

# Three Rules For Safe Gun Handling

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## The Fundamental NRA Rules for Safe Gun Handling Are:

ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction. This is the primary rule of gun safety. 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. The key to this rule is to control where the muzzle or front end of the barrel is pointed at all times. Common sense dictates the safest direction, depending on different circumstances.

ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot. When holding a gun, rest your trigger finger outside the trigger guard alongside the gun. Until you are actually ready to fire, do not touch the trigger.

ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use. Whenever you pick up a gun, always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, keep your finger off the trigger, engage the mechanical safety if possible, remove the ammunition source (magazine or ammunition from

magazine tube), open the action, visually and physically inspect the chamber(s) and magazine area, which should be clear of ammunition and leave the action open with the mechanical safety engaged. If you do not know how to open the action or inspect the chamber(s) leave the gun alone and get help from someone who does.

## When Using or Storing a Gun, Always Follow These NRA Rules:

Know your target and what is beyond. Be absolutely sure you have identified your target beyond any doubt. Equally important, be aware of the area beyond your target. This means observing your prospective area of fire before you shoot. Never fire in a direction in which there are people or any other potential for mishap. Think first. Shoot second.

Know how to use the gun safely. Before handling a gun, learn how it operates. Know its basic parts, how to safely

open and close the action and remove any ammunition from the gun or magazine. Remember, a gun's mechanical safety device is never foolproof. Nothing can ever replace safe gun handling.

Be sure the gun is safe to operate. Just like other tools, guns need regular maintenance to remain operable. Regular cleaning and proper storage are a part of the gun's general upkeep. If there is any question concerning a gun's ability to function, a knowledgeable gunsmith should look at it.

Use only the correct ammunition for your gun. Only BBs, pellets, cartridges or shells designed for a particular gun can be fired safely in that gun. Most guns have the ammunition type stamped on the barrel. Ammunition can be identified by information printed on the box and sometimes stamped on the cartridge. Do not shoot the gun unless you know you have the proper ammunition.

Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate. Guns are loud and the noise can cause hearing damage. They can also emit debris and hot gas that could cause eye injury. For these reasons, shooting glasses and hearing protection should be worn by shooters and spectators.

Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting. Alcohol, as well as any other substance likely to impair normal mental or physical bodily functions, must not be used before or while handling or shooting guns.

Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons. Several factors should be considered when you decide where and how you intend to store your guns. Your particular situation will be a major part of the consideration. Safe and secure storage requires that untrained individuals (especially children) be denied access to your guns.

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

## Cleaning

Regular cleaning is important in order for your gun to operate correctly and safely. Taking proper care of it will also maintain its value and extend its life. Your gun should be cleaned every time that it is used.

A gun brought out of prolonged storage should also be cleaned before shooting. Accumulated moisture and dirt, or solidified grease and oil, can prevent the gun from operating properly.

Before cleaning your gun, make absolutely sure that it is unloaded. The gun's action should be open during the cleaning process. Also be sure that no ammunition is present.

## Training Programs

NRA Basic Firearm Training Program — Safety with firearms begins with learning the rules outlined in this brochure and acquiring the skills to apply them in a responsible and conscientious manner. You can obtain hands-on training in the safe and proper use of different types of firearms by enrolling in a course of the NRA Basic Firearm Training Program.

Many thousands of persons attend these courses annually and receive a solid foundation in the basics of safe firearm handling and shooting skills. NRA basic courses are conducted in communities around the world by NRA Certified Instructors.

Courses are available in the following twelve areas:

- ◆ Pistol
- ◆ Rifle
- ◆ Shotgun
- ◆ Home Firearm Safety
- ◆ Range Safety Officer
- ◆ Shotgun Shell Reloading
- ◆ Metallic Cartridge Reloading
- ◆ Muzzleloading Pistol
- ◆ Muzzleloading Rifle
- ◆ Muzzleloading Shotgun
- ◆ Personal Protection In The Home
- ◆ Personal Protection Outside The Home

NRA Instructor Training Program — This program prepares experienced shooters to teach firearm safety and shooting skills to others as NRA Certified Instructors. NRA Training Counselors in each state provide training to qualified candidates.

NRA Shooting Coach Program — NRA Certified Shooting Coaches provide training to shooters and athletes who wish to develop and refine the skills necessary for success in competitive shooting.

If you are interested in attending an NRA Basic Course, Instructor Training Course, or Shooting Coach School, or wish to receive training from an NRA Coach, contact the NRA Training Department, or visit our Web site at [www.nrainstructors.org](http://www.nrainstructors.org).

## Other Resources

The NRA offers a wide variety of programs, activities, and publications, including:

Youth Programs — Youth activities in the shooting sports, such as: air gun programs for secondary schools; cooperative programs with 4-H, Jaycees, Boy Scouts, and The American Legion; marksmanship qualification program; and shooting camps and fairs.

Books, Brochures and Videos — Production of various safety and instructional materials, including: brochures (A Parent's Guide to Gun Safety); booklets (Smart & Safe); books (NRA Neighborhood Air Gun Program and Winchester/NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program); an accident-prevention program for children pre-kindergarten through third grade (The Eddie Eagle GunSafe™ Program); and videos (Fundamentals of Gun Safety, Basic Pistol Shooting, Personal Protection In The Home, Personal Protection Outside the Home, and Learn Gun Safety with Eddie Eagle®).

To join NRA today, or for additional information regarding membership, please call (800) NRA-3888. Your membership dues can be charged to VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover.

National Rifle Association  
11250 Waples Mill Road  
Fairfax, Va. 22030

The NRA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) affiliate of The National Rifle Association, has the mission of raising tax-deductible contributions to promote firearms safety and to enhance marksmanship skills of those participating in the shooting sports and to educate the general public about firearms. If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution and at the same time assist The NRA Foundation with its mission, you can make a contribution to The NRA Foundation, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030, by specifying The Firearms and Marksmanship Training Endowment. The NRA Foundation can be contacted by calling 1-800-423-6894.



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# GUN SAFETY RULES



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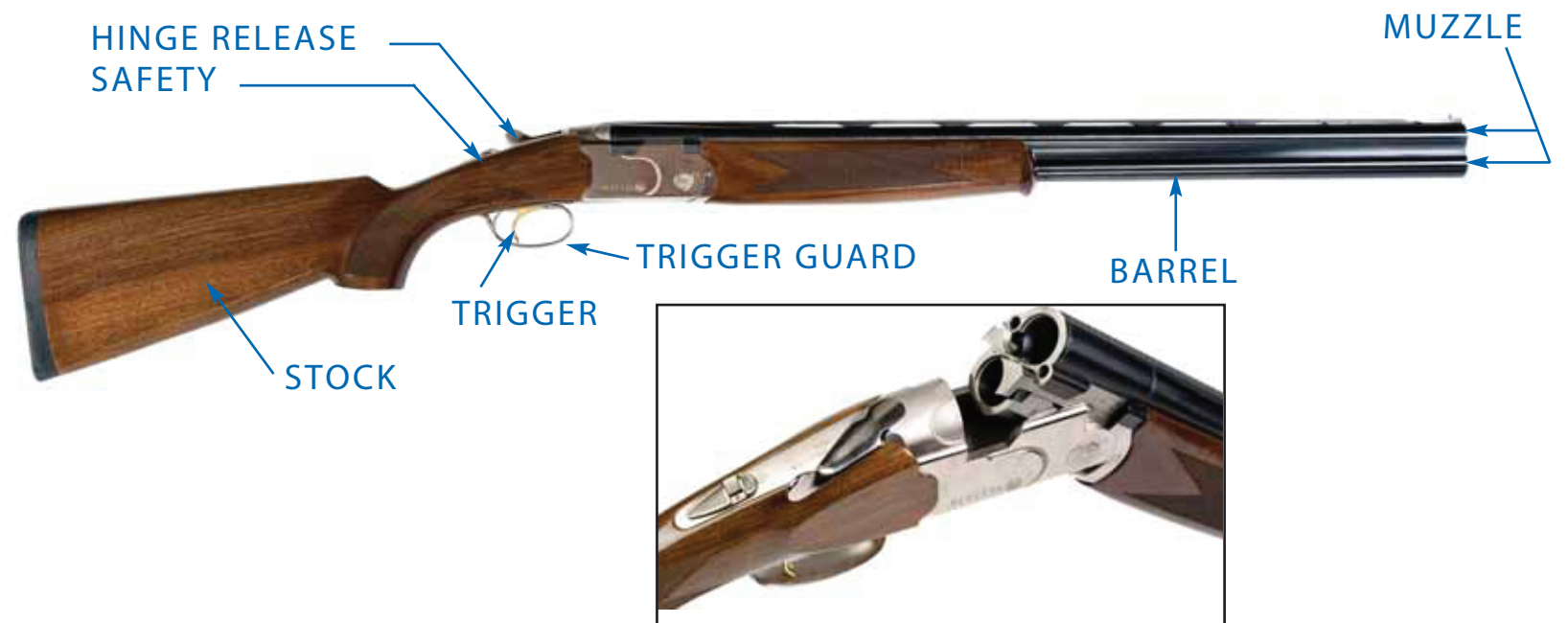
# NRA™

# NRA GUN SAFETY RULES

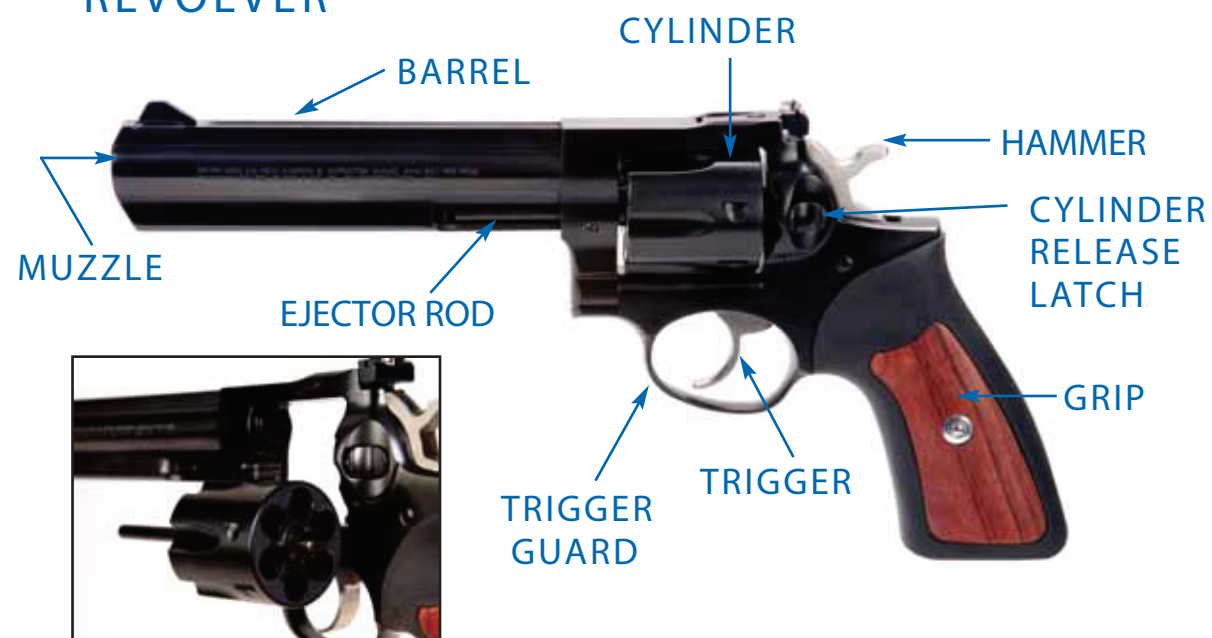
SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL



HINGE ACTION SHOTGUN



REVOLVER



BOLT ACTION RIFLE



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