

# GEAR REVIEW: Alessi Holsters Ankle Rig

By Chris Fry

## Background:

There exist numerous methods for concealed carry of handguns and with each method come a number of manufacturers, materials and types of holsters. I am a fan of very few methods of carry for personal protection and admittedly NOT a fan of ankle carry for a primary handgun. Unfortunately, things don't always go the way we want and the time comes when we have to explore options outside our comfort zone or personal preferences i.e. ankle carry/CCW.



In 2009 I had the opportunity to meet and train with a couple guys from Alessi Holsters located in Cheektowaga, NY. Anyone who carries a handgun on the job or off has probably at one time or another heard of Alessi and their reputation in the industry is well earned. Founded in 1974, Alessi holsters was primarily know for producing custom hand crafted holsters for the US Government and several foreign military agencies. In recent years Alessi has opened up production to citizens, undercover LE and security professionals who carry a gun every day.

One of the guys from Alessi approached me and showed me his Alessi ankle rig commenting on how I was pocket carrying my Smith & Wesson 642 backup. As stated above, I was not a fan of ankle carry due to the difficulties associated with accessing the handgun from that location and comfort issues I had experienced with previous ankle holsters I had evaluated for my personal use. Upon seeing the Alessi rig I immediately saw the difference in design quality, durability and comfort. Jeff allowed me to use his Alessi ankle holster for the remainder of that day during the class consisting of approximately 7 hrs on my feet shooting and moving. I will admit that I forgot I had that ankle rig on. The holster was so comfortable that I didn't want to give it back and, if I recall correctly, I offered to buy his from him right there on the spot. Upon returning home that night I got online and purchased an Alessi ankle holster via the Alessiholsters.com web store for my SW642. Over the last year and a half I have found myself presented with several occasions where carrying my full size guns was a no go such as weddings, formal meetings and other such events. The Alessi ankle rig has been with me each time.

### Specifications:

I received my holster in just less than 3 weeks and immediately started utilizing it for my backup gun. Made of russet leather and felt this holster is extremely durable and most importantly to me, comfortable. If a holster is not comfortable for 8+ hrs of extended wear I won't wear it. It measures 5.25 inches in height and under 2 inches at its thickest point (cylinder). The 2 inch wide wrap around secures via Velcro and is extremely robust and secure. When I first received it I did a little jog test on the treadmill for about half a mile with no shifting or retention problems. Since that time I have had occasion to sprint short distances and grapple in combatives classes while wearing this holster with similar results; retention is excellent.



### Ankle Carry Considerations:

- Accessing handgun from an ankle holster requires the shooter to either 1) Take a knee; which is not recommended in a combative environment since you are immediately limiting mobility 2) Be seated; in car, at desk or table where once again mobility is generally very limited 3) Balance on one foot while raising the other leg to the hands; not recommended. All of these methods require extensive practice.
- Depending upon physical make up, bending forward at the waist to access a handgun from an ankle holster may be extremely difficult.
- Shoe selection is an important factor; I do not wear my ankle holster with any type of mid or high boot because of the circumference of my ankle/calf since I cannot wrap the holster and secure it properly.
- Dress shoes and low top shoes may allow the holster to slide downward and expose the base of the holster, thus care should be taken when sitting due to this factor.
- While the holster may be secure the rounds in the chamber of a revolver will make noise when moving giving off a noise and or target signature.



- As with ANY holster it is recommended you dress around the holster to limit printing and unintended exposure.



**Conclusion:**

The Alessi ankle holster has changed my opinion of ankle carry as an option when circumstances dictate non-traditional primary carry. I now appreciate the positive reviews and recommendations for this holster I've received from LE undercover officer friends and Federal Agents I have had the pleasure of interacting and training with. To top things off Alessi offers a (3) day return policy and free lifetime holster repair for common wear damage. I will continue to utilize my Alessi ankle holster and if you are in the market I encourage you to check them out, you won't be disappointed.

**Alessi Ankle Rig:** \$165 + Shipping

**Contact Alessi Holsters:** <http://www.alessigunholsters.com/>