

Retention Levels

There are two kinds of retention: **Passive** and **Active**.

Passive retention does not require the user to do anything but pull on the weapon to remove it from the holster. This is usually a detent or tensioning device.

Active retention requires the user to release or manipulate a retention device in order to remove the weapon from the holster. This could be a thumb break, a sideways motion of the drawing hand or a locking device with a release mechanism.

The International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors has divided retention levels into three distinct categories: Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3.

Single Retention/Level 1

A single method of retention, usually a thumb break, tensioning screw or detent. This method is simple to use and requires minimal training. Unfortunately, it's less secure against a gun grab. And, sometimes, vigorous physical activity, like a foot chase, can dislodge your firearm.



Dual Retention/Level 2

Two methods of retention, usually a thumb break or other device that secures the gun from the top or that locks the trigger guard and a tensioning device. For some officers, this is a good balance of retention level and ease of drawing when under pressure. Moderately secure against a gun grab.

Triple Retention/Level 3

Three separate and distinct methods of retention including tensioning devices, trigger guard locks, thumb breaks or other top end locking devices and any other device that independently secures the firearm. Best security against a gun grab. Ideal for keeping gun holstered during vigorous or even violent physical activity. Requires a higher level of initial training and continued regular practice to avoid drawing difficulty under pressure.

