

Introduction to Competitive Shooting

Welcome to competitive shooting!

This 3-hour class will give you an introduction to the exciting world of competitive shooting with an opportunity to participate in 3 different disciplines while under the watchful eye of your experienced group of coaches.

What it is: This class will give you the basic knowledge and skills to begin participating in 3 of the most popular action shooting sports in our country; International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA), United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA) and Steel Challenge. We will cover the safety requirements, equipment needed to participate, an overview of each of the 3 sports and the basic rules of the game for each. Then, following a basic safety assessment period, our coaches will share an example stage of each sport with a live fire demonstration for you to watch and learn from. There will be lots of opportunity for questions and to address any concerns that you, our students, might have. You will then be invited to also shoot through our sample stages. After course completion, you will have a much greater understanding of what is required to embark on your journey into the amazing world of competitive shooting. All of this will be provided to you in a comfortable relaxed atmosphere. You will be participating with other beginners in what you will soon discover to be your new favorite thing to do!

Equipment Requirements

Some form of range bag or gear carrier: This is recommended as the way to arrive at the range with your firearm safely, and to carry, ammunition and the rest of your gear for the class as we move around.

Handgun: A safely functioning center fire handgun in a pistol caliber of 9mm up to .45ACP. Center fire revolvers are welcome, but magnum cartridges are not advised. Pocket sized pistols are also not advised as the smaller capacity and longer target distances involved with competitive shooting can be very frustrating for a someone new to shooting sports.

Ammunition: Bring 100 rounds for this class. Metal piercing, steel core, incendiary, and/or tracer ammunition, as well as ammunition loaded with steel-jacketed projectiles is prohibited. Steel case ammunition is allowed, provided the projectile does not stick to a magnet.

Holster: A holster that covers the trigger guard of this handgun completely. It is strongly recommended that generic nylon soft holsters not be used for this class, or any of the action shooting events. They tend to be difficult to re-holster without using your support hand to steady the holster. This can lead to safety issues. Drop leg, thigh rig, cross draw, and shoulder holsters are not allowed under any circumstances.

Belt: A sturdy belt that will keep your holster from moving around.

Magazines or speed loaders: At least three magazines if they hold 10 or more rounds, four magazines if they hold less than 10 rounds. At least four speed loaders holding six rounds and five speed loaders if they only hold five rounds. If you have more magazines or speed loaders bring them!

Magazine/speed loader carrier: For this class, we will allow you to carry extra magazines or speed loaders in a pocket, but some type of belt mounted carrier will make things easier.

Eye and ear protection: All persons on the range could potentially be exposed to ricochet debris, bullet fragments and the sound of gunfire. All persons on the range are required to wear eye and ear protection.

Clothing: A hat with a brim is recommended. A well-fitting shirt that can be tucked in is suggested so that it does not interfere with your drawing and re-holstering. Low cut or V neck style shirts are strongly discouraged as hot brass may get inside the shirt and cause burns. Open toed shoes or sandals are not allowed.

*Please don't go buy a holster or magazine carrier just for this class. We will assist you with equipment recommendations as part of the class in order to help you get the right parts the first time.

NOTE: This class and all competitive shooting events are held on a cold range. This means that before you arrive at the range, your firearm must be completely unloaded. For semi-automatic pistols, this means no round in the chamber and no magazine in the mag well. For revolvers, the cylinder must be completely empty.

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Safety Briefing

You have elected to learn more about using a firearm for competition. Great! Competition may not be near the stress of a real life or death situation, but it's about as close as most of us will hopefully ever come. It's also a chance to combine accuracy and speed in exciting courses of fire and to meet and share with other shooters who are like minded.

Shooting sports are exciting and fun, but we take safety very seriously! Therefore, keep safety at the forefront of your mind throughout the class. Fun and competition success will follow quickly. Ask your Range Officer (RO) for assistance at any time.

Coming to the Range for your Competition Safety Session:

When you arrive at the range your firearm must be unloaded and holstered or bagged. If you have any questions about your equipment, please come with your firearm unloaded and bagged and then ask a coach how to proceed.

Rules of Gun Safety

Every shooter **MUST** know the 4 Rules of Guns Safety.

1. *All guns are always loaded.*
2. *Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.*
3. *Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.*
4. *Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.*

In a match, these rules are enhanced a little:

1. **COLD RANGE:** Your firearm must be completely unloaded, unless you are under the supervision of a Range Officer. The magazine well or cylinder must be empty. Hammer or striker down. The only place you may handle your gun off the line is in the designated safety area and no ammunition may be handled in the safety area. If you are new to a range, ask for the location of the safety area(s) and where it is acceptable to holster or un-holster your firearm. If you are legally allowed to carry a firearm, unload your firearm before entering the premises of a match
2. **180 DEGREE RULE:** Do not point your muzzle up range past the 180 degree line. When facing directly at the down-range berm, your muzzle must never go up-range past a 180 degree plane extending to either side (right and left) of the shooter. Range Officers may warn you if they see you getting close to violating this rule, however, it is your responsibility to be aware of your muzzle position. Similarly, be careful and ensure your muzzle does not cover your own hands or body while drawing, moving, re-loading, reaching for a door, re-holstering, etc.
3. **FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER:** When you are not actually engaging a target, your finger is to be off the trigger and clearly outside the trigger guard. This includes while moving, reloading, drawing, re-holstering.

Safety Violations & Disqualifications

Violating a safety rule will get you disqualified (DQ'd) from a match. Even very experienced shooters can get DQ'd. If it happens to you, please remember that the Range Officer is working for everyone's safety so treat it as a "course correction" on your journey of safe competition shooting.

MATCH DISQUALIFICATION (DQ): A competitor who commits a safety infraction or any other prohibited activity during a match will be disqualified from the match, and will be prohibited from attempting any remaining course of fire in the match.

A competitor can be DQ'd for any of the following:

ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGES (AD):

- A shot which travels over a backstop, a berm or in any other unsafe direction.
- A shot which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor, except when shooting a target closer than 10 feet
- A shot which occurs while loading, reloading, unloading, remedial action, while transferring a firearm between hands
- A shot which occurs during movement, except while actually engaging a target

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UNSAFE GUN HANDLING:

- Handling a firearm at any time except when in a designated safety area or under the direction of a Range Officer
- At any time during a course of fire, a competitor allows the muzzle of their firearm to point rearward further than 90 degrees from the median intercept of the backstop
- At any time during the course of fire, a competitor drops their firearm or causes it to fall, loaded or not
- Allowing the muzzle of a firearm to point at any part of the competitor's body during a course of fire (SWEEPING)
- Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard while clearing a malfunction
- Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard during loading, reloading, or unloading.
- Failure to keep the finger outside of the trigger guard during movement unless aiming at a target
- Drawing a firearm while facing up range.

Range Commands

The Range Officer is working for everyone's safety. Under their direction, you will hear these commands at all USPSA matches:

STOP: This is the most important command. At any time, any Range Officer assigned to a stage may issue this command. The competitor must immediately cease firing, stop moving and wait for further instruction from the Range Officer.

MAKE READY/LOAD AND MAKE READY: This command signifies the start of "the course of fire". Under the direct supervision of the Range Officer, the competitor must face down range and prepare the firearm in accordance with the defined start condition for the stage. Except when in a designated safety area. **NEVER** handle your firearm outside of the safety area without hearing this command.

ARE YOU READY?: A positive response is appreciated but not required. Lack of a response from the competitor will be acknowledged as notice to proceed by the RO/SO.

STAND BY: This command will be followed by the start signal within 1 to 4 seconds.

START SIGNAL (Beep from Timer): The signal for the competitor to begin their course of fire. If a competitor fails to react to a start signal, for any reason, the Range Officer will resume the range commands from "Are You Ready".

IF YOU ARE FINISHED, SHOW CLEAR:

If the competitor has finished shooting, he must present the firearm for inspection by the Range Officer with the muzzle pointed down range, magazine removed, slide locked or held open, and chamber empty. Revolvers must be presented with the cylinder swung out and empty.

IF CLEAR, HAMMER DOWN, HOLSTER: While pointing the firearm safely downrange, the competitor must perform a final safety check of the firearm as follows:

Auto-loaders – release the slide and pull the trigger (without touching the hammer or decocker, if any).

Revolvers – close the empty cylinder (without touching the hammer, if any).

If the gun proves to be clear, the competitor must holster their firearm.

If the gun does not prove to be clear, the Range Officer will resume the commands from "IF Finished ..."

RANGE IS CLEAR: This declaration signifies the end of the course of fire. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score, patch, reset targets etc.

Additional Considerations

EYE AND EAR PROTECTION must be worn at all times while competing or on the range. If during the course of fire, your protective gear inadvertently falls off, please stop yourself and inform the range officer.

LISTEN TO THE RANGE OFFICERS AND OBEY THEIR COMMANDS. Their job is to keep it safe for all involved.

Don't anticipate commands, especially at the end of a course of fire. Wait for the RO to give you commands this prevents you from needing to perform the safety checks again. The RO will make sure the gun is clear and holstered before clearing the range.

EVERYONE MUST HELP OUT: This is a volunteer sport and without volunteers there is no sport. The match goes much smoother when everyone helps tape targets, set steel, set activators, pick up brass, score, etc.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: We are all here because we want to be surrounded by people with similar interests. Competitors can be disqualified from a match for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unsportsmanlike such as cheating, dishonesty, or behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute.

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Shooter Comprehension and safety assessment Students should be able to answer the following questions and demonstrate satisfactory performance of the following shooter safety assessment.

Questions

State the Four Rules of Gun Safety

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

State the most important Range Command: _____

Summarize the 180-degree Rule: _____

Summarize what is meant by a "Cold Range": _____

When is the only time your finger can be on the trigger? _____

Safety Assessment & Live Fire

The Range Officer will direct and assist the shooter through the following tasks to demonstrate comprehension:

Range Commands

"Make ready"

Draw:

- One hand, not two. (Do not use the weak hand to move clothing or support the holster)
- Muzzle level, and pointed downrange.
- Finger outside the trigger guard.

Load:

- 'Look' the magazine into the gun.
- Make sure it's seated
- 'Slingshot' the slide (your coaches will demonstrate this) while keeping the gun level and downrange.
- Finger outside the trigger guard.
- Put the safety on if available

Holster:

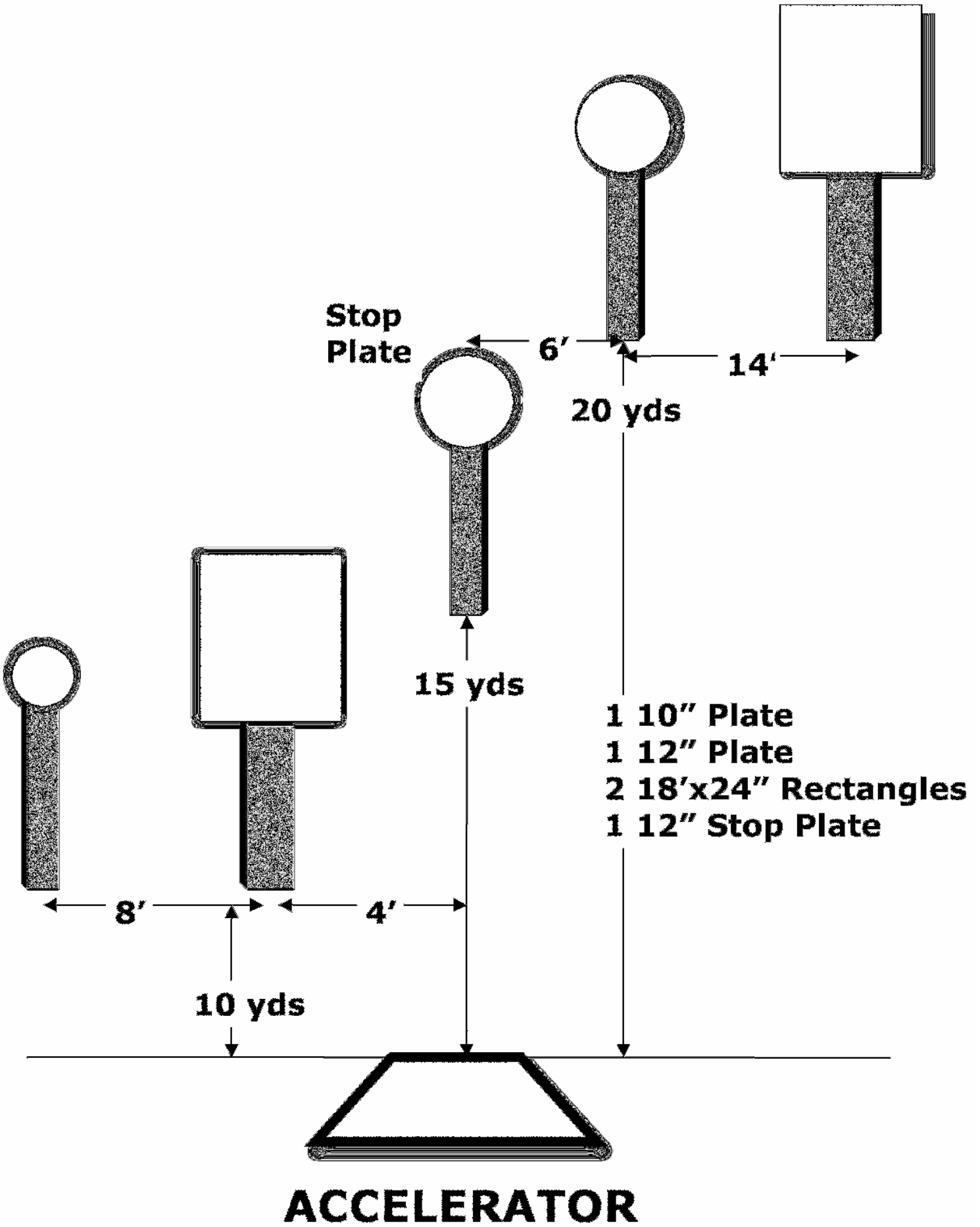
- One hand, not two. (Do not use the weak hand to move clothing or support the holster)
- Assume the start position

"If you are finished, unload and show clear"

- Remove the magazine and stow.
- 'Slingshot' the slide to unload, remember gun level and downrange.
- Let the round from the chamber fall...you can pick it up when the gun is clear.
- Show an empty chamber to the RO/SO

"If clear, hammer down, holster"

- Drop the slide
- Dry fire the gun pointed downrange.
- Holster the gun, again one hand, not two.



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Introduction to IDPA – Course of Fire

Written Stage Briefing for IDPA Stage

START POSITION:

Gun loaded to division capacity and holstered. Standing at SP, toes touching line, facing T1 with hands naturally relaxed at sides.

SCENARIO:

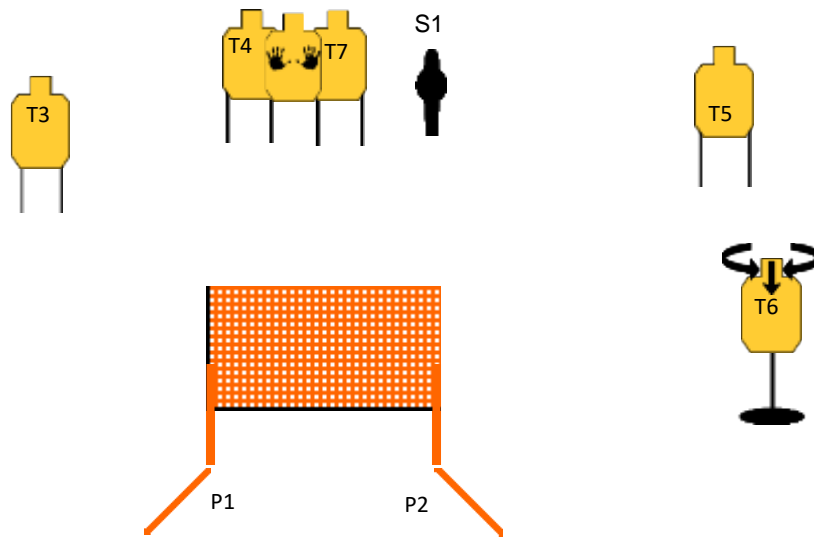
You are leaving the mini-mart when you are attacked by muggers. Save yourself and your friend who is still inside the store.

PROCEDURE:

At the signal engage T1 with 2 rounds to the body and one round to the head, T2- T7 with 2 rounds each and steel with a minimum of 1 round. Steel must fall to score.

S1 activates T6 (double drop turner).

Fault lines at P1 & P2 delineate proper use of cover and the positions from which to engage T3 - T7. Remember, you must "slice the pie" for tactical priority in IDPA. This stage is "unlimited" and you can take make-up shots if you desire, or if you see that you have a miss or a bad hit on a target.



Coaches will show you how to use tactical priority and cover at P1 & P2

