

NRA Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Lesson Plan

INTRODUCTION

Women On Target® Lesson Plan provides a hands-on introduction to the safe handling and proper use of all the firearms included in Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinics.

They provide a thorough introduction to firearm safety, handling, and shooting skills. These skills require regular practice. Initially, this practice should take place under the supervision of a qualified individual — like an NRA Certified Trainer. The Clinic encourages participants to take the next step by participating in our additional sessions customized to help women continue their training. This can be done in manageable time frames, by developing their shooting skills, choosing their first firearm, and making educated personal protection and/or concealed carry decisions. Participants can continue in the shooting and outdoor sports with the wide variety of training, personal safety and competitive opportunities available through the NRA.

TOTAL PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT (TPI)

The Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Program uses the Total Participant Involvement (TPI) training methodology to involve the new shooter. TPI takes an experiential approach that stresses active training and experiential learning, minimizing the use of lecture. Trainers guide participants to develop the specified knowledge, skills, and attitude through the use of hands-on exercises and practical applications. Participant are involved at every step of the training process. It engages their energy, holds their interest, and makes learning fun! Our performance-based training enables trainers to evaluate the participants' progress and provide appropriate feedback.

Each time a participant picks up a gun, the trainer sets the example by practicing the NRA's three rules of gun safety: **ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot, and ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.** Trainers follow through the safety policy by having participants verify that the gun is unloaded.

We also use the **coach-pupil method**: This is one trainer, one firearm, and two participants at a practice station in the classroom or on the range. While one participant (the "pupil") practices an exercise, the trainer involves the other participant (the "coach") in the learning process by guiding him or her to provide feedback under the trainer's direction. The trainer then has participants reverse roles and repeat the exercise.

The Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Program is designed for a low participant-to-instructor ratio. The 4 to 5 hour Clinic length is based on a ratio of one-to-one. The length of course lessons will need to be increased proportionately to allow multiple participants to complete all activities provided at each event.

During the range exercises for the Women On Target® Clinic Program, 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 instructor or coach. **Line trainers must position themselves to be able to take immediate corrective action if necessary.**

Instructors may use different firearm action types in the same Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic, but keep in mind that including multiple actions and firearm types will increase the time needed in the classroom and on the range. It may be more efficient to demonstrate the different actions to show function and terminology, but shoot only one type on the range or split the training time to provide general orientation in the classroom and more specific firearm related information at each of the ranges or disciplines being taught.

As with other NRA Basic Firearm Training Classes, **trainers should provide participants with a 10-minute break after every 50 minutes of instruction** during a Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic.

POLICY NOTES

Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic must be conducted by NRA Certified Firearm Instructors who have registered their Women On Target® Program and provide the required information to the National Coordinator as described in the Clinic Director's Guide.

They should follow the specifications of these lesson plans as they pertain to learning objectives, time requirements, training materials, equipment, orientation content, instructional methodology, and other specified details. Additional policies governing the conduct of the Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Program are provided in the Clinic Director's Guide and new information will be announced via electronic newsletters and emails.

During Clinic Orientation, trainers must provide each participant with the items in the Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Souvenir bag. This is for their permanent lesson retention. Trainers are encouraged to charge a reasonable fee sufficient to recover the cost of materials and other clinic-related expenses.

Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Completion Certificates are available only as part of the participant material. **Reproduction or modification of NRA Women On Target® Certificates is strictly forbidden.**

If participants are permitted to bring their own firearm, the owner's manual should be consulted prior to the orientation to see whether the manufacturer has any particular guidelines for its operation, dry firing recommendations, approved ammunition, and handling procedures. **Trainers should not conduct the class unless they are thoroughly familiar with the correct operation of a participant's firearm model as recommended by the manufacturer.** Trainers who have any questions concerning whether or not the participant's gun and/or ammunition is safe to shoot should encourage them to use a range firearm until they can be checked by a reputable gunsmith before using them.

No live ammunition is permitted in the classroom under any circumstances, or on the range during Lessons I, II and IV if these lessons are conducted on a range. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition to ensure that a live round is not brought to class, or to the range except during Lesson III.

NRA trainers may refer to guns as firearms, guns, pistols, rifles, shotguns, etc. but not as WEAPONS. The word WEAPON has a negative connotation.

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

Remember, the Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic Program was designed with both the trainer and the participant in mind. These lesson plans will prepare you to conduct a successful clinic, and provide your participants with an exciting and informative introduction to the world of shooting.

All attendees should be encouraged to participate in additional NRA training opportunities. These include:

- Basics of Pistol Shooting
- Basic Rifle
- Basic Shotgun
- Personal Protection In and Out of the Home
- Additional Next Steps opportunities are also available to develop those fundamentals and shooting skills learned at this clinic. They will be outlined in Lesson IV

We **THANK YOU** for your commitment for firearm education and your participation in the training programs of the National Rifle Association. Your expertise and dedication will train a new generation of American shooters to exercise their firearm freedoms safely and responsibly.

If you ever have any questions about Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic or the NRA Basic Firearm Training Program, please contact the Women's Programs National Coordinator:

**NRA TRAINING DEPARTMENT
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NRA Training Department
Education & Training Division
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NRA

NRA WOMEN ON TARGET[®]

INSTRUCTIONAL SHOOTING CLINIC

OUTLINE

GOAL:

To provide beginning shooters with an introduction to the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to own and use a firearm safely.

LENGTH OF CLINIC:

- 4 to 5 hours → All times listed are minimums. Additional time may be needed to meet the specified learning objectives using the methodology of Total Participant Involvement (TPI).
- Lesson time must be increased proportionately to allow multiple participants to complete all specified activities.
- If multiple firearms and actions are taught, additional time will be required.

PARTICIPANT TEXT:

NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE, NRA Guide to Shooting Fundamentals

CLINIC LESSONS:

Lesson I: Introduction to Firearms Safety, Parts, and Operation (45 minutes)

Lesson II: Introduction to Ammunition and the Fundamentals of Shooting (45 minutes)

Lesson III: Introduction to Shooting from the Benchrest Position followed by live fire exercises

Lesson IV: NRA Continued Training Opportunities (30 minutes)

LESSON I

INTRODUCTION TO FIREARM SAFETY, PARTS, AND OPERATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. State the goal of the Women On Target® Instructional Shooting Clinic.
2. Name the three fundamental NRA rules of safe gun handling and demonstrate them with a specific firearm.
3. Name the three major components of a firearm and describe their functions.
4. Safely demonstrate how to handle a firearm in a safe manner.

LENGTH: 45 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS:

- ❖ Firearm
- ❖ Firearm owner's manual
- ❖ Dummy ammunition
- ❖ One per participant of the following:
 - ❖ NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE and A Quick Guide to Shooting Fundamentals Infographic (Note: No live ammunition is to be used during this lesson. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.)
 - ❖ Optional: NRA Wall Charts

REFERENCES: NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE Pages 13-16 or NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting handbook.

Optional Power Point presentation

CONTENT

CLINIC INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES:

1. Registration

Have participants sign in and fill out any required releases and additional registration information.

2. Welcome

Introduce yourself and welcome participants to the Clinic.

3. Clinic Goal

Review the Clinic goal: To provide beginning shooters with an introduction to the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to own and use a firearm safely.

4. Clinic Schedule

Review the Clinic content, and the times and locations of the different lessons of the Clinic.

5. Special Considerations

Review any special considerations that are unique to the Clinic, e.g., transportation arrangements to range facility.

6. Facilities

Point out location of rest rooms, drinking fountain, telephone, first aid kit, fire exits, alarm, extinguishers, etc.

7. Firearms

Immediately check all firearms to be used during the Clinic to insure they are unloaded, and have a participant verify this.

8. No Live Ammunition In Classroom

Note: no live ammunition is permitted in the classroom. Only dummy ammunition will be used during the first two lessons. Verify participants have no live ammunition in the classroom.

9. Souvenir Bags

Distribute the Souvenir bags to participants. Note that the material will be used during the Clinic, and may be used afterwards as a reference to review the material covered in class.

Participants are encouraged to enroll in an NRA Basics of Pistol Shooting, Basic Rifle and Basic Shotgun courses for additional training in those disciplines.

LESSON I

FIREARM SAFETY

State learning objectives for this lesson

A. The importance of safety

1. **Ask** participants: *What do you think is our primary concern when handling firearms?*
2. **Discuss** responses briefly.
3. **State** that safety is always the primary concern when handling firearms, whether the guns are located in the home, at the range or in the field.

B. The major causes of gun accidents.

1. **Ask** participants: What do you think are the major causes of gun accidents?
2. **Discuss** responses briefly.
3. **State** that ignorance and carelessness are the primary causes: a lack of knowledge of firearm safety or operation (ignorance), or the failure to apply one's knowledge when handling guns (carelessness).

C. The NRA rules for safe gun handling

1. **Instruct** participants to turn to page 4 of the New Shooter Guide.
2. **Explain** that NRA has developed the following **three basic rules** which should always be applied simultaneously when handling or using a gun.

ALWAYS KEEP THE GUN POINTED IN A SAFE DIRECTION.

- ❖ **Have** participants read the first rule aloud.
- ❖ **Ask** *What do you think is meant by a "safe direction"?*
- ❖ **Discuss** responses briefly.
- ❖ **Explain** that this rule means that a gun must always be pointed so that even if it were to discharge, it would not cause injury or damage.
- ❖ **Note** that controlling the gun's muzzle is the key, and that common sense will dictate the safest direction.
- ❖ **Indicate** the safe direction(s) in the facility you are using.
- ❖ **Demonstrate** this rule by picking up a firearm, identifying the muzzle, and noting that you have it pointed in a safe direction.

ALWAYS KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER UNTIL READY TO SHOOT.
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- ❖ **Have** participants read the second rule aloud.
- ❖ **Ask** *If your finger is kept off the trigger, where should it be?*
- ❖ **Discuss** responses briefly.
- ❖ **Explain** that the finger should rest outside the trigger guard, along the side of the gun.
- ❖ **Demonstrate** this rule by picking up a firearm, identifying the trigger, while keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction.

ALWAYS KEEP THE GUN UNLOADED UNTIL READY TO USE.

- ❖ **Have** participants read the third rule aloud.
- ❖ **Explain** that you check whether a gun is unloaded by removing the magazine (if removable), opening the action, and visually inspecting the chamber(s).
- ❖ **Demonstrate** this rule by **identifying** the magazine (if any), action, and chamber(s) on the firearm you are holding, and noting that the magazine is empty or out, the action open, and the chamber(s) empty.
- ❖ **Have a participant verify that the gun is unloaded.**

D. Safe Handling Practical Exercise

1. **Note** that when handing a firearm to another person, the three rules of gun safety must be observed simultaneously, i.e., gun pointed in a safe direction, finger off the trigger, magazine out, action open, and empty chamber(s) visible.
2. **Emphasize** also that a gun should not be accepted from another person unless its magazine is out, its action open, and its empty chamber(s) visible.
3. **Ensure** participants demonstrate the three safety rules while handling the firearm. Have participants describe each action they perform, i.e., that they are keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, etc. The firearm's action must remain open during this exercise, and must not be manipulated by participants at this time. Have participants hand the firearm back to you when they are done.
4. Offer guidance, direction, encouragement, and positive feedback as appropriate

E. Firearm Parts: Major Components

Note that all firearms consist of three major components: the frame, the barrel, and the action

1. **Frame**

Turn with participants to the graphics in the NRA New Shooter Guide pages 8-16. Have participants point out the frame on the firearm they are using.

2. **Barrel**

Using the same graphic in the NRA New Shooter Guide, have participants point out the barrel of the firearms they are using.

3. **Action**

Using the same graphic in the NRA New Shooter Guide, have participants point out the action of the firearm they are using.

F. Firearm Parts

- ❖ Including all the firearm(s) being used in your clinic, continue with this section on firearm parts. Be sure to show the similarities and differences between rifles, pistols, shotguns and black powder guns as applicable.
- ❖ Name the firearm parts listed below, point out their location on the gun, and describe the function of each part.
- ❖ Point to each part, have participants name each one and describe the function of each part. It is often easier to do this with a disassembled firearm to avoid “safe direction” violations.

1. Frame → Review with participants the definition of the frame by asking them to define it. *Name the firearm parts listed below, point out their location on the frame, and describe the function of each part.*

a. Grip

Allow the shooter to grip the firearm comfortably.

They are usually composed of wood, rubber or molded plastic and are attached to the lower portion of the frame.

b. Backstrap (if applicable)

The rear, vertical portion of the frame that lies between (or beneath) the grip panels.

c. Trigger guard

Designed to protect the trigger in order to reduce the possibility of an unintentional firing.

d. Rear sight

Used along with front sight to aim.

2. Barrel → Review with participants the definition of the barrel by asking them to define it. Point to each part, have participants name each one, and describe the function of each part.

a. Bore

The inside of the barrel. The measurement of its diameter is called the caliber of the firearm.

b. Rifling

Composed of spiral lands and grooves cut into the bore. The rifling makes the bullet spin to give it stability.

Describe rifling (use optional Wall Charts)

c. Muzzle

The front end of the barrel where the bullet exits.

Front sight

Used along with the rear sight to aim the revolver.

3. **Action** → Review with participants the definition of the action by asking them to define it. Review the parts of the action. Point to each part, have participants name each one, and describe the function of each part.
 - a. **Trigger**

When squeezed, activates the hammer.
 - b. **Hammer**

Strikes the firing pin to fire the gun. The hammer spur is the part of the hammer that may be gripped by the thumb.
4. **Additional parts of the individual firearms** included in your clinic.

G. Firearm Operation

- ❖ You will be explaining, demonstrating, discussing, and reviewing the operations indicated. Discuss the indicated procedures in a clear, simple, step-by-step manner.
- ❖ **Review the owner's manual** for any particular guidelines pertaining to its operation.
 - For example, single-action semi-automatic pistols should not be uncocked while loaded unless the manufacturer provides specific guidelines for doing so.
- ❖ **Do not conduct the Clinic until you are thoroughly familiar with the correct operation of the firearms being used.**
- ❖ **Use only dummy ammunition during this practical exercise. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.**
- ❖ **Be sure to observe, cite, and reinforce** the NRA rules of safe gun handling throughout the exercise. Ammunition that falls to the ground must remain on the ground until it may be safely retrieved by someone who is not handling a firearm (the instructor or another participant under the instructor's direction).

1. **Loading**

Explain and demonstrate the loading procedure for your each firearm type you're using in a clear, simple, step-by-step manner. Then have participants repeat the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

2. **Cocking**

Define "cocking" (where applicable): placing the hammer (or internal firing mechanism) under spring tension to prepare it to strike the firing pin and fire the gun.

Explain and demonstrate the cocking procedure for each firearm type you're using in a clear, simple step-by-manner. Then have participants repeat the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

3. Uncocking

Define “uncocking” (if applicable): relaxing the spring tension on the hammer (or internal firing mechanism) so that it is not in a position to strike the firing pin and fire the gun.

If they are using a revolver, explain that a cocked revolver must be uncocked before it can be unloaded. If they are using a semi- automatic pistol, explain that a cocked semi-automatic may be unloaded without uncocking it.

Explain and demonstrate the uncocking procedure for the firearms in a clear, simple step-by-step manner. Then have participants repeat the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

4. Unloading

Explain and demonstrate the unloading procedure for the firearms in a clear, simple step-by-step manner. Then have participants repeat the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

H. Firearm Operation Practical Exercise

- ❖ **Review** the three fundamental gun safety rules. **Have participants explain and demonstrate** the correct loading, cocking, uncocking, and unloading procedures for the firearms used in this Clinic.
- ❖ It is important that participants explain what they are doing during the demonstration.
- ❖ This will indicate they have learned the steps correctly, and help to reinforce the skills they are performing.
- ❖ **Observe** participants closely. **Be sure all safety rules are followed.**
- ❖ **Offer guidance**, direction, encouragement, and positive feedback as appropriate.

I. Conclusion

A. Summary → **Highlight most important points of this lesson**

1. State the goal of the Clinic
2. Name the three fundamental NRA
3. Rules of safe gun handling.
4. Name the three major components of a firearm and describe their function.
5. Demonstrate how to handle a firearm in a safe manner.

B. Questions → **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. Answer questions.

C. Preview → **Preview** next lesson briefly.

LESSON II

INTRODUCTION TO AMMUNITION AND THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SHOOTING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify the three items they need to check to determine the proper ammunition for their firearm.
2. Identify ammunition parts, firing sequence and define the three major types of cartridge malfunctions and explain how to respond safely when they occur.
3. Determine their dominant eye.
4. Explain the fundamentals of shooting and demonstrate them from the benchrest position.

LENGTH: 45 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS:

- ❖ Firearm
- ❖ Firearm owner's manual
- ❖ Dummy ammunition
- ❖ Empty ammunition box
- ❖ Fired ammo for the firearms being used
- ❖ NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE (Note: No live ammunition is to be used during this lesson. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.)

REFERENCES: NRA New Shooter Guide. Optional NRA Rifle, Pistol or Shotgun Charts, NRA Guide to Shooting Fundamentals.

CONTENT

A. Introduce Lesson → State learning objectives for this lesson.

B. Ammunition

1. **Ammunition Compatibility**

- a. **Turn with participants to page 4** of the NRA New Shooter Guide.
- b. **Have them read the Other Rules To Keep In Mind**, and, referencing the line, “Use only the correct ammunition for your gun”,
- c. **Ask** participants: How do you know what type of ammunition should be used for a particular gun?
- d. **Discuss** responses briefly. Explain that most firearms have the ammunition type stamped on the gun itself.
- e. **Following the NRA gun safety** rules, show participants the ammunition designation on the firearms being used for this Clinic.
- f. **Ask** participants: How do you know whether the ammunition you have is the correct type for your gun?
- g. **Discuss** responses briefly. Referencing pages 19-20 in the New Shooter Guide, explain that the ammunition type is identified on the box, and sometimes on the cartridge or shell casing as well.
- h. **Show** participants the ammunition designation on an empty ammo box, and on a fired case for the firearms used.
- i. **Ask** participants: What three items should you check to be sure that you are using the correct ammunition for your gun? Review that the gun, the ammunition box, and the cartridge should be checked to make sure the ammunition is compatible with your gun.
- j. **Note:** the ammunition with a different designation may be compatible with the participant's gun, e.g., .38 Special ammunition may be fired in .357 Magnum revolvers and 9mm is the same as 9x19 or 9mm Luger.
- k. **Refer** to the owner's manual for specific recommendations endorsed by the manufacturer.

2. **Cartridge Components** → Explain the cartridge components

- i. Case
- ii. Primer or primer compound
- iii. Powder and projectile
- iv. Include shotgun shell components if shotgun is included as one of your disciplines for the day.

3. Cartridge malfunctions → Explain the three cartridge malfunction types.

a. Misfire

Ask participants: What is a misfire?

b. Hangfire

Ask Participants: What is a hangfire? Review the definition as stated in the handout.

c. Squib load

Ask participants: If a cartridge fails to fire immediately, what action should be taken?

Discuss responses briefly.

Explain that it will not be known at first whether the problem is a misfire or a hangfire. Since the problem may be a hangfire, you should wait at least 30 seconds while keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction. After that time, the firearm may be unloaded carefully.

C. Determining Dominant Eye

1. **Explain** to participants that each individual has a dominant eye: the eye that determines the direction a person is looking.
2. **Note** that the dominant eye is used to aim the firearm, so each participant must determine his or her dominant eye before learning the fundamentals of shooting.
3. **Have participants perform a dominant eye exercise.** Have participants note which of their eyes is dominant.
4. **Note** that right-handed participants with a right dominant eye should grip the firearm on the right side. Left-handed participants with a left dominant eye should grip the firearm on the left.
5. If a participant is cross-dominant (i.e., is right-handed with a left dominant eye, or vice versa), and if the participant plans to use a pistol for recreational or competitive shooting in which the one-handed stance is used, **have the participant try** gripping the firearm on the same side as the dominant eye during the grip exercise below. If the participant feels more comfortable using the hand opposite the dominant eye, he or she may do so, but line coaches should be made aware so they can assist the shooter in blocking the dominant eye if they are shooting long guns.

D. Position -- BENCHREST

Ask participants what we mean by “position.”

- ❖ Explain that a position is the platform from which all the shooting fundamentals are executed.
- ❖ A position should be comfortable, balanced, and consistent, supported naturally, and aligned with the target (NRA).
 1. The position should be comfortable, balanced, relaxed and properly aligned with target.
 2. Sit behind the bench or table facing the target.
 3. The feet should be flat on the ground.
 4. Both arms are extended fully forward.
 5. The back should be straight or leaning slightly forward.
 6. The wrists are supported by sandbags.
 7. The head is fully erect. If necessary, raise the sandbags to allow the head to be erect.
 8. Have participants practice the benchrest position without a firearm and describe the elements as they get into position.
 9. Observe participants to ensure that they assume the position properly, offer guidance and positive feedback as appropriate.

E. Grip

- ❖ Ask participants what we mean by “grip.”
- ❖ Explain that grip refers to the manner in which the firearm is held in the hand. A proper and consistent grip is essential to accurate shooting. Together, grip and position are the foundations that allow proper execution of the shooting fundamentals.

This section applies to Pistol only since it requires more specific placement of both hands. For long guns the strong hand procedure is similar, but stress the importance of the position of the face on the stock for each particular type of long gun. This may be better demonstrated once they get to the range.

1. Assuming a proper grip: **Explain** and **demonstrate** the steps to attain a proper two-handed grip.
 - a. While keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, and with the trigger finger off the trigger, use the non-shooting hand (“weak hand”) to place the pistol in the shooting hand (“strong hand”).
 - b. Fit the “V” formed by the thumb and index finger of the shooting hand as high as possible on the pistol backstrap.
 - c. Grip the pistol using the base of the thumb and the lower three fingers of the shooting hand. The pressure of the grip
 - d. Hold the pistol firmly, but without exerting so much pressure that the hand shakes.

- e. **Keep your finger off the trigger.** It should lie along the side of the frame, outside of the trigger guard.
- f. The thumb should lie relaxed on the other side of the frame.
- g. Place the heel of the non-shooting 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 weak- hand thumb forward of and below the strong-hand thumb before wrapping the fingers of the non-shooting hand around the fingers of the shooting hand. With students using semiautomatic pistols, be sure their thumbs are out of the path of the recoiling slide.**
- h. **Emphasize** that uniformity is the most important aspect of the grip. The shooter should grip the pistol the same way every time.
- i. **Have participants** assume the benchrest position and practice the steps to assume a proper grip. Have participants describe each step as they perform it.
- j. **Observe** participants to ensure that they perform the steps correctly and in the proper sequence, and that all safety rules are followed.

F. Fundamentals of Shooting

- ❖ **Ask** participants what the word “fundamental” means to them and how does it apply in the context of learning a skill.
- ❖ **Refer to Shooting Fundamentals Infographic** to explain that fundamental means basic or essential. Fundamentals are the essential elements of performing a skill — in the case of shooting the elements of firing a shot. They are important for beginners and experienced shooters alike, because they must be performed each time a shot is fired.
- ❖ **Discuss** the fundamentals of shooting and why they are important. The fundamentals should be performed every time a person fires a shot from any position. Position and grip are the platform from which the fundamentals are executed.
- ❖ **The five fundamentals of pistol shooting** are:
 1. Aiming
 2. Hold Control
 3. Breath Control
 4. Trigger Control
 5. Follow-Through
- ❖ **Explain** that Aiming is the process of achieving the proper relationship between the target, the front sight and the rear sight. Aiming consists of two components: sight alignment and sight picture.

1. Sight Alignment

- a. **Explain** that sight alignment refers to the proper relationship of the pistol's front and rear sights.
 - i. With typical post-and-notch sights found on most pistols, 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.
 - ii. 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 multiplies with distance.
- b. **Ask** participants what is meant by sight alignment.

2. Sight Picture

- a. **Explain** that sight picture refers to the proper positioning of the aligned sights on the target.
 - i. Sight picture is obtained by placing properly aligned sights into their proper relationship with the target.
 - ii. 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.
- b. **Ensure** the participants are made aware that it is best to keep both eyes open while aiming, as more light is available to the eyes, depth perception is better, and facial contortions and muscle tension are eliminated.
- c. **TIP!** A small piece of frosted tape on the inside of the lens of the shooting glasses in front of the non-shooting eye can relieve eye strain, if evident.

3. Breath Control

- a. **Ask** participants why breath control is important in shooting.
- b. Explain that body movement while breathing can produce gun movement that impairs shooting. For maximum accuracy, the shooter uses breath control to minimize such movement.
 - i. To minimize body movement, take a breath before each shot, let enough air out to be comfortable, and stop breathing while firing the shot.
 - ii. Holding the breath too long can result in muscle tremors. If this occurs, the trigger finger should be removed from the trigger, the gun should be lowered (while pointed in a safe direction). Relax, take a few breaths, and then begin the firing cycle again.

4. Hold Control

- a. **Ask** what hold control refers to.
- b. **Explain** that hold control allows the shooter to maintain the proper sight picture and sight alignment during the process of firing the shot.

- c. Grip - An important factor in hold control is the way in which the pistol is gripped. Demonstrate the proper method of assuming a proper firing grip, following the description in the NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting handbook.
- d. Arc Of Movement –
 - i. Explain that it is impossible to hold the pistol in a shooting position without some motion; this is called the “arc of movement.”
 - ii. 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

5. Trigger Control

- a. **Explain** that trigger control refers to the proper method of activating the trigger to minimize movement that can misalign the sights.
- b. **Demonstrate** the elements of proper trigger control.
 - i. The index finger is placed so that the trigger is halfway between the tip of the finger and the first joint.
 - ii. The trigger is squeezed straight to the rear in a smooth, continuous manner without disturbing sight alignment. Pressure should be applied evenly, not in a start- and-stop manner.
 - iii. The shooter should not be able to predict when the gun will fire. Each shot should come as a surprise.
 - iv. Trigger squeeze and sight alignment must be done simultaneously while maintaining a minimum arc of movement.
- c. **Have participants** practice proper trigger control using an empty pistol and describe what they are doing while they are squeezing the trigger. (Refer to the pistol's owner's manual to ensure dry firing is acceptable. If not, use dummy ammunition or “snap caps” as appropriate).

6. Follow Through

- a. Explain that follow-through is the continuation of everything that was being done at the time the shot was fired. Follow- through enables the shooter to integrate, maintain and continue all the shooting fundamentals before, during and immediately after firing the shot.
- b. Relate the importance of follow-through to other sports such as golf, baseball, etc.

7. The TWO most important fundamentals!

- a. **Ask** participants which of the fundamentals are the most important.
- b. Explain that aiming and trigger control are the two most important fundamentals.
- c. The other fundamentals all contribute to achieving these.

G. Conclusion Summary → **Highlight most important points of this lesson**

1. The three items need to be checked to make sure you are using the correct ammunition for your gun?
2. What are the three major types of cartridge malfunctions? What should you do if they occur?
3. Which of your eyes is dominant? What is the dominant eye used for in shooting?
4. What are the five fundamentals of pistol shooting? Which are the two most important ones?

H. Questions → **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. Answer questions.

I. Preview → **Preview** next lesson briefly.

LESSON III

INTRODUCTION TO PISTOL AND/OR RIFLE SHOOTING FROM BENCHREST POSITION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the three range commands, the procedures to be followed if one has a problem with a firearm or drops ammunition, and any applicable range rules which apply to the facility being used.
2. Discuss and explain the eight NRA gun safety rules to be followed when shooting and storing a pistol.
3. Safely shoot a target from the benchrest position using the five fundamentals of pistol shooting.

LENGTH: 60 minutes

FACILITY: Range

TRAINING AIDS:

- ❖ Pistol
- ❖ Pistol's owner's manual
- ❖ Ammunition
- ❖ Hearing and eye protection
- ❖ Blank targets
- ❖ Sandbags
- ❖ Benchrests (tables)
- ❖ Chairs
- ❖ NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE

REFERENCES: NRA New Shooter Guide. Optional NRA Rifle, Pistol or Shotgun Charts, NRA Guide to Shooting Fundamentals.

CONTENT

1. Introduce Lesson → State learning objectives for this lesson.

2. Range Safety and Shooting Facility Orientation

1. **Range Layout**

- a. **Refer students to pages 24-25 of the New Shooter Guide** to discuss the layout of the range: the location of the firing points, firing line, ready area, etc.
- b. Explain the activities that are permitted in each area.

2. **Range Personnel**

- a. **Introduce** participants to the range personnel, e.g., the chief range officer, other range officers, etc.
- b. **Describe** their functions/duties.

3. **Range Commands and Procedures**

Name the three basic range commands and **explain** what they mean.

a. **LOAD**

Explain that shooters may load their pistols only after this command has been given. Emphasize that this command authorizes shooters to load their pistols, and nothing more. Shooters must keep the gun pointed in a safe direction throughout the loading process and keep their fingers off the trigger.

b. **COMMENCE FIRING**

Explain that after this command has been given, shooters may fire their pistols when they are ready. Emphasize that shooters are not required to begin firing immediately.

c. **CEASE FIRING**

Explain when this command is given, shooters must stop shooting immediately, remove their fingers from the triggers, keep their guns pointed in a safe direction, and await further instructions from the range officer.

These instructions may include such commands as, “Unload . . . Cylinders open . . . Magazines out . . . Slides back . . . Guns on the bench.”

Emphasize that the “cease firing” command may be used during normal range operation or in an emergency situation. Anyone observing an unsafe situation may use the “cease firing” command.

d. **PROBLEM WITH FIREARM**

Explain that a shooter who has any type of problem with the pistol must take their finger off the trigger, keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, and raise his or her hand for assistance.

e. DROPPED AMMUNITION

Ammunition that falls to the ground must remain on the ground until it may be safely retrieved by someone who is not handling a firearm (the instructor or another participant under the instructor's direction).

Review by asking participants:

What is the meaning of the command, "Load"? "Commence firing"? "Cease firing"?

Who may issue the "cease firing" command?

What procedures should be followed by a shooter who is experiencing a problem with a pistol?

What should you do if you accidentally drop ammunition?

f. RANGE RULES

Explain and discuss the range rules for the range you are using.

3. Rules for Safe Shooting

1. Three fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling

Review the three fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling by asking participants to state them. **Turn back to pages 4-5 of the New Shooter Guide** if they need help.

2. NRA rules for using and storing a gun

Turn with participants to the **Other Rules to Keep in Mind on page 5**. Have participants read each rule aloud, and then ask participants to explain the importance of each of them.

- a. Know your target and what is beyond.
- b. Know how to use the gun safely.
- c. Be sure the gun is safe to operate.
- d. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
- e. Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.
- f. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.
- g. Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting situations require additional safety precautions.
- h. Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.

4. Preparation for Shooting Exercises

Be sure that you and participants are wearing hearing and eye protection before entering the range.

Prepare the firing point with the necessary equipment: a benchrest, chair, sandbags, and the firearm. Have a copy of the NRA New Shooter's Guide handy for reference.

Set a relatively large blank target (e.g., the back of an NRA 50-foot pistol target or a large paper plate) approximately fifteen feet in front of the firing line.

In the case of multiple participants, there should be one NRA instructor per firing point, one firearm per firing point, and no more than two participants per firing point.

Be sure to increase range time proportionately if there are two participants at a firing point.

Use the "coach/pupil" method with multiple participants: while one participant (the "pupil") shoots, **involve** the other participant (the "coach") in the learning process by guiding him or her to watch the "pupil" and offer feedback under your direction.

5. Shooting from Benchrest Position

Instruct participants using the NRA eight-step method for teaching beginning firearm shooters.

At each step, **observe** participant closely. **Be sure** all safety rules are followed. **Offer guidance**, direction, and positive feedback as appropriate.

1. **Study Bench Rest Position**

Review the details of the benchrest position and **demonstrate** the position for participants.

2. **Practice Position Without Firearm**

Direct one participant to practice what he or she has just heard and seen. The gun is not yet used so the participant can concentrate totally on the position of the body.

3. **Practice Position With Firearm**

Add the firearm once the participant has achieved the correct body position.

Review the elements of a correct grip and **be sure** the participant grips the firearm properly. If the participant's firearm is a semi-automatic, **be sure** the participant keeps the thumbs out of the path of the recoiling slide. The arms should be fully extended and the sights held in front of the dominant eye.

4. **Align Position with Target**

Be sure the participant is positioned so the gun points naturally at the center of the target. **Check** natural aiming area by having participant lower eyes away from the sights momentarily, and then look back at the sight picture. The aligned sights should still be on target. Have the participant adjust the position, if necessary

5. Dry Fire Exercise Using the Fundamentals of Shooting

Direct participant to practice the fundamentals of shooting by dry firing the firearm. *(Consult the firearm's owner's manual to see whether dry firing is approved by the manufacturer. If not, use dummy ammunition or "snap caps" to protect the firearm from damage.)*

For double-action pistols, have participants cock the hammer for each shot (if possible).

Review the five fundamentals. Emphasize focus on the front sight and the importance of pressing the trigger straight to the back while maintaining proper sight alignment. After the participant has demonstrated reasonable skill and confidence in dry firing the firearm, move on to the next step.

- a. Aiming
- b. Hold control
- c. Breath control
- d. Trigger control
- e. Follow-through

6. Live Fire Exercises

Conduct single-shot and multiple shot live-fire exercises as follows:

Supply participant with one cartridge at a time. **Direct** participant to LOAD.

When the participant is ready, **direct** him or her to COMMENCE FIRING.

Then **instruct** participant to CEASE FIRING and unload.

Have participant fire five shots on the targets.

Observe participant closely. Watch the gun and shooter, not the target.

Be sure all safety rules are followed.

Offer guidance, direction, and positive feedback as appropriate. Involve the other participant (the "coach") in the learning process by guiding him or her to watch the "pupil" and offer feedback under your direction.

Repeat the single-shot exercise at least once for a total of 10 shots.

7. Five Shot Exercise

Supply participants with five cartridges at a time.

Direct participant to “load.” When the participant is ready, direct him or her to “commence firing.”

Be sure the participant rests between shots. After the five shots have been fired, instruct participant to “cease firing” and unload.

Repeat the multiple-shot exercise until your student is able to shoot “groups” anywhere on the target. Observe, offer feedback, and involve the other participant as in the single-shot exercise.

8. Adjust Sights

Explain the rule for adjusting sights: *“Move the rear sight in the same direction that the hits on the target should move.”*

Direct participant to make sight adjustments as necessary, if reasonable groups were attained and if the gun has adjustable sights.

Repeat the multi-shot exercise until your student has been able to shoot at least three, five-shot groups within a 9-inch diameter circle in the middle of the target.

If you are using the coach/pupil method, have participants reverse roles and repeat the eight steps.

9. Review of Shooting Practice

Ask participants what they learned from the day’s shooting practice.

Discuss responses briefly. **Supplement** their comments with positive feedback as appropriate.

a. Conclusion Summary → **Highlight most important points of this lesson**

- a. What are the three basic range commands? What do they mean?
- b. What are the eight NRA safety rules for using and storing a gun?
- c. What have you learned from your practice of the five fundamentals of shooting?

b. Questions → **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. Answer questions.

c. Preview → **Preview** next lesson briefly.

LESSON IV

SAFE FIREARM STORAGE AND ADDITIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of storing firearms safely and the storage options available.
2. Discuss the continued options available for women through your club and the NRA.
3. Discuss the benefits of receiving additional training through the NRA Basic Firearm Training Program.

LENGTH: 30 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS:

- ❖ NRA NEW SHOOTER GUIDE
- ❖ Come Join Us booklet

REFERENCES: NRA New Shooter Guide. Pages 6 – 9
Come Join Us Booklet

CONTENT

1. Introduce Lesson → State learning objectives for this lesson.
2. Safe Storage and Storage Choices for Firearms
 - a. Instruct students to turn to pages 6-9 in the New Shooters Guide. Explain the different types of storage options and why it is important to make sure unauthorized persons do not have access to your firearms.
 - i. Ask them who they think an unauthorized person might be.
 - a. Cleaning person.
 - b. HVAC Repair person.
 - c. House or pet sitter.
 - d. Children's friends.
 - e. Others

3. Additional Opportunities for Training – You and your club have a great opportunity to grow your training program and increase club membership by offering additional “Next Steps” training to the ladies attending your Clinic.
 - a. The one question women always ask after they’ve spent the day learning to shoot, is “What’s Next”? There are numerous seminar ideas that take little time and do not need access to a range to conduct
 - b. How to properly fit a handgun to a woman’s hand
 - c. Concealed carry options – holster selection, how to dress, safety concerns with off-body carry
 - d. Drawing from a holster using SIRT or other laser pistols
 - e. Gun cleaning for your new gun.
 - f. Most can be done at your clubhouse or in a trainer’s home, informally, to build on the camaraderie established at your event.
 - g. These can be part of “ladies night” events that bring more new shooters, and ultimately, more families to your club or range.
4. Review of the Come Join Us booklet
5. Instruct student to page through the supplied booklet and explain some of the different opportunities available to them through the NRA.
6. Point out on pages 20-21 the many different courses available to them and how to find and register for them via the www.nrainstructors.org website. This is a great opportunity to promote upcoming courses at your club. Have your flyers there and offer a discount for any attendee who signs up for an upcoming class.
7. Conclusion Summary → **Highlight most important points of this lesson**
8. What is the safest way to store a firearm in their home?
9. What are the other opportunities available to them through the NRA?

Questions → **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. Answer questions.

Thank You!

**Questions? Contact the Women’s Programs National Coordinator:
NRA Training Department
11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 267-1398**



NRA