



## Course Handbook 2

# Firearms Safety Guide

Course in Firearms and Weapons Safety 11029 NAT  
(Approved for Firearms Licensing in Queensland)

*This handbook contains the Firearms Safety Guide*

We hope that your training will be enjoyable and productive. Please let us know if you experience any difficulties during your course, so that we can take action to assist you. Our aim is for you to achieve high levels of competency and we will assist you flexibly and fairly to achieve your goals.

***Please read this Firearms Safety Guide for your course carefully.***

If you have any questions after reading this Firearms Safety Guide and the Course Information, please consult your trainer

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## INTRODUCTION TO SAFETY.

It is always claimed that firearms are dangerous, by those who are not familiar with firearms, but the simple fact is that a firearm is an inanimate object, incapable of causing any injury until it is in the hands of a human being. Accidents are caused by people - not firearms.

The most important rule of firearm safety is that "the firearm is loaded" no matter what anyone has told you or what you may think — "the firearm is always loaded until you have cleared it and it can be seen to be empty" i.e. you have proved the firearm to be unloaded.

For organised shooting on a range and when handling firearms for demonstration and instructional purposes, rule of conduct and safety can be laid down and enforced. Simply put, it is that the handling of firearms must not give the slightest danger, nor give the slightest feeling of apprehension to anyone, in the immediate vicinity.

On their own, safety rules will never prevent an accident. It is the constant use and thought of the rules to the stage that safety becomes automatic, but even that is not enough. A person handling firearms must have their mind fully devoted to their actions. It is a full time job, you cannot forget — YOU cannot guess — you must know!!!

The following seven safety points are in the must know category. Remember them:

- How it works.
- Whether it is loaded.
- Where is it pointed?
- Where the target is.
- What the target is.
- Where the bullet will go.
- And most importantly— where the bullet will STOP.

Remember— Safety is not just a word or condition, it is a state of mind and that must be on full alert when handling firearms, operating a range or training new shooters.

Two things make up an accident—

- An unsafe act.
- An unsafe condition.

### **AGAIN: - Accidents do not happen — they are caused.**

It would be almost impossible to anticipate all the situations in which a firearm accident could happen, and limitless lists of rules could be made, but the general basic rules following should be followed.

- Treat every firearm with respect; ensure that the muzzle is always pointed in a safe direction — down range.
- Treat every firearm as if it were loaded until you have personally proven otherwise.
- Prove your firearm before handing it to someone else.
- Prove the firearm after receiving it from someone else.
- When a firearm is unattended, it must be left unloaded, secure, safe and in a stable condition.

- Never throw a firearm to someone else — it is stupid as well as dangerous. Do not attempt to catch a firearm thrown to you.
- To prevent a ricochet, do not shoot at hard flat surfaces or water.
- Always carry a firearm with complete control.
- Never point a firearm at any PERSON whether unloaded or not.
- Do not cock a firearm or place your finger on the trigger unless you are ready to fire.
- Be sure of your target. Always identify your target and what is behind it before you fire.
- Check your ammunition before use. Is it the correct size and type for the firearm in use?
- Store ammunition and firearms separately in a dry and secure place.
- Always maintain your firearms in good condition, have them checked regularly by a competent gunsmith.
- Remember gun powder and alcohol don't mix, so do not drink and fire.

Firearms may only be carried on a shooting range unloaded, in a gun case and under the control of a Range Officer, Coach or Range Safety and Training Officer.

When carrying and passing firearms to another person the safest way is (unless it is a malfunction and you are handing it to the Range Officer):-

- For a semi-automatic; to have the action open and the magazine removed from the firearm
- For a revolver; to have the cylinder unloaded and swung out.
- Any time you are handling a firearm
- Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction (down range); and
- Always keep your finger outside the trigger guard.

## **SPECIFIC SAFETY**

Various matches have particular safety rules that are specific for the particular matches, for example,

- Silhouette has a safety cone allowance because of the peculiarities of the "Creedmoor" position.
- Black Powder matches have special loading, unloading, malfunction and hang-fire rules due to the fact that Black Powder firearms have the powder loaded directly into the firearm and not into a cartridge. Also the volatile powder, during loading, is open to the atmosphere therefore increasing the chance of a spark from another source igniting it. A notice stating "No Naked Flame is Allowed Within" should be displayed. Glasses must be worn at all times.
- Action Pistol, Service Pistol and WA 1500 have special rules regarding the wearing of holsters. (New shooters should be trained and tested by the Holster Proficiency Tester prior to them using holsters on the range.) Glasses must be worn at all times by shooters and spectators.

## **SPORT SHOOTING RANGE COMMANDS FOR VARIOUS DISCIPLINES**

Different shooting disciplines have varying commands for the running of that discipline. All shooters should make themselves aware of the rules and commands for the event they are shooting. Some basic commands are:

- SHOOTERS TO THE LINE - shooters arrange their equipment on the shooting line
- LOAD – shooters load their magazines and firearms
- START – start shooting the series
- STOP – stop shooting

- UNLOAD – unload firearms, leave on bench pointing downrange with the action open

Step away from the firing line to allow Range Officer to check all firearms are safe.

REMEMBER it is YOUR responsibility to know the rules of the matches you are shooting.

Black Powder matches have specific commands as the firearms generally have the powder and balls loaded in an area separate to the shooting area. A series will start with the command "LOAD BUT DO NOT CAP" then "SHOOTERS TO THE LINE" followed by "CAP PISTOLS" === "ARE YOU READY" === "FIRE" followed then by "CEASE FIRE" and "UNLOAD".

Commercial, Security and Police venues may use such terms as: - - x rounds on target on right in your own time GO ON" or ' - - x rounds each on appearance - - ENGAGE TARGETS". "CEASE FIRE" may signal end of a series or whistle blasts.

As you can see, we can be exposed to a variety of commands, and shooters coming from a different shooting group may not understand specific commands at an early stage in a new environment. For this reason, it is recommended for new shooters and trainees in the Weapons Act Safety Course, that the commands "START" and "STOP" followed by "UNLOAD" be used. It would be wise to impress on all trainees that no matter where or on what range they may be shooting, that they should immediately stop shooting on hearing the command "STOP" or "CEASE FIRE".

## LICENSING

A Firearms Licence may be issued only if a person has an adequate knowledge of safety practices for the Use, storage, and maintenance of the weapon or category of firearm, the possession of which is authorised by the licence.

When applying for a licence, you need to have a genuine reason to possess a firearm. Reasons are prescribed by the Weapons Act 1990 and include:

- Sports or target shooting as a member of an approved club
- Recreational shooting (such as hunting on a property of approved size where permission has been obtained from a land owner) (NOT Category H (Pistol))
- An occupational requirement including a rural occupational requirement (such as for putting down diseased stock or control of vermin) ➤ Collection by a collector of weapons
- Another reason as allowed under regulation
- All Category H firearms, which have been rendered permanently inoperable, must be registered to a licence of that Category.

Persons wanting a licence to possess a firearm must also have access to secure storage facilities and be a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

### CATEGORY "H" FOR RURAL PURPOSES

Requirements:

- Holster proficiency tests are not required to utilise holsters for primary production purposes.
- Category "H" licences are normally issued for humanely dispatching injured or wounded livestock. It is normally understood that control of feral pests and wild dogs etc cannot be done effectively with a Category "H" firearm.

- A genuine need for a Category "H" firearm could be that the terrain is not accessible by conventional 4WD vehicles.
- Category "H" firearms must not be carried loaded or exposed when crossing public roads between paddocks or properties.

Category "H" calibres can range from .22 to .45 for rural Uses, and should be stored in a locked steel container when not in use.

#### **CATEGORY "C" FOR RURAL PURPOSES**

Requirements:

- That the genuine requirement for Category "C" Firearm cannot be met by using a Category "A" or "B".
- A reasonable land size with pest management issues to demonstrate a genuine need; e.g. Wild dogs, feral pigs etc. Damage mitigation permits can also support your application.
- Individual licences are required by property owners if more than one owner (family partnerships), in a situation where you traverse across public places; e.g. roads. (where public roads dissect between properties)
- Note: Category "C" firearms cannot be used for recreational shooting, but Category "C" shotguns can be used for clay target shooting if the shooter is SCI licensed.
- A suggested reason for requiring a Category "C" for primary production purposes could be: Due to the fact that feral pigs and wild dogs attack livestock in packs, a number of quick successive shots are required to humanely dispatch the feral pests.

It is a requirement of each licence that any changes to the conditions of issue of the licence are notified to the police within 14 days of the event causing the change of conditions.

These changes may be such things as: a change of address, a change in the reasons for having a firearm, club membership expires, a landowner revokes permission to shoot on his property or no longer having access to secure storage of the firearms.

#### **VISITORS TO QUEENSLAND FROM OTHER STATES**

Firearm Licences held by residents of other Australian States will be given temporary recognition in Queensland where the visit is for participation in a shooting competition, for recreational hunting on a property for which they have obtained prior permission, or occupational purposes on rural properties.

Interstate Firearms Licences must be converted to a Queensland Licence where a Licence holder intends to permanently reside in Queensland.

The person's licence is taken to be the corresponding licence under this Act in force for the period mentioned in subsection (3) or until the day the person's application for a licence under this Act is approved or rejected, whichever is the earlier.

The periods are:

For a licence authorising possession of a category A or B weapon or a category M crossbow — 3 months; and For a licence authorising possession of a category C, D or H weapon — 7 days.

#### **TRANSPORT OF FIREARMS**

All firearms should be transported in a carry case or carry bag. While being transported all firearms should be unloaded and where applicable, the bolt should be removed.

When travelling with firearms you should take precautions to minimise the likelihood of unauthorised access or theft. Depending on the circumstances it may be more secure to lock your firearms up within your temporary accommodation (motel room, guestroom) rather than leaving them locked in your car. Give careful thought to how you will secure your firearm before leaving on your trip and take appropriate trigger locks, chains or padlocks with you.

If travelling interstate it is important to remember that each State and Territory has its own firearms legislation. It may be that the regulations pertaining to transporting firearms and ammunition in your State or Territory differ slightly to those in the State or Territory to which you are travelling. It is important to contact the relevant Firearms Registry before travelling interstate.

#### **PUBLIC PLACES**

In public places, it is a requirement of law that firearms must not be exposed to the view of the public without reasonable excuse. They must be in a condition not capable of being discharged. Depending on the type of firearm you own, this may involve having the bolt removed, the action held open or an obstruction placed in the action to prevent it from closing, the action broken or the firearm dis-assembled.

#### **VEHICLES**

If possible, firearm carry cases/boxes should be kept out of sight in the vehicle. When transporting a firearm by vehicle, the person in control of the firearm must ensure that if the vehicle has a lockable boot, the firearm is locked in the boot. For vehicles, which do not have a boot, such as a tray back utility, the firearm must be locked in a metal container. If a metal container fixed to the vehicle is used, the metal box or anything on it is not to suggest that there is a firearm inside.

Vehicles should not be considered to be a secure option in which to store your firearms.

Remember, ammunition must be stored separately from the firearm and transported in its box and secured.

An unlicensed person should not be left in charge of a vehicle carrying firearms. Use of gun racks in cars is illegal on public roads.

#### **AIRCRAFT**

If travelling by air, you must contact the airline with which you are travelling well before the departure date. You are required to declare carriage of firearms and ammunition and they will advise you of their requirements as to how your firearms are to be transported. Generally, when travelling by air:

- Firearms must be in a locked container
- Passenger must have the key to the container
- Firearms will be checked by airline staff at check-in (ask for private room) to ensure that they are unloaded. Extra time of at least 45 minutes should be allowed for this to be done.
- No loose ammunition will be transported. All ammunition must be packed in manufacturer's packaging and in accordance with carriage of dangerous goods.
- All air cylinders must be empty

Under no circumstances will ammunition or firearms be permitted to be carried in the passenger compartment of any aircraft.

## **FIREARMS INCIDENTS**

One of the main objectives of firearm safety is to reduce the incidence of firearms accidents. In reality, there are few incidents that can be identified as a firearm accident. In almost every case at least one principle of the National Firearms Safety Code will have been breached.

It is essential that you, as a firearm owner / user, are aware of your responsibilities to yourself, your family, fellow shooters and members of the community.

It is virtually impossible to anticipate incidents and have rules to prevent every unsafe situation where accidents involving firearms may occur.

Knowledge of the basic rules is essential to prevent accidents, but to do this, the rules must be thoroughly understood and correctly applied at all times.

Two things make up an accident:

1. An unsafe condition of the firearm.  
(Such as a loaded firearm cocked with the safety catch off when not intending to fire the firearm):  
and
2. An unsafe act by the person in control of the firearm.  
(Such as placing the finger on the trigger when not actually intending to fire the firearm)

Persons in control of a firearm should know the condition of the firearm at all times. That is:

- Is the firearm loaded?
- Is there a round in the chamber?
- Is it cocked?
- Is the safety catch applied?
- Where is it aiming? Is muzzle pointing in a safe direction?

The degree of firearm readiness should be appropriate to the situation and the legal requirements, which may apply. The firearm should not be loaded or in a condition able to be discharged unless you are actually engaged in firing the firearm.

The condition of a firearm should be checked:

- When you first take control of the firearm either from storage or when handed a firearm by another person;
- Prior to handing the firearm to another person
- Prior to cleaning the firearm
- Prior to placing the firearm back in storage
- Whenever you are unsure of the condition of the firearm

## **FIREARMS SAFETY RULES EXPLAINED**

Now that you have some basic knowledge on how your firearm operates let's go over the SAFETY RULES again and explain them a little more.



## **1. TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS BEING LOADED**

Check every firearm yourself, do not take the word of another person that a firearm is unloaded.

Pass or accept only open and unloaded firearms. Never ever accept or pass a firearm to another person unless the breech is open and all ammunition has been removed from the firearm.

Get to know your firearm; learn thoroughly the way it works, what action to take in case of a jam or malfunction, how to tell if it is loaded or unloaded, how to remove the magazine where possible and how to care for your firearm correctly.

Always keep your finger off the trigger and keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction; be muzzle conscious.

If you do not know how to open a firearm leave it alone. A definition of a safe direction is in rule 3.

When handing a firearm to another person remember the following points

- Point the muzzle in a safe direction
- Open the bolt or action
- Check that the breech is empty
- Check that the magazine is empty or has been removed

Remember: never leave firearms loaded

Each year several people (often children) are injured or killed because a careless firearm user left a firearm loaded. Remember, when you are not using your firearm, unload it, and remove all rounds or cartridges from the breech or the magazine.

### **TIMES FOR SPECIAL CARE:**

Never allow your finger to go inside the trigger guard unless you are about to shoot. Be particularly careful at the moment of closing, cocking, releasing the safety catch, uncocking or opening a loaded firearm. These are danger times when a firearm may be accidentally discharged through poor handling procedures or mechanical failure.

Special care is required when using the action to unload live ammunition from a firearm, e.g. a lever action. Fully chambering ammunition should be avoided where possible when using the action to unload.

## **2. YOUR FIREARM IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

If you own/use a firearm you must comply with the requirements of the firearms legislation in your State or Territory. You are both legally and morally responsible for your firearm.

Responsible ownership and use of a firearm can:

- Prevent you being responsible for an accident with your firearm.
- Prevent the prospect of you being subject to civil and/or criminal charges.
- Prevent the possible loss of life through the misuse of your firearm.
- Prevent the illegal use of your firearm.

Remember: You are responsible for your firearm under all circumstances. You should not confine yourself to doing the right thing and obeying the law simply because of the risk of prosecution if you

do not. You should comply with and promote the National Firearms Safety Code because it is the right thing to do.

### 3. ALWAYS ENSURE YOUR FIRING ZONE IS CLEAR AND IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET BEYOND ALL DOUBT.

#### WHAT IS A SAFE DIRECTION?

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction. A safe direction will depend on where you are and what you are doing.

#### WHAT IS A SAFE DIRECTION?

Many theories abound on this subject, all of them most likely correct, however the simple answer is that a safe direction is based on where you are and what you are doing. Remember bullets can kill having passed through a wall, the ceiling or a car boot. Never assume a firearm is unloaded therefore the 'danger zone' is the arc through which the firearm can be pointed or moved.

Be aware of where the bullet would go if the firearm discharged. Remember bullets go through walls, ceilings and car doors with relative ease. Do not at any time point any firearm at yourself or another person. Do not allow careless habits to form. Concentrate on what you are doing and don't become distracted or daydream whilst you are handling firearms.

Never lean your firearms against a vehicle or put them in any place where they could slide or fall causing uncontrolled discharge of the firearm.

When removing a firearm from a vehicle or boat ensure that it is unloaded and be very careful to remove the firearm butt first, never remove it muzzle first.

Remember; do not let the muzzle point at anyone else or yourself. Be muzzle conscious.

#### IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEHIND IT

Make sure of your target before firing. It is not good enough to just think that what you see is your target.

Remember:

- Do not fire at movement only
- Do not fire at colour only
- Do not fire at sound only
- Do not fire at shape only

Your target must be positively identified before firing; if in doubt, do not shoot.

In the early morning or late evening, it is not easy to see clearly. Be sure the object you are aiming at is clearly identified and that it is in full view before you shoot.

#### WHAT IS BEHIND YOUR TARGET?

What will happen if you miss the target or the bullet passes through the target? What MIGHT you hit between you and your target? The firing zone is not only the area between you and your target, but also the area beyond the target, which is still within the extreme range of your firearm.

The effective danger range for projectiles, generally are:

.22 rim fire rifle	1500 metres (1.5 kilometres)
.303	3600 metres (3.6 kilometres)
.308	4050 metres (4.0 kilometres)
Air Rifle	150 metres
Shotgun	250 — 700 metres (depending on shot size)
BB shot	450 metres

Check your firing zone with special care when shooting at birds in flight. Shotguns need extra care because of the greater spread of pellets. Also remember when shooting at moving targets the danger area will increase because your target is moving. Be particularly aware of the position of other shooters who may be nearby.

It is essential that you ensure that your sights are correctly aligned, especially when using a telescopic sight; if your sights are not correctly aligned you may miss your target and increase the chance of hitting something that you did not intend to hit.

#### **NEVER FIRE AT HARD SURFACES OR WATER**

Consider the area in which you are shooting. Could a ricochet occur? A ricochet will almost certainly result from shooting at water, smooth flat surfaces and rocks.

Remember that when a ricochet occurs, you have lost control of where the projectile will finish up, resulting in possible injury, or even death, to another person or damage to property.

Be especially careful when shooting with an air rifle. Because of the slow velocity of pellets fired from air rifles they are very prone to ricochet and should be treated with the utmost caution. Rim fire and centrefire rifle

bullets are prone to ricochet as they lose velocity at the end of their travel, which can be some considerable distance.

When shooting with a shotgun, your chances of a ricochet are multiplied by the number of pellets in the cartridge that you are using. It takes only one pellet to cause serious injury or death. Be particularly aware of this if you are shooting over water or over hard flat surfaces.

#### **4. NEVER POINT A FIREARM AT OR NEAR ANOTHER PERSON.**

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction. Always be aware of the 'Danger Zone'

#### **5. NEVER LOAD A FIREARM UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO SHOOT.**

#### **6. NEVER TAKE LOADED FIREARMS INTO THE CAR, THE HOME OR THE CAMP.**

Many people have been injured or killed having broken this rule. Before entering a car, home or camp unload your firearm. Ensure that the action is open and there is no ammunition in the breech or the magazine. Pay particular attention to tubular or rotary magazines to ensure that all rounds are removed.

#### **IN THE FIELD**

This is a very important area for novice shooters. It is essential that you understand the basic principles that apply to using firearms in the field.

In the field firearms should be carried unloaded with the action open, until you are in your shooting area and you are expecting game to be flushed.

Always point your firearm in a safe direction, be aware of your surroundings, and if hunting with companions be especially careful of where you are pointing your muzzle, be aware of where your companions are, especially in thick scrub where you may lose sight of them.

If hunting in a party where shooters are walking line abreast be extremely conscious of the person either side of you. Take a shot only if the target is in front of you or if you are the shooter on the end of the line and can turn away from your companions to take a shot in safety.

If stalking game with companions and you are walking one behind the other, then the only person who should have his firearm loaded is the person in the lead.

If shooting from a boat or punt, keep both hands on your firearm and control the direction of the muzzle at all times. Do not carry LOADED firearms in a boat or punt unless you are ready to shoot.

Barrel obstructions are very common in the field due to objects such as mud, twigs, etc., becoming lodged in the barrel. It pays to check your barrel frequently to ensure that you do not have an obstruction. If you drop your firearm you should immediately check the barrel for obstructions. If a cartridge produces an unusual or soft sound when fired, you should check the barrel for an obstruction before firing again. ALWAYS unload the firearm before checking for obstructions.

When shooting in the field do not use set triggers or hair triggers. These are designed for target shooting and really have no place in the field. A simple knock is all it may take to cause an unintentional discharge.

When leaving or returning to a vehicle or camp make sure that your firearm is unloaded. Where possible, the magazine and bolt should be removed.

A person who handles firearms safely should refuse to hunt with a person who insists on violating the principles of safe firearms handling.

Remember, in the field, as elsewhere, firearms and alcohol do not mix.

When in the field, ensure that your dress is suitable for the conditions that you may encounter, and if going into mountainous areas, be prepared for sudden changes in the weather. Wear appropriate footwear when hunting, to protect your feet from injury and prevent you from slipping.

Thongs and sandals are not safe at any time whilst using firearms.

#### **7. KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO SHOOT.**

It is not safe practice to have your finger on the trigger or inside the trigger guard until the moment before you are ready to fire at your target.

Firearms in good order have trigger pressures set at safe levels. Normally the manufacturer sets this before they leave the factory. This does not mean that it is safe to leave your finger on the trigger while carrying your firearm, as other factors or distractions may cause the trigger to be set off accidentally. Trigger adjustments should only be carried out by a competent person, preferably a qualified gunsmith.

Most firearms have a safety catch fitted by the manufacturer. Safety catches have two positions.

**ON or SAFE**

In this position the firearm is restricted from firing in the event of the trigger being accidentally pulled or snagged on a branch when moving through dense vegetation.

**OFF or FIRE**

When in this position the firearm can be discharged by pulling the trigger. Most firearms have markings stamped into the metal work or coloured dots to indicate the current status of the safety catch.

NOTE: DO NOT RELY SOLELY ON SAFETY CATCHES - they are a mechanical device and may fail to engage properly or be knocked off.

**8. WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED SHOOTING REMOVE THE MAGAZINE (IF FITTED), UNLOAD AND THEN CHECK THAT THE CHAMBER IS EMPTY.**

On completion of shooting or handling a firearm, you should open the action and remove any live rounds from the chamber. You should make it a habit to check that the chamber is empty. At this stage you should also remove (if possible) or empty the magazine. Not all firearm magazines are removable or easily checked. Magazines may be removable, or fixed (box/hinged floor plate, tubular or some box magazines).

Remember: Your firearm is considered loaded if the action is open and if a live round is in the chamber or, if the magazine still contains a live round, even if the magazine is not attached to the firearm.

**9. MAKE SURE THAT ALL FIREARMS ARE TRANSPORTED SECURELY TO PREVENT MISUSE OR THEFT.**

When travelling with firearms, you should take precautions to minimise the likelihood of unauthorised access or theft. Depending on the circumstances, it may be more secure to lock your firearms up within your temporary accommodation (motel room, guestroom) rather than leaving them locked in your car. Give careful thought to how you will secure your firearms before leaving on your trip and take appropriate trigger locks, chains and padlocks with you.

If travelling interstate, it is important to remember that each State and Territory has its own firearms legislation. It may be that the regulations pertaining to transporting firearms and ammunition in your State or Territory differ slightly to those in the State or Territory to which you are travelling. It is important to contact the relevant Firearms Registry before travelling interstate.

**10. NEVER ALLOW UNAUTHORISED ACCESS TO YOUR FIREARM(S) OR AMMUNITION.**

**FIREARM SAFETY BEGINS AT HOME**

The storage of firearms and ammunition is your responsibility. You must never allow unauthorised persons access to your firearm(s) or ammunition. Your firearm(s) should only be accessed when you are present to ensure safe handling. You must ensure that your firearm(s) cannot be easily stolen.

When not in use, you must secure your firearms and ammunition separately, not only for safety reasons. Safes or other storage containment facilities must be constructed and secured in

accordance with Queensland Police/Government Regulations. Brown built lockers, old refrigerators or containers are not recommended storage systems.

As a firearm owner/user, you are responsible for making absolutely sure that all the safety requirements within the home are carried out. Over the years, a considerable number of children have been killed or injured because firearms were left in an unsafe condition in the home. So THINK when putting your firearm/s away. Do not put YOUR FAMILY AT RISK.

Before storing your firearm/s —

- Make sure your firearm is unloaded (magazine and chamber empty)
- Clean the firearm and lightly oil it before putting it away
- If possible, remove the bolt and magazine and lock it away separately from the firearm
- Leave the action open on firearms where the bolt cannot be easily removed such as lever action or self-loading rifles
- Break action firearms must be stored with the action broken or dis-assembled
- Store firearms and ammunition separately

REMEMBER YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR FAMILY AND TO OTHERS.

Make sure that all members of your family, especially the children, are aware of what a firearm is, what it is designed for (its capacity to kill or injure) and why it must not be touched.

ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE CONTROL OF KEYS TO PREVENT ACCESS TO YOUR FIREARMS.

#### **11. DO NOT CLIMB FENCES OR OBSTACLES WITH LOADED FIREARMS.**

Every year shooters are shot (Usually with their own firearm) as they attempt to negotiate fences and/or obstacles with loaded firearms.

Before attempting to negotiate a fence or obstacle, unload your firearm. DO NOT RELY ON SAFETY CATCHES. Safety catches, at best, only supplement the safe handling of firearms.

If attempting to cross a fence alone:

- Unload your firearm
- Place it through the fence and lay it on the ground with the muzzle pointing in a SAFE DIRECTION. Then cross the fence away from your firearm.

If crossing a fence with a friend:

- Ensure all firearms are unloaded
- Use the same method as for crossing alone, or hand your unloaded firearm to your companion and then cross the fence. Then have your companion hand you your unloaded firearm and his unloaded firearm.

These two methods of crossing, if carried out correctly, will prevent injury or possible death by a firearm, as could be the case if neither method was used.

**THINK BEFORE YOU CROSS: UNLOAD THAT FIREARM**

#### **12. ENCOURAGE SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE SHOOTING PRACTICES IN THE FIELD, ON THE RANGE, AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

Those involved with firearms should be ambassadors in the community for current and prospective firearms owners/users.

By exercising and encouraging training in the safe use of firearms by members of the community, clubs and collectors, it is possible to provide a safe environment for all.

Shooting and hunting ethics should be encouraged.

The use of both body and mind is necessary if one is to become proficient in the use of a firearm. It is therefore critical that those involved in the handling and use of firearms gain proficiency in as many aspects relating to them as possible.

Firearms have the potential to fire projectiles for distances far past the target. YOU should be aware of the capabilities and potential of your firearm. Ensure you are aware of what is around and beyond your target and do not shoot if it is not safe to do so. Refuse to shoot with a person who does not have safe firearm practices.

#### ANIMAL WELFARE ETHICS

Animal welfare ethics in regard to hunting or firearm use is very controversial and subject to media scrutiny:

Usually with the ultimate goal of either banning hunting or firearms use and ownership. It is the hunter's responsibility to ensure that animal welfare ethics are adhered to in a manner that is humane to animals, and does not bring hunting or firearm ownership into disrepute.

The Commonwealth Government Sub-Committee on Animal Welfare (SCAW) of the Animal Health Committee (AHC), has prepared Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals for the Commonwealth Standing Committee on Agriculture. Thirteen different Codes for aspects of agricultural animal welfare have been endorsed by the Australian Agricultural Council. These Model Codes of Practice apply to all states and territories of Australia.

The first thing that the hunter should learn are the principles of humane destruction. These principles cover topics such as animal anatomy (e.g. where the brain and heart/lung is located); correct selection of calibre, projectile type and weight for the target species, and how projectiles kill.

#### THE BASIC CODE OF PRACTICE:

The primary objective when shooting animals is to achieve instantaneous loss of consciousness and rapid death without regaining consciousness. This can be regarded as 'sudden and painless death'. Shooters should not fire at an animal unless they are confident of destroying it efficiently and humanely.

Shooting, if done properly, is a most effective, and in some cases, the only method for humanely destroying animals. To provide maximum impact and minimum misdirection, the operational range should be as close as circumstances allow. Shots should be aimed to destroy the brain, heart/lung or connecting blood vessels of the heart. Shooting at other parts of the body is not appropriate and likely to wound the animal.

Where an animal is wounded there is an ethical and humane obligation to ensure the death of that animal is complete before engaging another target or another activity. Where nursing females are shot, ensure that any offspring are targeted next so that they do not suffer.

### 13. NEVER MIX SHOOTING WITH ALCOHOL OR DRUGS.

GOOD JUDGE-MENT IS THE KEY TO SAFE FIREARMS USE.

AVOID ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AND/OR DRUGS AND/OR MEDICINES WHEN USING FIREARMS:

Alcohol and many day-to-day drugs and medicines (including hard drugs and drugs prescribed as medication) dull and slow your mental and physical reactions. At the same time you may be unaware of this reaction and even feel you are in better control than usual. When using firearms this is an extremely dangerous condition as the ability to recognise and react to dangerous situations swiftly and accurately is essential.

Do not shoot if you are on medication that is identified as affecting your ability to drive or operate machinery. If in doubt, ask your doctor.

Alcohol and drugs must never be taken before you go shooting, whilst you are shooting or until your firearm has been put safely away. It is an offence in Queensland to use or be in physical possession of a firearm/weapon whilst under the influence of liquor or a drug.

Refuse to shoot with others who are or have been drinking alcohol or taking drugs/medicines. Alcohol, drugs and firearms do not mix.

UNDERSTAND THE OPERATION OF YOUR FIREARM, KEEP IT IN GOOD REPAIR, AND ALWAYS USE THE CORRECT AMMUNITION.

IS YOUR FIREARM SAFE?

It is dangerous to use any firearm that is not in safe working order. Do not attempt to repair firearms yourself. Take suspect firearms to a gunsmith for inspection and have repairs carried out by a reputable gunsmith. A gunsmith has the experience and equipment to do the job. It is worth the extra cost to prevent an accident.

The following are firearm parts that may require attention from time to time:

- Head Space: The distance between the base of the chambered cartridge and the face of the bolt.
- Firing Pin Protrusion and Shape: Affecting safe, reliable firing.
- Tightness of Action and Stock: Affecting accuracy.
- Condition of Barrel and Chamber. Important for safety and accuracy.
- General Condition of Firearms including Safety Catch: Particularly important for self-loading shotguns and rifles.

Trigger Pull: Vital for both safety and accuracy. The recommended minimum trigger pull weights are:

22 rimfire rifle	1 .5 kg
centrefire sporting rifle	1 .5 kg
single trigger shotguns	1 .5 kg
double trigger shotgun	1 .5 kg 1 <sup>st</sup> trigger 1 .8 kg 2 <sup>nd</sup> trigger
target rifles	as regulated by competition rules
set triggers	follow manufacturer recommendations



NOTE: Self-loading firearms often have a heavier pull than conventional firearms. Manufacturer recommendations should be strictly adhered to.

WARNING: DO NOT EXCHANGE BOLTS, BOLT HEADS OR OTHER ACTION PARTS. THESE SHOULD BE FITTED BY A GUNSMITH.

When storing a firearm never block the barrel, just make sure the barrel is clean and coat your firearm lightly with oil.

**14. NEVER STORE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION TOGETHER. ENSURE THEY ARE SAFELY LOCKED AWAY WHEN NOT IN USE.**

It is a legal requirement to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers. It is also safe practice. Many firearm incidents occur in the home because ammunition and firearms are stored together. Children frequently suffer injuries because of their natural curiosity. (If a child finds a firearm with the ammunition the result may be fatal.)

LOCK UP YOUR FIREARM AND AMMUNITION SEPARATELY. NEVER LEAVE AMMUNITION IN THE BREECH OR IN THE MAGAZINE. REMEMBER YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALL OTHER PERSONS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY IN THE CARE AND HANDLING OF YOUR FIREARM(S).

When removing a firearm from the boot of a car or a similar place, remember to REMOVE IT BUTT FIRST. Never remove a firearm muzzle first. (People have shot themselves or their companions by removing a firearm from storage muzzle first.)

The storage of firearms must be in accordance with the requirements set out in the legislation of the Weapons Act and Regulations of Queensland

**15. BE FAMILIAR WITH THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SAFE STORAGE, FIREARMS OWNERSHIP, POSSESSION AND USE IN YOUR STATE, OR THE STATE OR TERRITORY YOU ARE VISITING:**

All firearm users must comply with the requirements of the legislation of the State or Territory in which they are residing or visiting.

The firearms legislation sets out the conditions and requirements for firearm ownership and use. Listed below is a small selection of topics that are covered:

- Firearm licensing conditions.
- Requirements for purchase of firearms and ammunition
- Security arrangements for the storage of firearms and ammunition
- Registration of firearms.

Remember that there are many more conditions associated with the ownership and use of firearms. Individuals interested in becoming involved with firearms must ensure that they are familiar with the laws applicable in their State or Territory.

**16. DISPOSE OF UNWANTED FIREARMS LAWFULLY: SURRENDER THEM TO THE POLICE OR SELL THEM TO OR THROUGH A LICENSED DEALER.**

Firearms or receivers no longer required by a licensed owner must be disposed of in the following manner:

Surrendered to a Police Station (you will receive a receipt for the surrendered firearm)

Dispose to a licensed firearms dealer

Dispose of the firearm to another person, via a licensed dealer (disposal in this manner must be in accordance with legislative requirements in the State or Territory).

DO NOT sell or give a firearm to a person who does not have a firearm licence as it is an offence and may result in prosecution.

## 17. MALFUNCTION / MISFIRE PROCEDURES

### RIFLE

#### FIELD

Should a malfunction/misfire occur, wait at least 30 seconds before trying to eject the shell from your rifle. Always make sure that you are pointing in a safe direction when clearing the firearm.

#### RANGE

This would usually be for competition shooting unless sighting in your rifle. If not sure of what is required, ask your Range Officer. It is up to the shooter to know the rules of the match he/she is shooting. Always remember, point rifle down range when clearing it.

## PARTS OF A FIREARM

The basic parts of a firearm are the receiver, the action, the stock and the barrel.

- THE STOCK is the part by which the firearm is held — the woodwork or synthetic parts comprising of the butt stock and the fore-end.
- THE RECEIVER joins the barrel to the butt stock and contains the action.
- THE ACTION is the mechanism, which loads, secures and fires the cartridge.
- THE BARREL is the steel tube through which projectiles are fired.

## KNOW HOW YOUR FIREARMS WORKS

It is very important that you know how and why your firearm operates. This is essential to be able to competently and safely load and unload the firearm and make it safe from any condition.

Read all of the manufacturer's instructions that come with your firearm. If you buy a second-hand firearm find out from the person selling it, the operating and cleaning instructions. Do not rely on the fact that you think you know how to do it. It could have disastrous consequences. If you think that your firearm is faulty, have it looked at by a competent gunsmith.

## TYPES OF FIREARMS AND ACTIONS

There are many different types of firearms in Australia today. Irrespective of the type or calibre you intend to purchase, it is important that you have some knowledge of the different types of actions.

Let's look at an explanation of the words used to describe the seven basic functions of a firearm. These functions can be applied, more or less, to every type of firearm:

FEEDS	Inserts a live round or cartridge into the chamber.
COCKS	Compresses the firing pin main spring and engages the firing pin to the trigger mechanism.
LOCKS	Locks the bolt tight to the breech ready to fire when the trigger is pulled.
FIRES	Discharges (or shoots) one round.

UNLOCKS	Unlocks the bolt from the breech face.
EXTRACTS	Removes the case (fired or unfired) from the chamber.
EJECTS	Throws the case clear of the firearm.

Each of these functions is employed in almost all firearms each and every time a round is fired. In some cases the functions may not be obvious or a number of functions may be performed as a result of one action by the person controlling the firearm.

These functions may not, in all circumstances, be performed as set out in the above order.

### ACTION TYPES

There are seven different types of actions, which are commonly found in Australia today. You will, over the next few pages, see all of these actions and an explanation in general of how they work, but first we must understand what is considered to be a firearm as defined by the Weapons Act 1990.

"FIREARM" means—

- A gun or other thing ordinarily described as a firearm; or
- A thing ordinarily described as a weapon that, if used in the way for which it was designed or adapted, is capable of being aimed at a target and causing death or injury by discharging; a projectile; or noxious, corrosive or irritant liquid, powder, gas, chemical or other substance; or
- A thing that would be a firearm mentioned in paragraph (i) or (ii), if it were not temporarily inoperable or incomplete; or
- A major component part of a firearm

But does not include—

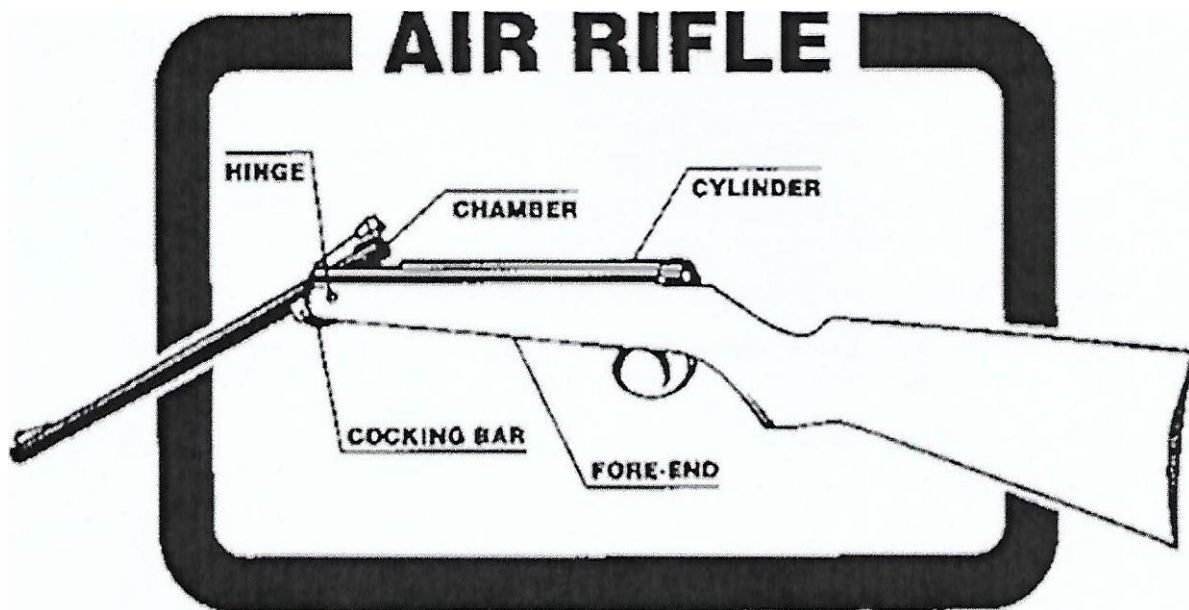
- An antique firearm, explosive tool, captive bolt humane killer, spear gun, longbow; or ➤ A replica of a spear gun or longbow

'MAJOR COMPONENT PART' of a firearm includes a part such as the receiver, body, barrel, breech bolt, frame or top slide without which the firearm would be considered inoperative or incomplete.

So now that we know what a firearm is, let us look at the Action Types.

### AIR RIFLE

An air rifle or airgun is a firearm, which Uses compressed air or gas to propel the projectile or pellet to the target. They are relatively inexpensive to buy and operate. What must be remembered is that they are firearms capable of causing serious injury, even death, and require a licence to use and possess. They are not toys and must be treated with the same care as any other firearm.



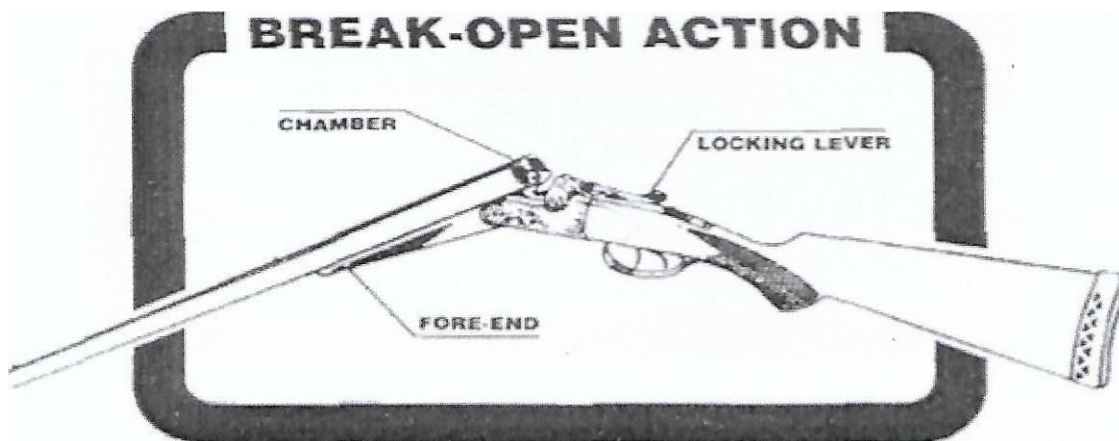
#### BREAK-ACTION SINGLE OR DOUBLE BARREL FIREARMS

Firearms fitted with this type of action are single and double-barrelled shotguns, shotgun and rifle combinations and double barrel centrefire rifles. The most common are shotguns, with the most popular being 12 and 20 gauge, and .410 calibre.

The break-action single- or double-barrel firearm generally-

- FEEDS by hand
- LOAD CARTRIDGE/S
- LOCKS - CLOSE ACTION
- FIRES - cocks (hammer back)
- UNLOCKS
- EXTRACTS & COCKS
- EJECTS - UNLOADS\*

\* (This will be done either automatically or by hand, depending on the firearm)



Ammunition or cartridges are fed into the chambers by hand. The barrels are then closed allowing the action to LOCK. The firearm at this point is loaded and ready to fire.

EXTREME CAUTION MUST BE EXERCISED AT THIS TIME.

In order to fire the shotgun, a simple squeeze of the trigger is all that is required. Once fired, the locking lever is moved to the right allowing the action to break open (UNLOCK). The fired or unfired cartridges as the case may be, may then be removed from the chamber (UNLOAD). This then completes functions 1—7.

#### WARNINGS

There may be old shotguns still in existence today that were not manufactured to use modern smokeless powders. All old shotguns should be inspected by an expert. DO NOT TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH THESE OLDER TYPE FIREARMS. THEY ARE LIABLE TO EXPLODE IF THE WRONG AMMUNITION IS USED.

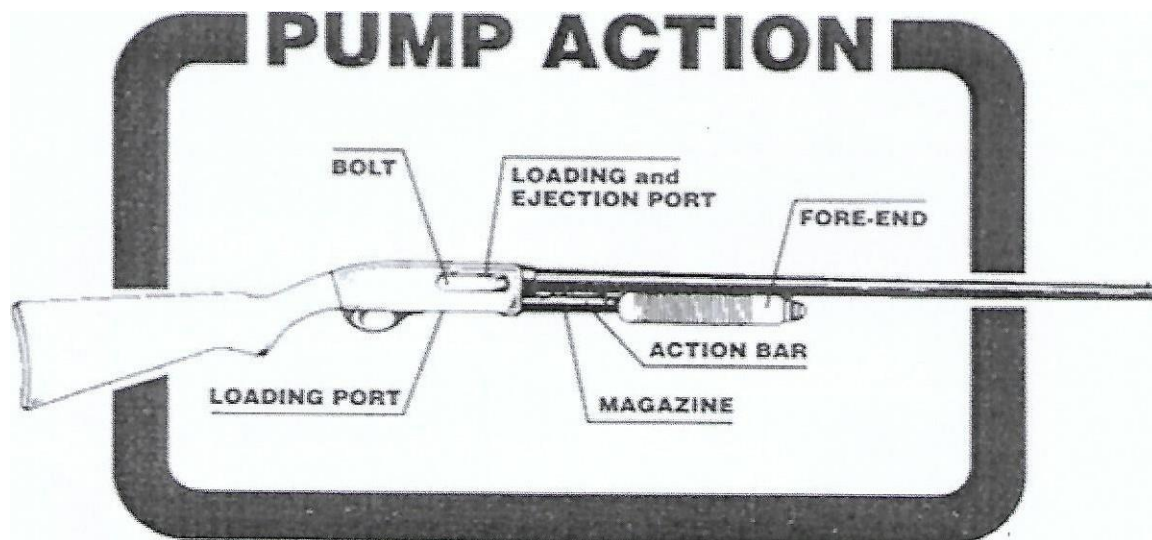
Some shotguns are fitted with exposed hammers. These may catch on clothing or on other objects and accidentally fire. Shotguns with external hammers require extra care.

#### THE SLIDE OR PUMP ACTION FIREARM

The pump or slide action generally—

1	FEEDS (cocked)	SLIDE FORWARD	LOADS
2	LOCKS		
3	FIRES		
4	UNLOCKS	SLIDE REARWARD	UNLOADS
5	EXTRACTS		
6	EJECTS		
7	COCKS		

The fore-end, which is attached to the action bar and also to the bolts, is pushed forward feeding a round into the chamber and locking the action. The firearm can now be fired by squeezing the trigger. The fore-end is then pulled to the rear, completing functions 4 to 6. Pushing the fore-end into the forward position cocks the firearm.



### THE SLIDE OR PUMP ACTION

This is very similar to the "Lever Action" and is operated by moving the fore-end of the stock instead of a lever. It is also known as a "Trombone Action" or a "sliding block". The slide or pump action firearm usually has a tubular magazine which is susceptible to the same problems as lever action rifles.

Particular care is required with this firearm because of –

1. EXPOSED HAMMER. (Some models are produced with exposed hammers).
2. TUBULAR MAGAZINE. (Some models are available with rotary and box type magazines).

You must remember, as with the Lever Action, if your firearm has a tubular magazine or an exposed hammer, you must exercise extreme caution when unloading the firearm to ensure that the magazine is completely empty.

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTION:	The mechanism of a firearm; the means by which it is loaded to secure the cartridge in the chamber.
ANVIL	A component of the primer, against which the priming composition is crushed by the impact of the firing pin.
AUTO-LOADER	See self-loader
BALLISTICS	The science of moving projectiles
BEDDING	The fit between the metal and the stock of the firearm
BLACK POWDER	A propellant developed several centuries ago from a combination of saltpetre, charcoal and sulphur.
BOAT-TAIL	A special type of projectile with a base of reduced diameter.
BOLT	A device of a breech-loading firearm, which normally contains the firing pin, and to which is attached the extractor
BOLT HEAD	The front portion of the bolt, which normally contains the firing pin hole and to which is attached the extractor.
BORE	The interior of the barrel of a firearm.
BREECH	The rear end of the chamber into which the cartridge is inserted.
BULLET	See projectile
BULLSEYE	The round of half-round centre of a typical paper target

BUTT	The rear portion of the stock, which is held against the shoulder
CALIBRE	The nominal diameter of the bore of a firearm, or the nominal diameter of the bullet or projectile.
CANNELLURE	A groove around the jacketed bullet into which the lip of the cartridge case is crimped. A grease groove in a lead projectile
CARTRIDGE	The combination of components.
CASE	The metallic or plastic container for the primer, powder and projectile.
CHAMBER	The enlarged portion of the bore in which the cartridge rest in the firing position.
CLIP	A device that hold a number of cartridges for quick and easy loading.
CORROSION	Deterioration of the metal parts of a firearm
EJECTOR	A device that that ejects or throws the fired case from the firearm after it has been withdrawn from the chamber by the extractor.
ELEVATION	The vertical movement of an adjustable sight to cause the bullet to strike the point of aim at various distances
ENERGY	The potential amount of work that can be performed by a projectile.
EROSION	The wearing away of the bore of a firearm by friction.
EXTRACTOR	The device that grips the base of the cartridge case and withdraws it from the chamber
EXTRACTOR GROOVE	The circular groove at the base of the cartridge case.
FIRING PIN	A device controlled by the trigger, which strikes the primer causing the cartridge to fire.
FLASH_HOLE	The small hole/s in the primer pocket through which the flash ignites the powder.
FLOATING BARREL	A barrel which does not touch the front end of the stock.
FLYER	An unaccountable shot wide of the mark or target.
FORE-END	The forward part of the stock under the barrel
FOULING	A deposit of residue from burning powder or from bullet metal on the interior surface of a barrel.
GAUGE	A unit of measurement for shotgun bore diameters, determined by the number of solid lead balls of the bore diameter obtainable from 1 lb of lead.
GRAINS	A unit of weight used for bullets or powder charge— 1 ounce avdp = 437.5 grains. 1 lb avdp — 7000 grains
GROOVES	Spiral cuts or impressions in the bore of a firearm which cause a projectile to spin as it moves through the barrel.
GROUP	The term applied to a series of shots fired at a target with a constant point of aim and sight setting to test accuracy,
HAMMER	Part of some actions controlled by the trigger, which drives the firing pin to strike the primer, firing the cartridge.
HANG-FIRE	Ignition in a cartridge which is delayed beyond the normal time after the firing pin has struck the primer
HEADSPACE	The distance from the bolt face to what stops forward movement of the cartridge in the chamber.

KEYHOLE	The imprint of a bullet in a target which shows that the bullet was not travelling head on to the target
LANDS	The raised portion of the bore between the rifling grooves
LEADING	Particles of bullet metal torn off as the bullet passes through the bore, and which adheres to the bore.
LINE OF SIGHT	The straight line from the eye through the sights to the target or point of aim.
LOCK	The firing mechanism of a firearm.
MAGAZINE	A metal case holding several cartridges in some firearms.
MAGNUM	A load or cartridge having large powder capacity in relation to bore diameter.
MID-RANGE TRAJECTORY	The highest vertical distance of a bullet above the line of sight.
MINUTE OF ANGLE	A unit of angular deviation equal to one-sixtieth of a degree
MUSHROOMING	The ability or capacity of a projectile to expand on or after impact
MUZZLE	The front end of a barrel. The point from which the projectile leaves the barrel
OPEN SIGHT	Metallic rear sight having a flat or U or V shaped cut out.
PATTERN	The distribution of pellets from a shotgun at a given distance in a given area.
PEEP SIGHT	Metallic rear sight with a sighting hole, aperture or 'peep'
PITTING	See Corrosion.
PLINKING	Informal target shooting.
POSSIBLE	A target shooter's perfect score.
PRESSURE	The force created by burning powder against case, chamber and projectile
PRIMER	A small metallic cup containing a detonating mixture which is seated in a recess in the base of the case and which, when fired, ignites the powder inside the case.
PRIMER POCKET	The cavity in the base of a cartridge case which receives and supports the primer.
PROJECTILE	The shot, ball or bullet fired from any firearm.
PULL	The pressure required on a trigger to release the firing mechanism. Also a term used to indicate the distance from trigger to butt plate, or in trap shooting a command to release the target.
RECEIVER	The frame, consisting of breech, locking and reloading mechanisms of a firearm.
RECOIL	The backward thrust of a firearm caused by the reaction to the powder gases pushing the bullet forward.
RIFLING	Parallel spiral grooves cut or impressed into the bore of rifles and pistols in order to make the bullet spin, ensuring steady, point-on flights to the target.
SEAR	A part designed to hold the hammer or firing pin at half or full cock.
SELF-LOADING	Reloads automatically on firing
SHOOTING AREA	Is the area where a shot may legally and safely be taken at any time.
SPITZER	A bullet shape employing a sharp point.
SMOKELESS POWDER	The modern propellant developed to replace black powder. These powders can be manufactured in two forms i.e. Single-base and double-base. The main ingredient of single-base smokeless powder is nitro-cellulose. It also contains a small percentage of special purpose additives. The main ingredient of double-base propellants is nitro-cellulose, which is supplemented by a percentage of nitro-glycerine and a small percentage of special purpose ingredients
SPORTERISE	To alter, reduce weight and convert a military firearm to suit sporting



	requirements.
STOCK	The wooden or synthetic part(s) of a firearm to which a barrel and firing mechanism are assembled
THROAT	The forward portion of the chamber where it tapers to meet the diameter of the bore proper.
TRAJECTORY	The curved path of a projectile from muzzle to target.
TRIGGER	The part of a firearm moved by the finger to release the firing mechanism
TWIST	Spiral inclination of the rifling grooves to the axis of the bore, measured by distance in which the bullet makes one complete turn.
VELOCITY	The speed at which the projectile or bullet travels.
WILDCAT	A non-standard cartridge which is not produced by commercial manufacturers.
W.M.R.F	Winchester Magnum Rim Fire.
WAD	Plastic or fibre device, which separates the powder from shot in a shotgun cartridge.

### DIFFERING TYPES OF AMMUNITION AND PROCEDURES FOR PURCHASE

Firearms are designed to fire ammunition and without it they become little more than intricately engineered clubs. Ammunition is the engine room of firearms technology.

Ammunition generally refers to self-contained cartridges which contain the basic components of primer, powder and projectile wrapped in a convenient package.

While ammunition may appear similar, there is considerable variation and purpose even within specific calibres.

### DIFFERENT TYPES OF AMMUNITION

Ammunition basically consists of four different types: -

- Rimfire
- Centrefire
- Centrefire (full metal jacket)
- Shotgun cartridges
- Pellets (air)

CHECK that jacketed ammunition is able to be shot where you plan to shoot. Most pistol ranges do not allow jacketed ammunition.

It is very important that you do not mix your ammunition. You should carry with you the correct ammunition for the firearm you are using.

It is very important that you can identify and recognise the different types of ammunition, as the wrong ammunition in a firearm could result in the firearm exploding and injuring the user. Make sure you use the correct ammunition designed to be used in your firearm.

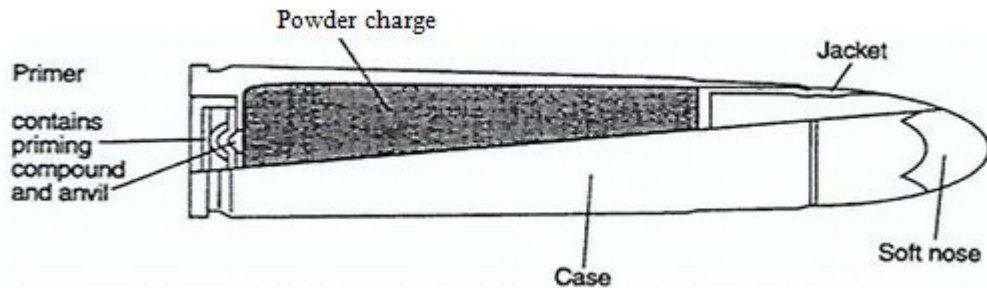
Check to see what length cartridges your shotgun is designed to take.

Do not load 76mm cartridges into a shotgun designed to take 70mm cartridges.

Do not mix 70mm and 76mm cartridges together.

Blank cartridges contain gunpowder, and they are as dangerous as normal cartridges. On discharge, the high velocity gases that escape from a firearm can cause death or serious injury. A rifle containing blank cartridges should always be considered as though loaded with normal ammunition, and should be treated as a loaded firearm. The normal safety rules applying to a loaded firearm apply to a firearm loaded with blanks.

### Centrefire



Centre-fire ammunition is named because the primer is contained in a small metal cup which fits into the centre of the base of the cartridge.

Ignition is provided by the firing pin blow to the primer. The resulting flame enters the body of the case through a flash hole or holes and ignites the main powder charge.

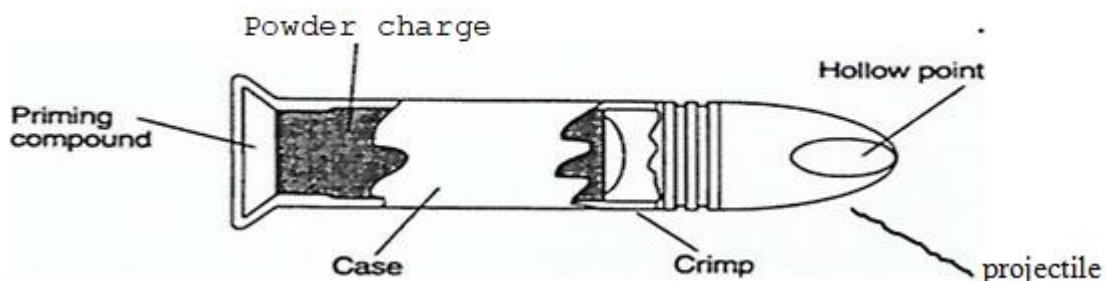
Although the internal components of centre-fire rifle cartridges and shotguns shells are different, both use a centre-fire priming system to provide consistent ignition.

### Ammunition components

#### Rimfire

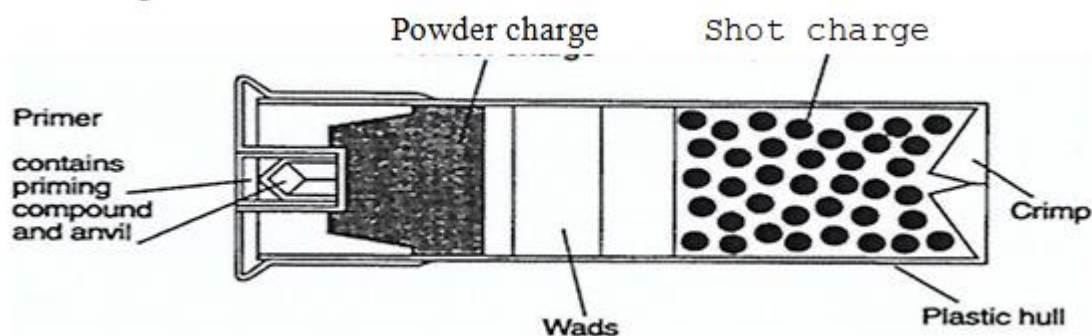
In rim-fire ammunition the priming compound is incorporated into the rim of the case. By pinching or indenting the rim with a blow from the firing pin, the cartridge is fired.

Shotguns usually fire charges of shot, which are groups of individual pellets graded according to their size (diameter).



Shot has traditionally been made by pouring molten lead through a series of mesh screens into water and forming perfectly round globules of lead. Diameter depends on the gauge of the screen.

### Shotgun



Smaller shot sizes are graded by a numbering system — the larger the number the smaller the shot diameter.

Larger shot sizes are graded using a lettering system in England and by a combined numbering and lettering system in America.

Similar shot sizes from the different systems may be considerably different in diameter.

Example Winchester shotgun field loads detailing shot size

Shot size	Shot Diameter inch	mm	Number of shot per cartridge	Cartridge name (including cartridge size)
9	0.08	2.05	292	.410 AA Target 2"
7 1/2	0.095	2.43	175	.410 Super x
7	0.10	2.56	384	12G super x 2%
6	0.11	2.82	281	12G Super x 2%
			253	12G Ranger (red) 2%
5	0.12	3.07	213	12G Super x 2%
			192	12G Ranger (red) 2%
4	0.13	3.33	169	12G super x 2%
			152	12G Ranger (red) 2%
3	0.14	3.58	141	12G Super x 2%
			127	12G Ranger (red) 2%
2	0.15	3.84	135	
			102	12G Ranger (red) 2%
	0.18	4.61	83	
			74	12G Ranger (red) 2%
AAA	0.20	5.12	42	12 G Buckshot 2%

SSG	0.25	6.41	18	12G Buckshot 2%
SG	0.33	8.46	9	12G Buckshot 2%
Solid	0.410	10.51		.410 Super rifled slug 2 1/2
Solid	0.729	18.69		12G Super X rifled slug 2%

## CONDITIONS AFFECTING SAFE SHOOTING

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF BALLISTICS (maximum range vs. effective range)

Generally, a firearm muzzle elevated to 30° will see the projectile/s reach maximum distance or range of travel. Whilst the projectile/s is likely to have lost much of its velocity and energy, it could still cause injury or death.

A projectile fired at a ricochet producing surface within 30 metres of the shooter can, in some circumstances; ricochet out to the maximum range the projectile could travel in free flight.

Australia has adopted range danger areas to cater for the ricochet/maximum range distances.

The effective range of a cartridge means the distance at which the projectile is still capable of producing humane destruction (hunting) or retaining accuracy (target shooting). There are many factors that come into play in determining the effective range, some of which are calibre, load, projectile type and weight, and the firearm. The target animal and the intended aiming area also have a part to play.

An example of effective versus maximum would be the .22LR HV cartridge has an effective range on a rabbit of approximately 100m, but a maximum range of 1485m. The following tables are a guide to maximum range.

Rifle projectile specifications -			
Cartridge/calibre	Projectile Weight	Muzzle velocity (feet/sec)	Maximum Range (metres)
.22LR HV	36	1280	1485
.22 Mag	40	1910	2000
.223 Rem	55	3200	2700
30/30 Win	150	2350	2850
7.62 x 39	125	2350	3000
.308 Win	150	2820	4040
.357 Mag	158	1235	1500
12G Shotgun projectile ranges -			

Shot size	Limits of killing range (effective range)	Maximum range (travel at 30° elevation)
	40m	290 - 300m
4	30m	250 - 265m
9	20m	195 - 265m
AAA	50m	370 - 385m
SSG	60m	470— 485m
SG	70m	545 - 560m
Rifled slugs	100m	800 - 900m

Never attempt to dry out wet or damp ammunition by placing it in a warm oven, a microwave oven or in front of a fire; you may cause an explosion almost certainly resulting in damage and/or injury.

If test firing ammunition you should ensure the area is safe (i.e. shooting range). TEST FIRING IN THE HOME OR AROUND THE HOME, EVEN ON RURAL PROPERTIES, IS NOT SAFE.

Never check the action of your firearm with ammunition at home. This should be done in an area where it is safe to do so. Remember, when checking the action "be muzzle conscious"; ensure that you point your firearm in a safe direction at all times.

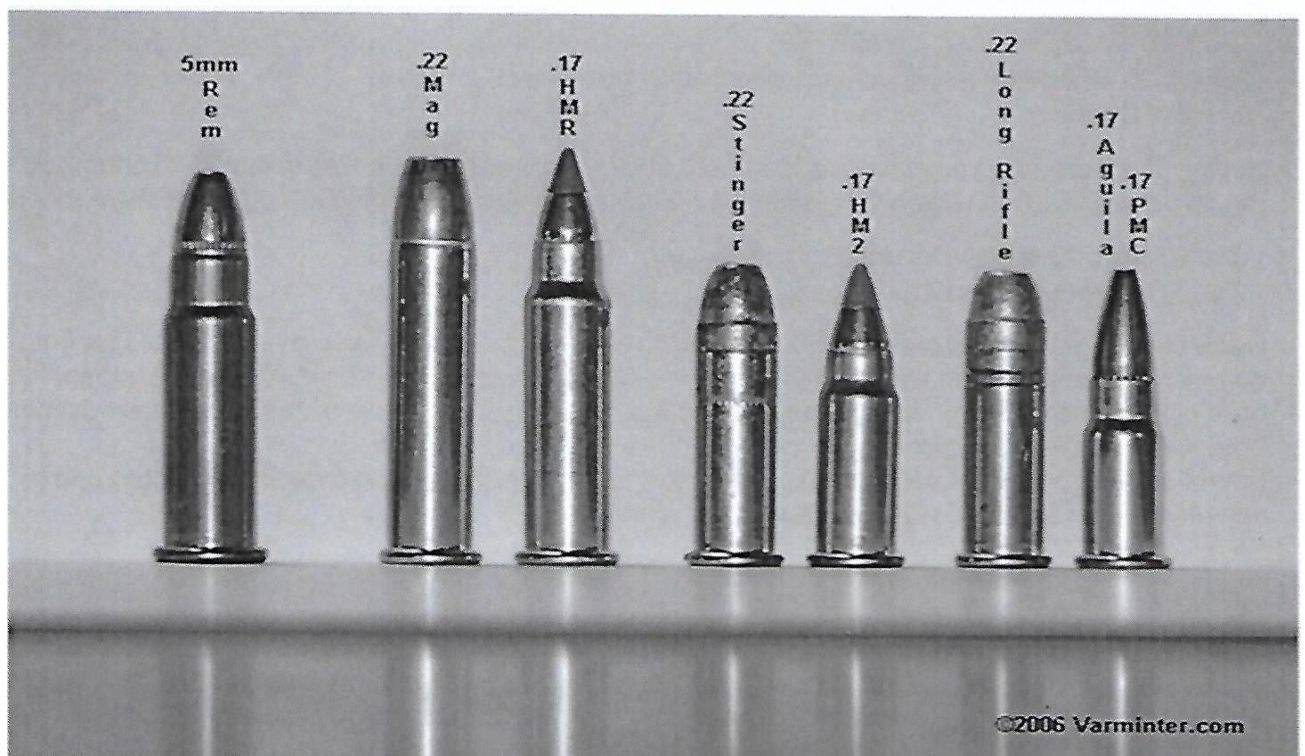
#### **PURCHASE OF AMMUNITION**

The procedure for the purchase of ammunition is not covered by the Weapons Act 1990 or the Weapons Regulations 1997.

The purchase and storage of ammunition is covered by the Explosives Act 1999 and the Explosives Regulations 2003 (Reprint No. 1)

You must produce your firearms licence when you are buying ammunition and particularly when buying gunpowder so that your licence number can be recorded.





### **POSSIBLE DANGEROUS CARTRIDGE INTERCHANGEABILITY**

- .222 Remington
- .223 Remington or 5.56 NATO
- .222 Remington Magnum

These first two can be accidentally chambered and fired in a .222 Rem Mag chambered rifle, depending on chamber tolerance and headspace or if force chambered, with projectile not firmly crimped. The projectile being forced further into the case on chambering. A .222 Rem can be fired in a .223 Rem accidentally. Similar to what occurs when a .308W is fired in a .30-06 as below. .222 Rem can be fired in a .223 Rem chamber and fire formed into the new chamber dimensions.

- .243 Winchester (308 Win necked to .243 or 6mm Cal)
- .25-06 Remington (30-06 case necked to .25 Cal)
- 7mm-08 Remington (308 Win necked to 7mm Cal)
- .308 Winchester, or 7.62mm x 51 mm NATO. Basically the same cartridge (One Imperial the other metric designation)
- .270 Winchester (30-06 case necked to .270 Cal)
- .30-06 Springfield (Parent case)

The parent case, .30-06 is resized and trimmed to length and neck reamed if necessary, depending on the projectile of choice: .243, .250, .270, 7mm or 30 calibres. Dangerous pressures are generated if a .308 Win is fired in a .270 Win chamber. A projectile of .308 inch will not resize to .270 inch with ease. Destruction of the firearm and injury to the operator is possible. Other combinations are also possible. A .308 Win fired in a .3006 chamber will take on the dimensions of the chamber. Inspection of the fired case will reveal that the case appears to be a .30-06 case with the neck missing. Check the chamber and the fired case to determine that the correct cartridge was fired and/or the case has not separated and the neck left in the bore. There are many cartridge cases that have the same rim size as the .30-06 (.473 inch) and may be chambered in a rifle for which they are not intended. Take care.

- 7 x 57mm Mauser
- .7mm Remington Mag

A 7 x 57 Mauser can be chambered and fired in a 7mm Rem Mag chamber, if the extractor claw holds the case against the bolt face on chambering and then fired. Dangerous: Escaping gases towards hands and face of firer when fired. The 7 x 57 case will expand to take up the near dimensions of the chamber with the splitting of the case.

- .32-20 Winchester (Usually chambered in lever action rifles)
- .310 Cadet

Surplus, (there are still some of them about), .310 Cadet Cartridges can be fired in the .32-20 chamber. Care should be exercised with pointed projectiles in tubular magazines. If necessary to use; load single shot only.

- .30-30 Winchester (lever action rifles)
- .32 Winchester Special (lever action rifles)

Cases are similar. Calibres are different. Easily confused unless compared side by side. Cartridges from commercial manufacturers will normally have the cartridge (calibre) type stamped (head stamped) into the base of the cartridge case. Surplus military cartridges will not necessarily have the calibre marked on the base. Only a date and factory code.

Normal imperial cartridges will be marked as a diameter of the projectile as a decimal in inches and manufacturer's name or developer's name. For example:

.222 Remington      .22 Calibre

.243 Remington      .243 Calibre

.308 Winchester      .30 Calibre

Metric or European cartridges are marked with calibre first then the length of the brass case. For example:

7mm x 57mm	7mm Dia. of projectile	57 Length of brass case
8mm x 57mm	8mm Dia. of projectile	57 Length of brass case
5.6mm x 39 mm	5.6mm Dia. of projectile	39mm Length of brass case Swedish Mauser (Mauser Military Cartridge)
6.5mm x 55mm	6.5mm Dia. of projectile	55mm Length of brass case

There are numerous cases that have head stamps of the parent case but may have been reformed or resized to another calibre by some re loader. A practice sometimes encountered. Care should be exercised when using cases or reloads in an unfamiliar firearm. Be sure of correct cartridge dimensions before use in unfamiliar firearms. Calibre is not necessarily marked on the firearm. If in doubt ask for informed help.

The old series Black Powder cartridges used in many of the old rifles including the lever actions will be encountered. For example: .25-20, .32-20, .38-55, .44.40, and .45-70 to list a few. The first number represents the calibre of the projectile in a decimal in inches. The second is the weight in Grains of Black Powder in the case.

7,000 Grains Pound (lb.) = 16 ounces (oz.) = 454grams. 1 grain (gr.) = 64.8 milligrams

Many of these cartridges have smokeless powder equivalent loads now. The weight of smokeless powder is NOT the same as the Black Powder load. There are many smokeless powders available, all with different burning rates. The smokeless load developed is safe in the newer firearms but caution should be exercised in use of these cartridges in the older firearms. The pressure generated with the smokeless loads may not be safe for use in these older firearms. Caution necessary. Many of these firearms could well be more than 100 years old.

Some of the new cartridges encountered such as WSSM's and WSM's (Winchester Super Short Magnums and Winchester Short Magnums) may sometimes chamber in the incorrect chamber if inserted into the longer Belted Magnum or similar sized chamber. The older Magnum is usually on the longer action as they are a long case. The Short Magnums as the name suggests is normally found on the medium action. To get the needed powder capacity the case is rather fat and short and no belted case. Again take care.



## **SHOTGUN CARTRIDGES**

Some of the older shotguns were made for **BLACK POWDER ONLY** and it may be unsafe to use smokeless powder loads in them. These firearms should be marked "FOR BLACK POWDER ONLY". Take care.

With the introduction of the new lead free shotgun cartridges, there will be instances of markings on shotguns such as "FOR USE WITH STEEL SHOT". Some of the older shotguns may not be safe if used with steel shot cartridges. Again take care.

There are numerous .410 gauge and 12 gauge cartridge lengths and shot loads. Attention is drawn to the chamber size and shot load marked on the firearm. Many of the older firearms were chambered for use with the shorter cartridge. Do not attempt to fire the longer length and heavier shot load in these firearms.

The above list is representative of possible combinations of incorrect use of cartridges. It is in no way an exhaustive list. There are other combinations possible. They are however, the combinations more likely to be encountered at this time.

It is well to remember that a cartridge, when fired, generates considerable pressure over a very short time in the chamber of the firearm, to propel the projectile down the bore of the firearm. The normal pressure generated in the burning of the propellant powder may be 50,00 pounds per square inch or higher.

(Somewhere in the vicinity of 3,440 bar). This very high pressure is generated by the ignition (burning) of the powder in very close proximity of the shooter's face, hands and eyes. A cartridge fired in a firearm in good condition and in its correct chamber, is normally safe. The firearm is designed to accommodate these pressures. Dangerous conditions occur if the incorrect cartridge is fired or the firearm is in poor condition. The cartridge case will not expand without rupture to form a proper seal on the walls of the chamber and bolt face on firing. These escaping gases, together with brass particles from a ruptured case can cause damage to the firearm and sadly, more importantly, also cause injury or death to the shooter.

## **PISTOLS**

Handguns are available in action types similar to their long arm relatives. Great care is required when handling and using handguns, especially as the shorter barrel requires greater concentration to ensure that it is always pointed in a safe direction.

Trigger Pull; Vital for both safety and accuracy. The recommended minimum trigger pull weight for target pistols is as per competition rules.

## **BLACK POWDER PISTOL**

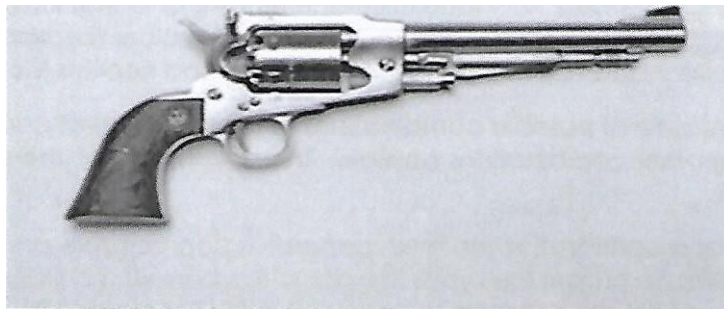
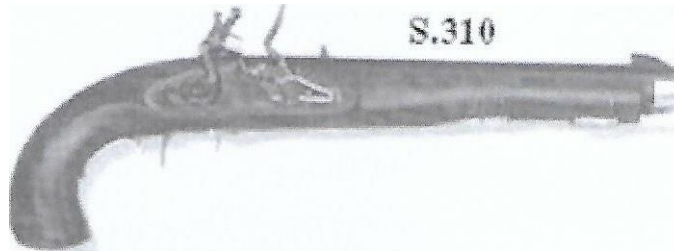
Is a firearm that is less than 75mm in length and is either a muzzle loading firearm or a cap and ball firearm. It does not accept cartridge ammunition

**THE PERCUSSION CAP LOCK MUZZLE LOADING FIREARM: (Use Black Powder only)**

The percussion Cap Lock firearm generally—

1. Load powder then patched ball
2. Remove ramrod from stock
3. Seat ball firmly on powder with ramrod

4. Return ramrod to stock
5. Half cock
6. Place percussion cap on nipple
7. Full cock
8. Fires

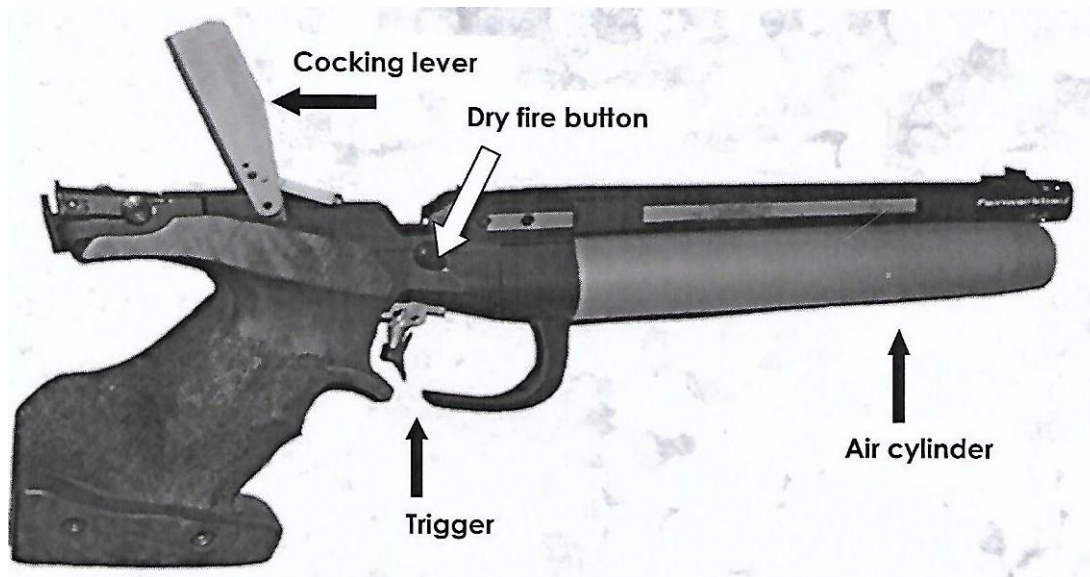


#### **SINGLE SHOT**

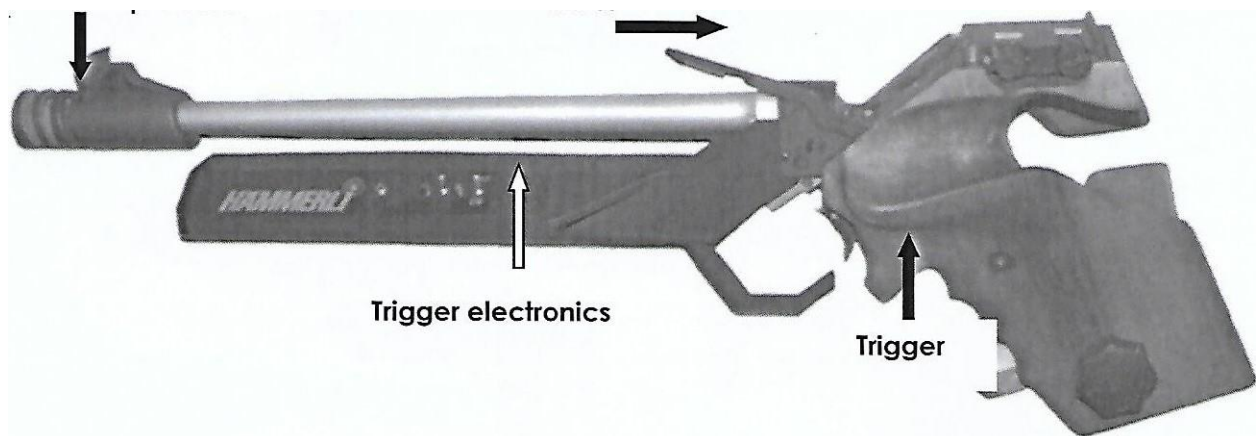
These may have the following actions; break, falling block or bolt.



Single shot pistol means just that, they have NO magazine or cylinder to hold extra rounds; instead the cartridge or pellet is loaded directly into the firing chamber manually, and the action must be opened and reloaded each time the firearm is fired.

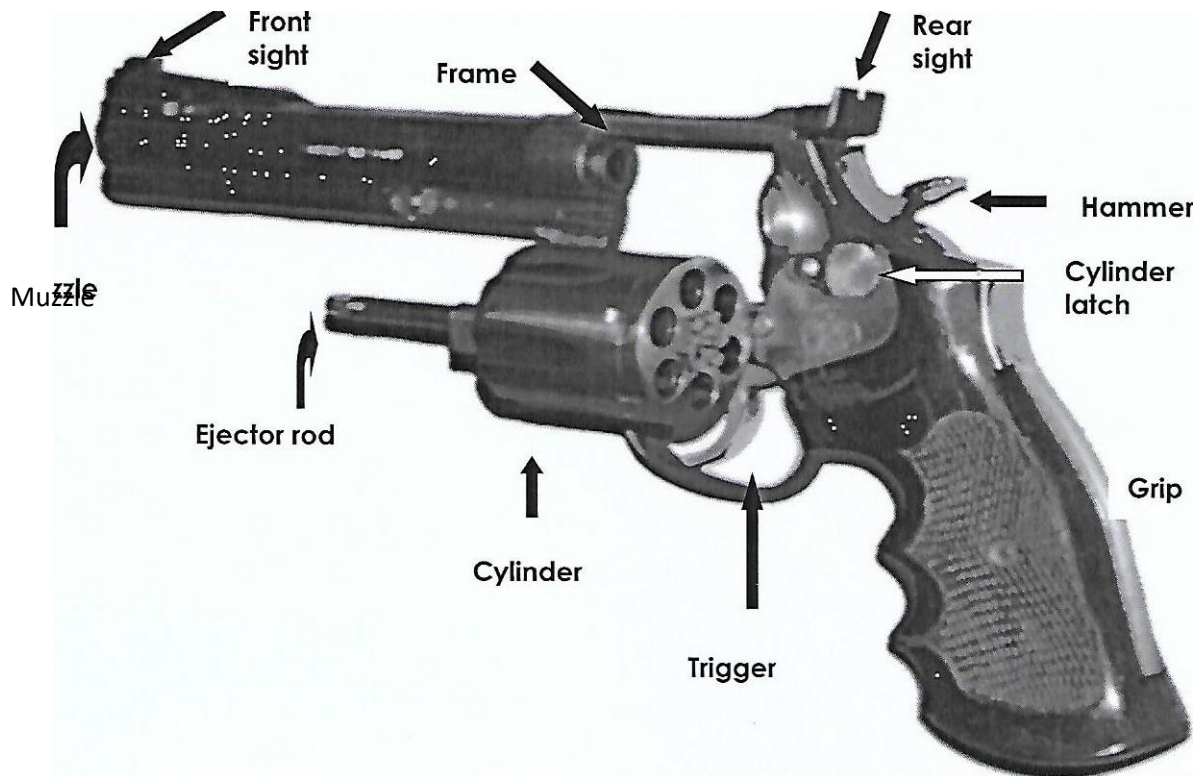


CompensatorLever



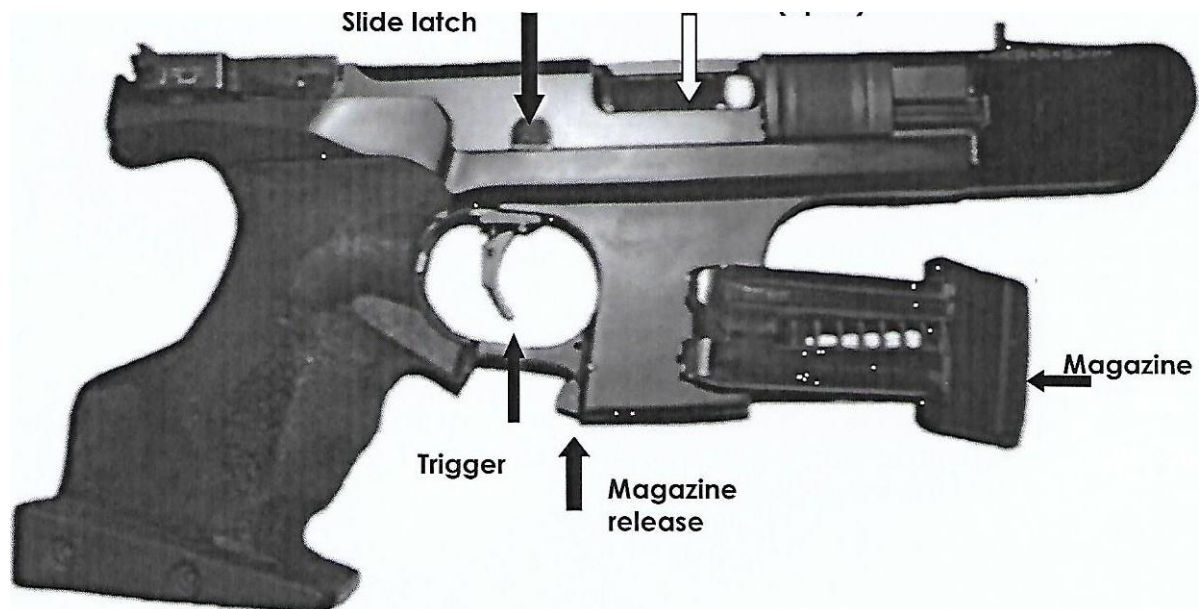
## REVOLVER

There are many types of revolvers and the revolving cylinder mounted in the centre of the guns' frames easily identifies these. The cylinder will have 5, 6 or more firing chambers that are brought into alignment with the bore, one at a time as the firing mechanism is operated. Basically, there are two types of revolvers referred to as single action or double action revolvers.



#### SEMI-AUTOMATIC

Firstly, unlike revolvers, cartridges are carried in a box magazine in the butt or frame of the pistol and are fed one at a time into the firing chamber. Once loaded and fired, the recoil energy of the fired cartridge is used to move the slide back to eject the empty case, and spring tension is used to strip and feed a new cartridge into the firing chamber ready to be fired once more. There are many different types of semi-automatics; again we have single action or double action.



## DETERMINING THE GENERAL CONDITION OF A FIREARM

Determining the general condition of a firearm is something that a person learns over many years' involvement with the many different types of firearms available.

Some of the more noticeable things in relation to the general condition of a firearm and could be checked personally would be—

- The general appearance of the firearm
- The condition of the bore and/or rifling
- Any wear that may be evident in relation to any moving parts

Some of the more intricate things in relation to the general condition of a firearm, and possibly require the assistance of a licensed dealer or a licensed armourer would be—

- The firearm's head spacing
- Wear in relation to the trigger mechanism and/or safety catch. Any defects in the actual materials, e.g. Metal fatigue.

## HOLSTERS

According to Weapons Regulations, a person may wear a category H firearm only if the person has an occupational requirement to wear it. The holster must be consistent with the shape and size of the firearm and be designed with a safety strap to secure the firearm in the holster, and the safety strap must be fastened and also designed so that the trigger is not exposed.

If the holster is worn in conjunction with a belt, the holster must be securely attached to the belt. If not worn on a belt, it must be secure within/on the vehicle being used.

The Weapons Safety Course does not qualify a person to use a holster for competition purposes. For sports or target shooting at an approved range, the shooter must have undertaken the required Holster Proficiency Test according to the Association that they are a member of and only for those matches that it is required for, and only worn whilst under the control of the Range Officer.

## MALFUNCTION / MISFIRE PROCEDURES

### PISTOL

#### *RURAL/OCCUPATIONAL ONLY*

On properties (if using the property handgun), should a malfunction/misfire occur, wait at least 30 seconds before clearing the ammunition, remembering to be aware of the muzzle pointing in a safe direction.

#### *LICENSED PISTOL RANGE ONLY*

As pistols are not allowed for hunting, all malfunctions are controlled by the Range Officer conducting the event. Should a malfunction occur, wait until the Range Officer is able to attend to you, explain what has happened and hand the firearm to the Range Officer so that he may take it from underneath.

All shooters should know the rules for malfunctions. If uncertain, ask the Range Officer before anything is done. In some cases, such as timed events, you can clear the malfunction yourself, pending time available.



## How to clean a firearm by Technical Advisor Brendan Atkinson

Firearms work better, shoot straighter and last longer if they are properly maintained and treated with respect. A large part of this maintenance involves the proper cleaning and care of the working



mechanisms and the all-important bore. What I consider to be the best method of cleaning firearms may differ from the opinion of others. I base my cleaning routines on the way I clean my bench rest target rifles, and I continue to use these procedures down through the rest

of my hunting firearms. Bench rest rifles are the Formula One of the centrefire rifle world. They incorporate every possible piece of technology to produce incredibly small groups. A large part of this is the use of stainless steel match-grade barrels, which can cost more than \$800 when fitted to an action. We do not use dubious methods when dealing with such precision instruments. If it works with these barrels, it certainly works on firearms not requiring such pinpoint accuracy. Having said that, what shooter would not want his/her firearm to be as accurate as possible?

When a firearm is discharged, particles of burnt powder and primer residue are left in the bore, along with copper or lead-fouling depending on what bullets are being used. The next shot causes the bullet to pass over the fouling and so on for subsequent shots. If the firearm is neglected and many shots fired, a sandwich build-up of fouling can occur in the bore, especially just in front of the chamber. This, in effect, reduces the size of the bore and can result in a rise in pressure - in extreme cases, copper-clad bullets can be swaged down by this fouling so they exit the bore slightly undersized, and this is why fouling causes accuracy to drop off as more shots are fired. This can happen in a little as 20 shots in some barrels. Lead bullets, such as those fired in pistols and rim fires, are less affected by this problem, but will still perform better in a clean bore. A firearm that has been left in an unclean state for a long time may also have a pitted bore, which will not become obvious until it is cleaned thoroughly. Of course, by then it is too late. Shotgun shooters have an additional problem, in that plastic fouling from the wads used to hold the shot can sometimes leave a very stubborn type of fouling in the bore. Special brushes are available to help remove this.

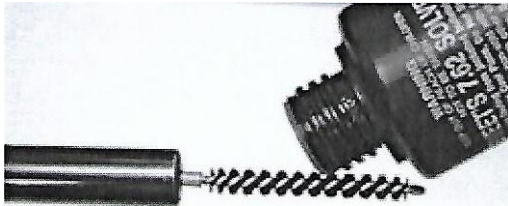


So, let's have a look at some cleaning methods. Firstly, it is a great help to the shooter to have some sort of cleaning cradle upon which to rest the firearm. If one already has a set of bench rest stands, they will do the job nicely. If not, make a cleaning cradle from a wooden box - cut a six-centimetre 'V' in both ends, and put some padding on the 'V' surface to protect the finish of the firearm. Inside the box, place all the cleaning gear apart from the cleaning-rod - it keeps things tidy.

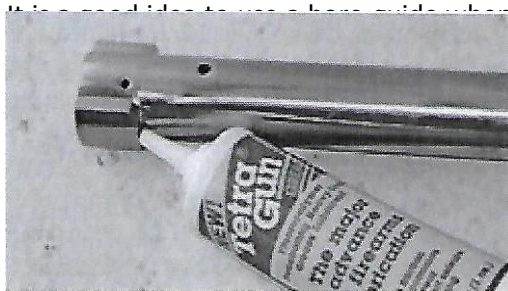
The basic items needed for bore-cleaning consist of the following:

- a one-piece cleaning-rod of appropriate length and diameter
- bronze bristle brushes of the correct bore size
- a nylon bristle brush as above
- a suitable brass patch jag
- a good supply of cotton patches
- a good quality bore (powder) solvent
- a good quality copper solvent for stubborn fouling
- a small glass jar filled with white spirits or Shellie
- a tin of Kroil (USA) or Penetrene (Aus) lubricant

The easiest type of fouling to remove is the loose powder type that can actually be seen by inspecting the bore after firing. To do this, spear a patch of the correct size on a brass jag and anoint it with bore solvent. Pass this patch through the bore and out of the muzzle. It will be stained with black residue and under no circumstances should be pulled back through the bore. Remember that carbon is one of the hardest substances known to man and dragging it back through the bore will damage it. Allow the patch to fall off the jag as the rod is withdrawn through the muzzle. Pass further patches with bore solvent through the bore until they come out clean. Do not skimp on patches, as they are much cheaper than barrels. At this stage, most of the powder and primer fouling (the black stuff) will have been removed.



Take a bronze bristle brush of the correct diameter for the bore, and pass it through the barrel from the chamber end until it is fully exposed in front of the muzzle. Place about ten drops of bore solvent along its length and by using the cleaning rod make about ten passes through the bore all the way through. If the brush is anointed with solvent before inserting it into the barrel, there is a risk that drops may fall into the magazine and trigger area. Before doing anything else, rinse off the bronze brush in the jar of Shellite, to remove fouling particles and the old solvent. Never leave a bronze brush wet with solvent for any length of time - the solvent is designed to attack copper, and that means it attacks the brush as well, which will cause bristles to fall out.

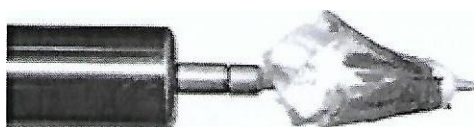


It is a good idea to use a bore guide when cleaning rifles, as this will help prevent solvent and loose bristles falling into the wrong areas. A bore-guide is just that - it prevents the cleaning rod from contacting the sensitive throat area of the barrel. Many barrels have been ruined by ham-fisted cleaning, which in severe cases has cut a groove in the throat of the barrel at the three o'clock position for right-handers and the opposite for lefties. Can you guess why? Firearms such as pump action rifles and shotguns (and some lever actions) have to be cleaned from the muzzle end, and a muzzle protecting rod-guide is an absolute must to prevent damage to the crown.

At this point, it is a good idea to run a couple of wet patches through to remove what the bronze brush has loosened up. Don't be surprised if they come out very black, as the brush will locate any ingrained powder fouling. When the patches come out unstained, it's in with the bronze brush again for another ten or so strokes. Hopefully this time the patches will come out almost clean. Two more wet, and one dry patch and you are done. Or are you?

Looking up the bore may give the impression that everything is shiny and clean, but is it? To test this out, use the nylon bristle brush and anoint the barrel with solvent. Now leave the barrel for some hours, preferably overnight, muzzle down in your gun safe - never muzzle up, as solvent will run back into the action and trigger area. Read the instructions on the bore solvent bottle, as some solvents are not recommended for overnight soaking, usually the ones that have an ammonia base.

Next day, pass a patch through the bore. If there are any green or blue traces on it, there is still copper fouling present. If severe, the bronze brush should be used to get it out, but if it is just a faint amount of



colour, then another soak will probably finish the job.

For really stubborn copper fouling, there are specific copper removing solvents. The best known is probably Sweet's 7.62, an Aussie-made ammonia-based solvent that has received wide acceptance both in Australia and abroad. It is applied to the bore with a nylon bristle brush (never use a bronze brush) and left to sit for about ten minutes per application. Believe me, if there is any copper in there this stuff will find it and remove it. Rinse the brush off in warm tap water after use. Patch-out the barrel until dry, then pass a patch through, lightly anointed with Kroil, Penetrene or gun oil to prevent rust.

The above method applies to rifles, but can be adapted to pistols and shotguns by using the appropriate-sized rods and brushes. Revolver shooters have six chambers to clean in addition to the barrel.

With the bore taken care of, we need to look at the rest of the firearm. If it has been used in wet or dusty conditions, it is a good idea to take the barrelled action out of the stock and give the trigger a clean by using one of the modern spray-type gun cleaners. A very small dab of moly-based grease on the sears is all that is required and all metal parts should be given a wipe-over with a cloth, lightly anointed with good gun oil. Lightly means just that - enough to prevent rust, but not enough to attract dust. Always lubricate the locking lugs of the bolt to prevent galling. With shotguns, put a little lubrication on the knuckles of the action. Always lubricate the bore when storing any firearm for some time. Synthetic stocks only need a rub with a damp cloth, but for wooden ones, any of the good furniture polishes will make them look like new.

## **THE D.R.S.A.B. OF FIRST AID**

(The following extract has been taken from the booklet of First Aid Hints published by St John Ambulance)

In life-threatening situations, remember the D.R.A.B.C. of First Aid.

Quickly assess whether the patient is conscious or unconscious (see below)

Where there is more than one patient always give priority to the unconscious patient.

Follow these steps:

### ***D - DANGER***

Ensure there is no danger to yourself. Then the patient, then any other person who is, or may become involved.

### ***R- RESPONSE***

Check for response — ask name — squeeze shoulders.

- No Response — send for help
- Response — make comfortable, check for injuries and monitor response

### ***S - SEND FOR HELP***

Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance or ask another person to make the call

### ***A - AIRWAY***



Open Mouth — Make sure the airway is clear. If foreign material is present:

- Place in the recovery position
- Clear airway with fingers

### ***B - BREATHING***

Check if the patient is breathing — LOOK, LISTEN and FEEL.

- Not breathing — Start CPR
- Normal breathing — place in recovery position, monitor breathing, manage injuries, treat for shock.

### **EMERGENCIES**

Stay with the patient. Call for help. Follow these steps.

1. Quickly assess the situation.
2. Ensure safety for the patient and yourself. Where there is danger, remove the cause of dangers from the patient or the patient from the cause.
3. Decide what you must do first, following the priority given under the DRABC of First Aid.
4. Move the patient as little as possible. If he can be treated where he is, don't move him, unless there is danger to the patient or the first aider. The patient should be moved only if:
5. He is in danger from fire, road traffic, hot road surfaces, electric current, drowning etc. It is necessary to establish and maintain a clear airway or perform expired air resuscitation.
6. Reassure the conscious patient.
7. Let the conscious patient rest in the position he finds most comfortable. IS THE PATIENT CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS?

### **Assessment of Response**

The most important observation the first aider makes is whether the patient is conscious or unconscious.

Check the response to "Touch and Talk"

Touch the patient by the shoulder. Ask his name and give him a simple command — "open your eyes" — "squeeze my hand. Let it go." If he responds he is conscious

The patient is unconscious if he fails to respond to the spoken word.

### **BLEEDING (haemorrhage)**

Haemorrhage or bleeding is loss of blood from blood vessels.

Profuse bleeding may lead to collapse and to death, depending on how much blood is lost and how rapidly.

Bleeding may be:

External — or visible from a wound.

Internal — into tissues, organs, body cavities.

### **Symptoms**

These will depend on the causes of bleeding, the site of the wound and the rate of bleed. There may be pain associated with a wound or fracture or abdominal tenderness from internal bleeding. The patient may complain of weakness or dizziness or feeling faint.

### **Treatment**

Lie the patient down.

Elevate the wounded part if on a limb and there is no fracture. Press edges of the wound together. Put pressure on the bleeding part with fingers or a dressing.

Clean round the wound, wiping away from the wound, and gently remove any loose foreign bodies. Apply a dressing, maintaining direct pressure and bandage securely. If bleeding continues, remove the dressing and apply direct pressure to the bleeding area (with fingers if necessary) for a longer period before replacing the bandage.

Note: Do not use an arterial tourniquet in the treatment of bleeding as it is:

- Painful
- May damage underlying tissue, especially nerves
- May make bleeding worse.

First aid is just that: the initial helping hand for a person in distress. In extreme cases, it could mean the difference between life and death. That is why everyone has an obligation, not only to family and friends but also to other members of the community, to become familiar with at least the basics of first aid.

The 'First Aid Hints' booklet is deliberately aimed at the untrained person who may wish to improve his or her knowledge of first aid. It is a very comprehensive publication and should be equally suitable as a training guide or as a ready reference in time of need.