



ATTORNEY-
GENERAL'S
DEPARTMENT

National Firearms Safety Code



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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this booklet is to encourage **SAFE FIREARM HANDLING PROCEDURES AND SAFE SHOOTING PRACTICES**.

You may be new to the sport of shooting, you may be an old hand. You may be a rifle, shotgun, air rifle or handgun shooter, it does not matter.

All of the **NATIONAL FIREARM SAFETY CODE PRINCIPLES and ALL OF THE SAFE HANDLING PROCEDURES** discussed in this booklet will remain the same for whatever type of firearm you intend to use.

If you remember what you learn from this booklet and put into practice the National Firearms Safety Code then you should safely enjoy your chosen type of shooting.

FIREARMS ACCIDENTS

One of the main objectives of firearms safety training is to reduce the incidence of firearm accidents. In reality, there are few incidents that can be identified as a firearms ACCIDENT. In almost every case at least one principle of the NATIONAL FIREARMS SAFETY CODE will have been breached.

It is essential that you, the firearms owner/user, are aware of YOUR responsibilities to:

- **YOURSELF**
- **YOUR FAMILY**
- **FELLOW SHOOTERS**
- **AND TO THE COMMUNITY**



THE NATIONAL FIREARMS SAFETY CODE

1. Treat every firearm as if it is loaded.
2. Your firearm is your responsibility.
3. Always ensure your firing zone is clear and identify your target beyond all doubt.
4. Never point a firearm at or near another person.
5. Never load a firearm until you are ready to shoot.
6. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
7. When you have finished shooting remove the magazine (if fitted), unload and then check that the chamber is empty.
8. Make sure that all firearms are transported securely to prevent misuse or theft.
9. Never allow unauthorised access to your firearm(s) or ammunition.
10. Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms.
11. Encourage safe and responsible handling of firearms in the field, on the range, and within the community.
12. Never mix shooting with alcohol or drugs.
13. Understand the operation of your firearm, keep it in good repair, and always use the correct ammunition.
14. Never store firearms and ammunition together. Ensure they are safely locked away when not in use.
15. Be familiar with the legal requirements for safe storage, firearms ownership, possession and use in your state or territory, or in the state or territory you are visiting.
16. Dispose of unwanted firearms lawfully. Surrender them to the police or sell them to or through a licensed dealer.

OBSERVE THE CODE: INSIST OTHERS DO THE SAME



**LEARN
PRACTICE
TEACH AND PROMOTE
THE NATIONAL FIREARMS SAFETY CODE**

NATIONAL FIREARMS SAFETY CODE EXPLAINED

Now that you have some knowledge of the National Firearms Safety Code, let's go over the Code Principles and explain it in a little more detail.

1. Treat every firearm as if it is loaded.

Check every firearm yourself. DO NOT take the word of another person that a firearm is unloaded. Pass or accept only open and unloaded firearms. Only accept or pass a firearm to another person if the breech is open and all ammunition has been removed from the firearm.

Get to know your firearm; thoroughly learn the way it works; what action to take in case of a jam or malfunction; how to tell if it is loaded or unloaded; how to remove the magazine where possible and how to care for your firearm correctly.

Always keep your finger off the trigger and keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction; be muzzle conscious. If you do not know how to open a firearm **LEAVE IT ALONE.**

When handing a firearm to another person remember the following points -

- point the muzzle in a safe direction
- open the bolt or action
- check that the breech is empty
- check that the magazine has been removed and is empty

REMEMBER: NEVER LEAVE FIREARMS LOADED

Every year people (often children) are injured or killed when firearms are left loaded. Remember to unload your firearm and remove all rounds or cartridges from the breech or magazine when you are not using it.



TREAT ALL FIREARMS AS IF THEY ARE LOADED

SPECIAL CARE is required when closing, cocking, taking off the safety catch, uncocking or opening a loaded firearm. Special care is required when using the action to unload live ammunition from a firearm. These are danger times when a firearm may discharge accidentally and without warning.

2. Your firearm is your responsibility.

If you own/use a firearm you must comply with the requirements of the firearms legislation in your State or Territory. You are both legally and morally responsible for your firearm.

Responsible ownership and use of a firearm can:

- Prevent you being responsible for an accident with your firearm.
- Prevent the prospect of you being subject to civil and/or criminal charges.
- Prevent the possible loss of life through the misuse of your firearm.
- Prevent the illegal use of your firearm.

Remember: You are responsible for your firearm under all circumstances. You should not confine yourself to doing the right thing and obeying the law simply because of the risk of prosecution if you do not. You should comply with and promote the National Firearms Safety Code because **it is the right thing to do.**

3. Always ensure your firing zone is clear and identify your target beyond all doubt.

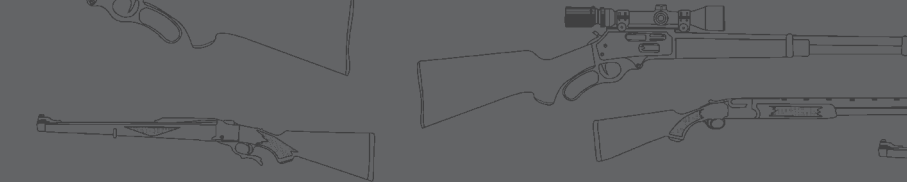
4. Never point a firearm at or near another person.

Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction.

WHAT IS A SAFE DIRECTION?

Many theories abound on this subject, all of them most likely correct, however the simple answer is that **a safe direction depends on where you are and what you are doing.** Remember bullets can kill having passed through a wall, the ceiling or a car door.

Do not develop bad habits. Concentrate on the task at hand. Do not daydream when handling firearms.



Never lean your firearms against a vehicle or put them in a place where they could slide or fall causing an unintentional discharge of the firearm.

When removing a firearm from a vehicle or boat ensure that it is unloaded and be careful to remove the firearm butt first: **NEVER REMOVE A FIREARM MUZZLE FIRST**. Remember to ensure the muzzle does not point at you or anyone else.

BE MUZZLE CONSCIOUS.

IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEHIND IT

Make sure of your target before firing. You should be certain that what you see is your target.

DO NOT FIRE AT MOVEMENT ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT COLOUR ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT SOUND ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT SHAPE ONLY

If in doubt **DO NOT SHOOT.**

It is not easy to see clearly early in the morning or late in the evening. Be sure the object at which you are aiming can be clearly identified and that it is in full view before you shoot.

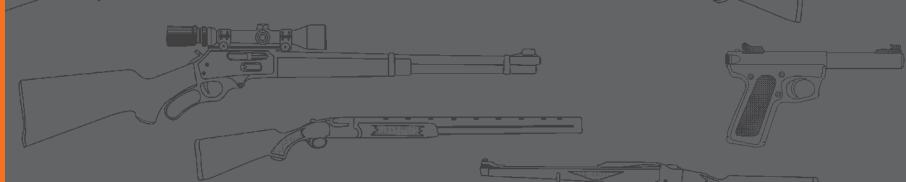
WHAT IS BEHIND YOUR TARGET?

What will happen if you miss the target or the projectile passes through the target? What MIGHT you hit between you and your target? The firing zone is not only the area between you and your target, but also the area beyond the target which is still within the extreme range of your firearm.

The effective danger range for projectiles, may generally be:

■ 22 rimfire	1500 metres (1.5 kilometres)
■ 303	3600 metres (3.6 kilometres)
■ 308	4050 metres 4.0 Kilometres
■ Air rifle	150 metres
■ Shotgun	# 6 shot 250 metres
■ BB shot	450 metres

Check your firing zone with special care when shooting at birds in flight.



You should remember that when using a shotgun, pellets spread further over long distances and therefore your firing zone will increase. Also remember when shooting at moving targets the danger area will increase because your target is moving. Be particularly aware of the position of other shooters who may be nearby.

It is essential that you ensure that your sights are correctly aligned, especially when using a telescopic sight. If your sights are not correctly aligned then you may miss your target and increase the chance of hitting something that you did not intend to hit.

NEVER FIRE AT HARD SURFACES OR WATER

Consider the area in which you are shooting. Could a ricochet occur? A ricochet will almost certainly result from shooting at water or smooth flat surfaces and rocks.

Remember that when a ricochet occurs you have lost control of where the projectile will finish up, resulting in possible injury to another person or damage to property.

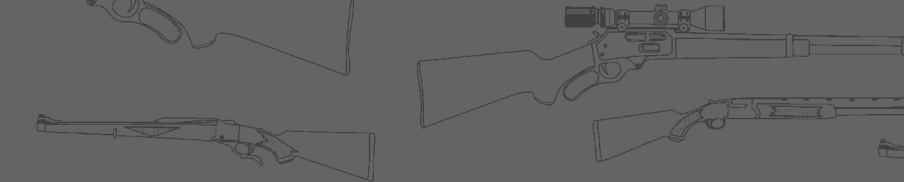
Be especially careful when shooting with an air rifle. Air rifles are very prone to ricochet and should be treated with the utmost caution because of the slow velocity of the projectile fired. Rimfire and centrefire rifle projectiles are prone to ricochet as they lose velocity at the end of their travel, which as we have already seen can be some considerable distance.

When shooting with a shotgun your chances of a ricochet are multiplied by the number of pellets in the cartridge that you are using. It takes only one pellet to cause serious injury or death. Be particularly aware of this if you are shooting over water or over hard flat surfaces.

5. Never load a firearm until you are ready to shoot.

NEVER TAKE LOADED FIREARMS INTO THE CAR, THE HOME OR THE CAMP.

Many people have been injured or killed having broken this rule. Before entering a car, home or camp unload your firearm. Ensure that the action is open and there is no ammunition in the breech or the magazine. Pay particular attention to tubular or rotary magazines to ensure that all rounds are removed.



IN THE FIELD

This is a very important area for novice shooters. It is essential that you understand the basic principles that apply to using firearms in the field.

In the field firearms should be carried unloaded with the action open, until you are in your shooting area and you are expecting game to be flushed.

Always point your firearm in a safe direction, be aware of your surroundings, and if hunting with companions be especially careful of where you are pointing your muzzle; be aware of where your companions are, especially in thick scrub where you may lose sight of them.

If hunting in a party where shooters are walking line abreast be extremely conscious of the person either side of you. Take a shot only if the target is in front of you or if you are the last shooter on either end of the line and you can turn away from your companions and take a shot in safety. For this type of shooting it is best to accompany people who are experienced shooters.

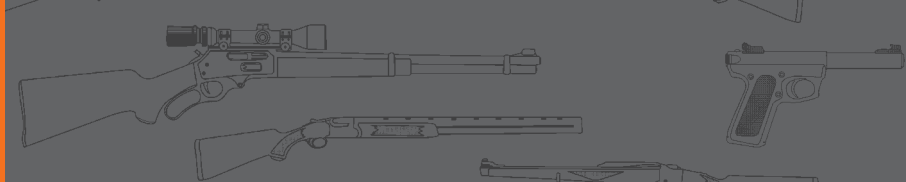
If stalking game with companions and you are walking one behind the other, then the **only person who should have his firearm loaded is the person in the lead.**

If shooting from a boat or punt, keep both hands on your firearm and control the direction of the muzzle at all times. Do not carry LOADED firearms in a boat or punt unless you are ready to shoot.

Barrel obstructions are very common in the field due to objects such as mud, twigs, etc., becoming lodged in the barrel. It pays to check your barrel frequently to ensure that you do not have an obstruction. If you drop your firearm you should immediately check the barrel for obstructions. If a cartridge produces an unusual or soft sound when fired, you should check the barrel for an obstruction before firing again. **ALWAYS** unload the firearm before checking for obstructions.

When shooting in the field do not use set triggers or hair triggers. These are designed for target shooting and really have no place in the field. A simple knock is all it may take to cause an unintentional discharge.

When leaving or returning to a vehicle or camp make sure that your firearm is unloaded. Where possible, the magazine and bolt should be removed.



6. Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.

It is not safe practice to have your finger on the trigger or inside the trigger guard until the moment before you are ready to fire at your target.

Firearms in good order have trigger pressures set at safe levels. Normally the manufacturer sets this before they leave the factory. This does not mean that it is safe to leave your finger on the trigger while carrying your firearm, as other factors or distractions may cause the trigger to be set off accidentally. Trigger adjustments should only be carried out by a competent person, preferably a qualified gunsmith.

Most firearms have a safety catch fitted by the manufacturer. Safety catches have two positions:

i. ON or SAFE

In this position the firearm is restricted from firing in the event of the trigger being accidentally pulled or snagged on a branch when moving through dense vegetation.

ii. OFF or FIRE

When in this position the firearm can be discharged by pulling the trigger.

Most firearms have markings stamped into the metal work or coloured dots to indicate the current status of the safety catch.

NOTE: DO NOT RELY SOLELY ON SAFETY CATCHES - they are a mechanical device and may fail to engage properly or be knocked off.

7. When you have finished shooting remove the magazine (if fitted), unload and then check that the chamber is empty.

On completion of shooting or handling a firearm, you should open the action and remove any live rounds from the chamber. You should make it a habit to check that the chamber is empty. At this stage you should also remove (if possible) or empty the magazine. Not all firearm magazines are removable or easily checked. Magazines may be removable, or fixed (box/hinged floor plate, tubular or some box magazines).

Remember: Your firearm is loaded if the action is open and if a live round is in the chamber or, if the magazine still contains a live round, even if the magazine is not attached to the firearm.

8. Make sure that all firearms are transported securely to prevent misuse or theft.

All firearms should be transported in a carry case or carry bag. All firearms should be unloaded and where applicable, the bolt should be removed.

If possible, firearm carry cases/boxes should be kept out of sight in the vehicle. Vehicles should not be considered to be a secure option in which to store your firearms.

Ammunition should be transported in its box and secured. Ammunition must not be transported in a magazine that can be fitted to a firearm.

When travelling with firearms you should take precautions to minimise the likelihood of unauthorised access or theft. Depending on the circumstances it may be more secure to lock your firearms up within your temporary accommodation (motel room, guestroom) rather than leaving them locked in your car. Give careful thought to how you will secure your firearm before leaving on your trip and take appropriate trigger locks, chains or padlocks with you.

If travelling interstate it is important to remember that each State and Territory has its own firearms legislation. It may be that the regulations pertaining to transporting firearms and ammunition in your State or Territory differ slightly to those in the State or Territory to which you are travelling. It is important to contact the relevant Firearms Registry before travelling interstate.

If travelling by air it is advisable to contact the airline with which you are travelling well before your departure date and find out how they require you to submit your firearms for transport.



9. Never allow unauthorised access to your firearm(s) or ammunition.

FIREARM SAFETY BEGINS AT HOME.

The storage of firearms and ammunition is your responsibility. You must never allow unauthorised persons access to your firearm(s) or ammunition. Your firearm(s) should only be accessed when you are present to ensure safe handling. You must ensure that your firearm(s) cannot be easily stolen.

Safes or other storage containment facilities must be constructed and secured in accordance with your State or Territory regulations.

As a firearm owner/user you are responsible for making absolutely sure that all the safety requirements within the home are carried out.

THINK when putting your firearm away. Do not put **YOUR FAMILY AT RISK**.

Before storing your firearms:

- Make sure both the magazine and chamber are empty.
- Clean the firearm before putting it away.
- If possible remove the bolt and magazine and lock it away separately from the firearm.
- Do not try to remove the action from lever, pump action or self-loading firearms.
- Store firearms and ammunition separately in locked containers or other approved repositories.

REMEMBER YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR FAMILY AND TO OTHERS.

Make sure that all members of your family are aware of what a firearm is, its capacity to kill or injure and **why it should not be touched**.



10. Do not climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms.

Every year shooters are shot (usually with their own firearm) as they attempt to negotiate fences and/or obstacles with loaded firearms.

Before attempting to negotiate a fence or obstacle, unload your firearm.

DO NOT RELY ON SAFETY CATCHES. Safety catches at best supplement the safe handling of firearms.

If attempting to cross a fence alone:

- unload your firearm;
- place it through the fence and lay it on the ground with the muzzle pointing in a **SAFE DIRECTION**. Cross the fence away from your firearm.

If crossing a fence with a friend:

- ensure all firearms are unloaded;
- use the same method as for crossing alone, or hand your unloaded firearm to your companion and then cross the fence, then have your companion hand the firearms to you.

If carried out correctly these two methods of crossing will prevent injury by a firearm. **THINK BEFORE YOU CROSS. UNLOAD THAT FIREARM.**

Correct methods of crossing a fence



Alone



In company



11. Encourage safe and responsible shooting practices in the field, on the range, and within the community.

Those involved with firearms should be ambassadors in the community for current and prospective firearms owners/users.

By exercising and encouraging training in the safe use of firearms by members of the community, clubs and collectors, it is possible to provide a safe environment for all.

Shooting and hunting ethics should be encouraged.

The use of both body and mind is necessary if one is to become proficient in the use of a firearm. It is therefore critical that those involved in the handling and use of firearms gain proficiency in as many aspects relating to them as possible.

Firearms have the potential to fire projectiles for distances far past the target. You should be aware of the capabilities and potential of your firearm. Ensure you are aware of what is around and beyond your target and do not shoot if it is not safe to do so. Refuse to shoot with a person who does not have safe firearm practices.

12. Never mix shooting with alcohol or drugs.

GOOD JUDGEMENT IS THE KEY TO SAFE FIREARMS USE.

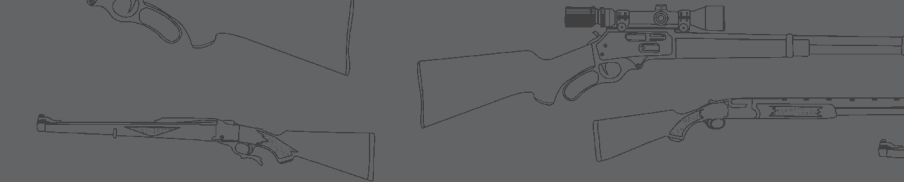
AVOID ALCOHOLIC DRINKS OR DRUGS/MEDICINES WHEN USING FIREARMS

Alcohol and drugs including some legal medicines dull and slow your mental and physical reactions. You may be unaware of this reaction and feel you are in better control than usual, which is extremely dangerous when using firearms. The ability to recognise and react to dangerous situations swiftly and accurately is essential.

Do not shoot if you are on medication that is identified as affecting your ability to drive or operate machinery. If in doubt ask your doctor.

NEVER TAKE alcohol or drugs before you go shooting, whilst you are shooting or until your firearm has been put away safely.

Refuse to shoot with others who are, or have been, drinking alcohol or taking drugs/ medicines.



13. Understand the operation of your firearm, keep it in good repair, and always use the correct ammunition.

IS YOUR FIREARM SAFE?

It is dangerous to use any firearm that is not in safe working order. Do not attempt to repair firearms yourself. Take suspect firearms to a gunsmith for inspection and have repairs carried out by a reputable gunsmith. A gunsmith has the experience and equipment to do the job. It is worth the extra cost to prevent an accident.

The following are firearm parts that may require attention from time to time:

Head Space: The distance between the base of the chambered cartridge and the face of the bolt.

Firing Pin Protrusion and Shape: Affecting safe, reliable firing.

Tightness of Action and Stock: Affecting accuracy.

Condition of Barrel and Chamber: Important for safety and accuracy.

General Condition of Firearm including Safety Catch: Particularly important for self-loading shotguns and rifles.

Trigger Pull: Vital for both safety and accuracy. The recommended minimum trigger pull weights are:

■ 22 rimfire rifle	1.5 kg
■ centrefire sporting rifle	1.5 kg
■ single trigger shotguns	1.5 kg
■ double trigger shotguns	1.5 kg 1st trigger
	1.8 kg 2nd trigger
■ Target Rifles	as regulated by competition rules
■ Set Triggers	follow manufacturer recommendations

NOTE: Self-loading firearms often have a heavier pull than conventional firearms. Manufacturer recommendations should be strictly adhered to.

WARNING: DO NOT EXCHANGE BOLTS, BOLT HEADS OR OTHER ACTION PARTS. THESE SHOULD BE FITTED BY A GUNSMITH.

When storing a firearm never block the barrel, just make sure the barrel is clean and coat your firearm lightly with oil.

14. Never store firearms and ammunition together. Ensure they are safely locked away when not in use.

It is a legal requirement to store firearms and ammunition in separate locked containers. It is also safe practice. Many firearm incidents occur in the home because ammunition and firearms are stored together. Children frequently suffer injuries because of their natural curiosity. If a child finds a firearm with the ammunition the result may be fatal.

LOCK UP YOUR FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION SEPARATELY. NEVER LEAVE AMMUNITION IN THE BREECH OR IN THE MAGAZINE. REMEMBER YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALL OTHER PERSONS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY IN THE CARE AND HANDLING OF YOUR FIREARM(S)

When removing a firearm from the boot of a car or a similar place. Remember REMOVE IT BUTT FIRST. Never remove a firearm muzzle first. People have shot themselves or their companions by removing a firearm from storage muzzle first.

The storage of firearms must be in accordance with the requirements set out in the legislation in your State or Territory.





15. Be familiar with the legal requirements for safe storage, firearms ownership, possession and use in your State or Territory, or the State or Territory you are visiting.

All firearm users must comply with the requirements of the legislation of the State or Territory in which they are residing in or visiting.

The firearms legislation sets out the conditions and requirements for firearm ownership and use. Listed below is a small selection of topics that are covered:

- Firearm licensing conditions
- Requirements for purchase of firearms and ammunition
- Security arrangements for the storage of firearms and ammunition
- Registration of firearms

Remember that there are many more conditions associated with the ownership and use of firearms. Individuals interested in becoming involved with firearms must ensure that they are familiar with the laws applicable in their State or Territory.

16. Dispose of unwanted firearms lawfully. Surrender them to the Police or sell them to or through a licensed dealer.

Firearms or receivers no longer required by a licensed owner must be disposed of in the following manner:

- Surrendered to a Police Station (you will receive a receipt as proof of disposal)
- Dispose to a licensed firearms dealer (you will receive a receipt as proof of disposal).
- Dispose of the firearm to another licensed person, via a licensed dealer (disposal in this manner must be in accordance with legislative requirements in that State or Territory).

DO NOT sell or give a firearm to a person who does not have a firearm licence as it is an offence and may result in prosecution.



ASPECTS OF FIREARMS EXPLAINED

“Firearm” means: a device designed to be carried by hand and to fire shot, bullets or other projectiles by means of burning propellant or by means of compressed air or other compressed gas.

Check what the definition of a ‘firearm’ is in your State or Territory.

So now that we know what a firearm is, let us look closer at the types and their common parts.

LOCK, STOCK & BARREL

This commonly used expression very clearly names the three basic parts of a firearm.

THE LOCK is the mechanism which fires the cartridge. It is now more commonly referred to as “the action”.

THE STOCK is the part by which the firearm is held - the butt and the fore end.

THE BARREL is the steel tube through which projectiles are fired. It is very important that you know how your firearm operates. You should read all the instructions for your firearm. If you buy a second hand firearm find out from the seller how to clean and operate it correctly. Do not rely on your own knowledge. It could have disastrous consequences.





TYPES OF FIREARMS AND FIREARM ACTIONS

There are many different types of firearms available in Australia but, regardless of the type or calibre you intend to purchase as your firearm, it is important that you have some knowledge of the different types of actions.

There are seven basic functions of a firearm generally. This is a generalisation of basic operating functions which can be applied, more or less, to every type of firearm.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. FEEDS | — inserts a live round or cartridge into the chamber. |
| 2. COCKS | — compresses the firing pin main spring and engages the firing pin to the trigger mechanism. |
| 3. LOCKS | — locks the bolt tight to the breech ready to fire when the trigger is pulled. |
| 4. FIRES | — discharges (or shoots) one round. |
| 5. UNLOCKS | — unlocks the bolt from the breech face. |
| 6. EXTRACTS | — removes the case (fired or unfired) from the chamber. |
| 7. EJECTS | — throws the case clear from the firearm. |

Each of the seven steps is employed each time a firearm is loaded/fired regardless of its type. In some firearms the seven steps may not be as obvious but all take place in order for the firearm to operate correctly.

SAFETY CATCHES

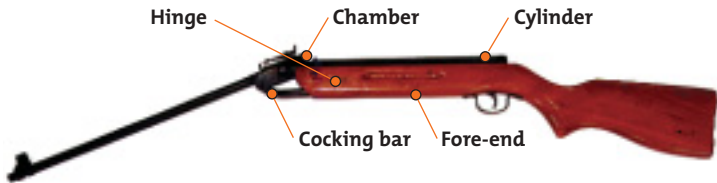
Safety catches are mechanical devices designed to prevent the firearms from discharging accidentally, but can fail and be accidentally released. Never rely solely on the safety catch.

Remember that safety catches simply supplement safe handling practices.

ACTION TYPES

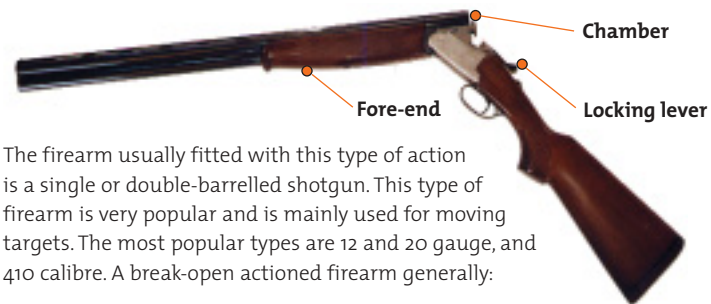
There are seven types of firearm actions commonly used in Australia. Following is an overview of these actions and their function.

AIR RIFLES



An air rifle or airgun is capable of causing serious injury. Air rifles are not toys and should be treated with the same care as any firearm. The projectile is propelled by means of compressed air or gas.

BREAK-OPEN SINGLE OR DOUBLE BARREL FIREARMS



The firearm usually fitted with this type of action is a single or double-barrelled shotgun. This type of firearm is very popular and is mainly used for moving targets. The most popular types are 12 and 20 gauge, and 410 calibre. A break-open actioned firearm generally:

1.	Feeds by hand.	LOADS
2.	Locks.	
3.	Fires.	
4.	Unlocks.	
5. & 6.	Extracts & Cocks.	
7.	Ejects.	UNLOADS*

**(this will be done either automatically or by hand, depending on the type of firearm)*

A cartridge or cartridges are fed into the barrels by hand. The barrels are then closed, allowing action to LOCK. The shotgun is **loaded and ready to fire. EXTREME CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED AT THIS TIME.**

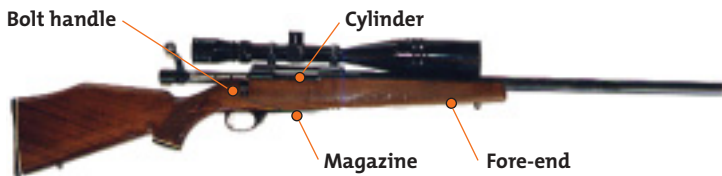
In order to fire the shotgun a simple squeeze of the trigger is all that is required. Once fired the locking lever is moved to the right allowing the action to break open (UNLOCK). The fired or unfired cartridges may then be removed from the chamber (UNLOAD). This then completes functions 1-7.

WARNINGS

THERE ARE MANY OLD SHOTGUNS STILL IN EXISTENCE WHICH WERE NOT MANUFACTURED TO USE MODERN SMOKELESS POWDERS. ALL OLD SHOTGUNS SHOULD BE INSPECTED BY AN EXPERT. **DO NOT TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH THESE OLDER TYPE FIREARMS. THEY MAY EXPLODE IF THE WRONG AMMUNITION IS USED.**

SOME SHOTGUNS ARE FITTED WITH EXPOSED HAMMERS. THESE MAY CATCH ON CLOTHING OR ON OTHER OBJECTS AND ACCIDENTLY FIRE. SHOTGUNS WITH EXTERNAL HAMMERS REQUIRE EXTRA CARE.

THE BOLT ACTION FIREARM



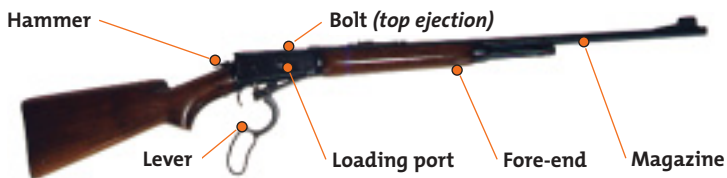
A bolt action firearm may be a rifle of any calibre. Some shotguns are also bolt actions. The bolt action follows the same seven steps of operation:

1.	Feeds (cocks)	Bolt forward	LOADS
2.	Locks	Bolt handle lowered	
3.	Fires		
4.	Unlocks	Bolt handle lifted	
5.	Extracts	Bolt rearward	UNLOADS
6.	Ejects		
7.	Cocks		

The round is fed into the chamber and the action is locked when the bolt is pushed forward and turned down. The firearm can now be fired by squeezing the trigger. Functions 4-7 are completed when the bolt handle is lifted and pulled to the rear.

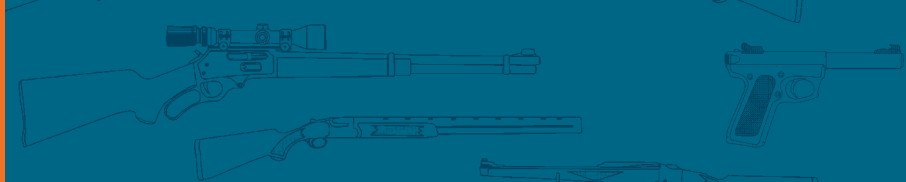
Bolt action firearms may be single shot or fitted with one of several types of magazine. When fitted with a magazine they may be referred to as bolt action repeaters.

THE LEVER ACTION FIREARM



A lever action firearm may be a "CENTREFIRE" or "RIMFIRE" calibre rifle. This type of firearm requires a higher level of safety than other types of firearms, because of its internal magazine, its exposed hammer and the difficulty in ensuring that the breech and the magazine are empty. If using a lever action firearm, you should ensure that you are fully aware of the operating and safety procedures associated with this type of firearm. The lever action generally:

1.	Feeds (cocks)	Lever upward	LOADS
2.	Locks		
3.	Fires		
4.	Unlocks	Lever downward	UNLOADS
5.	Extracts		
6.	Ejects		
7.	Cocks		



The lever, which is attached to the bolt, is moved upward which feeds the round into the chamber and locks the action. The firearm may now be fired by squeezing the trigger. The lever is then moved downward which completes functions 4 to 7.

Remember that there are several parts of a lever action firearm that require special attention:

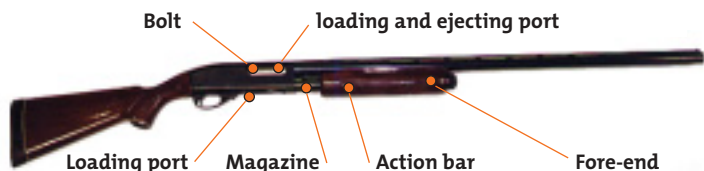
1. **EXPOSED HAMMER** which may catch on clothing or scrub and inadvertently become cocked.
2. **TUBULAR MAGAZINE** some models may be of some considerable age. The magazine spring which has been continually compressed and expanded may have become weakened, rusted through or broken.

The magazine tube may have been dented or have dirt or other matter in it which may cause a round to jam. A round may be slightly bent which may also cause a jam. If a round jams in the magazine you may work the action several times and believe that the firearm is unloaded when in fact there is still a round in the magazine. A knock may cause the round to be fed into the breech which may cause the firearm to be fired unintentionally.

ENSURE THAT WHEN STORING A FIREARM WITH A TUBULAR MAGAZINE, THE MAGAZINE IS FREE OF AMMUNITION.

3. **COCKING THE FIREARM** Remember that every time that the lever is operated (pulled down and returned up) the **firearm IS COCKED**. Extreme care should be exercised at this time.

THE SLIDE OR PUMP ACTION FIREARM



The pump or slide action generally:

1.	Feeds (cocked)	Slide forward	LOADS
2.	Locks		
3.	Fires		
4.	Unlocks	Slide rearward	UNLOADS
5.	Extracts		
6.	Ejects		
7.	Cocks		

The fore-end, which is attached to the action bar and the bolt, is pushed forward which feeds a round into the chamber and locks the action. The firearm can now be fired by squeezing the trigger. When the fore-end is pulled to the rear functions 4 to 6 are completed. Pushing the fore-end into the forward position cocks the firearm.

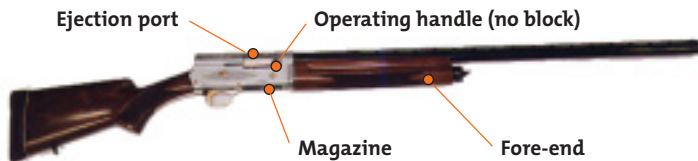
The slide or pump action firearm is very similar to the lever action firearm. It is operated by moving the fore-end of the stock instead of a lever. This is also referred to as a “trombone action” or a “sliding block”. The slide or pump action firearm usually has a tubular magazine which is susceptible to the same problems as lever action rifles.

Particular care is required with this firearm because of its:

1. **EXPOSED HAMMER.**
(Some models are produced with exposed hammers).
2. **TUBULAR MAGAZINE.**
(Some models are available with rotary and box type magazines).

Remember if your firearm has a tubular magazine or an exposed hammer, you should exercise extreme caution when unloading the firearm to ensure that the magazine is empty.

THE SELF-LOADING FIREARM



The self-loading (or semi-automatic) action generally:

1.	Feeds	Bolt forward	LOADS
2.	Locks		
3.	Fires		
4.	Unlocks	Bolt rearward	UNLOADS
5.	Extracts		
6.	Ejects		
7.	Cocks		

There are two distinct types:

(a) THE OPENED COCKED POSITION

In this type the bolt remains to the rear after firing a round. When the trigger is squeezed the following occurs automatically

- the bolt moves forward
- a round is fed into the chamber
- the firing pin strikes the round
- the block is driven to the rear, leaving a cocked firearm, ready to fire again.

(b) THE CLOSED COCKED POSITION

In this type, the bolt automatically moves forward to feed the next round into the chamber after firing. When the trigger is squeezed:

- the firing pin strikes the round
- the bolt then moves rearward compressing the return spring
- the bolt is driven forward, feeding the next round
- the firing pin spring is compressed, leaving the firearm loaded, cocked and ready to fire.

REMEMBER EVERY TIME A ROUND IS FIRED IT RE-COCKS ITSELF AND IS READY TO FIRE AGAIN.

This type of firearm is frequently manufactured with a tubular magazine, so you should exercise caution when unloading.

MUZZLE LOADING FIREARM

Great care is required when handling and using this type of firearm.



The sequence of operation for a muzzle loading firearm differs from the operation of the cartridge firearm. The ammunition components are inserted into a “permanently locked” action via the muzzle in the following three-step sequence:

1.	Feeds	Measure of powder and projectile seated with ramrod	LOADS
2.	Cocks		
3.	Fires		

Before loading a muzzle loading firearm ensure that it is not already loaded. You should not double up on the powder charge or insert more than one projectile.

Once the firearm has been loaded it should either be fired, or the charge and projectile removed so that it is not double loaded.

WARNING

Muzzle loading firearms are designed to be used with BLACK POWDER. Most muzzle loading firearms have proof marks or other signage stamped on the barrel or receiver to indicate that it should only be used with BLACK POWDER.

The use of modern double-base powders in firearms designed exclusively for BLACK POWDER may result in the explosion of the firearm.

If you are unsure of which propellant powder to use in your firearm consult an expert or the manufacturer.

HANDGUNS

Handguns are available in action types similar to their long arm relatives. Great care is required when handling and using handguns, especially as the shorter barrel requires greater concentration to ensure that it is always pointed in a safe direction.

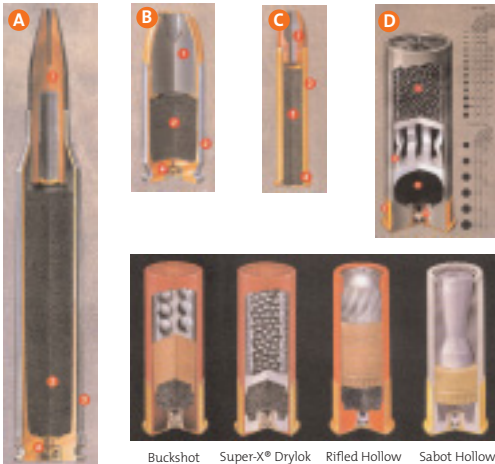


Air pistol

Semi-auto pistol

Revolver

AMMUNITION



Buckshot

Super-X® Drylok
Super Steel

Rifled Hollow
Point Slug

Sabot Hollow
Point Slug

A. Centrefire *(full metal jacket)*

1. Projectile
2. Propellant powder
3. Cartridge case
4. Primer

B. Rimfire

1. Projectile
2. Propellant powder
3. Cartridge case
4. Primer

C. Centrefire

1. Projectile
2. Propellant powder
3. Cartridge case
4. Primer

D. Shotgun

1. Projectile
2. Propellant powder
3. Cartridge case
4. Primer

Centerfire Handgun Ammunition



Centerfire Rifle Ammunition

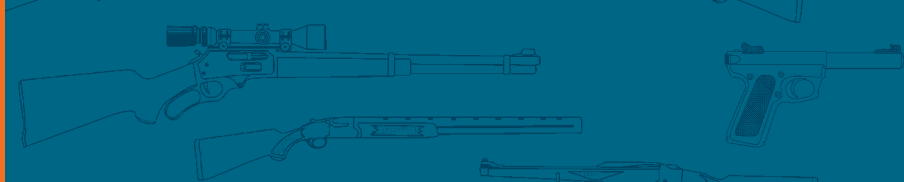


Rimfire Ammunition



Do not mix up your ammunition. You should only carry the ammunition for the firearm you are using. For example, it is very easy to confuse centrefire rounds of different calibres and shotgun cartridges of different gauges. The wrong ammunition in a firearm could result in the explosion of the firearm and injury to the user.

Ensure that you can identify and recognise the different types of ammunition so that you avoid mixing your ammunition.



Check to see what length cartridges your shotgun is designed to take. DO NOT LOAD 3" (76 mm) CARTRIDGES INTO A SHOTGUN DESIGNED TO TAKE 2 3/4" (70 mm) CARTRIDGES. Do not mix 3" and 2 3/4" cartridges.

Never attempt to dry out wet or damp ammunition by placing it in a warm oven, a microwave oven or in front of a fire; you may cause an explosion almost certainly resulting in damage and/or injury.

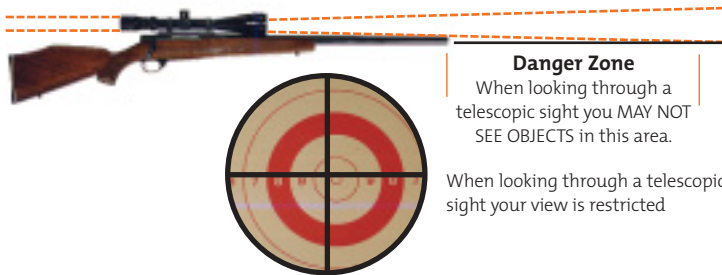
If test firing ammunition you should ensure the area is safe (ie. shooting range). TEST FIRING IN THE HOME OR AROUND THE HOME, EVEN ON RURAL PROPERTIES, IS NOT SAFE.

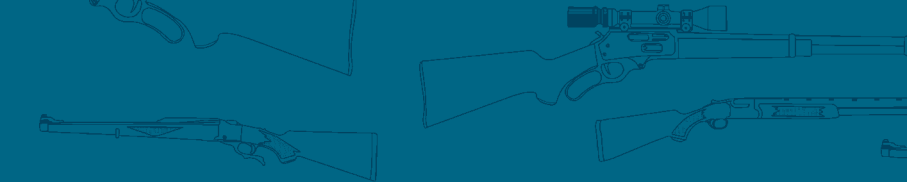
Never check the action of your firearm with ammunition at home. This should be done in an area where it is safe to do so. Remember, when checking the action "be muzzle conscious"; ensure that you point your firearm in a safe direction at all times.

SIGHTING IN YOUR RIFLE

Every firearm shoots differently. Some will shoot high, some low and some to the left or the right. In order to ensure that you hit your target you should sight in your firearm.

If you are using a telescopic sight, you will need to be very careful. A telescopic sight restricts your view of the firing zone. You may not see all that is in the danger zone. There is an area at the muzzle and a short distance beyond it which is not visible through a telescopic sight. Take care to ensure that no person, stock, object or obstacle is within this **DANGER ZONE** before firing. The size of this danger zone will vary according to the power of the telescopic sight.





If you are zeroing your firearms on an established outdoor range, ensure that both livestock and personal property are in no danger, and that people in the near vicinity are aware of your activity. If you intend to zero your firearm on a rural property then a few minutes spent talking to neighbours about your activity is good manners and will reduce stress that may be created when neighbours hear gun shots. A safe backstop such as a soft earthen bank should be used in order to stop all projectiles.

Your firing point should be set at 25m. Adjust the sights until the point of aim and the point of entry are the same. Remember, if you are using open sights “front sight follows”, “rear sight reverse”. If using a telescopic sight, follow the arrows. Then fire at a target from 100 metres and adjust sights as above.

GET TO KNOW YOUR FIREARM: BE THOROUGHLY AWARE OF THE WAY IT WORKS, AND HOW IT IS MAINTAINED.

SPOTLIGHTS

Most States require that written permission of the landowner is acquired before hunting on his/her property commences. Considering its nocturnal nature, spotlighting can cause considerable stress to owners of adjoining properties if they are unaware of the activity. Depending on the location of the property on which you intend to hunt, make the offer to your host to inform neighbouring properties of your intentions. **Remember** when using a spotlight, the only area that you can see is the area within the spotlight beam. Be sure of your target. If you have any doubt about taking the shot **DO NOT TAKE IT**.

Remember Firearm Safety Code No 3: “always ensure your firing zone is clear and identify your target beyond all doubt”

DO NOT FIRE AT MOVEMENT ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT COLOUR ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT SOUND ONLY

DO NOT FIRE AT SHAPE ONLY

FIREARM SAFETY INSTRUCTORS

If you have any questions in relation to firearm safety, then contact a Firearms Safety Training Instructor.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACTION: The mechanism of a firearm, that loads and secures the cartridge in the chamber.

ANVIL: A component of the primer, against which the priming composition is crushed by the impact of the firing pin.

AUTO-LOADER: See Self Loader.

BALLISTICS: The science of moving projectiles.

BEDDING: The fit between the metal and the stock of a rifle.

BLACK POWDER: A propellant developed several centuries ago from a combination of saltpetre, charcoal, and sulphur.

BOAT-TAIL: A special type of projectile or bullet, having a base of reduced diameter to assist flight.

BOLT: Part of a breech loading firearm worked by hand, spring or expanding gases, by which cartridges are fed into the chamber, held and extracted after firing.

BOLT-HEAD: The front portion of the bolt which normally contains the firing pin hole and to which the extractor is attached.

BORE: The interior of the barrel of the firearm.

BREECH: The rear end of the chamber into which the cartridge is inserted.

BULLET: See projectile.

BULLSEYE: The round or half round black or red centre of a typical paper target.

BUTT: The rear portion of a firearm stock which is held against the shoulder of the firer.

CALIBRE: The nominal diameter of the bore of a firearm or the nominal diameter of the bullet or projectile.

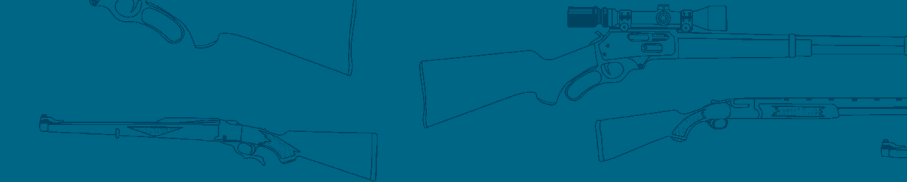
CANNELURE: A groove around the jacketed bullet into which the lip of the cartridge is crimped. A grease groove in lead bullets.

CARTRIDGE: The combination of components when assembled, ie. case, primer, powder (wads in the case of shotgun cartridges), projectiles.

CASE: The metallic, paper or plastic container for the primer or powder.

CHAMBER: The enlarged portion of the bore in which the cartridge rests in the position to be fired.

CLIP: A device that holds a number of cartridges together for easy or quick loading.



CORROSION: Deterioration of the metal components of a firearm. Often caused by chemical or electro-chemical reaction, arising from the by-product of fired propellant and compounded by improper cleaning and oiling.

EJECTOR: A device which ejects or throws the empty case clear of the firearm after it has been withdrawn from the chamber by the extractor.

ELEVATION: The vertical movement of an adjustable sight to cause the bullet to strike the point of aim at various ranges.

ENERGY: The potential amount of work that can be performed by a projectile.

EROSION: The wearing away of the bore of a firearm by friction and corrosion from fouling.

EXTRACTOR: The device which grips the cartridge case and withdraws it from the chamber.

EXTRACTOR GROOVE: A circular indentation in the rear of a rimless cartridge case by which the extractor grips the shell.

FIRING PIN: A device controlled by the trigger, which strikes the primer causing the firing of the cartridge.

FLASH HOLE: The small hole (or holes) from the base of the primer pocket into the case interior through which the primer flash ignites the powder.

FLOATING BARREL: A barrel which does not touch the fore-end of the stock.

FLYER: An unaccountable shot wide of the mark or target.

FORE-END: The forward part of the stock under the barrel.

FOULING: A deposit of residue from burning powder or from bullet metal on the interior surface of a barrel.

GAUGE: A unit of measurement for shotgun bore diameters, determined by the number of solid lead balls of the bore diameter obtainable from 1lb of lead.

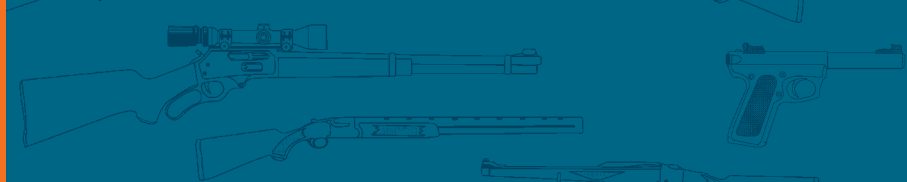
GRAINS: A unit of weight used for bullets or powder charge - 1 ounce avdp = 437.5 grains. 1lb avdp = 7000 grains.

GROOVES: Spiral cuts or impressions in the bore of a firearm that causes a projectile to spin as it moves through the barrel.

GROUP: The term applied to a series of shots fired at a target with a constant point of aim and sight setting to test accuracy.

HAMMER: Part of some actions controlled by the trigger, which drives the firing pin to strike the primer, firing the cartridge.

HANG-FIRE: Ignition in a cartridge which is delayed beyond the normal time after the firing pin has struck the primer.



HEADSPACE: The space between the breech bolt/block face and the cartridge base with the action closed.

KEYHOLE: The imprint of a bullet in a target which shows that the bullet was not travelling head-on to the target.

LANDS: The raised portion of the bore between the rifling grooves.

LEADING: Particles of bullet metal torn off as the bullet passes through the bore which adheres to the bore.

LINE OF SIGHT: The straight line from the eye through the sights to the target or point of aim.

LOCK: The firing mechanism of a firearm.

MAGAZINE: A metal case holding several cartridges in some firearms.

MAGNUM: A load or cartridge having large powder capacity in relation to bore diameter.

MID-RANGE TRAJECTORY: The highest vertical distance of a bullet above the line of sight.

MINUTE OF ANGLE: A unit of angular deviation equal to one-sixtieth of a degree.

MUSHROOMING: The ability or capacity of a projectile to expand on or after impact.

MUZZLE: The front end of a barrel. The point from which the projectile leaves the barrel.

OPEN SIGHT: A non optical sight, the rear portion of which has a flat or U or V shape cut-out.

PATTERN: The distribution of pellets from a shotgun at a given distance in a given area.

PEEP SIGHT: A non-optical sight, the rear portion of which has a hole, aperture or 'peep' to look through.

PITTING: See corrosion.

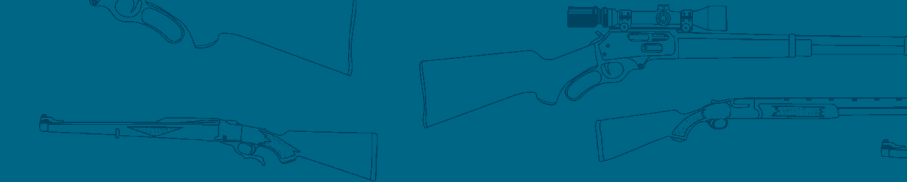
PLINKING: Informal target shooting.

POSSIBLE: A target shooter's perfect score.

PRESSURE: The force created by burning powder against the case, chamber and projectile.

PRIMER: A small metallic cup containing a detonating mixture which is seated in a recess in the base of the case and which, when fired, ignites the powder inside the case.

PRIMER POCKET: The cavity in the base of a cartridge case which receives and supports the primer.



PROJECTILE: The shot, ball or bullet fired from any firearm.

PULL: The pressure required on a trigger to release the firing mechanism. A term used to indicate the distance from trigger to butt plate. A command to release the target in trap shooting.

RECEIVER: The frame of a firearm consisting of breech, locking and reloading mechanisms.

RECOIL: The backward thrust of a firearm caused by the reaction to the powder gases pushing the bullet forward.

RIFLING: Parallel spiral grooves cut or impressed into the bore of rifles and pistols in order to make the bullet spin, ensuring steady, point-on flight to the target.

SEAR: A part designed to hold the hammer or firing pin at half or full cock.

SHOOTING AREA: Is the area where shooting may legally and safely take place.

SPITZER: A bullet shape employing a sharp point. Derivative of the German word spitzegeschoss meaning sharp pointed bullet.

SMOKELESS POWDER: The modern propellant developed to replace black powder. These powders can be manufactured in two forms ie. Single-base and double-base. The main ingredient of single-base smokeless powder is nitro-cellulose. It also contains a small percentage of special purpose additives. The main ingredient of double-base propellants is nitro-cellulose, which is supplemented by a percentage of nitro-glycerine and a small percentage of special purpose ingredients.

SPORTERISE: To alter or convert a military firearm to suit sporting requirements.

STOCK: The part(s) of a firearm onto which the barrel and firing mechanism are assembled.

THROAT: The forward portion of the chamber where it tapers to meet the diameter of the bore proper.

TRAJECTORY: The curved path of a projectile from muzzle to target.

TRIGGER: The part of a firearm moved by the finger to release the firing mechanism.

TWIST: Spiral inclination of the rifling grooves to the axis of the bore, measured by distance in which the bullet makes one complete turn.

VELOCITY: The speed at which the projectile or bullet travels.

WILDCAT: A non-standard cartridge which is not produced by commercial manufacturers.

WAD: Plastic or fibre device which separates the powder from shot in a shotgun cartridge.



A Commonwealth Government Initiative

National Firearms Safety Code