



**Pistol
New Zealand**

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

**Reference and ongoing guide
for Club Training Officers**

Multi action style Disciplines

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Introduction –

This Pistol New Zealand action style Shooting Trainers Manual has been compiled as a reference and ongoing guide for Club Training Officers (CTO's).

For the new club member the first six months are particularly important. It is during these early months that the foundation for firearm safety and basic pistol shooting skills are first formed. This is the new club member's probationary period, a time and basis on which they learn and master fundamental skills on which to build their future competitive Match Shooting skills.

Regardless of the discipline primarily shot at your club, basic pistol shooting skills are the foundation of every new club member's training program. From here CTO's can then develop and expand onto subjects and skills, relating more directly to the style or type of pistol shooting the new club members' interest may take them.

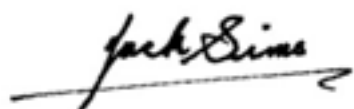
It is understood and appreciated that some clubs will already have a perfectly adequate new member training program in place. What we ask is, compare notes, and use what you feel is appropriate, replace or fill in any gaps with your own training plan. This manual is simply offered as a guide and reference for CTO's.

In this structured basic pistol shooting skills training program, two stages of development are outlined. Each stage has three cycles or classes. We start with Stage One for Beginners and then move onto Stage Two for Intermediate level shooters.

Rather than matches, we have included "live fire" exercises. Each exercise encapsulates material and drills covered in stages. You will note that we have not placed any time restrictions on each string of fire. The idea being, at this early stage of a new club member's development, we would rather see them concentrate on safety and technique - coupled with an ability to closely follow instructions.

A CTO's role can at times seem a thankless task; however, it can also be very rewarding. As a trainer you not only have to be a knowledgeable and capable shooter, you also have to be capable of passing on these skills to others. If and when a student in your charge experiences a problem, simple instruction may not always be enough. A top class trainer must have the ability to analyse, evaluate and resolve all manner of needs a student may experience.

On behalf of the PNZ Training team, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Sims". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Jack Sims

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Beginner Stage One

Classroom Theory will cover:

- Safe pistol handling habits and protocols.
- How a pistol works –the main components (revolver and semi-auto).
- Range attendance signing in procedures.
- The Safety Zone – location, purpose and strict rules that apply.
- Range Officer Commands and the required responses.
- Stance and Posture. The Weaver and Isosceles stances outlined.
- Recommended grip for free style and strong hand only shooting.
- Sight Picture acquisition and effect.
- Trigger control, technique and effect.
- The Tyro 45 degree 'Pistol Ready Position'.

Live Fire Exercise:

Using a club .22 pistol trainees receive instruction on free style, double grip (action style Shooting style) shot placement.

Using a club .22 pistol trainees receive instruction on single shot placement on a target using the strong hand only grip (ISSF style).

Instruction to cover:

- Safe muzzle direction keeping within the range cone of fire.
- How to Load and Make Ready – How to Unload and Show Clear.
- Stance - posture - grip - sight picture - trigger release - follow through.
- Single shot on a target.
- Series of shots on a target.

Assessment – demonstrate the following:

- Safe pistol handling skills.
- Ability to shoot a series of shots, following all instructions and range rules.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature.....

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Beginner Stage Two

Classroom Theory Will Cover:

- Safety zone - clear pistol for transfer to holster or other means of carry.
- Loading magazines – how and where.
- Review all Range Officer commands and the required responses.
- Ensure that appropriate ear and eye protection is in use.
- Understand and be able to demonstrate the “Pistol Ready Position”.
- Review – Stance, body posture, grip, sight picture and trigger control.
- Re-Loading procedures.

Live Fire Exercise – 10 meters – No time restrictions:

- Free style in your own time, single shot on target - repeat three times from Pistol Ready Position.
- Free style in your own time, two shots on target - repeat three times from Pistol Ready Position.
- Strong hand only in your own time, two shots on target - repeat three times from Pistol Ready Position.
- Free style in your own time, two shots on target followed by a re-load and a further two shots.

Assessment – demonstrate the following:

1. Safe pistol handling skills.
2. The ability to fire a shot or series of shots with reasonable accuracy.
3. The ability to follow trainer’s instructions.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Beginner Stage Three

Classroom Theory Will Cover:

- On range transportation / carry of unloaded pistol.
- Strong hand, weak hand pistol transition.

Dry Fire Drills:

- Free style - strong hand, weak hand grip, stance and posture.
- Transition of pistol between strong hand and weak hand.
- Load and make ready. Pistol Ready Position.
- Shooter ready, stand by - simulated dry fire down range.
- If finished unload and show clear.

Live Fire Exercise:

(Shooter and Range Officer - Role Playing Exercise)

- Range is in use - shooter to the line.
- Load and make ready (Pistol Ready Position).
- Ready, stand by - targets face or buzzer sound between 3-7 seconds.
- Fire.
- If finished, unload and show clear.
- If clear, hammer down holster or bag.

Assessment: Trainer will select a Stage One Live Fire Exercise.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature.....

Club Trainers Name/Signature.....

Club Training Officer - Preparation

Your role as a Club Trainer is to introduce and conduct a structured series of classes and assessments that will enable new club members to progress through your club's basic training program. As a trainer, you should always strive to plan and prepare your classes well in advance.

- You should be totally conversant with your club's training procedures.
- Understand the objectives of each stage/class.
- Rehearse and plan what you wish to convey to your trainees. Determine how you will go about it and at the end of the session ask yourself, did I manage to achieve a satisfactory result.
- You must project an air of confidence, be organized, approachable. Be firm, impartial and fair, and above all professional.
- Do not shout abuse or belittle your students; as paid up club members they deserve our respect and encouragement
- Be punctual; arrive ahead of the scheduled start time. Have the range setup in advance.
- Use this time to read through student's current training manual notes.

Course Requirements – things the CTO will need:

- A copy of your club's training manual.
- Pen and paper - white board (cheap substitute is a sheet of fluted board)
- Spare copies of the Training Manual – you will always get someone who left theirs at home.
- Flip over charts, Power Point or video aids you may have prepared.
- Club pistols – holsters – magazines – supply of ammunition available.
- Your own pistol, holster and associated equipment.
- Ammunition- live and dummy rounds for demonstration purposes.
- Ear and eye protection – suitable clothing (no camouflage clothing, provocative t-shirts, open toed shoes)

Classroom setup:

- Classroom clean, well ventilated in summer, warm in winter.
- Enough chairs, a suitable table.
- Position yourself so all student present can see and hear you. Speak clearly.
- Keep all members of your group actively involved. Students won't learn if they are bored.
- If you feel class student numbers warrant more supervision than you alone can offer, seek the assistance of additional trainers.

Ask and encourage questions:

This is how people learn, and in turn, express themselves. However, don't let an individual grandstand and waste time – you are the trainer and you are working within a set time frame.

Offer and encourage feedback between yourself and your students. If they shoot and perform well at a particular level, tell them so. Write up notes in their training manual listing subjects where they excel as well as including points they need to work on. Notes in the manual serve as good reference material, not only for the trainee but also the next trainer involved in their development.

Put a name to the faces:

Use a strip of masking tape or an I.D. sticker. Something that can be moved from the person's front (classroom) to their backs (while on the range). It's always nice to personalize your training sessions.

Measuring progress and ability:

When calculating a trainee's progress - either for writing up notes or for signing them off. Consider carefully what is a reasonable or an acceptable standard. You might ask what is reasonable. Reasonable is keeping within established boundaries. As a trainer, it's you who must consider if a reasonable standard has or has not, been reached.

One of the problems we often face in delivering any form of training is the real possibility of encountering a wide and varying degree of ability on display. In a given class, say at the beginner stage, we could have people with firearm handling skills and experience. Others may have never fired a shot in their lives. To be on the safe side assume all trainees are novice shooters – it won't hurt the more experienced shooters in your class to spend some extra time refreshing their skills.

I am sure you would agree, for a new club member to be capable of placing 10 shots of 12 fired within a set scoring zone would amount to a very pleasing result. Managing between 8 or 9 would still warrant an above average result. Under certain circumstances I would also be prepared to accept a 7 shot success rate. We need to measure progress on an individual basis. As a trainer use your discretion, experience and good judgment.

Writing up notes for future reference:

Apart from feedback for the trainee, what you write up in the way of notes may also assist the next trainer they come into contact with. Recorded notes could be helpful if your club has a policy that requires new club members to submit evidence that they have in fact attended and successfully completed a basic pistol shooting skills course.

Whatever marking system you use, it must convey a clear message of progress made, yet at the same time, highlight subjects that require further attention – even possible concerns a trainer may have.

Progress Report – Subjects for Assessing and Marking

Firearm Safety Gun Handling Skills Including Dry & Live Fire Drills Ability to Follow Instructions

A	B	C
Competent	Average Progress	Not Yet Competent

- (A) 8-10 = Competent - Clear to move ahead to the next stage or class.
- (B) 7 = Competent - Average progress, clear to move ahead to the next stage.
- (C) 5 – 6 = Not yet competent – Do not progress to next stage.

Stage One – Beginners Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

(Trainer's Objectives)

By the time the new club member finishes stage one they should be able to;

- Identify the main components of a pistol and know their function.
- Identify the main components that make up a live round of ammunition.
- Clear a pistol in the safety zone, understand the strict rules and function of the safe zone.
- Demonstrate the recommended freestyle and strong hand only grip.
- Demonstrate the Weaver and Isosceles shooting stances.
- Have a good understanding of range commands and the expected, appropriate responses.
- Be able to load rounds (ammunition) into a magazine.
- Be able to load and make ready - assume the 45 degree "pistol ready position".
- Safely engage in down range shooting using a freestyle and strong hand only grip.
- Be able to load and make ready - unload and show clear using the associated drills.
- Shoot a live fire exercise with the emphasis on safety and ability to follow all instructions.
- Re-load tactically and on demand.
- Group a series of shots with reasonable accuracy on a variety of targets.

Components of a pistol:

This could be a huge subject if we were to cover every make and model. The 1911/20 will be used as it was the forerunner of many pistol designs that followed.

As well as having a working knowledge of how a pistol works, it is also important that new shooters learn to identify the components of a live round of ammunition.

Re-loading ammunition:

This is a subject that is far too involved to include at this level – but we need to think about what sort of help and advice we will offer when the new shooter decides to buy a loading press and starts re-loading ammunition.

The Colt M1911 Single action style Semi-Auto Pistol

Brilliant Design That Others Copied.

There are many excellent pistols you may choose to own, however, the Colt Single action style Semi-Auto is where it all began.

This remarkable pistol was designed by John Browning and after rigorous testing (continuous firing of 6,000 rounds without a single stoppage) it was adopted and used by the US armed forces from 1911 to 1985. The only other pistol tested at the time was a Savage which had thirty two stoppages.

Browning, at the time was employed by the Colt firearms company, hence the name Colt. The model 1911 depicting the year it entered service with the US armed forces.

The basic design of the 1911 has seen very little change throughout its production life. The Colt M1911 is a single action, semi-automatic, magazine fed, recoil operated pistol chambered for 9mm, .45 ACP, 10mm, .40 S&W, 38 Super and .22 rim-fire conversion.

The following outlines the sequence of events that occur once you have inserted a loaded magazine, racked the slide, taken a sight picture and squeezed the trigger.

All functions are either spring or combustion assisted.

- The trigger moves back under the pressure of your finger.
- The sear hooks unlock and releases the hammer.
- The hammer falls striking the firing pin bringing it into contact with the primer of a chambered round.
- The primer creates a flash/spark which ignites the propellant (powder) in the shell case.
- As the expanding combustion gases force the bullet down the barrel, they give reverse momentum to the slide and barrel which are locked together during this portion of the firing cycle.
- After the bullet has left the barrel, the slide and barrel continue rearward a short distance.
- As the slide starts its rearward travel, the extractor hooks the fired shell case free from the chamber, after a short distance it then hits the ejector and is thrown clear (ejection port).
- The slide continues to the rear – pushing back and re-setting the hammer.
- The interrupter is engaged preventing premature trigger function.
- The recoil spring now begins to react and moves the slide forward.
- The slide peels off a fresh loaded round from the magazine and chambers it.
- The trigger is re-set (interrupter / disconnector disengages) and the pistol is ready to be fired again.
- Once the magazine is empty, the slide locks back (open).
- The hammer can be locked by the manual thumb safety in the cocked position only.

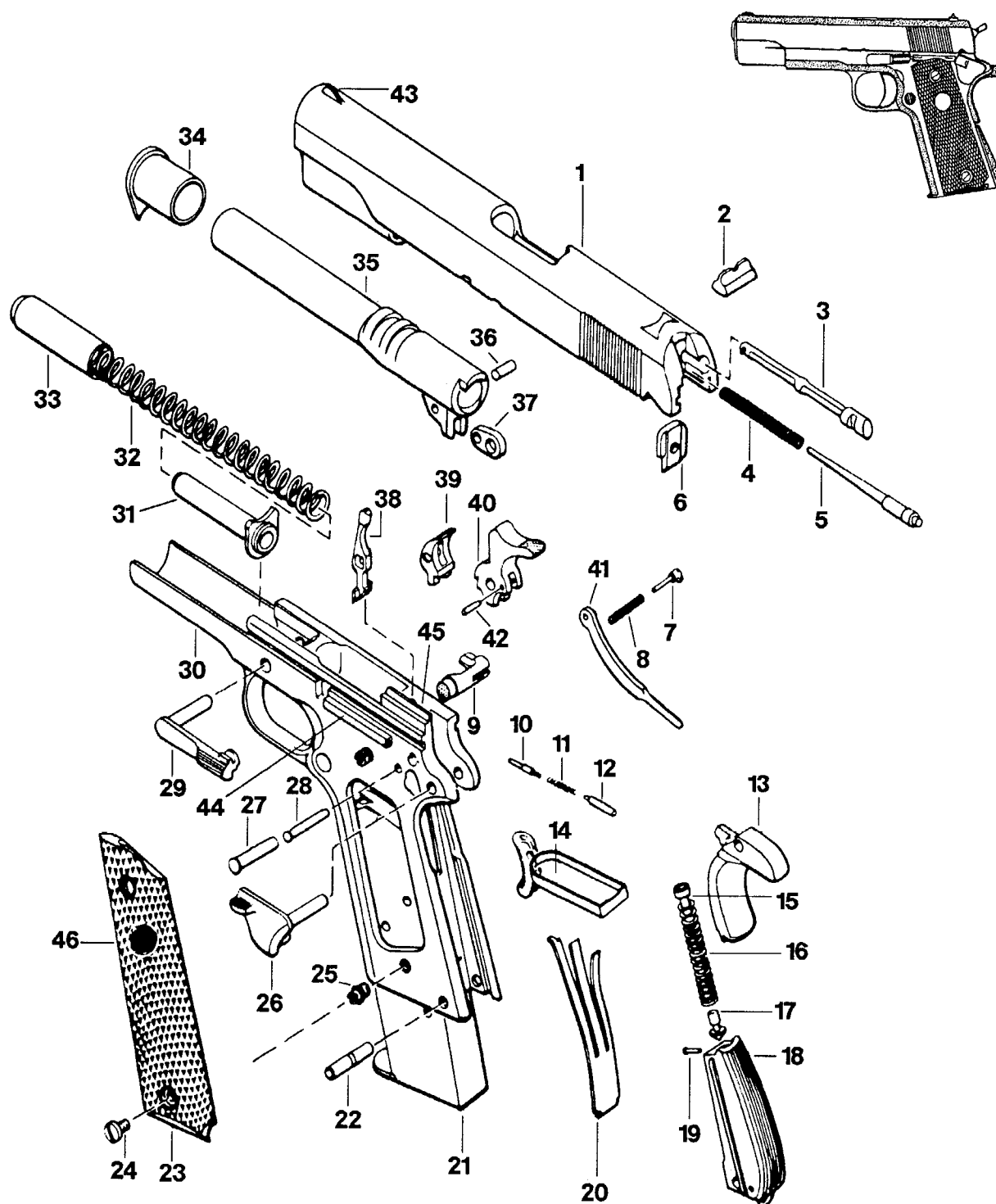


The M1911 Field Stripped



Match Grade Cold 1911 .45 ACP

Recoil operation is based on the law of conservation of momentum (Newton's Third Law, commonly paraphrased as "every action has an equal but opposite reaction"). In a recoil-operated firearm such as the M1911, the momentum of the projectile travelling forward out of the barrel is balanced by an equivalent recoil force acting on the barrel/slide assembly in the rearward direction. A recoil-operated self-loading firearm depends on proper "tuning" of the projectile's momentum (its mass multiplied by its velocity) so that there is sufficient recoil force generated to perform the extraction, ejection, and chambering of the next round. Optimal operation of a standard M1911 occurs with the use of .45 ACP ammunition weighing 230 grains travelling at approximately 250 meters/second.



- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Slide | 16 Mainspring | 33 Plug |
| 2 Rear Sight | 17 Mainspring Housing Pin Retainer | 34 Barrel Bushing |
| 3 Extractor | 18 Mainspring Housing | 35 Barrel |
| 4 Firing Pin Spring | 19 Mainspring Cap Pin | 36 Barrel Link Pin |
| 5 Firing Pin | 20 Sear Spring | 37 Barrel Link |
| 6 Firing Pin Stop Plate | 21 Magazine | 38 Disconnecter |
| 7 Magazine Catch Lock | 22 Mainspring Housing Pin | 39 Sear |
| 8 Magazine Catch Spring | 23 Hand Grip with Medallion | 40 Hammer |
| 9 Magazine Catch | 24 Grip Screw | 41 Hammer Strut |
| 10 Slide Stop Plunger | 25 Stock Screw Bushing | 42 Hammer Strut Pin |
| 11 Plunger Spring | 26 Safety Catch | 43 Front Sight |
| 12 Safety Catch Plunger | 27 Hammer Pin | 44 Plunger Tube |
| 13 Grip Safety | 28 Sear and Disconnecter Pin | 45 Ejector |
| 14 Trigger | 29 Slide Stop | 46 Medallion |
| 15 Mainspring Cap | 30 Frame (Receiver) | |
| | 31 Recoil Spring Guide | |
| | 32 Recoil Spring | |
| | | Parts Not Shown |
| | | Ejector Pin |

Components that make up a center fire round of ammunition



Shell case

Primer

Propellant (powder)

Projectile (bullet)

To re-load a fired round the spent primer is first removed and the case sized.

A fresh primer is then pressed into the primer pocket.

A carefully measured amount of propellant (powder) is then placed in the shell case.

The projectile (bullet) is then seated and crimped at the required depth.

The firing pin strikes the primer which creates a flash igniting the (powder) propellant.

The propellant, burning at a rapid rate, creating pressure within the confinement of the shell case.

This pressure in turn forcing the bullet (projectile) down and out of the barrel.

A day at the Range.....

On arriving at the range (pistol club) all members are required to sign the range attendance book. This is a means of recording the number of shoots a member attends in a twelve month period.

Safety Zone:

The safety zone is quite possibly the next port-of-call for a shooter visiting a club range. Take time to explain the purpose and function of a safety zone. In general;

- Pistols may be cleared and transferred from boxes/bags to a shooter's holster or other means of carry.
- Pistols may be cleared and transferred from a shooter's holster to a box or bag.
- Repairs and cleaning may be conducted in the safety zone.
- Viewing or showing a pistol to another person may be conducted in a safety zone.
- Ammunition of any description must not be handled in the safety zone.

Some clubs allow dry fire practice in a designated safety zone that has a safe aiming back drop. If your club has set rules regarding safety zones, make these rules clear to your members and the fact that another club may have different rules – apart from the above listed.



It's compulsory to wear ear and eye protection while on a range, so encourage new shooters to invest in quality ear muffs – at least grade four. Wrap around glasses offer the best eye protection. Prescription lens glasses are acceptable however, they should be shatter proof.

Range Officer Commands and Basic Responsibilities

New club members must understand Range Officer commands and the expected responses required, not only at their home club, but also at a regional, national or international events. Most of the action style shooting disciplines use the same or very similar range officer commands.

The duty Range Officer should always be the last person to leave the target area after patching and scoring has been completed. Part of the R/O's responsibilities is to ensure the safety of shooters, range staff and spectators on a range. On arriving back at the firing line the R/O will check the range is clear. The term "Clear the range" or "range is in use" may be used. The next designated shooter moves to the firing line "shooter(s) to the line".

The first R/O command to a shooter would be "Load and make ready" the last, "If clear, hammer down and holster".

Apart from the R/O responsibilities, shooters need to be made aware of what is expected of them.

The shooter should arrive on the firing line "fully prepared", have all magazines loaded, ear and eye protection on. Know what is expected of them and arrive ready to start. If they receive a warning, DQ, or request from a Range Officer – it must be taken in the spirit it is offered. After all, we are talking about their safety and the safety of every other person on range.

We all need to appreciate the Range Officers job: it can be a tough one so it is always nice to be thanked after a course of fire or match. Shooters should also offer to help with range duties such as patching out, painting or resetting targets. Help pick up brass. This help keeps the days shooting moving along and helps share the workload, plus it promotes a lot of goodwill.

Action style shooting has a remarkable safe track record. Each and every shooter is supervised by a Range Officer. Very strict rules and regulations are in force to protect us all. Unsafe gun handling, if and when observed, will without exception be addressed. In fact, we have an agreement amongst action style shooters. If an unsafe procedure is pointed out by another shooter or Range Officer, it will be accepted in good grace and a "thank you" offered.

It is important to maintain our unblemished safe pistol shooting record.



Range Staff and Shooters working together in order to achieve a safe and enjoyable event.

RANGE OFFICER COMMANDS

Plus The Required Shooters Responses

Before any live firing takes place the Range Officer will ensure the range is clear.

Live fire is about to commence. Everyone on the range should now be wearing ear and eye protection. No one should venture down range, past the firing point.

The next designated shooter(s) move into position on the firing line. Shooters should be fully prepared and ready to start a course of fire.

“Load and make ready”

Draw pistol (as per the associated drill). Load by inserting and seating a full magazine. Rack the slide, loading a round into the chamber of a semi-auto. Engage the safety if fitted and re-holster (as per the associated drill – if holster qualified).

Under “Wild Bunch” SASS rules, using a semi-auto pistol. Magazine is inserted and seated but no round is loaded into the chamber.

“Ready” or “Are you ready”

Shooter(s) assume the required start position indicating they are ready to start. If not they should state “not ready”

“Standby”

Within 3-7 seconds the start signal will sound, targets turn or target comes into view.

“If finished, unload and show clear”

Shooter(s) having completed a course of fire should lower pistol to 45 degrees and wait for the range officer to instruct them to unload and show clear.

Shooter(s) unloads (as per the associated drill) and checks that his/her pistol is clear - then presents the pistol to the range officer who confirms gun is clear.

“If clear, hammer down, holster or bag”

Lower the slide with care. Point the pistol downrange and pull the trigger in order to lower the hammer on an empty chamber. This needs to be a deliberately aimed shot so if an accidental discharge was to occur, a projectile would fall within a safe cone of fire.

“Range is clear”

Only at this point may people move downrange to patch or change targets. Retrieve empty brass, magazines etc.

Range Officer Commands Continued

Other Range Commands include;

“Stop” or “Cease fire, unload and show clear”

An incident has occurred that may endanger your personal safety or that of others on the range. On hearing this command you must stop firing immediately - apply safety and lower pistol to the 45 degree position. Wait for Range Officers instructions.

“Finger”

The Range Officer suspects you may have your finger inside the trigger guard and possibly making contact with the trigger.

This is a verbal warning for you to remove your trigger finger out of the trigger guard - NOW.

“Muzzle”

The Range Officer suspects you may be about to break the 180 degree cone of fire - this is a verbal warning for you to re-align the muzzle of your pistol down range – NOW

It is worth noting that a Range Officer may offer a verbal warning, but is not obliged to do so. Safety is the shooters responsibility.

The Tyro 45 degree Pistol Ready Position

For Tyro shooters the “Pistol Ready Position” must be understood and readily adopted once the Load and Make Ready procedure has been completed.

Note:

- Index finger tip on round helps direct the magazine smoothly into the mag well.
- Fully load magazine.
- Rack (cycle) the slide using a push – pull action. Hand clear of the ejection port.
- Encourage shooters to use their thumb to engage the safety – if fitted.
- At the Pistol Ready Position, finger remains outside of the trigger guard.
- Pay attention to the “free-style” grip.

Load and Make Ready 1911 Style Single Action Pistol



Firmly insert and seat a fully loaded magazine.



Rack the slide. Finger outside the trigger guard.
Muzzle pointing down range.
Hand clear of ejection port.



Apply the thumb safety with
finger outside the trigger guard.



Assume the tyro 45 degrees
“pistol ready” position.
Note the recommended free style grip.

Load and Make Ready Revolver



Swing the cylinder open, transfer revolver to the non shooting hand. Using the strong hand, load rounds into cylinder manually or using a speed loader. Close cylinder and transfer pistol back into the strong hand. Assume the Pistol Read Position.

Load and Make Ready Double Action (only) Auto



Insert and seat a loaded magazine. Rack (cycle) the slide chambering a live round of ammunition. If the pistol has a de-cocking lever, that alone must be used to de-cock the pistol, without touching the trigger. Assume the Pistol Ready Position.

Load and Make Ready Double Action/Single Action Auto



Pointing the muzzle in a safe direction. Insert and seat a loaded magazine. Finger outside of the trigger guard. Rack (cycle) the slide chambering a live round of ammunition.



Double Action mode (Production Division): Firmly grip both sides of the hammer using the thumb and index finger of the non shooting hand. Pull hammer back. Press the trigger and with care, lower the hammer fully. Assume the Pistol Ready Position.

Single Action mode: Finger outside of the trigger guard. Apply the thumb safety. Assume the Pistol Ready Position.

Glock: Like other strike fired pistols, has a unique safety system. Simply rack slide to load and then assume the Pistol Ready Position.



There are five key points to shooting an accurate shot every time you squeeze the trigger

1. Address the target(s) in the best possible stance and body posture.

(If needs be, adjust your stance and posture so that you can close your eyes, raise the pistol, open your eyes and find that the sights align on your intended target without any further adjustments).

2. Grip the pistol firmly but not to the point of a tremble.

(Use the recommended grip, stance and body posture recommended for the shot you are about to take, be it free style, strong or weak hand only shooting).

3. Acquire the correct sight picture.

(Maintain and hold this sight picture while you apply gentle, steady pressure on the trigger until the shot breaks).

4. Prep the trigger - press the trigger straight back.

(Too much finger on the trigger will result in pulling the shot – too little finger on the trigger results in pushing the pistol off center).

5. Follow through - Call the shot.

(Keep watching the sights before, during and after you fire the shot)

Stance - Posture - Grip - Sight Alignment - Hold - Trigger Control & Follow Through:

All of the following will have a bearing on a person's ability to shoot accurately and often at speed. As an experienced shooter and Trainer, you of course understand this structure. However, when dealing with tyro shooters we sometimes need to take a step back and remind ourselves what we take for granted is not at all fully understood or appreciated by a person new to the sport of pistol shooting. We need to take each of the required steps and decide how best we can impart this knowledge to our students. Telling is not quite enough. Think about how we go about remembering important things – like a new phone number. We repeat it to ourselves over and over until it sticks. If you have ever had anything to do with a memory improvement course you will recall how we are taught to remember all sorts of things by simply linking the object to something humorous, scary, crazy or even sexy.

A good example is the gentle trigger pressure principle – link it to how we take a photo with a digital camera. First light pressure allows the camera to focus, a little more pressure applied and the shot is taken – the same action is required to fire a pistol shot.

I am confident we could move through all of the above steps and link them to something that has meaning and therefore creates a more lasting impressions on our tyro shooters.

Stance

We generally describe the two most commonly used stances in Action shooting as the “Weaver” and the “Isosceles”. May I suggest that these days most experienced Action shooters adopt variations of these two stances – more what I like to call the “natural stance”.

I feel the important message we need to promote regarding stance is that it serves two functions stability and mobility. In time, and with experience, Action shooters will develop this natural stance, one that suits their own particular body size, shape and level of athletic ability



The “Weaver Stance” Created by US Deputy Sheriff Jack Weaver in 1959. This stance proved successful for drawing quickly and bringing the pistol up to eye level in order to shoot targets directly downrange. The Weaver stance involves positioning one foot behind the other and the body positioned at 45 degrees to the target. The dominate arm is locked straight and the support arm slightly bent at the elbow. This stance is not so popular with modern day Action shooters.



The “Isosceles Stance” So named because it characterizes two equal sides of a triangle.

Both feet are positioned parallel. The arms form the two side of a triangle – arms can be locked straight or slightly bent at the elbows. This is an excellent Action shooting stance as it not only offers a high degree of stability but it also allows a wide arc or angle of target engagement. From the Isosceles stance a shooter has great mobility – a variation would see both legs bent at the knees and the body slightly crouched.

Posture

A good shooting posture goes hand in hand with a stable, flexible stance. The requirements of a given match may require changes in our posture – shooting under or over an obstacle, through a port or window or going prone.

Regardless, good body posture will allow the shooter to establish and maintain a stable stance from which to address any target quickly. Align the sights, fire the shot(s) and be able to move smoothly and swiftly to the next course of fire.

Grips

In Action shooting the most commonly used grip is that adopted in freestyle – both hands are used to hold the pistol in a firm controlled manner.

The web of the hand, the area between the thumb and the index finger of the dominate hand should grip the back strap of the pistol as high as possible. The middle finger should be locked up against the bottom of the trigger guard, this and the remaining fingers firmly wrapped around and gripping the front of the pistol butt

The supporting hand overlaps the dominate hand. The fingers slotting into the groves of the strong hand. The index finger of this hand also locked up under the trigger guard. It is important for both hands to be in firm contact with each side of the pistol butt. It's as if the pistol is secured in the jaws of a vice.

The overall grip should be firm but not to the point of a tremble. The hands share a 60 – 40 percent grip ratio in favour of the supporting hand.



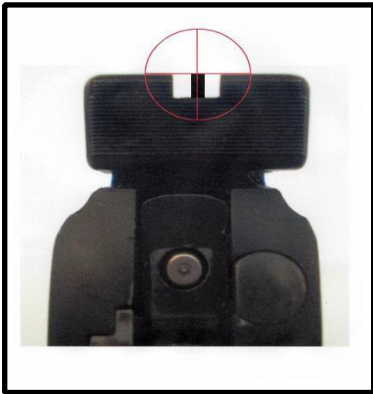
“Strong hand only” – Use the thumb and lower three fingers to grip the pistol firmly. Keep tension out of the trigger finger so it can function smoothly. The non shooting hand should be braced across the chest as a means of supporting the chest and arm holding the outstretched pistol. I would not like to recommend teaching “weak hand only” (live fire) at the Stage One level, this is a skill best reviewed during Stage Two of their basic pistol shooting skills training program.

Sight Alignment & Sight Picture

You may be surprised at how many people **do understand** how the front and rear sights should be aligned, but still manage to shoot badly. Once the correct alignment is understood, it of equal importance that this sight configuration is superimposed onto the intended target. It's now a matter of "holding" or "maintaining" this sight picture while gently applying trigger pressure until the shot breaks.

Even after the shot breaks, the shooter should continue to watch the sights. This is termed "follow through" or "calling the shot".

Most people understand how to align the crosshairs of a scope (reticule) onto a target. This visualization could be a helpful way of explaining the correct metallic sight alignment for a pistol.



- **Mentally superimpose the image of crosshairs onto the rear sight.**
- **The horizontal line being flush with the top of the front sight and rear sights.**
- **The vertical line dividing the equal space necessary on either side of the rear sight.**

Zeroing or Sighting In:

Maybe the trainee shooter is taking up and maintaining the correct sight picture, and yet is still unable to group a series of shots on a target. This would indicate the fault lies elsewhere. As the Trainer, check out the pistols zeroing. Ask to fire a few shots through the member's pistol. Remember club guns get used and abused. Could be the pistol needs an experienced shooter to sight it in.

A pistol can be zeroed "offhand" (free style standing). "Bench rested" (using a sandbag or stable surface) or from a prone position, using the ground as a stable platform on which to rest the pistol.

Of course adjusting the sights is pointless if shots are widely scattered over the target. This is more likely to be the shooter than the pistol being used.

Remember most pistols are capable of grouping far better than we can shoot them.

Sight Alignment Affects Bullet Placement

Rear sight alignment gap is equal both sides and flush with front sight bullet prints centre



Alignment gap less on the right
bullet prints to the right



A 'sight picture' relates to how
we align the front and rear
sights on an intended target



Alignment gap less on the left
bullet prints to the left



Top of front sight low alignment
bullet prints low



Top of front sight high
alignment bullet prints high

The effect on shot placement due to the position of finger on trigger



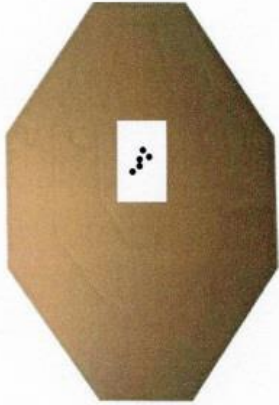
Not enough finger on the trigger can result in pushing the shot of center

Using the middle pad of the index finger allows the trigger to be pressed directly to the rear without disturbing alignment

Too much finger on the trigger can result in pulling the shot off center.

Hold & Grouping. Live Fire Exercise #1

An important step in the development of basic pistol shooting skills is the ability to “group” a series of shots anywhere on a target. Grouping shots requires a good fundamental understanding of;



- Appropriate stance and posture
- Correct grip
- Acquire and maintaining a sight picture
- Controlled trigger release
- Follow through

Here is a simple exercise that works well. Place a white card (roughly 10x15cm) on a target at 10 metres. The target you use is not important. Fire a series of shots at this card with the goal of “grouping” them as tightly as possible. Once successfully achieved, a further challenge would be, cut the card in half and repeat the exercise.

Holding steady on an object is something they can also work on at home as a dry fire exercise – if you don’t own a pistol yet, a toy gun, or even a finger will do just as well.

Trigger Time:

Once a shooter has proven to be safe in charge of a club pistol, it may be time to allow them time to shoot at their own pace.

An opportunity to fire off 25 – 50 rounds unrestricted. Of course there will always be an R/O close at hand, but this is a time for the shooter to enjoy putting into practice what they have learned so far.

This experience allows time for the new shooter to get a feel for the club pistol they are shooting. They will soon discover too much finger on the trigger will usually result in pulling the shot. Too little on the other hand will result in pushing the shot off center. Ideally the center pad of the trigger finger should be used with the intention of pressing the trigger directly back.

Follow through:

Have the trainee call a shot. Ask what happens to the sights the instant the shot breaks. If they don’t know, maybe they are not watching the sights closely enough. A good exercise is, instruct them to allow the sights to return to the aligned held position after recoil. Are they still aligned where intended?

When shooting falling plates (6 plates in total) I instruct shooters to follow on to an imaginary seventh plate – this tends to heighten their concentration rather than drop the gun too quickly after firing a shot. Of course all this will come down to hundredths of a second once they become competitive shooters.

Forced reload exercise:

A reloading exercise you may like to have your students shoot involves the NRA Falling Plates.

Knock down the first three falling plates, then re-load and knock down the remaining three plates. Shooters need to be encouraged to work hard on accuracy, only then increasing their speed – and at the same time, enjoying the training experience. You could reduce the number of plates to two with more reloads required. If falling plates are not available, static steel plates will do.

Beginner Stage - Live Fire Exercise #2



This is a Tyro exercise so time is not important. Safety and the ability to follow instructions are. 24 rounds are required and only the number of hits on each target will be scored.

Targets used may be NRA – IPSC – Service Pistol. Start signal shall be, targets turn to face or buzzer sounds.

Targets should be placed equal distances apart

Stage One: 7 metres

On Range Officer's command, load and make ready. Apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On start signal. **Fire 2 shots on the centre target** – return to pistol ready position.

On start signal. **Fire 2 shots on the left hand target** – return to pistol ready position.

On start signal. **Fire 2 shots on the right hand target**

On Range officer Command - unload and show clear.

Stage Two: 7 metres

On Range Officers command, load and make ready. Apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On start signal. **Fire 2 shots only on each of the three targets in any order.**

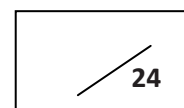
On Range officer Command - unload and show clear.

Stage Three. 10 metres

On Range Officers command, load and make ready. Apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On start signal. **Fire 2 shots only on each of the three targets – RE-LOAD And fire a further 2 shots on each of the three targets.**

On Range officer Command - unload and show clear.



Beginner Stage - Live Fire Exercise #3

In order to fire an accurate shot at any given target, one or two basic fundamental principles must be understood and carried out. The first consideration must always be safety - the shooters own safety and that of others present. A stray shot allowed to escape outside the confinements of the range could also cause serious injury or damage to property.

With this firmly in mind – remember;

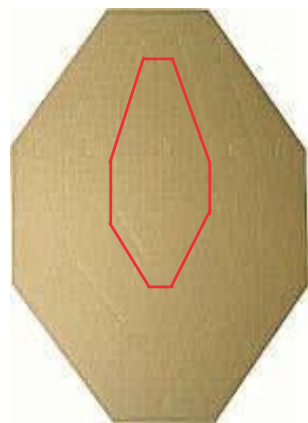
- Muzzle direction - always pointing down range.
- Finger out of the trigger guard until you are ready to fire a shot.
- Never handle a pistol while others are down range.
- Follow all legal instructions of the Range Officer

During this course, all shooting is conducted from a relatively close distance. The shooter must understand and master the basics before attempting to shoot fast and accurate from longer distances.

The shooter needs to set themselves up, address the target using a stable stance and good body posture. Align the sights and maintain the correct sight picture as they gently squeeze the trigger and the shot breaks. Continue to watch the sights (follow through) in order to call the shot.

They may be surprised how difficult it can be to shoot consistent tight groups at 10 metres - that is until they begin to fully understand and master the basics.

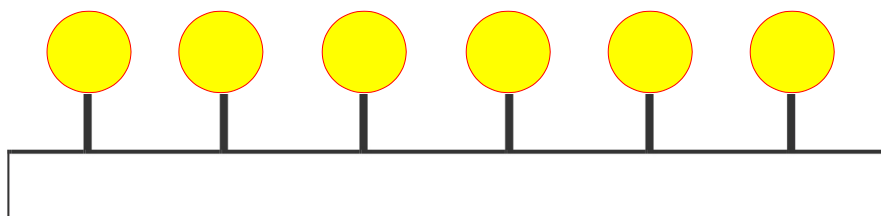
For this live fire exercise, we will be shooting on either an NRA or IPSC target, plus 8" steel falling plates.



IPSC Target



or NRA Target



Beginner Stage - Live Fire Exercise #3 (Continued)

Each shooter faces either an NRA or IPSC target at a distance of 10 yards.
All shooting is free style (double handed grip). A minimum of 24 rounds of ammunition is required.

If in doubt on any safety issue the shooter should - stop shooting, lower the pistol, apply the safety and seek the assistance or advice of the Range Officer.

Stage One: 10 Meters

On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

In the shooters own time fire six shots on target directly in front of them

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

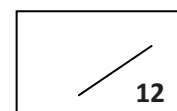
Stage Two: 10 metres

On the range officers command - Re-load and make ready, apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

*In the shooters own time, two shots on target, safety on, pistol to ready position.
Repeat three times.*

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.



Steel Plates Event:

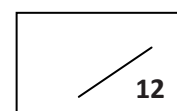
On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

One shot only on each of the six steel plates. Re-load and on a second start signal repeat course of fire.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Assessment: 8 of the 12 shots fired on the paper target must be in the "A" scoring zone.
8 of the twelve plated engaged must be knocked down to score.



Stage Two

Intermediate Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

(Trainer's Objectives)

On reaching this stage, the new club member may be considering which of the Action disciplines to pursue. With this in mind it is perhaps a good time to discuss what each discipline has to offer. The targets used and how they are scored.

Often the question is raised by a new club member, "What is the best pistol to purchase?" This of course depends on the Action discipline the new club member has in mind. If it comes down to cost, a Production Division or Metallic Sights pistol is a cheaper option than that of an Open Class 'Race Gun.

New club members should be encouraged to shoot a wide range of pistols in various configurations.

This way they can get a feel for and start to understand, what is best suited for the type of shooting they are interested in.

Regular club members are pretty obliging and quite happy to allow new club members an opportunity to shoot their pistols.

Shooting alongside experienced Action shooters can be somewhat daunting for the new shooter.

It's therefore important to explain the grading system and how shooting within a grade, evens up the playing field. Their objective should be, to shoot well within their grade.

By the time the new club member finishes stage two they should be able to;

- Have a working knowledge of all Action shooting disciplines.
- Be able to score, patch out targets and become involved in range duties.
- Understand and be able to recite Range Officer commands and know the expected responses.
- Be able to clear a pistol in the Safety Zone.
- Use a holster for "carry only".
- Be able to load and make ready any pistol in their charge (including a Double Action Pistol)
- Recognize the more common malfunctions and be able to carry out the necessary remedial action.
- Navigate through a basic course of fire.
- Competently and safely engage in Live Fire drills and exercises.
- Shoot from a standing, sitting, kneeling and prone position.
- Shoot multiple targets from behind a barricade, through a window, port or door.
- Able to shoot free style, strong and weak hand only.

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Intermediate Stage One

Classroom Theory Will Cover:

- The various shooting disciplines outlined
- Targets Used, and how they are scored.
- Power factors – Grades, categories and divisions
- Choice of pistol and associated equipment.
- How to “load and make ready” a Double action style semi-auto pistol.
- Deciding what discipline is best suited.

On Range Drills and Exercises:

Possible Malfunctions and the necessary remedial actions required.

- Stove pipe – swipe lodged shell case free to the rear with support hand.
- Fails to fire (light strike) – check magazine is seated, rack slide and continue.
- Squib load (pop-n-stop) – stop shooting, unload, check barrel for obstruction.
- Ammunition failure to feed – remove magazine, rack slide to clear obstruction, reload fresh magazine, rack (cycle) slide and continue shooting.

Live Fire Exercise:

Shoot an Intermediate Level Match (trainer will select from manual)

Assessment – Demonstrate the Following:

- Able to recognize and respond to malfunctions as they occur.
- Shoot a stage two match competently.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Intermediate Stage Two

Classroom Theory Will Cover:

- Address target.
- Draw from holster or start from the pistol ready position.
- Align the sights, take and maintain the correct sight picture.
- Dry fire at designated aiming point by applying smooth trigger pressure.
- Magazine re-loading technique.
- Strong hand to weak hand pistol transition.
- Moving into the kneeling and prone shooting positions.

Shoot a Stage Two Intermediate Match:

Trainer will select a suitable match from the manual.

Assessment – Demonstrate the Following:

1. Safe gun handling skills.
2. The ability to follow instructions and demonstrate basic pistol shooting skills
3. Shoot the live fire match and score 80% of possible score.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

Basic Pistol Shooting Skills

Intermediate Stage Three

Live Fire Drills:

Safely moving on range with a loaded firearm, conscious of the muzzle direction at all times – the 180 degree rule and finger outside of the trigger guard unless engaging a target.

- Doors, Ports and Barricade. Kneeling, seated and prone shooting.
- Shooting at multiple targets.
- Moving targets. Plates and Poppers
- Boxes and charge lines

Level Two Intermediate Match:

Set up an appropriate match which includes on range movement, multiple targets, doors, ports and barricades. A mixed range of shooting positions and styles.

Trainer will select a suitable match from the manual.

Assessment:

Must demonstrate competency involving all basic pistol shooting skills learned so far.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

Holster used for carry only

Consider allowing Stage Two Intermediate trainees to use a holster for carry only (an unloaded pistol). If your club is agreeable, it would be wise at this stage to instruct the correct drawing and holstering procedures. Later, this will be reinforced and expanded upon during the PNZ Holster Proficiency Qualification Course.

Other means of carry may include; a pistol zip up bag or a plastic carry tool box. If a box or bag is used for on range transportation, the pistol must always be unloaded (cleared) and the muzzle pointing downrange.



Points to reinforce when a holster is used for carry only:

- Unloaded pistol only, no magazine - unloaded means the pistol does not have a magazine inserted.
- Holster must be capable of pistol retention.
- Holster must cover trigger guard preventing accidental contact with trigger.
- When correctly holstered pistol should not point further than a one meter radius from shooter's feet
- Gun belt must be of sturdy construction and threaded through pants loops, double Velcro belt system or belt keepers.
- Finger out of the trigger guard during draw and re-holstering.
- Draw pistol pointing the muzzle immediately downrange.
- Do not use non shooting hand to open or secure holster during draw or re-holstering (possibility of sweeping)
- Do not wear loose fitting clothing that could impede a safe draw or re- holstering procedure

If carrying a pistol to and from the firing line in a zip up bag or carry case - demonstrate what is acceptable regarding muzzle direction when moving a pistol, to or from a bag.

If the pistol is placed on the ground, bench, or moved from one firing point to another - muzzle must remain pointing down-range - whether loaded or not.

Malfunctions

Malfunctions - sometimes referred to as a 'stoppage' or 'jam'.

In principle, most pistols are very reliable, more often than not malfunctions can be contributed directly to problems associated with ammunition. Once we are able to recognize the symptoms as to why our pistol does not go 'bang' as expected, we can put into effect remedial actions to correct the situation and continue shooting.

Our first consideration must always be safety, our own and others on or in the near vicinity of a range. When a shooter attempts to clear a malfunction the golden rules are;

- **Remove your finger from inside the trigger guard.**
- **Keep your pistol pointing downrange (in a safe direction) at all times.**
- **Stay calm – if you cannot clear a malfunction. Inform the range officer that you wish to unload and show clear.**

Stove pipe: This is where an empty shell case becomes lodged in the ejection port. This will impede the movement of the slide and prevent the pistol from chambering a fresh round.

Remedial action: Remove finger from inside of the trigger guard. Keep the muzzle pointing downrange. With weak hand, use a rearward sweeping action to clear, (brush away) the empty case. Continue shooting.

Ammunition fails to feed: The shooter will notice the slide may not have fully closed (gone into battery) This means that when the last shot was fired the shell case may not have been ejected completely.

Another reason may be a fresh round has not found its way into the chamber. Almost as if two rounds are attempting to fit into one hole (breach)

Remedial action: Remove finger from inside the trigger guard. Keep the muzzle pointing downrange. Remove (drop) the magazine – rack the slide twice to clear the jam – re-insert a fresh magazine, rack the slide in order to chamber a live round. Continue shooting.

Failure to fire: The round chambered fails to go 'bang' This could be due to a faulty primer – or perhaps a light strike on the primer.

This could also indicate that the magazine has not been fully seated.

Remedial action: Remove finger from inside the trigger guard. Keep the muzzle pointing downrange. Tap (push) the base of the magazine (to seat correctly), rack the slide, this will eject the faulty round and chamber a fresh round. Continue shooting.

Projectile lodged in barrel: (sometimes called a 'pop n stop') Instead of the normal 'bang' you hear a pop, and or softer bang and recoil.

This sometimes occurs as a result of a squib load (not enough, or no powder in the loaded case). Only the primer has fired. This alone does not create enough pressure to force the projectile out of the barrel.

Remedial action: ***Stop shooting immediately!*** Remove your finger from inside the trigger guard. Keep the muzzle pointing downrange. Wait for 30 seconds, in case of a possible 'hang fire' Unload and show clear in the normal manner. Seek the help and advice of the range officer. If a projectile has been lodged in the barrel it may be possible to remove it on the firing line. If not, the pistol may need to be dismantled – on the line – then taken away and the projectile safely removed.

(Note – If a round cannot be chambered CHECK that a projectile is not lodged in the barrel blocking its entry)

Pistol will not fire any ammunition chambered: Could be a broken firing pin.

Unload and show clear. Have your pistol checked by an experienced shooter or gunsmith.

Slide fails to lock open on last shot fired: In most cases this may be due to a light load. Slightly increase the amount of propellant (powder). Always seek advice on a safe, appropriate load if you are reloading your own ammunition. (Cont Page 37)

High primer or light strike: If a round fails to fire. Look at the primer. If there is only a slight indent visible the firing pin has only managed to lightly strike the primer. This can happen if the primer has not been fully seated. (This is a re-loading problem).

Primer flow: If the fired primer appears to have melted or flowed in the shell case primer pocket – your load may well be excessive.

Practical exercise:

Start with dry fire drills using dummy rounds. Set up malfunctions and then have the trainee practice recovery procedures. If no gun handling safety issues are apparent, move on to live fire malfunction drills. Introduce other malfunctions you have experienced.



Stove pipe – swipe clear



Feed jam – drop mag, cycle slide, reload



Dummy rounds:

No primer seated. Hole drilled through case. Firmly crimped to avoid projectile from being forced back into the case with repeated use. Snap caps may also be used.

Intermediate Level Match Shooting:

Even at the Intermediate level of training some students will continue to struggle shooting live fire drills or matches. Downplay the need to shoot within a time frame - it doesn't matter if they shoot overtime. They will speed up as their confidence and experience develops. It is far more important that they learn to follow instructions such as; how many shots, on which target, free style, strong hand or weak hand only and from what position.

It's quite common for a tyro shooter to load magazines with only enough rounds to complete a given string of fire. They frequently ask, "How many rounds do I require?" If it's six, they tend to only load six. This means the slide locks open on the last shot - nothing in reserve in case of a malfunction, or the need for a backup shot. Having to drop a mag, seat a fresh one and drop the slide amounts to poor economy of movement. From a training point of view, it is also better to have a live round chambered at the time of "unload and show clear". It allows for another opportunity to reinforce and have demonstrated the full and correct unload and show clear drill.

Drills and procedures that can be seen by tyro shooters as good, permanent examples to follow:

Experienced shooters can sometimes project a less than perfect example for others to follow. There are drills and procedures that should remain with a shooter no matter how long they have been shooting. One or two examples; the weak hand placed or drawn to the center of the body during the draw and re-holstering procedures.

On "gun clear, hammer down and holster" pointing the pistol down range and executing a deliberately aimed dry fire. Which amounts to a final safety procedure. It's natural for tyro shooters to attempt to mirror the actions and performance level of their peers. As trainers we need to continually reinforce the importance of drills and shooting habits that will remain with us for as long as we shoot any firearm.

If we plan on setting a high standard for our trainees, our own technique should be par excellence as well!

Shooting Positions

Shooting positions – From a barricade:

When shooting from behind a barricade care must be taken not to impede the movement of the slide. Muzzle must be well clear of any obstacles. When switching sides of the barricade avoid sweeping the muzzle down towards the feet or upward towards the sky – instead, the pistol is drawn horizontally towards the shooter, then thrust forward to engage targets. Note finger out of trigger guard during transition.



Kneeling and sitting position:

Kneeling may be on one knee or both. Care must be taken in the sitting position that the feet or legs are not in direct danger of muzzle sweeping.



Shooting Positions - Moving through a door – shooting through a port or window:

When opening and moving through a door care must be taken not to muzzle sweep the arm/hand or any other part of the body, keep finger out of the trigger guard.

Shooting through a port or window – avoid contact damage to sights or possibility of impeding the movement of the slide.



Shooting from the prone position:

Drop to one or both knees, supporting the body weight with the non- shooting hand.

Pistol must be drawn before starting to drop prone, muzzle pointing downrange.

Kick both legs back and extend pistol. Ideally, arms should lay flat on mat or ground surface.



Transitions

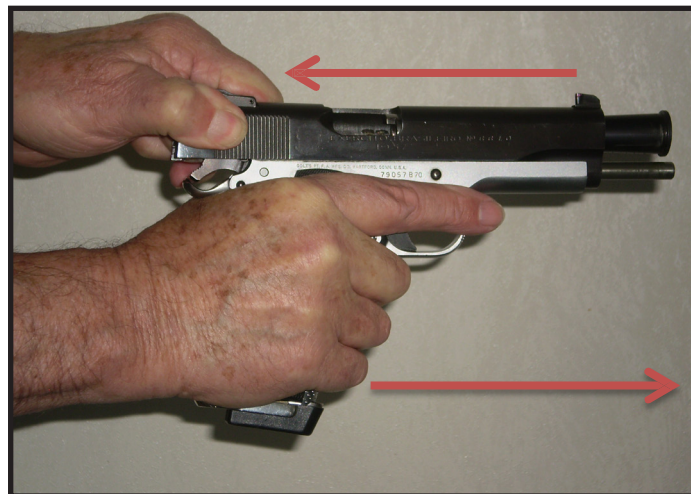
Transitioning pistol from strong to weak hand:



The slide method – For better control, draw the pistol in close to the body by bending both elbows. Peel back the thumb exposing the back strap. Slide the pistol into the opposite hand, extend and continue shooting.

Racking (cycling) the slide:

Some shooters find it difficult to action the slide of a semi-auto pistol. The “push – pull” technique works well to overcome this.



- Firmly grip the rear end of the slide (serrations), hand well clear of the ejection port.
- Finger outside of the trigger guard.
- Use a pulling motion to bring the slide rearward.
- A pushing motion with the dominant hand to drive the frame (butt) forward.

Load and Make Ready – Revision:

Production pistols are proving extremely popular in several of the action style disciplines. However, as responsible trainers we have to understand and appreciate that we are instructing safe firearm handling and basic pistol shooting skills to new club members. For a novice shooter de-cocking a double action pistol can possibly be a little daunting, for them and others on range. A good time to teach this technique would be when a new club member has completed at least Stage two, is actively shooting Production Division, or owns such a pistol.

Coaching aids

There are times when actions speak louder than words. If a student is not responding to correction or advice try another approach. Maybe video the person and then ask them to watch a replay. An app that could be used on an iPhone/iPad is called “coaches eye” (www.CoachesEye.com). This program allows the user to review and highlight any part of the action – you could add a commentary, save the video and share it via email, Facebook etc. with the person concerned.

Match Pressure – cause and how to deal with it:

Nervous reactions can prevent us from performing at our very best. We may become anxious, sweat, get the shakes and/or loss of concentration. It's a mixture of attempting something completely new, wanting to succeed above all else, or possibly a fear of failure. With practice we can overcome nerves. They say it takes 10,000 hours of training to master a given sport or art form. We may not all wish to put in the time to become a master or expert, but to shoot very well would be a great start. If you do encounter a very nervous trainee your message should be - stay safe, but relax and enjoy your shooting. Improvement will come in time and with practice.

Encourage deep breathing. Try not to place a time restriction on a string of fire unless the new member is up to the pressure this may impose.

For the experienced high performance shooter, nerves can affect our performance in other ways. Choking is when we blow something we normally do without the slightest problem. The brain psychologically flips from a system used by experts to one used by novices. It is a complex subject but to be brief, we try too hard. Self-inflicted pressure trips the brain out and blocks out what would normally be natural. The trick is to convince yourself that this important match/activity is in fact “just another day at the office” - just another shoot. In effect, you lie to your brain.

Summary and rationale of live fire drills/exercises outlined for Stage One:

Three live fire exercises have been included in Stage One. The first (page 27) is a simple shot grouping exercise where a white card is placed on a target (any action style target). Shooters fire a series of shots with the idea of achieving a tight group. The result of this exercise offers an instant feedback to both the shooter and trainer as to an understanding and the effect of stance, posture, sight picture, hold, trigger control and follow through.

The second (page 28) is based on the NRA action style Pistol Tyro match. I have used this format because it involves indexing between three targets. The shooter has to concentrate on the order and course of fire. It also includes a re-load. Although any action style targets may be used, the NRA D1 target with its bulls eye scoring rings is ideal for training purposes.

The third Stage One Live Fire exercise (Page 29-30), is in two parts – paper and steel. As with most of the exercises, the shooter has to concentrate on following the correct course of fire and R/O instructions.

The second part of this exercise a modified version of “El Presidente” without the 180 degree turn.

The El Presidente drill was developed by Jeff Cooper in the 1970's. This drill is still used and enjoyed as the bench mark to gauge a shooter's skills, as it tests the draw, reload, and requires good target transition and follow-through.

For Stage Two Live Fire Exercises:

Five live fire exercises for Stage Two shooters are shown on pages 42-46. The final exercise is taken from the popular Steel Challenge event “Smoke and Hope”. This exercise allows the shooter to experience and understand the “point and shoot” principle and then the need to take more care with their sight picture for a smaller “stop plate” target – it's also a fun shoot that the new shooter can enjoy.

It goes without saying that you may have to modify an exercise to suit your club's range setup, also use whatever targets you have at your disposal or perhaps prefer. Add your own exercises. The idea is to design and use a live fire exercise or match to reinforce the basic pistol shooting skills you are teaching.

Intermediate Stage – Live Fire Exercise #1



Use an NRA, IPSC or Service Pistol Target (2 Targets Only)

Each shooter faces two targets. Pistol is loaded, safety applied and held at the tyro 45 degree Pistol Ready Position. Start signal – targets will turn to face or buzzer sounds.

Stage One: 15 Meters

On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Standing (free style) 2 shots on targets 1 & 2

Apply safety, assume the Pistol Ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Kneeling (free style) 2 shots on targets 1 & 2

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

On the Range Officers command - **Load and make ready, apply safety place pistol on mat, muzzle facing downrange.**

On the start signal- (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds) **drop to the prone position**

Retrieve pistol 2 shots on targets 1 & 2

On Range Officer command, (put down pistol, stand, retrieve pistol) unload and show clear.

Stage Two: 10 metres

On the range officers command - Re-load and make ready, apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Standing (free style) 2 shots on targets 1 & 2

Re-load and repeat course of fire using the strong hand only.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Stage Three: 7 metres

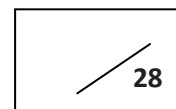
On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Standing (free style) 2 shots on target 1 & 2.

Re-load and repeat course of fire engaging targets in the opposite order.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.



Assessment: Demonstrate safe pistol handling skills. Followed all instructions and shoot competently.

Intermediate Stage - Live Fire Work Shop #2

This is a live fire exercise, time is not important – safety, procedure and the ability to follow instructions are. You may use NRA, IPSC or Service Pistol targets. Static or Falling plates.



T1



1



2



3



4



5



6



T2

Exercise One: 10 Meters (Start in shooting box, standing middle of the targets)

On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Fire 1 shot on T1 & T2 – then engage plates 1 & 6 only. Repeat 1 shot on T1 & T2 – then engage plates 2 & 5 only.

Repeat 1 shot on T1 & T2 – engage plates 3 & 4 only.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Exercise Two: Modified El Presidente (Min 12 Rounds)

10 Meters (Start in shooting box, standing middle of the targets)



On the range officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume the pistol ready position. Facing Downrange

On the start signal - (targets turn to face or buzzer sounds)

Engage each target with 2 shots only, then re-load and repeat course of fire. Targets may be engaged in any order.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Assessment: Shot both exercises safely and competently.

Demonstrate ability to follow instructions

Live Fire Exercise – With Movement #3

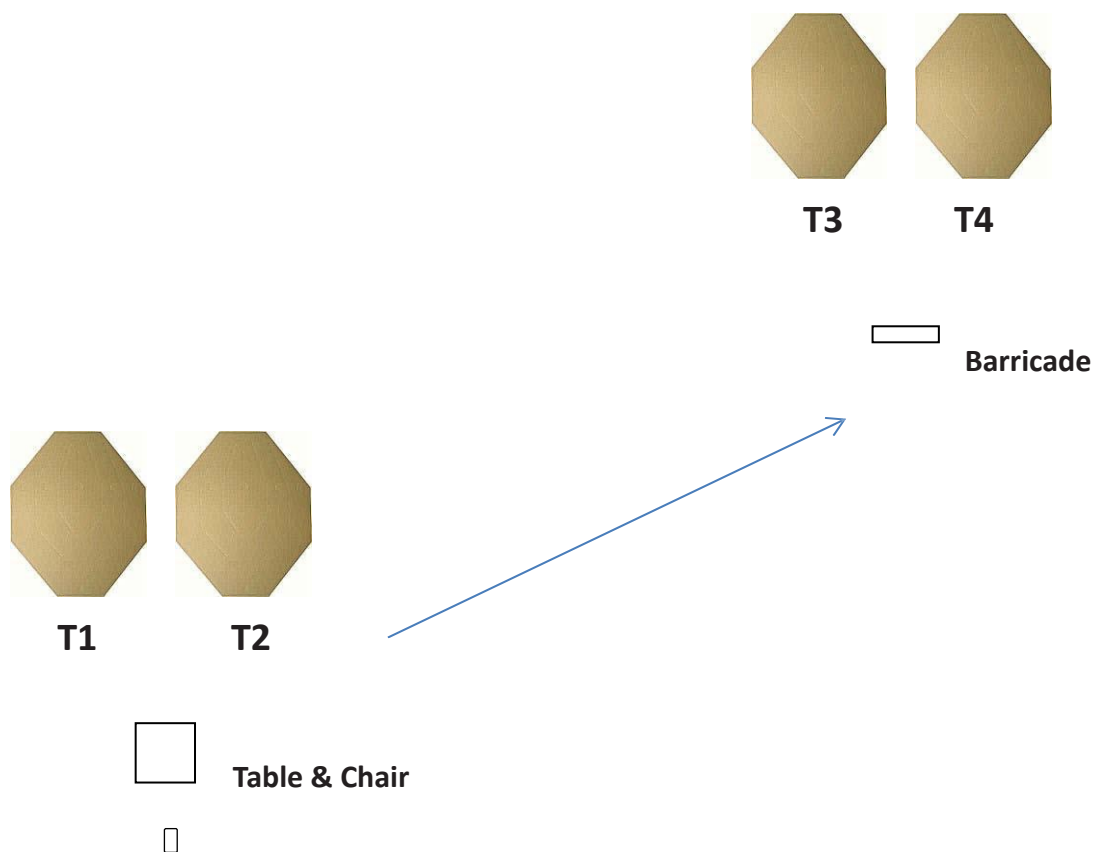
This is a live fire exercise so speed is not important
safety, procedure and the ability to follow instructions are.

Distance to targets and target type and spacing to suit range setup.
Only the number of hits on each target are scored.

Stage One: Start position is; seated in chair. Unloaded pistol, slide closed, is lying flat on the table.
Muzzle pointing down range.

On the start signal - retrieve pistol from the table, load and fire 2 shots on targets 1 & 2 complete a forced re-load as you move to box B. Engage target 3 with 2 shots from the right hand side of the barricade – then move pistol to the left hand side of barricade and fire 2 shots on target 4.

If finished, on the Range Officers command unload and show clear.



Assessment: Shoot exercise safely and competently.

Demonstrate ability to follow instructions.

On range movement, drills and procedures as instructed.

Intermediate Stage - Live Fire Exercise #4



This is a Tyro exercise so time is not important. Safety and the ability to follow instructions are. 24 rounds are required and only the number of hits on each target will be scored.

Targets used may be NRA – IPSC – Service Pistol.
Start signal shall be, targets turn to face or buzzer sounds.

Stage One: 15 Meters

On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On start signal. Fire 2 shots on the centre target – return to pistol ready position.

On start signal. Fire 2 shots on the left hand target – return to pistol ready position.

On start signal. Fire 2 shots on the right hand target

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Stage Two: 7 metres

On the range officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume the pistol ready position.

On start signal. Fire 2 shots only on each of the three targets in any order.

On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

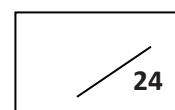
Stage Three: 10 metres

On the Range Officers command - Load and make ready, apply safety and assume pistol ready position.

On start signal. Fire 2 shots only on each of the three targets – RE-LOAD and fire a further 2 shots on each of the three targets.

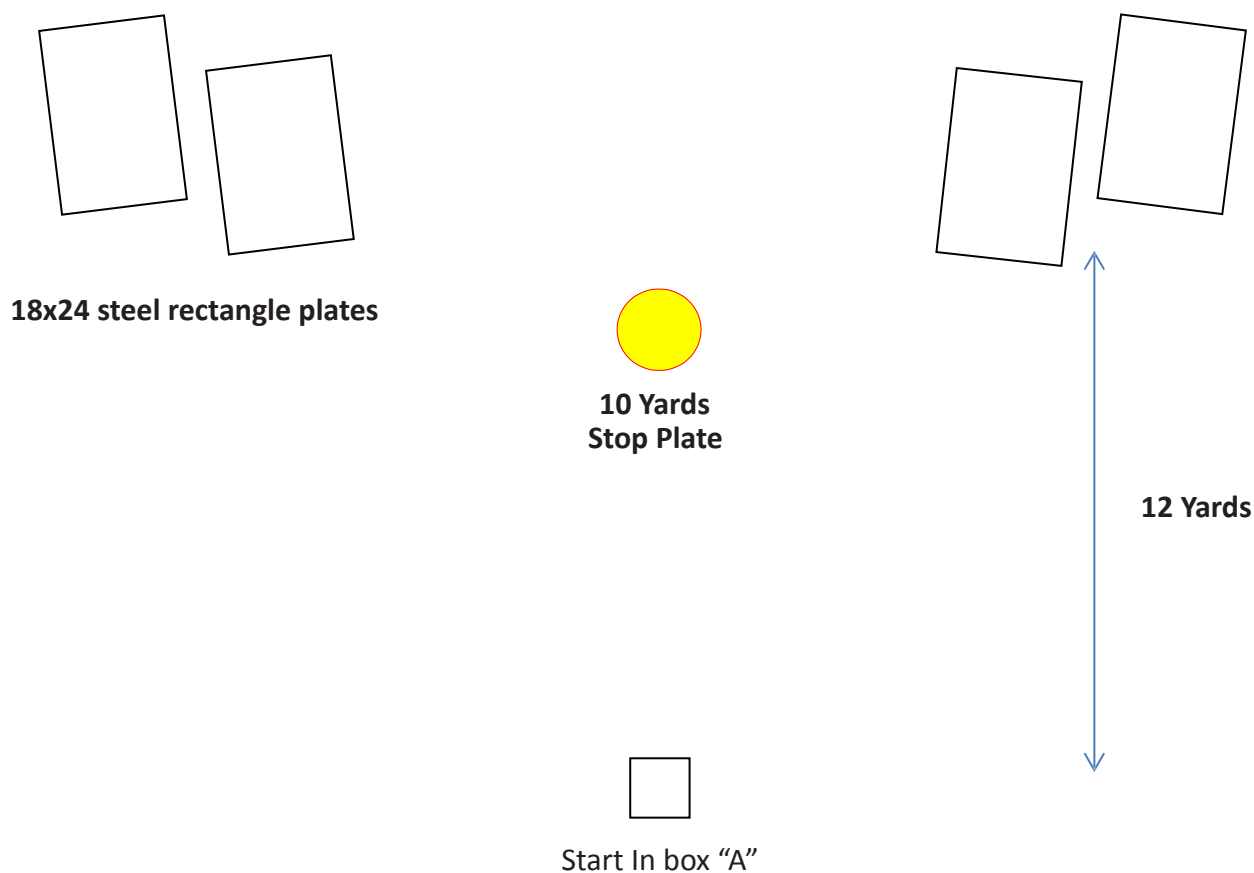
On Range Officer command, unload and show clear.

Assessment: Demonstrated safe pistol handling skills. Followed all instructions and shot competently.



Intermediate Stage – Live Fire Exercise #5

Smoke and Hope



Load and make ready – apply safety – pistol held at 45 degree pistol ready position.

On start signal (buzzer) engage the 4 steel rectangle targets in any order – engage the round steel target last in order to stop the clock.

Best four from five runs is your aggregate score (time).

5 second penalty for every missed target – stop plate must be hit last.

Maximum time allowed for each run is 30 seconds.

Ear and eye protection must be worn by everyone on the range.

Assessment: Shoot the five strings of fire safely and competently.

Demonstrate all drills correctly and with confidence.

Demonstrated ability to follow instructions.

1 st Run	2nd Run	3 rd Run	4th Run	5 th Run	Aggregate Time

Moving on:

Your job as a CTO is almost over. As a result of your hard work and efforts your students will be a much safer and more knowledgeable shooters. Not quite time to totally cut the strings however.

The introduction of Basic Pistol Shooting Skills has set a solid platform on which to build the next step in the new club member's development. Now it's time to move onto club level, organized match shooting.

As you know, things tend to move along a little faster at this level. Often we hear how new shooters struggle to keep up with the demands of match shooting. If not already in place at your club, maybe it is time to introduce a means of transitioning a tyro shooter on to match shooting. Consider a "buddy system". Here the new club member under the watchful eye of the club Section Director would be teamed up with a more experienced shooter. Someone who will offer advice and encouragement when and where needed, also make the new club member feel welcome.

Your club may have a policy that new club members must be holster qualified before engaging in match shooting. Others will allow restricted involvement – such as, all shooting starts from the Pistol Ready Position. No on range movement with a loaded gun, or perhaps only at a fast walking pace.

In the meantime, the new shooter has several other requirements to take care of.

The PNZ Club Range Officer and Safety course.

The questions sheet is on the Pistol New Zealand website's Qualifications page. It is always a good idea to make sure you cover the topics the questions referred to in your training presentation.

Club Range Standing Orders and Club Rules verbal Test

Some clubs also require their members to sit and pass a verbal test relating to "club rules" and "range standing orders".


When it comes to applying for a "B" firearms endorsement it helps if you, and the trainee knows the correct procedures to follow.

The PNZ Holster Qualification course.

Please make sure your students know in advance what this course is all about. Those attending this course must own their own equipment – pistol, holster, belt, mag pouches. They must be proficient with the pistol and equipment they will be using. Most importantly, they must be cleared by a CTO in order to enrol.

Finally, thank you once again for your contribution as a PNZ Club Training Officer. We would welcome any feedback and remind you that you have the full support of Pistol New Zealand Training Team to call upon.

Kind regards,




Jack Sims

PISTOL NEW ZEALAND

Club Range Officer and Safety Test

Before applying to sit the PNZ Holster Qualification Course and a “B” endorsement, new members must sit and pass the PNZ Club Range Officer and safety test.

This is a 20 question multi choice test to test the shooters knowledge of general gun handling safety plus range procedures and requirements. The course is based on questions found in the members handbook. Trainers, please make sure all subjects have been covered during the Basic Pistol Shooting Skills training program.

 **PNZ CLUB RANGE OFFICER and SAFETY TEST** **TEST A**

All persons joining a Pistol NZ member club are REQUIRED to sit this test within 6 months of joining their pistol club. Pistol shooters must pass this test before applying for a B cat endorsement and will then be awarded PNZ Club range officer Status.
Note: This Club Range Officer qualification allows the member to officiate at club “down the line” precision target shooting only (i.e. ISSF club shooting only). For other discipline Range Officer Qualifications see the RO1 tests specific to your discipline.

Once you have passed this test, you must be confident when acting as a Range Officer and operate ranges under your control safely. Safety is always the primary concern of all Range Officers. You should always make sure you are aware of the Range Standing Orders for any range you are in charge of. Any other range rules of the club must also be followed.

Becoming a qualified Pistol NZ Club Range Officer is an important step, as you will directly assist your club in operating its ranges safely.

This test is to be conducted as a “closed book” test supervised by your Club Training Officer or another experienced club member. The test paper must be signed by the person sitting the test and the supervising examiner to verify the test has been properly completed as a closed book test and that you have undergone practical experience in the duties of an RO. It is estimated the test will take less than half an hour to complete.

JUNIORS
 In the case of a Junior the test paper should have the Junior's name and be signed by the person taking the Junior through the test. Training should be given to the Junior to cover the questions that should be answered. Completion of these questions allows the Junior to sit the Holster course but not pass as a Club Range Officer—the whole test must be done to achieve this.

JUNIOR TEST (Ages 12-16)
 As part of the “Junior Proficiency Badge” the following questions Marked “(Junior)” must be answered. A Pass mark is 10 out of 12.

ALL CANDIDATES
PLEASE DO NOT WRITE ON THIS BOOKLET. You must only write on the test answer paper provided. First you must record your name and other details as required at the top of the paper including whether you are sitting Test A or Test B (the letter at the top right of this test booklet cover).
 The pass mark is 18 out of 20. All questions are multi-choice with four answers to choose from, and are about club level range safety and important information you need to know and understand to safely operate as a Club Range Officer on a pistol range in New Zealand. To answer a question, mark the corresponding answer on your test paper with an X, as in the sample question below. **When the test is completed the answer sheet should then be sent, by the testing official to the Executive Officer, PNZ.**

Sample Question (this is NOT Question One of the test)

Q1. Who is in control of a range while shooting is in progress?
 a) The Club President
 b) The Range Officer
 c) The shooter with the highest score
 d) The most popular club member present

The correct answer is b) and you mark this on your test paper as follows:
 1. A B C D (please use an X, not a circle or any other mark)

If you have to make a correction, clearly blot out the first X and place a new X over the correct letter. Your first question starts at the top of the next page.

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 **PNZ CLUB RANGE OFFICER and SAFETY TEST** **TEST A/B**

First Name Surname Club

Address

Test Date Pistol Club

The Club Training Officer (or other club supervisor) will first observe sitting the test must sign to the right to verify that this test has been properly completed as a “closed book” test, and that you have undergone practical experience in the duties of an RO. It is estimated the test will take less than half an hour to complete.

Free Member Signature

Supervisor Signature

1	A	B	C	D	11	A	B	C	D
2	A	B	C	D	12	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D	13	A	B	C	D
4	A	B	C	D	14	A	B	C	D
5	A	B	C	D	15	A	B	C	D
6	A	B	C	D	16	A	B	C	D
7	A	B	C	D	17	A	B	C	D
8	A	B	C	D	18	A	B	C	D
9	A	B	C	D	19	A	B	C	D
10	A	B	C	D	20	A	B	C	D

The test takes around 10-15 minutes and is self-marking at the end – so you will be able to give the results immediately after the test.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

VERBAL TEST

CLUB RULES & REGULATIONS

RANGE STANDING ORDERS

To ensure that all club members have read and understood the club's Rules and Regulations as well as the Club's Range Standing Orders (The member should be handed a set of the club rules and Range Standing Orders when joining), your club may ask you to take a verbal test before submitting your application for B endorsement to the committee.

The member will need to understand the material well enough in order to answer a brief series of questions.

Example Questions:

- What are you not permitted to take into the Safety Zone and why?
- When bringing a visitor to the club, what restrictions apply?
- What is the maximum height a target can be placed at (name of your club)?
- Describe the process in case of an accident at the club.
- What are the 3 items you must wear at the club while on any range?

The club Training Officer should be approached when the member is ready to take such a test.

Such a test should take around 10-15 minutes and is self-marking at the end – so you will know the results immediately after sitting the test.

I confirm that the probationary member has completed this section of the training program and is competent in all material covered. It is my opinion that this trainee is ready to advance to the next stage of basic training.

Date:/...../.....

Members Name/Signature

Club Trainers Name/Signature

APPLYING FOR A B ENDORSEMENT

Once a new probationary member has completed the mandatory six month probationary period, an application may be made to the club seeking approval for a “B” endorsed firearms license. Below is a checklist of things needed before applying to the committee for a “B” endorsement.

“B ” Endorsement Checklist

- Be a current financial member of a Pistol New Zealand recognized pistol club
- Hold a current New Zealand firearms license
- Have been a probationary member of the club for no less than 6 months
- Attended the Introduction course and Basic Safe Gun Handling courses
- Completed 12 recorded shoots during your probationary period
- Sat and passed the Pistol New Zealand Club and Range Officer Safety Test.
- Sat and passed the Verbal test on Club Rules & Regulations and Club Range Standing Orders (If applicable)
- Have an application form from the Police for “B” endorsement

Once the member is ready to apply for their B endorsement, they should submit the following to the committee:

NEW ZEALAND POLICE POL67F 05/09

FIREARMS LICENCE APPLICATION SUPPLEMENTARY FORM (TYPE B - PISTOL CLUB MEMBER)

NOTE FOR APPLICANTS
Complete this side of the form. Your signature must be witnessed by a member of police. The form must then be submitted through the committee of the incorporated pistol shooting club for the time being recognised by the Commissioner of Police for the purposes of section 29 of the Arms Act 1983.

PART A:

Surname: Forename/s:

Date of Birth: Licence Number:

Types held: A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐

Club Name:

Club Address:

Membership Number:

Joining Date:

Security
You must comply with the security requirements of the Arms Regulations 1992 (specifications are available from an Arms Office).
Where do you intend to store your pistol/s?
☐ Strongroom ☐ Room of stout and secure construction
☐ Locked in steel cabinet, steel box or safe which is fixed in an approved manner.

Declaration
I am an active and current financial member of the above incorporated pistol shooting club. I fully understand and abide by the club rules and conditions of membership. I understand and will comply with all the requirements of the Arms Act 1983, the Arms Regulations 1992 and other such matters as are agreed by the New Zealand Police and the club.
I declare that the information I have supplied for this application is true and correct. I understand that it is an offence to intentionally supply incorrect particulars or misleading details. I consent to the police making inquiries into my fitness to possess or own pistols and authorise any person approached by the police in this matter to release or disclose all relevant information.

Applicant's Signature: Witnessed by (Member of Police):

Date: QID: Station:

Important Note
Information you supply on this form and that otherwise collected from you by Police in relation to this application is for the purpose of the preservation of public safety. It will not be released to any other person or organisation except insofar as authorised in terms of Information Privacy Principles 6 and 11 contained in the Privacy Act 1983. Pursuant to Information Privacy Principle 6 you are entitled to have access to any information you supply on this form and to request correction of the information in terms of Information Privacy Principle 7.

PART B:
(For Club use)

Applicant is an active and current financial member Y ☐ N ☐

Applicant is aware of and abides by range and match rules, and club and/or association constitutions Y ☐ N ☐

Shooting meetings attended in the last year to date

Applicant has undergone safety training Y ☐ N ☐

Comment on applicant's safety, Competence and attitude to security:

Recommendation and declaration
IMPORTANT: The executive committee of the club must be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to have and use pistols. The declarant may be required to justify his or her opinion on oath in Court. It is an offence to intentionally supply false or misleading information.
I declare that the (club name) is an incorporated pistol shooting club which has been recognised by the Commissioner of Police for the purposes of section 29 of the Arms Act 1983. The information given above by the executive committee of the club is true and correct. I know of no reason why the applicant should not have and use pistols. The committee supports and recommends this application.

Date:
(President or Secretary)

PART C:
(For national association use - if applicable)

Application Number:

Executive Secretary: Recommended ☐ Declined ☐

(Signature) Date:

Executive Secretary: Recommended ☐ Declined ☐

(Signature) Date:

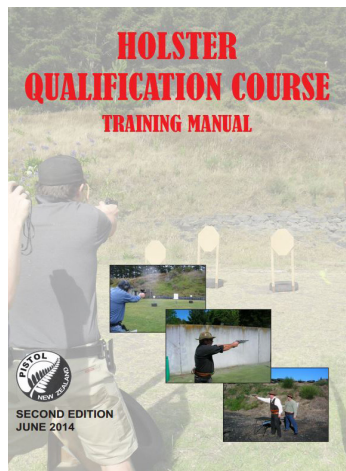
NOTE: When completed, this form may be returned to applicant or forwarded directly to the Arms Office at which the application is to be made.

- Application for ‘B’ endorsement – Blue form from the Police (ensure this is signed by the Arms Officer)
- The members completed Training Manual – Training record
- Copies of the members Pistol New Zealand Club and Range Officer Safety Test
- A photocopy of the members club ID (If Applicable)

Once approved these will be sent to the Pistol New Zealand Executive Officer to process.

PISTOL NEW ZEALAND

HOLSTER BADGE QUALIFICATION COURSE



Before a shooter is permitted to holster and draw a loaded gun from a Holster they must attend and pass the PNZ Holster Qualification course. The Holster training course is available to members who meet the following criteria;

- Completed AT LEAST 4 months of the first 6 months of their probationary period, be at least 12 years of age AND a holder of the “Junior Proficiency” badge (12-16 years of age). Pistol NZ is aware that some clubs allow the trainee to take the course with equipment purchased by the trainee and held by a B Cat endorsed club member. This is not recommended. However, if this does happen the person whose name the firearm is registered to MUST be in attendance with the trainees at all times – as required by the MOU Section 5.6 (a) and (b). Clarification: You can’t take possession of a pistol without a permit to procure (Section 44 of the Arms Act, 1983). If a club gun is used then the person whose license it is on must be present.
- Completed the “PNZ CLUB RANGE OFFICER SAFETY TEST”.
- Be the holder of a current Firearms license or have completed the “junior proficiency badge” course (12-16 years of age).
- Have received tuition from their club in the safe handling of firearms on the range, plus completed a Basic Pistol Shooting Skills training program.
- Have their own equipment. This includes the pistol they propose to use in their chosen discipline, plus their own belt, holster and pouches.
- Received clearance from the Club Training Officer that they are deemed suitably qualified to take this course.

The Holster course consists of:

- Theory session – Rules and Regulations, Range commands.
- The Load, unloading and reloading procedures as applicable to pistol used.
- Five stage safety draw.
- Free style, strong hand, weak hand shooting and transitions.
- Drawing / Shooting from the kneeling, prone and seated positions.
- Turning and drawing.
- Dry fire drills and exercises.
- Live fire drill and assessment – 85% pass rate required.

NOTES: