

Gun Safety

by Matt
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Recently in SD there was a tragic shooting where a child shot their sibling while they were playing with a handgun. So the article I had planned for this issue has been pushed back, to talk about the important issue of practicing gun safety. Firearms owners owe it to ourselves, family, friends, and others around us to practice firearms safety when at home, on the range, in the field, or anywhere else you might be handling a firearm. We must also remain on guard against becoming complacent when handling and storing our firearms.

With all the various types of firearms and shooting sports all the rules of firearms safety begin with the basics.

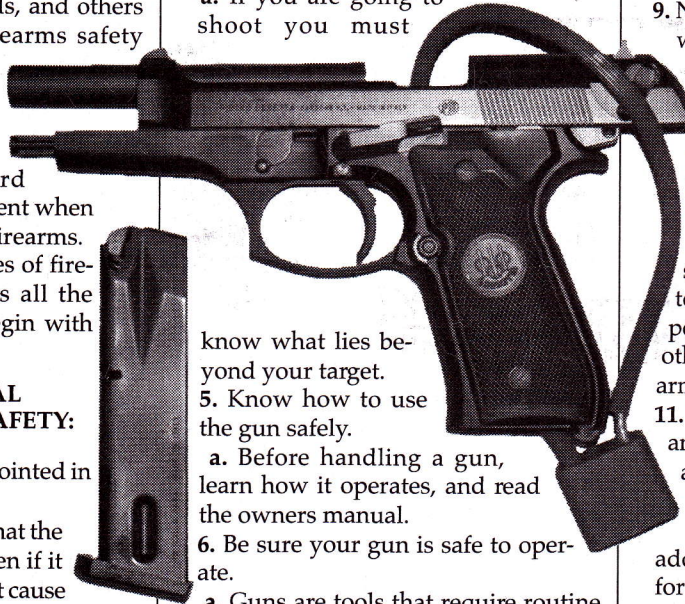
The NRA FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF FIREARMS SAFETY:

1. **ALWAYS** keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
 - a. A safe direction means that the gun is pointed so that even if it were to go off, it would not cause injury or damage.
2. **ALWAYS** keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
 - a. Your trigger finger should always be kept straight, along side the frame and out of the trigger guard until you have made the decision to shoot.
3. **ALWAYS** keep the firearm unloaded until ready to use.
 - a. A firearm that is not being used should always be unloaded.
 - b. When at the range, your firearm should be left unloaded while you walk downrange and check your target.
 - c. When storing a firearm in a gun safe or lock box should generally be unloaded.
 - d. Special precautions should be taken when storing firearms kept for personal protection.
 - i. When a personal protection firearm is not being carried on your person.
 - ii. It is recommended they are stored separately from your other firearms in such a manner they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.

RULES FOR USING OR STORING A GUN:

These additional rules reinforce the three basic firearms safety rules, when using or storing your firearms.

4. Know your target and what is beyond.
 - a. If you are going to shoot you must



know what lies beyond your target.

5. Know how to use the gun safely.
 - a. Before handling a gun, learn how it operates, and read the owners manual.
6. Be sure your gun is safe to operate.
 - a. Guns are tools that require routine maintenance, regular cleaning, and proper storage.
7. Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.
 - a. Each firearm is intended for the use of a specific cartridge.
 - b. Only cartridges designed for a particular gun can be fired safely in it.

8. Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.

- a. The sound of a gunshot can damage unprotected ears.
 - b. Gun discharges can also emit debris and hot gases that could cause eye injuries.
9. Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.

- a. Alcohol and drugs can impair normal mental and physical bodily functions, sharply diminishing your ability to shoot safely.

10. Store guns so they are inaccessible to unauthorized persons.

- a. As a firearms owner it is your responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized persons (especially children) from handling or otherwise having access to your firearms.

11. Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting activities require additional safety precautions.

- a. There are many different types of firearms, some of which require additional safety rules or procedures for proper operation.

- b. Most shooting activities have developed a set of rules to ensure safety during completion or the activity.

In closing it is my personal recommendation when firearms are not in use to keep them secured in such a manner to prevent unauthorized persons from accessing them. 🍷

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