



## Frequently Asked Questions:

Why don't you list a telephone number?

Because I am not at my grip works during the week and I don't have a phone in my workshop. Making gun grips is a weekend hobby for me. I do it because I enjoy helping people obtain reasonably priced, semi-finished grips that they might not otherwise find. I like making special colors and unusual models that are not popular enough for the mass producers to handle. But I also work 60-70 hours a week in my "main" business (also in the firearms industry) and just can't handle any more telephone calls than I already get in that business each day.

Besides which, I'm a little hard of hearing, and have the memory of a turnip, so if you tell me the color and medallions and the gun model on the phone, I may not hear it right and probably will remember incorrectly. I am sure that by the time your pencil tracing arrived, I'd have forgotten what you said. Besides, if you are going to send a pencil tracing (which is the only way I can make sure that the grip you are ordering actually is large enough to let you fit it to your gun without too much extra work), why not just put all the information in the letter with it? Sure makes things a lot quicker to find if they are all on one page, written down clearly for me.

I have found that correspondence by fax, letter, e-mail, or on the web store notes is a much more positive, accurate, and easily re-located source of the vital information needed when I make a set of grips. Also, I can answer your message at midnight, after work, and send you images by email, drawings by mail or fax, and generally spend more time and do a better job for you than I could possibly do in a hurried phone conversation when a thousand other things are demanding my attention at the same time. I honestly do a much better job for you with written information, pictures, tracings, etc., than I do with verbal information. Some people are the opposite, I know. Gotta do what works!

Why don't you offer completely finished, ready-to-install grips?

Because without the gun in my hands, I can't precisely locate the pin holes and sand the outline to an exact fit with the grip shape and size. The same model of gun will vary slightly from one to another, just due to normal manufacturing tolerances, such as forging variations, casting shrinkage, changes in the tooling with time, and so forth. I must have fifteen different molds to make various shapes and sizes of grips for Uberti or Pietta copies of the same gun, the 1858 Remington Army revolver. I have at least that many slightly different variations in size and shape for the various guns that claim to be copies of the 1873 Colt Model P or Peacemaker.

How in the world would I know exactly the size and shape to make your grip, unless I had your gun here? That is why I leave the fitting for you, or for your favorite gunsmith if you don't feel up to it. But really, it isn't hard. Thousands of clients have fitted their Tombstone Gun Grips and lived to tell about it. You can see some of the examples on my web site. I send complete instructions. Just read them first. Contrary to the popular thinking, instructions are not always just another man's opinion. Sometimes they make things easy that would otherwise seem difficult.

Why won't you let me send my gun to be fitted with grips?

Because I don't have an FFL to handle client guns and I don't have a good way to safely and legally store hundreds of them at one time, which is how many grips I may be making during a month. Also, I don't have and don't want to have to buy and pay for the liability insurance even if I did buy a giant gun safe and get the FFL required. Also, I don't want to be responsible for tens of thousands of dollars worth of client guns when I'm not at my little grip works except on weekends. Just doesn't fit the way I am set up to handle the grip business. Besides, the whole idea of Tombstone Gun Grips is to save you money by not putting a lot of expensive hand labor into the grips. Instead, I use the highest quality materials: polyurethane epoxy resins that don't warp, crack, or melt even at 350-degrees F. These are a polar opposite from mass-produced, injection molded thermosetting plastic grips. Think more along the lines of what in-line roller-blade skate wheels and heavy duty machinery moving hand-trucks use for wheels. That's the 3000 psi tensile strength polymer I use for your grips. It isn't cheap plastic by any means! A gallon of the chemicals costs over 90 times what you pay for a gallon of gasoline. So do you want me to make high grade, custom color, hard-to-find grips for the less popular guns for about \$30-50, or spend a lot more time hand fitting a few grips to a few clients' guns instead, for several hundred dollars? I do the former, while pistol makers and gunsmiths do the latter.

Why do I have to send a tracing if I tell you the model and make?

Because the same model and make of gun can have slightly different grip shape or size from one example to another, and in fact, most of them do. Factory grips seem to be one of two sorts: they "kinda-fit" with manufacturing tolerances that are acceptable to the average buyer (obviously), or they are hand fitted on the more expensive guns and no two are precisely the same.

I make grips for people who can decide for themselves how well they want the grips to fit. If you send me a pencil tracing that clearly and accurately gives me the outline of your gun's grip frame, or of a pair of grips that actually do fit the gun, I can then match it to one of several very close, similar but not identical molds and come up with a grip for you that is just slightly oversized, so you can do a little light sanding and make it perfect. If it is a little undersized, you can't do anything with it.

Some gun grips are hard to trace around, such as the 1-piece Colt 1873 style or the Colt Walker grips. You can instead use a piece of index card stock (or the thin cardboard that comes with shirts) and cut out a pattern or template that fits against the gun exactly where the edges of your grips should fit. If you do this carefully, it is as good as having the gun, almost. I can use it to match the flat backside of the grips, so you will have very little sanding to do. It is for your benefit. If you don't want to do it, you don't have to. I'll send you whatever you want by the numbers. But it's not my fault, then, if what you order doesn't fit your gun. I put the dimensions on the grip listings, so you can measure your own gun and compare. But a pencil tracing is one more way to assure a good fit.

A typical 1911 Colt that follows the standard government screw hole spacing specifications probably won't need any tracing to fit right. If you have an ambidextrous safety lever, you can easily sand or file the clearance on the right-hand grip top. I don't do that "for you" because I don't have your gun. I don't know exactly how your particular right-hand safety lever fits or how long or big it might be. You do. This material sands or files nicely. It has no grain to chip or crack like wood.

Why can't you tell me whether or not a certain one of your grips fits my gun?

Because some guns were made in a wide variety of grip sizes and shapes even if they are labeled or marked the same as another version or model. For instance, I can't really tell you which one of the dozen or more of my S&W breaktop grips, or Iver Johnson breaktop grips, will fit your .32 Breaktop with an 1895 patent date on the barrel. Both firms would use up the existing stock of parts while changing from one model or variation to another. Both would use patent dates that did not necessarily refer to the particular gun, but rather to a feature used in it, such as a safety grip lever variation or a latch change. Both would use a .38 S&W frame and cylinder diameter and fit it up with a .32 barrel and cylinder bore, so the grips for your ".32 Breaktop" might well be the ones normally found on a .38 Breaktop.

This infinite variation of combinations of parts, frames, and calibers crosses model lines, and in the case of both H&R and especially Iver Johnson, even brand names. Iver Johnson actually built guns under a great many other brand names. The bottom line here is that I really need a pencil tracing around the grip frame or the existing grips that fit your gun. If they are chipped or broken, that's OK. I can probably fill in the missing part of the line. If they are warped, distorted, or turning to powder as so many early plastics did, then a template made to fit the gun itself is better than the grip outline.

If you want to send me your actual grips (assuming they fit the gun, and are not warped or shrunken with age so I can't get the true size from them) that is OK. Sometimes, if your grips fit and are in good condition, I can make a new mold around them and then use that to create another grip copy, which I call "cloning the grip". I usually have to modify the copy by adding material to make it slightly larger, and then create another mold from that. It is a long process, rather expensive, but I don't charge you for all that work if it gives me a new mold to help other folks get the right grip too. Your original grips are not harmed in any way by this and are returned along with the final copy. It just takes me longer than usual to make your grip if I have to create molds also.

Why do you say "20 business days average delivery time"?

Because sometimes I have the weekend available to make your grips, and it is only a few days, but other times I may be out of town on business or have hundreds of prior orders ahead of yours. It could take longer than 20 days. So the average is about 20 business days (which means, normal work weeks, or about a month on the calendar). If you order around Christmas, I may be so buried in grip orders that I just can't get your grips made in time to use them as a present. Order in November or they may turn out to be for Valentine's Day! These are hand made to your order for color, medallions, and special effects such as pearl. Best advice is to dust off the sense of humor and enjoy these optional accessory items, rather than fret how long they might take... they're not heart valves! People live without'em!