

# Introduction to Handguns



**Sporting Shooters Pistol Club**



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**Sporting Shooters Pistol Club**

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## Introduction

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The Sporting Shooters Pistol Club (SSPC) is one of Victoria's largest handgun target shooting clubs. Our club is entirely run by a team of hard working volunteers. We operate at the Springvale SSAA range and run a number of different handgun shooting competitions.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with a safe and informative introduction to the sport of handgun shooting within our club.

This guide will cover some of the basics which you need to know in order to be safe and get the most out of your shooting experience. We will cover basic handgun safety, handgun operation, range safety and shooting fundamentals.

Many competitions require you to shoot one handed. You will be able to learn this later. This introductory material covers primarily two handed shooting.

Please keep in mind that this is an introduction only and is in no way a comprehensive course on the subject of handgun shooting. You can always learn more and we have many members who are able to assist with your questions. There is also wealth of good information available online and you would do well to spend some time with Google and research more about any of the topics in this guide.

**NOTE: This course DOES NOT REPLACE the mandatory Victoria Police Handgun Safety Course which you will be required to pass before becoming a member of this club and gaining a handgun licence.**

## Handgun Safety

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There are many different aspects to safe handgun handling. As you learn more about handguns your awareness and safety will increase. However all handgun safety is based on three basic laws which must always be followed without exception:

First law:

**Assume the gun is always loaded.**

Every time you pick up a gun treat it as if it was loaded.

Second law:

**Never point the gun at anything you do not want to shoot.**

If you always assume that the gun is loaded, then you will always keep it pointing in a safe direction.

Third law:

**Always be sure of your target and what is behind it.**

Bullets can penetrate a number of objects. Always ensure that there is a safe impact area behind your target before firing.

Always check that a gun is clear as soon as you pick it up and before you put it down. This means removing the magazine if it has one and opening the action. Then check to ensure that no ammunition remains in the gun.



**Always clear the gun as soon as you pick it up and before you put it down!**

## Finger off the Trigger!

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**Whenever you pick up a gun or handle a gun, in any circumstances, without exception, KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER!**



Keep your trigger finger extended in a straight line in the same direction as the gun and rest it on the side of the gun ABOVE the trigger guard.

### **Always Remember:**

**ON TARGET - ON TRIGGER**  
**OFF TARGET - OFF TRIGGER**

Only place your finger on the trigger when you are pointing the gun at the target and ready to fire.

## Safety Equipment

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Some basic safety equipment is required whenever you are on a handgun shooting range:

### Ear Protection

Handguns are loud, louder than a jet engine and they can cause permanently hearing damage. You must have ear protection while shooting. Some people prefer ear plugs while other use earmuffs. Some people use both. We recommend earmuffs with a noise reduction of 26dB or greater.



### Eye Protection

Handguns shoot bullets. Bullets travel very fast and sometimes when the bullet strikes a hard target, a bullet fragment can come back towards you. These pieces of shrapnel don't usually travel fast enough to do any serious damage, unless they hit you in the eye.

Safety glasses are required whenever there is shooting on the range, even if you are just watching others shoot. If you need to take your safety glasses off for any reason, then leave the range first!





The club will loan you eye and ear protection for use at the range. If you continue to take part in shooting then you should buy your own eye and ear protection as soon as possible. Standard earmuffs and safety glasses are available from the shop at the range or from any hardware store. Remember to look for earmuffs with a noise reduction of 26dB or greater.

### Appropriate clothing

Wear comfortable clothing. No low cut tops, as empty rounds ejected from your gun can easily end up going down your top, and they're hot! Be sure to wear comfortable shoes. No thongs or open toed shoes.

No camouflage clothing. You're not Rambo, and we're not in the army.

### "Eyes and Ears!"

You will hear the range officer call out "Eyes and Ears!". This instruction is called out before any shooting begins and is your reminder to make sure you have your eye and ear protection on.

### Wash your hands!

Handgun ammunition contains some very hazardous materials. Bullets are usually made from lead and the primers can contain mercury or lead styphnate. So make sure that you wash your hands thoroughly using cold soapy water after you have finished shooting.

## The Shooting Range

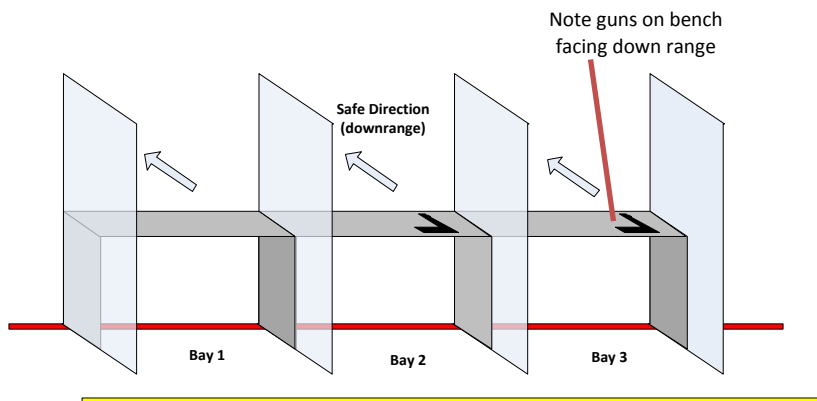
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Your first few shoots will be from a bench on a 25 metre range. Each shooter will be allocated a shooting bay. Remember the bay which you are allocated, they are usually numbered.

### Range Layout

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The shooting bay is marked out by the walls on the left and right and a bench at the front.



Red and Yellow safety lines run along the front and behind the bay at the back.

### **Never reach across the red line!**

You can never reach across the red line from either side at any time. If you drop some ammunition off the bench while you are shooting and it ends up in front of the bay, then you cannot reach across the red line to get it. You will need to wait until the range is clear and then pick it up from around the front of the bay. Likewise when the range is clear and you are on the range in front of the bay, you cannot reach across the line into the shooting bay or the bench.

## Handling Guns on the Range

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There are several important safety rules which must be followed on the range.

### **Only handle a gun while in the shooting bay.**

You can only handle the gun when you are at the bench of your shooting bay.

### **The handgun must at all times point downrange.**

Always make sure the gun is pointing in a safe direction, and the only safe direction is downrange! Be careful while loading and unloading. Also be especially careful of turning around to talk to someone. You can turn, but keep the gun pointed downrange.

### **You may not leave the shooting bay with the handgun.**

You must always remain within the shooting bay while holding a gun.

### **The gun must point downrange while taking it out of a bag.**

When you first touch the gun, it **MUST** be facing downrange. If the gun is in a bag or box, then only open the bag or box when you get to the bench in your shooting bay. Look inside without touching the gun and check if it is pointing downrange. If the gun is not pointing downrange, then rotate the box or bag so that the gun points downrange before touching it or taking it out.



**The handgun must at all times point downrange!**

**The gun must be unloaded and open when on the bench**

Before putting a gun down on the bench remove the magazine and lock back the slide for semi-automatics or swing out the cylinder for Revolvers. Then put the gun down on the bench facing downrange.

*You will learn how to open the slide or cylinder of a gun in the section on Handgun Operation.*



**Never put down a loaded gun.**

Whenever you have finished with the gun, it must be put on the bench, facing downrange, empty and open.

If something goes wrong and you need to ask for help, then raise your hand while keeping the gun pointing downrange with your other hand.



**Never put down a loaded gun!**

## Range Commands

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Listen for commands from your instructor and the Range Officer (the RO). Any commands must be obeyed immediately.

Make sure you know who the range officer is. They will be wearing an orange or yellow safety vest with “Range Officer” written on it. The Range Officer is the person ultimately in charge of the range.



**Listen carefully to instructions from the Range Officer. Instructions must be followed immediately.**

Make sure you know who your instructor is. They will supervise and assist you while you shoot. Listen to them.

### Range Commands:

**Eyes and Ears:** A reminder to get your safety equipment on.

**Move Forward:** You may cross the yellow safety line and move into your allocated shooting bay.

**Load:** (sometimes “Load and make ready”). You may load your gun, but do not commence firing. Once your gun is loaded it must remain in your hand. Do not put a loaded gun down. If you need to put the gun down for any reason then unload and open it first.

**Fire:** (sometimes “Commence Firing”). You may commence firing.

**Cease Fire:** Immediately stop shooting. Do not fire another shot! A Cease fire will be called out at the completion of a series of shots so that shooters can walk down to the targets. A cease fire can also be called in an emergency or if the range officer notices an unsafe situation on the range.

**Unload:** (sometimes “Open Action and Remove magazine). Remove all ammunition from the gun. Keep the gun pointed downrange.

For Revolvers, swing out the cylinder and remove all rounds from the chambers now place the gun on the bench with the cylinder out.

For a semi-automatic, remove the magazine then pull and lock open the slide. Place the gun on the bench with the slide open. Now empty the magazine and place the empty magazine on the bench or resting on the grip of the gun.

**Stand clear of Firearms:** Keep behind the yellow safety line at the back of your shooting bay. Do not enter the bay again until instructed to do so by the range officer.

At the end of a course of fire the last three instruction may be given in succession as one command **“Cease Fire, Open all actions, remove all magazines and stand clear of firearms”**. This is your instruction to stop shooting, ensure that your gun is safe and empty and move back behind the line.

The range officer will then check each gun on the line to ensure it is empty and clear of ammunition. After completing the check the range officer can declare the range clear and allow you to move forward of the firing line to check your target. The command you will hear is **“Range is clear, you may move forward”**.

At this command you may move forward of the firing line, usually one end of the range has a walkway to allow you out in front of the shooting bays.

**Upon your return firearms are NOT to be approached until instructed by a range officer!**

From this point you may no longer cross the yellow line and enter the shooting bay. If you need to access something in the shooting bay area then you will need to wait until the next course of fire. If you are out front of the shooting bay collecting empty brass, then do not reach across the red safety line at the front of the shooting bays. You must remain outside of the shooting bay and away from the guns on the bench from either side.

Once everybody has returned the range officer can call the range clear and the course of fire will begin again. (Starting with Move forward, then Load, etc...)

### Asking for Help

If at any time you need help just put up your hand. This is a signal to the range officer to come over to you.

If you have a gun jam or malfunction, then **keep pointing the gun downrange** and put up your other hand. Never put a loaded gun down on the bench.

Remember, guns jam and things do go awry from time to time. We're here to help and make sure everyone stays safe.



**If you have a question, always ask, never assume.**

## Ammunition and Calibres

The ammunition for handguns is sometimes referred to as “rounds” or “cartridges”. Each round consists of a casing (usually made from brass) which contains the gunpowder and a bullet at the top. Rounds come in different sizes, called calibres. For historical reasons, some calibres are in imperial terms like .22 (of an inch) others are metric like 9mm.

You will be using three common types of ammunition:

**.22LR (Twenty-Two)** for semi-automatic pistols and small revolvers

**9mm (Nine-Millimetre)** for semi-automatic pistols

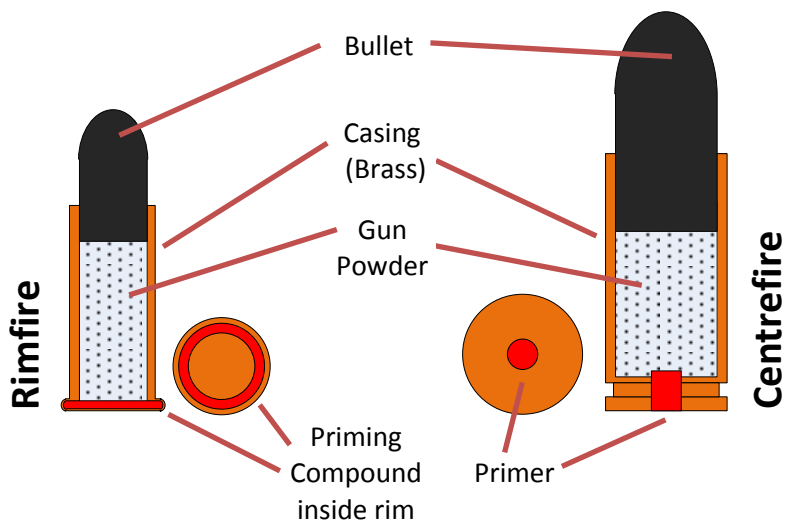
**.38 Special (Thirty-Eight)** for larger revolvers

There are two basic classes of ammunition which are used in handguns, Rimfire and Centrefire. The difference is in how each type of round is fired.

Both types of round use a primer or priming compound which when struck by the guns firing pin will burn and ignite the propellant powder (gun powder).







### Rimfire

The most common Rimfire cartridge is the .22 (twenty-two). This is the same cartridge as used in popular rifles.

The term Rimfire refers to way in which the round is fired. The firing pin of the gun impacts on the outer rim of the casing where the priming compound is located. This priming compound then ignites the powder in the casing, which burns and pushes the bullet through the barrel.

### Centrefire

Centrefire rounds are generally larger (higher calibre) and therefore require a more robust priming system to ensure that the gunpowder is rapidly and completely ignited. The Centrefire round has a separate primer which is located in the centre of the base. The firing pin strikes this primer which in turn ignites the powder.

## Handgun Operation

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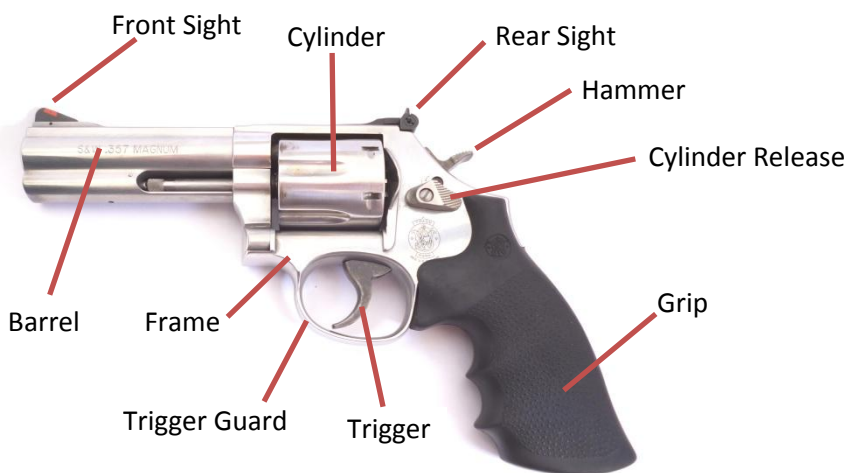
In this introduction we are showing Centrefire handguns, but the theory of operation and controls of Rimfire handguns are almost identical. Rimfire guns have significantly less recoil than Centrefire guns and are easier to shoot more accurately. The club has both Rimfire and Centrefire guns available for members to use.

There are various terms used to refer to the hand in which you hold the gun. We use the term Shooting Hand, you will also hear the term Strong Hand or Master Hand. Your other hand is referred to as your Non Shooting Hand, Weak Hand or Support Hand. If you are right handed, then your shooting (or strong) hand is your right hand. If you are left handed, it is your left.

## Revolver

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The revolver is one of the oldest and most reliable and accurate gun designs dating back to the 1850s.



The basic mechanism of a revolver comprises a revolving cylinder of chambers into which rounds are loaded.

Each time the trigger is pulled (or the hammer is cocked) the cylinder will rotate and bring the next round in line with the barrel at the top. When the trigger is pulled the hammer strikes the primer of the top round, firing the bullet down the barrel.



The cylinder can be swung out by pushing the cylinder release forward (towards the front of the gun) with your thumb.

The Ejector rod runs through the middle of the cylinder and connects to the Ejector at the back of the cylinder. This provides an axle on which the cylinder rotates.

When the Cylinder is open, the ejector rod can be pushed back (towards the rear of the gun) and the ejector then pushes the spent rounds back out of the cylinder. When closing the cylinder, do not slam it! Push it closed gently until it clicks into place.

*Note: Revolvers traditionally have cylinders with 6 chambers, however modern revolvers can have 7, 8 or even 10 chambers.*

### Grip for Revolver

Grip the revolver with your shooting hand (finger off the trigger!) and then place your other hand around the grip so that your thumbs are on the same side of the revolver.

Rest one thumb on top of the other. Make sure you are holding the revolver as far up the grip as possible.





### Opening the Cylinder on a Revolver



**Step 1**



**Step 2**



**Step 3**

**Step 1:** Hold the revolver in your right hand with the left side of the revolver facing up.

**Step 2:** Grip the cylinder between the thumb and middle two fingers of your left hand and push the cylinder release forward with the thumb of your right hand.

**Step 3:** Push the cylinder up and out from underneath using the middle two fingers of your left hand.

**Step 4:** Transfer the revolver to your left hand and hold it between your thumb and your middle two fingers through the cylinder gap.

Maintain this grip while loading the revolver.



#### Loading a Revolver

While holding the revolver in your left hand as shown, use your right hand to load rounds into the chambers.



After loading the rounds, close the cylinder slowly, do not slam it closed. Once closed, you may need to rotate the cylinder slightly until it clicks into place. The revolver is now ready to fire.



Some revolver brands revolve the cylinder clockwise, some anticlockwise each time the trigger is pulled.

This is important if you are not loading all of the chambers, as you want to close the cylinder with an empty chamber at the top (aligned with the barrel). The first trigger pull will then rotate the cylinder onto a live round, not another empty chamber.

Work out which way yours rotates before loading!

### Unloading a Revolver

To unload the empty rounds from the revolver, first open the cylinder as per step 1 to 4 of the cylinder opening instructions.



Once you are holding the open revolver with your left hand, press the ejector rod in towards the back of the revolver with your right hand and the empty shells will be pushed out of the cylinder.

### Shooting a Revolver

There are two modes in which a revolver can be shot: Single action and double action. You should try each and note the difference in the amount of force required to operate the trigger.

#### Double Action

Each time the trigger is pulled, the revolvers cylinder will rotate, aligning the next round with the barrel while simultaneously cocking the hammer. When the hammer falls the shot will be released.

In this mode the Trigger performs two actions (cocking and firing). Double action revolvers usually have a very heavy trigger pull, as the trigger is operating multiple mechanisms within the revolver.

After the shot is fired the revolver is ready for another shot.

#### Single Action

Most double action revolvers can also be shot in single action mode. In single action, the shooter must manually cock the hammer (pull the hammer back). This causes the cylinder to rotate and aligns the next round with the barrel (the same thing that happens in the first part of a double action shot).

Once the hammer is cocked it will lock in place and the revolver is ready to shoot. Since most of the work has already been done, the trigger needs to just release the hammer to fire the shot. So in single action mode the trigger travel is a lot shorter and the trigger pull is a lot lighter. Be careful of this!



### Cocking the hammer of a revolver

The hammer needs to be manually cocked in order to shoot the revolver in single action.



Always use the thumb of your non-shooting hand to cock the hammer. This way you will retain a firm grip on the revolver with your shooting hand. Remember to keep your finger away from the trigger while cocking!

Single action mode has an advantage over double action in a much reduced trigger pull. This allows for more accurate shot placement.

## Semi-Automatic Handgun

The Semi-Automatic (or self-loading) handgun is a more modern handgun. After each round is fired, the empty round is automatically extracted and thrown clear of the gun and a new round is automatically loaded.



Many semi-autos have a beavertail at the top of the grip so that the gun can be gripped as high as possible while still remaining clear of the slide.

*Note: The safety may be in a different location and many modern semi-automatics do not have an external safety.*



### Grip for Semi-Automatic Handgun

Pick up the pistol in your shooting hand (finger out of the trigger!) and seat it so that your hand sits as far up on the grip as possible while remaining clear of the slide.



Place your other hand around the grip so that the base of your palm makes good contact with the grip.



Make sure that the side of your top thumb does not drag against the side of the slide when the slide moves back and that your thumbs are on the same side with one thumb resting on the other.

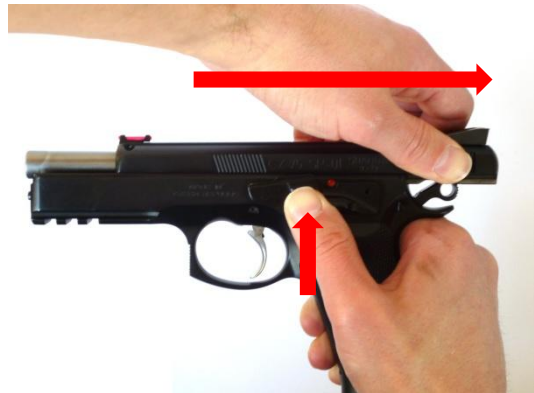


**Never cross your thumb over behind the slide.  
Remember that the slide flies back with each shot  
and you do not want to get your thumb in the way!**

### Locking the slide open

Whenever you put the gun down, the slide must be locked open.

Hold the gun in your strong hand with your thumb pushing up on the slide lock lever. Now use your weak hand to pull the slide back. It will lock into place in the open position.



This is very tricky and will take some practice.

Make sure the gun always remains pointing downrange!

### Loading a Semi-Automatic Handgun



Ammunition is loaded into a magazine which is inserted into the grip of the gun. Handgun laws limit magazine capacity to a maximum of 10 rounds, however many modern handguns can take up to 17 rounds.



The loaded magazine is then inserted into the bottom of the grip of the pistol.



Hold the gun in your shooting hand (pointing down range) and insert the magazine into the base of the grip with your other hand.

Make sure that the magazine is inserted all the way until it clicks into place.

To close the slide, use your left thumb to push down on the slide lock lever and the slide will spring forward, loading one round from the magazine. The gun is now ready to fire.

*NOTE: The slide can also be closed by gripping the back of the slide with your non shooting hand and pulling it back slightly, then releasing it to snap closed.*

### Shooting a Semi-Automatic Handgun



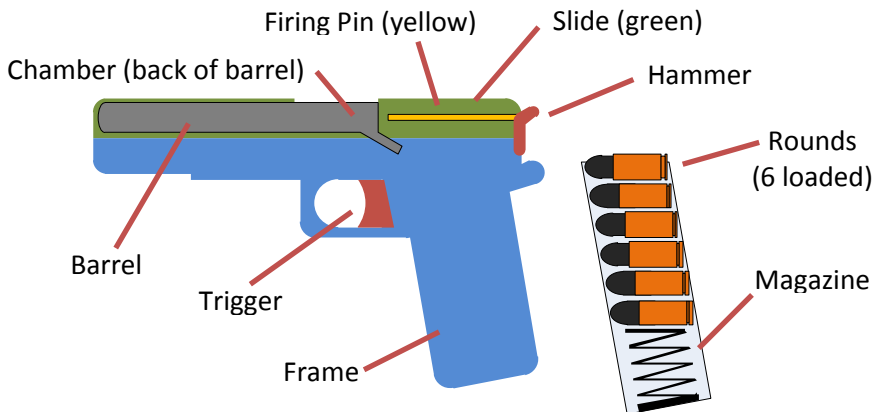
Each time a shot is fired the slide travels rearward to the open position, ejecting the empty round from the ejection port. The slide then returns to the closed position, which loads a new round from the magazine.

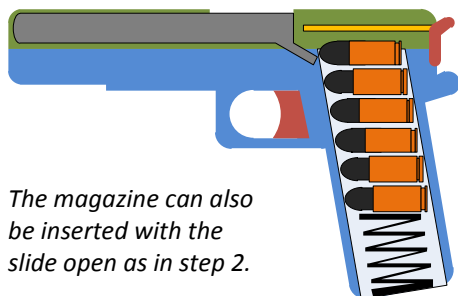
*This happens very quickly and you may not even see the slide move.*

When the magazine is empty and the last round has been fired, the slide will remain locked open. This is a signal to you that the gun has run out of ammunition. To take out the empty magazine, press the magazine release in towards the gun. This will cause the magazine to drop from the bottom on the grip. Put your hand underneath to catch it.

### How a Semi-Automatic Handgun Works

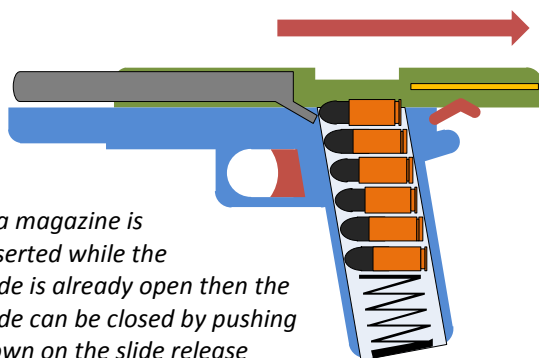
It helps to understand what is going on inside of the semi-automatic pistol while it is operating. Take a look at the components of this cut-away handgun then follow the 6 steps of the firing process:





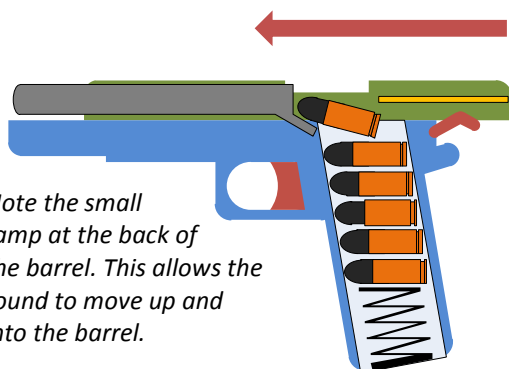
*The magazine can also be inserted with the slide open as in step 2.*

**Step 1:** The magazine is inserted into the base of the grip. Note that at this stage the gun will not be able to fire as there is no round in the chamber at the back of the barrel.



*If a magazine is inserted while the slide is already open then the slide can be closed by pushing down on the slide release*

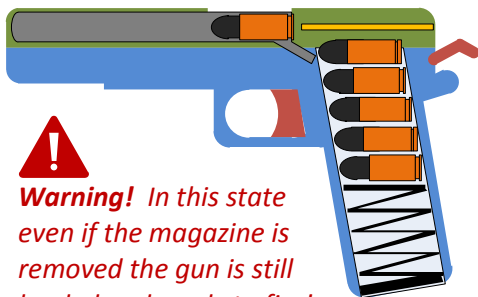
**Step 2:** The shooter grips the slide and pulls it all the way back and releases it. This is known as **racking the slide**. This also cocks the hammer of the pistol.



*Note the small ramp at the back of the barrel. This allows the round to move up and into the barrel.*

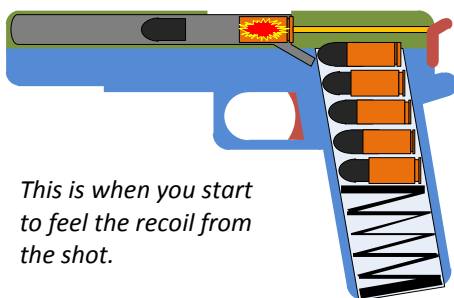
**Step 3:** The slide moves forward under spring tension, stripping one round from the top of the magazine and loading it into the chamber.





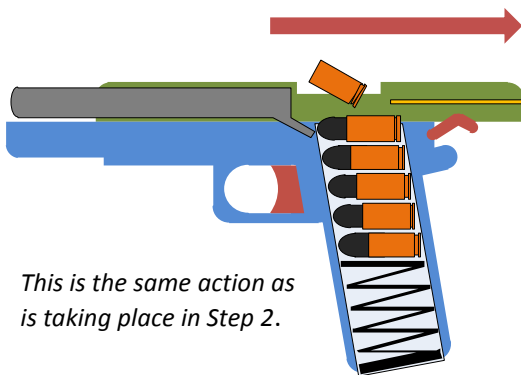
**Warning!** In this state even if the magazine is removed the gun is still loaded and ready to fire!

**Step 4:** The hammer is cocked, a round is chambered and the pistol is ready to fire when the trigger is pulled.



*This is when you start to feel the recoil from the shot.*

**Step 5:** When the trigger is pulled, the hammer falls striking the firing pin which strikes the primer at the back of the round and the bullet is propelled down the barrel.



*This is the same action as is taking place in Step 2.*

**Step 6:** The recoil from the shot forces the slide back, which in turn extracts the empty round from the chamber and throws it out of the ejection port.

The process now continues at Step 3 and the pistol will keep shooting each time the trigger is pulled until the magazine is empty.

## Shooting Fundamentals

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There are three very important components which you need to master in order to shoot accurately. Those are grip, sight picture and trigger pull. They can be learned and mastered separately, but you need to understand and combine all three to produce a good shot.

When you first start handgun shooting, you may spend too much time overanalysing and thinking about what you are doing and where your hands are. That is fine, but it will all come together over time.

### Grip

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Always hold the handgun in your strong hand (right hand if you are right handed, left hand if you are left handed). Refer to the appropriate grip for either a revolver or semi-automatic. Remember to keep your thumbs on the same side of the gun!

The vast majority of handguns are built for right handed use in that most of the controls are on the left hand side. There are ambidextrous hand guns around, but they are quite rare.

Whenever picking up a handgun, remember to be aware of the barrel direction and keep your finger off the trigger!

### Sight Picture

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Lining up the sights will in theory ensure that the bullet impacts exactly where the gun is pointing. To begin with it may be easier to close one eye and align the sights with one eye only.

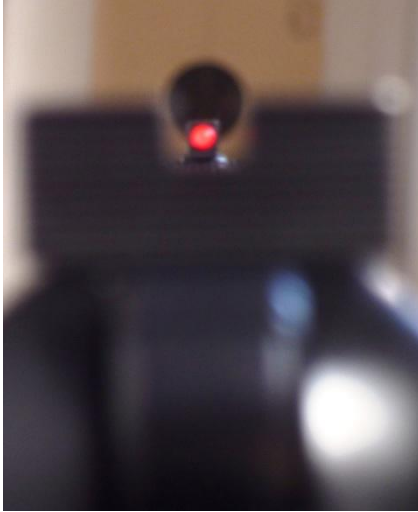
You need to work out which eye to use. Most right handed people are right eye dominant, while left handed people are left eye dominant.

Keep your dominant eye open, close the other one and hold the handgun with your arms outstretched and line up the sights so that the front sight sits evenly in the middle of the rear sight.



Line up the gun so that the front sight appears centred in the rear sight notch.

Some sights have a red dot or coloured outline to help you see them. Other sights are just plain black. They each work equally well and the choice is more one of personal preference.

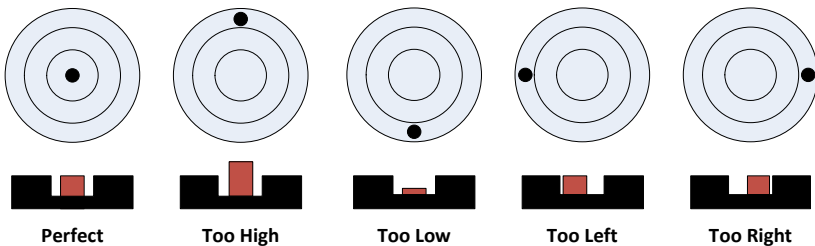


Your focus should be fixed on the front sight while the target should be a blur in the background. This is very important.

If you have your target in crisp focus then your front sight will be out of focus and you will not shoot well.

As you pull the trigger, remember to keep your focus on the front sight.

The gun may wander around the target as you try to gain the correct sight picture, but it is more important to have the sight picture correct. An error on the sight picture will make far more difference to the shot placement than the amount of wobble of the gun.



Your sight picture will have one of the greatest effects on your shot placement. It takes practice and good muscle control to get it right every time.

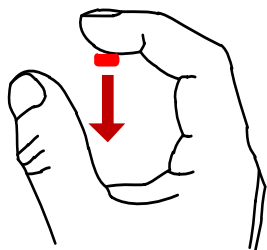
## Trigger Pull

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The trigger must be operated smoothly and should never be jerked or yanked back. Firing the gun involves pulling the trigger straight back using the action of a single finger slowly until the shot breaks while maintaining a constant grip on the gun.

Imagine you are pressing your finger against a thin piece of glass. It may bend slightly as you apply pressure, but eventually with more and more pressure it will break. This is how the trigger should feel when used correctly.

If you jerk the trigger then all your hard work in lining up the target and maintaining your sight picture will be wasted as the gun will go off target with the trigger pull.



Where the finger is placed on the trigger is also important. Place the pad of your finger on the trigger. Letting the finger slip too far into the trigger will cause your shots to go off target as grip will change as you pull the trigger back.

### **Finger Pad on Trigger**

Once the shot is fired, hold the trigger back for a second or so, then slowly release it and let the trigger travel all the way forward before taking the next shot. Remember that if you are not going to take another shot right away or take the gun off the target, then you must take your finger off the trigger as well!

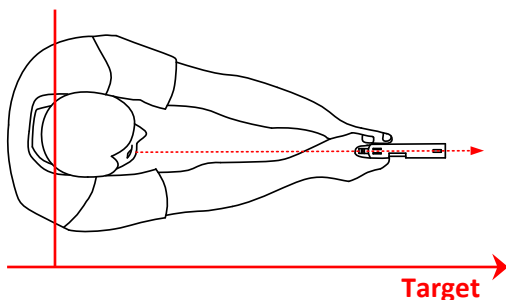
## Stance

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A good stance will provide a strong and stable platform, which is vital for accuracy. The gun will also recoil (push back) when fired. A good stance will help maintain aim and control this recoil.

### Two handed shooting

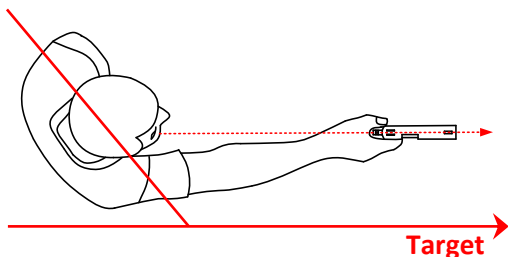
To begin with you will be shooting two handed using the Isosceles stance. Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, facing square on to the target. Your arms should be fully extended straight out in front holding the gun. You don't need to lock your arms, but make sure they are straight out in front of you pointing at the target.



You should be standing straight up, or leaning forward slightly. Don't lean back, or you will have less control of the recoil.

### Single Handed shooting

Single handed shooting is more difficult as the gun and recoil needs to be supported with only one hand. Stand with your feet and shoulders at a 45 degree angle to the target.



Your feet should be shoulder width apart. Extend your arm straight out pointing at the target. Your other hand is loose by your side.

## **SSPC Club Information**

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The Sporting Shooters Pistol Club (SSPC) is part of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (SSAA) and we operate out of the SSAA range in Springvale and for some competitions at the SSAA range in Little River.

We maintain a friendly club atmosphere and family participation is encouraged. We also have a licensed Bar and Bistro facilities where members can relax and socialise after a shoot. Note that when on the range or shooting there is a zero alcohol requirement.

Our club is entirely run by a group of hardworking volunteers.

## **Competitions**

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SSPC holds a number of different competition shoots in which you can participate as a club member.

### Air Pistol

This match is a slow fire match which is shot at 10m on a 12mm ten-ring target. Air pistol is an excellent match to learn handgun shooting fundamentals: the guns used in Air pistol are extremely accurate, are easy to control and have no recoil.

### ISSF 25 Metre

This match consists of two separate stages 30 shots of fire. The two stages are "Precision" and "Rapid Fire". The Precision stage is shot at 25m on a precision target with five minutes allowed for each five shot series. The Rapid Fire stage is also shot at 25m, but the target turns toward the shooter for three seconds and away for seven seconds.

The match can be shot two ways: With a Centrefire pistol (in which case it is referred to as a 25 Metre Centrefire competition), or with a .22 Rimfire pistol (referred to as a 25 Metre sport pistol competition). This competition is always shot one handed.

### Service Match

The service match is shot at ranges from 50 metres down to 7 metres and consists of 90 shots. Throughout competition shooters are required to shoot prone, sitting, kneeling and standing from a barricade position with right and left hand. You will need to get a holster qualification to shoot this competition.

### IPSC

The IPSC competition consists of a number of action packed stages with the shooter running between targets in order to get the highest score in the shortest possible time. Each stage has variety of target types (paper and steel, stationary and moving, scoring targets and penalty targets). There is no set way these targets are arranged, nor even how many targets are used in a single match. You will need to get a holster qualification to shoot this competition.

### Competition days

Competitions shoots are held at Springvale throughout the week.

Tuesday from 5pm until 9pm (no centrefire after 8pm)

Thursday from 5pm until 9pm (no centrefire after 8pm)

Saturdays from 10am until 2pm

Sundays from 12 until 2pm

The range is set up for ISSF style 25 metre competitions during these times (sport pistol and centrefire).



Other competitions such as Service match and IPSC are held on a monthly basis. Check our website competition calendar for the dates.

Even before you are a member, you are always welcome to come and watch any of the competitions being held.

## How to Join SSPC

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There are several steps involved in joining our club:

**Step 1:** You will need to successfully complete this introduction to handguns course, demonstrating knowledge of safety and good gun handling.

**Step 2:** You need to come down to the range and shoot along with our other members on at least two occasions. These sessions will be signed off in your participation record at the end of this book.

**Step 3:** Join the SSAA. We are a part of the SSAA, so you will need to be an SSAA member before joining.

**Step 4:** Handgun Safety Course. You will need to successfully complete the Handgun Safety Course. This is a one day course which goes into a lot more detail about handgun safety and handgun laws. The Safety Course is run at Springvale range. You will need to book in at the front office.

**Step 5:** Apply for membership! Joining forms are available from our website at: <http://www.sspc.org.au/>

## Licensing and Handgun Ownership

Once you are a member of our club, you will be able to apply for a provisional handgun licence. This licence will allow you to shoot without filling out a NORI (Notice of Receiving Instruction) form. You can then take part in any of our competitions. You will need to take part in at least 5 competitions while you hold your provisional licence.

Once you hold a provisional licence you can purchase and store ammunition, but you cannot own a handgun.

The provisional licence lasts for 6 to 12 months, after which you can apply for a full handgun licence.

Once you have a full handgun licence you can make an application to purchase a handgun. There are more steps involved in this process which you will learn about later.

Remember that our club has plenty of different handguns available for you to use. There is no charge for this and many of our club members do not own handguns and instead use the club guns for all competitions.

## Handgun Laws

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Handgun laws are a separate subject, and you will learn more about this during the Safety Course. For now, there are a few things you need to be aware of:

### NORI Forms

Until you have a provisional handgun licence, each time you shoot you will need to complete a NORI (Notice of Receiving Instruction) form. The form is then signed by your instructor and forwarded to the Victoria Police. You will receive a confirmation letter from the police each time you participate in shooting with a NORI form.

You can only use a maximum of 10 NORI participations before you must either stop shooting or apply for a full licence. (This is reduced to 3 for juniors).

Even if you have joined as a member of our club, you must continue to complete NORI forms for each shoot until your provisional licence arrives.

### Ammunition

You are not allowed to possess any handgun ammunition unless you have a handgun licence (or provisional handgun licence).

Make sure that you do not take any ammunition home with you!

### Prohibited Persons

You are not allowed to take part in any shooting activity if you are a prohibited person. This may include people who are subject to an intervention order or have been in prison. Please discuss this with your instructor if you think it affects you.

## **Course Completion Certificate**

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This certificate will be signed off once you have successfully completed the Introduction to Handguns course.

Once you have completed this course, you may come down to the range on any of the SSPC shooting days and shoot alongside members of the club while continuing your NORI participation.

### ***Handgun Awareness Course Completion Certificate***

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_

has completed the SSPC Introduction to Handguns course  
and has demonstrated safe gun handling and safety  
awareness throughout the instruction.

Name of Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

*You will need to photocopy these pages and include them with your application as proof that you have completed the course and participated in at least two additional shoots.*

## Participation Record

Use this page to record your NORI participations at SSPC. You are able to apply for membership after you have completed three participations (one being the actual introduction course and at least two further shoots as recorded here).

NORI	Date	Supervisor Name	Supervisor Signature
2			
3			

You are able to apply for SSPC membership after the third NORI Shoot. While you are waiting for you membership to be processed you can continue to shoot with us as a NORI.

NORI	Date	Supervisor Name	Supervisor Signature
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Plan of Springvale Range

SSAA Springvale Range  
is located at:  
  
710 Dandenong Road,  
Springvale 3171  
  
Phone 03 9547 0007

