

# **BLACKHAWK!®**

**BLACKHAWK!® EPOCH® Instruction Guide  
Level 3 Light Bearing Duty Holsters**

Congratulations! You have just purchased the most advanced synthetic retention light bearing duty holster on the market. Here are some of its many unique features:

- Patent Pending EPOCH® Auto Lock™ technology combines immediate access with unparalleled retention
- Auto Lock™ and finger groove position reinforces full master grip by allowing you to draw the weapon normally with the index finger sliding from holster body to the weapon frame in one single movement
- All models are molded from a durable and resilient blend of proprietary impact-modified nylon for low maintenance and high performance in all environments
- Unique jacket slot belt loop adjusts for cant and fits your individual belt width. Other belt loop styles are available as separate accessories.
- Metal hardware on all models is either stainless steel or brass for all-weather performance
- Versatile carry options meet each customer's varied yet specific mission requirements

 **WARNING!** READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS ENTIRE MANUAL BEFORE USE. This manual contains important information about the proper assembly, fit, care and use of the EPOCH® holster. Failing to read or follow these instructions may result in serious injury or death. Store this manual in a safe place and review it periodically.

When using this holster, always follow these precautions:

- Do not place a loaded firearm into the holster without first testing the holster for proper fit as set forth in this manual.
- Activate the EPOCH® release with your thumb and your index finger straight and off the trigger, until ready to shoot.
- Use this holster only with the specific firearm for which it is designed. Use of a firearm other than the one specified may greatly increase the likelihood of an accidental discharge or the defeat of the retention characteristics.
- Do not use with firearms that have been modified or fitted with aftermarket accessories that affect the safe performance of your firearm with the holster.
- If equipped, always carry the firearm with any manual safeties engaged unless you have been specifically trained to carry it otherwise.
- Never carry any gun with a round in the chamber or in a cocked position unless you are trained to do so and the gun is designed to be carried this way.
- Do not attempt to repair or modify the holster in any way. Unauthorized repairs or modifications can affect the safe performance of your holster and will void your warranty.
- User should always practice to proficiency (see Section 4.4) before using any holster, particularly retention holsters.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
1 PARTS AND NOMENCLATURE	5
2 FIT AND ADJUSTMENT INSTRUCTIONS	7
3 MOUNTING INSTRUCTIONS	14
4 USE INSTRUCTIONS	17
5 CARE INSTRUCTIONS	22
6 WARRANTY INFORMATION	23
7 CUSTOMER SUPPORT	24

**CAUTION!** Do not use EPOCH® Light Bearing Holsters without an under barrel light attached to the firearm as this will not properly secure the firearm. A firearm without a light can be placed into a Light Bearing Holster in an emergency, but should not be relied upon for weapon retention. EPOCH® Light Bearing Holsters are compatible with SureFire® X200a, SureFire® X200b, SureFire® X300, SureFire® X300 Ultra, Streamlight® TLR-1®, Streamlight® TLR-1®s, Streamlight® TLR-1® HL, Streamlight® TLR-2®, Streamlight® TLR-2® G, Streamlight® TLR-2®s and Streamlight® TLR-2® HL under barrel lights. Some models require the use of a spacer. See pages 12-13 for more details.

**NOTE:** Do not attempt to holster a firearm backwards into an EPOCH® holster.

## 1. PARTS AND NOMENCLATURE

Before using your EPOCH® holster, it is important to know your holster's nomenclature and how it functions.

### LEVEL 3 EPOCH®



## LEVEL 3 EPOCH®

Belt Loop Mounting  
Screws



Light Module  
Spacer Screw

## 2. FIT AND ADJUSTMENT INSTRUCTIONS

**⚠ WARNING!** Do not attempt to place a loaded firearm into your EPOCH® holster without carefully following these instructions with an UNLOADED firearm.

### 2.1 Proper Firearm and Holster Pairing

Before you begin, look at the back of the holster body and confirm that you have the right size and model holster designed to fit your firearm and under-barrel light. This holster is only compatible with the firearms listed on the back of the holster and the lights designated in this manual.

**⚠ WARNING!** Do not use this holster with an incompatible, improperly maintained or abused firearm. Failing to follow this precaution could cause an unintended discharge and/or the defeat of the retention characteristics and result in property damage and/or serious injury or death.

**⚠ CAUTION!** Using the EPOCH holster without the proper spacer will result in an improper fit and reduce its retention strength. Make sure to install the proper spacer, if required, before use.

## 2.2 Under Barrel Lights

Your EPOCH® is designed to be used with SureFire® X200a, SureFire® X200b, SureFire® X300, SureFire® X300 Ultra, Streamlight® TLR-1®, Streamlight® TLR-1®s, Streamlight® TLR-1® HL, Streamlight® TLR-2®, Streamlight® TLR-2® G, Streamlight® TLR-2®s and Streamlight® TLR-2® HL under barrel lights. Your EPOCH is shipped with two Light Module Spacers, one for use with SureFire X200a/X200b/X300/X300 Ultra and one for Streamlight® TLR-1® / TLR-1®s/ TLR-1® HL.

**⚠ CAUTION!** Using the EPOCH holster without the proper spacer will result in an improper fit and reduce its retention strength. Make sure to install the proper spacer, if required, before use.

To install this spacer follow the instructions below.

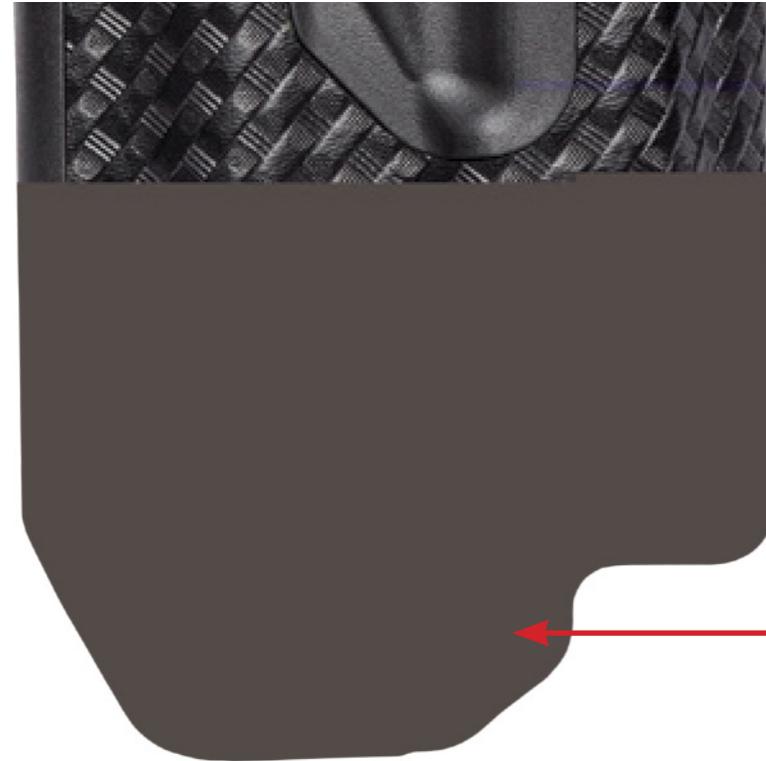
1. Locate the correct Light Module Spacer that corresponds to your light and the screw.
2. Place your index finger on the spacer block, slide it into the holster pocket aligning the threaded insert with the spacer screw hole.
3. Using a Phillips screw driver, install the screw and tighten. Be careful not to over-tighten the screw.
4. Store the other spacer block in a safe place.



### 2.3 Level 1 “Passive Retention” Adjustment

The first level of retention on your EPOCH® holster is a result of friction from the holster body on the firearm’s slide/frame and under barrel light. Retention can be adjusted by tightening or loosening the passive retention screw as follows:

1. Loosen the passive retention screw until you can see a slight gap between the bottom of the screw and the surface of the holster body.



Passive Retention  
Screw

2. Insert an UNLOADED firearm into the holster until the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ engages on the firearm’s ejection port. Make sure the under-barrel light is installed properly on your firearm before holstering. Make sure that no part of the holster interferes with the trigger, safety features, sights, magazine release, compatible accessories or any other part of the firearm.

**! WARNING!** If your holster interferes with any of these parts of the firearm, **DO NOT USE IT.** Interferences can cause an unintended discharge and/or interfere with retention mechanisms. Do not attempt to modify or alter any portion of the holster in any way or add any lubricants or chemicals to make your firearm fit. Contact BLACKHAWK!® for a resolution.

3. Depress the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ release with your thumb keeping your index finger flattened/straight and pull on the firearm. There should be little or no resistance at this point when attempting to remove the firearm. If your firearm does not come out of the holster easily, contact BLACKHAWK!® for a replacement.
4. Turning the passive retention screw in clockwise increments to increase friction, test the passive retention by pulling up on your firearm (with the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ release depressed) until the desired level of passive retention is achieved. The passive retention screw should be just tight enough so that the firearm does not fall out of the holster when turned upside down with the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ release depressed.

**NOTE:** Tightening the passive retention screw too much can inhibit your draw or wear the finish off the slide/frame your firearm and under barrel light.

## 2.4 Level 2 EPOCH® Auto Lock™ Test

After properly adjusting the level 1 passive retention, test the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ several times for proper functioning. Confirm the following:

1. When holstering, the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ should engage the ejection port with an audible “click.”
2. When seated inside the holster, the firearm should not rattle or move excessively.
3. When the EPOCH® release is pressed, the EPOCH Auto Lock™ should not interfere with any part of the firearm as it is removed from the holster.

## 2.5 Level 3 Pivot Guard Test

1. With your unloaded firearm properly seated in the holster, press and hold the release with your firing hand thumb.

**NOTE:** The EPOCH Auto Lock™ release actuates two separate functions by first disengaging the Pivot Guard and then deactivating the Auto Lock from the firearm’s ejection port.

2. While holding the thumb release down, roll your index and middle fingers over the top of the Pivot Guard and pull it to the rear over the slide of the firearm.

3. Release the Auto Lock™ thumb release while holding the Pivot Guard closed. The Pivot Guard should stay in place.
4. Press the thumb release again to release the Pivot Guard. The Pivot Guard should immediately spring away from the firearm and not interfere with the firearm as it is being drawn from the holster.
5. Repeat this process several times to ensure proper functioning.

## 2.6 Aftermarket Firearm Accessories/Modifications

 **WARNING!** Never use your EPOCH® holster with a firearm that has been modified with a trigger shoe, oversized sights, wide target trigger or hammer. Do not use with any other aftermarket firearm accessory unless you first test to make sure it does not affect the safe performance of your firearm. Use with incompatible, modified or improperly installed accessories can cause an unintended discharge or damage to your firearm.

- With your firearm unloaded, repeatedly test your holster to ensure that accessories do not interfere with any retention devices or the safe holstering and drawing from your holster.
- Since BLACKHAWK!® cannot possibly design or test its holsters for compatibility with all possible aftermarket firearm accessories, the user assumes all risk and liability associated with use of a firearm with any aftermarket accessories.

### 3. MOUNTING INSTRUCTIONS

#### 3.1 Mounting Platforms Options

Your EPOCH® Duty Holster is shipped mounted to a jacket slot belt loop or tactical platform, but can be mounted to a variety of different platforms to meet your specific mission requirements.

**NOTE:** Never use concealment belt mounts on duty holsters as they are not designed for the rigors of duty use.

#### 3.2 Mounting Your EPOCH® Holster to a Duty Platform

When mounting your EPOCH holster to the desired duty platform:

- Your EPOCH® holster adjusts for cant on most mounting platforms to allow for individual preferences or department regulation. The holster is shipped in the vertical position but can be converted to either a “butt forward” or “muzzle forward” position as needed.
- Simply align the holster mounting inserts with the desired holes on the mounting platform to achieve the desired position. Firmly hand-tighten all three mounting screws with a hand screw driver or with a torque screw driver set to 12 inch-lbs. for tactical platforms or 18 inch-lbs. for all other platforms. **DO NOT OVERTIGHTEN.**

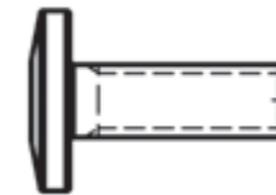
**NOTE:** Do not tighten mounting screws with a power tool or otherwise apply excessive force. Doing so can damage your holster.

- Routinely check mounting screws for loosening and tighten if necessary

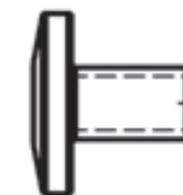
**! WARNING!** Do not use holster if a mounting screw is missing. Using with less than all three screws can weaken the holster’s retention properties. Contact BLACKHAWK!® for replacement mounting screws.

- To compensate for bulky body armor or varied hip-to-waist contours, BLACKHAWK!®’s holster spacer kit allows you to adjust the amount of angle and distance away from your body.

**NOTE:** Do not use longer spacer kit mounting screws without the spacer. Doing so can damage your holster.



Spacer Kit Mounting Screw  
(Shown actual size)



Standard Mounting Screw  
(Shown actual size)

#### 3.3 Mounting Your Jacket Slot Belt Loop to a Duty Belt

Use your EPOCH® holster only with a durable and well-maintained belt specifically designed for duty use. The jacket slot belt loop can accommodate duty belts up to 2 ¼” wide. To mount your jacket slot belt loop to a duty belt, follow these steps:

1. Remove belt loop mounting screws completely.
2. Spread the two straps of the belt loop open and slide over the duty belt at the desired location.
3. Push all the way down until the top of the duty belt is seated firmly against the inside radius of the loop.
4. Hand-tighten screws evenly and firmly. DO NOT OVERTIGHTEN. If using a torque screwdriver, tighten using a setting of 12 inch-lbs.
5. Push and pull on the holster to make sure it does not move on the duty belt.

 **WARNING!** Ensure that nothing on your duty belt, holster or clothing (e.g. drawstrings), interferes with the safe holstering and drawing of your firearm and function of your holster.

### 3.4 Mounting Your Tactical Holster Platform to a Belt

Use your EPOCH<sup>®</sup> holster only with a durable and well-maintained belt specifically designed for tactical or duty use. To mount your tactical holster platform to a belt, follow these steps:

1. Attach platform to belt using hook & loop belt keepers. Spread the two straps apart along your waist to help with stability.

2. Attach both leg straps by using the side-release buckles. Tighten straps by pulling on remaining straps.
3. For quick disconnect, use the quick-disconnect swivel buckles to allow superior flexibility and quick holster mounting and dismounting.

 **WARNING!** Ensure that nothing on your duty belt, holster or clothing (e.g. drawstrings), interferes with the safe holstering and drawing of your firearm and functioning of your holster.

## 4. USE INSTRUCTIONS

### 4.1 Holstering a Firearm into Your EPOCH<sup>®</sup> Holster

 **WARNING!** If equipped, always carry the firearm with any manual safeties engaged unless you have been specifically trained to carry it otherwise. If your firearm is not equipped with an external safety selector, do not attempt to holster with a cartridge in the chamber unless you are specifically trained by a qualified instructor in holstering, carrying and drawing firearms in this manner and have a need to carry in this manner. Never carry any gun with a round in the chamber or in a cocked position unless you are trained to do so and the gun is designed to be carried this way.

When holstering:

- Always keep your firearm pointed in a safe direction.
- Make sure the holster is free from any kind of obstructions that could engage the trigger.
- Always look at your holster when holstering until you have gained proficiency. Civilians should never attempt to holster a loaded firearm without looking at the holster unless proficient in this technique and properly trained by a qualified instructor.
- Never attempt to holster a firearm with your finger on the trigger or inside the trigger guard.
- Make sure the trigger, slide and hammer do not catch on any part of the holster.
- Place firearm straight into the holster until the EPOCH® Auto Lock™ catches the ejection port. You will hear an audible “click” when the EPOCH Auto Lock feature has been properly engaged.
- If you feel any resistance or have trouble properly seating the firearm, stop immediately and determine the cause of the problem.
- Engage the Pivot Guard following the instructions in Section 2.5 above.

 **WARNING!** If misused, certain unavoidable design features of some holsters can engage your firearm’s trigger and cause an accidental discharge. Do not attempt to force your firearm at unnatural angles against the outside of your holster. Place your firearm directly into the holster, pay attention to what you are doing and practice holstering for proficiency before using under stress.

## 4.2 Carrying a Firearm in Your EPOCH® Holster

 **WARNING!** No holster can completely secure a weapon from unauthorized removal or falling out during certain physical activities. It is your responsibility to receive training in, follow and regularly practice proper weapon retention techniques and safety precautions at all times during use. Secure firearm in holster with your hand during physical activity such as jumping, crawling, falling, climbing, running or tumbling. Always ensure retention device(s) is/are engaged before engaging in such physical activity.

- If equipped, always carry the firearm with any manual safeties engaged unless you have been specifically trained to carry otherwise.
- Never carry any gun with a round in the chamber or in a cocked position unless you are trained to do so and the gun is designed to be carried this way
- If your firearm is not equipped with an external safety selector, do not attempt to carry a firearm with a cartridge in the chamber unless you are specifically trained by a qualified instructor in holstering, carrying and drawing firearms in this manner and have a need to carry in this manner.

 **WARNING!** The trigger on certain firearms is unavoidably accessible while seated in Light Bearing Holsters. Extreme caution must be used during a struggle to prevent an unauthorized person from accessing and pulling the trigger.

### 4.3 Drawing From Your EPOCH® Holster

Before drawing, make sure the EPOCH release is free from dirt and other debris and that the holster is otherwise functioning properly. Proper firearms handling requires you to place your trigger finger on the frame of your firearm as the firearm comes out of the holster. The placement of the EPOCH finger groove is specifically designed to promote proper “safe master grip” on your firearm.

1. Establish a safe master grip on the weapon with your index finger extended straight along the frame of the firearm.
2. The flat of your index finger will naturally align onto the EPOCH® finger groove. Keeping your finger straight, apply downward pressure with your thumb to disengage the EPOCH Auto Lock™ and drag the flat of your finger across the EPOCH finger tray as you draw the firearm.

 **WARNING!** Do not bend your index finger while drawing or place your finger on the trigger or in the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot. Placing your finger on the trigger too soon can cause an unintended discharge and result in property damage and/or serious injury or death.

3. Draw the weapon with ‘safe master grip’ and your finger will naturally align on the frame of the weapon above the trigger guard.

**NOTE:** It is extremely important to regularly practice drawing from your EPOCH for proficiency.

### 4.4 Practice for Proficiency

Holsters should only be used by those who have received proper training in the safe handling of firearms. Before attempting live-fire exercises, it is critical that you regularly practice drawing from and holstering into your EPOCH® holster with an unloaded firearm.

Before using in a duty setting, at a fast speed or under stressful conditions, practice drawing, firing (live and dry) and holstering with your EPOCH® holster until proficiency has been attained. Proficiency depends on the individual user’s experience and skill level, but generally requires several hundred repetitions and a demonstrated ability to safely draw and holster a weapon quickly. Practice must include use under conditions of simulated stress and firearm retention techniques.

Once attained, proficiency must be maintained through frequent practice and training. BLACKHAWK!® strongly recommends dry fire drills with an unloaded weapon as well as live fire exercises.

### 5. CARE INSTRUCTIONS

 **WARNING!** Failure to routinely inspect, test and care for your holster may prevent your firearm from being properly deployed and/or defeat retention characteristics. It is critical that you strictly follow these care instructions.

### 5.1 Inspecting Your EPOCH® Holster

Although your holster does not have a specific service life, no holster lasts forever. Your holster's functionality and retention properties will diminish as the holster ages and is used. Therefore, you should test and inspect your holster frequently (at least monthly) and each time before going on duty. Replace your holster if it cannot meet these criteria:

- Carefully inspect your holster for cracking, deformation, missing parts and excessive wear.
- Adjust the passive retention screw and mounting screws as necessary.
- Check to ensure that all other screws are securely tightened. Replace missing screws immediately.

Contact BLACKHAWK!® if you need additional parts.

- Ensure holster and all retention mechanisms are free from all dirt and other debris.
- Check functionality of holster for proper fit, holstering, locking, retention, release and drawing, as specified above.

### 5.2 Cleaning/Decontaminating Your EPOCH® Holster

- Routinely clean your EPOCH® holster with warm soapy water, rinse with fresh water and air dry.
- Decontaminate your EPOCH® holster with a 10% solution of household bleach in fresh water.
- Do not use any harsh, abrasive or caustic solutions, or petroleum derivatives on your EPOCH® holster.

### 5.3 Storing Your EPOCH® Holster

 **WARNING!** This is a retention holster, not a storage device. This holster is not designed to keep firearms away from children or other unauthorized persons during storage. When not in use, always keep guns locked and safely secured according to applicable local, state and federal laws.

Store your holster indoors at room temperature. Do not expose to excessive temperature, sunlight or humidity for extended periods of time. Improper storage can lead to premature degradation of holster performance.