

You have elected to learn more about using a firearm in training and for competition. Competition may not be near the stress of a real life or death situation, but it's about as close as most of us will hopefully ever come. It's also a chance to combine accuracy and speed in exciting courses of fire and to meet and share with other shooters who are like minded.

Shooting sports are very exciting and fun, but a mistake can be fatal. Therefore, this session is focused on your safety and the safety of those around you. Please keep safety at the forefront of your mind and fun and competition success will follow quickly. Ask your Range Officer (RO) for assistance at any time.

Coming to the Range for your Safety Session

Your safety session will be conducted under the rules governed by a match, and as such, conform to more stringent requirements than a casual day at a range.

Your firearm must be unloaded and holstered or bagged. If you have any questions about your equipment, please come with your firearm unloaded and bagged and then ask your safety instructor how to proceed.

Rules of Gun Safety

Every shooter, whether they shoot once in their lifetime or compete on a regular basis MUST know the 4 Rules of Guns Safety.

1. **All guns are always loaded.**
2. **Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.**
3. **Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.**
4. **Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.**

In a match, these rules are enhanced a little:

1. **COLD RANGE:** Unless you are actually in the course of fire and under the direction of a Range Office, your gun must be in its holster or bagged with the hammer (or striker) down on an empty chamber and the magazine well or cylinder must be empty. The only place you may handle your gun off the line is in the designated safety area and no ammunition may be handled in that safety area. If you are new to a range, ask for the location of the safety area(s) and where it is acceptable to holster or un-holster your firearm. If you are legally allowed to carry a firearm, disarm yourself before entering the premises of a match
2. **90 DEGREE RULE:** Your muzzle must never cover more than 90 degrees from the median intercept of the backstop (including up or down) during a course of fire. Range officers may warn you if they see you getting close to violating this rule, however, it is your responsibility to be of your location and orientation. Similarly, be careful and ensure your muzzle does not cover your own hands or body while drawing, moving, re-loading, reaching for a door, re-holstering, etc.
3. **FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER:** When you are not actually engaging a target, your finger is to be off the trigger and clearly outside the trigger guard. This includes while moving, reloading, drawing, re-holstering.
4. **KNOW YOUR TARGET AND WHATS BEYOND:** Take your time and make every shot count. You are responsible for every shot you send down range. If a course appears unsafe to you, contact a match official immediately.

Safety Violations & Disqualifications

Generally speaking, violating one rule will get you disqualified (DQ'd) from a match. Violating two rules could cause significant damage, or worse. Even very seasoned shooters can get DQ'd. If it happens to you, please remember that the Range Officer is working for everyone's safety so treat it as a "course correction" on a long journey of safe shooting.

MATCH DISQUALIFICATION: A competitor who commits a safety infraction or any other prohibited activity during a match will be disqualified from the match, and will be prohibited from attempting any remaining course of fire in the match regardless of the schedule or physical layout of the match.

ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE (AD): A competitor who causes an accidental discharge must be stopped by a Range Officer immediately and DQ'd from the match. This includes: A shot which travels over a backstop, a berm or in any other direction specified in the written stage briefing by the match organizer as being unsafe; A shot which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor, except when shooting a target closer than 10 feet; A shot which occurs while loading, reloading, unloading, remedial action, while transferring a firearm between hands; A shot which occurs during movement, except while actually engaging a target.

UNSAFE GUN HANDLING: A competitor can be DQ's for any of the following: Handling a firearm at any time except when in a designated safety area or under the direction of a Range Officer; If at any time during a course of fire, a competitor allows the muzzle of their firearm to point rearward, that is further than 90 degrees from the median intercept of the backstop, or in the case of no backstop allows the muzzle to point up range, whether the firearm is loaded or not; If at any time during the course of fire, a competitor drops their firearm or causes it to fall, loaded or not; Allowing the muzzle of a firearm to point at any part of the competitor's body during a course of fire (SWEEPING). Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard while clearing a malfunction where the competitor clearly moves the firearm away from aiming at targets; Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard during loading, reloading, or unloading.; Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard during movement unless aiming at a target; Drawing a firearm while facing up range.

Range Commands

The Range Officer is working for everyone's safety. Under their direction, you will hear these commands.

STOP: This is the most important command. At any time, any Range Officer assigned to a stage may issue this command. The competitor must immediately cease firing, stop moving and wait for further instruction from the Range Officer.

MAKE READY: This command signifies the start of "the course of fire". Under the direct supervision of the Range Officer, the competitor must face down range and prepare the firearm in accordance with the defined start condition for the stage. Except when in a designated safety area, you should NEVER handle your firearm without hearing this command.

ARE YOU READY?: A positive response is not required and the lack of a negative response from the competitor indicates understanding of the course of fire thus allowing the Range Officer to proceed.

STAND BY: This command should be followed by the start signal within 1 to 4 seconds.

START SIGNAL (Beep from Timer): The signal for the competitor to begin their attempt at the course of fire. If a competitor fails to react to a start signal, for any reason, the Range Officer will confirm that the competitor is ready to attempt the course of fire, and will resume the range commands from "Are You Ready".

IF YOU ARE FINISHED, UNLOAD AND SHOW CLEAR: If the competitor has finished shooting, he must present the firearm for inspection by the Range Officer with the muzzle pointed down range, magazine removed, slide locked or held open, and chamber empty. Revolvers must be presented with the cylinder swung out and empty.

IF CLEAR, HAMMER DOWN, HOLSTER: While continuing to point the firearm safely downrange, the competitor must perform a final safety check of the firearm as follows:

Self-loaders – release the slide and pull the trigger (without touching the hammer or decocker, if any).

Revolvers – close the empty cylinder (without touching the hammer, if any).

If the gun proves to be clear, the competitor must holster their firearm.

If the gun does not prove to be clear, the Range Officer will resume the commands from "IF Finished ..."

RANGE IS CLEAR: This declaration signifies the end of the course of fire. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score, patch, reset targets etc.

Additional Considerations

EYE AND EAR PROTECTION must be worn at all times while competing or on the range. If during the course of fire, your protective gear inadvertently falls off, please stop yourself and inform the range officer.

LISTEN TO THE RANGE OFFICERS AND OBEY THEIR COMMANDS. Their job is to keep it safe for all involved. Don't anticipate commands, especially at the end of a course of fire. Wait for the RO to give you commands this prevents you from needing to perform the safety checks again. The RO will make sure the gun is clear and holstered before clearing the range.

EVERYONE MUST HELP OUT: This is a volunteer sport and without volunteers there is no sport. The match goes much smoother when everyone helps tape targets, set steel, set activators, pick up brass, score, etc.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: We are all here because we want to be surrounded by people with similar interests. Competitors can be disqualified from a match for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unsportsmanlike such as cheating, dishonesty, or behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute.

Shooter Comprehension

State the Four Rules of Gun Safety

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

State the most important Range Command: _____

Summarize the 90 degree Rule: _____

Summarize what is meant by a "Cold Range": _____

When is the only time your finger can be on the trigger? _____

Shooter Signature: _____ Date: _____

Range Office Signature: _____

Range Activities / Live Fire

The Range Officer will direct and assist the shooter in the following tasks to demonstrate comprehension.

Under the direction of the RO using the Range Commands, the shooter will retrieve the firearm from their holster or bag and re-holster it in the appropriate condition.

Under the direction of the RO using the Range Commands, the shooter will Make Ready. Starting with the STOP command, the RO will ask you to unload and re-holster your firearm in the appropriate condition.

Under the direction of the RO using the Range Commands, the shooter will run through a very simple course of fire as defined by your RO.

Upon satisfactory demonstration of comprehension through these tasks along with successful completion of your first match, you will receive a Safety Card which will allow you to compete in the sports and at the clubs as specified on the card.