

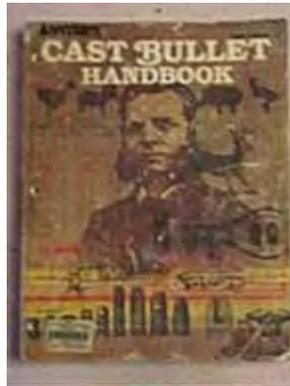
# Cast Bullet Reference Books

Cast bullet reference books are where you find them. There is not a reference book these days that is up to date and what I'd call "the book" on making and loading cast bullets.

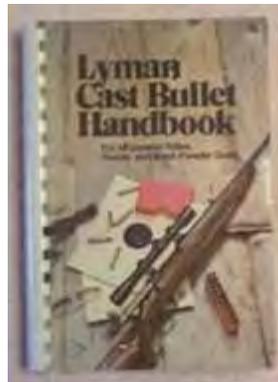
The closest thing to "the book" is the *Lyman Cast bullet Manual, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (current printing). Even so, this manual is very outdated as far as current moulds and newer powders are concerned. Still, it's the best we have and due to the declining number of bullet casters and the limited market, I don't see any of the mould manufacturers putting out a revised edition due to lack of marketing interest and cost.

In the field of cast reference books, Lyman and its predecessor, Ideal dominates the field. The old Ideal loading manuals are a valuable trove of cast bullet lore and are much sought after items by collectors on E-Bay and at gun shows. Again, the data is outdated but many of the articles and techniques described in them make them worth looking for.

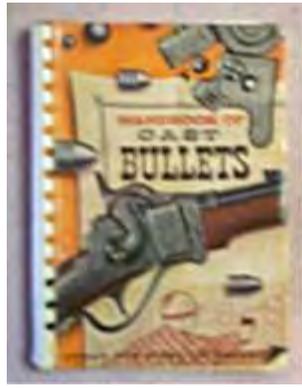
There are four books that any budding bullet caster should own.



*The Lyman Cast Bullet Manual, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*  
(Still in print)

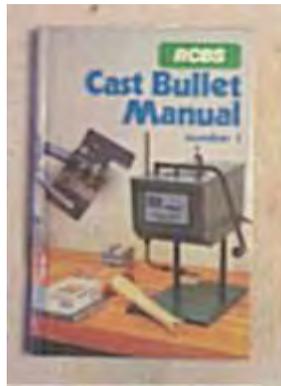


*The Lyman Cast Bullet Manual, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*  
(approximately \$20 off E-Bay)



***The Lyman Cast Bullet Manual, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition***  
(\$10-35 off E-Bay depending on condition)

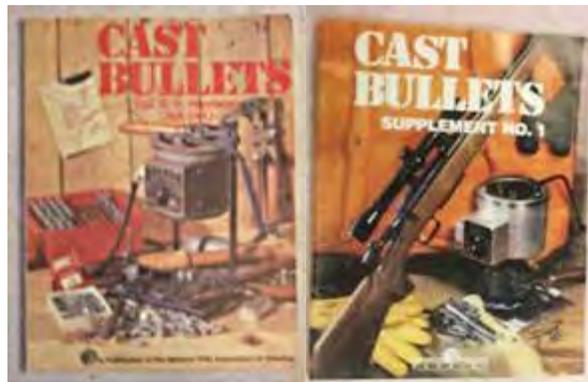
The latter two are spiral bound and finding one in good condition is very hard.



***RCBS Cast Bullet Manual***

***The RCBS Cast Bullet Manual***, hardbound. (\$6-10 off E-Bay) This manual is a great book and covers many of the powder that the Lyman books do not. It uses only RCBS bullet designs but makes for a good reference if you're looking for a load for a bullet of a similar weight that is not covered by Lyman.

Any of the older Ideal or Lyman loading manuals have cast data in them and are worth buying if you find them at a decent price.



***NRA's Cast Bullet Manual and Number 1 Supplement***

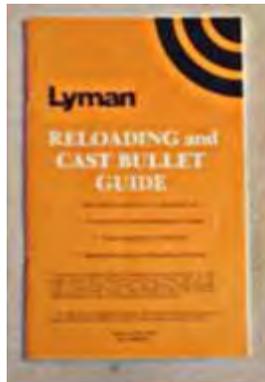
Another fine reference book that contains much information is ***The NRA Cast Bullet Manual (paperback) with Supplement Number 1***. This publication gives you a lot on casting, alloys, loading subjects but very little loading data. It's a great reference and a good read. Unfortunately, these are out of print and you'll have to dig to get a set.



**Cast Bullet/Bullet Making Annuals**  
Published by Wolfe Publishing

More good references come from Wolfe Publishing in the form of their *Cast Bullet Annuals*. Supposedly, there are three of these and they were published back in the 1990s. I have two of them and wish that I had the third from the series.

Next time you order anything from Lyman, as for a copy of their booklet titled, *Reloading and Cast Bullet Guide*. As long as you're ordering something, they'll normally throw one in free and there's a lot of good information in it and diagrams illustrating parts for all of their moulds, the Mag 20 furnace and their #450 lubricator sizer. It is a handy little reference to have in your library.



**Reloading and Cast Bullet Guide**  
Published by Lyman

*The Accurate Loading Manuals, Number 1 and Number 2* are also good references to have. Accurate, and William Fallin, were responsible for us to have much of the later data on cast bullet loads using Accurate powders and accompanied by pressure data. Something that is hard to find in this day and time of trivial lawsuits. Both copies are well worth seeking out and obtaining. Ramshot has just acquired Accurate so it remains to be seen how this new company will treat cast bullet shooters.

*The Hodgdon Loading Manuals*. All of these I have encountered contain loading data for cast bullets of one sort or another. They contain very little on making bullets. Hodgdon's web site, <http://www.hodgdon.com/data/basic1997.htm> is one of the most cast friendly web sites of any powder manufacturer on the internet. If you're looking for a load, hit this site. It will be using Hodgdon powder but its good, tested data, usually with pressure figures.

Other cast reference books include **Belding and Mull, Cramer and Modern Bond**. These manuals were more along the lines of advertising for their moulds but are still interesting to read and are good references.

## **More modern References**

Another source of cast bullet material is Handloader Magazine. This has been the only shooting publication that has over the years continues to cater to the wants, needs and desires of cast bullet shooters. A complete set of these would be nice to have and can be assembled off E-Bay for a portion of the newsstand price. This month's Handloader has an advertisement in it for a complete set of the magazine on CD for the unbelievably low price of \$599.00 (gulp!). Guess I won't be springing for a set of those anytime soon as that's the price of a new gun. But, if you're flush, it's a good reference to have.

## **Vintage Cast Bullet Reference Books**

This is a category for the more advanced caster. Since all of these books have been out of print for years, it's a matter of finding them and paying the price.

*Sixguns*, by Elmer Keith. I can't imagine a pistol shooter that makes, loads and shoots cast bullets not owning a copy of this classic. Fortunately, this old reference has reappeared in soft cover so everyone can afford one. To .44 Magnum shooters, this book is akin to the bible and what Elmer says is gospel. Reprints are still available.

*Handloading Ammunition*, J.R. Mattern, 1926.

*Complete Guide to Handloading*, Philip B. Sharpe, 1937.

*Practical Dope on the .22*, 1947

*Practical Dope on the Big Bores*, 1948

F.C. Ness

*Handloader's Manual*, 1937, Earl Naramore

*Twenty-Two Caliber Rifles*, Charles S. Landis (I have a 1991 reprint)

Now, this list is not an all-inclusive list. It only touches the tip of the iceberg. There are many authors out there who have written on bullet casting and shooting. These are just the ones that I'm familiar with from my meager library.

The loading data in these volumes is for the most part, outdated. The theory of ammunition loading, bullet casting and sizing is still as pertinent as it was when written even going back in some cases to the 20s.

This is only a representative sample of the cast bullet reference sources that are out there. Many cast bullet shooters have written on the subject over the years. Unfortunately, you can't pull your wallet out and trade that green or plastic for them, as they're for the most part not available.

Search E-Bay, Bookfinder, dig through the dusty boxes at gun shows, flea markets and yard sales and by all means look at every estate sale you encounter. These references will be found everywhere. Some will be cheap and others will be expensive.

You owe it to yourself as a bullet caster and cast bullet reloader to equip yourself with the best tools possible and that includes the reference material that's pertinent to our hobby.

**John Goins/aka beagle**

