

# GEAR REVIEW: VRI Tactical EDC Belt

By Chris Fry

## BACKGROUND:

Located in Cheektowaga NY, VRI Tactical is a fairly new (3 yrs or so) division of VRI Sharpening owned and run by Brian Benson. Brian is a big, unassuming guy who is always eager to help you out, answer a question, or discuss a piece of gear. Last year Brian attended an MDTs Combative Pistol Skills class in Buffalo, NY. I was immediately impressed with his shooting ability and personable yet non-salesman like nature while interacting with other students in the class. I also noticed his KYDEX® holster and belt pouches as well as the unique belt he was carrying his



Brian with his son at VRI booth at the Wounded Warrior Steel Shoot fund-raiser held in May. VRI has been extremely supportive of any 2A events and efforts here in NYS.

EDC (Every Day Carry) gear on and running in that class. I asked Brian about the holsters and belt. He humbly mentioned how he crafted the holster in his “shop” the day before the class (apparently no big deal!) but then lit up about the belt since it was his personal design and one of a few T&E models he had prior to full production. After lunch that day, Brian asked my belt size, and a few days later I received version 1.0 of the VRI Tactical EDC Belt in the mail for my personal wear and T&E.

## THE GUN BELT:

Anyone who carries or has carried a handgun and all the requisite gear associated with carrying a handgun daily knows the importance of a good, firm, durable gun belt. If you don't, then you probably don't carry all that often or you don't carry the handgun for extended amounts of time. For years, and probably even today, there are gun training circles that advocate leather as being the ONLY material a good gun belt should be made out of. Well, as with leather holsters, modern technology, materials, and manufacturing has caught up, and leather is taking a back seat to nylon, canvas, and plastic composites as the new industry standard for every day carry gun belts. Having used leather, nylon, and composite plastic belts, I can say that they all have their pros and cons. For example, I cannot and do not wear my Wilderness belt with dress pants; that is where a good leather belt comes into play. Likewise, I want to keep my leather belt in good shape for formal dress occasions, so I don't wear that in classes or to the range.

## THE VRI TACTICAL BELT SPEC'S:

The VRI Tactical EDC Belt is an extremely firm 1.5 inch double stitched tactical nylon belt with a one inch FASTEX® male/female buckle. Brian is extremely proud that this belt is made in the USA with USA made materials and deals directly with other companies to secure these materials himself. The VRI Tactical EDC Belt loops around the waistline and overlaps itself, securing back to face via VELCRO® hook and loops. Once comfortable, the 1 inch FASTEX® belt buckle is secured and then drawn tight; this makes for a very secure and comfortable fit.

100% Made in the USA with 100% USA made materials

Now accepting Pre Orders

1.5" wide rigid belt with accent color and 1" FASTEX buckle

Sizes Available

Medium (32, 34, 36)

Large (36, 38, 40)

XLarge (40, 42, 44)

Colors Available

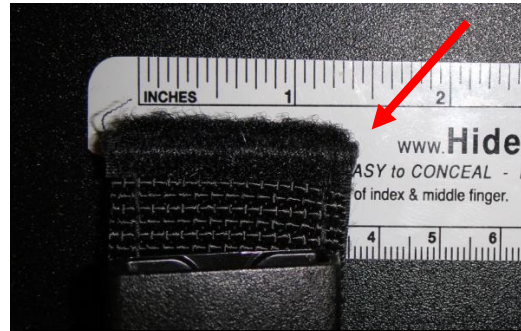
Black / Black

Tan / Black

OD / Black



A full ½ cm double strap thickness makes for a VERY firm and supportive belt.



1.5 inch width (poorly measured by author), note how VELCRO® is wrapped around top or face of belt and doesn't just stop at the end of the belt. This is a measure of quality; not cutting corners to make assured the belt secures properly.



The VRI Tactical EDC Belt comes with an extremely durable 1 inch FASTEX® plastic buckle. The male end is easily removed for fast and simple threading through belt loops and holster loops.

## PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:

I received the EDC Belt from VRI back in November of 2010 and have been T&E (testing and evaluating) as my primary carry belt for seven+ months. I carry every day; sometimes for a few hours, and sometimes for 8+ hours. The longest I have worn the VRI belt is while instructing classes, which from start to finish average 14-16hrs. Comfort is my number one priority when choosing any piece of EDC gear, and wearing a piece of kit for extended duration is the ultimate test of comfort. The VRI Tactical EDC Belt is extremely comfortable and does not loosen throughout the day, like some nylon belts do during dynamic movement sometimes associated with gun training, riding in cars for extended periods of travel (6+hrs), or during every day about town chores.



Durability and longevity is also important, and so far it has shown zero wear or tear. This was a concern based on experience with other VELCRO hook and loop belts where the VELCRO started to come off and stitching breaks down under stress or introduced to the elements. There are no such issues with the VRI belt, which I have worn in the wet, mud, extreme heat, and humidity.

The next criteria I look for in a new piece of EDC gear is how well it conceals in regard to CCW (carrying a concealed weapon) of my handgun and overall personal defense profile. Some belts look *tactical* in nature, and to a trained eye or astute observer, they can easily identify you as probably someone to take note of. When conducting my every day activities, I rarely want to be noticed by anyone and attempt to be as low profile as possible, infrequently wearing any NRA



gear, MDTS gear, or anything that can associate me with the shooting sports or firearms. The VRI Tactical EDS Belt is lower profile than other gun belts I own; however, it has drawn attention once or twice while traveling when TSA agents asked me to take the belt off at security. It is a carry belt that I wear covered by a shirt or coat, and I have never worn it with a shirt tucked in fearing it will draw undue attention; everyone has their personal preferences.

The final criterion is integration with the rest of my EDC kit; how does it work with my gun holster, magazine pouches, and tertiary gear? Over the years, like everyone, I have come up with a system of easily changing out gear from one outfit/pair of pants to

another as the daily activities with work, family, and training evolves. The VRI Tactical EDC Belt's plastic FASTEX buckle makes for an easy switch over, threading through belt loops, holster loops and integration with other gear. I will be honest; when I first got this belt, I did not

like how the male end of the buckle wouldn't fit through the loops on my Raven Concealment holster, but after speaking with Brian and providing him feedback, he tipped me off to an easy fix for this problem. Simply slide the male end of the buckle off, thread the belt, and slide it back on. No big deal. Now, with minimal amount of practice, it's a non-issue.

**CONCLUSION:**

Overall, I think the VRI Tactical EDC Belt is an excellent addition to the current gun belt offerings on the market today. If you are looking for a lower profile every day carry belt that combines comfort, durability, and functionality, check out the VRI Tactical EDC Belt and let me know what you think.

VRI Tactical EDC Belt - \$39.95

[http://www.vrisharpening.com/c39\\_vri\\_tactical.html](http://www.vrisharpening.com/c39_vri_tactical.html)

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