SOFTWARE & TECH

Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale

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Introduction: The Timeless Appeal of the Double Barrel Coach Shotgun

For centuries, few firearms have captured the imagination and practical respect of shooters quite like the double barrel coach shotgun. Often simply called a "coach gun," this classic side-by-side shotgun evokes images of stagecoach guards, frontier lawmen, and the rugged simplicity of a bygone era. Yet, far from being a relic, the double barrel coach shotgun remains a highly sought-after firearm today. Whether you are a historical collector, a cowboy action shooter, or a homeowner looking for a reliable and straightforward home defense tool, the search for a **Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale**often begins with a desire for proven simplicity and undeniable character.

This article serves as a comprehensive guide to understanding, selecting, and purchasing a double barrel coach shotgun. We will explore its rich history, dissect its defining features, discuss what to look for when buying, and offer advice on finding the best examples currently on the market. By the end, you will have a thorough understanding of why this classic firearm continues to command attention and respect in the modern firearms world.

A Brief History of the Coach Shotgun

The coach shotgun earned its name from its intended purpose: defending stagecoaches against highwaymen and bandits during the 19th century. This was an era when traveling long distances was fraught with danger, and passengers and drivers needed a compact, powerful, and reliable weapon for close-quarters defense.

The Origins and the Wild West

The classic design typically featured a side-by-side configuration with relatively short barrels—usually between 18 and 20 inches. This made the weapon easy to handle inside the cramped confines of a stagecoach while still delivering devastating stopping power at close range. The double barrel action provided two quick shots without the need to cycle a pump or lever action, which was a critical advantage in a chaotic fight.

While the image of the Wild West popularized the coach gun, its use extended far beyond the American frontier. It was employed by guards, law enforcement, and private citizens worldwide who needed a compact and formidable defensive tool. The design's simplicity meant it was less prone to jamming than more complex repeating mechanisms, a trait that remains highly valued today.

Key Features of a Double Barrel Coach Shotgun

Before you start searching for a **Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale**, it is essential to understand the specific features that define this classic firearm. Not all side-by-side shotguns are coach guns, so knowing the details helps you make an informed purchase.

Barrel Length and Configuration

- Short Barrels (18-20 Inches): This is the hallmark of a true coach gun. Short barrels make the firearm exceptionally maneuverable and quick to point, ideal for defensive use and cowboy action shooting.
- Side-by-Side vs. Over-Under: The traditional coach gun is a side-by-side, meaning the two barrels are arranged horizontally. While over-under shotguns are popular for modern sporting clays, the classic coach gun is almost always a side-by-side.

Action Type

- Break-Action (Hinge Action): This is the standard action for double barrel shotguns. To load or unload, you break the barrel open by releasing a top lever. This simple mechanism is incredibly reliable and easy to maintain.
- Exposed Hammers vs. Hammerless: Two distinct sub-types exist:

Exposed Hammers: These are the "old west" style with visible external hammers that must be manually cocked. They are popular with historical reenactors and cowboy action shooters.

- Hammerless (Internal Hammers): These are more modern and practical for general use. The hammers are cocked automatically when you break open the action. They are less prone to snagging and offer a cleaner profile.

Gauge and Chambering

- 12 Gauge: The most common and versatile choice. Offers a wide range of ammunition, from light target loads to heavy defensive buckshot and slugs.
- 20 Gauge: Lighter recoil, making it an excellent choice for smaller-framed shooters or those who prefer a less punishing experience. Still effective for defense and small game.
- .410 Bore: The smallest common gauge, often used for pest control or as a training tool. Limited defensive utility but fun to shoot.

Most coach guns feature a **chamber length of 3 inches**, allowing them to shoot both 2 ¾ inch and 3 inch shells, providing flexibility for different loads.

Stock and Finish

Traditional coach guns often feature a straight-grip stock (without a pistol grip) and a splinter forearm, giving them a sleek, classic appearance. Finishes vary widely, from blued steel and walnut to more modern synthetic stocks and matte finishes intended to reduce glare. For a true "Old West" look, look for case-hardened receivers and oil-finished walnut.

Why Choose a Double Barrel Coach Shotgun?

In a modern market filled with semi-automatic shotguns and high-capacity pump-actions, the double barrel coach gun might seem quaint. However, it possesses several distinct advantages that keep it competitive and beloved.

Unmatched Reliability

The break-action design has very few moving parts. There are no feed mechanisms, no springs to weaken, and no complex gas systems to foul. A double barrel coach shotgun will fire in almost any condition, from dusty deserts to freezing rain. This simplicity is its greatest strength. When you need a firearm to go bang every single time, the double barrel is a champion of reliability.

Exceptional Pointability

Because the barrels are fixed and the gun is typically light and well-balanced, a coach gun mounts to the shoulder naturally and points instinctively. Many shooters find they can hit targets faster with a well-fitted side-by-side than with a pump-action, especially at close ranges. This is why it remains so popular for **home defense**

and cowboy action shooting, where speed and accuracy are paramount.

Aesthetics and Collectibility

There is an undeniable aesthetic charm to a finely crafted double barrel coach shotgun. The lines are classic, the wood-to-metal fit is a hallmark of fine gunsmithing, and the overall presentation is timeless. For collectors, finding an early 20th-century model for sale can be a rewarding experience, connecting you directly to the era of the Wild West.

What to Consider Before You Search for a Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale

Entering the market for a coach shotgun requires some forethought. Here are critical factors to evaluate before making a purchase.

Intended Use

1. Cowboy Action Shooting: You will want a model with exposed hammers, typically 20-inch barrels, and a classic "Old West" finish (like case-hardening). Look for modern reproductions from manufacturers like Stoeger, Cimarron, or Taylor's & Company.
2. Home Defense: A hammerless model with 18.5-inch barrels is ideal. It is compact, easy to deploy from a closet or safe, and simple to operate under stress. Consider synthetic stocks for durability.
3. Collecting: Condition is everything. Look for original finish, matching serial numbers, barrels free of pitting, and tight action. Antique guns from makers like Parker, L.C. Smith, or Ithaca are highly sought after.

Legal Considerations

In many jurisdictions, a **double barrel coach shotgun for sale**must comply with barrel length regulations. In the United States, a shotgun with a barrel length under 18 inches is classified as a "Short-Barreled Shotgun" (SBS) under the National Firearms Act (NFA) and requires a tax stamp and registration. Most legal coach guns have 18.5 3 or 20 3 barrels to stay compliant. Always check your local, state, and federal laws before purchasing.

New vs. Used

- New: Modern reproductions are widely available and offer the benefit of modern manufacturing standards, warranty support, and compatibility with modern ammunition (including steel shot). Stoeger's Coach Gun Supreme is a perennial favorite.
- Used/Antique: Buying a vintage coach gun can be a fantastic way to own a piece of history. However, you must carefully inspect the firearm. Check for barrel obstructions, pitting, loose action, and the integrity of the stock. Budget for a gunsmith inspection if you are unsure.

Where to Find a Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale

Once you know what you want, the next step is finding it. The market for coach guns is robust, with several excellent channels to explore.

Online Gun Auctions and Retailers

Websites like **GunBroker**, **Guns.com**, and **ArmsList** are treasure troves for finding both new and used **Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale**. These platforms allow you to search by manufacturer, barrel length, gauge, and price. Pay close attention to the seller's feedback rating and detailed photos. Online retail giants like **Buds Gun Shop** and **Sportsman's Warehouse** often stock modern reproductions.

Local Gun Stores and Pawn Shops

Do not underestimate the value of visiting your local gun store. They often have used coach guns in their

inventory that are not listed online. You can handle the firearm, check the action, and get a feel for its fit. Building a relationship with a local dealer can also lead to them contacting you when a desired model comes in.

Gun Shows

Gun shows are excellent for finding unique and collectible firearms. You can negotiate prices in person and examine the gun directly. For antique coach guns, gun shows are often the best source. Be prepared to haggle and bring a knowledgeable friend if you are new to collecting.

Private Sales

Depending on your local laws, private sales can be a way to find a good deal. However, proceed with caution. Always inspect the firearm thoroughly and ensure you are complying with all legal requirements. A private sale should still involve a bill of sale for your records.

Popular Models of Double Barrel Coach Shotgun For Sale

When you begin your search, you will encounter several dominant names. Here are some of the most popular models currently on the market.

- Stoeger Coach Gun: Easily the most popular modern production coach gun. Available in 12 and 20 gauge, with 20-inch barrels. You can choose from hammerless (Supreme) or exposed hammer (Uplander) models. Incredibly reliable and affordable.
- Cimarron Firearms Model 1878: A faithful reproduction of the Colt 1878 double barrel shotgun. Features exposed hammers, classic engraving, and case-hardened receiver. Ideal for cowboy action shooting.

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