

N R A

**FIRST STEPS
PISTOL
ORIENTATION**



**NRA FIRST STEPS FIREARM INSTRUCTION, RESPONSIBILITY,
& SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM**

First Edition

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *FIRST Steps*!

FIRST Steps — *Firearm Instruction, Responsibility, and Safety Training* — is the National Rifle Association's response to the American public's need for a firearm orientation program for new purchasers. New Firearm owners are encouraged to take the "first step" of obtaining training, and the NRA *FIRST Steps* Program is designed to provide a hands-on introduction to the safe handling and proper orientation of *one specific firearm model*. There are three orientations in the program: one for rifle, one for pistol, and one for shotgun.

Since *FIRST Steps* orientations are model-specific, and teach only the most basic shooting skills, they are not complete "courses" in the traditional sense of the word. They do provide a thorough introduction to firearm safety, handling, and shooting skills. These skills require regular practice. Initially, this practice should take place under the supervision of a qualified individual — like an NRA Certified Trainer. For this reason, the orientation encourages participants to obtain additional training in an NRA basic Firearm Training Course, and then to take the "next step" by participating in other local activities designed to help individuals maintain and develop their shooting skills.

Total Participant Involvement

The *FIRST Steps* Orientation Program was the first NRA program designed for the new shooter that uses the *Total Participant Involvement (TPI)* training methodology. Minimizing the use of lecture, TPI takes an experiential approach that stresses active training and learning by doing. Trainers guide participants to develop the specified knowledge, skills, and attitude through the use of hands-on exercises and practical applications. Keeping participants involved at every step of the training process engages their energy, holds their interest, and makes learning *fun*! At the same time, the performance-based training approach enables trainers to evaluate the participants' progress and provide appropriate feedback.

Like the lesson plans for NRA Basic Firearm Training Courses, the *FIRST Steps* lesson plans use a double column format of *content* and *instructional notes*: what to teach and how to teach it. The *FIRST Steps* lesson plans contain detail on *how to teach*, and use **bold print** to indicate directions to the trainer. Involving participants is stressed throughout the orientation.

One example of involving participants is the NRA policy on how trainers handle firearms. Each time they pick up a gun, they set the example by practicing the NRA's three rules of gun safety: ***ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot, and ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.*** Trainers then involve the participants by having one of them verify that the gun is unloaded.

Another way to involve participants is through the use of the *coach-pupil method*, which has one trainer, one firearm, and two participants at a shooting station on the range. While one participant (the “pupil”) shoots, the trainer involves the other participant (the “coach”) in the learning process by guiding him or her to provide feedback under the trainer’s direction. The Trainer then has the participants reverse roles and repeat the shooting exercise.

The *FIRST Steps* Program is designed for a low participant-to-instructor ratio. The three-hour orientation length is based on a ratio of one-to-one. The length of course lessons will need to be increased proportionately to allow multiple participants to complete all activities specified in the lesson plans. For example, in Lesson I, *each* participant must name the indicated firearm parts, describe their functions, and explain and demonstrate the loading and unloading procedures.

During the range exercises for the NRA *FIRST Steps* Pistol Course, a *one-to-one student-to-instructor ratio on the firing line is encouraged whenever possible*. If this is not possible, the ratio on the firing line should not exceed two shooters for every NRA Certified Pistol Instructor. Instructors must position themselves to be able to take immediate corrective action if necessary.

Instructors may combine students using different handgun models in the same *FIRST Steps* class, provided that all handguns are of the same action type (all semi-automatics, all single action revolvers, etc.). In that case, each individual student’s completion certificate must still show the specific model handgun they used.

As in the case in NRA Basic Firearm Training Courses, trainers should provide participants with a 10-minute break after every 50 minutes of instruction during a *FIRST Steps* orientation.

Policy Notes

FIRST Steps orientations can be conducted by NRA Certified Instructors holding credentials in the discipline. They should follow the specifications of these lesson plans as they pertain to learning objectives, time requirements, training materials, equipment, orientation content, instructional methodology, and other specified details. Additional policies governing the conduct of the *FIRST Steps* Program will be periodically announced in the *NRA Shooting Education Update* newsletter, which is sent to all NRA trainers.

In conducting an NRA *FIRST Steps* orientation, trainers must provide each participant with the items in the *FIRST Steps* Pistol Participant Packet for their permanent retention, and also use the other items indicated on the “Required NRA Materials” list. Trainers are encouraged to charge a reasonable fee sufficient to recover the costs of materials and other training-related expenses.

NRA *FIRST Steps* Orientation Completion Certificates are available only as part of the participant packet. **The trainer must indicate on the certificate the model of firearm that was used in the orientation.**

The owner's manual for each participant's pistol should be consulted prior to the orientation to see whether the manufacturer has any particular guidelines for its operation, dry firing recommendations, approved ammunition, and cleaning procedures. **"Trainers should not conduct the orientation class unless they are thoroughly familiar with the correct operation of the participant's pistol model as recommended by the manufacturer."** Trainers who have any questions concerning whether or not the participant's handgun and/or ammunition is safe to shoot should have them checked by a reputable gunsmith before using them in the orientation.

The *FIRST Steps* Program is designed to provide training with one particular firearm model — preferably the participant's. However, individuals who do not yet own a firearm may attend a *FIRST Steps* orientation using a firearm provided by the trainer. If a trainer's firearm is used, however, participants should be advised that the operational and handling characteristics will not be the same on a different firearm. They should be encouraged to attend a new *FIRST Steps* orientation if they later purchase a different gun.

No live ammunition is permitted in the classroom under any circumstances, or on the range during Lessons I, II and IV if these lessons are conducted on a range. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition to ensure that a live round is not brought to class, or to the range except during Lesson III.

NRA trainers may refer to guns as "firearms," "guns," "pistols," etc. but not as "weapons." "Weapon" has a negative connotation.

Establish emergency procedures to be followed in the event of an accident. All course staff must be aware of these procedures and maintain a list of emergency telephone numbers.

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Good Luck!

Remember, the *FIRST Steps* Program was designed with both the trainer and the participant in mind. These lesson plans will prepare you to conduct a successful orientation, and provide your participants with an exciting and informative introduction to the world of shooting.

We thank you for your commitment for firearm education and your participation in the training programs of the National Rifle Association. Your expertise and dedication will train a new generation of American shooters to exercise their firearm freedoms safely and responsibly. If you ever have any questions about *FIRST Steps* or the NRA Basic Firearm Training Program, please contact the National Instructor Trainer, NRA Training Department, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030, (703) 267-1423.



NRA

NRA Training Department
Education & Training Division
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To join the NRA today, or for additional information regarding membership, please call 1-800-NRA-3888. Your membership dues can be charged to Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover.

ORIENTATION OUTLINE

NRA *FIRST Steps* Pistol Orientation

Orientation Goal: To provide beginning shooters with an introduction to the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to own and use a specific pistol model safely.

Length of Orientation: 3 hours. (All times listed are minimums. Additional time may be needed to meet the specified learning objectives using the methodology of Total Participant Involvement. Lesson time must be increased proportionately to allow multiple participants to complete all specified activities.)

Participant Text: NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook.

Orientation Lessons:

- Lesson I: Introduction to Pistol Safety, Parts, and Operation (45 minutes)
- Lesson II: Introduction to Ammunition and the Fundamentals of Pistol Shooting (45 minutes)
- Lesson III: Introduction to Pistol Shooting from the Benchrest Position (60 minutes)
- Lesson IV: Introduction to Pistol Cleaning, Storage, and Training Opportunities (30 minutes)

REQUIRED NRA MATERIALS

NRA *FIRST STEPS* Pistol Orientation

(See current NRA *Trainers' Catalog or Materials.nrahq.org* for item numbers and prices)

One per participant:

NRA *First Steps* Pistol Participant Packet — contains the following items:

- NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook
- NRA *FIRST Steps* Pistol Orientation Completion Certificate
- NRA *Gun Safety Rules* brochure
- NRA *Basic Firearm Training Program* brochure
- Winchester/NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program booklet
- Basic Practical Rocker

NRA Training Course Student Registration Card

OTHER REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Pistol

Pistol owner's manual

Dummy ammunition (must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition)

Empty cartridge box for pistols used

Fired cartridge case for pistols used

Live ammunition (for use during live fire exercises on range only)

Hearing protection

Eye protection

Targets

Sandbags

Benchrests (tables)

Chairs

Small screwdriver (for sight adjustments)

Pistol cleaning equipment

Lockable pistol case

LESSON I. Introduction to Pistol Safety, Parts, and Operation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. State the goal of the NRA *FIRST Steps* Pistol Orientation.
2. Name the three fundamental NRA rules of safe gun handling and demonstrate them with a specific pistol model.
3. Name the three major components of a pistol and describe their functions.
4. Safely demonstrate how to handle a specific pistol in a safe manner.

LENGTH: 45 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS: Pistol, pistol owner's manual, dummy ammunition, one per participant of the following: NRA Training Course Student Registration Card, NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure. (**Note:** No live ammunition is to be used during this lesson. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.)

REFERENCES: NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. Chapters 1-7.

Content	Instructional Notes
A. Orientation	
1. Registration	1. Have participants fill out an NRA Training Course Student Registration Card.
2. Welcome	2. Introduce self and welcome participants to the orientation.
3. Orientation goal	3. Review the orientation goal: <i>To provide beginning shooters with an introduction to the knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary to own and use a <u>specific pistol model</u> safely.</i>

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4. Orientation schedule

4. **Review** the orientation content, and the times and locations of the different lessons of the orientation.
5. Special considerations

5. **Review** any special considerations that are unique to the orientation, e.g., transportation arrangements to range facility.
6. Facilities

6. **Point out** location of rest rooms, drinking fountain, telephone, first aid kit, fire exits, alarm, extinguishers, etc.
7. Firearms

7. Immediately **check** any firearms to be used during the orientation to insure they are unloaded, and **have a participant verify** this.
8. No live ammunition in classroom

8. **Note:** no live ammunition is permitted in the classroom. Only dummy ammunition will be used during the first two lessons. **Ensure** participants have no live ammunition in the classroom.
9. Gun fit

9. **Check** the fit of the pistol to be used during this orientation relative to the size and strength of the participants. The participant should be able to correctly grip the pistol securely and comfortably and properly operate the appropriate parts safely.
10. Basic handbooks

10. **Distribute** the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbooks to participants. **Note** that the handbook will be used during the orientation, and may be used afterwards as a reference to review the material covered in class.

The pistol handbook contains additional information that will not be covered during the orientation, should not be considered a substitute for hands-on training. Participants may enroll in an NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course for additional pistol training.

B. Introduce Lesson

B. **State** learning objectives for this lesson.

C. Pistol Safety

1. The importance of safety

1. **Ask** participants: What do you think is our primary concern when handling firearms? **Discuss** responses briefly. **State** that safety is always the primary concern when handling firearms, whether the guns are located in the home, at the range or in the field.

2. The major causes of gun accidents

2. **Ask** participants: What do you think are the major causes of gun accidents? **Discuss** responses briefly. **State** that ignorance and carelessness are the primary causes: a lack of knowledge of firearm safety or operation (ignorance), or the failure to apply one's knowledge when handling guns (carelessness).

3. The NRA rules for safe gun handling

3. **Distribute** the *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure to participants. **Explain** that NRA has developed three basic rules which should always be applied simultaneously when handling or using a gun.

a. **ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.**

a. **Turn** with participants to the three rules in the brochure. **Have participants read** the first rule aloud. **Ask**: What do you think is meant by a "safe direction"? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that this rule means that a gun must always be

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pointed so that even if it were to discharge, it would not cause injury or damage. **Note** that controlling the gun's muzzle is the key, and that common sense will dictate the safest direction. **Indicate** the safe direction(s) in the facility you are using.

Demonstrate this rule by **picking up** a pistol, **identifying** the muzzle, and **noting** that you have it pointed in a safe direction.

b. ***ALWAYS*** keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.

b. **Have participants read** the second rule aloud. **Ask:** If your finger is kept off the trigger, where should it be? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that the finger should rest outside the trigger guard, along the side of the gun.

Demonstrate this rule by **identifying** the trigger and trigger guard on the pistol you are holding, and **noting** that you are holding the gun with your finger off the trigger, while keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction.

c. ***ALWAYS*** keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

c. **Have participants read** the third rule aloud. **Explain** that you check whether a gun is unloaded by removing the magazine (if removable), opening the action, and visually inspecting the chamber(s).

Demonstrate this rule by **identifying** the magazine (if any), action, and chamber(s) on the pistol you are holding, and **noting** that the magazine is empty or out, the action open, and the chamber(s) empty. **Have a participant verify** that the gun is unloaded.

D. Safe Pistol Handling Practical Exercise

D. Note that, when handing a firearm to another person, the three rules of gun safety must be observed simultaneously, i.e., gun pointed in a safe direction, finger off the trigger, magazine out, action open, and empty chamber(s) visible. **Note** also that a gun should not be accepted from another person unless its magazine is out, its action open, and its empty chamber(s) visible.

Have participants demonstrate the three safety rules while handling the pistol. **Have participants describe** each action they perform, i.e., that they are keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, etc. The pistol's action must remain open during this exercise, and must not be manipulated by participants at this time. **Have participants hand** the pistol back to you when they are done.

Offer guidance, direction, encouragement, and positive feedback as appropriate.

E. Pistol Parts: Major Components

E. Note that all pistols consist of three major components: the frame, the barrel, and the action.

1. Frame

1. **Turn** with participants to the definition of the frame for (revolver) or (semi-automatic) in the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Have participants read** the definition aloud. **Point out** the frame on the pistol they are using.

2. Barrel

2. **Turn** with participants to the definition of the barrel (revolver) or (semi-automatic) in the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Have participants read** the definition

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3. Action

aloud. **Point out** the barrel on the pistol they are using.

3. **Turn** with participants to the definition of the action in the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Have participants read** the definition aloud. **Point out** the action on the pistol they are using.

F. Pistol Parts: Revolvers

F. If you are conducting an orientation with a revolver, **continue** with this section on revolver parts. If the orientation is using a semi-automatic pistol, **skip** to the next section (**G**) on semi-automatic pistol parts.

1. Frame

1. **Review** with participants the definition of the frame by asking them to define it.

a. Grip panels — allow the shooter to grip the revolver comfortably. They are usually composed of wood, rubber or molded plastic and are attached to the lower portion of the frame.

Name the revolver parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the frame and **describe** briefly the function of each part.

b. Backstrap — the rear, vertical portion of the frame that lies between (or beneath) the grip panels.

c. Trigger guard — designed to protect the trigger in order to reduce the possibility of an unintentional firing.

d. Rear sight — used along with front sight to aim the revolver.

Review the parts of the frame. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one and **describe** the function of each part.

2. Barrel

a. Bore — the inside of the barrel. The measurement of its diameter is called the caliber of the pistol.

b. Rifling — composed of spiral lands and grooves cut into the bore. The rifling makes the bullet spin to give it stability.

c. Muzzle — the front end of the barrel where the bullet exits.

d. Front sight — used along with the rear sight to aim the revolver.

3. Action

a. Trigger — when squeezed, activates the hammer.

b. Hammer — strikes the firing pin to fire the gun. The hammer spur is the part of the hammer that may be gripped by the thumb.

c. Cylinder — holds ammunition in individual chambers that are rotated into firing position by the action of the trigger or hammer.

d. Chamber — holds the cartridge at the instant of firing.

2. **Review** with participants the definition of the barrel by asking them to define it.

Name the revolver parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the barrel, and describe the function of each part.

b. **Have participants turn** to the page in the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook with the illustration of rifling.

Review the parts of the barrel. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one, and **describe** the function of each part.

3. **Review** with participants the definition of the action by asking them to define it.

Name the revolver parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the action, and **describe** the function of each part.

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e. Cylinder release latch — releases the cylinder and allows it to swing out for loading and unloading.

f. Loading gate (single action revolvers only) — opens to expose the rear of the chambers for loading and unloading.

g. Ejector (also called extractor) — removes cartridges from the cylinder when activated by the ejector rod.

h. Ejector rod — activates the ejector.

Review the parts of the action. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one, and **describe** the function of each part.

G. Pistol Parts: Semi-automatics

G. If you are conducting an orientation with a semi-automatic pistol, **continue** with this section on semi-automatic pistol parts. If the orientation is using a revolver, **skip** to the review section (**H**).

1. Frame

1. **Review** with participants the definition of the frame by asking them to define it.

a. Safety — a mechanical device designed to reduce the chance of an unintentional discharge. A safety is a mechanical device that can fail. It must be used as a supplement to safe gun handling practices, never as a substitute.

Name the semi-automatic parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the frame, and **describe** the function of each part.

b. Slide stop (also called slide lock) — locks the slide in an open position.

c. Decocking lever (if applicable) — relaxes spring tension and lowers hammer so it is not in a position to strike the

firing pin and fire the gun. On some pistols, the decocking lever also serves as a safety.

d. Grip panels — allow the shooter to grip the pistol comfortably. They are usually composed of wood, rubber, or molded plastic and are attached to the lower portion of the frame.

e. Backstrap — the rear, vertical portion of the frame that lies between (or beneath) the grip panels.

f. Trigger guard — designed to protect the trigger in order to reduce the possibility of an unintentional firing.

g. Rear sight — used along with the front sight to aim the pistol.

g. If the semi-automatic pistol they are using has its rear sight located on the slide, **describe** the rear sight while discussing the action (below).

Review the parts of the frame. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one, and **describe** the function of each part.

2. Barrel

2. **Review** with participants the definition of the barrel by asking them to define it.

a. Bore — the inside of the barrel. The measurement of its diameter is called the caliber of the pistol.

Name the semi--automatic pistol parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the barrel and **describe** the function of each part.

b. Chamber — holds the cartridge at the instant of firing.

c. Rifling — composed of spiral lands and groves cut into the bore. The rifling makes the bullet spin to give it stability.

c. **Have participants turn** to the page in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook with the illustration of rifling.

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d. Muzzle — the front end of the barrel where the bullet exits.

e. Front sight — used along with the rear sight to aim the pistol.

e. If the semi-automatic pistol they are using has its front sight located on the slide, **describe** the front sight while discussing the action (below).

Review the parts of the barrel. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one, and **describe** the function of each part.

3. Action

3. **Review** with participants the definition of the action by asking them to define it.

a. Hammer — strikes the firing pin to fire the gun.

Name the semi-automatic pistol parts listed at left, **point out** their location on the action, and **describe** the function of each part.

b. Slide — performs several functions:

(1) Extracts the cartridge case from the chamber and ejects it from the pistol.

(2) Cocks the hammer (on most models).

(3) Removes the top cartridge from the magazine and feeds it into the chamber.

c. Ejection port — opening through which cartridge case is ejected from the pistol.

c. If the semi-automatic pistol they are using has its ejection port located on the frame, **describe** it while discussing the frame (above).

d. Magazine — holds cartridges ready for feeding into the chamber.

e. Magazine release — releases the magazine so it may be removed from the pistol.

e. Trigger — when pulled, activates the hammer or an internal firing mechanism.

Review the parts of the action. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** each one, and **describe** the function of each part.

H. Pistol Parts: Review

H. Review all the parts of the frame, barrel, and action listed under **F** or **G** above. **Point** to each part, **have participants name** and **describe** the function of each part.

I. Pistol Operation

I. Explain that, in addition to firing (which will be discussed in Lesson II), there are four basic operations of most pistols: loading, cocking, uncocking, and unloading. (You may not need to discuss uncocking if this does not apply to the operation of your participant's pistol.)

You will be explaining, demonstrating, discussing, and reviewing the operations indicated. **Refer** to the general operational guidelines in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook or the pistol's owner's manual for the type of pistol. Discuss the indicated procedures in a clear, simple, step-by-step manner.

Review the owner's manual of your participant's pistol for any particular guidelines pertaining to its operation. For example, single-action semi-automatic pistols should not be uncocked while loaded unless the manufacturer provides specific guidelines for doing so.

Do not conduct the orientation unless you are thoroughly familiar with the correct operation of the participant's pistol as recommended by the manufacturer:

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Use *only* dummy ammunition during this practical exercise. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.

Be sure to observe, cite, and reinforce the NRA rules of safe gun handling throughout the exercise. Ammunition that falls to the ground must remain on the ground until it may be safely retrieved by someone who is not handling a firearm (the instructor or another participant under the instructor's direction).

1. Loading

1. **Explain and demonstrate** the loading procedure for your participant's pistol in a clear, simple, step-by-step manner. Then **have participants repeat** the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

2. Cocking

2. **Define** "cocking": placing the hammer (or internal firing mechanism) under spring tension to prepare it to strike the firing pin and fire the gun.

Explain and demonstrate the cocking procedure for your participant's pistol in a clear, simple step-by-step manner. Then **have participants repeat** the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

3. Uncocking

3. **Define** "uncocking" (if applicable to your participant's pistol): relaxing the spring tension on the hammer (or internal firing mechanism) so that it is not in a position to strike the firing pin and fire the gun.

If they are using a revolver, explain that a cocked revolver must be uncocked before it can be unloaded. If they are using a semi-

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automatic pistol, **explain** that a cocked semi-automatic may be unloaded without uncocking it.

Explain and demonstrate the uncocking procedure for your participant's pistol in a clear, simple, step-by-step manner. Then **have participants repeat** the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

4. Unloading

4. **Explain and demonstrate** the unloading procedure for your participant's pistol in a clear, simple step-by-step manner. Then **have participants repeat** the steps back to you as you repeat the demonstration.

J. Pistol Operation Practical Exercise

J. Review the three fundamental gun safety rules. **Have participants explain and demonstrate** the correct loading, cocking, uncocking, and unloading procedures for the pistol used in this orientation.

It is important that participants explain what they are doing during the demonstration. This will indicate they have learned the steps correctly, and help to reinforce the skills they are performing.

Observe participants closely. **Be sure** all safety rules are followed. **Offer** guidance, direction, encouragement, and positive feedback as appropriate.

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K. Conclude Lesson

1. Summary

1. Highlight most important points of this lesson:

a. State the goal of the orientation.

b. Name the three fundamental NRA rules of safe gun handling.

c. Name the three major components of a pistol and describe their function.

d. Safely handle a specific pistol model in a safe manner.

2. Questions

2. **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. **Answer** questions.

3. Preview

3. **Preview** next lesson briefly.

Lesson II. Introduction to Ammunition and the Fundamentals of Pistol Shooting

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify the three items they need to check to determine the proper ammunition for their pistol.
2. Identify and define the three major types of cartridge malfunctions and explain how to respond safely when they occur.
3. Determine their dominant eye.
4. Explain the fundamentals of pistol shooting and demonstrate them from the benchrest position.

LENGTH: 45 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS: Pistol, pistol owner's manual, dummy ammunition, empty cartridge box for the pistol being used, fired case for the pistol being used, sighting device (if available), NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure. (**NOTE:** No live ammunition is to be used during this lesson. Dummy ammunition must be visually distinguishable from live ammunition.)

REFERENCES: NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, Chapters 8-11.

Content

A. Introduce Lesson

Instructional Notes

A. State learning objectives for this lesson.

B. Pistol Ammunition

1. Ammunition compatibility

1. **Turn** with participants to the *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure. **Have them read** the paragraph discussing the rule, "Use only the correct ammunition for your gun."

Ask participants: How do you know what type of ammunition should be used for a particular gun? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that most firearms have the ammunition type stamped on the gun itself.

Following the NRA gun safety rules, **show** participants the ammunition designation on the pistol being used for this orientation.

Ask participants: How do you know whether the ammunition you have is the correct type for your gun? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that the ammunition type is identified on the box, and sometimes on the cartridge as well.

Show participants the ammunition designation on an empty cartridge box, and on a fired case for the pistol used for this orientation.

Ask participants: What three items should you check to be sure that you are using the correct ammunition for your gun? **Review** that the gun, the ammunition box, and the cartridge should be checked to make sure the ammunition is compatible with your gun.

Note, if appropriate, the ammunition with a different designation may be compatible with the participant's gun, e.g., .38 Special ammunition may be fired in .357 Magnum revolvers. **Refer** to the pistol's owner's

manual for specific recommendations endorsed by the manufacturer.

2. Cartridge malfunctions

2. **Have participants read** the definitions of the three cartridge malfunction types aloud in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Have participants read** the next two paragraphs to themselves.

a. Misfire

a. **Ask** participants: What is a misfire? **Review** the definition as stated in the handbook.

b. Hangfire

b. **Ask** participants: What is a hangfire? **Review** the definition as stated in the handbook.

Ask participants: If a cartridge fails to fire immediately, what action should be taken? **Discuss** responses briefly. Explain that it will not be known at first whether the problem is a misfire or a hangfire. Since the problem may be a hangfire, you should wait at least 30 seconds while keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction. After that time, the pistol may be unloaded carefully.

c. Squib load

c. **Ask** participants: What is a squib load? **Review** the definition as stated in the handbook.

Ask participants: What may indicate that a squib load may have been fired? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that, if anything unusual is noticed when a shot is fired, such as a difference in recoil or noise, a squib load may have been fired, and you should stop firing immediately. Squib loads can result in the bullet failing to exit the barrel. If the bullet is lodged in the barrel, the firing of another shot could cause serious injury or damage.

Ask participants, what action should be taken if a squib load is suspected? **Discuss** responses briefly. **Explain** that you must point the gun in a safe direction, unload it, and check the chamber to be sure that it is empty. Then, with the gun pointed in a safe direction and the action open, you must carefully run a cleaning rod through the barrel to be sure a bullet is not stuck in the barrel. If the barrel is obstructed, the gun must not be fired until the barrel has been cleared.

C. Determining the Dominant Eye

C. Explain to participants that each individual has a dominant eye: the eye that determines the direction a person is looking. **Note** that the dominant eye is used to aim the pistol, so each participant must determine his or her dominant eye before learning the fundamentals of pistol shooting.

Have participants perform a dominant eye exercise such as the example in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Have participants note** which of their eyes is dominant.

Note that right-handed participants with a right dominant eye should grip the pistol on the right side. Left-handed participants with a left dominant eye should grip the pistol on the left.

If a participant is cross-dominant (i.e., is right-handed with a left dominant eye, or vice versa), and if the participant plans to use the pistol for recreational or competitive shooting in which the one-handed stance is used, **have the participant try** gripping the pistol on the same side as the dominant eye during the grip exercise below. If the participant feels more comfortable using the hand opposite the dominant eye, he or she may do so, but should use the dominant eye to aim the pistol.

D. Position

D. Ask participants what we mean by “position.”

Explain that a *position* is the platform from which all the shooting fundamentals are executed.

A position should be *comfortable, balanced, consistent, supported naturally, and aligned with the target* (NRA).

1. Benchrest position

Explain that the *benchrest position* is the position that will be taught in this course. **Explain** and **demonstrate** the elements of the benchrest position, (without a pistol) as described in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook:

- The position should be comfortable, balanced, relaxed and properly aligned with target.
- Sit behind the bench or table facing the target.
- The feet should be flat on the ground.
- Both arms are extended fully forward.
- The back should be straight or leaning slightly forward.
- The wrists are supported by sandbags.
- The head is fully erect. If necessary, raise the sandbags to allow the head to be erect.

Have participants practice the benchrest position without a pistol and describe the elements as they get into position.

Observe participants to ensure that they assume the position properly, offer guidance and positive feedback as appropriate.

Ask participants what we mean by “grip.”

E. Grip

Explain that *grip* refers to the manner in which the pistol is held in the hand. A proper and consistent grip is essential to accurate shooting. Together, grip and position are the foundations that allow proper execution of the shooting fundamentals.

1. *Assuming a proper grip*

Explain and demonstrate the steps to attain a proper two-handed grip.

- While keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction, and with the trigger finger off the trigger, use the non-shooting hand (“weak hand”) to place the pistol in the shooting hand (“strong hand”).
- Fit the “V” formed by the thumb and index finger of the shooting hand as high as possible on the pistol backstrap.
- Grip the pistol using the base of the thumb and the lower three fingers of the shooting hand. The pressure of the grip should be directed straight to the rear.
- Hold the pistol firmly, but without exerting so much pressure that the hand shakes.
- Keep your finger off the trigger. It should lie along the side of the frame, outside of the trigger guard.
- The thumb should lie relaxed on the other side of the frame.
- Place the heel of the non-shooting hand against the heel of the shooting hand. With a revolver, place the thumb of the non-shooting hand on the thumb of the shooting hand, and firmly wrap the fingers of the non-shooting hand around the fingers of the shooting hand. With a semi-automatic pistol, place the weak-hand thumb forward of and below the strong-hand thumb before wrapping the fingers of the non-shooting hand around the fingers of the shooting hand.

With students using semiautomatic pistols, be sure their thumbs are out of the path of the recoiling slide.

Emphasize that uniformity is the most important aspect of the grip. The shooter should grip the pistol the same way every time.

Have participants assume the benchrest position and practice the steps to assume a proper grip. Have participants describe each step as they perform it.

Observe participants to ensure that they perform the steps correctly and in the proper sequence, and that all safety rules are followed.

E. Fundamentals of Pistol Shooting

Ask participants what the word “*fundamental*” means to them and how does it apply in the context of learning a skill.

Explain that *fundamental* means *basic* or *essential*. *Fundamentals* are the essential elements of performing a skill — in the case of shooting the elements of firing a shot. They are important for beginners and experienced shooters alike, because they must be performed each time a shot is fired.

Discuss the fundamentals of pistol shooting and why they are important. The fundamentals should be performed every time a person fires a shot from any position. *Position* and *grip* are the platform from which the fundamentals are executed.

The five fundamentals of pistol shooting are *aiming*, *hold control*, *breath control*, *trigger control* and *follow-through*.

1. *Aiming*

Explain that *Aiming* is the process of achieving the proper relationship between the target, the front sight and the rear sight. Aiming consists of two components: *sight alignment* and *sight picture*.

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Lesson II

a. sight alignment

Ask participants what is meant by *sight alignment*.

Explain that *sight alignment* refers to the proper relationship of the pistol's front and rear sights.

- With typical post-and-notch sights found on most pistols, the top of the front sight is even with the top of the rear sight, and the post is centered in the notch, with equal amounts of light on both sides.
- Proper sight alignment is the key to accurate shooting. Any misalignment of the eye, the front sight or the rear sight, introduces an angular error that multiplies with distance.

b. sight picture

Ask participants what we mean by *sight picture*.

Explain that *sight picture* refers to the proper positioning of the aligned sights on the target.

- *Sight picture* is obtained by placing properly aligned sights into their proper relationship with the target.
- The eye can only focus on one object at a time. The pistol shooter should concentrate on the front sight, which will appear sharp and clear, while the rear sight and the target will appear less sharp or blurred.

Ensure the participants are made aware that it is best to keep both eyes open while aiming, as more light is available to the eyes, depth perception is better, and facial contortions and muscle tension are eliminated. **Note:** a small piece of frosted tape on the inside of the lens of the shooting glasses in front of the non-shooting eye can relieve eye strain, if evident.

2. *Breath control*

Ask participants why *breath control* is important in shooting.

Explain that body movement while breathing can produce gun movement that impairs shooting. For maximum accuracy, the shooter uses *breath control* to minimize such movement.

- To minimize body movement, take a breath before each shot, let enough air out to be comfortable, and stop breathing while firing the shot.
- Holding the breath too long can result in muscle tremors. If this occurs, the trigger finger should be removed from the trigger, the gun should be lowered (while pointed in a safe direction). Relax, take a few breaths, and then begin the firing cycle again.

3. *Hold control*

Ask what *hold control* refers to.

Explain that *hold control* allows the shooter to maintain the proper sight picture and sight alignment during the process of firing the shot.

a. grip

An important factor in hold control is the way in which the pistol is gripped.

Demonstrate the proper method of assuming a proper firing grip, following the description in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook.

b. arc of movement

Explain that it is impossible to hold the pistol in a shooting position without some motion; this is called the “arc of movement.” The shooter should try to maintain proper sight alignment and sight picture while minimizing the arc of movement. With practice, the arc of movement will decrease.

4. *Trigger control*

Explain that *trigger control* refers to the proper method of activating the trigger to minimize movement that can misalign the sights.

Demonstrate the elements of proper trigger control.

- The index finger is placed so that the trigger is halfway between the tip of the finger and the first joint.
- The trigger is squeezed straight to the rear in a smooth, continuous manner without disturbing sight alignment. Pressure should be applied evenly, not in a start-and-stop manner.
- The shooter should not be able to predict when the gun will fire. Each shot should come as a surprise.
- Trigger squeeze and sight alignment must be done simultaneously while maintaining a minimum arc of movement.

Have participants practice proper trigger control using an empty pistol and describe what they are doing while they are squeezing the trigger. (Refer to the pistol's owner's manual to ensure dry firing is acceptable. If not, use dummy ammunition or "snap caps" as appropriate).

5. *Follow-through*

Explain that *follow-through* is the continuation of everything that was being done at the time the shot was fired. Follow-through enables the shooter to integrate, maintain and continue all the shooting fundamentals before, during and immediately after firing the shot.

Relate the importance of follow-through to other sports such as golf, baseball, etc.

6. *The two most important fundamentals!*

Ask participants which of the fundamentals are the most important. Explain that ***aiming*** and ***trigger control*** are the two most important fundamentals. The other fundamentals all contribute to achieving these.

F. Conclude Lesson

1. Summary

1. **Highlight the most important points of this lesson:**

a. The three items need to be checked to make sure you are using the correct ammunition for your gun?

b. What are the three major types of cartridge malfunctions? What should you do if they occur?

c. Which of your eyes is dominant? What is the dominant eye used for in shooting?

d. What are the five fundamentals of pistol shooting? Which are the two most important ones?

2. Questions

2. **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. **Answer** questions.

3. Preview

3. **Preview** next lesson briefly.



Lesson III. Introduction to Pistol Shooting from the Benchrest Position

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the three range commands, the procedures to be followed if one has a problem with a firearm or drops ammunition, and any applicable range rules which apply to the facility being used.
2. Discuss and explain the eight NRA gun safety rules to be followed when shooting and storing a pistol.
3. Safely shoot a target from the benchrest position using the five fundamentals of pistol shooting.

LENGTH: 60 minutes

FACILITY: Range

TRAINING AIDS: Pistol, pistol owner's manual, ammunition, hearing and eye protection, blank targets, sandbags, benchrests (tables), chairs, small screwdriver (for sight adjustments), the *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure.

REFERENCES: The *NRA Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, Chapters 9-11.

Content

A. Introduce Lesson

B. Range Safety and Shooting Facility Orientation

1. Range layout

Instructional Notes

A. State learning objectives for the current lesson.

1. **Discuss** the layout of the range: the location of the firing points, firing line, ready area, etc. **Explain** the activities that are permitted in each area.

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Lesson III

2. Range personnel

2. **Introduce** participants to the range personnel, e.g., the chief range officer, other range officers, etc., and describe their functions.

3. Range commands and procedures

3. **Name** the three basic range commands and **explain** what they mean:

a. "Load"

a. **Explain** that shooters may load their pistols only after this command has been given. **Emphasize** that this command authorizes shooters to load their pistols, and nothing more. Shooters must keep the gun pointed in a safe direction throughout the loading process and keep their fingers off the trigger.

b. "Commence firing"

b. **Explain** that, after this command has been given, shooters may fire their pistols when they are ready. **Emphasize** that shooters are not required to begin firing immediately.

c. "Cease firing"

c. **Explain** that, when this command is given, shooters must stop shooting immediately, remove their fingers from the triggers, keep their guns pointed in a safe direction, and await further instructions from the range officer. These instructions may include such commands as, "Unload . . . Cylinders open . . . Magazines out . . . Slides back . . . Guns on the bench."

Emphasize that the "cease firing" command may be used during normal range operation or in an emergency situation. **Anyone** observing an unsafe situation may use the "cease firing" command.

d. Problem with firearm

d. **Explain** that a shooter who has any type of problem with the pistol must take the index finger off the trigger, keep the gun pointed in a safe direction, and raise his or her hand for assistance.

e. Dropped ammunition

e. Ammunition that falls to the ground must remain on the ground until it may be safely retrieved by someone who is not handling a firearm (the instructor or another participant under the instructor's direction).

Review by asking participants: What is the meaning of the command, "Load"? "Commence firing"? "Cease firing"? Who may issue the "cease firing" command? What procedures should be followed by a shooter who is experiencing a problem with a pistol? What should you do if you accidentally drop ammunition?

4. Range rules

4. **Explain and discuss** the range rules for the range you are using.

C. Rules for Safe Shooting

1. Three fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling.

1. **Review** the three fundamental NRA rules for safe gun handling by asking participants to state them.

2. NRA rules for using and storing a gun

2. Turn with participants to the rules for using and storing guns in the NRA *Gun Safety Rules* brochure. **Have participants read** the first rule aloud, and then **have them read** the rest of the accompanying paragraph to themselves. **Ask** participants to explain the importance of the first rule. **Repeat** this procedure for each of the remaining rules.

a. *Know your target and what is beyond.*

b. *Be sure the gun is safe to operate.*

c. *Know how to use the gun safely.*

d. *Use only the correct ammunition for your gun.*

e. *Wear hearing and eye protection as appropriate.*

f. *Never use alcohol or drugs before or while shooting.*

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Lesson III

g. *Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.*

h. *Be aware that certain types of guns and many shooting situations require additional safety precautions.*

D. Preparation for Shooting Exercises

D. Prior to the range session, **inspect** the participant's pistol for overall appearance, fit of parts, function, and operation. If it is a new-in-the-box pistol, consult the owner's manual to determine if it should be cleaned before shooting. If there is any question concerning whether or not the pistol is safe to shoot, **have it checked** by a reputable gunsmith before using it in the orientation.

Inspect the ammunition to be used during the shooting exercises to be sure it is clean, free of obvious defects, and compatible with the gun. **Keep** the ammunition under your control. If there is any question concerning whether or not the ammunition is safe to use in the participant's pistol, **check** with a reputable gunsmith before using it in the orientation.

Be sure that you and participants are wearing hearing and eye protection before entering the range. **Prepare** the firing point with the necessary equipment: a benchrest, chair, sandbags, and the pistol. **Have** a copy of the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook and the owner's manual for your participant's pistol handy for reference.

Set a relatively large blank target (e.g., the back of an NRA 50-foot pistol target or a large paper plate) approximately fifteen feet in front of the firing line.

In the case of multiple participants, there should be one NRA instructor per firing

point, one pistol per firing point, and no more than two participants per firing point. **Be sure to increase range time proportionately if there are two participants at a firing point.**

Use the “coach/pupil” method with multiple participants: while one participant (the “pupil”) shoots, **involve** the other participant (the “coach”) in the learning process by guiding him or her to watch the “pupil” and offer feedback under your direction.

E. Shooting from the Benchrest Position

E. **Instruct** participants using the NRA eight-step method for teaching beginning pistol shooters.

At each step, **observe** participant closely. **Be sure** all safety rules are followed. **Offer** guidance, direction, and positive feedback as appropriate.

1. Study benchrest position

1. **Review** the details of the benchrest position and **demonstrate** the position for participants.

2. Practice position without pistol

2. **Direct** one participant to practice what he or she has just heard and seen. The gun is not yet used so the participant can concentrate totally on the position of the body.

3. Practice position with pistol

3. **Add** the pistol once the participant has achieved the correct body position. **Review** the elements of a correct grip and **be sure** the participant grips the pistol properly. If the participant’s pistol is a semi-automatic, **be sure** the participant keeps the thumbs out of the path of the recoiling slide. The arms should be fully extended and the sights held in front of the dominant eye.

Lesson III

4. Align position with target

4. **Be sure** the participant is positioned so the gun points naturally at the center of the target. **Check** natural aiming area by having participant lower eyes away from the sights momentarily, and then look back at the sight picture. The aligned sights should still be on target. Have the participant adjust the position, if necessary.

5. Dry fire exercise using the fundamentals of pistol shooting

5. **Direct** participant to practice the fundamentals of pistol shooting by dry firing the pistol. (**Consult** the pistol's owner's manual to see whether dry firing is approved by the manufacturer. If not, **use** dummy ammunition or "snap caps" to protect the pistol from damage.) For double-action pistols, **have participants cock** the hammer for each shot (if possible).

a. Aiming

Review the five fundamentals. **Emphasize** focus on the front sight and the importance of squeezing the trigger while maintaining proper sight alignment. After the participant has demonstrated reasonable skill and confidence in dry firing the pistol, **move on** to the next step.

b. Hold control

c. Breath control

d. Trigger control

e. Follow-through

6. Live fire exercises

6. Conduct single-shot and multiple shot live-fire exercises as follows:

a. Single-shot exercise

a. **Supply** participant with one cartridge at a time. **Direct** participant to "load." When the participant is ready, **direct** him or her to "commence firing." Then **instruct** participant to "cease firing" and unload. **Have participant fire** five shots on the targets.

Observe participant closely. **Watch** the gun and shooter, not the target. **Be sure** all safety rules are followed. **Offer** guidance, direction, and positive feedback as appropriate. **Involve** the other participant (the “coach”) in the learning process by guiding him or her to watch the “pupil” and offer feedback under your direction.

Repeat the single-shot exercise at least once for a total of 10 shots.

b. Five-shot exercise

b. **Supply** participants with five cartridges at a time. **Direct** participant to “load.” When the participant is ready, **direct** him or her to “commence firing.” **Be sure** the participant rests between shots. After the five shots have been fired, **instruct** participant to “cease firing” and unload.

Repeat the multiple-shot exercise until your student is able to shoot “groups” anywhere on the target. **Observe**, **offer** feedback, and **involve** the other participant as in the single-shot exercise.

7. Adjust sights

7. **Explain** the rule for adjusting sights: “Move the rear sight in the same direction that the hits on the target should move.” **Direct** participant to make sight adjustments as necessary, if reasonable groups were attained and if the gun has adjustable sights.

8. Resume live fire exercises

8. **Repeat** the multi-shot exercise until your student has been able to shoot at least three, five-shot groups within a 9-inch diameter circle in the middle of the target. If you are using the coach/pupil method, **have participants reverse roles and repeat** the eight steps.

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Lesson III

F. Two-Handed Standing Position

F. Have participants who are shooting well with tight groups fire from the two-handed standing position as described in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting Handbook*.

G. Review of Shooting Practice

G. Ask participants what they learned from the day's shooting practice. **Discuss** responses briefly. **Supplement** their comments with positive feedback as appropriate.

H. Conclude Lesson

1. Summary

1. Highlight the most important points of this lesson.

a. What are the three basic range commands? What do they mean?

b. What are the eight NRA safety rules for using and storing a gun?

c. What have you learned from your practice of the five fundamentals of pistol shooting?

2. Questions

2. Ask participants what questions they have about this lesson. Answer questions.

3. Preview

3. Preview next lesson briefly.

Lesson IV. Introduction to Pistol Cleaning, Storage, and Training Opportunities

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: As a result of their participation in this training session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify materials needed to clean a pistol.
2. Outline the three safety guidelines to be followed when cleaning a pistol.
3. Explain and demonstrate how to clean a pistol safely.
4. Name the NRA rule for safe firearm storage, and discuss options for applying this rule when storing a pistol.
5. Discuss the three hygienic guidelines following exposure to airborne particulates and cleaning solvent residue.
6. Discuss the benefits of receiving additional pistol training through the NRA Basic Firearm Training Program.

LENGTH: 30 minutes

FACILITY: Classroom or Range

TRAINING AIDS: Pistol, pistol owner's manual, pistol cleaning equipment, lockable pistol case, the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure, *NRA Member Guide*, *NRA Basic Firearm Training Program* brochure.

REFERENCES: NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook, Chapters 15-17 and Appendix C.

Content

A. Introduce Lesson

Instructional Notes

A. State learning objectives for the current lesson.

NRA *FIRST STEPS* PISTOL ORIENTATION
Lesson IV

B. Cleaning a Pistol

1. Importance of cleaning
 1. **Turn** with participants to the *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochures. **Have participants review** the rule, "Be sure the gun is safe to operate" and the paragraph that follows. **Discuss** the importance of regular cleaning and proper storage as part of a gun's general upkeep as stated in the brochure. Gun should be cleaned after every shooting session.
2. Materials
 - a. Cloth patches
 - b. Cleaning rod
 - c. Soft cloth
 - d. Cleaning rod attachments (tips and bore brush)
 - e. Small brush
 - f. Bore cleaner
 - g. Gun oil
 2. **Display** the materials necessary to clean a pistol. **Identify** each of the items listed at left, and **explain** their use in cleaning a pistol.

Have participants note manufacturers' guidelines for the use of gun cleaning products.
3. Safety guidelines
 - a. Ammunition must not be present in the area
 - b. The gun must be unloaded
 - c. The action must be open
 3. **Ask** participants: Based on our discussions of gun safety, what are some of the safety guidelines you think should be followed when cleaning a pistol? **Discuss** responses briefly. When cleaning a pistol, the guidelines listed at left must be followed.
4. Cleaning procedure
 4. **Explain** and **demonstrate** the proper use of the components in a gun cleaning kit to clean the pistol used in the orientation. Show them how to use daylight, a bore scope, or white piece of paper to examine

the bore for remaining powder, lead or copper residue.

Follow the cleaning guidelines outlined in the NRA *Guide to the Basics of Pistol Shooting* handbook. **Note** that the pistol bore should be cleaned from the breech end whenever possible.

Most semi-automatic pistols must be partially disassembled prior to cleaning. **Consult** the pistol's owner's manual for disassembly/reassembly directions and any recommendations participants have regarding cleaning. Show how to accomplish this.

Have the students demonstrate that they know and can perform each step of the cleaning procedure using the items in a cleaning kit on the gun used in the orientation.

C. Hygienic Guidelines Following Exposure to Airborne Particulate Lead or Cleaning Solvent Residue

1. Refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, applying makeup, or otherwise placing your hands and/or fingers near your face while on the range or while cleaning a gun.

2. After leaving the range or cleaning a gun, wash your hands and face thoroughly before eating, drinking, smoking, applying makeup, or otherwise placing your hands and/or fingers near your face.

3. Change and wash clothing after a shooting or gun cleaning session so that

C. **Ask** participants: What hygienic practices should be followed during and after a shooting or gun cleaning session? **Discuss** responses briefly.

Explain the three hygienic guidelines at left. **Note** that they should be practiced by individuals who were present at the range even if they did not participate in the shooting session.

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Lesson IV

exposure to airborne particulates or solvent residue may be further minimized.

D. Storing a Pistol

1. NRA rule for safe firearm storage

1. **Turn** with participants to the *NRA Gun Safety Rules* brochure. **Have participants review** the rule, "Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons" and the paragraph that follows. **Note** that there is no universally applicable method for applying this rule, and that storage options must take into account each individual's particular situation.

2. Options for safe pistol storage

2. **Discuss** some of the options available for pistol storage, such as gun cases, cabinets, safes, etc. **Show** participants a lockable pistol case as an example of a storage device.

Note that ammunition should generally be stored separately from guns, and should likewise be stored so that it is inaccessible to unauthorized persons. **Note** also that there may be state or local laws governing the storage of guns and ammunition.

E. The "Next Step": Additional Pistol Shooting Activities

1. The NRA Basic Firearm Training Program

a. NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course

a. NRA Personal Protection Course

1. **Distribute** copies of the *NRA Basic Firearm Training Program* brochure.

Discuss the advantages of receiving additional pistol training in an NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course or NRA Personal Protection Courses. **Provide** participants with a schedule of upcoming NRA Basic Courses in the area, and **encourage** them to attend.

2. Additional NRA training opportunities

2. **Inform** participants that the NRA has developed additional pistol

training opportunities, including advanced marksmanship clinics for competitive shooters and an advanced level personal protection course. **Note** that the NRA also has special programs available for young shooters.

3. The National Rifle Association

3. **Discuss** the advantages of NRA membership and review several of the many programs available to the shooters from the NRA, and **invite** them to join.

4. Other shooting activities

4. **Review** the Winchester/NRA Marksmanship Qualification Program and distribute the program booklets.

Discuss local activities in which participants may practice and develop their shooting skills after they receive additional training. Refer participants to your NRA-affiliated state association, NRA-affiliated shooting clubs, and local shooting ranges.

F. Conclude Lesson

1. Summary

1. Highlight the most important points of this lesson:

a. What are the materials needed to clean a pistol?

b. What three safety guidelines must be followed when cleaning a pistol?

c. What did you learn from the pistol cleaning exercise?

d. What three hygienic guidelines should be followed after exposure to airborne particulates or cleaning solvent residue?

e. What is the NRA rule for safe storage of a gun?

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Lesson IV

f. What additional pistol training opportunities are available from the National Rifle Association?

2. Questions

2. **Ask** participants what questions they have about this lesson. **Answer** questions.

G. Orientation Review

G. Ask participants what questions they have about anything that was covered during the orientation. **Answer** questions.

H. Orientation Certificates

H. Distribute completed NRA *FIRST Steps* Pistol Orientation Certificates to qualified participants. **Congratulate** them on their accomplishments, and **invite** them to attend your next NRA Basic Pistol Shooting Course or NRA Personal Protection Course.

I. Thank you

I. A special thanks needs to go to the NRA Foundation and its generous donors for helping make this course possible by their donations.

Thank participants for their interest in firearm education and for their participation in the training programs of the National Rifle Association.

Attention NRA Certified Trainers . . . Did you know there is an NRA Practical Rocker available for your students?

The NRA Practical Rocker has become part of the basic student package which NRA Certified Instructors order for their students. It can be awarded to anyone who masters the four basic marksmanship skills that are taught during the NRA Basic Firearm Training Courses.

1. The student will need to demonstrate safe gun handling at all times, both on and off the range. This includes safely unloading and loading the firearm, safely shooting the firearm, and safely cleaning the firearm while under the supervision of an NRA Trainer.

2. The student will demonstrate how to shoot groups. Pistol: From a supported position at a distance of 15 feet, the student must shoot three, five-shot groups each of which can be covered by a circle nine inches in a diameter, anywhere on the blank target.
3. The student will demonstrate how to zero the firearm. From a supported position at 15 feet, the student must shoot a five-shot group on a bullseye target, determine the sight adjustment needed to move the group to center, make the sight change, and shoot a confirming group. If necessary the adjustment may be refined and another confirmation group shot. (*Note: If a student's pistol has fixed sights, use off-set aim to correct the grouping.*)
4. The student will demonstrate how to safely clean the firearm.

If you have any questions about the new NRA Practical Rucker call the NRA National Instructor Trainer, NRA Training Department, (703) 267-1423.

