

The Streamlight TLR-8 light/laser combo allows you to light up a threat while maintaining a proper two-handed hold on your pistol. The TLR-8 is shown here on a Ruger American Compact in .45 ACP.



# **RULE** THE NIGHT

**STREAMLIGHT'S  
NEW TLR-8  
WEAPON-MOUNTED  
LIGHT/LASER  
CAN GET YOU  
THROUGH THE  
DARKEST  
SCENARIOS**

BY CCH STAFF



## SOURCES

Streamlight  
www.Streamlight.com

DeSantis Gunhide  
www.DeSantisHolster.com

**“THE STREAMLIGHT TLR-8... CAN GIVE YOU GREATER CAPABILITY IN LOW LIGHT WHEN MOST CONFLICTS OCCUR.”**

**T**he more you practice low-light shooting techniques, the more you appreciate a good flashlight. And the more you practice flashlight techniques, the more you appreciate having a light attached to the weapon.

There are many good tactical flashlights on the market. But the techniques for using a flashlight in conjunction with a handgun usually don't allow for your normal two-handed hold on the gun. Sometimes you're OK for the first shot, but it can be difficult getting the gun back

on target for a follow-up.

A weapon-mounted light (WML) can solve that problem. Once used primarily by tactical units, as the devices have become smaller and lighter in weight, they have become more practical for widespread, everyday use.

One of the best new ones is the Streamlight TLR-8. Designed to be mounted on the rail of compact and full-sized handguns, the TLR-8 combines a powerful light with a maximum output of 500 lumens, with a red

The TLR-8 is a powerful light in a small package, with a maximum output of about 500 lumens.

laser for an excellent sighting alternative in low light. It has many qualities that should make it a popular if not necessary handgun accessory.

### TLR-8 FEATURES

The TLR-8 is powered by one CR123A lithium battery, which is pretty easy to find these days. You access the battery compartment by unscrewing the light's bezel. You can do this without removing the light from the weapon.

Long, narrow power switches run vertically along each side of the unit.



They make the light easy to operate in the dark, under stress. Press either switch and the light turns on or off. Press and hold a switch briefly and the light switches to momentary-on mode. Release the button and the light goes out. That's a good tactical feature because a light can also make you a good target.

Pressing both buttons allows you to toggle through the different modes: light only, laser only, and light and laser together. There's a strobe mode too that, once you program it in, activates with two quick touches.

The TLR-8 is 2.15 inches long, so it's not a bulky add-on. It weighs less than 3 ounces—not much—but it's at the muzzle where every little bit can

Top Left: The TLR-8 is compact and what little weight it does add to the muzzle end of the gun also helps in recoil management.

Top Right: The laser of the TLR-8 can be adjusted for windage and elevation using the included hex wrench.

help with recoil control.

The TLR-8 comes with an assortment of adapter plates so that you can fit it precisely and securely to your particular gun. The clamp that secures the TLR-8 to the gun's rail is held tight by a single bolt. It is slotted so you can use a screwdriver to tighten it, but a quarter or other coin will do. The bolt is also knurled, so you can hand-tighten it too in a pinch.

Adjusting the laser for windage and elevation is easy using the included tiny hex wrench. I sighted it in to be on target at 15 yards. Closer or beyond that to reasonable handgun distances and I was still putting hits where they'd do damage. Removing the TLR-8 and remounting it didn't seem to affect the zero appreciably. That's good to know if you will be taking the unit on and off the gun.

The Streamlight TLR-8 has a suggested retail price of \$350. The company offers a TLR-7 model too with light only, no laser, for a suggested \$215. Either one is a worthy addition to your self-defense gear that can give you greater capability in low light when most conflicts occur. **CC**



The Streamlight TLR-8 uses one CR123A battery. It can be replaced easily without removing the light from your weapon by unscrewing the bezel.

## WML BENEFITS

Aside from being able to control your handgun with a normal grip, the obvious benefit of a weapon-mounted light is that it takes no more coordinated effort or skill to use it with a firearm. Where you point your gun is where your light shines. You can assess any threat without the constant need to work at keeping the gun and light focused on the same point.

They are small enough now that many people keep a light mounted to the gun all the time, so it's there when you need it. Holster makers are responding by offering new rigs designed to fit handguns with lights and lasers attached. DeSantis Gunhide, for instance, has its leather Tac-Lite (with thumb break) and Speed-Lite (without thumb break) holsters for use with TLR-8-equipped guns.

If you don't want the light attached full time, they're easy to remove. You can carry the gun all day, then add the light when you reach your destination, whether that's a remote wooded area, a hotel in a strange town or home sweet home. They make great handheld lights off of the gun too. That's a good idea because often you don't want to be pointing a gun where you need to direct your light.