Firearms Fundamentals: A Course for New Target Shooters

Course Title: Introduction to Handgun Safety & Marksmanship

Course Goal: To provide new shooters with the fundamental knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to safely handle and operate a handgun for recreational target shooting. Upon completion, students will be able to demonstrate firearm safety, understand their firearm's operation, and apply the core principles of marksmanship.

Target Audience: Individuals with no prior shooting experience or those seeking a comprehensive refresher on firearm fundamentals.

Estimated Duration: 4 hours (Classroom Instruction)

Module 1: Firearm Safety - The Foundation (60 Minutes)

• 1.1. Introduction & Course Overview

- Instructor and student introductions.
- Course objectives and expectations.
- Emphasis on a positive and responsible mindset.

1.2. The Four Universal Rules of Firearm Safety

- Rule 1: Treat all guns as if they are always loaded.
- Rule 2: Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy. (Muzzle Discipline)
- Rule 3: Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target and you
 have made the decision to shoot. (Trigger Discipline)
- Rule 4: Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.
- o Interactive discussion and scenario-based examples for each rule.

• 1.3. Additional Range Safety Protocols

- Understanding range commands (e.g., "Cease Fire," "Range is Hot," "Range is Cold").
- o Proper use of eye and ear protection.

Image of safety glasses and hearing protection

- * Rules for handling firearms at the firing line versus behind the line.
- * Uncasing and casing firearms safely.

Module 2: Understanding Your Handgun & Ammunition (60 Minutes)

• 2.1. Anatomy of a Handgun

- Semi-Automatic Pistol: Key components (Frame, Slide, Barrel, Sights, Trigger, Magazine Release, Slide Stop).
- Revolver: Key components (Frame, Cylinder, Barrel, Sights, Hammer, Trigger, Cylinder Release).
- o Hands-on demonstration with inert training firearms (dummy guns).

• 2.2. Basic Firearm Operation

- o The Cycle of Operation for a semi-automatic pistol.
- How a double-action/single-action revolver functions.
- Demonstration of loading and unloading procedures.

• 2.3. Understanding Ammunition

- Components of a cartridge (Case, Primer, Powder, Bullet).
- o Understanding caliber and how to select the correct ammunition.

o Identifying and handling misfires (dud rounds).

• 2.4. Common Malfunctions

- Recognizing and safely clearing common stoppages (e.g., Failure to Feed, Stovepipe, Double Feed).
- o Instructor demonstration on how to clear malfunctions safely.

Module 3: The Fundamentals of Marksmanship (75 Minutes)

• 3.1. Dominant Eye

- Explanation of ocular dominance.
- o Practical exercise to help each student determine their dominant eye.

• 3.2. The Seven Core Fundamentals

- Stance: Establishing a stable and balanced shooting platform (Isosceles/Modified Isosceles).
- Grip: Achieving a firm, high, and consistent two-handed grip.
- Sight Alignment: The relationship between the front and rear sights.
- o **Sight Picture:** The relationship of the aligned sights to the target.
- o **Breathing Control:** How to breathe correctly for precision shots.
- Trigger Control: The most critical fundamental. A smooth, continuous press without disturbing the sights.
- o **Follow-Through:** Maintaining all fundamentals through the shot and recoil.

• 3.3. Dry-Fire Practice

- o Introduction to the concept and importance of dry firing.
- Guided dry-fire practice session in the classroom using dummy rounds or training firearms.

Module 4: Firearm Ownership & Next Steps (45 Minutes)

• 4.1. Firearm Cleaning & Maintenance

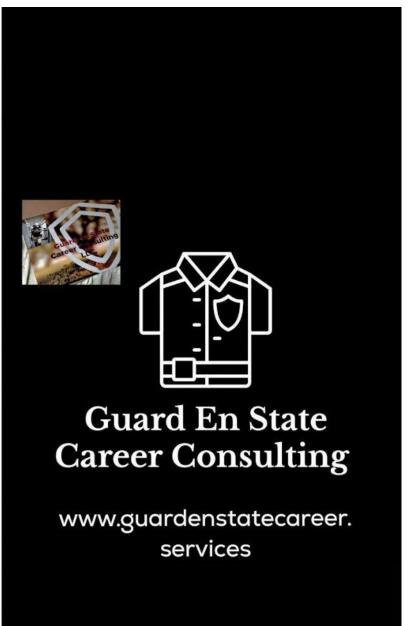
- o Importance of a clean and properly lubricated firearm.
- Overview of cleaning equipment and solvents.
- Demonstration of basic field stripping and cleaning.

• 4.2. Safe Storage Practices

- o Secure storage options: Gun safes, lockboxes, and cable locks.
- Legal and ethical responsibilities of securing firearms from unauthorized persons.

4.3. Continuing Your Training

- Preview of the live-fire range session.
- Suggestions for practice drills and skill development.



Information on further training opportunities.

•4.4. Final Review & Q&A Recap of key safety rules and fundamentals.

Open forum for student questions.

Disclaimer: This course outline provides general firearm safety and marksmanship information. All handling of firearms should be done under the supervision of a certified instructor. Always know and comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding firearm ownership, transportation, and use.