



BASICS OF  
**PISTOL**  
**SHOOTING**  
PHASE II

---

LESSON PLANS & SHOOTING QUALIFICATIONS





*BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING PHASE II:  
LESSON PLANS & SHOOTING QUALIFICATIONS*



**NRA**™

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**BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING PHASE II:  
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***Thank you for your dedication to upholding  
the standards of the NRA training programs.***

***Good luck with your course!***

We thank you for your commitment to firearm education and for participating in the training programs of the National Rifle Association. Your expertise and dedication will help train a new generation of shooters how to exercise their freedoms safely and responsibly. If you have any questions about the NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course, please contact:

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11250 Waples Mill Road  
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## **DISCLAIMER**

The NRA expressly disclaims any and all liabilities, losses, costs, claims, demands, suits, or actions of any type or nature whatsoever arising from or in any way related to: this manual; the use of this manual; any representation, drawing, or statement made in this manual; or any claim that a particular action is in compliance or performed according or pursuant to this manual.

This manual is under no circumstances to be viewed as a restatement of the law in any jurisdiction or to assure compliance with any applicable federal, state or local laws, ordinances, rules or regulations. You must consult a local attorney to ascertain compliance with all applicable federal, state or local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations and to advise you of the applicable duty of care required in your jurisdiction.

Instructors should consult with their attorneys for advice on reducing their potential liability for injuries or damages which students or others may incur while learning to use pistols safely, or as a result of other activities. The effectiveness of theories of liability (e.g., strict liability, negligence, and others) and methods for protecting oneself from liability (e.g., incorporation, waivers, and others) vary between different jurisdictions, and the attorney consulted should be familiar with the law of the applicable jurisdiction.

Discharging firearms in poorly ventilated areas, cleaning firearms, or handling ammunition or lead-containing components may result in exposure to lead. Have adequate ventilation at all times. Wash hands with water after exposure.

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

Phase II of the NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course reinforces and applies the skills students have already learned in the NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting e-learning. Instructors are responsible for effectively reviewing safety rules and procedures, while also coaching and assisting students as they handle pistols for the first time in a classroom and range setting. Ultimately, students will become more comfortable and familiar with pistols in order to achieve certification. The Basic Pistol Course will also help prepare the student for participation in other NRA courses.

In order to uphold the NRA's adherence to safety, and to maintain standardization among all NRA courses, adhere to the following guidelines when conducting the NRA Basic Pistol Course.

The key to conducting a successful Basic Pistol Shooting Course is to be well organized and know the subject. To maintain national standards for this program, the NRA has developed lesson plans for you. Prepare for the class by reviewing this lesson plan and ensuring that all materials are prepped for use. Each lesson plan provides the:

- Lesson title
- Learning objectives
- Estimated length of lesson
- Location and preparation information
- Materials

- Resources, including references to e-learning lesson
- Discussion notes
- Demonstration notes
- Student practice information
- Performance Requirements Checklist information

Prepare for the class by reviewing this lesson plan and ensuring that all materials are prepped for use.

Combined with the information found in the *NRA Trainer's Guide* ("Planning and Conducting Your NRA Course"), the material presented in this course outline will put you on the road to success. The learning objectives are your road map--use them.

## **OBJECTIVES**

In Phase II, instructors are responsible for determining whether students have successfully completed each exercise. In this course, students must complete the exercises provided and meet the shooting qualification in order to achieve certification. Use the Performance Requirements Checklist provided (see Appendix E) to sign off on each exercise as the student demonstrates proficiency. (You are authorized to make photocopies of the Performance Requirements Checklist and Shooting Targets as needed.)

Explanations and demonstrations provided by the instructors are not to be confused with meeting a learning objective. The students must be able to perform each objective. It is up to the instructor's discretion whether the student has passed. There is no minimum score to pass. Cause for failing a student would be the unsafe handling of a firearm, inability to meet learning objectives, or a poor attitude.

## **QUALIFICATION/COURSE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE**

Basic Pistol Phase II students must demonstrate the Knowledge, Skills, and Attitude necessary for the safe and proficient use of a pistol, and pass the qualification shooting standard at a Level 1: Red minimum to earn a completion certificate.

**Instructors need to provide an original Performance Requirements Checklist to the student and keep a copy for the instructor's records. Then, instructors and students need to each sign off on Exercises 1 through 4 in the Performance Requirements Checklist as students demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary for the safe and proficient use of a pistol. After completion of Exercise 4, sign and date each copy of the Performance Requirements Checklist for completion.**

After completion of Exercise 4, sign and date each copy of the Performance Requirements Checklist for completion. Students are ready to begin the shooting qualification to earn certification. Keep in mind that each qualification level does not need to be conducted in a single session. **Sample qualification targets are available at the end of this lesson plan. Instructors may make as many copies as needed, however print a test page for each level to ensure they have printed to the proper target measurements. If not, you may have to enable your printer to print outside of the margins. If you're unable to print the targets to the proper size, create your own targets to meet the standard.**

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Instructors have the freedom to invite students back for further mentorship, and qualifying for each additional level as well as participating in the Winchester/NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program. If your students' return, you have the choice of printing new certificates to endorse each level, or have them bring their original certificates back for your endorsement.

### **Red, White, and Blue Certification**

Students must qualify at the Level 1: Red level to earn a Basic Pistol Course Completion certificate. Once the student accomplishes the Level 1: Red level, instructors are encouraged to offer them the opportunity to qualify for the Level 2: White, Level 3: Blue, and Instructor level endorsements on their certificates.

- Qualification for **Level 1: Red** is four five shot groups within the four-inch circle at 10 feet.
- Qualification for **Level 2: White** is four five shot groups within the four-inch circle at 15 feet.
- Qualification for **Level 3: Blue** is four five shot groups within the four-inch circle at 20 feet.

### **Instructor Certification**

Instructors can also take this opportunity to allow the students the opportunity to shoot to the same qualification standard an NRA Certified Instructor must shoot. For the instructor level, use the NRA Instructor Training Qualification Target. Have the student shoot 20 shots from 45 feet. If they are able to place 16 of the 20 shots within a six inch group, the student would earn the instructor level endorsement. Each endorsement is something they would be proud to share with their friends and family.

## **MATERIALS**

### **Required**

- Performance Requirements Checklist (printed, one per student and one per instructor for record keeping)
- Targets (blank typing paper and bullseye targets)
- Staple gun and staples, and/or target holders
- Target pasters
- Eye and hearing protection
- Pens or pencils
- Course schedule (one per student and instructor)
- Firearms (single-action and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)
- Appropriate dummy ammunition
- Live ammunition (a minimum of 200 rounds of quality factory ammunition per student)
- Gun cleaning kit

### **Optional**

- NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course Wall Charts (13330)
- NRA DVD: Fundamentals of Gun Safety (11560) and DVD player
- NRA Range Rules Poster (EF 14880)
- Flip chart, easel, and markers
- Computer presentation and projector
- Dry erase board, markers, and eraser
- Name tags

- Marking pens
- Highlighter pens
- Folding chairs
- Refreshments
- NRA Member Services Guide (one per student)
- Ceiling fans or floor fans for ventilation
- Access to Phase I: Basics of Pistol Shooting e-learning

See the current NRA Trainers' Catalog or <http://materials.nrahq.org> for item numbers and prices.

## **TIME REQUIREMENTS**

The NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting course Phase II is objective-based. This course has been designed to allow for maximum flexibility in scheduling. The exercise times listed are typical times and your actual experience may vary.

Instructors teaching this course for the first time, those mentoring new instructors, or those who do not have the support of an experienced instructor team should factor in additional time. It is better to plan a longer course and finish early than to run overtime or cut a lesson short. With experience gained by teaching from these lesson plans, you will soon be able to plan an entire course accurately and adhere more closely to your schedule.

## **EXERCISE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Location**

Each lesson will indicate whether you may perform the exercises in a classroom, or whether a range is required. If you have difficulty scheduling range time, or must maximize the amount of shooting and minimize dry practice while on the range, then you may want to conduct all of the dry-firing drills in a classroom setting before proceeding to the range.

### **Targets**

Use blank targets (such as typing paper or the back of a standard target) allow beginning shooters to concentrate upon sight alignment and trigger control without the distraction of a bullseye. Use targets provided in the lesson plan for the shooting exercises when indicated. The emphasis should be on shooting for group, not score. Instructors may make as many copies of the targets as desired.

## **STUDENT-TO-INSTRUCTOR RATIO**

During the range exercises for the NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course, a *one-to-one student-to-instructor ratio on the firing line is encouraged whenever possible*. If this is not possible, the ratio on the firing line should not exceed two shooters for every NRA Certified Pistol Instructor.

Whenever possible, use the coach/pupil method, with one student coaching the shooter on the line through the proper technique. This promotes student learning and provides an extra pair of eyes on the shooting line for greater safety.

Additionally, it is recommended that a range safety officer oversee the safety of the entire line. The range safety officer's responsibility is to ensure safety, not to give individual instruction.

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Depending upon the range facilities used and the number of instructors available, it may be advantageous to split the class into two or more separate groups or to use two relays for the range sessions.

## **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT**

### **Total Participant Involvement**

The key to a successful and positive training experience is total participant involvement (TPI). *People learn by doing!* Use questions, discussions, demonstrations, group interaction, and practical exercises to their maximum potential. Minimize lectures. Remember, telling is *not* synonymous with teaching.

### **Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers**

Pregnant women are encouraged to discuss their participation in this course with their physicians prior to the first lesson. They should discuss the effects of exposure to loud sounds and (if using an indoor range) airborne lead particulate. If any students are pregnant or nursing an infant, *they should not handle any chemicals, lubricants, or solvents* unless they have discussed doing so with their physician.

### **Physical Limitations and Disabilities**

Some students will not be able to assume certain shooting positions (i.e., standing shooting positions) because of physical limitations or disabilities. The presence of a physical limitation does not by itself affect a student's eligibility to attend the course or receive a completion certificate. Where necessary, adapt the exercise to work within a given student's abilities. For example, students in wheelchairs may utilize a sitting unsupported shooting position for the standing positions taught in this course.

Students who are in wheelchairs, use prosthetic devices, or have amputations may need gun handling skills and techniques adapted in ways that are not covered in this lesson plan or the student handbook. An excellent resource for assistance and advice in working with disabled shooters is the national manager of the NRA Adaptive Shooting Program. Call Manager, National Adaptive Shooting Program, Education and Training Division, National Rifle Association of America, (703) 267-1431, for further information and assistance.

Regardless of the physical ability, all students are required to demonstrate the necessary **knowledge, skills, and attitude** to receive a course completion certificate. Also, safety must never be compromised when modifying techniques to accommodate a student's abilities.

## TERMINOLOGY

Do not use the term *weapon* in this course. *Weapon* has a negative connotation. Use *pistol*, *revolver*, *gun*, *firearm*, etc.

## FIREARM SAFETY

During every lesson, constantly emphasize in words and by your own actions that a gun must always be kept pointed in a safe direction. Be certain that students observe this rule at all times, especially whenever students handle guns, as in dry-fire, live-fire and gun cleaning exercises. Safety must be your foremost concern; therefore, you must personally observe all of the gun safety rules at all times, and monitor your students carefully to ensure that they are also observing these rules.

Whenever you pick up a pistol, either for demonstration purposes or to hand it to a student, always be sure to keep it pointed in a safe direction, keep your finger off the trigger, remove the magazine (if any), open the action, and visually and physically check the chamber(s) to be sure that no live round remains in the gun. Use each such occasion as an opportunity to reinforce your students' gun safety training by having a student verify the unloaded condition of the pistol. Be sure that each student also performs this sequence of steps each time he or she picks up a pistol. Ensure that the student observes all of the safe gun handling rules (such as "ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction") while he or she inspects the chamber(s) to verify that the pistol is empty.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** All training aids to be used as representation of a firearm (e.g.: Blue guns, Laser training devices, Air Soft, Air guns, toy guns, etc.), MUST be treated in the same fashion and with the same safety rules as firearms AT ALL TIMES. Infractions against this rule will be treated exactly the same as infractions using firearms in the same manner.

Bad habits can easily be passed from instructor to student, and so you must make absolutely sure that all necessary respect for firearms safety rules are followed at all times, regardless of the tool used in the capacity of firearm during a class.

## Establish Emergency Procedures

Establish emergency procedures to be followed in the event of an accident. All course staff should be aware of these procedures and maintain a list of emergency telephone numbers.

## No Live Ammunition in the Classroom

No live ammunition is permitted in the classroom. In a training environment where handling and dry firing is necessary, it is imperative that no ammunition or loaded firearms be present. If ammunition is not in the room, it cannot possibly get into a firearm! This protects instructors from potential liability and protects the students as well. Only dummy ammunition that is visually distinct from live ammunition is allowed in the classroom. Live ammunition may only be present on the range during live-fire exercises.

## **RELEASE, WAIVER, INDEMNIFICATION, HOLD HARMLESS, AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK AGREEMENT**

A sample Release, Waiver, Indemnification, Hold Harmless, and Assumption of Risk Agreement is included in the *NRA Trainer's Guide*. You or your club may want to develop a similar agreement for use with your shooting activities.

Please note that the legal issues that may be raised in an attempt to enforce such an agreement involve the interpretation of contract and tort law, both of which are governed by state (not federal) law. Tort and contract law varies from state to state and this form agreement may be enforceable in some jurisdictions and not in others. You will have to tailor this agreement to comport with the law of the state in which you intend to use it. You are strongly urged to obtain the advice of an attorney licensed to practice law in your state to advise you of the specific applicable state statutory and common law as they relate to tort and contract law, and in particular how to ensure the enforceability of release and waiver and hold harmless and indemnification agreements in your jurisdiction.

The form agreement was not drafted by an attorney licensed to practice law in your state, nor was it drafted to comport with and to withstand the scrutiny of the particular laws in your state. The agreement is therefore not to be considered as a restatement of law, nor is it to be relied upon to protect you. You must have an attorney, who is licensed to practice law in your state, review said form, if you intend to make any use of it.

Please note that the agreement is intended to be executed by adult individuals, not minors. Even if otherwise effective, it will not be effective if executed by or on behalf of a minor.

## **WINCHESTER/NRA PISTOL MARKSMANSHIP QUALIFICATION PROGRAM**

Be sure to encourage participation in the Winchester/NRA Pistol Marksmanship Qualification program. This program is designed to support the course content and will help the students get started in a shooting program. Emphasize that it is a fun and challenging way for students to demonstrate the skills they have acquired in the Basic Pistol Shooting Course, and also serves as an incentive to further enhance those skills.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Exercise 1: Firearm and Range Safety Review

**Setting:** Classroom and/or range

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Review the three NRA rules for safe gun-handling.
2. State range rules.
3. Identify range commands.

### Exercise 2: Fundamentals

**Setting:** Classroom and/or range

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Determine your dominant eye.
2. Assume a proper two-handed grip.
3. Demonstrate the five fundamentals of pistol shooting: aiming, breath control, hold control, trigger control, and follow through.

### Exercise 3: Loading, Cocking, De-cocking, Unloading, and Pistol Maintenance

**Setting:** Classroom and/or Range

**Learning Objectives:**

- A. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a single-action revolver.
- B. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a double-action revolver.
- C. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a semi-automatic pistol.
- D. Review how to safely clean a pistol.

### Exercise 4: Shooting Positions and Shooting Qualification

**Setting:** Range

**Learning Objectives:**

- A. Demonstrate the five learning steps to shoot from the benchrest position
- B. Demonstrate the five learning steps to shoot from the Isosceles position.
- C. Shoot the course qualification.

## **STUDENT COURSE INTRODUCTION**

Before beginning the course exercises, take 20 minutes to address various administrative tasks with students.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

- Instructor
- Staff
- Assistants
- Range staff (if appropriate)

### **POLICIES**

- No live ammunition in the classroom
- Firearm security
- Refreshments/snacks/smoking
- Breaks and lunch
- Cell phones and other mobile devices

### **LOCATION INFORMATION**

- Restrooms and drinking fountains
- Phones and emergency exits
- Air conditioning and heating adjustment

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

- Course length
- Course objective
- Course outline

## EXERCISE 1

### Firearm and Range Safety

#### INTRODUCTION

In this exercise, you will introduce many range safety rules that weren't learned previously in the course. This exercise focuses on students becoming familiar with safe gun-handling and range safety rules. Even if this exercise is held at the range, do not introduce ammunition at this time since this is the first gun-handling experience for many students.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| OBJECTIVES | A. Review the three NRA rules for safe gun-handling.<br>B. State range safety rules and information.<br>C. Identify range commands.  |
| TIME       | This exercise is objective based   |
| LOCATION   | Classroom or Range <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up a table as a firing line. Lay various pistols on the table so that they are pointed safely downrange.</li></ul>  |
| MATERIALS  | <b>Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firearms (single-action and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)<br/>*no ammunition is required in this exercise*</li><li>• Eye and hearing protection</li><li>• Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist for each student</li><li>• Pens or pencils</li></ul><br><b>Optional</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask the facility manager for a copy of range rules</li><li>• Handout: <i>NRA Gun Safety Rules</i></li><li>• NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting Course Wall Charts</li><li>• <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist for each student</b></li><li>• Notepads and pens or pencils – one per student</li></ul> |
| RESOURCES  | Basics of Pistol Shooting Phase I <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson 3 – Using a Pistol</li><li>• Lesson 5 – Introduction to Shooting a Pistol</li></ul>   |
| IMPORTANT  |  <p><b>Students should not be handling ammunition or loaded pistols in this exercise. No live ammunition in the classroom!</b></p>  |

## ACTIVITIES

### A. Review the three NRA rules for safe gun-handling.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>         | <p>Ask students what the major causes of firearm accidents are. Discuss their responses. There are typically two major causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ignorance</b> (lack of knowledge) regarding rules of safe gun handling and of the proper and safe way to operate a pistol.</li><li>• <b>Carelessness</b> (poor or improper attitude) leading to a failure to apply the rules of safe gun handling and to observe proper procedures for safely operating a pistol.</li></ul>   |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>      | <p>Using an unloaded pistol, demonstrate safe gun-handling. Emphasize the importance of each step.</p> <p><b><u>ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.</u></b></p> <p>Emphasize that this is the single most important rule of gun safety. This rule means that a gun must <b><u>ALWAYS</u></b> be pointed so that even if it were unintentionally discharged, it would not cause injury or damage. Ask what a “safe direction” might be under different circumstances. Discuss the responses.</p> <p><b><u>ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.</u></b></p> <p>Your trigger finger should always be kept straight alongside the frame and out of the trigger guard until you have made the decision to shoot.</p> <p><b><u>ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.</u></b></p> <p>A pistol cannot fire if it is unloaded. Tell the students that whenever they pick up a firearm, they must immediately point it in a safe direction, with the trigger finger off the trigger, and then check to make sure it is unloaded.</p> |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>The purpose of these two exercises is to provide the students with an opportunity, under supervision, to learn and practice the safe gun handling rules through practical application.</p> <p>Use a table in the classroom as a firing line. Lay the various pistols on the table so that they are pointed safely downrange.</p> <p>Evaluate each student as appropriate using the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b>, providing positive feedback as appropriate.</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Independent gun handling</b>                 | Have the students practice the safe gun handling rules while they pick up the pistols. Observe the students closely and evaluate their performance. Be sure that each student, when picking up a gun, immediately checks to make sure the gun is unloaded while keeping it pointed in a safe direction and maintaining his or her trigger finger off the trigger. |
| <b>2. Exchanging a pistol with another student</b> | Have each student pick up a pistol, open the action and verify it is unloaded, and hand it to another student. Ensure that the students observe the rules for safe gun handling at all times.   |

## B. State range safety rules and information.

### DISCUSSION



#### 1. Range-specific information and rules

For the range you are using, identify and explain the significance of the following:

- Ready line
- Firing line
- Target area
- Backstop/impact area
- Left and right range limits
- Firing points
- Target and firing line numbers
- Downrange
- Safety berms
- Entry and exit routes
- Range flags
- Warning markers or other physical safety features of the range
- First-aid kit
- Phone (indicate whether 911 service is available and if any special dialing procedures are needed to access an outside line)
- Fire extinguishers
- Restrooms
- Any other applicable equipment

Share the range safety rules for the particular facility being used. Note that most ranges have their own range rules, which are usually posted. Always review the range safety rules for the specific range you are going to use.

- Know and obey all range rules (wait for each command to be given during each exercise).
- Know where others are at all times.
- Shoot only at authorized targets.
- Stop shooting immediately if you think you may have experienced a malfunction.
- Review cease fire command: stop shooting immediately, finger off trigger, and wait for further instructions. Note that anyone can call cease fire.

**2. NRA Rules for  
Using and Storing  
a Gun**

Review the NRA Rules for Using and Storing a Gun.

- Know your target and what is beyond.
- Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
- Know how to use the gun safely.
- Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
- Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
- Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
- Store guns so that they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.

**3. Review proper  
actions for  
malfunctions**

Ask students to define, and state the proper action for, a misfire, hangfire, and squib load.

Remind students that if they have any questions or problems during an exercise (such as a reduction in noise, muzzle flash or recoil, or a possible misfire, hangfire, or squib load), they should:

- Stop firing immediately.
- Take their index finger off the trigger.
- Keep their gun pointed downrange.
- Raise their non-shooting hand to signify there is a problem.
- Wait for range personnel to provide assistance.

**4. State hygiene  
rules**

Shooting or cleaning guns can expose a person to airborne lead particulate, powder residue, solvents, and other chemicals. Although casual exposure to these elements is minimal compared to daily activities and exposures (such as exposures to harsh chemicals), the shooter should still follow certain precautions:

- Refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, or placing hands close to your mouth. Keep your hands away from your face to prevent ingestion of lead particulate and chemical residues. This precaution includes refraining from applying lip balm or makeup.
- After shooting or cleaning a gun, wash your hands and face thoroughly with soap and water prior to eating, drinking, smoking, or otherwise placing your hands near your mouth, eyes, or nose.
- Change and wash clothing as soon as possible after shooting or cleaning a gun so that possible exposure to a lead particulate or solvent residue may be minimized.

### C. Identify range commands

#### DISCUSSION



#### 1. Range-specific information and rules

Review the “Load,” “Commence Firing,” and “Cease Firing” range commands.

The “Load” command authorizes the students to load their pistols, nothing else. Remind students that the “Cease Firing” command is not restricted to use by the range officer. **Anyone observing an unsafe situation may and should call “cease firing.”**

## EXERCISE 2

### Fundamentals

#### INTRODUCTION

In this exercise, students will review and practice the fundamentals of shooting using a pistol under your supervision. Students should demonstrate proficiency of these skills before continuing to the next exercise on loading, cocking, de-cocking, and unloading.

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>OBJECTIVES</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Determine your dominant eye.</li> <li>B. Assume a proper two-handed grip using a:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Semi-automatic</li> <li>b. Revolver</li> </ul> </li> <li>C. Demonstrate the five fundamentals of pistol shooting: aiming, breath control, hold control, trigger control, and follow-through.</li> </ul> |
| <b>TIME</b>       | This exercise is objective based  |
| <b>LOCATION</b>   | Classroom and Range   |
| <b>MATERIALS</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firearms (single-action and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)</li> <li>• Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist for each student</li> </ul>   |
| <b>RESOURCES</b>  | Basics of Pistol Shooting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson 5 – Preparation for Shooting</li> </ul>   |
| <b>IMPORTANT</b>  | <b><i>No live ammunition in the classroom!</i></b>  |

#### ACTIVITIES

##### A. Determine your dominant eye.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>       | Ask students why its important to know which eye is dominant.  |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>    | Demonstrate the steps of determining eye dominance. Students may not have a dominant eye and may be non-dominant. Point out the eye dominance may change over time, particularly in teens and females, and the test should be performed again periodically. It is recommended that the shooter use the hand which is on the same side of the body as the dominant eye. |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | Ask students to determine their dominant eye following the five-step process. Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b> .  |
| <b>1. Determine dominant eye exercise</b>  |  |

## B. Assume a proper two-handed grip.

### DEMONSTRATION



Demonstrate the steps of a proper two-handed grip, following all safety rules, and using a semi-automatic.

1. Use your non-firing, support hand to pick up the gun and place it in your firing hand.
2. Form a "V" with your thumb and index finger with your firing hand, and place it as high as possible on the pistol's backstrap.
3. Grip the pistol using the base of your thumb and the three lower fingers of your firing hand. The pressure of the grip should be directed straight to the rear.
4. Hold the pistol firmly, without exerting excessive pressure, and keep your finger off the trigger, outside the trigger guard, along the side of the frame. Your thumb should lie relaxed on the other side of the frame.
5. Wrap the fingers of your support hand around the fingers of your firing hand so that the corresponding knuckles of both hands meet.
6. Place the heel of your support hand against the heel of your firing hand.

Remind students that the two-handed grip on a revolver is the same as the semi-automatic, except the support hand thumb position should cross over the top of the firing hand thumb. Demonstrate the difference using a revolver.

### STUDENT PRACTICE



#### 1. Two-handed grip practice

Have students practice picking up a gun using the proper two-handed grip. Have students describe each step as they perform it. Observe and provide corrections and support as needed, ensuring that all safety rules are followed. When students are using semi-automatic pistols, be sure their thumbs are out of the path of the recoiling slide.

Emphasize that uniformity is the most important aspect of the grip; the student should grip the pistol the same way every time.

Record student results in the **Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist**.

## C. Demonstrate the five fundamentals of pistol shooting.

### DISCUSSION



Ask students to name the five fundamentals of pistol shooting (aiming, breath control, hold control, trigger control, and follow-through).

Remind students that the fundamentals should be performed every time a person fires a shot from any position.

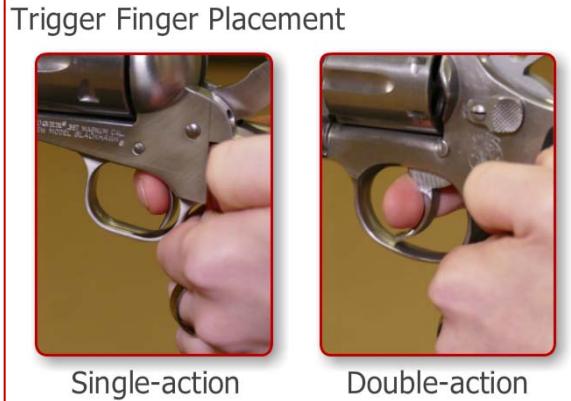
Emphasize that the two most important fundamentals in pistol shooting are aiming and trigger control. The other fundamentals all contribute to achieving these.

### DEMONSTRATION



#### *Sight Alignment*

Demonstrate aiming with the typical post and notch sights found on most pistols, so that the top of the front sight is even with the top of the rear sight and the post is centered in the notch with equal amounts of light on both sides.

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Aiming</b>          | Proper sight alignment is the key to accurate shooting. Any misalignment of the eye, the front sight, or the rear sight introduces an angular error that multiples with distance.<br><br><b>Sight Picture</b><br>Put the aligned sights in their proper relationship with the target to demonstrate sight picture.<br><br><b>Focus</b><br>If possible, keep both of your eyes open while aiming to increase the light available to the eyes and improve depth perception. If necessary, you can place a small piece of frost tape on the inside of the lens of the shooting glasses of the non-shooting eye to relieve eye strain.  |
| <b>2. Breath Control</b>  | Demonstrate how breath control can minimize body movement and the effect of arc of movement. Be sure to take a breath before each shot, let enough air out to be comfortable, and then stop breathing while simulating firing the shot without ammunition.  |
| <b>3. Hold Control</b>    | Exercising hold control allows the shooter to maintain the proper sight picture and sight alignment during the process of firing the shot.<br><br>An important factor in hold control is the way in which the pistol is gripped. Reinforce the proper method of assuming a proper firing grip.<br><br>It is impossible to hold the pistol in a shooting position without some motion; this is called the “arc of movement.” The shooter should try to maintain proper sight alignment and sight picture while minimizing the arc of movement. With practice, the arc of movement will decrease.   |
| <b>4. Trigger Control</b> | Demonstrate proper trigger control with an unloaded pistol: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For single-action mode, place the index finger on the trigger about halfway between the fingertip and the first joint. For double-action mode, place the trigger in the first joint of your finger.</li> </ol> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Trigger Finger Placement</b></p>  <p>Single-action      Double-action</p> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Squeeze the trigger straight to the rear in a smooth, continuous manner, without disturbing sight picture.</li> <li>3. Apply finger pressure evenly, not in a start and stop manner. You should not be able to predict when the gun will fire. Emphasize that as you are squeezing the trigger you are maintaining sight picture while simultaneously maintaining a minimal arc of movement.</li> </ol> |

**5. Follow-through**

**STUDENT PRACTICE**



**1. Fundamentals practice without ammunition**

Emphasize that shooting fundamentals continue after the shot. Relate the importance of follow-through to other sports, such as golf, baseball, etc.

Demonstrate how to integrate, maintain, and continue all the shooting fundamentals before, during, and immediately after firing the shot.

Ask students to practice shooting fundamentals using an unloaded pistol and provided targets. Students will practice aiming, hold control, breath control, trigger control, and follow through.

- Since the eye can only focus on one object at a time, the pistol shooter should concentrate on the front sight, which will appear sharp and clear, while the rear sight and the target will appear less sharp or blurred.
- Both eyes should be open to make more light available to the eyes and improve depth perception.
- Eliminate facial contortions and muscle tension.
- If eye strain is evident, relieve it by placing a small piece of frosted tape on the inside of the lens of the shooting glasses in front of the non-shooting eye.
- Ensure students are breathing before each shot and that they are stopping during shooting.
- If someone is experiencing muscle tremors they can relax by removing their trigger finger from the trigger, lowering the gun while pointing it in a safe direction, relaxing, and taking a few breaths before beginning the process again.

Once each student demonstrates proficiency, move on to the next practice.

## EXERCISE 3

# Loading, Cocking, De-Cocking, Unloading, and Pistol Maintenance

### INTRODUCTION

In this exercise, students will demonstrate proficiency loading, cocking, de-cocking, and unloading their pistol under your supervision. Although this exercise splits these skills up by pistol type, students should be assessed based on available pistol types and their advancement to the next exercise is based on your evaluation. Remember that students must use appropriate dummy ammunition in the classroom. Students should demonstrate proficiency of these skills before continuing to the next exercise on shooting using different positions.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| OBJECTIVES | A. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a single-action revolver.<br>B. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a double-action revolver.<br>C. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a semi-automatic pistol.<br>D. Review how to safely clean a pistol.  |
| TIME       | This exercise is objective based  |
| LOCATION   | Classroom and Range   |
| MATERIALS  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firearms (single- and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)</li><li>• Appropriate dummy ammunition</li><li>• Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist for each student</li><li>• Pens or pencils</li></ul> |
| RESOURCES  | Basics of Pistol Shooting <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson 3 – Using a Pistol</li></ul>   |
| IMPORTANT  | Appendix C – Pistol Shooting Skills Instructional Methods<br><b>No live ammunition in the classroom!</b>  |

### ACTIVITIES

#### A. Load, Cock, De-cock, and Unload a Single-Action Revolver

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| DEMONSTRATION | <br>Explain and safely demonstrate the following procedures with the single-action revolver. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loading</li><li>• Cocking</li><li>• Uncocking</li><li>• Unloading</li></ul> Note that you, as the instructor, will be handling pistols constantly. Always be sure, when picking up any handgun, to keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, and your trigger finger off the trigger, alongside the frame. Constantly observe all safe gun handling rules – set a good example for your students. |
|---------------|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>Have students practice loading, cocking, de-cocking, and unloading a single-action revolver using an unloaded pistol. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>Record the results from each step in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b>. Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable.</p> |
|--|---|

### B. Load, De-cock, and Unload a Double-Action Revolver

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>       | <p>Remind students that the process for loading, cocking, and de-cocking a double-action revolver is similar to that of a single-action revolver, but special attention should be made in the unloading process.</p>  |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>    | <p>Explain and safely demonstrate the following procedures with the double-action revolver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loading</li> <li>• Cocking</li> <li>• Uncocking</li> <li>• Unloading</li> </ul>  |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>Have students practice loading, cocking, de-cocking, and unloading a double-action revolver in <i>both</i> modes using dummy ammunition. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b>. Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable.</p> |

### C. Load, Cock, De-cock, and Unload a Semi-Automatic Pistol

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>       | <p>Remind students that the concepts of loading a revolver apply to a semi-automatic pistol, but the mechanics are different.</p>  |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>    | <p>Explain and safely demonstrate the following procedures with the semi-automatic pistol.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loading</li> <li>• Cocking</li> <li>• Uncocking</li> <li>• Unloading</li> </ul> <p>Remind students that different semi-automatic pistols vary in their uncocking procedures. The specific uncocking procedure for a specific model of semi-automatic pistol is found in the pistol owner's manual.</p> <p>Emphasize when unloading any semi-automatic pistol, <b>the magazine must be removed first</b>. Then the action may be worked to eject any live cartridge in the chamber. Ask students why this is necessary.</p> |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>Have students practice loading, cocking, de-cocking, and unloading a semi-automatic pistol using dummy ammunition. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b>.</p>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | <p><b>Requirements Checklist.</b> Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable.</p>  |
| <p><b>D. Demonstrate how to safely clean a pistol.</b></p>  |   |
| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>    | <p>Ask students to name advantages to cleaning and performing maintenance on their pistol.<br/><i>(keep it functioning reliably; longer service life; allow better shooting accuracy; more value for your dollar; reduce contaminants causing jams while firing, wear, and corrosion; affect how well it fires; keep loose pins and work screws from causing shift sights out of alignment; limit malfunctions)</i></p>   |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br> | <p>Explain and demonstrate to the students the proper use of the components of a gun cleaning kit to properly clean a pistol. Show them how to use daylight, a bore scope, or a white piece of paper to visually examine the bore for remaining powder, lead, or copper residue. Explain safety rules. Provide an opportunity after the qualification shooting for those students that need assistance learning to clean their own pistol if they have one.</p> <p>Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist.</b></p> |

## EXERCISE 4

# Shooting Positions and Shooting Qualification

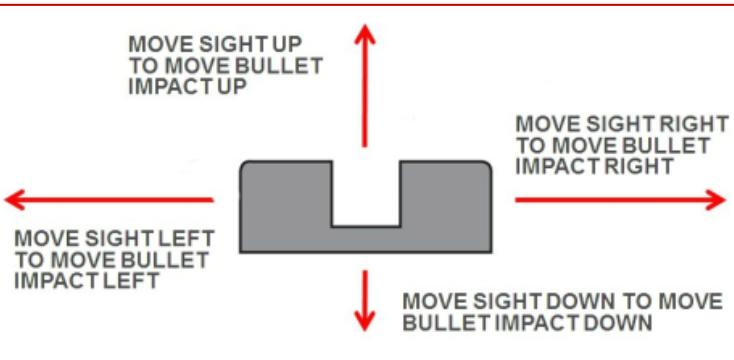
### INTRODUCTION

In this final exercise before the shooting qualification, students will practice shooting from various positions in relationship to a specified target at a range. Students must demonstrate proficiency of these skills to receive certification.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| OBJECTIVES | A. Demonstrate the learning steps to assume the benchrest position, and shoot from the benchrest position.<br>B. Demonstrate the learning steps to assume the Isosceles position, and shoot from the Isosceles position.<br>C. Shoot the course qualification.  |
| TIME       | This exercise and qualification is objective based  |
| LOCATION   | Range and classroom (ensure the area is well-ventilated)  |
| MATERIALS  | <p><b>Required</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firearms (single-action and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)</li><li>• Live ammunition (range only)</li><li>• Pens or pencils</li><li>• Eye and ear protection</li><li>• Targets</li><li>• Standard sheet of white paper with a 1" diameter black dot in the middle.</li><li>• Target pasters</li><li>• Stapler</li><li>• Gun cleaning kits for student use (safety glasses, protective gloves, gun solvent, small brush, cleaning rod, bore brush and jag, cotton cleaning patches, gun oil, soft cloth)</li><li>• Soap and water to wash hands after cleaning a pistol</li><li>• <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist for each student</b></li></ul> <p><b>Optional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dummy ammunition</li><li>• Ceiling fans or floor fans for ventilation</li></ul> |
| RESOURCES  | Basics of Pistol Shooting <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson 6 – Shooting Positions</li><li>• Lesson 7 – Pistol Shooting Errors</li><li>• Lesson 9 – Pistol Cleaning and Maintenance</li></ul> Appendix A – One-Handed Standing Shooting Position<br>Appendix C – Pistol Shooting Skills Instructional Methods  |
| IMPORTANT  |  <b>No live ammunition in the classroom!</b>   |

## ACTIVITIES

### A. The Benchrest Position

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| <b>DISCUSSION</b><br>       | Ask students what the advantages are of using the benchrest position.  |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>In this practice, you may set up benchrest positions with targets at various points. Targets should be blank pieces of paper for the first two shooting exercises. A good blank target is a sheet of typing paper, the back of an NRA 50-foot bullseye target, or even an 8" or 10" paper plate. By using a blank target, the students will be able to concentrate on the front sight and keep it in focus without being distracted by the bullseye. Have the students aim at the center of the blank targets, which should be placed at a distance of about 15 feet from the firing line.</p> <p>Students will need to practice some different set-ups to demonstrate proficiency.</p> <p>Observe the students at each step and provide corrections as needed. Provide guidance on how to zero the pistol as needed.</p> <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"><p>The diagram illustrates the relationship between sight movement and bullet impact. It features a central white square representing the target. Four arrows point away from the center to the corners, each labeled with a movement command:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Upward arrow: MOVE SIGHT UP TO MOVE BULLET IMPACT UP</li><li>Rightward arrow: MOVE SIGHT RIGHT TO MOVE BULLET IMPACT RIGHT</li><li>Leftward arrow: MOVE SIGHT LEFT TO MOVE BULLET IMPACT LEFT</li><li>Downward arrow: MOVE SIGHT DOWN TO MOVE BULLET IMPACT DOWN</li></ul></div> <p>Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b>. Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable.</p> <p><b>1. Study the benchrest position.</b></p> <p>Demonstrate the proper two-handed grip and the benchrest position. Have students observe. Answer any questions they may have.</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>2. Practice the position without a pistol.</b>                                   | Have the students focus on attaining a proper body position before adding the handgun.   |
| <b>3. Practice the position with an unloaded pistol.</b>                            | Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable with it. Ensure that students are using the proper grip and that their arms are fully extended with the sights properly aligned on the target.   |
| <b>4. Align position with the target.</b>   | <b>Ensure that those students using semi-automatic pistols do not place their thumbs in the way of the recoiling slide.</b>  |
| <b>5. Dry fire the pistols at the target.</b>                                       | Make sure that the students are positioned so that their pistols naturally point at the center of the target.<br><br>Students should apply the fundamentals while dry-firing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aiming</li><li>• Breath control</li><li>• Hold control</li><li>• Trigger control</li><li>• Follow-through</li></ul><br>While the students practice shooting fundamentals by dry-firing their pistols, emphasize that they should concentrate on sight alignment and squeezing the trigger without disturbing the sights.<br><br>Dry-firing will familiarize the students with cocking and firing their pistols. Suggest that they use dry-fire practice at home.<br><br><b>Students must be able to execute the fundamentals of dry-firing before they are allowed to progress to live ammunition.</b>                               |
| <b>6. Shoot at targets using live ammunition.</b>                                   | Ensure that everyone on the range has eye and hearing protection. Emphasize the importance of applying the shooting fundamentals every time they fire a shot.<br><br>Have the students load and fire only one cartridge at a time. Have them fire five times at a blank target, and have coaches evaluate the shooters. Perform this exercise at least twice, for a total of 10 shots.<br><br>Then, have students load five cartridges and fire at a blank target, at their own pace, to achieve a shot group. All shots should be on the target. Be sure that the students rest between each shot. Repeat this exercise until your students are able to form four-inch groups anywhere on the target. Observe and offer feedback as appropriate.<br><br>Note: Students with double-action revolvers should cock the hammer before each shot, if possible. |
| <b>7. Adjust the rear sight to center five shots in no greater than a 4" group.</b> | Once the students are able to shoot four-inch groups, instruct them on how to make sight adjustments, if necessary. Remind them to move the rear sight in the same direction that they want the hits on the target to move. Emphasize that the guns must be unloaded before any attempt is made to adjust the sights. Point out that some pistols do not have adjustable sights.   |

**8. Continue firing five shot groups from the bench.**

If sight adjustments were necessary, continue to have the students load and fire five shots from the bench using the Level 1 target.

Remind students that their eyes can focus on only one object at a time, and that the front sight should be in sharp focus, with the rear sight and target being less clear.

The students should rest after each shot. Continue to make sight adjustments as necessary.

Repeat the five shot exercise until your student is able to shoot at least three, five-shot groups within a four-inch circle. If you are using the coach/pupil method, have participants reverse the roles and repeat the eight steps. Observe and offer feedback as appropriate.

**B. Isosceles Position**

| DISCUSSION   | Ask students what the advantages are of using the Isosceles position. ( <i>easy, natural to get into, stable position for almost any type of shooting</i> )  |
|--|--|
| STUDENT PRACTICE   | Students will gradually build their comfort with the Isosceles position through the following practice exercises.<br><br>To evaluate students properly, lead them in a discussion of the shooting exercises and focus on the positive aspects of student performance. Record the results in the <b>Basics of Pistol Shooting Performance Requirements Checklist</b> . Allow adequate time for students to become familiar and comfortable. |
| <b>1. Study the Isosceles position.</b>                  | Demonstrate the Isosceles position. Explain that both hands are used to grip and support the pistol. Have students observe and answer questions they may have.   |
| <b>2. Practice the position without a pistol.</b>        | Assist students in achieving the proper foot, arm, and body position without a pistol.   |
| <b>3. Practice the position with an unloaded pistol.</b> | Assist students in achieving the position with a pistol. Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper grip</li> <li>• Feet shoulder-width apart and body weight distributed evenly</li> <li>• Legs straight</li> <li>• Back straight or bent slightly forward</li> <li>• Head erect</li> <li>• Arms fully extended</li> <li>• Pistol brought to eye level</li> <li>• Shooter should be relaxed and comfortable</li> </ul>    |
| <b>4. Align position with the target.</b>                | Make sure that each student's position is such that the pistol is naturally aligned with the target.   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>5. Dry fire the pistols at the target.</b>                           | <p>Have students dry-fire their pistols at a target. Emphasize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sight alignment – aiming</li><li>• Trigger squeeze – trigger control</li></ul> <p>Point out that nobody can hold a pistol perfectly still. The students must try to keep the sights aligned while maintaining a minimum arc of movement.</p> <p>Emphasize that the trigger should be squeezed straight to the rear, and that the hammer fall should be a surprise.</p> <p>Note: Students with double-action revolvers should cock the hammer before each shot, if possible.</p> |
| <b>6. Shoot at targets using live ammunition.</b>                       | <p>Have the students load and fire one cartridge at a time. Have the students fire five shots at a blank target. Be sure that the students rest between each shot.</p> <p>If the two-handed position is maintained for eight seconds or more without firing a shot, the shooter should remove the trigger finger from the trigger, keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, and lower it or rest it on the bench before attempting another shot.</p> <p>Using the coach/pupil method, have coaches evaluate the shooters.</p>  |
| <b>7. Continue firing five shot groups from the Isosceles position.</b> | <p>Have the students load five cartridges and fire at a blank target, at their own pace, to achieve a shot group. All shots should be on the target. Be sure the students rest between each shot.</p> <p>Repeat the five shot exercise until your student is able to shoot at least three, five-shot groups within a four-inch diameter circle in the middle of the target. If you are using the coach/pupil method, have participants reverse the roles and repeat the eight steps.</p>  |

### C. Shooting Qualification

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>When the student is ready, begin the shooting qualification for Level 1: Red. Use the Level 1 through 4 targets provided. Print as many copies as desired.</p> <p>Once the student has met the qualification, offer the opportunity for students to continue with the other levels. Issue a certificate and initial each level the student has earned.</p> |
| <b>1. Level 1-4 Qualification</b>  |   |

## APPENDIX A

### One-Handed Standing Shooting Position

#### INTRODUCTION

Though not a requirement for this course, the one-handed standing shooting position may be taught as an extension of Exercise IV Shooting Positions. It is more difficult than two-handed positions. It is used in some pistol competitions because it is more challenging.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>OBJECTIVES</b>   | A. Safely demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to assume the one-handed standing shooting position.<br>B. Safely shoot a pistol from the one-handed standing shooting position, using the fundamentals of pistol shooting, at a target on a range.         |
| <b>TIME</b>   | This exercise is objective based  |
| <b>LOCATION</b>   | Range   |
| <b>MATERIALS</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firearms (single- and double-action revolver, semi-automatic pistol)</li> <li>Live ammunition</li> <li>Pens or pencils</li> <li>Eye and ear protection</li> <li>Targets (printed from the lesson plan – verify size accuracy)</li> </ul> |
| <b>RESOURCES</b>  | <p>Basics of Pistol Shooting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lesson 6 – Shooting Positions</li> </ul> <p>Appendix C – Pistol Shooting Skills Instructional Methods</p>   |
| <b>IMPORTANT</b><br> | <b><i>No live ammunition in the classroom!</i></b>  |

#### ACTIVITIES

##### A. Safely demonstrate how to assume the one-handed standing shooting position.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>    | Demonstrate the proper one-handed grip and the one-handed standing position.   |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>Have students focus on attaining a proper body position before adding the handgun.</p> <p>Check for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proper one-handed grip</li> <li>Feet shoulder-width apart with body weight evenly distributed</li> <li>Body and head comfortably erect</li> <li>Shooting arm fully extended with wrist and elbow locked</li> <li>Non-shooting hand relaxed in a pocket or comfortably hooked in the belt or waistband</li> <li>Pistol raised to eye level</li> <li>Shooter relaxed and comfortable</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Students should be positioned so that their pistols naturally point at the target center.</p>   |
| <b>B. Safely demonstrate how to shoot a pistol using the one-handed standing shooting position.</b>          |  |
| <b>DEMONSTRATION</b><br>    | Demonstrate how to safely shoot a pistol using the one-handed standing position.   |
| <b>STUDENT PRACTICE</b><br> | <p>Have students dry-fire their pistols at the target while applying the fundamentals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aiming</li> <li>• Breath control</li> <li>• Hold control</li> <li>• Trigger control</li> <li>• Follow-through</li> </ul> <p>Students should concentrate on sight alignment, focusing on the front sight, and squeezing the trigger without disturbing the sights. Students must be able to execute the fundamentals of shooting during dry-firing before they can progress to live ammunition.</p> |
| <b>1. Dry-fire exercise</b>  | <p>Ensure that everyone on the range has eye and hearing protection.</p> <p>Note: Students with double-action revolvers should cock the hammer before each shot, if possible.</p>  |
| <b>2. Single-shot exercise</b>   | <p>Have students load and fire, one cartridge at a time.</p>   |
| <b>3. Five-shot exercise</b>   | <p>Now, have them fire five times at a blank target. Using the coach/pupil method, have coaches evaluate the shooters.</p> <p>Perform this exercise at least twice, for a total of 10 shots.</p>   |
| <b>4. Continue firing five-shot groups</b>   | <p>Have students load and fire five cartridges from the one-handed standing shooting position on a bullseye target. The students should use a six o'clock hold so that they can see the front sight in the white area of the target around the bullseye. The students should rest between shots.</p> <p>Have the coaches evaluate the shooters after this five-shot string. Repeat the exercise as necessary, until you are satisfied with the student's performance.</p>  |

## APPENDIX B

# The Fundamentals of Pistol Shooting

### INTRODUCTION

This detailed outline is provided as a study reference to assist you in your preparations to teach the fundamentals of pistol shooting.

#### I. Importance of a Fundamental

##### a. What does “fundamental” mean? What is a fundamental?

- i. “Fundamental” has a number of meanings:
    1. Basic; elemental
    2. Necessary; indispensable
    3. Primary; principle; most important
    4. Central; key
    5. Of or relating to essential structure, function, or facts
  - ii. In terms of pistol shooting, a “fundamental” is an essential skill, technique, or principle that provides the foundation for effective shooting.
- ##### b. Why are fundamentals so important in sports? What role do they serve?
- i. They are the elementary skills necessary to the beginner for “initial success” in the early stages of skills development.
  - ii. They are the basic skills that form the foundation of a sport activity.
  - iii. They are the basic skills that can be built upon to meet the specific skill requirements of a sport.
  - iv. They are forever essential in providing a sound foundation for progressively improving the performance of a sport skill from beginner to world champion.

#### II. Eye Dominance

Determining which eye is dominant will tell the shooter which eye should be used to aim this pistol. This information, in turn, usually also indicates which hand should be used to hold the pistol.

For most shooters, the dominant eye and dominant hand are on the same side. A minority of individuals experience cross-dominance, in which the dominant eye and dominant hand are on opposite sides. Such shooters should aim the pistol using the dominant eye, and learn to hold the gun with the non-dominant hand. If this is not possible, the shooter can cant the gun in order to aim with the dominant eye.

Establishing eye dominance needs to be done before teaching the pistol shooting fundamentals. Have the students use the following exercise to determine their dominant eye.

##### a. Skills Learned

- i. Establish dominant eye to determine which eye should be used to aim the pistol, and which hand should be used to hold the pistol.
- ii. The student learns how to determine the dominant eye.

b. **Exercise**

- i. Extend the hands at arm's length in front of the face. Bring the hands together, leaving a small opening between them, and, keeping both eyes open, look at a distant object through this opening. Focus the eyes on the object as the hands are brought slowly to the face. As the hands reach the face, the eye that is used to view the object is the dominant eye.
- ii. If the right eye is dominant, the pistol should be aimed with the right eye and held in the right hand, if possible. If the left eye is dominant, the pistol should be aimed with the left eye and held in the left hand, if possible.

c. **Instructional Points**

- i. Repeat the exercise several times to check for consistency of results.
- ii. Have the students extend their hands at arm's length, and then bring their hands together, leaving a small hole between them. Then have the students look through the hole at the bridge of your nose. This will allow you to validate the identity of the dominant eye.
- iii. However, for cross-dominant shooters, there is nothing wrong with holding the pistol in the dominant hand in front of the dominant eye.
- iv. As with most any exercise, there may be exceptions to the rule, but this exercise will reliably establish the dominant eye in the majority of cases.
- v. Do not give the students medical or optometric advice regarding their dominant or non-dominant eyes. Don't attempt to be an eye doctor unless you are one!

III. **Pistol Shooting Foundations**

a. **Shooting Position**

- i. Not a shooting fundamental, but the platform from which the fundamentals are executed
- ii. A *shooting position* is the position of the shooter's body and gun in relationship to the target. The suggested teaching order in this course is the two-handed grip in the benchrest position and then the two-handed grip in the standing position.
- iii. Elements of a shooting position
  1. A shooting position should be *comfortable*. This can be achieved through stretching exercises and by practicing the position.
  2. A shooting position should be *balanced*, putting the body's center of balance over the supported points of the position. An erect head position is key, contributing to balance and also permitting the shooter to sight through the center of the lens of the eye. This, in turn, avoids distortions in the sight picture caused by looking through the eyelashes.
  3. A shooting position should be *consistent* and *relaxed*.
  4. A shooting position should be *aligned with the target*. A good position must provide a steady natural aiming area (NAA). The entire body position must be shifted to align the NAA with the target. After firing, the pistol will tend to return to the NAA.
  5. *NAA exercise:* To establish NAA, the shooter should take his or her unloaded pistol and acquire the shooting position in relationship to a target. The shooter should

then close his or her eyes and allow the body to settle naturally into the position. The shooter then opens the eyes and determines where the gun is pointing in relation to the target. If the gun is pointing slightly to the right or left, the body is shifted to bring it naturally into target alignment.

iv. Benchrest position

The benchrest position is the most stable pistol shooting position, and should be the position learned first by new pistol shooters. Its stability also makes it useful even for experienced pistol shooters during accuracy testing and sight zeroing.

To assume the benchrest position:

1. Sit behind the bench or table facing the target, with both feet squarely on the ground.
2. Extend both arms fully forward toward the target, with the pistol held in a proper two-handed grip.
3. The back should be straight or leaning slightly forward.
4. Rest both wrists on sandbags or other suitable support. Do not allow the gun to touch the support.
5. Keep the head erect. If necessary, increase the height of the sandbag or other support to raise the pistol to eye level, which allows an erect head position.

v. Two-handed standing shooting position

The two-handed standing shooting position is probably the most versatile offhand shooting position, being useful for self-defense, competition, and general recreational shooting.

To assume the two-handed standing shooting position:

1. Stand facing the target with the shoulders and feet square to the target. The body weight should be equally distributed on both feet.
2. Extend both arms fully forward toward the target, with the pistol held in a proper two-hand grip.
3. Raise the pistol so that sights are at eye level. It is important to have the head erect and vertical, not canted to one side.
4. Lean forward slightly, on the balls of the feet, so that the body can absorb recoil. Avoid leaning backward.

b. **Grip**

*Grip* refers to the manner in which the pistol is held in the hand. A proper and consistent grip is essential to accurate shooting. A *two-handed grip* is taught in this course. Together, grip and position are the foundations that allow proper execution of the shooting fundamentals.

To assume a proper two-handed grip:

- i. While keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, and with the trigger finger off the trigger, use the non-shooting hand ("support hand") to place the pistol in the shooting hand ("dominant hand").
- ii. Fit the "V" formed by the thumb and index finger of the shooting hand as high as

possible on the pistol backstrap.

- iii. Grip the pistol using the base of the thumb and the lower three fingers of the shooting hand. The pressure of the grip should be directed straight to the rear.
- iv. With the pressure of the grip applied at the “V” of the thumb and forefinger, wrap the lower three fingers naturally around the grip. This isolates the trigger finger from the grip, allowing better trigger control and less gun movement when the trigger is squeezed.
- v. Hold the pistol firmly, but without exerting so much pressure that the hand shakes.
- vi. Keep the index finger off the trigger. It should lie along the side of the frame, outside of the trigger guard.
- vii. The thumb should lie relaxed on the other side of the frame.
- viii. Place the heel of the support hand against the heel of the shooting hand. With a revolver, place the thumb of the non-shooting hand on the thumb of the shooting hand, and firmly wrap the fingers of the non-shooting hand around the fingers of the shooting hand. With a semi-automatic pistol, place the support-hand thumb forward of and below the shooting-hand thumb before wrapping the fingers of the support-hand around the fingers of the shooting-hand.

With students using semi-automatic pistols, be sure their thumbs are out of the path of the recoiling slide.

Emphasize that uniformity is the most important aspect of the grip. The shooter should grip the pistol the same way every time.

#### IV. **Pistol Shooting Fundamentals**

##### a. **Aiming**

*Aiming* is the process of putting the gun’s sights into proper relationship with each other and with the target. Aiming is composed of two elements: *sight alignment* and *sight picture*.

- i. *Sight alignment* is the visual relationship between the eye and the front and rear sights. In correct sight alignment, the front sight will be viewed as centered in the notch of the rear sight with the top of both sights on the same level.
- ii. *Sight picture* is the visual relationship of the eye, the aligned sights, and the target. The aiming point may be the spot where the shooter wants the bullets to strike (center hold) or it may be another spot where sight alignment can be more precisely seen (such as the 6 o’clock hold). In the later case, the sights are adjusted so that the shot will strike the desired location rather than the actual aiming point.
- iii. To achieve correct sight alignment and sight picture, it is imperative that the shooter focus on the front sight. The appearance of the rear sight will be less sharp, and the target will likely be blurred.
- iv. Proper sight alignment is more critical to accuracy than a proper sight picture. Even a slight error in sight alignment can cause an inaccurate shot. On the other hand, a similar error in sight picture, if sight alignment is correct, may still produce an acceptable shot.

b. **Breath Control**

Body movement while breathing can produce gun movement which impairs shooting. *Breath control* enables the shooter to hold the pistol steady and maintain proper sight picture.

- i. To minimize body movement, breathing must stop while firing a shot.
- ii. The shooter should breathe normally while settling into position. Before each shot, the shooter should take a breath, let enough air out to be comfortable, and hold the remaining breath while firing the shot.
- iii. If the shot isn't fired within 5 to 8 seconds after breathing is interrupted, oxygen depletion may cause muscle tremors and/or blurred vision, resulting in a poor shot. If this period of time elapses without a shot being fired, the trigger finger should be removed from the trigger, the gun should be lowered (while continuing to be pointed in a safe direction), and the shooter should relax, take a few breaths, and then begin the firing cycle again. Instructors should be attentive to a student's reaction to delayed shots, and have them rest and restart the shot process as needed.

c. **Hold Control**

*Hold control* refers to the ability of the shooter to maintain the proper sight picture and sight alignment during the process of firing the shot.

- i. It is impossible to hold the pistol in a shooting position without some circular or oval motion of the sights, this is called the "arc of movement." If no errors in executing the shooting fundamentals are committed, each shot will strike within the shooter's arc of movement. With practice, the shooter will develop the muscles and coordination used in holding the pistol steady, and the arc of movement will decrease. Beginning shooters should be encouraged to accept their arc of movement and execute the fundamentals to the best of their ability.
- ii. A proper grip assists the pistol shooter to fire the shot without disturbing sight alignment, and thus is an essential factor in hold control. A good grip also enables the shooter to quickly re-establish the correct sight picture for subsequent shots.
  1. The handbook describes ways to initially establish both the two-handed and one-handed grip. Some adjustments in grip may be required to accommodate the individual shooter's hand size, finger length, and hand strength. If the shooter cannot dry-fire the pistol without disturbing sight alignment, grip adjustments should be made until correct sight alignment can be maintained while dry-firing.
  2. *Consistency* is the most important element in establishing the grip. Once the shooter determines the optimum grip, it should be practiced until it can be reliably repeated, shot after shot.
- iii. *Natural Aiming Area* (NAA) refers to the individual, instinctive alignment of the shooter, gun and target in a specific stance. The NAA is achieved when the stance feels most balanced and comfortable to the shooter, and the pistol is in close alignment with the target. An exercise for determining an individual's NAA is described in the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting*. Ensuring the students are able to establish and consistently repeat their NAA will enhance their ability to master hold control quickly.

d. **Trigger Control**

*Trigger control* describes the process of pulling the trigger without disturbing the sight picture. This is generally accomplished using a gradual trigger squeeze that produces a surprise trigger break. The grip and placement of the trigger finger on the trigger may need adjustment to accomplish the correct trigger squeeze.

- i. The trigger finger pressure on the trigger should be directly rearward, and should be continuous and uninterrupted until the shot is fired.
- ii. Instructors should be watchful that the new shooter with a large arc of movement does not attempt to jerk the trigger at the instant when a correct sight picture may fleetingly appear. Ball-and-dummy exercises will usually reveal trigger jerking. Be sure your corrective instruction is positive. Tell the students to “squeeze the trigger steadily” rather than “don’t jerk the trigger.”

e. **Follow-Through**

*Follow-through* is an important aspect of many physical skills, such as sports. In general, follow-through involves the continuation of an action, with proper technique, through and beyond the completion of an action. For example, in swinging a golf club, follow-through means that the club is swung through and past contact with the golf ball while maintaining proper grip, balance, head, and body position and so forth.

- i. In pistol shooting, follow-through means to maintain position, and continue aiming, hold control, breath control, and trigger control for one or two seconds after the shot is fired. Follow-through ensures that the shooter will integrate and continue all shooting fundamentals before, during, and immediately after the shot is fired.
- ii. When the mind causes the trigger finger to activate the trigger, trigger movement causes the firing pin to go forward and hit the primer, which in turn creates a spark which ignites the powder charge. This produces a volume of high-pressure gas which propels the bullet down the bore. The mind simply cannot calculate the precise moment when this process is complete and the bullet is on its way to the target. In order to ensure that all fundamentals are actually applied at the moment the shot is fired, the shooter must employ follow-through, consciously continuing the fundamentals even after the bullet has left the barrel.
- iii. A shooter exercising proper follow-through should be able to “call the shot.” This means that the shooter is so focused on sight alignment and sight picture that he or she can report, with reasonable accuracy, where the pistol was pointing at the moment the shot was fired. The practice of calling the shot will aid the shooter in maintaining concentration on the front sight.

V. **Teaching Basic Shooting Positions**

Only after the shooter has learned the fundamentals involved in firing a shot in the benchrest position is it appropriate to introduce the standing two-handed position. The two-handed standing shooting position taught in the NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course is the *Isosceles position*, so called because the base of the shooter’s arms form an Isosceles triangle when viewed from above. There a number of other two-handed standing shooting positions, including the Weaver, modified Weaver, and modified Isosceles.

## APPENDIX C

# Pistol Shooting Skills Instructional Method

### INTRODUCTION

This detailed outline is provided as a study reference to assist you in your preparations for Exercise IV, “Shooting Positions,” in the Phase II NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting Course.

#### I. Method Objectives

- a. To expose the beginning shooter to a successful shooting experience.
- b. To instill confidence in the beginner’s ability to hit a target on his or her first attempt by properly using the fundamentals of pistol shooting.

#### II. Method Preparation Requirements

##### a. Number of participants per instructor:

The instructor’s experience, the physical size and mental maturity of the participants, and the limitations of the range facility are all factors that will determine the instructor/participant ratio. It is important that you know your capabilities and limitations and always work within them. Ideally, an instructor will be at each firing point.

##### b. Equipment/materials:

- i. Range: one or more firing points
- ii. Targets: numerous targets per shooter
- iii. Firearms:
  1. One pistol for each two shooters for dry-firing exercises. If not possible, run the exercises in relays.
  2. One pistol for each firing point
- iv. Ammunition: at least 200 rounds per shooter
- v. Accessories:
  1. Hearing protection for each shooter and instructor
  2. Eye protection for each shooter and instructor

##### c. Operational Considerations for Group Exercises:

- i. A shooting line must be marked on the ground to maintain safety, group control and position during group exercises (tape or baby powder are good for marking lines).
- ii. The instructor should position himself so all shooters can hear or see instructions:
  1. Without firearms: in front of the class, at the end of the firing line or at the center of the group.
  2. With firearms: in the rear of the class, at the end of the firing line, or at the center of the group

##### d. Things To Help Your Students Concentrate

You should do everything possible to enhance your students’ learning and concentration on hitting the first target. Listed below are a few suggestions:

- i. Small caliber—less recoil
- ii. Proper gun fit—grip not too large or small

- iii. Proper gun weight—not too heavy
- iv. Shorter barrel—not muzzle-heavy
- v. Safety off—instructor check
- vi. Gun functional and mechanism clean
- vii. Reliable ammunition of good make and proper caliber
- viii. Target should be close
- ix. Target should be large
- x. Target background—clear
- xi. Range should be well-lit
- xii. Range should have little or no wind
- xiii. Range should have little or no background noise
- xiv. Clothing—shooters should wear light shirts or jackets closed in front
- xv. Do not over-instruct
- xvi. Keep extraneous spectators to a minimum
- xvii. Don't introduce or discuss competitive shooting until the students can hit the target

**e. Instructional Techniques Used**

i. Coach/Pupil method

Two students are paired as a team, one as the shooter/pupil, and the other as the coach. The roles are reversed upon the direction of the instructor.

- 1. Provides for increased attention to safety
- 2. Makes productive use of non-shooting time of students
- 3. Allows for productive exchange of information on the skill
- 4. Improves performance
- 5. Increases learning

ii. Dry-Firing

This is practicing the fundamentals of firing a shot with an unloaded gun. A dummy round may be used or the hammer/firing pin may be dropped on an empty chamber. For .22 rimfire, insert a fired case to protect the firing pin.

- 1. Allows shooter to focus attention on the fundamentals rather than the results of a shot.
- 2. Allows refinement of skills before trying live firing, thus greatly increasing the likelihood for success.
- 3. Assists instructor in analyzing skill performance.

iii. Ball and Dummy Method

This is a combination of live and dry-firing used at the discretion of the instructor. The gun is loaded with a combination of live cartridges and dummy rounds. Loading of the gun is done by the instructor, out of sight of the student, so that the student does not know when he or she might be pulling the trigger on a live cartridge or a dummy round. This allows the instructor and shooter to readily recognize errors in shooting fundamentals, especially trigger jerking, anticipation, flinching, etc.

- 1. Allows shooter and instructor to analyze execution of fundamentals under circumstances that simulate live fire for the student
- 2. Allows reinforcement of correct skills execution

### III. Instructional Method

- a. **Points to be reviewed with the class before beginning shooting exercises:**
  - i. Range layout and operation orientation
  - ii. Positions and movement of people on and around the range
  - iii. Range commands or signals to be used
  - iv. Pay attention to instructors at all times.
  - v. Firearms handling and shooting rules—at all times, firearms are to be carried on the range either with the muzzle pointed in the safest direction, or cased, as appropriate
  - vi. Special procedures concerning firearms and ammunition during exercises.  
Instructor(s) should supervise ammunition before, during, and after each session.
  - vii. Reconfirm eye dominance of shooters.
  - viii. Other points as may be appropriate to the situation.
- b. **Exercises applicable to all positions:**
  - i. **Exercise One: Practicing the fundamentals using the coach/pupil method**
    1. Coach/pupil assignment—have students count off by twos and pair off, ones being “pupils” and twos being “student-coaches.”
    2. Have students put on eye and hearing protection
    3. Have “pupils” step up to the line at arm’s length (at least) apart with the “student-coach” immediately to the rear.
    4. Stress the absolute importance of paying attention to, and immediately following, the directions of the instructor.
    5. Re-emphasize the rules of safe firearms handling:
      - (a) Keep the gun pointed in a safe direction at all times. During the practicing of the fundamentals, pistols are to be pointed downrange. At all other times, they are to be held or carried with the muzzle pointed in the safest direction.
      - (b) Keep the finger off the trigger at all times, except when directed otherwise by the instructor.
      - (c) Keep the action open at all times, and the pistol unloaded, except when directed to load the pistol and close the action by the instructor. Now is the time to ingrain in the students the habit of frequently checking the action, magazine and chamber of a gun to ensure it is unloaded.
    6. Remind shooters that their dominant eye determines which eye they will use to aim the pistol, and which hand should be used to hold it, if possible.
      - (a) Right-eye dominant—hold pistol in right hand
      - (b) Left-eye dominant—hold pistol in left hand
      - (c) Cross-dominant shooters can simply raise the gun to their dominant eye for aiming.
    7. Stress the importance of staying in position and on the line.
    8. On command, have student-coaches get a pistol and return to the firing line behind their pupil.
    9. Per your directions, have each coach/pupil pair practice the fundamentals at their own pace.
      - (a) The student-coach checks the shooter’s pistol shooting fundamentals.

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- (b) The student-coach should hold the pistol or it should be placed on the bench/table when the pupil is not actually practicing the fundamentals, to avoid tiring the pupil.
- ii. Exercise Two—Shooters dry-fire at the target using the pistol. Instruct each pair of shooters from the rear of the line as needed.**
1. Skills learned:
    - (a) How to open and close the pistol's action
    - (b) The benchrest shooting position
    - (c) Aiming
    - (d) Hold control
    - (e) Breath control
    - (f) Trigger control
    - (g) Follow-through
  2. Exercise preparation:
    - (a) Explain the exercise to the class.
      - (1) The pupil should close the pistol action only on instructor command.
      - (2) Action to be opened immediately by pupil each time upon completion of dry-firing.
    - (b) Review proper procedures for opening and closing the pistol action. Let students practice before starting exercise.
      - (1) Stress muzzle control and awareness.
      - (2) Stress keeping the finger off the trigger, except when in position and ready to shoot.
    - (c) Continue same coach/pupil assignments, with students exchanging roles
  3. Exercise:
    - (a) Position shooters on line with student-coaches to the rear holding the pistol, or place pistol on bench/table.
    - (b) On command from the instructor, student-coaches hand the pistol to the pupil, who closes the action and attains a proper benchrest position and grip.
    - (c) The instructor then gives the "commence firing" command. The shooter aims and pulls the trigger.
    - (d) Shooter then opens the action of the pistol.
    - (e) Repeat and allow discussion as necessary to improve skills.
    - (f) Have student-coaches and pupils exchange roles.
    - (g) Repeat 3.(a) through 3.(e), above.
    - (h) Student-coaches should return the pistol to the bench/table when the exercise is finished.
  4. Instructional points:
    - (a) Check ability to properly close and open action in a safe manner.
    - (b) Be sure shooter opens action immediately upon completion of dry-firing.
- iii. Exercise Three—individual shooters participate with the class instructor (one-on-one) in ball-and-dummy exercises.**
1. Skills learned:

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- (a) Reinforce safe handling and shooting under live-firing conditions.
  - (b) To shoot at own initiative and pace.
  - (c) To load and unload live ammunition from the pistol.
  - (d) To shoot at a target using the fundamentals of pistol shooting.
2. Exercise preparation
    - (a) Explain exercise's purpose and how it works to class.
    - (b) Stress and review importance of gun handling, shooting rules, and related exercise procedures.
    - (c) Demonstrate the proper procedures for loading and unloading ammunition for the pistol used.
    - (d) Have instructors and students put on eye and hearing protection.
  3. Exercise
    - (a) The instructor loads the pistol with live cartridges and dummy rounds, with the shooter looking in the other direction as loading takes place so as not to see the loading process. The instructor then closes the action.
    - (b) On command, the shooter aims, fires and follows through.
    - (c) The shooter checks to see if the action is open and, if not, opens it.
    - (d) Repeat the ball-and-dummy exercise as necessary.
    - (e) Upon completion of the ball-and-dummy exercise, allow the shooters to fire the remaining rounds on their own.
      - (1) With the shooter holding the pistol, give the shooter one cartridge and supervise loading of the pistol.
      - (2) Allow the shooter to shoot the target at his or her own pace.
      - (3) Repeat the process until all five cartridges are fired.
    - (f) If the shooter is executing the fundamentals correctly, normally the first two or three initial attempts should be dummy rounds with a live cartridge to follow. This allows the instructor to prepare the shooter for success with the first live cartridge, gives the shooter time to settle down, allows him or her to see and correct minor problems (usually flinching), and promotes shooter familiarity with shooting from the firing point independently.
    - (g) After the first round is fired, be very supportive, whether the shot is a hit or miss. Give one to three more dummy rounds as appropriate before providing the second live round.
    - (h) If the first two live shots result in hits, allow the shooter to fire the remaining three shots on his or her own initiative under supervision.  
If the shooter has missed any targets with the first two live cartridges, continue the ball-and-dummy exercise through the third live cartridge. Thereafter allow the shooter to fire the remaining shots, loading and firing at his own initiative.
  4. Instructional Points:
    - (a) Work with only one shooter at a time.
    - (b) Pay special attention to the muzzle direction at all times during the exercise.
    - (c) When handing the pistol to the shooter, cup your hand around the trigger guard to ensure safety and to train new shooters to keep their trigger fingers off

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the trigger upon receiving the pistol

- (d) Instructors and student-coaches conducting the exercise should be the only ones handling ammunition and the pistol except the shooter participating under supervision.
- (e) On the first attempt, if students experience great difficulty in executing the fundamentals because of live firing, continue the use of dummy rounds, up to five times. Using any more than five dummy rounds may only increase the anxiety level and begin to tire the shooter. If problems still persist, the instructor has two options:
  - (1) Allow the shooter to fire one cartridge. In some cases, the anxiety of the first shot may be the only problem. Firing even one shot, though the chance for success may be minimal, is necessary to get him or her “over the hump.”
  - (2) Shooters with consistently severe problems that will clearly cause them to miss the target should be returned to dry-firing until the problems are resolved.
- (f) Make the exercise fun and enjoyable for the shooter. Be enthusiastic and encouraging. Remember, it can be very intimidating performing a skill for the first time in front of peers.
- (g) Keep the exercise moving. Beginners tire quickly and the rest of the group will be anxious for their turn.
- (h) Keep instruction limited to only that which is necessary to produce a target hit (success). Too much instruction at the beginning destroys the ability to concentrate and creates frustration.
- (i) If possible, have qualified assistant instructors conduct the exercise for other shooters on other firing points.
- (j) Provide supervision for the rest of the class while working with shooters. Keep their attention and involvement.

## APPENDIX D

### Phase II: NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting Course Evaluation

Your input is needed to improve future training courses. Please take a few moments to complete this evaluation and return it to the instructor.

#### General Information

1. How did you learn about this training course?

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Course Poster | <input type="checkbox"/> Government Agency   | <input type="checkbox"/> School          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member | <input type="checkbox"/> NRA Website         | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Club      | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms Dealer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |  |  |

2. Please indicate your age group.

- |                                      |                                |                                |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 and under | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18-21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22-30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40       | <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> 51-60 | <input type="checkbox"/> 61-70 | <input type="checkbox"/> 71-80 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> over 80     |                                |                                |                                |                                |

3.  Male     Female

#### Your Knowledge and Skills

Please rate how well you feel you can do the following as a result of attending this course, on the following scale: **1=not at all; 2=poorly; 3=satisfactory; 4=very well; 5=extremely well.**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Identify the three NRA rules for safe gun-handling   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. State range rules.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Identify range commands.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Determine your dominant eye.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Assume a proper two-handed grip.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Demonstrate the five fundamentals of pistol shooting: aiming, breath control, hold control, trigger control, and follow through. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a single-action revolver.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a double-action revolver.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Load, cock, de-cock, and unload a semi-automatic pistol.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Demonstrate the five learning steps to shoot from the benchrest position.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Demonstrate the five learning steps to shoot from an Isosceles position.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Demonstrate how to safely clean a pistol.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Meet at least one level of the shooting qualification to earn course certification.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

*BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING PHASE II:  
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**Course Organization and Instruction**

Circle the appropriate number representing your response to each statement below, using the following scale: **1=not at all; 2=poorly; 3=satisfactory; 4=very well; 5=extremely well.**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The exercises were easily understood.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The exercises were presented in a logical manner.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. This course has helped me gain a better understanding of the function and safe operation of firearms. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. This course met my needs.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. The instructors presented the information effectively.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. The instructors answered my questions.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. The instructors made the course enjoyable.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The instructors presented a favorable image.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please provide suggestions for improvement for any statement you rated 1 or 2:

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**Comments**

1. How do you feel this course could be improved?
- 
- 

2. What parts of this training course do you feel were most beneficial?
- 
- 

3. Please make any additional comments.
- 
-

**NRA****BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING**

Performance Requirements Checklist

**Phase II:  
Performance Requirements Checklist****A. INFORMATION** Student copy Instructor copy

| STUDENT INFORMATION |  |            |  |                  |  |
|---------------------|--|------------|--|------------------|--|
| Last Name           |  | First Name |  | Date             |  |
| Street Address      |  |            |  | Apartment/Unit # |  |
| City                |  | State      |  | ZIP              |  |
| Phone               |  | Work Phone |  |                  |  |
| E-mail Address      |  |            |  |                  |  |

**SIGNATURE**

|                      |                                       |   |  |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Date Started         |                                       | Date Completed                          |  |
| Certification Earned | Level 1: Red <input type="checkbox"/> | Level 2: White <input type="checkbox"/> | Level 3: Blue <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Signature    |                                       | NRA No.                                 | Date                                   |
| Instructor Signature |                                       | NRA No.                                 | Date                                   |

**B. CHECKLIST**

In order to receive certifications, instructors must witness students performing the following requirements for each exercise and add a signature or initial to each line. It is up to the instructor's discretion on the total number of attempts and the number of successful attempts required to meet requirements.

Note: Exercise requirements may vary based on availability of materials, class size, and available locations. Add non-applicable (N/A) in place of the signature for activities that are not required for certification.

| EXERCISE I: SAFETY   |       |      |                      |                   |
|--|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Requirement  | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
| GUN HANDLING SAFETY  |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>1. Independent handling exercise</b>                      |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.             |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot. |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.          |       |      |                      |                   |

**NRA****BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING**

Performance Requirements Checklist

**EXERCISE I: SAFETY**

| Requirement  | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|--|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2. Pistol exchanging exercise</b>                         |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.             |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot. |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.          |       |      |                      |                   |

**EXERCISE II: FUNDAMENTALS**

| Requirement   | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|---|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>EYE DOMINANCE</b>  |       |      |                      |                   |
| Student determined eye dominance.<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Right <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Dominant<br><input type="checkbox"/> Left |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>TWO-HANDED GRIP</b>  |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>1. Student assumed the proper two-handed grip:</b>   |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. With a semi-automatic  |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. With a revolver  |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>2. Student followed safety rules throughout the exercise:</b>  |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.  |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.  |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.   |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>FIVE FUNDAMENTALS OF PISTOL SHOOTING</b>   |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>1. Student demonstrated the five fundamentals of pistol shooting:</b>  |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Aiming   |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Breath control   |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Hold control   |       |      |                      |                   |
| d. Trigger control  |       |      |                      |                   |
| e. Follow through   |       |      |                      |                   |

**NRA****BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING**

Performance Requirements Checklist

**EXERCISE II: FUNDAMENTALS**

| Requirement  | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|--|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2. Student followed safety rules throughout the exercise:</b> |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.                 |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.     |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.              |       |      |                      |                   |

**EXERCISE III: LOADING, COCKING, DE-COCKING, UNLOADING, AND PISTOL MAINTENANCE**

| Requirement   | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|---|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1. Student properly loaded, cocked, de-cocked, and unloaded:</b> |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. A single-action revolver   |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. A double-action revolver   |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. A semi-automatic pistol  |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>2. Student followed safety rules throughout the exercise:</b>    |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.                    |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.        |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.                 |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>2. Student understands how to safely clean a pistol.</b>         |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Inspect.   |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Oil.   |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Clean.   |       |      |                      |                   |

**EXERCISE IV: SHOOTING POSITIONS AND SHOOTING QUALIFICATION**

| Requirement  | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|--|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1. Student demonstrated the learning steps to shoot from the:</b> |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Benchrest position  |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Isosceles position  |       |      |                      |                   |

**NRA****BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING**

Performance Requirements Checklist

**EXERCISE IV: SHOOTING POSITIONS AND SHOOTING QUALIFICATION**

| Requirement   | Notes | Date | Instructor Signature | Student Signature |
|---|-------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
|   |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>3. Student followed safety rules throughout the exercise:</b>  |       |      |                      |                   |
| a. Student kept gun pointed in a safe direction.  |       |      |                      |                   |
| b. Student kept finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.  |       |      |                      |                   |
| c. Student kept gun unloaded until ready to use it.   |       |      |                      |                   |
| <b>4. Shooting qualification:</b>   |       |      |                      |                   |
| After completion of Exercise IV, add the completion date and your signature to the first page of this Performance Requirements Checklist.   |       |      |                      |                   |
| Students are now ready to complete the shooting qualification. Print the targets provided. Students must earn a minimum of Level 1: Red level certification to pass the course and receive certification. |       |      |                      |                   |



# NRA

## BASICS OF PISTOL SHOOTING

Performance Requirements Checklist



# NRA Basic Pistol Achievement Target

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NRA Certified Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1

2

3

4



**5 Shots/10 Feet Standing**

Bullets that pierce the outside edge of the circle count as hits

# NRA Basic Pistol Achievement Target

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NRA Certified Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1

2



3

4

**5 Shots/15 Feet Standing**  
Bullets that pierce the outside edge of the circle count as hits

# NRA Basic Pistol Achievement Target

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ NRA Certified Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1

2

3

4



**5 Shots/20 Feet Standing**

Bullets that pierce the outside edge of the circle count as hits

# NRA Instructor Training Qualification Target

20 shots/15 yards (45 feet) 16 out of 20 shots in a 6 inch group

