



**The Firearm Licensing Authority  
Firearm Safety Training Manual  
2013 Edition**

**Disclaimer**

The information contained in this document is intended to provide comprehensive reference information to guide existing or prospective Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) licensed firearm owners in promotion of the safe and lawful use of firearms in Jamaica.

The FLA recommends its use as a basic reference document for persons training in preparation for the standard FLA assessment for Competency Certification.

This manual is also recommended as a basic reference document for refresher preparation for the assessment to recertify existing license owners.

Information in this manual may be subject to periodic review and update.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Firearm Licensing Authority gratefully acknowledges the many persons and organizations who made contributions to the production of this Manual. Their knowledge and effort to deliver accurate information, reflecting internationally accepted best-practices, was invaluable.

The Authority is grateful for their dedication and passion.

# Table of Content

<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>VISION &amp; MISSION STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b> .....	<b>6</b>
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIREARMS ACT & ETHICAL ISSUES .....	6
DEFINITIONS OF MURDER & MANSLAUGHTER.....	18
JUDICIOUS USE OF A FIREARM.....	19
SUMMARY.....	23
<b>CHAPTER 2</b> .....	<b>24</b>
SECURITY ISSUES & MINDSET .....	24
SELF-CONFIDENCE .....	26
THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH OF A DEFENSIVE SHOOTING.....	31
REDUCING THE EMOTIONAL AFTERMATH OF A DEFENSIVE SHOOTING.....	32
<b>CHAPTER 3</b> .....	<b>42</b>
FIREARM SAFETY .....	42
FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY .....	43
<b>CHAPTER 4</b> .....	<b>47</b>
VARIETIES OF REVOLVERS.....	50
<b>CHAPTER 5</b> .....	<b>67</b>
SAFE HANDLING, MECHANICS OF SHOOTING, CARRY/RETENTION .....	67
<b>CHAPTER 6</b> .....	<b>71</b>
MULTIPLE TARGETS, MOVEMENT, USE OF COVER, MAINTAINING OPERATION OF THE FIREARM .....	71
<b>CHAPTER 7</b> .....	<b>73</b>
PREPARATION FOR COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT .....	73
ON THE RANGE .....	74
COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT .....	75
BRIEFING AT COMPETENCE ASSESSMENTS .....	76
<b>GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>77</b>

# **VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS**

## **Vision Statement**

FLA enjoys public confidence through consistently superior professionalism, integrity and customer satisfaction.

## **Mission**

Our mission is to provide an environment of transparency and integrity in the regulation of firearms and ammunition used by Jamaican Residents. We will do this by having highly trained, professional staff providing high quality service to our individual applicants, Dealers, Range Operators, Trainers, Security Companies and other customers. As a part of the national security infrastructure of Jamaica, we will also ensure that the integrity and completeness of our database of firearms records are maintained at high standards, and will also seek to maintain excellent communication with the other members of the national security infrastructure under the umbrella of the Ministry of National Security.

## **Strategic Objectives**

- To provide a decision for new firearm applications within six months.
- To process renewals and recertifications in less than one hour.
- To perform audits on security companies, dealers, ranges, gun clubs at least biennially.
- To ensure that there is adequate risk management systems to protect the authority's database of license records.
- To ensure the timely payment of and accounting for all fees due and payable to the FLA for the delivery of its services.
- To ensure consistent high levels of customer service for internal and external customers.
- To provide a regular forum to meet with our main stakeholders.

## **Introduction**

Firearm Competence Certification is granted to a conditionally approved applicant after success at the Firearm Licensing Authority (FLA) Competence Assessment. The applicant is expected to have been trained in the basic legal, moral and ethical issues relating to firearms, and the safety, basic use, and care of firearms.

The Competence Certification Training Course is intended to expose the applicant to all critical aspects of the areas stated above. The overarching theme throughout the training sessions must be safety and fostering the development of a responsible attitude toward firearm ownership.

One of the mandates of the Firearm Licensing Authority was to develop a system of improving the knowledge, skills and attitude of firearm holders. This is an obligation to our customers that each FLA Approved Trainer will consistently model the appropriate desired attitude and behavior, as well as impart the required knowledge and skill to their trainees in pursuit of ensuring public safety.

This training manual is also designed to guide trainers in providing trainees with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude in the safe, lawful and responsible use of firearms. Trainers are required to ensure that all applicants attend the standard number of lectures/discussions/demonstrations and 'Dry Fire' sessions that will suitably equip them with the required knowledge, skills and attitude.

# Chapter 1

## Highlights of the Firearms Act & Ethical Issues

The Trainer must ensure that the Trainee has a clear understanding of the legal and moral responsibilities of owning and using a firearm in Jamaica. In order to demonstrate this, the trainer should not only lecture/discuss but also conduct practical demonstrations utilizing role plays and real-life scenarios to emphasize these critical points.

This chapter seeks to highlight some important areas of the Firearms Act that will emphasize the role of the Firearm Licensing Authority; the role and authority of the police and the rights and responsibilities of the firearm holder.

### Overview

The objective of the Firearms Act is to regulate and control the manufacture, sale, purchase, importation, exportation, transshipment, disposal, possession and use of firearms and ammunition. The Act prescribes the various regulating authorities, the definition of a firearm, by whom, how and where a firearm may be legally possessed, the various fees applicable, and the various penalties for breaches.

The following extracts from The Firearms Act represent the most critical, everyday information most often needed by firearm holders.

Please consult **The FIREARMS ACT** (Jamaica, 1967 and amendments), for details on all its provisions, including regulatory framework, legal obligations of the firearm holder and penalties for any breach.

### **Establishment of the Authority, Section 26A**

(1) There is hereby established for the purposes of this Act, a body to be known as the Firearm Licensing Authority<sup>1</sup>.

### **Functions of the Authority, Section 26B**

- (1) .... the functions of the Authority shall be –
- (a) to receive and consider applications for firearm licences, certificates or permits;
  - (b) to grant or renew firearm licences, certificates or permits;
  - (c) to revoke any firearm licence, certificate or permit granted under this Act;
  - (d) to amend the terms of a firearm licence, certificate or permit;
  - (e) to receive and investigate any complaint regarding a breach of a firearm licence, certificate or permit.
- (2) The Authority shall have the power to -
- (a) summon witnesses;
  - (b) call for and examine documents; and
  - (c) do all such other things as it considers necessary or expedient for the purpose of carrying out its functions under this Act.

### **Types of Licences, Certificates and Permits, Section 27**

The Authority may grant the following licences, certificates or permits -

- (a) a Firearm Import Permit; or
- (b) a Firearm Export Permit; or
- (c) a Firearm Transshipment Permit; or
- (d) a Firearm Manufacturer's Licence; or
- (e) a Firearm Dealer's Licence; or
- (f) a Gunsmith's Licence; or
- (g) a Firearm Disposal Permit; or
- (h) a Firearm User's Licence; or
- (i) a Firearm User's (Special) Permit; or
- (j) a certificate under paragraph (j) of subsection (2) of section 20; or
- (k) a Firearm User's (Employee's) Certificate.

*<sup>1</sup>The Authority is managed by a Board of Directors and a CEO, and reports to the Minister of National Security*

### **Establishment of the Review Board, Section 37A**

(1) For the purpose of a review under section 37, there is hereby established a Review Board consisting of persons appointed by the Minister in accordance with the Fourth Schedule.

(2) The Review Board appointed under subsection (1) shall within ninety days of receiving an application for review;

- (a) hear, receive and examine the evidence in the matter under review and
- (b) submit to the Minister, for his determination, a written report of its findings and recommendations.

(3) The Minister upon receipt and consideration of the reports of the Review Board shall give to the Authority such directions as the Minister may think fit.

(4) Where the Review Board fails to comply with subsection (2), the Minister may hear and determine the matter under review.

### **Information required accompanying Application, Section 28**

Every application for any licence, certificate or permit shall

- (a) be addressed to the Authority; and
- (b) be in the prescribed form; and
- (c) contain the prescribed particulars; and
- (d) be accompanied by the prescribed number (if any) of photographs of the prescribed dimensions of the person to whom the licence, certificate or permit applied for is desired to be granted; and
- (e) bear upon it, if so prescribed, a specimen of the signature of the person to whom the licence, certificate or permit applied for is desired to be granted; and
- (f) be signed by the applicant; and
- (g) be accompanied by the receipt for the prescribed application fee (if any) and by such other documents, if any, as may be prescribed.

*<sup>2</sup>The Review Board is independent of the Firearm Licensing Authority*

### **General provisions for the Grant of Firearms Licences, Section 29**

(4) ... a Firearm User's Licence, ... or a certificate issued under paragraph (j) of subsection (2) of section 20 shall be granted by the Authority only if the Authority is satisfied that the applicant has a good reason for acquiring or having in his possession the firearm or ammunition in respect of which the application is made, and can be permitted to have in his possession that firearm or ammunition without danger to the public safety or to the peace:

Provided that such a permit, certificate or licence shall not be granted to a person whom the Authority has reason to believe to be of intemperate habits or unsound mind, or to be for any reason unfitted to be entrusted with such a firearm or ammunition:

Provided further that no Firearm User's Licence, Permit or Certificate shall be granted until the applicant therefore has –

(a) satisfied the Authority of his proficiency in the use and management of the type of firearm in respect of which his application is made;

(b) satisfied the Authority that he has made adequate provision for keeping the firearm in respect of which his application is made in a secure place when it is not being carried or used in accordance with the Licence, Permit or Certificate.

### **Provision for Amendment of Licence by the Authority, Section 35**

(1) ... the Authority may at any time by notice in writing to the holder of a licence, certificate or permit vary the conditions subject to which such licence, certificate or permit is held except such of them as may be prescribed.

(2) A notice under subsection (1) shall specify the nature of the variation of conditions proposed and require the holder to deliver up the licence, certificate or permit to the Authority on or before a day specified in the notice (not being less than three days after delivery of the notice) for the purpose of amending the conditions specified therein.

### **Definition of Firearm, Section 1**

**“Firearm”** means any lethal barreled weapon from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged, or any restricted weapon or, unless the context otherwise requires, any prohibited weapon, and includes any component part of any such weapon and any accessory to any such weapon designed or adapted to diminish the noise or flash caused by firing the weapon, but does not include any air rifle, air gun, or air pistol of a type prescribed by the Minister and of a calibre so prescribed;

**“Prohibited weapon”** refers to any artillery or automatic firearm; or any grenade, bomb or other like missile.

**“Restricted weapon”** refers to any weapon of whatever description or design which is adapted for the discharge of any noxious liquid, gas or other thing.

### **Definition of Imitation Firearm, Section 25**

**“Imitation firearm”** means anything which has the appearance of being a firearm within the meaning of this section whether it is capable of discharging any shot, bullet or missile or not.

### **Restrictions on Alteration/Conversion, Section 15**

(1) ... a person other than the holder of a Gunsmith's Licence shall not –

- (a) shorten a barrel of any smooth bore gun to a length of less than twenty inches;
- (b) convert into a firearm anything which is not a firearm;
- (c) convert into a prohibited weapon anything which is not a prohibited weapon
- (d) convert into a restricted weapon anything which is not a restricted weapon.

## **Possession of Firearms and Ammunition, Section 20**

(1) A person shall not -

(a) save as authorized by a licence which continues in force by virtue of any enactment, be in possession of a prohibited weapon.

(5) In any prosecution for an offence under this section –

(a) any person who is in the company of someone who uses or attempts to use a firearm to commit -

(i) any felony; or

(ii) any offence involving either an assault or the resisting of lawful apprehension of any person

shall, if the circumstances give rise to a reasonable presumption that he was present to aid or abet the commission of the felony or offence aforesaid, be treated, in the absence of reasonable excuse, as being also in possession of the firearm;

(b) any person who is proved to have in his possession or under his control any vehicle or other thing in or on which is found any firearm shall, in the absence of a reasonable explanation, be deemed to have in his possession such firearm

## **Restrictions to the Carrying of Firearms in Public<sup>3</sup>, Section 22**

(1) The Minister may by order apply this section to any area, parish, district, town or village specified in such order.

(3) A person shall not carry any firearm or ammunition in any public place within any area, parish, district, town or village to which this section applies, except in accordance with the terms of a Firearm User's (Special) Permit.

<sup>3</sup>*Such places often include sections of Government offices and Ministries, Diplomatic Embassies, Courtrooms and the National Stadium. Carrying firearms in public may also be temporarily restricted during special national events such as on Election Day.*

***NOTE: Private business operators have the right to refuse entry of firearms on to their premises, and have no obligation to provide storage.***

## **Possession of Licence, Section 21**

(1) A person shall not carry any firearm or ammunition in any public place unless at the time when he carries such firearm or ammunition he has about his person a licence, certificate or permit granted by the Authority, authorizing him to carry such firearm or ammunition in such place and, if such place is a place to which section 22 applies, a Firearm User's (Special) Permit authorizing him to carry such firearm or ammunition in such place on such occasion.

## **Power of Police to Require Licence to be Shown, Section 39 & 40**

[sec. 40](1) Where any constable who suspects, any person carrying any firearm or ammunition concealed about his person he may -

(a) ask that person if he is carrying such firearm or ammunition; and

(b) if that person admits that he is carrying such firearm or ammunition require that person to produce such firearm or ammunition and, unless he is exempted by virtue of subsection (2) of section 20, his licence or certificate in respect thereof and if the place in which that person is carrying such firearm or ammunition is within any area to which section 22 applies to produce his Firearm User's (Special) Permit in relation to such firearm or ammunition.

[sec. 40](2) If any person so required fails, unless he is exempted as aforesaid, to produce the licence, certificate or permit, as the case may be, or to permit the constable to read the licence, certificate or permit or to examine the firearm or ammunition for the purpose of verifying the particulars in the licence, certificate or permit -

(a) that person shall be guilty of an offence; and

(b) the constable may seize and retain the firearm or ammunition until such time as legal proceedings against that person in respect of that offence are finally disposed of and may require that person to declare to him immediately his name and address.

[sec. 40](3) If any person denies that he is carrying any firearm or ammunition about his person the constable may search that person and seize and retain any firearm or ammunition carried by that person until such time as legal proceedings against that person in respect of that offence are finally disposed of and may require that person to declare to him immediately his name and address.

[sec. 40](4) If any person so required refuses to declare his name and address, or fails to give his true name and address, he shall be guilty of an offence and the constable may arrest without warrant any person who refuses so to declare his name and address, or whom he suspects of giving a false name or address or of intending to abscond.

[sec. 39](4) A constable authorized in writing by a chief officer of police may at any time require the holder of a licence, certificate or permit to produce for inspection the firearm and ammunition to which it relates, and any person who without good cause refuses or fails to do so shall be guilty of an offence.

### **Restrictions relating to the Discharge of Firearms, Section 23**

(1) A person shall not discharge any firearm or ammunition on or within forty yards of any public road or in any public place except under the following circumstances;

(a) in the lawful protection of his person or property or of the person or property of some other person;<sup>4</sup> or

(b) in the lawful shooting of a trespassing animal;<sup>5</sup> or

(c) under the direction of a civil or military authority authorized to give such direction; or

(d) with the permission of the Minister.

<sup>4</sup>Jamaican law allows for *reasonable force, up to and including the use of, or the threat of, lethal force, to be employed in the defense of a person's life. The threat must be of a **criminal or careless and reckless nature** and, the threat must be **clear, identifiable, and able to immediately cause serious injury or death.***

*This also applies to someone committing arson. This is because arson is deemed to be a crime committed by a deadly weapon (fire).*

*While the law allows the use of a firearm for the protection of property, it is not recommended (except as outlined above in the case of arson). The fact is that most property is insured and/or easily replaced – and the **mandatory** legal response of the police authorities will often result in the **seizure** of the firearm until investigations are complete (timeframe indeterminable) and **possible prosecution** if there is any doubt as to the legitimacy of that usage. The use of a firearm to protect (replaceable) property is not worth risking your freedom or the continued ownership and use of the firearm.*

<sup>5</sup>*Except cows, horses, mules, donkeys (see the Pound Act)*

### **Search & Seizure relating to the discharge of Firearm, Section 23 continued**

(2) Where any contravention of subsection (1) occurs, any Justice of the Peace or constable may, without warrant, enter any premises on which he has reasonable cause to believe such contravention was committed and seize any firearms and ammunition there found which he has reasonable cause to believe were used in such contravention, or are about to be used in the commission of a contravention of subsection (1), and may retain such firearm or ammunition for so long as may be necessary for the purpose of any investigation in relation thereto, and where such investigation results in legal proceedings against any person for any such offence, until such legal proceedings are finally disposed of.

### **Report of Loss or Theft of a Firearm, Section 41**

(1) The holder of a licence, certificate or permit in respect of any firearm or ammunition and any other person lawfully in possession of any firearm or ammunition by virtue of subsection (2) of section 20 shall, within forty-eight hours after he discovers the loss or theft of such firearm or ammunition, report the loss or theft at a police station.

### **Penalty for Loss of a Firearm through Negligence, Section 41.A**

Any person who, being the holder of any licence, certificate or permit in respect of a firearm or being lawfully in possession of a firearm by virtue of subsection (2) of section 20, loses such firearm through negligence on his part shall be guilty of an offence....

### **Power of Police to Stop and Search Vehicles, Section 42**

(1) Any constable may without warrant stop any vehicle in which he suspects any firearm or ammunition is being conveyed, and may search such vehicle and the driver thereof and any person conveyed therein.

(2) Any person who-

(a) being the driver or person operating a vehicle fails to stop the vehicle at the request of a constable under this section; or

(b) being conveyed in a vehicle, prevents or intimidates the driver thereof or other person operating such vehicle from stopping at the request of a constable under this section; or

(c) escapes or attempts to escape from a vehicle requested to be stopped under this section, shall be guilty of an offence ....

### **Search Warrants, Section 43**

(1) A Justice of the Peace on being satisfied by information on oath that there is reasonable ground for suspecting that an offence under this Act has been, is being, or is about to be committed, may grant a search warrant authorizing any constable named therein -

(a) to enter at any time any premises or place named in the warrant, if necessary by force, and to search the premises or place and every person found therein; and

(b) to seize any firearm or ammunition which he may find on the premises or in the place, or on any such person, in respect of which or in connection with which he has reasonable grounds for suspecting that an offence under this Act has been, is being, or is about to be committed and to retain such firearm or ammunition for so long as may be necessary for the purpose of any investigation in relation thereto, and where such investigation results in legal proceedings against any person for any such offence, until such legal proceedings are finally disposed of.

(2) The constable making the search may arrest without warrant any person found on the premises or in the place whom he has reason to believe to be guilty of an offence under this Act other than an offence against section 41.

### **Special Arrangements for Storage of Firearms**

Where any holder of any Firearm User's Licence (Primary or Secondary Firearm Holder) is about to leave Jamaica and does not desire to take the firearm or ammunition to which such licence relates with him, he shall before leaving Jamaica arrange for the storage of such firearm or ammunition at any Police Station or the Firearm Licensing Authority.

**The following has been edited / paraphrased for clarity – Please consult the Firearms Act for details.**

### **Institutions and Instruments to which this Act is not applicable**

Notably among them;

- (a) Firearms and Ammunition, the property of the Jamaican Government, except at a time when such firearm or ammunition is in the possession of some person other than a person authorized by or on behalf of the Jamaican Government.
  
- (b) Firearms and Ammunition or Signaling apparatus of any ship or aircraft or aerodrome;
  
- (c) Any slaughtering instrument which is the property of the KSAC or any other Parish Council, or the Jamaica Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

## Ethical Issues

### The Right to Life

The Right To Life Declarations presented here are as contained in **Chapter 3 Section 14** of the Jamaican Constitution. Remember that the law may consider that these rights have been violated if a person dies as a result of the force you used against them.

(1) No person shall intentionally be deprived of his life save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been convicted.

(2) Without prejudice to any liability for a contravention of any other law with respect to the use of force in such cases as are hereinafter mentioned, a person shall not be regarded as having been deprived of his life in contravention of this section if he dies as the result of the use of force to such extent as is reasonably justifiable in the circumstances of the case –

(a) for the defense of any person from violence or for the defense of property;

(b) in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;

(c) for the purpose of suppressing a riot, insurrection or mutiny; or

(d) in order to lawfully prevent the commission by that person of a criminal offence, or if he dies as the result of a lawful act of war.

## Definitions of Murder & Manslaughter

### Murder

Murder is the crime of unlawful killing during the Queen's Peace with Malice Aforethought; as where the accused causes death by an unlawful act with the intention to cause death or grievous bodily harm (R. v. Moloney [1985] A.C. 905).

The burden of proving Malice Aforethought rests upon the prosecution (Woolmington v. DPP [1935] A.C. 462). Where a person kills another in the course or furtherance of some other offence, the killing does not amount to murder unless done with the same malice aforethought as is required for a killing to amount to murder when not done in the course or furtherance of another offence (Homicide Act 1957, s.1 (1)).

The partial defenses of provocation (q.v.), diminished responsibility and killing in pursuance of a suicide pact will reduce the murder liability to Voluntary Manslaughter.

A person who killed but lacked the *mens rea (criminal intent)* for murder when he did so, may be found guilty of Manslaughter provided he killed as part of an unlawful and dangerous act or with gross negligence or recklessness.

### Manslaughter

Manslaughter is a crime of unlawful homicide. Manslaughter may be divided into two (2) categories:

(1) **Voluntary Manslaughter** where the defendant killed with malice aforethought but with the presence of a mitigating factor at the time of the killing, namely provocation, diminished responsibility or killing in pursuance of a suicide pact.

(2) **Involuntary Manslaughter** where the defendant is killed without malice aforethought but with a certain required fault element. The fault element required is that the defendant caused the death whilst committing an unlawful and dangerous act or that his act or omission, which caused the death, was grossly negligent or reckless.

## JUDICIOUS USE OF A FIREARM

Firearms are owned for personal protection or sport. If you hunt or participate in any of the many other shooting sports, it is your responsibility to do so in a lawful manner; that means hunting in prescribed areas only, within the allowed time and for the approved game/bag-limits. If you intend to participate in any of the other shooting games it is important that you become fully familiar with the rules and techniques that will allow you to safely enjoy the sport. We recommend you seek qualified instruction in the discipline(s) of your choice. Most firearms are owned for personal protection. **Even if you own your firearm purely for sport, it is still considered a lethal instrument. Therefore, the use of lethal force must always be examined when contemplating firearm ownership.**

*The following is adapted from an essay by John Farnam, which offers thoughtful guidance when considering the use of lethal force.*

There are three elements legally considered to allow the legitimate use of lethal force. They are the cornerstones of any legally justifiable act of self-defense or protection of others, especially using a lethal weapon. They must all be present simultaneously in order for there to be a situation where deadly self-defensive actions are warranted. They are:

- 1. Ability/Means**
- 2. Opportunity**
- 3. Manifest intent (imminent jeopardy)/Motive**

An "**ability**" is simply an injurious capacity. It usually, but not always, manifests itself in the form of a weapon of some sort. Serious injury can be inflicted by many individuals using no weapon at all. The person you applied deadly force against must have the "means" or been "able" to kill or inflict serious bodily harm. Threats alone do not suffice, unless he had the "ability or means" in hand to carry them out. If you were attacked by a person much larger than yourself, or by someone using martial arts techniques, or several individuals at the same time, you may reasonably conclude that he/they had the ability to seriously injure or kill you, even though they may have been technically "unarmed." Disparity in size, age, strength, sex, and the level of aggressiveness of the involved parties are all important matters when considering the element of "ability/means."

Situations must also contain the element of "**opportunity**". An attacker, in addition to having the "ability," must also be in a position to bring the destructive powers of his ability to bear effectively upon his victim. Now the attacker has the "opportunity" to kill or cause serious bodily injury. Everything hinges on whether you were within the effective range of his weapon(s)? If for example, someone standing twenty meters away from you is holding a knife or bludgeon, he is harmless yet either can be deadly if the person is standing within arm's reach, or is several meters away but closing fast. Legally, on the other hand, a firearm is considered deadly at any range.

Your attacker must show "**manifest intent**" on causing harm. The victim is in "imminent jeopardy" when the attacker unmistakably indicates, by words and/or actions, that it is his intention (motive) to kill or cause serious injury, and further, that he intends to do so at once.

You are NOT permitted to use deadly force against nebulous or "empty" threats. The danger must be mortal and immediate. It must appear that the circumstances were sufficient to cause the legitimate fears of any reasonable person, and that you acted under the influence of those fears, not in a spirit of negligence, frivolity or criminal assault. When a person has reasonable grounds for believing, and does in fact actually believe, that the danger of death or serious injury is imminent, he is permitted by law to act based on those appearances, even to the extent of using lethal force, if necessary. This is true even if it turns out that the appearances were misleading and the person was thus honestly mistaken as to the real extent of the danger.

No one is expected to wait until they have absolute and incontrovertible knowledge that a threat is real. That is, no one is expected to wait until the attack is actually underway before responding. However, there must be an overt act coupled with that threat. There must be reasonable evidence "to make it look and feel real". The point is, it does not matter if your attacker's "weapon" later proves to be a toy, or non-functional, or unloaded. So long as, under the circumstances, you had good reason to believe (or any other reasonable person would be expected to believe) that the weapon was real and functional and that he intended to use it to cause harm forthwith, your actions will likely be considered reasonable and appropriate.

Remember, you will be judged only with regard to what you knew and reasonably believed to be true at the time of the encounter. You will not be judged based upon facts and circumstances of which you had no prior knowledge or cognizance. Often, these facts and circumstances won't even be allowed to be entered as evidence for your defense.

"Intent" or "motive" is, after all, a mental process. We therefore cannot perceive intent directly. We can only infer it from the person's actions and/or words. Accordingly, it is an error to say, "He was going to kill...me...my wife...that elderly man." How do you know? Are you a prophet, or mind-reader? The fact is that you don't know what was going through his mind. The correct way to phrase it is: "It looked as if he was going to kill me...etc." That way, you correctly identify your motivating factor as his actions, which you can see, not his thoughts, which you cannot see. Intent is not strictly necessary for imminent jeopardy to be present. You can, for example, be placed in lethal danger by an individual acting with extreme carelessness or recklessness but who may have no intention of harming you specifically.

#### **The Fourth Element to Consider - Preclusion**

Although "preclusion" as a component of legitimate self-defense has not been expressly worded in Law, it is widely perceived and therefore has come to be generally accepted. "Preclusion" simply means that other options were precluded. **In other words, you used lethal force only as a last, desperate resort.**

Many persons have come to think of lethal force to be so abhorrent and final that they believe a person should retreat from an attack or at least attempt to do so, rather than use lethal force to repel it. Alternately, people in our society have come to expect that a "warning" will be issued prior to using lethal force. This is to give the offending party a chance to cease the offence, preventing the use of lethal force.

If the jury believes that, under the circumstances, you had no logical or reasonable alternative but to use lethal force to defend yourself, you are *more likely* to win an acquittal. Generally, the more self-restraint you use, the more "reasonable" your actions will look. In fact, "self-restraint" is a key word, particularly if you used a firearm.

Generally, you should expect the concept of "attempted retreat/warning" to be applied to all situations, *except when the victim is in his own home.*

It is desirable for your legal defense that your actions be seen as judicious, restrained, reasonable, and retrogressive. They should believe you made *every reasonable effort* to abate the situation, even including the use of non-lethal force and/or retreating, before finally having to resort to the use of lethal force.

Conversely, your attacker's actions should be seen as precipitous (causing your response), unwarranted, barbarous, and unconscionable.

The jury is deemed to *consist of reasonable people*. It is therefore expected they will *fairly* decide whether appearances of danger were sufficient so as to justify the actions that were taken. You should set your parameters for responding with lethal force so as to leave no doubt whatsoever in their minds.

The outcome of criminal and civil court proceedings alike is often determined not so much by how a particular law is written, as it is by how it is interpreted. This is usually referred to as the “spirit of the law”. An acquittal in a criminal court, or winning in a civil court, is usually determined by a jury that is sympathetic to your side, and “preclusion” is often the key ingredient.

Finally, the decision to use lethal force always hinges upon a balance of two opposing imperatives: risk exposure and restraint. Exposure to risk is, of course, inherent in all human activity. Risk cannot be entirely purged from any endeavor, but it must be identified, controlled, and minimized. Everyone is expected to expose themselves to some degree of risk during the course of their daily activities. It is an understood condition of life. However, no one is expected or required to expose themselves to unreasonable or suicidal risk. In any situation, as a person's risk exposure increases, he is permitted by law to take reasonable measure to reduce it, restraining himself from using lethal force until such a time as risk exposure has escalated, or is about to escalate, to unacceptable levels so as to cause death or serious bodily harm. At that point, lethal force may be employed if it is the **only** reasonable avenue through which the risk can be reduced.

## Summary

For you to be considered *legally justified* to use lethal force, your attacker must have, or *reasonably appear* to have:

- The ability to inflict serious bodily injury (he is armed or reasonably appears to be armed with a deadly weapon),
- The opportunity to inflict serious bodily harm (physically he is in a position to harm you with his weapon), and
- The intent (hostile actions or words) indicates that he means to place you in jeopardy -- to do you serious or fatal physical harm.

When all three of these "potential attack indicators" are in place **simultaneously**, and all other reasonable options have been precluded, then you are facing a reasonably perceived deadly threat that can justify an emergency lethal force response.

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## Chapter 2

### Security Issues & Mindset

The student should be psychologically prepared not only for ownership but also for the possibility of using her/his firearm. In this chapter the trainer will seek to explore certain security aspects and the possible psychological aftermath in the use of one's firearm. Students should be challenged to affirm their commitment to safety and responsibility.

#### General Principles of Personal Security Planning

No matter how confident you are in your skill with a firearm, it is always better—legally, emotionally and practically—to deter or evade an attack rather than to have to use lethal force. You can substantially reduce your personal risk of becoming a victim by adopting behaviours and habits that will help protect you from such threats.

#### Awareness/Response Levels Colour-Code System

Many times you can become so familiar with the things and routines in our daily lives that you become complacent. You become lost in your own world and if danger were to strike you would be caught off guard.

Instead, try to become aware of what is going on all around you. Begin to hear the sounds, see further than just what is directly in front of you, even try to smell the air around you. Begin to take it all in and process it.

A useful guide to awareness/response levels is a color-code system developed by a Master Defensive Instructor many years ago and is still valid today.

WHITE	You are unaware of what is going on around you.
YELLOW	You are alert but calm and relaxed, scanning your surroundings for a threat.
ORANGE	You sense that something is not right and that you might be attacked.
RED	The fight is on, you are being assaulted and you are reacting to the attack and defending yourself.

Where are you on this color-coded system right now? Most people live their lives in Condition White. If you said Condition Yellow you would be in the right place. Knowing what's going on around you will help to make sure you don't have to go to Condition Orange or, worse yet, Condition Red.

## **Avoidance, De-escalation, Disengagement**

You have no obligation to get into a confrontation with another person. In fact, you should do everything in your power to avoid confrontations. And just because you're armed doesn't necessarily mean you must confront anybody at gunpoint. Develop your "situational awareness" skills so you can detect and avoid trouble altogether.

If, despite your best efforts to the contrary, it seems a confrontation is inevitable never mention, imply or expose your gun for the purpose of intimidation or one-upmanship. You should expect to be arrested by police at gunpoint, and be charged with a crime and confiscation of your firearm anytime you draw / display your handgun in public, regardless of how unintentional, innocent or justified the situation might seem.

Further, this publicity also now makes you a potential target for the other criminal elements to steal your gun – and they're usually willing to kill you to get it. Before you deliberately expose your gun in public, ask yourself: "Is this worth going to jail or making me a possible target for theft and murder?"

Be careful not to escalate the aggression by issuing threats or insults. Instead try to calm every one down. Try to diffuse the situation – apologize, cajole, plead. Make a joke about yourself or think about all the important people in your life. Watch for any signs of escalating aggression or other persons goading the aggressors(s). If you see this happening the best course of action is to leave the scene altogether. There is nothing that says you have to stay in a danger zone. Find a way to quickly and safely get away. Your life and those that depend on you are far too important.

If you successfully avoid a confrontation, the single negative consequence might be a bruised ego, and that will heal quickly. But if you force a confrontation you risk the possibility of any or all of the following things happening:

- being killed or suffering lifelong crippling/disfiguring physical injury
- a family member being killed or suffering lifelong crippling/disfiguring physical injury
- criminal liability and prosecution up to murder
- Financial ruin from civil lawsuit.

Don't let heated emotions get the best of you. You'll simply make a bad situation worse for yourself and everyone else involved. Flee if you can, fight only as a last resort.

## Self-confidence

### Positive Image

Project a positive image by adopting a confident posture. If you look like an easy target, you will become a victim. As we say in Jamaica, “**Duppy know who to frighten**”. The way in which you carry yourself can either attract or deter a potential attacker.

Get into the habit of projecting a strong, confident demeanor during all of your activities from walking on the street, to responding to a knock at your gate, to your interactions with others, particularly strangers. Carry yourself erect with your chin up and shoulders back, and walk with a confident and purposeful stride.

### Acknowledgement

When you approach, or are approached by another person, momentarily look that person squarely in the eye so that they will know that you have seen them and that you are not intimidated by them. However, do not “lock eyes” with that person as you do not want your look to be misinterpreted as a challenge. After momentarily meeting the person’s gaze, resume scanning the area to retain awareness of your surroundings.

### Authoritative Voice

When confronting those who come onto your property or invade your personal space, you should be firm, purposeful, confident and energetic. Act and speak with authority, using short, strong declarative sentences. Make it clear to any person who intrudes on your space or property that you are in control of your environment, your household and your property.

### Assertive Attitude

When are you in a situation in which you feel threatened, it is normal to feel nervousness and/or fearful. The important factor is to control these feelings and not let them show to the potential adversary. Maintain an assertive attitude, if only in outward appearance.

## **Personal Issues faced by a firearm holder**

The willingness to take a life in self-defense is very different from the desire to take a life. The willingness to use lethal force in self-defense does not imply a devaluation of human life. Those who include a firearm in their personal protection plans could be seen as affirming the value of their own lives and those of their family members. An ethical person sees the use of lethal force as a last resort to be used only at those times when it is the only option.

## **Mental Preparation for Defensive Shooting**

Using a handgun efficiently for personal protection requires a firearm holder to train to shoot an assailant. If you aim a gun at a person, you must be prepared to shoot. A person who has religious, moral or personal objections to using lethal force and possibly taking a life should not incorporate a firearm into his or her personal protection strategy.

Anyone contemplating the inclusion of a firearm in a personal protection strategy must consider the following questions:

- Am I prepared to take the life of another human being to save my own or one of my family members?
- Does my religion or personal moral standards permit the taking of a life in self-defense?
- Am I prepared to tolerate the judgment of my family, friends and neighbors if I must defend myself with lethal force?
- Am I prepared to deal with the legal issues that will follow?

Even when it is necessary and justified, defending yourself or someone else from even a violent criminal is not a pleasant experience. You will need to come to terms with, and plan for this eventuality as part of your mental training. As a firearm holder, it is important to develop and practice the various mental skills, attitudes and techniques that together will constitute a state of mental preparedness for confrontation with an attacker.

One of the most effective ways to “practice” your defensive skills is by visualizing different scenarios. These should be based on realistic situations that you may encounter at home, at work, out and about in public...etc. Your scenarios should involve “shoot/no-shoot” decision-making. As you indulge your imagination, make sure to include the people you may find yourself with at the time. This helps to make the visualization feel real.

Keep in mind that not everyone is a part of your “reaction plan”, so they may behave erratically or irrationally. Finally, you should include the aftermath; what the scene might look like, what onlookers might do or say, what you will say to the police...etc.

Practicing "shoot/no-shoot" scenarios helps the firearm holder to decide whether he has an unobstructed shot at a villain or whether he might put a bystander in danger. Firearm holders should hone their instincts and trust their intuition and fear. Remember that the decision to use lethal force has consequences.

Ultimately, the purpose is to shift the “automatic response” of the firearm holder from shooting as first reaction. Instead the firearm holder should seek to develop the knack of quickly and carefully examining the circumstances, and shooting only if necessary and safe to do so.

You will also need to:

- Heighten your awareness of your surroundings
- Be more security-conscious
- Be willing to use lethal force
- Have the determination to persevere

An individual whose marksmanship skills are considered as only fair but who has a high level of mental preparedness and motivation has a greater chance of prevailing in a lethal encounter than a highly skilled shooter who lacks the awareness, the will to persevere – the mental preparedness that contributes significantly to surviving an attack.

## **Physical and Psychological Issues**

A confrontational situation which causes you to discharge your weapon will result in Physical and Psychological issues that you, the Firearm Holder, need to be aware of, and able to handle. They include:

- The reaction of your body to stress
- Your emotions in the immediate aftermath
- Post-Traumatic Stress

Bear in mind that there is no certainty that you will go through any or all of these emotional stages. Human reactions and emotions are much too complex for neat psychological categories, or to be arranged in a simple sequence. But you should be aware of the possibilities so that you are prepared to deal with them as they occur.

## **Reactions to a Life-Threatening Encounter**

No matter what your level of training or how capable you believe yourself to be in handling stressful situations, you will experience, to a greater or lesser degree, a number of involuntary physiological changes during a serious defensive situation.

## **General Bodily Responses to Imminent Danger**

In most situations, there will be a period of time between when you first perceive a threat and when an attack actually occurs. During this period, you will probably experience a number of bodily responses to the imminent danger.

- Your heart rate and respiration will increase - to provide more blood and oxygen to the muscles and brain
- Your pupils will dilate - to take in more light and see the threat better
- Your muscles will tighten in anticipation of your having to make sudden movements

## **Adrenaline Rush**

One of the ways in which your body prepares you for flight or fight is by releasing the hormone Adrenaline into your bloodstream. This powerful chemical heightens the senses and increases strength, but it can also cause trembling of the muscles. This trembling can make it more difficult to stand or sit still or, more importantly, hold the firearm steady.

This trembling can be mistaken for fear by both you and your attacker. In reality, the trembling is a physical reaction to the excess adrenaline in the bloodstream. Sometimes you will also experience uncontrollable shaking after a confrontation. This is also attributable to the excess adrenaline that was released. Although the heightened awareness/alertness caused by adrenaline will enable you to more readily perceive a threat, it may also predispose you to overreact to any sudden stimulus.

### **Loss of Fine Motor Skills**

Stress, regardless of its source, usually results in a loss of fine motor skills. This is often experienced in daily life. For example, it is much harder to unlock your front door with a key when you are rushing to get to a ringing telephone inside. During an attack, your loss of fine motor control will manifest itself in many ways. For example, you will find it more difficult to load cartridges into a pistol magazine or revolver cylinder, or to work the combination lock on a gun box or gun safe. This can be mitigated by thorough, careful and consistent training.

### **Denial**

Unfortunately, it is a common by-product of our civilized upbringing to deny to ourselves the reality of unpleasant things. We often hear people say “I couldn’t believe my eyes”, or “I couldn’t believe what I was hearing”. Begin to believe them. Begin to trust your instincts, your “gut feelings”. If you see or hear something odd, feel like something is not right, don’t allow yourself to give it a reason – check it out. Make sure everything is alright. Or get away from the area quickly. It’s always better to be safe than sorry.

## **The Emotional Aftermath of a Defensive Shooting**

After prevailing in a violent encounter, you are likely to experience a number of emotions. These emotions are typically experienced in the order listed below. Remember that individual responses will vary; some people may not exhibit any of the emotions, while others will experience some or all of the emotional reactions but in varying sequences.

### **Elation**

Often there is an immediate feeling of elation at having survived and prevailed in a life-threatening encounter. The survivor who feels this elation is not cold-bloodedly rejoicing at the death of another. Rather, it is a euphoria resulting from both a sense of relief at having survived, and an involuntary biochemical reaction resulting from the release of endorphins and other sensory- and mood-enhancing chemicals into the bloodstream. It is important to realize that there is nothing wrong with a momentary or lasting feeling of elation at having prevailed. Often this emotion is quickly followed by guilt at having felt elation in the first place.

### **Revulsion**

After the initial elation, there is often a feeling of revulsion at what has happened. The victorious victim may become nauseous, he/she may vomit or even faint from the emotional shock of seeing the result of the confrontation. The absence of revulsion does not mean you are a bad or cold person. Your own experiences (such as work as medical personnel in an emergency room or military duty) may have given you a greater tolerance for the unpleasant and often graphic scenes that are the consequences of a shooting. In preparing yourself for the aftermath of defensive firearm use, you must recognize that the scene of a shooting contains many distasteful and even sickening sights, sounds and smells. While you cannot completely steel yourself to what you will see and hear, visualizing potential outcomes will often help to decrease the distress you experience after a shooting.

### **Remorse**

Many survivors experience remorse at having killed an attacker. This has nothing to do with the moral justifiability of their actions. It is simply a normal feeling of sadness or sorrow at having been forced to kill.

### **Self-Doubt**

Those who prevail in a situation where deadly force was necessary may replay the sequence of events over and over in their minds, asking themselves questions such as: Did I really have to shoot? Could I have avoided the attack?" "Was there something else I could have done?" Like remorse, this feeling is a natural reaction of the normal person's aversion to taking a life, even when the action is morally and legally justifiable.

## **Acceptance**

This is usually the last of the emotional stages encountered after a defensive shooting. Rationalization is the first step to acceptance and is often a consequence of the self-doubt described above. As you analyze the circumstances of the shooting, you will conclude that your actions were both necessary and justified.

## **Reducing the Emotional Aftermath of a Defensive Shooting**

Although you cannot avoid experiencing certain emotions as the result of your justifiable use of deadly force, you can prevent those emotions from taking control of your life. Two (2) methods that many have found helpful are self-reinforcement and counseling.

### **Self-Reinforcement**

Self-reinforcement is a technique in which you replace negative, self-destructive thoughts with positive, self-affirming ones. Self-reinforcement allows you to act as your own counselor in a sense as you give yourself support and validate the actions you took in self-defense.

Self-reinforcement can, and should be practiced by anyone who has had to defend himself or herself with deadly force. Self-reinforcing statements take the following form:

- I am a good person
- I am a moral person
- I did not attack anyone.
- I was attacked by a criminal
- I did not invade the sanctity of another's home
- My attacker was the one who chose a lifestyle and sequence of events that led to his injury/death
- I was morally and legally justified in protecting my life
- I had no choice but to use everything within my power, including lethal force, to stop my attacker
- I have quite possibly saved the lives of others by stopping this predator from harming other innocent victims in the future

It is useful to make these self-reinforcing statements readily available to yourself. You can carry them as a printout in your wallet or purse, or make them into a screen-saver for your desktop or laptop. The critical factor is to have them readily available so that you can bolster yourself whenever you are assailed by self-doubt. Ultimately, you are the only person who can make it possible for you to put a defensive shooting into proper perspective and get on with your life.

## **Counseling**

Counseling is one of the most widely used and effective methods for working out problems. Although the term may immediately bring to mind formal sessions with a psychotherapist, in reality counseling goes on every day in our normal lives. Every time you discuss your fears and concerns with another person, whether this person is your spouse, friend, or co-worker, informal counseling is taking place.

Counseling is beneficial in several ways. Talking to a sympathetic family member or friend about surviving a lethal attack gives support and affirmation as well as the viewpoint of a detached third party. This objective viewpoint can be important in helping the survivor deal with overwhelming self-doubt and remorse caused by the experience, and can help him/her in finally arriving at an acceptance of his or her actions.

Formal counseling may be obtained from a variety of sources including:

- Psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health professionals
- Members of the Clergy

Seeking counseling, whether formally with a professional or informally with a friend or relative should never be viewed as a sign of weakness. In fact, getting help when it is needed will prevent further emotional trauma.

## **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Not everyone who goes through a traumatic event is afflicted with PTSD but it is useful to know the signs to look for. Some of the symptoms of PTSD are flashbacks, recurrent nightmares, and an inability to function normally in daily activities or relationships. Not everyone who displays these symptoms has PTSD; that diagnosis can be made only by a trained mental health professional. If you notice these reactions after a lethal encounter, get professional help.

## **The Importance of Maintaining Good Physical Health**

Aside from the overall benefits to your quality of life, maintaining good physical health will be of special benefit to you as a firearm holder. An active and healthy lifestyle, which incorporates regular exercise, will go a far way in helping you to safely enjoy the use of your firearm.

Some of the specific benefits of good physical health to firearm holders are:

- improved mental alertness
- improved physical appearance which may deter a potential attacker
- improved confidence to deal with a confrontation without having to resort to the use of deadly force
- improved ability to defend your firearm if a struggle develops
- improved ability able to use your firearm effectively
- improved ability to withstand strenuous physical activity (such as running)
- improved ability to recover from the physical and emotional stress of facing a deadly encounter
  
- improved ability to recover from an injury

**Always consult your physician before beginning any form of exercise program.**

## General Principles of Home Security Planning

While no home or place of business can be made impregnable to a determined criminal, by taking a number of different steps you can increase the security of your home. With a little planning you can make it more difficult for a stranger to enter and make your residence less attractive to criminals.

When assessing the level of security risk in your yard, it is useful to think like a criminal. You will probably see things in a vastly different light. Here are some of the steps that can be taken to promote home security.

### Grounds and Landscaping

Here are a few of the things you can do to make the area around your home less appealing to intruders.

**1) Trees and foliage that provide privacy from public view can also act as hiding-places for housebreakers.** Consider reducing the number of trees or large bushes that are close to your home as they can provide a place from which an intruder or attacker may launch an ambush. Consider planting thorny shrubs or other “unfriendly” plants to minimize an attacker’s use of foliage as cover.

**2) Keep shrubs and other vegetation below window level** - Do not block the view from a window. Tree branches or bushes growing in front of windows can prevent you from looking out and seeing threats lurking outside. Also, intruders or attackers can hide under the foliage, effectively concealed from you or your neighbour’s view while they force or break a window to gain access.

**3) Avoid house designs featuring recessed entryways and other natural hiding places.** If you are thinking of buying a house, avoid models whose architectural design provides ambush sites or hiding places for intruders. If you already own a house, assess your home for such areas and take the necessary steps to minimize the danger; for example, avoid using recessed entryways at night, and install lighting to thoroughly illuminate potential hiding places.

**4) Avoid storing ladders, hammers, crowbars, screwdrivers or other tools that home intruders could use in outdoor sheds.**

5) **Keep outside lighting well maintained.** Replace bulbs that are blown. Also, install lighting as needed to illuminate any areas close to the home that are in darkness at night. Motion-sensitive lights are a very useful option.

6) **Maintain your level of awareness when approaching your house.** Many people let their guard down when they turn into their driveway - **do not do this.** Look out for signs that will alert you to potential danger. Keep checking your rear view mirror for signs of someone following you. If you think that you are being followed **do not go home.** Drive to the nearest police station or the nearest place with high level of activities like a shopping mall. Excessive barking from your neighbour's dog, no sign of your own dog that usually runs to meet you, or a car parked near your gate should all serve as warnings.

7) **When you are away from home, have a trusted friend or neighbour maintain a normal exterior appearance to your home.** If you travel for extended periods, **do not** reveal your travel plans to anyone who does not need to know. Ensure that the neighbour or friend you select to maintain your home's lived-in appearance also preserves this necessary confidentiality.

Make sure to have your grass cut regularly, your drapes/window blinds repositioned occasionally, and vehicles in your driveway moved periodically. Putting interior lights and the television or radio on staggered timers also gives the illusion of nighttime occupancy. In this way, any burglars monitoring your neighbourhood for a potential target will assume that your house is currently occupied, and look elsewhere.

## Review The Exterior of Your Home

An intruder who gains entry into your home has breached the house's exterior—the doors, windows, or the roof. It is critical to maintain the integrity of this zone.

1) **Install quality steel doors, steel doorframes, and door locks featuring both live- and deadbolts.** Bolts should project at least one (1) inch into the strike plate, and should have a hardened steel center pin that resists cutting. Strike plates can be reinforced by installing a substantial plate at least one-eighth (1/8) of an inch thick running from the top to the bottom of the door frame.

2) **Review how your doors are placed.** If your door or the area around your doorframe contains window panes or decorative glass, consider installing a deadbolt lock requiring a key on both sides. This will prevent a burglar from simply smashing the glass, reaching through and manually unlocking the door.

3) **Consider the installation of a monitored alarm system.** Such a system can result in a quick response to a break-in. Many have panic buttons that can be used to immediately alert authorities to the presence of an intruder. Non-monitored systems, which emit a piercing wail via an external horn or siren when security is breached, can also be useful to deter or scare away intruders. Even a sticker advertising that your home is protected by an alarm system is often sufficient to act as a deterrent.

4) **Install burglar bars/grills over windows and doors.** Most homes have these in place, but if yours do not, seriously consider installing some. The bars should be spaced four (4) inches to six (6) inches apart to prevent an intruder from gaining entry easily.

5) **Do not let strangers into your home for any reason.** If someone requests assistance and asks to use your telephone, make the call for them. Make sure that your children and household help observe this rule also. When talking to strangers at night or under suspicious circumstances, converse with them through the door. **Do not** open the door.

7) **Make repair persons, representatives of the utility companies and others you may have to allow in your home show proper identification.** Make sure that your children and household help observe this rule also. Deal with reputable companies/persons and ask the repair persons who are coming to your home to agree to a specific appointment time. This makes the activity safer. Make sure you have the names of the repair technicians and give this information to anyone who will be representing you at home.

## **Assess the Interior of Your Home**

You cannot absolutely prevent an intruder from gaining entry if he or she is sufficiently determined. The level of motivation of a housebreaker will depend in part on how attractive a target your home appears to be. You can take a number of steps to make your home less appealing and less vulnerable to a criminal.

1) **Do not place valuable articles where they can be seen through a window or door.** Stand at your own open front and back door and look into your home - what you see is what a stranger at your door will see. Place electronic equipment, silverware, valuable art and other such items in rooms which do not allow visibility from outside.

2) **Keep firearms out of sight.** Keep guns out of sight in a gun safe or vault, locked gun case, or other secure location.

3) **Know all the nooks & crannies, blind corners, shadowed areas and other natural hiding places in your home.** This serves two purposes: first, to anticipate where you may unexpectedly confront an intruder; and second, to identify places that you or your family members can use to escape attack or to surprise an intruder. To help with this process, think like an intruder and look around your home for places to hide or to surprise an unaware homeowner.

4) **Practice walking around your home in the dark.** Learn what floorboards, steps and doors creak, and what furniture is most likely to be bumped into. This practice will help you to avoid making noise if you have to move around your house in darkness, and, more importantly, will enable you to locate an intruder by listening to the sounds he/she makes while walking around in your house.

## Firearm Safety in the Home

By following these common-sense rules, parents and children can prevent firearm accidents in the home. All you have to do is act responsibly and insist that other members of your family do the same.

Like the **five basic rules of firearm safety**, safety in the home is really only a matter of things that make sense. As an adult, spouse and parent, you alone are responsible for putting the right safety equipment in place. You are also responsible for teaching everyone in the household the correct rules and creating the right atmosphere for the rules to be followed.

**As a firearm owner you are responsible for knowing** how to properly handle your firearm(s) and how to secure your firearm(s) in a safe manner in your home. This section underscores the responsibilities you must accept when we bring firearms into our homes.

**If for any reason you feel uncomfortable with, or are unable to accept these responsibilities, we strongly urge you not to own a firearm.**

- Unload sporting firearms carefully and completely **before** taking them into the home, remembering to keep the muzzle pointed in the direction of a safe area. **Never** load a sporting firearm in the home.
- Always clean and place firearms in their proper storage location **immediately** after returning from a hunting trip or a day at the range.
- Always make absolutely sure that firearms in your home are **securely** stored out of the reach of children or other unauthorized persons. Unloaded firearms should be stored in a locked cabinet, safe, firearm vault or storage case. Unloaded firearms should also be secured with a locking device to make them inoperable.
- Ideally ammunition and firearm should be in separate locked location and definitely **out of the reach of children**.
- Always re-check firearms carefully and completely to be sure that they are **still unloaded** when you remove them from storage. You may have taken out the firearm to inspect or test it, to respond to a possible threat and return it to storage while still loaded. **Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.**

## **Firearms Kept For Home & Personal Protection**

**Maintaining a firearm for personal protection** in the home is a serious matter. Any added safety benefit gained from owning a firearm depends in large measure on the owner having appropriate training and clear understanding of safe handling and storage rules. Factors such as individual temperament, reaction to emergency situations, specific family circumstances and support for your having a firearm in the home from other adults in the household must be considered. If you feel the need for quick access to a loaded firearm in your home, you must take special safety measures.

**Keeping a firearm to defend your family makes no sense if that same firearm puts family members or visitors to your home at risk.** In keeping a firearm for home security, your objective should be to have the firearm readily available to you, yet not accessible to others. Special lockable cases that can be quickly opened by authorized individuals are options to consider.

**You must exercise full control and supervision over a loaded firearm at all times.** This means the firearm must be unloaded and placed in secure storage whenever you leave it at home. Secure ammunition separately. Fatal home firearms accidents can occur when children discover loaded firearms that adults thought were safely hidden or out of reach.

**Your most important responsibility is ensuring that children cannot encounter loaded firearms.** The precautions you take must be effective. Anything less invites tragedy and is a serious violation of the law and your responsibility as a firearm owner. Your home will only be as safe as you choose to make it.

Teach everyone in your household about Firearm Safety. Even if they never come into contact with your gun, it is quite possible they might come into contact with a firearm somewhere else.

Children (12+) and adult household members should be taught the FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY.

Children (under 12) should be taught the Children's Rules for Firearm safety.

## Children's Rules for Firearm safety

**NB: PARENTS SHOULD EXPLAIN TO CHILDREN THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HANDLING FIREARMS.**

1. Do not go looking for firearms in your house or a friend's house.  
Do not let other children look for firearms in your house.
  
2. If you find a firearm in your house — or anywhere else — leave it alone. Do not touch it! Do not let anyone else touch it! Tell an adult.
  
3. Even if a firearm looks like a toy — do not touch it! Some real firearms look like toys.  
Do not take a chance. Tell an adult.  
Remember. . . if you find a firearm, **Do not** pick it up. Just leave it alone. And tell an adult right away.

**All members of the household must understand and follow the requirements of Firearms Responsibility in the Home.**

## Chapter 3

### Firearm Safety

Safety is paramount in the use of firearms. This should be taught and demonstrated at all sessions. Students must demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for this before being recommended for competence.

#### **Firearm Safety and Developing a Socially Responsible Attitude**

Any discussion on firearms must first begin with a discussion on firearm safety. While firearms can provide many hours of enjoyment in sport or as a comforting tool for your personal security, the law considers a firearm as being capable of inflicting serious injury or death.

**It is imperative that the trainer devote as much time needed in emphasizing and ensuring each student understands, appreciate and displays safety in the use of firearms. The trainer must never compromise on matters regarding safety.**

There is always a risk of danger; therefore the safe use of firearms cannot be over emphasized.

Accidental discharge of a firearm can cause serious injury or death to you, other persons or damage to property. Firearm safety is YOUR obligation. Only you are responsible for the firing of your gun. You owe this obligation to yourself, your family, your co-workers and the general public. This is a heavy responsibility indeed, but one that can be carried out with a conscientious approach to firearm safety.

Some people think it is “manly” or “cool” to be cavalier with firearms. The braggadocio by irresponsible persons with their firearm is an accident waiting to happen (or a revocation of their licence if a thoughtful policeman is present). Either way, sooner or later, these people are going to get into trouble unless they change their attitude.

It's not “wimpy” to be conscious about firearm safety. In fact, quite the opposite, it shows maturity and good social responsibility – attitudes which are to be commended. A mature and responsible attitude toward firearm safety will allow you to enjoy your firearm for as long as you wish.

There are many common-sense rules for safely using a firearm – but there are FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY which if followed will avoid accidents. Even if you don't own a firearm, it's likely you will come in contact with a gun at some time or other in your life. By understanding and following these five simple rules you avoid needless grief.

## **FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY**

### **1. Conduct yourself in a mature and responsible manner**

This is the first rule you must follow when handling firearms. In fact, following this rule is necessary in order to effectively practice the other rules of safety.

#### **Do NOT engage in horseplay or braggadocio with a firearm**

A firearm is not a toy. Nor is it something that you should be “showing off”. Irresponsible or immature behavior can often get out of hand, which may have dire consequences. The handling of firearms is a serious matter and should always be treated as such.

Example: JJ and his friends engage in a “gun salute” to the popular performer on stage. Policemen quickly move-in, seizing the guns and prosecuting the men. They will never be able to own a firearm again.

#### **Maintain sobriety**

Never consume anything that will impair your judgment or physical coordination when you're using a firearm. Guns and alcohol or drugs can be a deadly combination.

Example: An argument develops among men at a local “watering hole” over a parking space. The argument escalates into a gunfight. Two men die on the spot, a third dies later in hospital.

### **2. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.**

Never assume a firearm is empty. It is better to put yourself on guard at all times by treating it as if it were loaded. Then carefully inspect it and verify its condition. Once this has been done then you will now be in a position to handle the gun accordingly.

*Example: Danny is showing his friend Ray his new H&K 2000 pistol. He removes the magazine and clears the chamber before handing it to him. While Ray is looking at the gun, Danny becomes distracted by a phone call. Ray slips the magazine in and chambers a round when his thumb accidentally drops the slide release tab. Ray quickly hands the gun back to Danny, who thinks the gun is still empty. He begins to wave the gun around as he's talking on the phone and pulls the trigger in a moment of anger. BANG! He accidentally shoots Ray in the leg.*

### **3. Never point a firearm at anything unless you plan to destroy it.**

As redundant as it may sound, a bullet can't hit something unless the gun was pointed at that thing in the first place. And when the bullet is fired it doesn't come back. Remember, once the gun has been fired you alone are responsible for wherever the bullet may go and whatever it may hit. By simply pointing the firearm in the direction of a safe area you will avoid any chance of shooting someone or something accidentally.

*Example: Mikey has owned his gun for sometime now and is eager to become a good shot. While watching TV one night he comes upon a cowboy movie. He decides to play fast-draw against the bad guy character. He puts his gun in his holster, assumes the classic fast-draw pose in front of the TV and BANG! He shoots his TV to smithereens.*

### **4. Never put your finger on the trigger unless you intend to fire the gun.**

Firearms don't have a mind of their own or the ability to fire themselves. The gun will only discharge if the trigger is pulled to the rear. By simply not putting your finger on the trigger you will avoid inadvertently pulling it and firing the gun.

*Example: Stan is coming down a hill after a successful afternoon of dove hunting with his bird boy "Puss" in tow. Stan slips and falls flat on his rear. The fall causes him to clutch the shotgun he was carrying slung over his shoulder with his finger in the trigger guard – and his finger pulls the trigger. BANG! "Puss" has his right leg amputated that afternoon due to complications from the shotgun blast to his knee.*

### **5. Know your target, what is beyond and around the target.**

Be certain of what you intend to shoot. Never fire at a sound, a movement or a patch of color. Also, be certain of what is behind the target and that, if necessary, you intend to shoot that too. Why? You could miss your target because it moved or you aimed incorrectly – leaving whatever was behind it to be hit by your errant bullet. Or your bullet may penetrate your target fully – again leaving whatever was behind it to be hit by your bullet.

*Example: Mrs. Spence heard an unusual noise late one night outside her window. Retrieving her licenced firearm from the bedside drawer, she peeped and saw what looked like a prowler walking in her back yard. Mrs. Spence fired multiple shots. The "prowler" turned out to be her gardener who was paying a visit to her live-in housekeeper. He's lucky to be alive, but the neighbor's car was badly damaged.*

There is no doubt that the FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY discussed here are indeed ‘common sense rules’ . Yet all the examples listed of accidental shootings actually occurred (the names have been deleted or changed to protect the guilty!) – so maybe common sense isn’t so common after all.

## **FIVE BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY**

- 1. Conduct yourself in a mature and responsible manner.**
- 2. Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.**
- 3. Never point a firearm at anything unless you plan to destroy it.**
- 4. Never put your finger on the trigger unless you intend to fire the gun.**
- 5. Know your target, what is beyond and around the target.**

However, you can make a difference. It begins with your **decision** to be a responsible citizen – whether you own a firearm or not.

## **NORMAL SAFETY PROCEDURES (NSP) STEPS**

### **Pistol:**

- Remove magazine
- Pull back on slide (allowing any round in the breach to fall free)
- Lock slide to the rear.
- Present firearm for inspection.

### **Revolver:**

- Open cylinder
- Eject rounds utilizing the ejector rod
- Present firearm for inspection.

## **Shotguns:**

- i. Pump Action:
  - Depress safety catch
  - Pull back on fore end repeatedly to allow rounds to be ejected from firearm
  - Leave ejection port open
  - Present firearm for inspection
  
- ii. Auto Loading:
  - Pull back on ejection lever repeatedly to allow rounds to be ejected from firearm
  - Leave ejection port open
  - Present firearm for inspection
  
- iii. Semi-automatic:
  - Pull back on ejection lever repeatedly to allow rounds to be ejected from firearm
  - Leave ejection port open
  - Present firearm for inspection
  
- iv. Hinged/Break Action:
  - Depress or swing action release lever
  - Swing barrel downwards to allow round/ cartridge to be ejected
  - Leave the firearm broken
  - Present firearm for inspection

## **Rifles:**

- i. Bolt Action:
  - Pull back on bolt repeatedly to allow rounds to be ejected from breach of firearm
  - Lock bolt to the rear leaving the breach open
  - Present firearm for inspection
  
- ii. Semi-Automatic
  - Remove magazine
  - Pull back on cocking piece repeatedly to allow rounds to be ejected from breach of firearm
  - Leave breach open
  - Present firearm for inspection

**The Trainers should begin and end each training session with Safety, including demonstrations and repeating of the five (5) basic rules of firearm safety.**

***Firearm safety is everyone's business.***

## Chapter 4

### Types of Firearms -

#### Parts, Mechanical operation, Varieties and their Ammunition

Now that you have a better understanding of how to handle firearms safely, we can now turn our attention to a discussion on firearms themselves. It is important that you have a general appreciation of firearms for many reasons; whether you own/plan to own a firearm or not. Some of these may be:

- to satisfy your natural curiosity about firearms
- Because you may come into contact with a gun or gun owner
- Because you may be called upon to identify a gun
- To help dispel myths

Here we will discuss the various firearms for which licences are granted (handguns, shotguns and rifles). This section will also discuss the different varieties and types of firearms listed, their uses, parts, mechanical operation and ammunition.

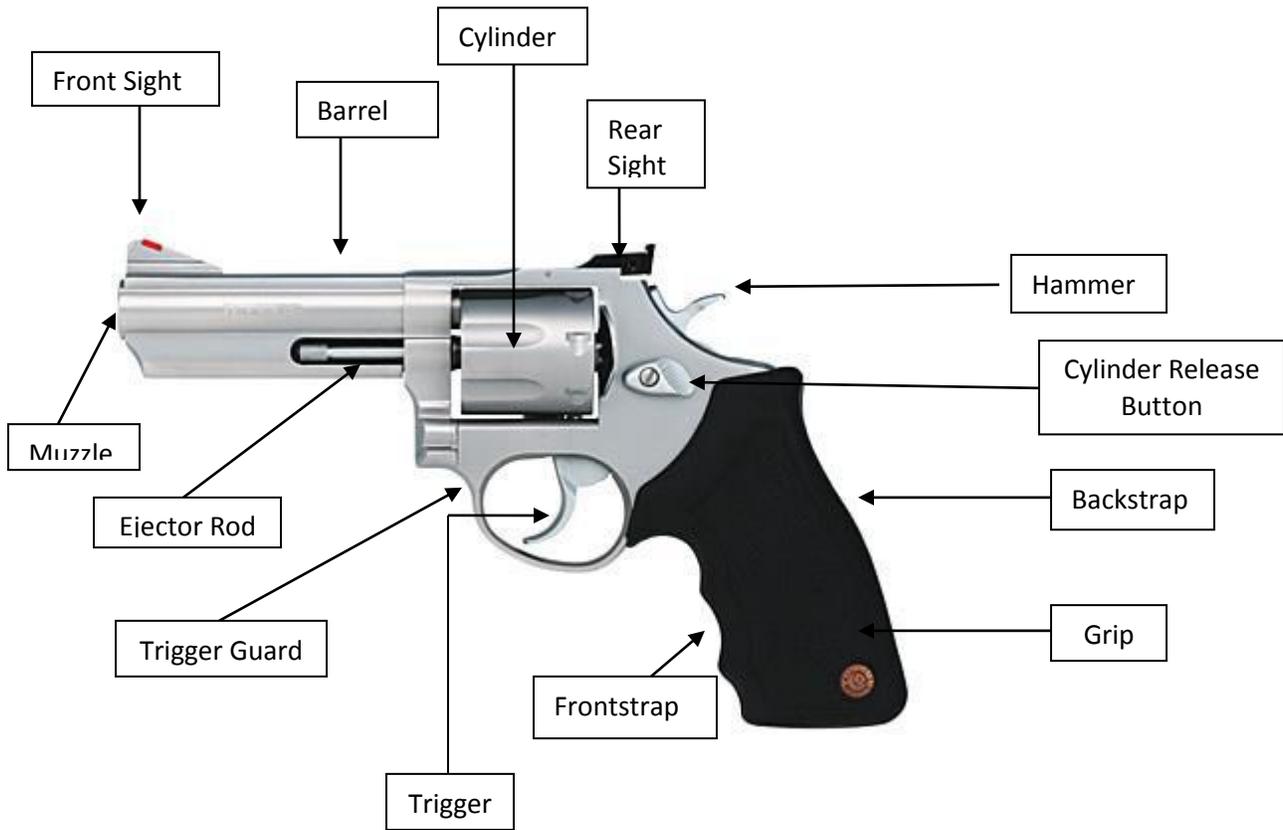
Handguns, as the name suggests, is a relatively small firearm which may be fired with one hand only. It fires a single projectile each time.

A shotgun is a larger firearm normally used with both hands. It was designed to discharge many projectiles (or shot) at once, hence its name. Shotguns represent a great improvement over handguns because of their increased power and range.

Rifles, like shotguns, are normally used with both hands. They are designed to fire a single bullet but now incorporate a special design improvement over shotguns. The bore (the inside of the barrel) is “rifled” vs. the smooth bore of the shotgun. “Rifling” refers to grooves that are cut along the length of the bore with a slight twist. As the bullet is fired and travels down the rifled bore, it is guided by the grooves into a spinning motion. This spinning motion stabilized the bullet in flight. Rifles represent an improvement over shotguns because the spinning bullet makes the gun far more accurate and has an even longer range than pistols, revolvers and shotguns.

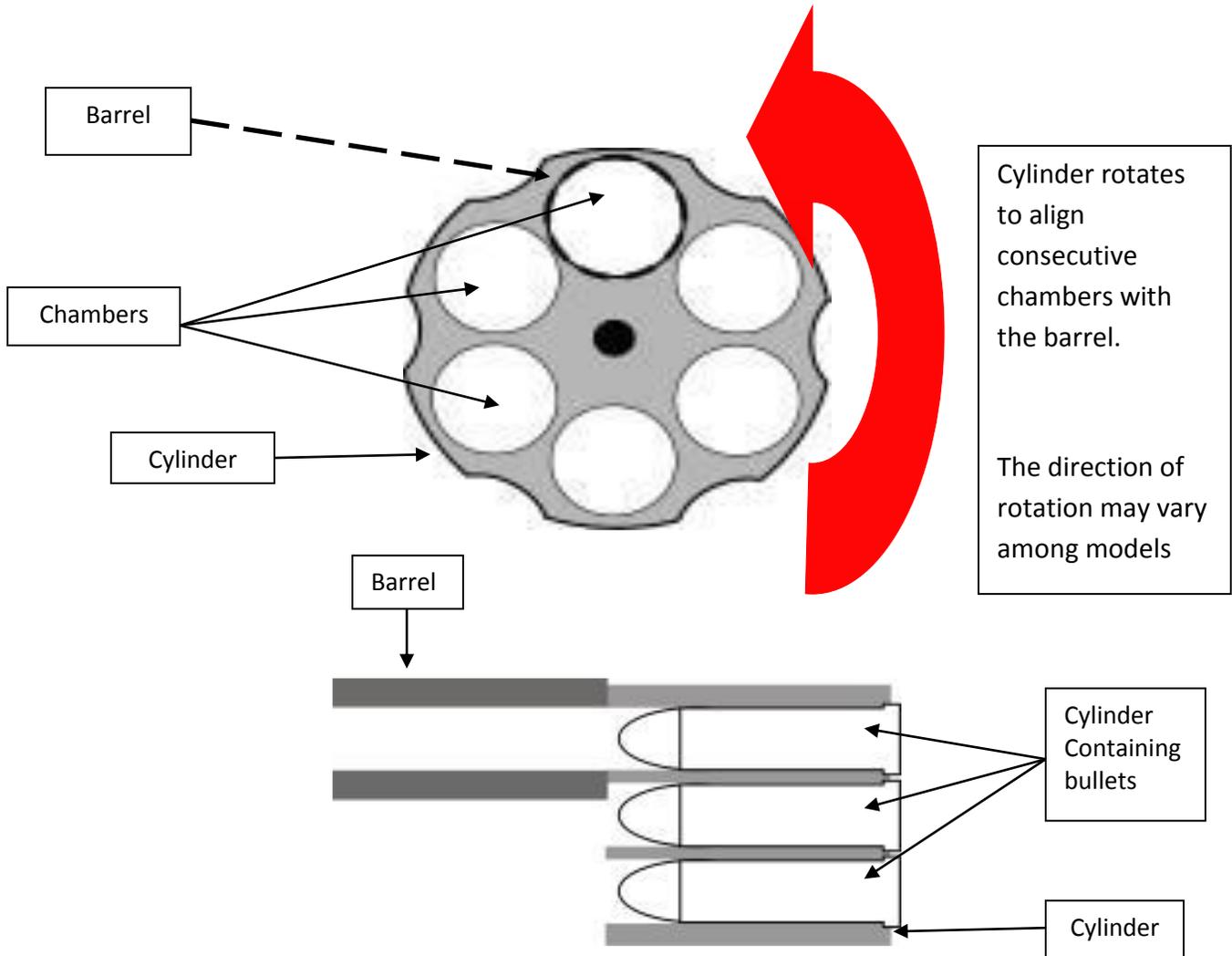
This process of “rifling” is also used in the barrels of handguns.

## Parts of a typical Revolver



## Mechanical Operation of Revolvers

The name for this type of handgun derives from the operation of getting the bullets aligned with the barrel. The bullets are housed in a revolving cylinder. The mechanism is designed so that the chambers of the cylinder containing the bullets are aligned with the barrel each time it turns.



## Varieties of Revolvers

There are two varieties of revolvers based on the differences in their “actions”:

Single Action (SA) and Double Action (DA) Revolvers. The “action” refers to the motion of the firing parts of the gun when the trigger is pulled.

But, first we need to understand the sequence of events or “action” of firing a bullet. The firing pin must hit the back of the bullet with enough force to cause it to fire. The hammer is used to hit this firing pin. In order for the hammer to do this, it must be lifted or cocked against spring pressure. Then it must be released so that it can drive the firing pin forward.

Single action (SA) revolvers will be familiar to you as Cowboy guns. In a single action revolver, the hammer must be lifted manually before the gun can be fired and this must be done each time the gun is to be fired. Pulling the trigger will only release the hammer forward. Again, this will allow the hammer to strike the firing pin, which in turn fires the bullet.

In this variety of revolver, pulling the trigger results in a “single action” only –that is, it releases the hammer only. This is a typical single action revolver.



In a double action (DA) revolver, pulling the trigger does two things: it lifts the hammer back and then releases the hammer forward. Again, the powerful forward motion of the hammer strikes the firing pin, which in turn fires the bullet.

Pulling the trigger results in “double actions” – lifting and then releasing the hammer. Below is a typical double action revolver.



Now there is a unique feature of double action revolvers – the hammer may also be manually lifted or cocked, allowing the gun to be fired just like a single action gun. The trigger now requires very light pressure to drop the hammer. So light in fact, it is commonly referred to as a *hair trigger*.

Incidentally, this differentiation of revolvers by their “actions” also applies to semi-automatic pistols, as we will see later.

So why are there single action and double action revolvers? Well, the answer is simple. Single action revolvers were the original design – and some people are nostalgic. They like the style and many hunters find the “crispness” of a single action-firing stroke very desirable. In some countries, western cowboy shooting sports have been developed so that these persons can fully enjoy their nostalgia.

Double action revolvers on the other hand are of modern design. Many police departments and security guards use this type of revolver, as well as private citizens who appreciate their simple operation, rugged design and economic price. In Jamaica, virtually all licenses for revolvers are for the double action model.

As you will see, revolvers also come in many different sizes and colors. This is because their primary functions are all different - small size for concealment and personal protection, large for open carry or hunting. Dark colors help in concealing the gun, while those made of chrome or stainless steel is more resilient to rusting.

In some cases, there might even be slight design modifications, for example, the first three revolvers shown on the next page are relatively small and have very short barrels. The short barrels help in concealing the gun since they are used for personal protection. Two have their hammers modified - shrouded (center) and completely bobbed off (right). These two are designed to be carried in pockets or purses. The modifications to their hammers help ensure they don't snag in clothing when they are being drawn quickly.

## Some Typical Revolvers



Chief's Special  
.38Spl. 5-shot



.38 Spl  
Shrouded Hammer



.38 Spl  
Hammerless



6-Shot 'Security'  
.38 Spl

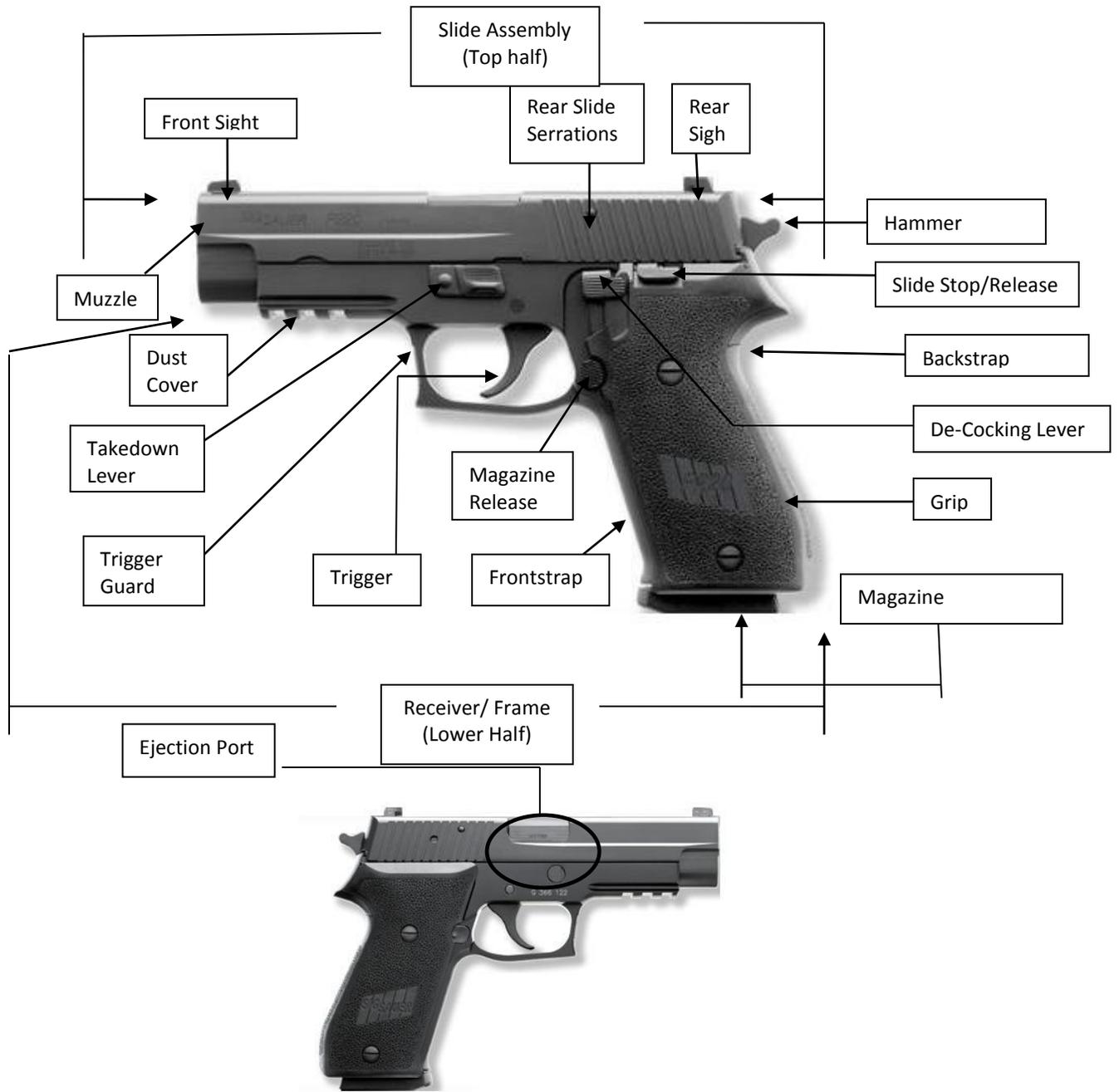


.41 Magnum Hunting Revolver



Colt Long Army  
SA Revolver

## Parts of a Typical Semi-Automatic Pistol

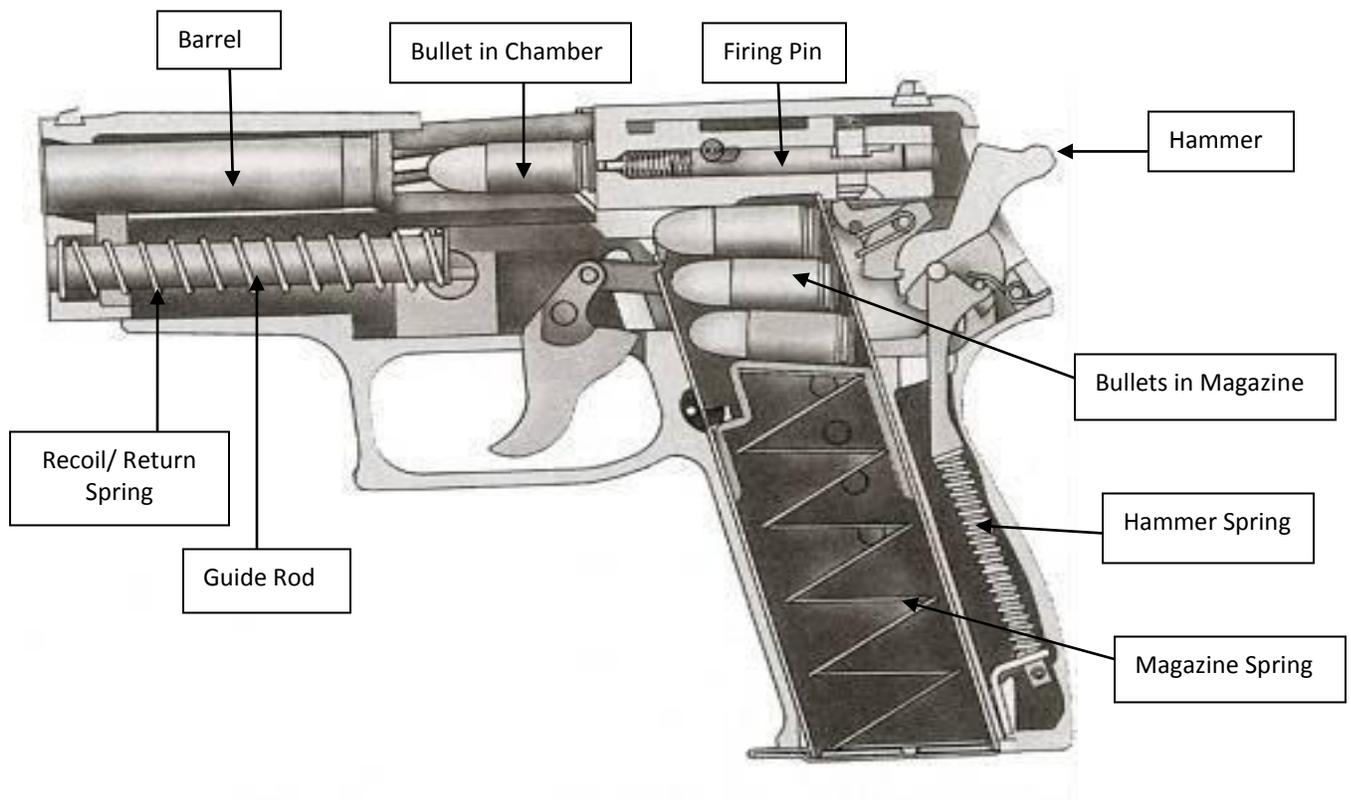


## Mechanical Operation of Semi-Automatic Pistols

This type of handgun aligns its bullets in the chamber in a very different way. Here the bullets are housed in a separate, spring-loaded container called a *magazine* (also referred to as a *clip*). The *magazine* is then inserted into the hollowed-out handle (magazine housing) or grip of the pistol. The top bullet is now nearly aligned with the chamber.

To prepare the gun to be fired initially, the slide must be manually pulled back under spring pressure and released. This backward and forward motion of the slide does two things. First, pulling back the slide lifts or cocks the hammer. The hammer remains cocked by engaging a sear or catch. Next, as the slide is released and moves forward to its rest position, it strips the top bullet from the magazine and pushes it into the chamber.

When the trigger is pulled, it trips the sear releasing the hammer. The hammer hits the firing pin, which fires the bullet. The resultant force of the explosion of the bullet out of the barrel in one direction causes a force in the opposite direction. This force drives the slide assembly backward – pulling out the empty shell, ejecting it from the chamber area, and now once again cocking the hammer. The spring in the magazine pushes up the next bullet for feeding, and again, as the slide returns to its rest position, it strips a fresh bullet and feeds it into the chamber.



Remember the initial sequence was done manually. After the first bullet is fired, the sequence of cocking the hammer and the chambering of the bullets happens automatically each time the trigger is pulled. So the first part was done manually and the subsequent sequence of events took place automatically: so we say the whole thing was done semi-automatically. Hence the name semi-automatic pistol

## Varieties of Semi-Automatic Pistols

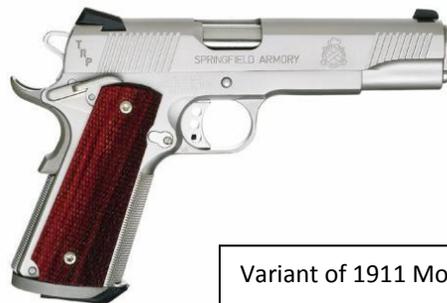
As in the case of revolvers, semi-automatic pistols may be of a single action (SA) or double action (DA) operating system. That is, pulling the trigger may release the trigger only (single action) or may lift and release the hammer (double action).

Also like double action revolvers, double action pistols can be manually cocked and fired in a single action mode with a hair trigger. The astute reader will realize that a DA pistol is really only DA for the first shot. Thereafter, since the hammer is now cocked by the slide, firing is done in single action mode from a very light trigger. Some manufacturers refer to their double action pistols as DA/SA for this reason. Other manufacturers design their pistols, or have varieties of the same DA/SA pistol that will NOT fire in a single action mode. These are called double action only or DAO.

Finally, as was the case for revolvers, original pistols were of a single action design, with double action pistols being of more recent designs. Here are two examples of single action (SA) pistols



Browning High Power



Variant of 1911 Model

Here are two examples of double action/single action (DA /SA) pistols



Sig 220



H & K USP

Semi-automatic pistols come in many different sizes, shapes, and colors. They may also be constructed of materials other than steel. Aluminum-titanium alloys are being used in some pistols, and more recently, synthetic polymers (plastic) have been used to make the receiver/frame in others, such as the GLOCK.

Many modern semi-automatic handguns have some sort of safety lever. Safety levers can have many different operating modes. Usually this safety lever simply prevents the pistols from being fired when engaged. In others it safely lowers the hammer from a cocked position. Still other guns may have a safety lever that does both. Some guns have “ambidextrous” safety levers that allow access from either side.

Here is an example of DA/SA pistol (left) and its DAO variation (right). Note the absence of a hammer or safety lever on the DAO version.



**CAUTION: The safety lever is no substitute for safe firearm handling. Always point the firearm in the direction of a safe area when lowering the hammer, even if you are using the safety lever. It is a mechanical device, and therefore may fail in its function.**

## Some typical Semi-Automatic Pistols



Beretta 92 Brigadier



Sig 220 Stainless



Glock 17



Variant of 1911 Model



Variant of 1911 Model Race Gun



Browning High Power



Beretta Tomcat



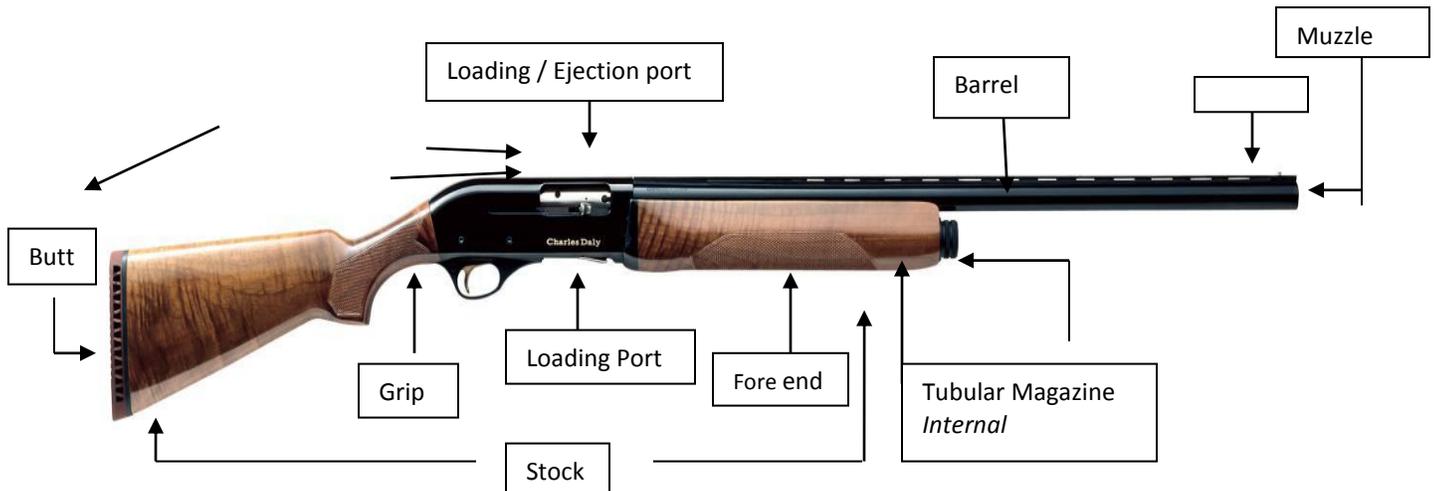
Beretta Target Pistol

## Types of Shotguns

The three most common types of shotguns are the semi-automatic or auto-loading shotguns; the slide or pump action versions; and the hinged or break action models.

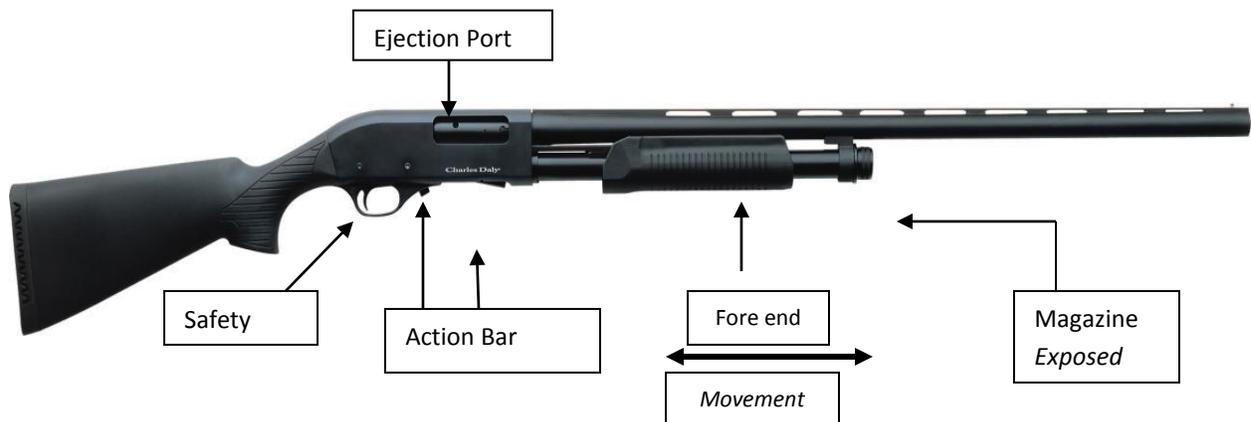
### Auto-loading/Semi-automatic Shotguns

As with semi-automatic handguns, the semi-automatic or auto-loading shotgun fire, extracts, reloads, and is ready to fire again with each pull of the trigger. Semi-automatic or auto-loading shotguns offer speed in cycling from the first to second to third shot. Because they "bleed" off a portion of the fired shell's gases to operate the loading, unloading, and cocking mechanisms, the shooter perceives less recoil than with other types of shotguns.



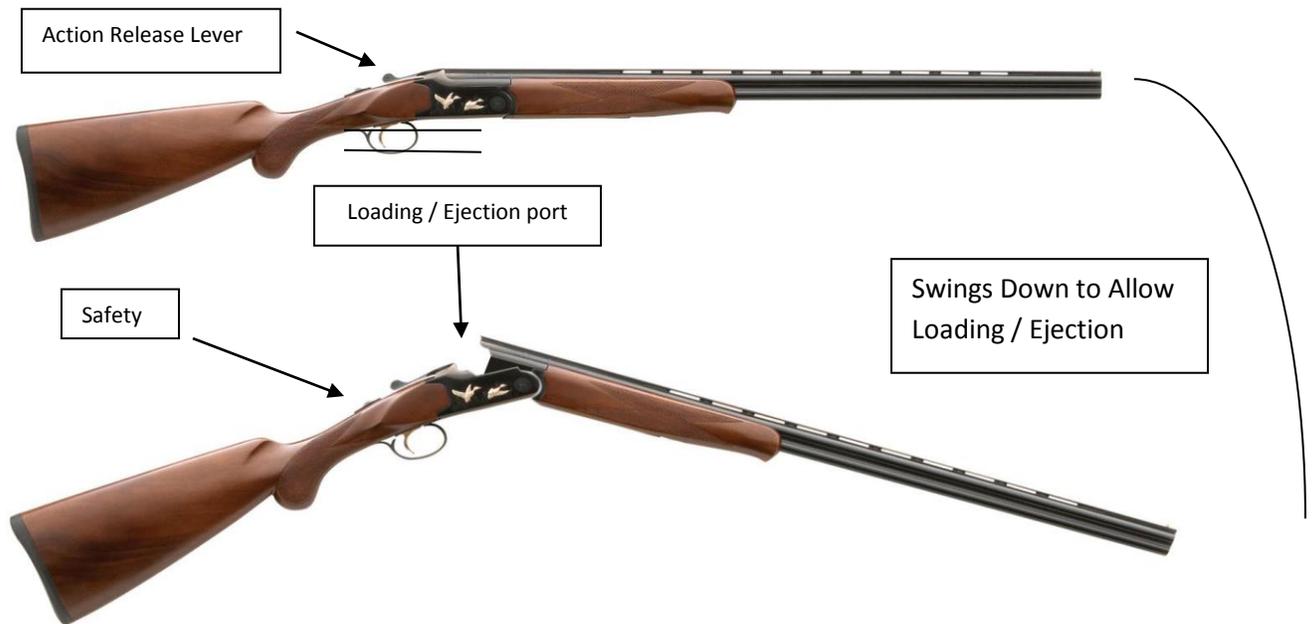
### Slide or Pump Action Shotguns

With Slide or Pump Action shotguns, shells are fed from the shotgun's magazine by pulling the fore end to the rear, then "pumping" it forward. The rearward motion opens the action, extracts and ejects the spent shell casing, and allows a fresh shotshell to move from the magazine to the chamber area. The forward motion on the fore end seats the new shotshell into the chamber of the barrel bore and closes the action. After the trigger is pulled, the shooter must bring the slide to the rear, and then pump it forward before the next round can be fired.



## Hinged or Break Action Shotguns

In hinged or break-action shotguns, shells are inserted directly into the chamber by hand. They are extended from the chamber and ejected when the action is opened. Some older hinged or break action models have extractors but lack automatic ejectors, requiring the shells to be physically removed from the chamber by hand.

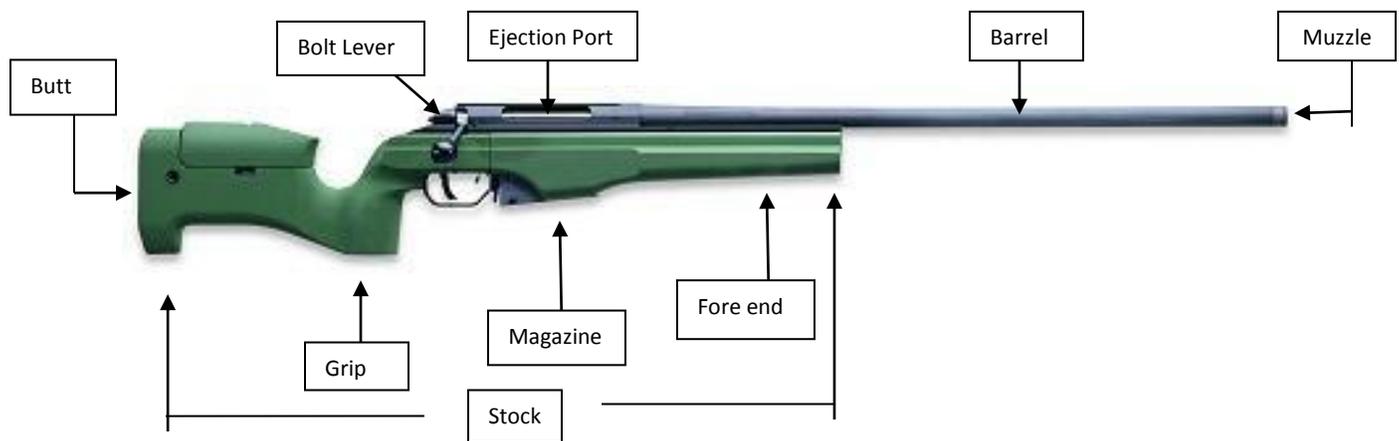


## Types of Rifles

Modern rifles come in all types, including working reproductions of rifles from the very early years of their development. The most common are bolt actions, and semi-automatic actions.

### Bolt Action Rifles

Bolt action rifles are primarily of the **turn bolt design**. In the **turn-bolt** design, lifting the bolt handle rotates the locking lugs on the bolt out of engagement and begins the cartridge extraction process. Pulling the bolt handle to the rear extracts and ejects the fired cartridge case. Pushing the bolt handle forward strips a fresh cartridge from the magazine toward the chamber. Turning the bolt handle down engages the locking lugs in the corresponding recesses in the receiver and locks the action in preparation for firing.

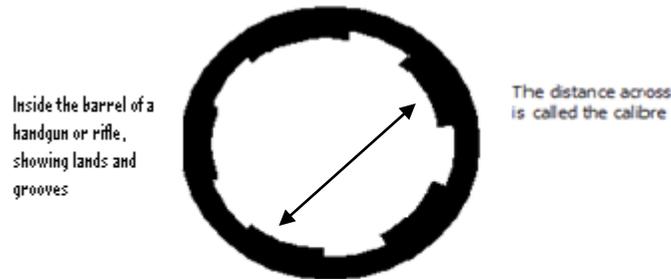


### Semi-Automatic Rifles

Similar to semi-automatic pistols, the semi-automatic rifle requires that the hammer be manually cocked before it may be fired. Once fired, the hammer is cocked by the reciprocating action, which also extracts and ejects the empty case, and feeds a new cartridge into the chamber.

## Ammunition

The terms “rounds” or “cartridge” may be used interchangeably to describe ammunition for handguns and rifles. For shotguns the common name is “shot shell” or simply “shell”.



In the case of shotguns the unit of measurement for diameter of the inside of the barrel (the bore) is called the gauge. The generally accepted explanation is that the gauge is determined by taking lead balls the same diameter as the gun's bore, then counting the total number of those lead balls it takes to equal one pound. For example: a 12-gauge = 12 lead balls to the pound; a 20-gauge = 20 lead balls to the pound. The most common types of shotgun gauges are 10, 12, 16, 20 and 28, with 12 being the most popular. Note: the smallest size (.410) is actually a measurement as a fraction of an inch, but the convention is to also refer to it as a gauge.

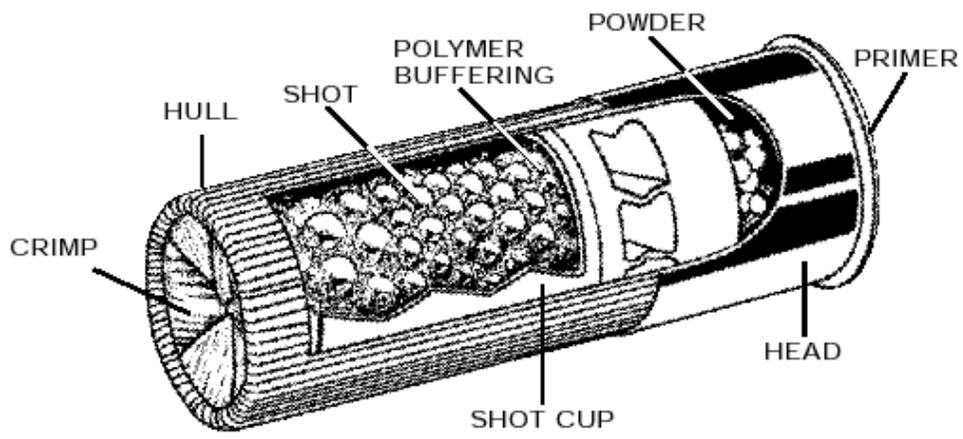
There are three categories of Ammunition/Cartridges; rimfire, centrefire and shotshell.

- (a) **Rimfire Ammunition** is made up of three parts; the case, gunpowder and a bullet/warhead.
- (b) **Centrefire Ammunition** is made up of four parts; the primer, the case, gunpowder and a bullet/warhead. This illustration shows the separated parts.

Operation is very simple. The firing pin (white arrow) hits the primer. The primer explodes, which in turn, ignites the gun powder. The powerful ignition of the gunpowder in the confined space of the shell causes the bullet to be dislodged and propelled down the length of the barrel at great speed.

Aside from variations in calibres, ammunition can vary depending on the amount of powder used and the material used to make up the bullet (lead only, lead with a partial/full copper jacket).

- (c) **Shotshell** is made up of several parts as illustrated below. The operating principle is the same for shotgun ammunition. The only difference is that shotgun ammunition may normally contain many pellets (shots) instead of a single bullet.



## **Additional Safety Tips**

Here are some other good, common sense rules for using and enjoying firearms safely.

### **Firearms Used For Sport Should Be Unloaded When Not Actually in Use, Being Transported or While Stored.**

That way there is no chance of an accidental discharge (AD) by you or other persons who may come into contact with your gun. This applies on the target range or in the field when hunting. Your gun should also be unloaded whenever you put it away for storage. This is to avoid undue wear on springs or to prevent ammunition becoming contaminated with lubricants from inside the gun. Contaminated ammunition can cause mechanical failure of your firearm or injury when fired.

### **Don't Rely on Your Gun's 'Safety.'**

Treat every gun as though it can fire at any time whether or not there's pressure on the trigger. Remember that a gun's "safety" is a mechanical device, and, like any mechanical device, it could fail. You alone are responsible for the safe use or handling of your firearm regardless of any mechanical devices that may be present on the firearm.

In addition, the safety is not a substitute for common sense. It's only a supplement to your proper handling of the firearm. Don't touch the trigger on a firearm until you're ready to shoot. Keep your fingers away from the trigger while loading or unloading. And don't pull the trigger with the safety engaged, or positioned anywhere between "safe" and "fire." The gun could go off at any time.

### **Use the Correct Ammunition.**

Every firearm is designed to use a certain calibre or gauge of ammunition. **Using the wrong ammunition, or mixing ammunition, can destroy your firearm and expose you or bystanders to serious personal injury.**

Make sure that the ammunition you use exactly matches the calibre or gauge and chamber length of your gun. **Refer to your owner's manual to find out about the specific requirements of your gun and always read and heed the instructions on ammunition boxes.**

Check all ammunition before you load it to be sure that it matches. For example, if a 20-gauge shell is loaded into a 12-gauge shotgun, it will probably lodge in the bore. If a 12-gauge shell is fired behind the 20-gauge, the two will slam together and can cause the barrel to explode, possibly resulting in serious personal injury or death.

Do not use ammunition that feels or looks faulty in any way, for example, too heavy or too light, signs of bulging or dimples or that looks as if it has not been carefully made. If you have any doubts about the quality of ammunition, get rid of it safely. It is better to discard possibly good ammunition than to use possibly bad ammunition.

### **If Your Gun Fails to Fire When the Trigger is Pulled, Handle with Extreme Caution**

If for some reason the ammunition does not fire when you pull the trigger, stop and keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

Keep your face away from the breach. Carefully open the action, unload the firearm and dispose of the cartridge safely.

Remember, any time there is a shell in the chamber, your gun is loaded and ready for use - even if you have tried to shoot and it didn't fire. It could still discharge.

### **Always Wear Eye and Ear Protection When Shooting.**

Your sight and hearing risk injury from shooting, and should be protected at all times. Serious damage to your eyes, including loss of sight, can result if the barrel of your gun bursts for any reason. Wear shooting glasses to guard against such injury, as well as falling shots, clay target chips, powder residue and twigs in the field.

Continued exposure to shooting noise can damage your hearing. Use the maximum protection of a headset on a confined range, where shooting volume is the loudest. And learn to use earplugs in the field.

### **Be Sure the Barrel is clear of Obstructions before Shooting.**

Before loading your gun, open the action and make sure there is no ammunition in the chamber or magazine. Check to see that there is no debris of any kind in the barrel. Even a small amount of excess lubricant in the bore or mud from your last outing can dangerously increase pressure and cause the barrel to bulge or burst on firing.

Use a cleaning rod or pull through and patch to wipe away anti-rust compounds or any other residue in the gun. Never try to remove an object from the barrel by loading another shell and firing. When firing, trust your instincts - if the noise or recoil on firing seems "off," stop everything and check to make sure there is nothing lodged in the barrel.

### **Follow the Manufacturers' Instructions**

Your gun is subject to wear, and must be maintained and periodically serviced to assure optimum safety and performance. Do not allow anyone to service, repair or modify your firearm except a qualified Gunsmith.

Proper cleaning and lubrication of all parts of your gun are also critical to gun maintenance, and are necessary to assure accuracy, safety and reliability. Clean your gun before and after long-term storage, and no less frequently than once a year. And clean your gun whenever it has been exposed to adverse conditions, such as dirt, mud, rain, or in saltwater areas.

Carefully inspect the trigger assembly to be sure it is clean and free of debris and residue build-up. Use recommended lubricants on your gun, and take care not to over-lubricate. Excessive use of non-recommended lubricants could cause serious functional problems that might result in an accidental firing.

### **Learn the Correct Mechanical and Handling Characteristics of the Firearm You Are Using.**

Not all guns are alike. They have different mechanical characteristics that dictate how you should carry and handle them. Anyone who plans to use a firearm should first become totally familiar with the type of gun it is and the safe handling requirements for loading, unloading, carrying, shooting and storage.

### **Maintain Control and Security of your Firearm(s)**

This will prevent unauthorized persons from gaining control, or at least deter them long enough so that you can re-gain control. There are a variety of devices that may be used – trigger locks, and safes being the most common.

Remember, trigger locks are not recommended for disabling loaded firearms, and most manufacturers of trigger locking devices warn against their use on loaded firearms. There are, however, hand safes for handguns and wall mounted securing brackets for long guns that effectively immobilize a loaded firearm yet keep it instantly available through a push button combination lock.

# Chapter 5

## Safe Handling, Mechanics of Shooting, Carry/Retention

**The Trainer must ensure that ALL applicants are fully exposed and competent in the following:**

- Safe and accurate operation of firearm using live ammunition on a single target.
- Demonstrate these skills using one/two hands.
- Understand the pros and cons of different modes of carry
- Retaining possession of their firearm if challenged
- Safely drawing the firearm from concealment and accurately engaging a target

### Safe Handling

The prime aspects of Safe Firearm Handling are connected with the times that the firearm is not in use or directed at a target:

- 1) When not in use the firearm should be holstered or enclosed in a secure care within your control  
**(Trainer should demonstrate and ensure each student practice and accurately demonstrates this)**
- 2) When the firearm is in your hand, not in use, but not directed at a target, your finger should be off the trigger and the firearm directed in a safe area.  
**(Trainer should explain 'safe area'. Role plays/demonstrations should be utilized).**

Using an empty firearm, demonstrate to the students each aspect of safe firearm handling.

### Loading/Unloading the Firearm

1. When loading or unloading a firearm, your finger should be off the trigger and the firearm pointed in a safe direction.
2. Unload the firearm according to Manufacturer's instructions.
3. Make visual and tactile check to ensure firearm is empty.

**Trainer will use dummy rounds to demonstrate these techniques with various types of firearms. Each student will be required to accurately demonstrate these skills.**

## **Mechanics of Shooting**

The main aspects of shooting are: stance, grip, sight alignment, breath control and trigger squeeze/control. All areas must be completely and clearly explained. Each student will be required to accurately demonstrate these skills.

There are five (5) fundamental principles of marksmanship

- 1) Stance – position and hold must be firm enough
- 2) Grip – Weapons should point naturally at the target without any undue physical effort
- 3) Sight Alignment – Sight alignment must be correct to support the weapon
- 4) Trigger Squeeze / control – Shots must be released with least disturbance to the sight picture.
- 5) Breath Control – Shot must be released and follow through without disturbing the aim.

**Trainer will explain and demonstrate these principles.**

### ***Stance***

The student is taught the importance of being comfortable and balanced, the most effective stance is achieved:

- Feet comfortable apart and body slightly forward
- Left knee slightly bent forward for a right hand shooter, the opposite for a left hand shooter.
- Shoulders and hip square to the target, head steady
- Allow for target transition by movement of the waist and pivoting on the slightly bent knee
- Shooter should feel relaxed with no stiffing of the body or arm muscles.

### ***Grip***

The student **MUST** be able to demonstrate the correct grip

- The two-handed hold.
- The dominant hand grips the firearm first with the web (V) section between the thumb and trigger finger of the dominant (firing hand) placed along the frame of the weapon (NOT on the trigger guard).

- The firearm is held firmly with fingers of the shooters hand wrapped around the grip, with the thumb held as high as possible.
- Supporting hand is placed with the palm touching the exposed section of the grip.
- The trigger finger must be along the frame until just about ready to shoot.
- The thumb of the supporting hand is placed under the thumb of the firing hand.

Once you have achieved the proper sight picture you should practice holding this picture on the target you wish to hit. If you have a good sight picture and don't hold it steady you are sure to miss your target. A common complaint is that people find that they shake slightly and cannot hold their sight picture. This is usually caused from gripping too tightly which causes your muscles to tense up resulting in a slight tremor. **Students should be allowed to practice and demonstrate grip. Ensure all students are able to comfortably grip the firearm.**

### *Sight Alignment*

The proper sight picture means that once you see your target your focus is brought to your front sight. What you should see is a razor sharp front sight and the rear sight will be slightly blurred as will be the target. Revolvers and pistols generally have a rear sight which has a squared off notch. When looking into your rear sight towards the front sight it should be lined up so that there is an equal amount of light showing on either side of the front sight. The top of the front sight should be flush with an imaginary line across the top of the rear sight.

### *Trigger Squeeze/Control*

The trigger must be squeezed back in a straight smooth motion with your finger. At the same time proper sight picture must be maintained.

### *Breath control*

Oxygen deficit leads to an unsteady hold as the muscles require more oxygenated blood. Therefore, the trigger should be pressed at a point in the respiration cycle (inhale, hold, exhale) when the shooter is steadiest. Various techniques work for different individuals: usually after exhaling half a breath or exhaling the entire breath.

### *Follow Through*

Follow through is important in developing consistency. While the bullet leaves the rifle's barrel within milli-seconds of ignition, the shooter benefits from "staying on the sights" in order to determine where the round likely struck. It is important to hold the focus on the front sights and have a smooth, steady trigger pull. This should be emphasized through demonstration and in practice.

**Each of these aspects must be performed correctly so as to ensure accuracy and control the recoil.**

### **Dry Fire**

Shooting is a practical skill that is best learnt through demonstration. Once the student has sufficiently grasped the techniques through lecture/discussions/role-plays and demonstrations, it is imperative that time be spent in 'Dry fire' sessions.

Dry firing is a method of practicing with an unloaded handgun. There should be sufficient dry fire sessions that will allow each student to demonstrate all the techniques that will suitably indicate to the Approved FLA trainer that she/he has grasped all the required components in the use, care and handling of a firearm safely.

Using an empty firearm, demonstrate and then coach each student through each of the mechanical aspects of drawing and firing the gun.

### **Live Fire**

Students should be acquainted with and understand range commands:

- Load
- Make Ready
- Are You Ready
- Standby
- Begin/Timer Beep
- If you are finished Unload and show Clear
- Ceasefire
- Hammer Down Pin Down
- Gun Clear
- Holster
- Range Clear

**Trainer must provide close supervision to ensure that each student can safely and completely handle and use the firearm. Training should not only be aimed at passing the competence but to be a competent licensed firearm holder.**

## Chapter 6

### Multiple Targets, Movement, use of Cover, Maintaining Operation of the Firearm

#### Engaging Multiple Targets

The main aspects of engaging multiple targets are; near to far or in descending order of risk, both eyes open, maintain awareness of surroundings. It is important that each aspect be performed correctly so as to ensure accuracy and control the recoil.

**Trainer will demonstrate and then coach each student through each of the mechanical aspects of drawing and engaging multiple targets. For safety and protection each student must wear eye and ear protection.**

#### Movement

This is regarded as the single most important defensive tool a holder can employ to reduce risk to one's personal safety. It is critical to evading attack or avoiding a potentially dangerous situation altogether. Any movement away from an attack is desirable. Lateral (sideways) movement is preferable since it requires the greatest readjustment of thrust or aim by your attacker.

**Trainer will use role plays to illustrate the advantages of movement as explain and the negative consequences of not following same.**

There are three (3) critical factors to consider when moving with a loaded firearm

1. Keep your finger off the trigger
2. Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction
3. Keep a low, forward center of gravity

**The Trainer should demonstrate these movements and explain the reason for each factor. Each student should be allowed to demonstrate the recommended movement technique.**

#### Use of Cover

Cover is a physical barrier used to help protect you from an attack. This protection can be categorized as follows:

- Hard Cover – giving physical, impenetrable protection
- Soft Cover – providing visual concealment only so that your attacker is unable to direct his attack

**Hard Cover should be utilized over soft cover whenever possible. Trainer must state the reason for this preference including demonstrated advantages.**

When using a firearm to engage an attacker from behind cover, stay back a few inches from the edge of your barricade. Also, try to expose as little of yourself as possible.

**All students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate the offensive and defensive positions using the barricade.**

### **Maintaining Operation of the Firearm**

Trainer should begin this section by emphasizing the importance of knowing your firearm and being familiar with its operation

There are four (4) reasons why the firearm will stop firing:

1. Ammunition is finished
2. The firing pin fails to hit the primer of a cartridge
3. Ammunition is defective
4. Some operating part of the firearm is defective

The reasons for failure to fire of a revolver or pump-action shotgun are usually reasons # 1 to 3 due to their simple mechanical action.

When a holder experiences a failure to fire in a Revolver the recommended response is to simply pull the trigger again until the firearm discharges. If there is still no response after you have cycled through the entire cylinder then fresh ammunition should be loaded.

# Chapter 7

## Competence Assessment

### Preparation for Competence Assessment

1. A list of maximum seventy (70) '*conditionally approved*' applicants is received by FLA (by email) from the Range Operators.
  - a. The Range Operators are also to copy the listing sent to FLA to Trainers.
  - b. The Range Operator should submit the list by 12:00 noon, five (5) clear working days before the Competence Assessment.
  - c. Any changes to the list by Trainers should be communicated to the Range Operator, who will communicate the change to FLA 12:00 noon, three (3) working days prior to Competence exam.
  - d. List being submitted to the FLA by the Range Operator **Must** include the following:
    - i. Name of Applicant
    - ii. Application Number
    - iii. Calibre of Firearm
    - iv. Trainer(s) Name
  - e. FLA will email the confirmed list to the range operator and the trainers
2. The names on list are quality assured:
  - a. Firearm Examination Officer validates approval of applicant
  - b. Firearm Examination Officer also verifies whether there are any 'stop orders' issued by the FLA Board
3. The list is entered in the Competence Schedule on the FLA Database
4. Individual Competence Certificates for each candidate are printed by FLA and taken to Competence Exam.
  - a. The print order of the certificates will be maintained by the FLA representative at the Competence Assessment
  - b. Successful candidates will receive a text message with their Purchase Order Number within five working days after the Competence Assessment.

## On the Range

1. The FLA representatives must be at the range at least half hour before the scheduled start of the Competence Assessment.
  - a. There should be at least two representatives from FLA
2. On arrival of the FLA team at the range for Competence Assessment, the training of applicants for Assessment **MUST** cease
  - a. The applicant(s) will be held accountable for not adhering to the rules.
  - b. The applicant(s) will be disqualified for breaching this rule and will need to reschedule for the next competence assessment
  - c. Repeated breaches by trainers will also be reviewed
3. The FLA Representative will indicate to Trainers and Candidates the order of Assessment based on FLA's Competence List. The ordering of the list should be non-negotiable except in exceptional situations.
4. The FLA representative will do their preparation (measuring, Taping off and briefing).
  - a. Target A - 9ft
  - b. Target B - 15ft
  - c. Target C - 21ft
  - d. Distance between the targets – 6ft

### **Pistol & Revolver shoot:**

1. Course of fire is explained.
2. Applicant should be instructed to pick-up firearm.
3. Load and holster.

### **For Shotgun / Rifle shoot:**

1. Course of fire is explained.
2. Applicant should be instructed to pick-up firearm.
3. Load and standby.

After the shoot, the applicant is instructed to **unload and show clear**. Afterwards the applicant will be instructed to **rest the firearm on the table**.

## Competence Assessment

Instruction to Range Operator:

Shooting line must be equipped with a table capable of accommodating firearms and magazine.

1. Applicant is called to shooting position
  - a. Course of Fire is explained by the Trainer
  - b. 11 rounds are to be loaded for handgun exams
  - c. Applicant should be able to pick-up firearm
  - d. Applicant Should be able to Load and holster firearm
  - e. Core Assessment:
    - i. First String: 4 seconds - 2 shots on Target A
    - ii. Second String: 6 seconds - 2 shots target A, 2 shots target B
    - iii. Third String: 10 seconds - 2 shots target B, 2 shots target C
  - f. After all shoot applicant is instructed to **unload and show clear after which the applicant will be instructed to rest firearm on the table.**
  - g. Any breach of time fails
  - h. The candidate Passes if there is at least 80 % hit in the scoring area with all three targets being hit (That is 8 out of 10 on target and targets A, B & C must be hit.)
  
2. At the end of shoot, the applicant is to be given the following instructions by the Trainer :

### a. For Pistol

*'Unload and show clear'*

Applicant is expected to:

- i. Remove magazine
- ii. Pull back slide allowing the one round in the breach to fall free
- iii. Lock slide to rear
- iv. Show that firearm is clear
- v. Hand the firearm to the trainer

### b. For Revolver

*'Unload and show clear'*

Applicant is expected to:

- i. *Open cylinder*
- ii. *Eject empty cartridge or live round*
- iii. *Present firearm for inspection*
- iv. Hand the firearm to the trainer

### c. For Shotgun

*'Unload and show clear'*

Applicant is expected to

- i. Eject unused cartridges
- ii. Lock slides to the rear
- iii. Apply Safety
- iv. At the end of the shoot a round must still be left in the chamber to demonstrate the action to be carried out on the command "Unload and show clear"

## **Briefing at Competence Assessments**

At each assessment an FLA Representative is required to brief all persons present for the assessment - applicants and trainer(s).

The applicant is reminded that:

1. He / She is handling a lethal weapon and at all times the weapon must be kept pointing down range with fingers away from the trigger unless otherwise instructed.
2. Purchase Order Number(s) (PO#) will be texted to successful applicant five working days after the Assessment.
3. After purchasing the firearm and the dealer submits the Declaration of Sale to FLA, the applicant will be notified by Text Message when they are to visit the Authority to begin processing the new license. The duration for the entire process from FLA receiving the Declaration of Sale to the ID card being ready for pickup, should be approximately six weeks.
4. For successful applicants from security companies, the company will be contacted by the FLA when the license is to be processed.
5. If the firearm is being acquired other than through an FLA approved dealer, then other procedures and documentation may be required.
6. The successful applicant collects his/her license and is legally allowed to collect firearm from dealer.
7. Applicants are required to inform (in writing) the FLA of any change of phone number and address.
8. Applicants are reminded that the skill of competently using a firearm can only be maintained at the proficiency level desired if there is regular practice. The applicant is encouraged to practice at any of the Approved Ranges island-wide. Soon renewal applications will require some proof of practice.
9. The choice of a firearm must be an informed decision. Look at what suits you – size, weight etc.

## GLOSSARY

**Action:** The mechanism of a firearm directly behind the barrel, by which a gun is loaded, locked, fired, unlocked, extracted and ejected.

**Auto-loading:** See Semi-Automatic

**Ballistics:** The study of what happens to a moving projectile in the barrel and in flight - their trajectory, force, impact and penetration. Internal ballistics refers to what happens inside the barrel before the bullet or shot leaves the muzzle; External ballistics is what happens after the bullet or shot leaves the barrel and travels to its final point of impact and Terminal ballistics is what happens to the bullet at the final point of impact.

**Barrel:** The metal tube of a firearm made from iron or steel, through which the bullet or shot charge passes when the firearm is fired.

**Bluing:** A process of treating metal gun parts in a bath of metallic salts and water, which colors them blue to prevent rust.

**Bolt:** A steel rod-like assembly which moves back and forth in a bolt action, sealing the cartridge in the chamber during firing.

**Bore:** The tunnel down the barrel of a firearm through which the projectiles travel.

**Bore Diameter:** The measurement from one side of the bore to the other. In a rifled barrel this means measurement of the bore before the rifling grooves are cut.

**Breech:** The rear end of the barrel (in modern arms, the portion of the barrel into which the cartridge is inserted). See Chamber.

**Buckshot:** Large lead pellets used in shot shells.

**Bullet:** A single projectile fired from a firearm. Also referred to as a warhead.

**Butt:** The rear end of a rifle or shotgun. (The portion that rests against the shoulder.)

**Calibre:** The diameter of the bore of a rifle before the rifling grooves are cut.

**Carbine:** A light short-barreled rifle.

**Cartridge:** A metallic case, usually made of brass or copper, containing the powder charge, the primer and the bullet. (Before development of the metallic cartridge, the term was used to mean a roll or case of paper containing powder and shot.) Modern cartridges are generally classified in three categories; centre fire metallics, rim fires and shot shells. **Centre fire metallics** include all metal cartridges that have primers in the center of the base. **Rim fires** include all cartridges in which the priming powder is sealed in the soft rim around the base. **Shot shells** include all cartridges that contain shots, or small pellets, instead of a single bullet.

**Centre-Fire:** See Cartridge.

**Chamber:** The enlarged portion of the barrel at the breech in which the cartridge is placed ready for firing.

**Choke:** The constriction at the muzzle of a shotgun barrel by which the spread of the shot pattern is controlled.

**Cock:** To set the action into position for firing. (On some firearms the action has an intermediate position called half cock.)

**Comb:** The upper edge of a rifle or shotgun stock where the cheek rests.

**Corrosion:** The gradual eating away of the metal parts of a firearm caused by rust.

**Down Range:** The direction from the shooting position to the target on a range. See Range.

**Double-Action:** The operating action of a handgun whereby a single pull of the trigger both cocks and releases the hammer.

**Ejector:** The mechanism, which causes the cartridge case to be thrown free from the gun.

**Erosion:** The wearing away of a barrel's metal surface by a bullet or shot charge or by the heat of powder gases.

**Extractor:** A hook device which pulls the case out of a chamber as the breech mechanism is opened. (The extractor generally brings the case within contact of the ejector, which then flips it out of the gun.)

**Feed:** The action of moving live cartridges from the magazine of a firearm into the chamber.

**Firing Pin:** The part of the breech mechanism, which strikes the primer of the cartridge. (In most firearms, the firing pin is part of the bolt assembly.)

**Fore-End:** The forward portion of a shoulder-arm stock located under the barrel (the fore-end serves as a hand-hold).

**f.p.s.:** Abbreviation for feet per second. A term used in expressing the velocity of a bullet.

**Gauge:** Measurement of shotgun bores derived from the number of bore-sized balls of lead to the pound. For example, 12 balls that fit the bore of a 12-gauge shotgun weigh one pound.

**Grip:** The small portion of the stock gripped by the trigger hand.

**Grooves:** See Rifling.

**Hammer:** The part of the action that drives the firing pin forward.

**Hammerless:** Refers to a firearm whose hammer and striker are concealed within the metal frame.

**Hangfire:** Delay in firing a cartridge after the firing pin has struck the primer.

**Lands:** In the rifling of a bore, the uncut portions of the barrel's inner surface left after the rifling grooves have been cut into the metal. See Rifling.

**Machine Gun:** A firearm, which continuously fires ammunition at a high rate of fire when the trigger is pulled only once.

**Magazine:** The part of a repeating firearm, which holds the cartridges or shells in position ready to be loaded one at a time into the chamber. (The magazine may be an integral part of a firearm or a separate device attached to the action).

**Magnum:** A cartridge or shell with greater power than normal (i.e. .300 magnum rifle, 3 inch magnum shotshell).

**Millimetre:** A metric measurement equaling .03907 inches. (Its abbreviation is mm.)

**Misfire:** Failure of a cartridge to discharge after the firearm's firing pin has struck the primer. See Hangfire.

**Muzzle:** The forward end of a barrel through which the warhead emerges.

**Muzzle Blast:** The violent disturbance in the atmosphere after discharge of a firearm, caused by release of powder gases into the air.

**Muzzle Energy:** The energy of a bullet as it emerges from the muzzle.

**Over-And-Under Gun:** A firearm with two or more barrels placed one over the other.

**Plinking:** Casual, informal target practice on common objects such as tin cans, bottles etc, instead of conventional printed-paper targets.

**Powder:** The general term for any propellant used in firearms which burns upon ignition. (The two major types are black powder and smokeless powder).

**Primer:** The collective term for the chemical primer compound, cup and anvil which, when struck, ignites the powder charge.

**Projectile:** A bullet or shot in flight after discharge from a firearm.

**Propellant:** The chemical substance which imparts movement to the projectile in a firearm.

**Range:** The distance traveled by a projectile from the firearm to the target. **Pointblank range** is the distance a projectile will travel before it drops the extent that sight adjustment is required.

**Effective range** is the greatest distance a projectile will travel with accuracy. **Extreme range** is the maximum distance a projectile will travel. Also refers to a facility designed for the safe shooting of firearms (shooting range).

**Receiver:** The metal frame of a rifle or shotgun which contains the breech, locking mechanism and reloading mechanism.

**Recoil:** The backward force of a firearm caused by expansion of powder gases which also impels the bullet out of the barrel. Recoil is measured in foot pounds.

**Rifle:** A shoulder firearm with a rifled barrel designed to fire one projectile at a time. See Rifling.

**Rifling:** Spiral grooves cut into the inside barrel surface to cause a bullet to spin, thereby stabilizing it. The cut-away portions of the rifling are called Grooves and the uncut portions are called Lands.

**Rim:** The edge on the base of a cartridge case which stops the progress of the case into the chamber. (It is also the part of the case the extractor grips to remove it from the chamber).

**Rimfire:** A cartridge in which the priming compound is contained in the rim at the base of the cartridge. (See also Cartridge.)

**Safety:** A device that blocks the firing mechanism of a firearm.

**Sear:** The part of a firearm which links the trigger and the firing pin and releases it when the trigger is pulled.

**Semi-Automatic:** An action which fires, extracts, ejects, reloads and cocks with each separate pull of the trigger and is powered by the propellant gases. (Also called autoloading.)

**Shotgun:** A firearm with a smooth bore designed to fire small pellets (shots) or rifled slugs.

**Shotshell:** See Cartridge.

**Sight:** The device on a firearm designed to help the shooter aim accurately.

**Single Action:** The operating action of a handgun that requires a manual cocking of the hammer before sufficient pressure on the trigger releases the firing mechanism.

**Slug:** A single large bullet contained in a shotgun cartridge, designed for hunting large game. The slug is usually encased in a plastic material which is rifled to add stability in flight.

**Small Bore:** Generally refers to a .22 calibre firearm.

**Smokeless Powder:** See Powder.

**Smooth Bore:** A firearm with a bore that is not rifled. Usually refers to a shotgun.

**Stock:** The part of a shoulder firearm by which it is held for firing and into which the metal parts are fitted.

**Straight-Pull Action:** A bolt action in which the bolt is pulled and pushed straight backward and forward.

**Striker:** The front part of a firing pin which strikes the cartridge.

**Trajectory:** The path a bullet travels from muzzle to impact.

**Trigger:** The part of a firearm mechanism which releases the firing pin.

**Trigger Guard:** A metal loop around the trigger designed to protect it.

**Turn-Bolt Action:** A bolt action which is locked by pressing the bolt handle in and down, thereby turning its locking lugs into the receiver.

**Twist:** The angle of rifling grooves relative to the bore axis. (Expressed as the distance in inches over which a turn or twist is completed, i.e., 1-10, 1-22).

**Velocity:** The speed at which a projectile travels. (Usually measured in feet per second or metres per second).