FIREARM
SAFETY
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Always Keep the Gun Pointed in a Safe Direction

This is the primary rule of gun safety. A safe direction means that the gun is pointed so that even if it were to go off it would not cause injury or damage. The key to this rule is to control where the muzzle or front end of the barrel is pointed at all times. Common sense dictates the safest direction, depending on different circumstances.

Always handle the gun as if it is loaded!

Always Keep Your Finger Off the Trigger Until Ready to Shoot

When holding a gun, rest your finger on the trigger guard or along the side of the gun. ***Until you are actually ready to fire, do not touch the trigger.***

Always Keep the Gun Unloaded Until Ready to Use

Always unload your firearm following use and whenever you pick up a gun, immediately engage the safety device if possible, and, if the gun has a magazine, remove it before opening the action and looking into the chamber(s) which should be clear of ammunition. If you do not know how to open the action or inspect the chamber(s), leave the gun alone and get help from someone who does.

Assume every gun is loaded!

Know Your Target and What is Beyond

Be absolutely sure you have identified your target beyond any doubt. Equally important, be aware of the area around and beyond your target. This means observing your prospective area of fire before you shoot. Never fire in a direction in which there are people or any other potential for mishap. Do not fire unless you know exactly where your shot is going and what it will strike. Never fire at a sound, a movement or a patch of color. Make sure your shot has a backstop such as a hillside or dense material like sand or dirt.

Think first; Shoot second!

Know How to Use the Gun Safely

Before handling a gun, learn how it operates. Know its basic parts, how to safely open and close the action and remove any ammunition from the gun or magazine. Remember, a gun's mechanical safety device is never foolproof. Treat every gun as if it can fire at any time, whether or not there's pressure on the trigger.

Nothing can ever replace safe gun handling: ***Save & USE your Owner's Manual***

Be Sure the Gun is Safe to Operate

Just like other tools, guns need regular maintenance to remain operable. Regular cleaning and proper storage are a part of the gun's general upkeep. If there is any question concerning a gun's ability to function, a knowledgeable gunsmith should look at it.

Use Only the Correct Ammunition for Your Gun

Most guns have the ammunition caliber stamped on the barrel or slide. Ammunition can be identified by information printed on the box and sometimes stamped on the cartridge. ***Do not shoot the gun unless you know you have the proper ammunition*** or damage to the gun or personal injury may result. When in doubt consult a qualified gunsmith.

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

Wear Eye and Hearing Protection

Guns are loud and the noise can cause hearing damage. They can also emit debris and hot gas that could cause eye injury. For these reasons, approved shooting glasses and hearing protectors should be worn by shooters and spectators.

Continued exposure to shooting noise can permanently damage your hearing!

Never Use Alcohol Before or While Handling Firearms

Alcohol, as well as any other substance, to include prescription medications, likely to impair normal mental or physical bodily functions, must not be used before or while handling or shooting guns.

Store Guns so They are Not Accessible to Unauthorized Persons

Many factors must be considered when deciding where and how to store guns. A person's particular situation will be a major part of the consideration. Dozens of gun storage devices, as well as locking devices that attach directly to the gun are available. However, mechanical locking devices, like the mechanical safeties built into guns, can fail and should not be used as a substitute for safe gun handling and the observance of all gun safety rules.

Be Aware that Certain Types of Guns & Many Shooting Activities Require Additional Safety Precautions

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 firearm it is and the safe handling procedures for loading, unloading, carrying, shooting and storing it.

Cleaning

Regular cleaning is important in order for your gun to operate correctly and safely. Taking proper care of it will also maintain its value and extend its life. Your gun should be cleaned every time that it is used.

A gun brought out of prolonged storage should also be cleaned before shooting. Accumulated moisture and dirt, or solidified grease and oil, can prevent the gun from operating properly.

Before cleaning your gun, ***make absolutely sure that it is unloaded***. The gun's action should be open during the cleaning process. Also, be sure that no ammunition is present in the cleaning area.

Additional Considerations

- Never leave an unsecured weapon unattended
- Check state & local laws for storage, transportation and securing requirements
- Ensure ammunition and weapons are secured & stored separately
- Inspect ammunition for defects before use

Safety & Education Resources

- National Shooting Sports Foundation
  www.nssf.org

- National Rifle Association
  www.nrahq.org/education

- International Hunter Education Association
  www.homestudy.ihea.com

- State & Local Shooting Sports Associations

Don’t Monkey Around With Firearms!!!