

## Notes From the Lab: .44 Magnum Revolver (Part 2)

Hornady .44 Magnum data for the 225-grain FTX bullet suggests trimming cases from 1.275/1.285 inches to 1.255 inches and seating bullets for an overall cartridge length of 1.645 inches, which is still some .035 inch greater than industry standards. This loading procedure is suggested so that cartridges will feed and function in most guns; however, some rifles still would not feed correctly with the longer cartridges.

On the other hand, most U.S. manufactured revolvers readily accept cartridges that are greater than suggested industry overall lengths. The following data was developed using standard length .44 Magnum (Starline) cases of 1.280 inches, and with the FTX bullets roll crimped in their cannellure for an overall length of 1.670 inches. With this, I was able to reach and even exceed the velocities of Hornady factory loads with several powders while staying within maximum average pressure (MAP) guidelines.

Data for other 225-grain jacketed bullets should not be used with the 225-grain FTX, as it seats comparatively deeply, reducing powder capacity. It also features an unusually long bearing surface that is .068-inch longer than the 240-grain Hornady HP-XTP. Both features will raise chamber pressures significantly and therefore "maximum" loads should not be exceeded.

Seating the FTX will require a seating stem (aka "plug") that is profiled to fit the ogive of this spitzer-shaped bullet. Traditional flatnose stems often deform the bullet nose, and due to the FTX's rather soft construction, may cause bullets to actually begin "expanding" when being seated. It is also suggested to crimp bullets as a separate step after they are seated to correct depth.