



Firearm Safety

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." 2nd Amendment

We're not going to get into political views on purchasing and owning a firearm.

There's already too much bickering and division that is taking place in America these days.

What we are talking about is defending your life or the life of someone else.

If you or someone else is in imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm, the appropriate use of force could be the use of your firearm.

There are many people these days that disagree with the right to bear arms, but the truth is:

You do have the legal right to protect yourself, and your family, according to the Constitution, State Laws, and also God's Law.

If someone breaks into your home, and you shoot them as they're running out the door holding your TV, the use of deadly force would land you in a heap of trouble.

But if someone is armed or tries to attack you, then that's a different story. You have the right to protect yourself and your household."

The four basic firearm safety rules are:

- 1.) Remember, always treat your firearm as if it were loaded.**
- 2.) Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.**
- 3.) Keep your finger off the trigger until you're ready to shoot.**
- 4.) Always be sure of your target and what's behind it.**

Gun safety rules and practice recommendations are intended to avoid accidental discharge or negligent discharge, or the consequences of firearm malfunctions.

Many firearm accidents result from someone mistakenly believes a firearm is unloaded when in fact it is ready to be discharged.

Other firearm accidents result from:

Faulty handling of the firearm:

Someone may execute the steps of procedures such as loading, firing and emptying in the wrong order or omit steps of the procedures.

Mechanical failures:

Wear, faulty assembly, damage or faulty design of the firearm can cause it not to function as intended. For instance, a safety may have been worn down to a point where it is no longer functioning. Broken or worn parts in the trigger, sear or hammer/striker may have given the firearm a "hair trigger" (a very sensitive trigger). A dented or bent body of the firearm may cause jams or premature discharge of ammunition. Sensitivity to impact may cause a firearm to discharge if dropped or struck against another object. A broken extractor may result in a round remaining in the chamber even when the otherwise proper steps have been taken to unload the firearm.

Misunderstandings about a firearm's status:

For instance, someone may think the safety is "on" when it is not. A round of ammunition may be left in the chamber or in the magazine while the gun owner thinks it is unloaded. The firearm may have been handled by another person without the owner's knowledge. Someone may receive a firearm and assume it is in a certain condition without checking whether that assumption is true.

For example: Person 'A' may misjudge the status; person 'B' cannot assume that "it's OK because person 'A' already checked it".

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Be a responsible gun owner and get in the habit of following these safety rules:

Read and heed all warnings, including those that appear in your firearm's instruction manual and on the ammunition boxes.

Always treat your firearm as if it were loaded.

Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.

Keep your finger off the trigger until you're ready to shoot.

Always be sure of your target and what's behind it.

There are no second chances with a gun and the rules for safe gun handling must always be followed to avoid accidents.

Your life and the lives of others depend on it.

Gun safety is your responsibility, no matter your age or ability level.

Practice firearm safety at all times.

Never draw your firearm unless you are facing an imminent, unavoidable threat of death or great bodily harm.

Safe and secure storage of your firearm is one of your most important responsibilities. It is a full-time responsibility.

Never leave a firearm unattended unless it is unloaded, locked andmsecured.

Handle every gun as if it's loaded.

Always keep the gun unloaded until you are ready to use it.

Never leave a firearm lying around the house.

Whenever your firearm is not in use, keep it unloaded and locked.

Use a firearms safety device on the gun, such as a trigger lock or cable lock, so it can not be fired.

You must always secure your firearm and ammunition separately so that they are not accessible to children or other unauthorized persons.

Never leave a loaded gun on the dresser, in a drawer, in a closet, under the bed, or anywhere that's accessible to children or other unauthorized persons.

Never let a loaded gun out of your sight or out of your hands.

Never point your gun at anything you do not intend to shoot. This is especially important when loading or unloading a firearm.

Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.

Always be aware of where a gun is pointing. The key is to control where the muzzle or front end of the barrel is pointed at all times.

A "safe direction" means that the gun is pointed so that even if it were to go off it would not cause injury or damage.

In the event of an accidental discharge, no injury can occur as long as the muzzle is pointing in a safe direction.

Even when "dry firing" with an unloaded gun, you should never point the gun at an unsafe target.

No one will be injured by an accidental discharge if you always keep your firearm pointed in a safe direction.

Only point a gun at an object you intend to shoot.

Never point a gun toward yourself or another person.

Always keep your finger off of the trigger until you're ready to shoot the gun.

Always keep your fingers outside the trigger guard while loading or unloading.

Trigger guards are made to enable you to hold the gun comfortably with your finger off the trigger. When holding a gun, rest your finger on the trigger guard or along the side of the gun. It is also recommended to keep your trigger finger above the trigger guard, so that there is less chance of the finger involuntarily slipping into the guard. A properly indexed trigger finger also helps remind you that you're holding the firearm in the direction of the muzzle.

Know your target and what is around and beyond it.

Check that the areas in front of and behind your target are safe before shooting. Be aware that if the bullet misses or completely passes through the target, it could strike a person or object.

Know how far a bullet will travel if you miss your intended target or it ricochets in another direction. Even a .22 LR bullet can travel over a 1 mile and a high velocity cartridge can send its bullet more than a couple of miles.

Identify the target and make sure it is what you intend to shoot.

Be aware of all the people around you before you shoot. Never fire in a direction in which there are people or any other potential for mishap.

Whether you are shooting or simply handling your gun, never point the muzzle at yourself or others.

Never pull or push a loaded firearm toward yourself or another person.

Learn the mechanical and handling characteristics of the gun you are using.

Never shoot a firearm without checking the barrel for obstructions. And never point the gun at your own head when looking through the barrel.

Make sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions, and carry only the proper ammunition for your firearm.

Be aware of your surroundings when handling guns so you don't trip or lose your balance and accidentally point and/or fire the gun at anyone or anything.

Never shoot a gun in the air during a celebration such as New Year's Eve. Not only is this unsafe, but it is generally illegal. A bullet fired into the air will return to the ground with enough speed to cause injury or death.

Never shoot what you can't see. Never fire at a sound, a movement or a patch of color.

A hunter in camouflage can easily be mistaken for a target by an impulsive shooter. Deaths occur each year because someone shot at a sound or a movement. "It sounded like a deer" or "It moved like a turkey".

Never climb a tree or a fence or even run with a loaded gun.

The Safety device on your Firearm:

A gun's safety is a mechanical device and, like any mechanical device, it could fail.

Human error is a more likely reason for a gun safety to fail. By mistake, you may think the safety is "on" when it really isn't.

You should never handle a gun carelessly and assume that the gun won't fire just because the "safety is on."

Never place the safety in between positions, since half-safe is unsafe. Keep the safety "on" until you are absolutely ready to fire.

Never handle a firearm carelessly and assume that your gun won't fire just because the safety is "on".

Don't rely on the gun's safety to keep it from firing. Remember that a gun's safety device is a mechanical device that can fail.

Never dry-fire a firearm that could be loaded simply because you've engaged the safety mechanism.

Even when dry-firing with an unloaded gun, never point your gun at an unsafe target.

Regardless if the safety is "on" or not, any blow strong enough to actuate the firing mechanism of a gun can cause it to fire. This can happen even if the trigger is not touched, such as when a gun is dropped.

Never rest a loaded gun against any object because there is always the possibility that it will slide from its position and fall with sufficient force to discharge.

Remember, you and your safe gun handling practices are your gun's best safety.

Blank Ammunition:

Blank ammunition, which is a primed casing filled with gunpowder, either crimped or covered with a wad, is dangerous up to 15 feet.

People have injured or killed themselves believing that blanks were not dangerous. Therefore, gun safety rules apply even to guns loaded with blanks.

Storing your firearm:

Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely.

Store it unloaded in a locked container, such as a lock box or a gun safe. A safe keeps your guns secure from thieves, protects them from fire and keeps them out of unauthorized hands.

While some safes are strictly for storage purposes, others are meant to keep guns secure but also ready to go in a location convenient for self-defense.

To protect your ammo in the long term, always store it in a cool, dry area, preferably in a sealed container.

Ammunition is best stored in the original box.

When choosing an ammo storage location, store ammo somewhere dry and cool.

A closet inside a home is ideal. But avoid extremes such as a basement storage or storing ammo in the attic.

Don't store ammo near solvents and cleaning compounds.

Changes in temperature or humidity can cause the cartridge case to corrode. This is dangerous, as corrosion can cause a loss of integrity.

Firearm Misfire:

Always handle misfires properly:

When firing, if the noise or recoil from your firearm seems off or weak, stop everything, unload your firearm and be sure nothing is lodged in the barrel.

Any time there is a bullet in the chamber, your gun is loaded and ready to fire even if you've tried to shoot and it did not go off.

Never try to shoot out an obstruction by loading another shell and firing.

Sometimes, a cartridge may not fire when the trigger is pulled. If this occurs, keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

If your gun fails to fire when the trigger is pulled, hold your shooting position for several seconds; then with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction, carefully unload the gun.

Keep your face away from the breech. Then, carefully open the action, unload the firearm and dispose of the cartridge in a safe way.

Use only the correct ammunition for your firearm.

Before handling a gun, learn how it operates.

Know its basic parts, how to safely open and close the action and remove any ammunition from the gun or magazine.

Read the instruction manual to find out the specific requirements of your firearm.

Keep the manual handy in the case where you store your gun for quick reference.

Do not shoot your gun unless you know you have the proper ammunition. Examine every cartridge you put into your firearm.

Ammunition that has become very wet or has been submerged in water should be discarded in a safe manner.

Never use damaged or substandard ammunition.

Using the wrong ammunition, mixing ammunition or using improperly reloaded ammunition can cause serious personal injury or death.

Use only cartridges or shells that are designed for a particular gun can be fired safely in that gun. It only takes one cartridge or bullet of the incorrect caliber or gauge, or which has been improperly reloaded to destroy your firearm.

Always read and heed the instructions on ammunition boxes.

Most guns have the ammunition type stamped on the barrel. Ammunition can be identified by information printed on the box and sometimes stamped on the cartridge.

Make sure the barrel is clear of obstructions before shooting:

Before loading your gun, open the action and make sure there's no ammunition in the chamber or magazine.

Check the barrel for any obstructions or debris.

Even a small amount of snow, mud, excess lubricant or grease in the bore can dangerously increase pressure and cause the barrel to bulge or burst when firing.

Carefully open the action, unload the firearm and dispose of the cartridge in a safe way.

Use a cleaning rod and patch to wipe away anti-rust compounds or any other residues or obstructions in the barrel.

If you keep a loaded firearm in your home:

If you keep a loaded gun in your home, always use a trigger guard cover.

It ensures you don't press off a round while you grab for the gun in the heat of the moment such as an intruder breaks in your home. Because a negligent discharge can happen to even the most experienced shooter.

Even though using a trigger guard cover of some sort seems to be a small safety step, it can make a big difference.

Keep children safe from your firearm:

Never leave a firearm lying around the house.

You must always secure your firearm and ammunition separately so that they are not accessible to children or other unauthorized persons.

Kids are fascinated by guns. It's a natural curiosity that can have tragic consequences when not properly supervised.

Never assume that because a child may lack finger strength, they can't pull the trigger.

A child's thumb has twice the strength of the other fingers. When a child's thumb pushes against a trigger, invariably the barrel of the gun is pointing directly at the child's face.

Even if you don't have any children or if your children are grown and left home. A nephew, niece, a neighbor's child or a grandchild may come to visit.

Be familiar with your gun:

Know how to use the gun safely.

Before handling a gun, learn how it operates.

Read the owner's manual. If you don't have a manual, contact the gun's manufacturer and ask them to send you one; they'll be happy to do so.

Know your gun's basic parts, how to safely open and close the action and how to remove ammunition from the gun.

No matter how much you know about guns, always take the time to learn the proper way to operate any new or unfamiliar firearm.

Never assume that because one gun resembles another, they operate in exactly the same way.

Never alter or modify your gun and have it serviced regularly.

Your firearm has been designed to operate according to certain factory specifications.

You'll jeopardize your safety and the safety of others around you by attempting to alter its trigger, safety or other mechanisms.

Like any mechanical device, a firearm is subject to wear. It must be maintained and periodically serviced to assure optimum safety and performance.

Never handle a firearm while angry:

Never handle a gun when you are in an emotional state such as anger or depression. Your judgment may be impaired.

"Nothing gets solved when we fight angry. Doing anything out of anger will most probably result in regrets." - Bruce Lee

Only defend when you have to. Even though it is hard, do not seek revenge, let God handle it.

Remember: The only time that you should ever use deadly force, is when you or your family's life is threatened.

Avoid alcoholic beverages before and during shooting. Also avoid mind or behavior altering medicines or drugs.

You may be thinking, "I don't drink or do drugs!" Even some legal drugs, like prescription medicine or over-the-counter remedies, can impair your ability to shoot safely.

Read the label of any medication you take and ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible side effects.

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Cleaning and Maintaining your firearm:

Be sure your gun is safe to operate.

Remember, always treat your firearm as if it were loaded.

Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.

Keep your finger off the trigger until you're ready to shoot.

Today's firearms are rather easy to disassemble, and each gun is a bit different when it comes to cleaning.

Read the owner's manual for your particular gun. The manual will explain exactly how to take your gun apart safely and clean it.

Keep the manual handy in the case where you store your gun for quick reference.

Regular cleaning is important in order for your gun to operate correctly and safely. Accumulated moisture, dirt or greases can interfere with the gun's safe operation. Taking proper care of it will also maintain its value and extend its life.

Periodically inspect the internal workings of your firearm to be sure they're clean and free of rust, unwanted dirt and debris.

Before cleaning your gun, be absolutely sure that it is unloaded.

Make sure the gun's safety is on during the cleaning process.

With a semi-auto firearm, push the magazine release button and drop the magazine. Next, pull the slide to the rear and eject any round in the chamber. Visually inspect the gun again to be sure a round isn't in the chamber.

With a double-action revolver, swing out the cylinder and visually check for rounds.

A single-action revolver requires that the loading gate be opened and maybe the hammer cocked back one notch to release the cylinder so it rotates freely. Check each chamber of the cylinder to be sure it's empty.

Always use the right cleaning products.

Always clean your firearm in a well-ventilated and well-lit area away from distractions, young children and pets.

The best place to work is outdoors or in the garage. If you need to clean your gun inside, do so near an open window. Use a table that is sturdy and free of clutter.

Be careful when working with solvents to prevent drippage onto wood, painted or other sensitive surfaces.

Always wear eye protection from flying springs, debris, and chemical splash/vapors. So, before you start taking your gun apart for cleaning, put on your safety glasses.

You should also wear solvent resistant gloves to protect your hands from contact with chemicals and their absorption.

Use a cleaning mat with a non-slip and solvent resistant pad when cleaning your firearm.

Many guns have small parts such as pins and springs. Also use a tray when cleaning your gun, it will keep help you from losing these small parts.

Use only recommended cleaners and oil lubricants on your gun and do not over-lubricate.

Excessive use of a non-recommended lubricant could adversely affect the function and safe operation of your firearm.

Always clean your gun after use. This allows for optimal firing conditions.

Always clean the barrel from the chamber end to the muzzle when possible.

Failure to properly maintain your firearm can not only damage or ruin your firearm, it can expose you and others to unnecessary risks of personal injury or death.

A clean gun is also a safe and reliable gun.

If storing a firearm for an extended period, especially in a safe, avoid swaddling them in gun socks, zipper cases, etc. They can often trap or hold moisture.

A firearm brought out of prolonged storage should also be cleaned before shooting.

Accumulated moisture and dirt, or solidified grease and oil, can prevent the gun from operating properly.

If you have a revolver:

Always make sure your revolver is safely and completely unloaded.

To be sure you have all the ammunition accounted for, inventory the number of rounds you remove and account for any that are missing.

This is important as revolvers can sometimes fail to extract all the rounds from the cylinder.

A revolver is much easier to clean.

A double-action revolver doesn't require any disassembly to clean, and a single-action revolver just requires you to pull the cylinder pin and remove the cylinder from the frame.

Regular cleaning and proper storage are a part of the gun's general upkeep.

If there is any question regarding a gun's ability to function, have it examined by a knowledgeable gunsmith.

Use gunsmith-specific screwdrivers rather than whatever is in your household toolbox. Only use screwdriver bits that precisely fit the screws on your revolver.

Whenever a firearm is disassembled and reassembled, a functional check needs to be conducted in order to ensure that the firearm still operates as designed following the disassembly.

This checks the proper functioning of the trigger mechanism, safety, slide operation and locking, magazine retention and ejection systems are working.

Follow the owner's manual for your specific firearm and always follow the rules of gun safety, because you are responsible for the proper care and maintenance of your firearm.

If you're a first time buyer:

Before using your firearm for the first time, it should be cleaned.

Most guns nowadays, if new in the box, are coated with either a preservative or oil to protect it against corrosion during shipping and storage.

Field strip your gun and give it a basic cleaning according to the owner's manual.

Take time to inspect and get familiar with your new gun. Look for any manufacturing defects, metal shavings or barrel obstructions.

Make sure to give the barrel a good cleaning, as well as (if applicable) the slide, the frame and any and all other parts until your patches come clean.

Then lubricate, according to the owner's manual.

Use plain gun oil and patches/rags. This applies primarily to semi-automatic firearms although any gun with moving parts can benefit from proper lubrication.

While at the Range:

Know and follow all the rules of the Shooting Range.

Listen and do what the Range Master tells you to do.

Uncase and case your gun at the shooting bench, never behind the safety line.

Always keep the barrel pointed down range.

Always keep the gun on safe until you intend to shoot.

Always wear shooting glasses and hearing protection when shooting.

Gun discharges can emit debris and hot gas that can cause injury to your eyes, and gun shots are loud and the noise can cause hearing damage.

Wearing eye protection when disassembling and cleaning any gun will also help prevent the possibility of springs, spring tension parts, solvents or other agents from contacting your eyes.

Never shoot at water or hard surfaces.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." 2nd Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country." - James Madison 1789

"The Constitution shall never be construed to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms." - Samuel Adams, Massachusetts Ratifying Convention, 1788

"Our nation was built and civilized by men and women who used guns in self-defense and in pursuit of peace." - Ronald Reagan

"No free man shall ever be debarred the use of arms." - Thomas Jefferson

"Self-defense is not only our right; it is our duty." - Ronald Reagan



There are many training and safety courses that are available that teach proactive strategies to avoid dangerous situations, self-defense using a firearm, as well as protection inside and outside the home.

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