10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

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Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
Introduction to Tactical Shotguns

When deciding on a weapon, and in particular, a shotgun for home defense there are several things to consider. One major consideration of course is the ability to secure the weapon, while still maintaining accessibility. The balancing act can be a fine one when you must decide on how accessible the weapon will be yet still keeps it out of inexperienced hands.

Keep in mind there is a distinction between shotguns for home defense and hunting. There are laws that prohibit the number of shells one can load in a pump shotgun when hunting waterfowl. Shotguns will have a plug that prevents you from loading more than three shells in most cases. The number can however, vary by what type of migratory birds you are hunting.

Shotguns such as the Remington 870™ Express® Tactical can hold up to seven rounds with a 2-shot factory installed extension. For home defense, you want as many rounds loaded as possible. However, consider safety as well, a chambered round means the weapon is ready to engage an intruder.

A recommended self-defense load for home use is tungsten pellets with a mixture of # 2 and # 4 pellets manufactured by Remington called HD™ Ultimate Home Defense. Unlike full-jacketed rounds, pellets will not normally penetrate (through and through) walls, bodies and other objects to injure others. This load is designed for close quarters and contrary to what many believe, you have to have the weapon on target for full affect because the spread is insignificant at very close range.

Members of the military have been known to call this type of shotgun a “room organizer” because of its use in close quarter combat in clearing confined spaces. A shotgun is ideal for home defense because shotguns not only are visually intimidating (can act as a deterrent) they have tremendous stopping power.

The 870™ Express® Tactical with a synthetic stock and 18 inch barrel is ideal for home defense, and is considered an outstanding self-defense weapon in any situation. Check with your local authorities for specific local, state and federal regulations concerning barrel length, pistol grips or collapsible/adjustable stocks.

Several models of the Remington 870™ have adjustable synthetic stocks with 18.5 inch or longer barrels making them ideal for male or females. Shotguns can be designated for law enforcement only therefore, some options may not be available, or you may not have the ability to modify or add certain options.

Shotguns used for home defense must be easily maneuvered in tight spaces such as around corners and through doorways. That is why 18 to 18.5 inch barrels are ideal for home defense. The weapon must be short enough to bring it around on target in confined spaces. Slings are not recommended for close quarter/ home use because they can be grabbed by the aggressor and they will hang up on doorknobs, nails/ protruding hooks, and any number of other objects. However, it is recommended you have a sling mounted on any weapon used for hunting. Carrying a

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weapon at port arms becomes tiresome and can lead to accidents with the weapon. The right
weapon at the ready can mean the difference in a survival situation whether that situation is in
your own home or in the woods.

The so-called backpacker shotguns are gaining popularity as a survival and home defense
weapon. Some shotguns with an adjustable stock and 18-inch barrel can be reduced to an overall
length of about 36 inches making it ideal for all around survival use.

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10 Tips to Building Tactical Remington 870

This instruction will guide you through the process of converting your standard Remington 870 shotgun into a tactical one. This process is easy and you can install all upgrades yourself. You can find instructions on how to change stock, forend, sights etc. on the Rem870.com website.

It is very interesting to upgrade your shotgun and once this process started it is never finished.

1. Change Stock and Forend

All shooters are different. We have hands of different size and it is very important to find the stock that fits you.

Choose the one of proper length and material.

If you have shorter hands, find the youth or shorter stock (like Hogue Shortstock with 12” length of pull). It is also good when wearing winter clothes or ballistic vest.

If you think that your shotgun will be used by several shooters, choose adjustable stock. That way you can adjust length of pull easily.

If you are new to shotguns chose the recoil reducing stock. It will help you to get used to heavy shotgun recoil.

Wood stock and forend look great but plastic is more durable. Metal forends are durable but heavy.

Forend with integrated light is a good idea too. It enables you to control flashlight easily and without taking your hand off the forend.

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If you are building home defense or Close Quarters Combat shotgun it will be useful to get a short LOP¹ stock, folding stock or a pistol grip.

**5 Best Forends for Remington 870**

The more options you have the better. But sometimes it is difficult to choose the best variant. This post will help you choosing the forend for Remington 870.

There are other forend available but they are not as popular as the ones listed below.

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¹ Length of Pull


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**Magpul MOE Forend – Modern Remington 870 Forend which Enables you to Have Additional Equipment**

Magpul MOE Forend is simple but well thought out product. It is made of thick plastic and looks sturdy.

I was afraid that plastic Magpul MOE forend could be slippy but it turned out that it is made of plastic which enables you to have a firm grip. Special grooves and hand stops on the forend make it extremely easy to use.

I have tested it one the range and it was easy to rack a shotgun using Magpul MOE forend. It enables you to position your hand comfortably and have a reliable positive grip.

Magpul MOE forend is little longer than other tactical forend but still can be used with 6-round sidesaddles.

ATTENTION: The Magpul MOE forend has a longer front end, which makes it impossible to use with front sling attachments installed between the magazine tube and magazine extension.

This forend has slots which enable you to install different MOE accessories such as rails, grips, etc.

Installation of the Magpul MOE forend is the same as with any other forend for Remington 870. No special instructions.

One of the good surprises – is a plastic forend wrench supplied with Magpul MOE forend. This means that Magpul cares about customers and don’t want them to spend money on tools to install Magpul MOE Forend.


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It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

**Recommended Product:**
Get Magpul Forend here:  
http://tinyurl.com/kqfpr74

**Hogue Overmolded Forend – Forend with the Best Grip**

Get Hogue Overmolded forend here:  
http://tinyurl.com/kceerzj

Material and texture of the Hogue forend are unique and assure excellent feel and a non-slip positive grip. Hogue rubber finish is much better than plastic on other stocks/forends.

One of the advantages is that it is very comfortable to hold this stock/forend even in cold or wet weather.

**Recommended Product:**
Get Hogue Overmolded forend here:  
http://tinyurl.com/kceerzj

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:  
http://www.rem870.com/book/

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Surefire Forend Light

Surefire Forend Light – is one of the popular choices of the light for a tactical shotgun. It is well-known, it is reliable and compact.

Recommened Product: Get Surefire Forend Light here: http://tinyurl.com/loa86sr

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide: http://www.rem870.com/book/

Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

**Speedfeed Forend with Deep Groves for Enhanced Grip**

This forend is shorter and allows the installation of a sidesaddle Shotshell carrier. Receiver mounted shell carriers can extend to the point where the forearm cannot be fully cycled back to chamber a round.

The Forend is made of synthetic material, which matches standard synthetic stock. The grip is tight because of the ribbed design. Once installed the Forend is solid without any movement.

**Recommended Product:**

Get Speedfeed Forend here:  
http://tinyurl.com/lcb4k5j

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**Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair**

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

Classic Walnut Remington 870 Police Forend with Grooves

Classic walnut forend looks fantastic on Remington 870. It has grooves which ensure positive grip.

**Recommended Product:**

Get Classic Walnut Forend here:

http://tinyurl.com/n57onax

5 Best Aftermarket Stocks for Remington 870

The more choices we have the better. But it becomes more difficult to choose the best option out of the available ones. I have chosen 5 best aftermarket stocks for Remington 870. Let’s see what advantages they give you.

**Hogue Overmolded Stock for Remington 870**

Hogue Overmolded Stock is a classic stock which is available in standard and short LOP. It has time-proven design which is great and tested by thousands of Remington 870 owners worldwide.

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:

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It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

The biggest advantage it gives you is special texture and rubber finish of the stock. That makes it extremely grippy and easy to operate. Hogue rubber finish is much better than plastic on other stocks.

The best thing is that this stock is simple and easy to operate. Hogue shortstock is a shorter version of the standard stock and makes your shotgun compact and easier to handle.

Why you should consider buying Hogue Overmolded Stock for Remington 870:

- Unique rubber finish and texture
- Simple design
- Affordable price
- Short LOP stock available.

Read more: Hogue Overmolded Stock for Remington 870 Review

Recommended Product:

Get Hogue Overmolded Stock for Remington 870 here:
http://tinyurl.com/mbpgm3p

Magpul SGA Stock for Remington 870

Magpul has solid reputation of the manufacturer of innovative and quality accessories for firearms. Magpul MOE Forend is simple but well thought out product. It is made of thick plastic and looks sturdy.

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:
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Magpul SGA Stock looks very unusual, some even call it ugly, but it is very comfortable. This stock is going to become one of the most popular upgrades for Remington 870. It gives a lot of advantages to the end user and enables you to customize it easily.

Ergonomics of this stock are great. The unusual form of the pistol grip incorporated into classic stock enables you hold it comfortably but it doesn’t hurt your wrist under recoil as ordinary pistol grips do.

Another advantage of this stock is that Magpul SGA comes with 4 additional spacers to adjust the length of pull. They enable you to find the length of pull that fits you.

Overall performance during the tests on the range was great. It is very comfortable to hold, reload and shoot.

There are lots of different accessories available for this stock:
- Sling mounts (classic and quick detachable)
- Cheek risers (2 types)
- Butt adapter (enables installation of any aftermarket butt pad for Remington 870)

Why you should consider buying Magpul SGA Stock for Remington 870:
- Unique design, you either love it or hate it
- Pistol grip incorporated into classic stock is very comfortable
- Many additional accessories
- Spacers enable you to adjust the length of pull

Recommended Product:

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide: http://www.rem870.com/book/

Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

Get Remington 870 Magpul SGA Stock here: http://tinyurl.com/nctzeza

Read more: Remington 870 Magpul SGA Stock Review

Mesa Tactical Telescoping Stock for Remington 870

Mesa Tactical Telescoping Stock is the best choice for those who owns a M4 carbine and want to have similar stock. This stock is adjustable, you can adjust length of pull when needed. The stock is very reliable, receiver adapter is made of aluminum.

One more advantage of this stock is Hogue overmolded rubber pistol grip with palm swells and finger grooves which enable you to have positive grip.

There is recoil-reducing version of Mesa Tactical Telescoping Stock available.

The only disadvantage of this stock is a high price.

Why you should consider buying Mesa Tactical Telescoping Stock for Remington 870

- Design which is similar to M4 stocks
- Stock is adjustable
- Receiver adapter is made of aluminum
- Hogue overmolded rubber pistol grip

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Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

- Recoil-reducing version of the stock is available

**Recommended Product:**
Get Mesa Tactical Remington 870 Telescoping Stock here:
http://tinyurl.com/lkrokvd

**Mesa Tactical Urbino Tactical Stock for Remington 870**
Urbino stock is simple and easy to use. This is tactical short LOP stock from Mesa Tactical.

The Mesa Tactical Urbino Stock with cheek riser and limb saver butt pad is a very good quality product. The stock comes with an ambidextrous sling plate from the factory. The pistol grip texture is grippy, it is angled for better recoil-management.

Mesa Tactical Urbino Stock comes with Limbsaver recoil pad which helps to reduce felt recoil.

**Why you should consider buying Mesa Tactical Urbino Stock for Remington 870**
- Simple design with pistol grip
- Short LOP
- 5-Position cheek riser
- Ambidextrous sling plate included
- Limbsaver recoil pad helps reduce felt recoil.

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**Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair**
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10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

Read more: Mesa Tactical Urbino Stock for Remington 870 Review

Recommended Product:

Get Mesa Tactical Urbino Stock here:
http://tinyurl.com/k4gvkd

Blackhawk! Knoxx SpecOps Recoil-Reducing Stock for Remington 870

Knoxx SpecOps Recoil-Reducing Stock is very popular because it is the most affordable recoil-reducing stock. It really reduces felt recoil and will help new shotgunners to get used to it. Knoxx SpecOps Recoil-Reducing Stock would be really useful when shooting slugs or buckshot.

This stock is adjustable, you can easily set needed length of pull. There are additional accessories available such as PowerPak ammo carrier and cheek riser. There are several way to attach a single to this stock.

The only disadvantages are:
1. It is compatible only with Wilson Combat oversized safety and will not work with other ones.
2. Stock has moving parts.

Why you should consider buying Blackhawk! Knoxx SpecOps Recoil-Reducing Stock for Remington 870:

• Recoil-reducing stock
• The stock is adjustable

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10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

- Additional accessories available
- The most affordable recoil-reducing stock.

**Recommended Product:**

### 2. Get a Flashlight

If you don’t have a light on your shotgun it becomes useless during the night. Light on a is one of the most important upgrades that are required for a home-defense or tactical shotgun. Adding a tactical flashlight to a shotgun – is one of the first advices that all firearm instructors give. If you have flashlight on your shotgun you can use it day and night. If you can’t identify target, you can’t shoot it. I recommend choosing one of the following options:

**CDM Gear Clamp + Tactical Flashlight**

![CDM Gear Clamp + Tactical Flashlight](http://www.rem870.com/book/CDM_Gear_Clamp_Tactical_Flashlight.jpg)

CDM Gear Clamp is one of the best ways to attach a flashlight to your Remington 870 shotgun. It is lightweight and easy to install. The CDM Gear clamp and flashlight combo is affordable and high-quality upgrade for any tactical or homedefense shotgun.

CDM Gear clamp is lightweight, low profile and compact.

You have many options to choose from: clamps, forends etc. Choose the one which suits you better.


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It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

This is one of the most important upgrades for a home defense shotgun.

**Recommended Product:**
Get CDM Gear clamp here: [http://amzn.to/T7odgC](http://amzn.to/T7odgC)

**CDM Gear Clamp with Rail + TLR Flashlight**

Streamlight TLR-2 Flashlight/Laser combo. I have installed it using CDM Gear BMT clamp with picatinny rail. I think this is the best way to attach Streamlight TLR-2 or Streamlight TLR-1 to Remington 870. I really like this flashlight/laser combo, it is lightweight and easily attaches to a rail. TLR-2 is low profile and doesn’t stick out much. Streamlight TLR-1 which doesn’t have laser is even smaller. Stremalight TLR-2 has lots of great features.

**Recommended Product:**
Get CDM Gear Clamp with Rail here: [http://amzn.to/X7ww3x](http://amzn.to/X7ww3x)

**Recommended Product:**

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It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

Get TLR Flashlight here: http://amzn.to/X7wMzK

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3. **Install a Magazine Extension**

Basic model of a Remington 870 shotgun can be loaded with just 4+1 shells. Get a magazine extension to have more firepower.

There are a lot of magazine extensions available on the market. You can choose from 1 to 5 (or even more) additional rounds. But remember that extensions which are longer than a barrel make your shotgun less maneuverable.

New Remington 870 shotguns have dimples in magazine tube. Remove them before installing magazine extension.

**Recommended Product:**

Get Remington 870 Magazine Extension here:

http://tinyurl.com/kuanafg

**Useful links:**

**Magazine Extensions for Remington 870 Shotgun:**

**Removing Dimples on Remington 870 Magazine Tube:**

**How to Remove Dimples From Remington 870 Express Magazine Tube:**
http://www.rem870.com/2011/02/14/how-to-remove-dimples-from-remington-870-express-magazine-tube/

Get even more info about your shotgun from **Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:**
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Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

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10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

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4. **Add a Sling**

One-point, two-point or even three-point sling can be attached to your shotgun. You will need a sling plate which has to be installed between receiver and stock (one-point sling) or between extension and magazine tube (two-point or three-point slings).

Sling is very useful when you need to use your hands or switch to a secondary weapon. If you don’t have a sling you will have to drop your shotgun on the ground to free your hands.

There are a lot of discussions about a sling on a home defense shotgun, so you need to decide for yourself if it is good for you.

There are a lot of different slings available on the market today and you can experiment with them and find the one that fits you.

Useful links:

**Ambidextrous Quick Detach Sling Plate for Remington 870 Shotgun from S&J Hardware:**

**Wilderness Giles Tactical Sling:**

**Tactical Sling Velcro Adapter Attachment Stock Mount for Remington 870:**

**Tactical Link QD adapter and Sling**

**QD Sling on MESA Tactical Stock:**

**Custom Single Point Sling on MESA Tactical Stock:**

**TacticalLink single point bungee sling:**

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5. Install Oversized Safety Button

A lot of shotgun owners prefer to replace the standard factory Remington 870 safety because it is rather small and in a stress (combat, self-defense) situation it maybe difficult to quickly disengage it. Oversized safety button enables you to disengage safety fast ensuring that you will be able to use your shotgun when you need it. This is very important, especially in stress situation. Also, oversized safety button is much easier to find when you wearing gloves.

Vang Oversized Safety

Vang Comp Systems is a good safety and I have heard positive feedback about it from many shooters.

There are two issues which can stop you from buying this safety button:
1. Sticks out too far.
2. Cannot be installed with Knoxx recoil reducing stocks.

Other than that, it is good and tested by many Remington 870 owners.

Recommended Product:
Get Vang Oversized Safety here: [http://tinyurl.com/l3m8hvm](http://tinyurl.com/l3m8hvm)

Wilson Combat (Scattergun Technologies) Jumbo Head Safety

Very good safety button for Remington 870. Works great and can be easily disengaged. It doesn’t stick out much and big enough to be quickly disengaged. The quality of this safety button is very good. This is the only one oversized safety which can be used with Knoxx recoil reducing stocks.

Recommended Product:
Get Wilson Combat Jumbo Head Safety here: [http://tinyurl.com/nx56yeb](http://tinyurl.com/nx56yeb)

Useful links:


How to Change a Safety on a Remington 870 Shotgun:


Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

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6. Get a New Magazine Follower

Factory Remington 870 magazine follower is cheap and easy to brake. This is number one cause for feeding problems. First Remington 870s had metal followers which were strong and reliable. Changing factory magazine follower is extremely important to ensure reliable feeding. Remember, that broken extractor can stuck inside the magazine tube and you will have to disassemble your shotgun to fix that. And if we are talking about self-defense situation this is the worst case scenario. Factory follower is junk, remove it as soon as possible!

Vang Comp Systems Follower

It turned out that stainless steel follower from Vang Comp Systems works perfectly even without tail which is believed to prevent spring from kinking. I think that the reason of such good result is metal on metal contact which enables VCS follower to slide freely inside the magazine tube. Also it takes less space in a magazine tube.

This follower has a hole on the front side, which enables you to check the magazine with your finger.

Recommended Product: Get Vang Steel Follower here: http://tinyurl.com/mlllaaj

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**Brownells Stainless Steel Magazine Follower**

When you hold it in your hands you feel that it is heavy and reliable, it is thick and made of stainless steel, it is even thicker than Vang Comp Systems follower. Looks good and works well, I didn’t have any malfunctions during the tests.

Brownells Magazine Follower has grooves and will work with Remington 870 shotguns which have dimples but don’t have extension.

Brownells Stainless Steel Magazine Follower is very good alternative to Vang Comp Systems follower. It is machined, it is stainless, it is thicker than Vang Comp Systems follower. It will last forever.

Get it here: http://tinyurl.com/8swhcuq

**Recommended Product:**

Get Brownells Stainless Steel Magazine Follower here:
http://tinyurl.com/nx8gf7n

**Useful links:**

**Shotgun Followers Overview (Remington 870):**
http://www.rem870.com/2010/03/10/shotgun-followers-overview-remington-870/

Get even more info about your shotgun from **Remington 870 Shotgun Guide**:
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7. Change Extractor

Machined extractor is one of the must-have upgrades for your Remington 870. It insures reliable extraction of fired shells. Police version of the Remington 870 utilizes non-MIM extractor too because it is more reliable.

Recommended Product: Get Non-MIM Extractor here:
http://tinyurl.com/k8azogs

Useful links:
MIM and non-MIM Extractor for Remington 870 Shotgun:
http://www.rem870.com/2011/03/21/mim-and-non-mim-extractor-for-remington-870-shotgun/

Remington 870 Extractor Replacement (How to Install non-MIM Extractor):

Modification of the Remington 870 Extractor:

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:
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8. **Install Sidesaddle**

When you grab a shotgun, all ammunition you have is in shotgun and on shotgun, so it’s important to have receiver mount shell holder.

I recommend getting Mesa Tactical sidesaddle. This is the most durable and reliable sidesaddle available on the market today. Mesa Tactical sidesaddle is made of aluminum which makes it indestructible. It is low profile and looks fantastic!

One of the good features of this shell carrier is that it doesn’t hide the serial number.

There are many different versions of this sidesaddle. There are 4-round, 6-round and even 8-round shell carriers.

This is the most expensive shell carrier but it is worth the price.

Sidesaddle allows having from 4 to 8 shells on your Remington 870.

**Recommended Product:** Get Mesa Tactical Sureshell Holder here: [http://tinyurl.com/kz3ocye](http://tinyurl.com/kz3ocye)

**Useful links:**


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9. **Shorter Barrel**

The most popular barrel for home defense is the Remington 870 18” bead sight barrel. It is short, simple and inexpensive.

This short barrel enables you to easily maneuver around the house. It is possible to change the factory bead with light gathering or Tritium one.

This barrel is universal tool which is good for almost any purpose. Of course, longer barrel will be better for hunting and ghost ring sights will be better for home defense. But 18” bead sight barrel enables you to do almost all tasks. It is good choice for beginners or for people that want to have only one shotgun for home defense and for week end clay shooting.

Barrel which is shorter than 18” usually requires special license.

**Recommended Product:**

Get Shorter Barrel here:  
[http://tinyurl.com/mxk3sa9](http://tinyurl.com/mxk3sa9)

Get even more info about your shotgun from **Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:**  

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10. Sights

Better sights are very important because you use them every time you shoot. It is a good idea to get Tritium sights because they glow in the dark for years.

This set is very sturdy and well made. I have tested them in daylight and they were very good and easy to use. Of course, they don’t glow in the daylight as light-gathering sights but easily identifiable thanks to the white ring around tritium tubes. Also, Ameriglo sights glow in the dark thanks to the tritium elements (which will be glowing for 12 years). You can choose several colors for your sights, I have a front dot of the green color and yellow dots on the back sight. You can choose all green elements if you want. These sights are a little higher than standard ones but I like it.

Recommended Product: Get Shotgun Tritium Sight Set here:
http://tinyurl.com/lcjxwog

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide:
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Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

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10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

**Bonus 1: Budget Upgrades for Remington 870**

Try upgrading standard stock

Before you replace your standard Remington 870 stock you can try upgrading it for just $21.99. Remington SuperCell recoil pad really works and reduces felt recoil.

**Recommended Product:**

You can get Remington 870 SuperCell Recoil Pad on Brownells for just $21.99

ATI Pistol Grip Stock for Remington 870

Stock from ATI which is recommended by Trevor, one of the readers of the blog: “I have a fixed pistol grip/buttstock stock made by ati installed on my 870. It is the best 55$ I have ever spent on any gun I own. It has proven itself well built and tough. I even slammed it against a tree to see if it was capable of hand to hand combat. It took multiple hits and still works extremely well.”

**Recommended Product:**

ATI Pistol Grip Buttstock on Brownells for just $44.99

Now, let’s see how we can add a flashlight to shotgun without going bankrupt

There are a lot of different flashlights and flashlight mounts for shotguns available on the market today. The most inexpensive but still very good and reliable variant is Shotgun Flashlight Mount and PolyTac Flashlight, it’s just: $39.99 + $39.99. This setup is reliable, light-weight and enough for home defense.

Get even more info about your shotgun from Remington 870 Shotgun Guide: http://www.rem870.com/book/

Disassembly, Reassembly, Cleaning, Shooting, Upgrades and Repair

It will help you to get most out of your Remington 870!
10 Tips to Building a Tactical Remington 870 Shotgun

Recommended Product: You can get Elzetta ZSM Flashlight Mount on Brownells for just $39.99

Another good thing to upgrades is forend

You can choose from inexpensive Hogue, Speedfeed or Magpul forends.

The main advantage of the Hogue forend is rubber coating which makes it extremely comfortable to hold.

Recommended Product: You can get Hogue Forend on Brownells for just $20.99

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See you on the Remington 870 forum: [http://rem870.com/forum/](http://rem870.com/forum/)

Recommended website for shotgun parts, accessories and upgrades: [Brownells.com](http://Brownells.com)


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