



BHPSC New Shooter Orientation Guide

Getting Started in “Practical Shooting” (USPSA)

Practical Shooting is “Safety in Action:” **Safety** is **the** watchword of the entire USPSA program! Practical Shooters instinctively practice safe gun handling under pressure, and they demand the same of others. USPSA-affiliated clubs always check new shooters to insure that they have the skills needed for safe participation. Consequently, before you are allowed to compete in any USPSA practical shooting match or organized practice, a Practical Shooting Safety Check is always required.

Upon successful completion of your Safety Check and Orientation, you will be issued a BHPSC “Safety Check Card,” and will be allowed to shoot as a “Coach-Through” for your first three matches. Upon successful completion of your first three matches (i.e., no unsafe gun handling) as a Coach-Through, the Safety Director or another BHPSC Board Member will sign your card (make sure you ask!), allowing you to compete (as “unclassified”) in weekly matches. You must join USPSA to obtain a national classification, however it is not required.

You will be expected to have:

- A serviceable and safe handgun, minimum caliber 38 spl./9mm. All of the critical safeties (slide safety, safety catches, half cock notch, disconnect, hammer block, etc.) on your handgun must be functional. If your gun is fitted with a trigger shoe or extension, it may not protrude beyond the outer dimensions of the trigger guard.
- A safe holster on a belt; the muzzle of the handgun must point downwards to the ground within three feet of you when standing naturally relaxed, the trigger must be covered, and the belt upon which the holster and allied equipment are carried must be secured at waist level (please leave your shoulder holsters, S.O.B. holsters, fanny packs, manly “Tac Ops” thigh holsters, etc., at home!).
- Magazines or speed loaders (2 or 3 is plenty to start with), and carriers for same. Bring at least 100 rounds of ammunition, 150 is better. We suggest factory ammo for your safety check, unless you are an experience reloader.

- Ear and eye protection. Shooting glasses must be industrial safety glasses or genuine shooting glasses; most sunglasses lack the strength needed to afford adequate protection. Foam ear plugs provide excellent ear protection, and they're cheap.

At your Safety Check, we will expect you to demonstrate these safe gun handling skills:

- Safely un-holster gun
- Load and make ready
- Draw and fire from various starting positions
- Safely reload your gun (both standing and moving)
- Safe downrange & cross-range movement (180° rule)
- Safe strong- and weak-hand only shooting
- Safely clear a (semi-auto) jam
- Unload and show clear

All clubs are considered a "cold" range: This means that all guns must be unloaded, and holstered (or cased/bagged) at **ALL** times. Guns are not to be removed from holsters or cases, unless and until so **directed** by a Range Officer, or in a **designated safety area**. Guns must be empty (inclusive of magazines, snap caps, and/or empty cases), with actions closed and hammers down, when holstered or cased. Gear up only in a Safety Area. Your car is **NOT** a Safety Area! Do **NOT** handle ammunition in a Safety Area!

Always arrive at the range with your empty gun secured in a suitable bag or case - including anything you might normally be carrying concealed.

Firearm safety is ultimately a matter of personal responsibility and self-control, two key qualities stressed in Practical Shooting. The shooter is always responsible for his or her actions and safe gun handling.

The basic principles of safe gun handling are expressed in the Practical Shooting Code of Ethics:

1. I will treat every firearm as a loaded one!
2. I will never point a firearm at anything I am not willing to destroy!
3. I will be sure of my target and what is behind it before firing!
4. I will keep my finger off the trigger until my muzzle is pointed downrange!

Violations of this Code of Ethics, as defined in the USPSA Practical Shooting Rule Book, are considered gross safety violations, and will lead to disqualification from matches. The careless and/or immature will find other shooters intolerant of sloppy gun handling - they expect to

compete under safe conditions. Like rock climbing, white water rafting, or sky diving, Practical Shooting contains a remote element of danger. Unlike virtually any other sport, though, the "disaster factors" are all under your direct control. That is why we demand that you accept full responsibility for your actions; it's your gun, you're shooting it, and you have full control of the "disaster factors."

If you can't or won't accept this responsibility, then this isn't the sport for you!

The Fundamental Safety Rules You Need to Know

From USPSA's Practical Shooting Handbook, 2010 Edition:

2.4 SAFETY AREAS

The host organization (i.e., BHPSC) is responsible for the construction and placement of a sufficient number of Safety Areas for the match. They should be conveniently placed and easily identified with signs. Safety Areas should include a table with the safe direction and boundaries clearly shown.

2.4.1 Competitors are permitted to use the Safety Areas for the activities stated below provided they remain within the boundaries of the Safety Area and the firearm is pointed in a safe direction (this would be towards the wall of our designated Safety Area). Violations are subject to match disqualification (see Rules 10.5.1 & 10.5.12).

2.4.1.1 Casing, uncasing, and holstering unloaded firearms.

2.4.1.2 Practice the mounting, drawing, "dry-firing" and re-holstering of unloaded firearms.

2.4.1.3 Practice the insertion and removal of **empty** magazines and/or to cycle the action of a firearm.

2.4.1.4 Conduct inspections, stripping, cleaning, repairs and maintenance of firearms, component parts and other accessories.

2.4.2 Dummy ammunition (including practice or training rounds, snap caps and empty cases), loaded magazines, loaded speed loading devices and live rounds **must not be handled** in a Safety Area under any circumstances (see Rule 10.5.12).

5.1.6 SERVICEABLE & SAFE

Handguns must be serviceable and safe. Range Officers may demand examination of a competitor's handgun or related equipment, at any time, to check they are functioning safely. If any such item is declared unserviceable or unsafe by a Range Officer, it must be withdrawn from the match until the item is repaired to the satisfaction of the Range Master.

5.2.6 HOLSTERS

USPSA Handgun matches will not require the use of a particular type or brand of holster. However, the Range Master may deem that a competitor's holster is unsafe and order that it be improved to his satisfaction, failing which it must be withdrawn from the match. Divisions may restrict a specific type of holster.

5.2.7 Competitors must not be permitted to commence a course of fire wearing:

- 5.2.7.1 A shoulder holster or “tie-down” rig (visible or otherwise), except as specified in Rule 5.2.8.
- 5.2.7.2 A holster with the heel of the butt of the handgun below the top of the belt, except as specified in Appendix D, or otherwise indicated in Rule 5.2.8 (i.e., LE Duty Holsters).
- 5.2.7.3 A holster with the muzzle of the handgun pointing further than 3 feet from the competitor’s feet while standing relaxed.
- 5.2.7.4 A holster which does not completely prevent access to, or activation of, the trigger of the handgun while holstered.

5.4 EYE & HEARING PROTECTION

- 5.4.1 All persons near an area potentially exposed to ricochet debris or bullet fragments are required to wear eye protection. All persons near an area where the sound of firearms being fired may potentially cause hearing damage are required to wear adequate hearing protection.
- 5.4.2 If a Range Officer deems that a competitor about to make an attempt at a course of fire is wearing inadequate eye or ear protection, the Range Officer may order the competitor to rectify the situation before allowing the competitor to continue. The Range Master is the final authority on this matter.
- 5.4.3 If a Range Official notices that a competitor has lost or displaced their eye or ear protection during a course of fire, or has commenced a course of fire without them, the Range Official must immediately stop the competitor who will be required to reshoot the course of fire after the protective devices have been restored.
- 5.4.4 A competitor who inadvertently loses eye or ear protection during a course of fire, or commences a course of fire without them, is entitled to stop, point their handgun in a safe direction and indicate the problem to the Range Official, in which case the provisions of the previous rule will apply.
- 5.4.5 A competitor who intentionally loses or displaces eye and/or ear protection during a course of fire will be disallowed the provisions of Rule 5.4.4, and will be subject to match disqualification (see Rule 10.6.3)

5.5.3 PERMITTED AMMUNITION

Metal-piercing, tracer, and incendiary ammunition is strictly prohibited.

5.5.5 UNSAFE AMMUNITION

Any ammunition which is, in the opinion of a Range Officer, unsafe (pierced primers, multiple squibs, etc.) will be withdrawn from the competition.

5.7.2 MALFUNCTIONS

In the event that a competitor's handgun malfunctions after the Start signal, the competitor may safely attempt to correct the problem and continue the course of fire. During such corrective action, the competitor must keep the muzzle of the handgun pointing safely downrange at all times.

8.4.1 RELOADING

When loading, reloading or unloading during a course of fire, the competitor's fingers must be visibly outside the trigger guard and the handgun must be pointed safely down range or in another safe direction authorized by a Range Officer (see Section 10.5).

8.5.1 MOVEMENT

Except when the competitor is actually aiming or shooting at targets, all movement (see Appendix A3) must be accomplished with the fingers visibly outside the trigger guard and the safety should be engaged. The handgun must be pointed in a safe direction.

8.6.1 VERBAL SAFETY WARNINGS

No assistance of any kind can be given to a competitor during a course of fire, except that any Range Officer assigned to a stage may issue safety warnings to a competitor at any time. Such warnings will not be grounds for the competitor to be awarded a reshoot.

10.4 MATCH DISQUALIFICATIONS ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE

A competitor who causes an accidental discharge must be stopped by a Range Officer as soon as possible. An accidental discharge is defined as follows:

10.4.1 A shot, which travels over a backstop, a berm or in any other direction, specified in the written stage briefing by the match organizers as being unsafe. Note that a competitor who legitimately fires a shot at a target, which then travels in an unsafe direction, will not be disqualified (the provisions of Section 2.3 may apply).

10.4.2 A shot which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor, except when shooting at a paper target closer than 10 feet to the competitor.

10.4.2.1 Exception — A bullet which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor due to a “squib”.

10.4.2.2 In the case of a shot striking a prop where the bullet is deflected or does not continue to strike the ground, if the Range Official determines that the bullet

would have struck the ground within 10 feet of the competitor had it not been deflected or stopped by the prop, the provisions of 10.4.2 shall apply.

10.4.3 A shot which occurs while loading, reloading or unloading a handgun. This includes any shot fired during the procedures outlined in Rule 8.3.1 and Rule 8.3.7.

10.4.3.1 Exception – a detonation, which occurs while unloading a handgun, is not considered a shot or discharge subject to a match disqualification, however, Rule 5.1.6 may apply.

10.4.4 A shot which occurs during remedial action in the case of a malfunction.

10.4.5 A shot which occurs while transferring a handgun between hands.

10.4.6 A shot which occurs during movement, except while actually shooting at targets.

10.5 MATCH DISQUALIFICATIONS - UNSAFE GUN HANDLING

Examples of unsafe gun handling include, but are not limited to:

10.5.1 Handling a firearm at any time except when in a designated safety area or when under the supervision of, and in response to a direct command issued by, a Range Officer.

10.5.2 If at any time during the course of fire, a competitor allows the muzzle of his handgun to point rearwards, that is further than 90 degrees from the median intercept of the backstop, or in the case of no backstop, allows the muzzle to point up range, whether the handgun is loaded or not (limited exceptions: 10.5.6).

10.5.3 If at any time during the course of fire, or while loading, reloading or unloading, a competitor drops his handgun or causes it to fall, loaded or not. Note that a competitor who, for any reason during a course of fire, safely and intentionally places the handgun on the ground or other stable object will not be disqualified provided:

10.5.3.1 The competitor maintains constant physical contact with the handgun, until it is placed firmly and securely on the ground or another stable object, and;

10.5.3.2 The competitor remains within 3 feet of the handgun at all times (except where the handgun is placed at a greater distance, under the supervision of a Range Official, in order to comply with a start position), and;

10.5.3.3 The provisions of Rule 10.5.2 do not occur, and;

10.5.3.4 The handgun is in the ready condition as specified in Section 8.1, or;

- 10.5.3.5 A self-loading pistol has an empty chamber, the magazine removed and the slide locked open, or;
- 10.5.3.6 A revolver has the cylinder open and empty.
- 10.5.4 Drawing or holstering a handgun within the confines of a tunnel.
- 10.5.5 Allowing the muzzle of a handgun to point at any part of the competitor's body during a course of fire (i.e. sweeping).
 - 10.5.5.1 Exception – A match disqualification is not applicable for sweeping of the lower extremities (below the belt) while drawing or re-holstering of the handgun, provided that the competitor's fingers are clearly outside of the trigger guard. This exception is only for holstered handguns. Sweeping does not apply to a handgun holstered in compliance with Rules 5.2.1 and 5.2.7.
- 10.5.6 While facing downrange, allowing the muzzle of a loaded handgun to point up-range beyond a radius of 3 feet from a competitor's feet while drawing or re-holstering.
- 10.5.7 Wearing or using more than one handgun at any point in time during a course of fire.
- 10.5.8 Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard while clearing a malfunction where the competitor clearly moves the handgun away from aiming at targets.
- 10.5.9 Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard during loading, reloading, or unloading. Exception: while complying with the "Make Ready" command to lower the hammer of a gun without a de-cocking lever, or while initially loading a revolver with a spurless hammer.
- 10.5.10 Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard during movement in accordance with Section 8.5.
- 10.5.11 Holstering a loaded handgun, in any of the following conditions:
 - 10.5.11.1 A single action self-loading pistol with the safety not applied.
 - 10.5.11.2 A double action or selective action pistol with the hammer cocked and the safety not applied.
 - 10.5.11.3 A revolver with the hammer cocked.
- 10.5.12 Handling live or dummy ammunition (including practice or training rounds, snap caps and empty cases), loaded magazines or loaded speed loading devices in a Safety Area, or failing to comply with Rule 2.4.1. The word "handling" does not preclude competitors from entering a Safety Area with ammunition in magazines or speed loading devices on their belt, in their pockets or in their range bag, provided the competitor does not

physically remove the loaded magazines or loaded speed loading devices from their retaining or storage device while within the Safety Area.

10.5.13 Having a loaded firearm other than when specifically ordered to by the Range Officer.

10.5.14 Retrieving a dropped handgun. Dropped handguns must always be retrieved by a Range Officer who will, after checking and/or clearing the handgun, place it directly into the competitor's gun case, gun bag or holster. Dropping an unloaded handgun or causing it to fall outside of a course of fire is not an infraction, however, a competitor who retrieves a dropped handgun will receive a match disqualification.

10.5.15 Using metal piercing, incendiary and/or tracer ammunition (see Rule 5.5.3), and/or using any ammunition which has been deemed unsafe by a Range Official (see Rule 5.5.5).

10.5.15.1 Ammunition declared unsafe by a Range Official due to multiple squibs, shall not subject the competitor to disqualification.

10.5.16 Drawing a handgun while facing up-range.

10.5.17 A shot fired at a metal target from a distance of less than 23 feet, measured from the face of the target to the nearest part of the competitor's body in contact with the ground (see Rule 2.1.3).

10.6 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

10.6.1 Competitors will be disqualified from a match for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unsportsmanlike. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, dishonesty, failing to comply with the reasonable directions of a Match Official, or any behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute. The Range Master must be notified as soon as possible.

10.6.2 Other persons may be expelled from the range for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unacceptable. Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, failing to comply with the reasonable directions of a Match Official, interference with the operation of a course of fire and/or a competitor's attempt thereof, and any other behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute.

10.6.3 A competitor who is deemed by a Range Officer to have intentionally removed or caused the loss of eye or ear protection in order to gain a competitive advantage will be disqualified.

10.7 PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

10.7.1 All persons are required to be in complete control both mentally and physically during USPSA matches.

10.7.2 USPSA considers the abuse of alcoholic products, non-prescription and non-essential drugs and the use of illegal or performance enhancing drugs, irrespective of how they are taken or administered, to be an extremely serious offense.

10.7.3 Except when used for medicinal purposes, competitors and officials at matches must not be affected by drugs (including alcohol) of any sort during matches. Any person, who in the opinion of the Range Master is visibly under the influence of any of the items described herein, will be disqualified from the match and may be required to leave the range.

10.7.4 USPSA reserves the right to prohibit any general or specific substances and to introduce tests for the presence of these substances at any time.

General Information

Practical Shooting lets you test your defensive skills in a sporting atmosphere. It is open to all reputable persons. You can use any firearm meeting the minimum power factor (9mm/.38 spl.), as all types of firearms compete together without handicap (power is factored via USPSA target scoring zones).

We (i.e., BHPSC) also will allow new junior shooters to start with .22 caliber pistols, once they have proven they can handle their firearm safely. There is no specific age minimum, but they must be able to behave rationally (i.e., no out-of-control tantrums), maintain a safe attitude and adhere to all standard safety regulations. Failure to meet any of these, will result in disqualification and/or may result in the shooter being asked not to return.

Practical Shooting Matches are realistic and diverse. Course designers mix props such as walls, barricades, doors, and tables with full or partial targets, no-shoot targets, steel reactive targets, moving targets, and others. As Practical Shooting is freestyle, you provide the solution to the shooting problem, and both score and speed are factored.

U.S.P.S.A. stands for the “United States Practical Shooting Association,” the IPSC governing body for the United States. I.P.S.C. (pronounced “ip-sick”) stands for the “International Practical Shooting Confederation,” the world body that governs the sport of Practical Shooting.

D.V.C. (diligentia, vis, celiratis) is the USPSA motto; it stands for “Accuracy, Power, and Speed,” and symbolizes the challenge of the sport. How fast can you shoot? How accurately? Can you find the right mix of speed and accuracy when using a firearm?

The Principals of Practical Shooting

1. Practical competition is open to all reputable persons, without regard to occupation; it may specifically not be limited to public servants.
2. Accuracy, power, and speed are equal elements of practical shooting, and practical competition must be conducted in such a way as to evaluate these elements equally.
3. Firearm types are not separated; all types compete together without handicap. This does not apply to the power of the firearm, as power is an element to be recognized and rewarded.
4. Practical competition is a test of expertise in the use of practical firearms and equipment. Any item of equipment, or modification to equipment, which sacrifices practical functionality for competitive advantage contravenes the principles of the sport.
5. Practical competition is conducted using practical targets, which reflect the general size and shape of such objects as the firearms may reasonably be called upon to hit in their primary intended use.
6. The challenge presented in practical competition must be done with the utmost safety in mind. Courses of Fire should follow a practical rationale and simulate hypothetical situations in which firearms might reasonably be used.
7. Practical competition is diverse. Within the limits of realism, problems are constantly changed, never permitting unrealistic specialization of either technique or equipment. Courses of fire may be repeated, but no course may be repeated enough to allow its use as a definitive measure of practical shooting skill.
8. Practical competition is freestyle. In essence, the competitive problem is posed, and the participant is permitted the freedom to solve it in the manner he considers best, within the limitations of the competitive situation as provided.

Your Gun, Gear and Accessories; Getting Started

First, shoot a few matches. You can actually get started with very little equipment: A safe gun and holster, ammo carriers, a belt and several hundred rounds of ammunition. Eye and hearing protection are mandatory. Most all magazine/speedloader carriers work - some are more elegant than others. You can start with two magazines (or speed loaders), but most shooters carry four or more (courses of fire requiring up to 32 rounds are not uncommon). A bag for spent brass is handy.

Don't rush out and spend - you'll be sorry later. Study what experienced shooters are using and ask them about their guns and gear; they're always happy to help new shooters. Get a number of and ask where the best buys are before you do any major spending. Frequently, you can arrange to borrow equipment to try.

Wear adequate clothing. Practical Shooting is an outdoor sport practiced in all weather. Pouring rain, a foot of snow, whatever - the match goes on. Dress to stand around while you're waiting your turn to shoot. Pants should allow you to freely bend and stretch. Shirts should fit closely so loose fabric doesn't snag your draw. Stop holster wiggle with a good gun belt (if you ever shoot a match with a holster on a thin "street" belt, you'll quickly find out what holster wiggle is and how it badly slows down your draw) - in fact, the selection of a good gun belt is every bit as critical as the selection of a good holster and firearm. Good running shoes (cleated football shoes are popular) are a plus. Sunscreen and umbrellas are nice to have, as are gloves and hand-warmers for standing about in the cold. A small first aid kit is also nice to have.

Gun store commandos and Rambo wanna-be's have absolutely no place in our sport; so leave your camouflage clothing and your shirts with those clever and/or obscene sayings at home. USPSA is a sport - not SWAT training, not combat training, not militia apprenticeship! Un-sportsmanlike appearance and/or behavior will get you barred from the range. This sort of stuff gives us image headaches - we're sure you understand!

Your gun must be serviceable and safe - not fancy, trick, or custom. Start with the gun you selected for personal protection - your first few matches with it will tell you a lot. Remember - it needs to make minor (.38/9mm) to compete for place and/or prizes. Got a Glock? A 1911? Great! Need a \$3,000+ race gun to be competitive? No! In fact, Production Division (stock guns) have outstripped Open Division (race guns), and thus favoring newer shooters with "entry-level" armament.

Your First Match

Nervous about your first public performance? Most people are! Relax and enjoy it! Moreover, everyone you meet had a first match too; we've all been there. You'll find that both experienced shooters and Range Officers are friendly and helpful with new shooters. We all enjoy Practical Shooting, and we want to get you started right! Matches are just as much social gatherings as shooting contests.

Above all else, though, forget speed! Walk through the match – it's the smart move. Don't try to imitate the "hosers" that zip through a course at lightning speed and a shower of brass. To be good at this (or any other) sport, you have to pay your dues, learn the fundamentals, and be able to apply them on demand. Forget speed – think safe and smooth! Forget your time – concentrate on getting all "A" hits. Forget winning – think about your front sight. Practical Shooting is very much a mental game. Shooters who are obsessed with winning rarely do – they distract themselves.

Finally, concentrate on controlling your gun! Nobody wants to see you get disqualified on your first time out because of a safety violation, but it will happen if you try to run before you can walk, or try to miss fast before you can hit anything slow. Concentrate on learning safe gun handling practices – speed will come with practice and experience (or, put another way, it'll happen by itself or it won't happen at all – don't "try" to go fast). Always, always, always pay attention to your muzzle direction and where your trigger finger is!

The Range Commands

On each stage, a shooting order will be established. If you're not "on deck," you'll be helping to tape targets or retrieve brass. When you're "on deck," you will follow the next shooter (don't tape or pick when you're on deck - you won't have time to prepare yourself to shoot). When the shooter ahead of you is finished, the range is clear, and everyone is downrange picking brass and taping targets, this is your opportunity to walk through the course, play on the props, and finalize your game plan in your mind (do not, of course, touch your gun!). Be sure you finish your "practice" and come to the line ready to shoot when it's your turn!

When you are called, step into the shooting box (or initial shooting position), stand, and await the

Range Officer's commands: DO NOT touch your gun until you're told to!

The Range Officer will then issue these "Range Commands":

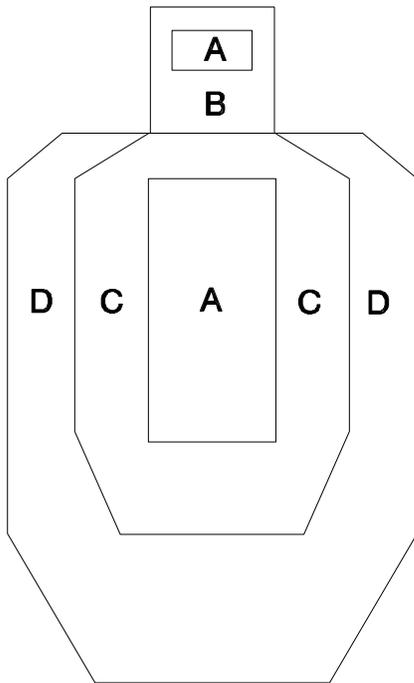
- Do You Understand The Course Of Fire?** Optional - most R.O.'s ask this (or something like it), but some don't. Now's your chance to ask any last-minute questions. If you don't respond, or reply in the affirmative, the next command you hear will be;
- Make Ready!** This is your "OK" to handle your gun. You may (usually) take a sight picture (BEFORE YOU LOAD) and load and holster your gun (remember to put that safety on - hammers down on double actions & revolvers). When you have assumed the mandated starting position, the next command you hear will be;
- Are You Ready?!** If you are NOT ready, shout "NOT READY!" If you react in any other way (nodding, etc.), or don't react at all, the R.O. will proceed with "the countdown." The next command you hear will be;
- Stand By!** This means the audible start signal is imminent. DO NOT "creep" towards your gun or change your starting position after you hear this command! Within two to five seconds, you'll hear a "beep," signaling you to commence shooting. Once you have completed the course of fire, stop in place, and await further commands. You will
- If You Are Finished, Unload And Show Clear.** With your finger out of the trigger guard and the muzzle pointed safely downrange, drop the magazine, empty the chamber, and lock or hold your slide back (revolvers, open and empty the cylinder); allow the R.O. to examine the now-empty gun (chamber and mag well). The next command you hear will be;
- If Gun Is Clear – Hammer Down** With the muzzle pointed safely downrange, close the slide, and DROP the hammer - this means pull the trigger as though you were firing a round (revolvers, just close your empty cylinder). This does NOT mean decock the gun. If your gun has a magazine safety, be sure to carry an empty magazine along if necessary to drop the hammer using the trigger – the RO wants to see the firing pin
- And Holster.** Holster your empty gun.

The Range Is Clear!

This signals the end of the course of fire. The tapers and pickers - and you - may go forward. Stay with the Range Officer and check your targets. Stay at least three feet from your targets, and don't touch them! Verify your score (scored correctly, hits totaled) and sign the score sheet. Don't worry about picking up after yourself: Someone will collect your spent brass and dropped magazines.

If, at any time, the RO blows a whistle or shouts “hold it!” “stop!” or the like, cease firing, point the muzzle safely downrange, remove your finger from the trigger guard, apply the safety, and await further instructions.

USPSA TARGET SCORING ZONES



SCORING USPSA TARGETS

<u>Points</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>
A	5	5
B	4	3
C	4	3
D	2	1

POWER FACTOR

$$\frac{(\text{bullet wt, gr}) * (\text{muzzle velocity, fps})}{1,000}$$

"Major" = 165 or greater

"Minor" = 125 - 164.99

Sub-Minor = <125 - scores zero

HIT FACTOR

total points ÷ total time = "hit factor" HIGHEST

HIT FACTOR WINS THE STAGE

and receives max. points for the stage. Other shooters are scored against the stage winner ratioed on their hit factors.

STEEL/REACTIVE TARGETS

Knockdown = 1 "A" hit.

There are three types of stages/scoring used in USPSA practical shooting:

COMSTOCK

Most common: Rounds & time unlimited. Usually, only your best two hits on a target are scored, but you may "shoot all you want!"

VIRGINIA COUNT

Limited rounds; (i.e.: you cannot make up misses as you can on a Comstock stage) but unlimited time. Extra shots, extra hits, and misses are penalized. The secret to V.C. stages is to take the time to get your hits. Time won't hurt you, but misses will kill you on a Virginia Count stage (since you can't fire extra shots to make up misses).

FIXED TIME

Both the number of rounds and time are fixed; extra shots, extra hits, and overtime shots are penalized (but misses are not). "Fixed" or "Timed" Fire courses are not factored; you are scored on your target points only. The secret to T.F. stages is to try for only the scoring hits that you can make in that time. Don't "spray and pray," trying to get all your shots off - you'll be disappointed.

Information About Shooter Classifications

As with most shooting sports, USPSA has "classifications," categorizing shooters into different skills strata. Not only does this mean that you only have to compete against those in your class (of equivalent skills), it provides an incentive (and, let's face it - a thrill) to advance in class as your skills and capabilities increase!

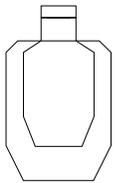
USPSA maintains a National Classification System for its members; you must maintain a membership in USPSA to become - and remain - classified. The National Classification System is based on your scores on National Classifier Stages. USPSA publishes a selection of standardized "Classifiers" that every club in the country uses. Your initial classification as a newer shooter (assuming, of course, that you've joined USPSA) is based on your first four scores on different Classifier Stages. Thereafter, your scores on Classifiers are forwarded to the national office by the hosting club; these are reviewed quarterly, and, if you've shot well enough, you'll be re-classified upwards.

The highest hit factor (nationally) on any given classifier constitutes a 100% score; your percentage is based on the ratio of your hit factor to that fired by the "100% shooter" that quarter. The average of your highest six most recent Classifiers establishes your National Classification, as follows:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Grand Master	95% - 100%
Master	85% - 94.9%
A	75% - 84.9%
B	60% - 74.9%
C	40% - 59.9%
D	< 40%

USPSA Targets

You've already seen the standard USPSA metric paper target (and its scoring zones) on a preceding page. USPSA stages of fire ("stages") can contain full or partial USPSA metric targets, steel reactive targets, swingers, turners, appearing and disappearing targets. The only limitations being the stage designer's imagination and the applicable Safety Rules in the USPSA Handbook. Let's look at the targets you'll most commonly encounter:



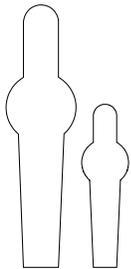
USPSA Metric Targets. (full) The targets are tan in color. Scoring zones are delineated by pressed in or punched scoring lines that are invisible except at very close range.



No-Shoot Targets. These are white, and may or may not have a black "X" across them. Hits on no-shoot targets are always penalized 10 points each.



Hard-Cover Targets (various configurations). The obstructed (black or otherwise colored) portion of the target represents hard cover that is impenetrable to a full bullet diameter. Hits in hard cover are deemed misses, and are penalized 10 points for each missing hit in the scoring portion of the target. This is important in Comstock stages: You may fire extra shots to make up for hits in the hard cover.



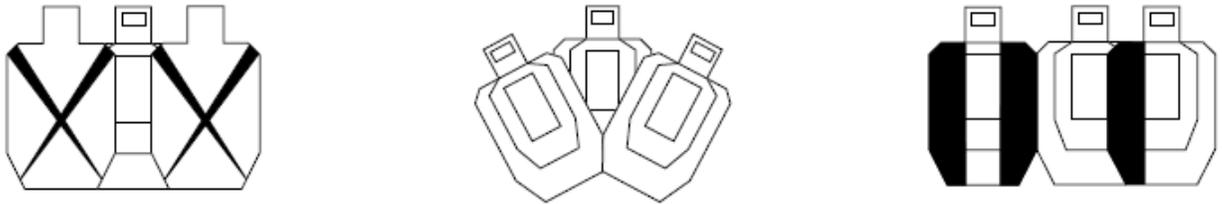
Large "Pepper" and Small "Poppers". These are steel reactive targets that must fall to score (knockdown = 1 "A" hit or 5 points). Stages may include no-shoot poppers. Pepper poppers and US poppers are commonly used to activate moving targets when they're knocked down. They are calibrated with minor power factor 9mm ammunition prior to the match to insure that they'll fall if properly struck.



8" round and 6" square steel plates. These are steel reactive targets that must fall to score (knockdown = 1 "A" hit or 5 points). These, along with regulation poppers, are the only legal steel targets for USPSA.

Almost every stage will include some combination or combinations of USPSA, hard-cover, and/or no-shoot targets, and will more often than not include a steel target or two.

You'll also encounter partial/combo targets delineated by no-shoots, another shoot target(s), or perhaps a hard cover target, like these:



All targets are impenetrable to a full bullet diameter, so, a hole through two targets only scores on the “top” target (the first one the bullet passes through). This includes no-shoot’s and hard cover. For example, a full bullet diameter through the center of the no-shoots flanking the first target above would not score on the shoot target behind it! Likewise, a full bullet diameter through the right-hand “D” zone of the angled left-hand target in the second array above would not score a “C” on the center target!