

Handgun Shooter Tips

Ammunition: Identify specific brands and types of ammunition for each firearm you own which functions reliably through the gun's action, and delivers optimum performance. Write purchase dates on each ammo box end flap and keep it for your records. Use inexpensive practice ammo for training, but use the same ammo you will carry in your personal protection firearm to qualify with several times a year.

Holsters: Take along your unloaded & cased handgun when you shop for a quality holsters. You should try on the holster with the gun in it to determine if it will meet your requirements - if possible. If you have more than one carry requirement for your handgun, you need more than one holster system. *Security, concealability, accessibility & comfort* will be important considerations when either purchasing or using your holster. Start with a strong-side hip holster (I prefer kydex Blackhawk Industries 'Serpa', Uncle Mike's of Oregon and Fobus holsters because of their low cost and good quality).

Gear Carrier: The most efficient method of carrying your handgun & accessories is in a gear box or gear bag. The bag/box should be large enough to carry all the gear that you require in a safe & efficient manner. Multiple compartments are a plus. The container should be able to protect its contents and store all of the tools and accessories needed for your shooting activities. You may need more than one container. Do not store or carry your cleaning materials in this container.

Safety Equipment: Acquire a good set of ear plug or muffs along with some wrap around-type shatter proof glasses [*colors optional*]. It is a good idea to carry a spare set of each to the range.

Self-Training: Pull together information from many sources. Develop a system that will assist you in practicing your skills [*marksmanship, tactics, drawing, stances, etc.*]. Set up different drills/exercises which will assist you in your training. Spend more time on the skills you have not mastered. Stay with your program. Your learning may drop off significantly after 100 - 150 rounds of live fire ammo (without a significant break). Physical & mental stress set in at that point. Make notes (journal your training) and review them before your next training session.

Practice: The majority of your shooting skills can be worked on & improved while **dry firing**. Most commercial ranges will not allow you to shoot from other than a *standing high ready position*. You can work on breathing, grip, stances, movement, sighting, drawing, reloading, etc. while at home without live ammo. **Never "dry fire" train with live ammo in the same room as you & your firearm.**

Safety: If you can not practice in a safe manner, do not do it! Develop safe gun-handling practices as soon as you begin to learn to shoot. Each movement or technique should consider how safety could be incorporated into it. Accidents with firearms are often traumatic.

Speed: This is one element of shooting for combat/survival that should be the very last to be developed. Do all your training "*s-l-o-w-l-y*". Once proficient, you will find that speed will come easily. Do it right - then do it quickly. Devote your training time to proper form.