

UZI DOES IT

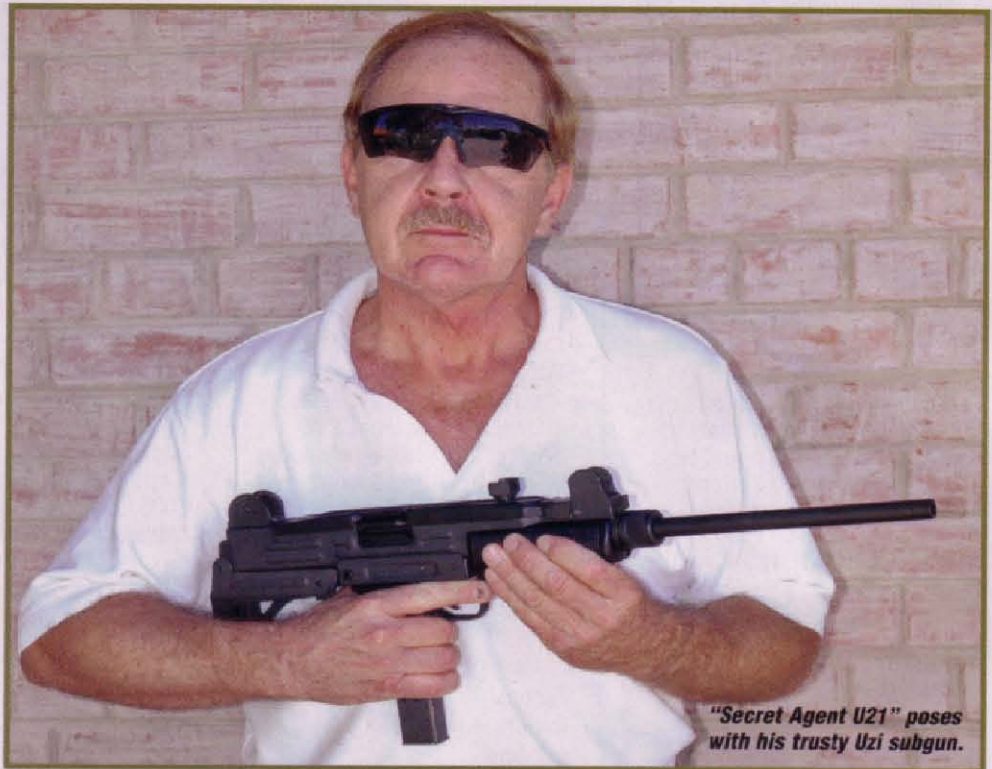
One of the most distinctive subguns ever is re-created.

The Uzi carbine is back, and it's a doozy. If there ever were an internationally recognized symbol for the submachine gun, it would be the profile of an Uzi. Rich in history, remarkably reliable and accurate, found throughout the world, easy to strip and maintain with an abundance of spare parts and magazines floating around, the new Uzi is one of the greatest fun guns ever to come down the surplus pipeline. Thanks to Century International Arms, you, too, can wrap your hands around this interesting firearm.

Century International Arms, the C.I.A. of the surplus arms world, is building anew the Uzi carbine model combining brand new receivers with newly manufactured and new surplus parts. The result is an affordable, semiauto version of a universal classic.

The Uzi was a gun of historical circumstance, a product of its political times and environment. The times were the 1940s and early 1950s when Israel was emerging as a nation. The new country was forged in conflict with its Arab neighbors who were doing everything possible to keep Palestine an Arab-controlled state. The environment was the sandy, dusty deserts of the Middle East that are about as tough a proving grounds as exists for any weapons system.

At the time, Israel's Defense Forces were armed with everything from German and Czech Model 98 Mausers to homegrown versions of the British Sten gun. Faced with a rudimentary economy and the lack of an advanced industrial production base, the



"Secret Agent U21" poses with his trusty Uzi subgun.

Israelis needed a domestic arms industry badly and a cheap, easily produced submachine gun that suited the ambush, raid, night-fighting-style of close quarter combat in which they found themselves engaged in daily. Uziel Gal gave it to them.

Uziel Gal was born in Germany in 1923 and fled with his family to Britain in 1933.

In 1936, he and his family immigrated to British Mandatory Palestine, where the family settled at the Kibbutz Yagur.

Attending technical school, he exhibited a strong mechanical bent for weapons design and was recruited into the Jewish military underground movement to head up its armaments department.

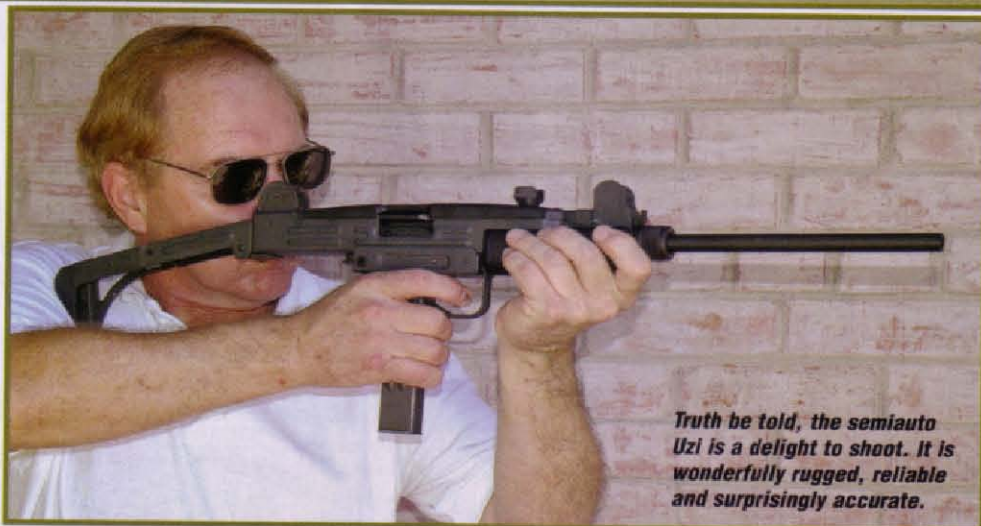
The British had other ideas and arrested Gal in 1943 on weapons charges. He spent the next three years in prison. Following his incarceration, he emerged as a major force in the newly-independent Israel's homegrown armaments industry.

Working at the government owned Israeli Military Industries (IMI), where he would spend his professional career, Gal took some of the best features of the Czech vz23 subgun, specifically, its barrel-enveloping bolt and handgrip magazine well, and crafts what's to become the most popular submachine gun of the era.

Over Gal's protest, the gun is named in his honor — the Uzi. It quickly made its reputation in the Six-Day War and during the Entebbe rescue mission. In full combat mode, it can be fitted with a bayonet, anti-



A full 7½" of an Uzi barrel is housed within its compact receiver.



Truth be told, the semiauto Uzi is a delight to shoot. It is wonderfully rugged, reliable and surprisingly accurate.

tank grenade, silencer and flashlight.

The Uzi is simple to make, simple to use, reliable in the dirt of combat and cheap. It is also profitable on the international arms and security markets and makes the country hundreds of millions of dollars. The IMI licenses Fabrique Nationale in Belgium and Lyttelton Engineering Works in South Africa to produce the Uzi as well. Among the major purchasers are West Germany, Netherlands, Venezuela, Peru, Panama, Haiti and Iran plus numerous police and security agencies including the US Secret Service.

In fact, the picture of a take-charge

Secret Service agent wielding an uplifted Uzi seconds after John Hinkley Jr. shot President Reagan is among the most famous of all Uzi action photographs.

For ease and economy of production, Gal designed the Uzi to use a maximum amount of stampings and heat-resistant plastics. The major components — the receiver, top cover, trigger housing, and folding metal stock — are welded-up sheet metal stampings. The only heavy-duty machining is found on the bolt and barrel.

When you lift the top cover and realize that the big, square Uzi bolt just reciprocates freely back-and-forth in a trough

formed by three sides of sheet metal, the ingenuity of the design hits you. Furthermore, when you look at the sides of that trough and realize there are pressed-out grooves running along both sides of the receiver to capture dirt, sand, and whatever, and the enveloping bolt completely surrounds and protects the chamber from crud, and the top cover effectively seals off the bolt raceway and receiver, you have to conclude this is one weather- and combat-proof little subgun. Combat results in the Middle East proved it was.

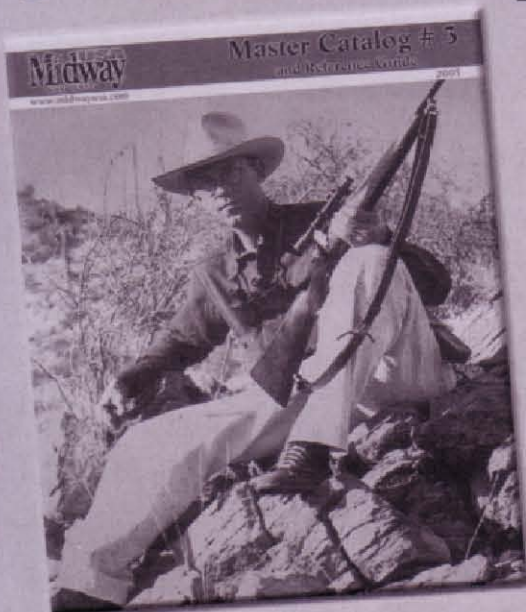
Ah, but there's a lot more to this inspired design. The heavy enveloping bolt puts mass where it counts, over the balance point at the pistol grip, making the Uzi very stable, particularly in full-automatic fire. The bolt design also permits shortening the extended barrel considerably.

Century's carbine sports a civilian legal 16"-barrel, 7½" of the barrel is inside the receiver and only 8½" projects from the frame. It gets better with the classic military Uzi. Here the barrel is 10"-long with only a 2½" snout peeking out. With the metal stock folded, it's a compact 17" package. No wonder the troops loved it. You can run around with an Uzi in one hand and feel like you are in total control of the gun and the situation.

And then there's the 25-, 32- or 40-round heavy-duty magazine housed within the centrally located grip frame.

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Not only does the location of the magazine protect it, but the location facilitates the hand-finds-hand concept of swapping out magazines in the stress of combat and particularly at night. Close your eyes and try it. Your hand will naturally find the other hand, and that's exactly where the Uzi magazine well is located.

I've seen some criticism poked at the Uzi's right angle grip-to-frame angle. My hunch is the critics have never really handled an Uzi for any period. With the mass of the gun perched right there over your pistol hand, the Uzi becomes a totally manageable, neutrally balanced tool. Even with its federally mandated 16"-barrel, the Century Arms Uzi is easily carried, pointed and fired accurately with one hand.

While early Uzi's were produced with wood stocks, Century International Arms' Uzi is fitted with the later model folding metal stock that might be a bit cold in cold weather and a bit hot in sizzling weather, but it's the one of the best folders ever put on a gun. You whack it with your hand to open it and whack it to close it. It's one rugged piece of engineering.

The sights consist of an L-shaped flip-up rear peep with apertures for 100 and 200 yards and a coarse, adjustable front post. The front post is eccentric. As it turns up-and-down to adjust elevation, it also changes the windage. While you can buy one, buy a surplus Uzi front sight-adjusting tool from SARCO. They cost

UZI ACCURACY			
AMMO (brand, bullet weight, type)	VELOCITY (fps)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)	
		25 yards	50 yards
Winchester Ranger 124 NATO	1,335	3/4	1 1/2
Sellior & Belloit 115 RN	1,268	1	1 1/2

Accuracy is the result of 5-shot groups.

less than \$10, would cost a \$100 to make, and without one, the adjustment of the front sight will prove a bit challenging.

While I'm on the subject of Uzi surplus parts availability, right now is the time to stock up. Uzi parts and magazines are in sudden abundance. SARCO has parts kits, stocks, magazines, extractors, recoil springs, barrels, and even searchlights! The two items I would recommend buying in addition to the sight-adjusting tool are an extractor and retainer (\$12.50) and four, 25-round magazines packed in a new Israeli combat pouch (\$51.50). Yes, and maybe a couple of extra springs.

Don't order or try fitting an original 10" submachine gun barrel to your 16"-barreled carbine though, unless you want the ATF to come knocking at your door. This is the only time in your life when Sweet Sixteen *only* is legal.

Next, you'll need an operating manual and the best of the bunch is Cornell Publications reprint of the IMI/Action Arms "Uzi Instruction Manual." It was written by an English-speaking author. Need I say more?

UZI CARBINE	
Maker: Century Int. Arms 1161 Holland Drive Boca Raton, FL 33487 (561) 998-1997 www.centuryarms.com	
ACTION TYPE:	Blowback, Semiautomatic
CALIBER:	9mm Luger
CAPACITY:	25-, 32-, 40-round magazines
BARREL LENGTH:	16"
OVERALL LENGTH:	Folded: 24 1/2", Extended: 31 1/2"
WEIGHT:	9 1/4 pounds with 25-round mag
FINISH:	Matte blue
SIGHTS:	Flip-up 100 & 200 yard apertures
STOCK:	Metal-folding
PRICE:	Approximately \$800

The Uzi carbine is no featherweight, but it is compact. Loaded with 25 rounds of 9mm, it weighs in at 9 1/4 pounds on my scale, but again, remember, its neutral balance belies its actual weight. And you have 25 rounds of 9mm at your touch. With the metal stock folded, its overall length is 23 1/4". With stock extended, it measures 30 1/2".



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DISASSEMBLY

The Uzi can be fieldstripped in seconds without any tools. Because there is no bolt hold-open, be doubly, doubly certain your Uzi is unloaded. Remove the magazine and cycle the bolt several times to clear the chamber of any rounds. Visually check the chamber. Set the safety on "Safe."



Depress the barrel retaining nut catch, unscrew the nut, and pull the barrel out (A).



Depress the top cover latch and remove the cover (B).



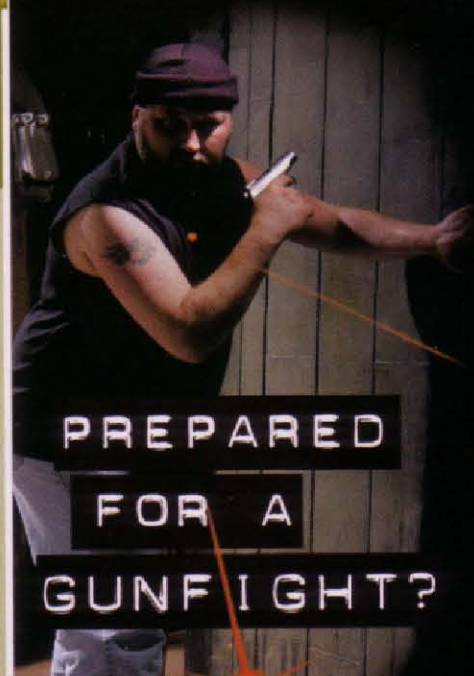
Lift the front of the bolt while moving it slightly rearward, and lift it and the striker assembly out of the frame (C).



The Uzi is now fieldstripped (D).



After 5,000 rounds or annually, remove, clean and lubricate the trigger mechanism by pushing this pin through — but not free of — the frame. Then swing the pistol grip down and forward (E). If you need to break your Uzi down further, follow the illustrations in Cornell Publication's reprinted Uzi instruction manual. Reassemble in reverse order.



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The double-stacked Uzi magazine is among the most copied of all. It is heavy walled and features a cartridge counter. You could run a truck over it, load it, stick it in the Uzi and keep on shooting. It's easy to load until you get to the 21st round. From number 21 to number 25, it's a bit of a thumb buster. Frankly, I would stay away from the 32- and 40-round magazines unless you just have to have one and have a loader of some type as your assistant.

Uzi designed a very safe firearm. The original full-auto model fires from an open bolt while the Century Arms model fires from a closed bolt. On the left side of the receiver is a selector switch designed to be activated by the thumb of the firing hand, so you had better be right-handed.

On the full-auto models, there are three selector positions, typically marked "A" for full auto, "R" for 'repetition' or semi-auto and "S" for safe. On the Century Arms Uzi, there are only two — "F" for fire and "S" for safe. When on "S," the trigger is blocked.

At the rear of the pistol grip a grip safety blocks the operation of the sear and the bolt. The grip safety must be depressed to fire the Uzi. It's a rather unique safety design on a subgun and natural to operate.

What is it like to shoot the new Uzi? Because of its weight and neutral bal-



Three "must have" accessories are a sight adjustment tool, extra extractor and additional magazines.

ance, the Uzi is a pleasant gun the whole family can enjoy. Its reputation for reliability and accuracy is well deserved, and it will feed a variety of ammunition types without a hiccup.

The final swan song of the Israeli Uzi was its miniaturization. The Uzi is morphed into a pistol and two petite Uzis with side-folding stocks, the Mini-Uzi and the Micro-Uzi. With their stocks folded, they are small indeed. The Mini-Uzi is 14"

long, weighs 5.9 pounds and has a cyclic rate of 950 rounds per minute. The Uzi Pistol (semiauto) and the Micro-Uzi (full auto) shrink to 9.8", weigh only about 3.3 pounds and the Micro can shuck out 1,250 rounds per minute. The miniaturized models, available in 9mm Luger and .45 ACP, find homes with special operations units and security agencies.

And what happened to Uziel Gal the man? In 1976, Gal moves from Israel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to care for an ailing daughter. He teams up with Action Arms in Philadelphia to design the semi-automatic models of the Uzi Action Arms imported from IMI until 1989, including models chambered for the .41 AE, .45 ACP, and .22 LR conversion units. He assists Ruger in the design of the Ruger MP-9 submachine gun. He works with Reed Knight on silencers. He serves as a resource for the Secret Service. He is a busy man and a gun enthusiast to the last when he passes on in 2002. He is flown home and buried at the Kibbutz Yagur.

Century International Arms is breathing new life into the Uzi. Even in its semiautomatic carbine form, it is still the classic submachine gun. Let the fun begin!

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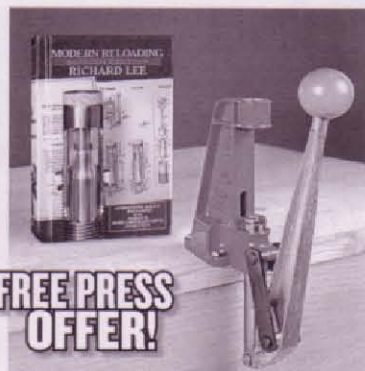
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