

Meet 'The Alternative,' Which Turns Police Handguns Into Less-Lethal Weapons

By Dan Seitz •



Alternative Ballistics

The role of a police officer is, if at all possible, to arrest, not kill. Unfortunately, it's hard to arrest instead of kill with a gun, despite ongoing efforts to keep guns from firing and to drive down the use of deadly force. Alternative Ballistics, though, has created a tool to make a gun simple and easy to turn less-lethal.

The operation is simple; you clip it onto the muzzle of the standard police sidearm, over the top. It doesn't interfere with the rails, so cameras or flashlights can still be attached, and the iron sights are unaffected. When fired, the bullet smashes into a sphere made of a proprietary alloy; this both reduces the speed by 80% and spreads out the point of impact, so instead of penetrating the target, the bullet bounces off.

Make no mistake, though; you get hit by the Alternative, it is going to hurt and it may potentially be fatal. We're still talking about a metal sphere going at 150 miles per hour bouncing off your center mass. As for the rest of the Alternative, the orange plastic clip pops off when the first bullet is fired, allowing conventional bullets to be fired if needed.

Will it catch on? One would hope so. Especially in light of the issues of deadly force and its misuse we've seen in the last few years, the Alternative would seem to be an important measure. The question now remains, what safety measures will police departments be willing to adopt?