

Basic Firearm Ownership Guidelines for Older Adults

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A study referenced by *International Criminal Justice Review* notes adults 65 and older are less likely to be victims of serious crimes. However, seniors tend to have more personal safety concerns. Such worries can stem from concerns about living alone, community safety, or health issues that may make other forms of self-defense impractical. With situations like this, being able to safely access and use a firearm can provide added peace of mind for older adults. Below, we present a basic guide for senior gun ownership.

The Willingness to Use a Firearm if Necessary

Regardless of age, anyone looking to own a gun needs to have a willingness to use it in situations where it's necessary to do so. There are many seniors who are responsible and confident gun owners and users. That being said, other personal security options may be worth exploring for seniors who aren't fully comfortable with the possibility of having to use a gun.

Knowledge of State Gun Laws

Senior gun owners should be aware of what gun laws apply in their state. For instance, open handgun carry in Texas is permitted with a license, but open carry is generally not

allowed in California, Florida, Illinois, and some other states. To avoid potential issues when traveling with their firearms, seniors should also take the time to learn the basics of gun laws that apply in other states they'll be visiting.

Current State of Mental Health

Depression, dementia, anxiety, and bipolar disorder are among the more common mental health issues for seniors. As is the case with gun owners in all age groups, seniors need to be mentally alert and focused to make the decisions that sometimes need to be made when firearms are involved.

Gun Selection

Ammo.com stresses the importance of senior gun owners choosing the right guns. For example, semi-automatic pistols may be difficult to handle for older adults with dexterity and hand strength issues. Some aging adults may also have difficulty properly handling heavier guns or ones with triggers that require more force to pull. With gun selection, seniors are advised to:

- Hold and handle the preferred firearm first before making a purchase
- Choose a gun that's comfortable to hold and operate
- Look for guns with features that accommodate any physical shortcomings (e.g., sights placed in a way that allows for better accuracy)

Proper Handling, Use, & Practice

After the right gun has been selected, the next step for a senior is to learn how to properly handle and use it. A convenient way to do this is by taking a [firearms safety class](#). Such classes typically cover the basics of gun use and ownership. Topics covered often include:

- Proper handling techniques
- Ways to approach situations when a gun may need to be used
- General care, storage, and maintenance routines

It can also be helpful for a senior to explore options with holsters for times when a handgun will be carried. Proper handling also involves regular practice. From setting up

a safe practice area in a backyard (if there's sufficient space) to visiting local firing ranges and bullseye shooting, there are many ways seniors can regularly practice with their preferred firearms.

Making Others Aware of Gun Ownership

Lastly, if you're ready to become a responsible senior gun owner, let other trusted family members know this fact. As you age, it can be helpful to have loved ones look for any issues with how you care for and use your firearms so optimal safety can be kept in mind at all times. Also, let people who may be spending some time in your home or staying overnight know you have a gun. This way, they won't be surprised if they come across your gun or see you handling or storing it.

Whether you're a senior who already owns a firearm or an older adult who's considering purchasing a gun for the first time, it's essential to know how to use your gun safely. Gun Safety Training Pros is dedicated to providing the finest firearms training available. If you're looking for a high-quality [handgun safety class online](#), we have everything you need. Contact us today at info@GunSafetyTrainingPro.com.