a Magic Marker and then pressing the grip carefully against the gun to transfer a dot of ink. Then a Dremel tool and a grinding burr can be used to carefully make a depression at the point in the back of the grip.

If you drill or grind a hole off center or get it too large, you can simply fill it with 5-minute epoxy and let the epoxy cure overnight. Then, try again. In fact, if you grease the gun frame and pin or screw head with a thin film of release agent, you can probably press the still-soft epoxy-filled hole over the pin or screw head and let it create its own hole. Be careful not to glue the grip to the gun!