



December 2020 Newsletter

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2020 we will be running a Drill of the Month in each edition of the newsletter. The goal is help motivate folks to get to the range and actually shoot their defensive weapons, and to have some fun in the process. Each month we'll post a drill or a short course of fire. You are encouraged to go to the range, shoot the drill, and then post your thoughts and a photo of your target on the Rangemaster Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rangemaster/> .

This year I posted the same drill in January and again in December. This gives you a chance to set a baseline in January, and then check your progress in December. Let's go shooting!

Baseline Skills Assessment Drill

Use a B-8 repair center, FBI-IP-1 bullseye, or the bullseye on an LTT-1 target, scored as printed. This drill is intended to be shot cold, from concealed carry.

5 yards Draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds, using both hands.

5 yards Start gun in hand, at Ready, in dominant hand only. Fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.

5 yards Start gun in hand, at Ready, in non-dominant hand only. Fire 2 rounds in 3 seconds.

7 yards Start gun in hand, loaded with 3 rounds only. Fire 3 rounds, conduct an empty gun reload, and fire 3 more rounds, all in 10 seconds.

10 yards Start gun in hand, at Ready. Fire 4 rounds in 4 seconds.

20 rounds total. Possible score = 200

Why Do You Own a Gun?

The Pew Research Center is a think tank that generates research on a wide variety of social issues. They recently conducted a fairly large survey on gun ownership, and found some interesting information. To read the study, see:

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/06/22/americas-complex-relationship-with-guns/>

One quick take-away from this survey: the reasons Americans own guns have shifted considerably since 1999. Now, instead of sporting applications, the majority of gun owners cite protection as their primary reason for owning a gun. Those citing “protection” as their reason for owning a gun went from 26% in 1999, to 48% in 2013, to 67% in 2017. This is quite a shift in thinking for many people. With the current unrest and uncertainty in the country, I imagine the percentage who think in terms of protection has gone even higher.

Medical Study on How Trauma Care Reduces the Homicide Rate

Here is a medical study about something I’ve been preaching for years. The actual murder rate would be five times as high as it is without the intervention of modern trauma care. It’s not that people aren’t trying to kill each other—it’s that modern trauma care allows a much lower percentage of victims to die.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1124155/?fbclid=IwAR15FK1j9MQAbdt50r-SvzRtKoiD5gFTWKjnHYS0dU4VSUfvVVBtXSyTW0U>

Gospel of the Gauge, the Book of The Beretta 1301T

It is no secret that I am a huge fan of the serious social shotgun. In the military context there are far more useful weapons, but for the urban police officer or the armed citizen, nothing beats the performance of a 12 gauge loaded with buckshot when dealing with armed human predators at close

range. The Remington 870 has been in continuous production since 1950, and to date over 10 million have been sold. That's the shotgun I got my initial training on and the one I have the most trigger time with. It's no surprise then to look in my gun room and find four of them, including 18" barrels and a 14" shorty.

A couple of years ago I was intrigued by the introduction of the Beretta 1301 series, especially the 1301 Tactical, or 1301T model. I handled one at SHOT when they were first unveiled, and I really liked it. Since then, I have observed quite a few of them in classes, both in shotgun operator classes and shotgun instructor courses. This has given me an opportunity to watch thousands of rounds fired through them, many in stressful drills. That's a pretty good way to get a feel for a particular model's handling characteristics and reliability. I also shot several individual specimens belonging to my students, and liked the way they handled. I have been impressed by the lack of observed malfunctions and the degree of enthusiasm shown by their owners. So much so that I bought one for myself a couple of years ago and began working with it on the range.

At an overall length of 37.8 inches, the 1301T is almost exactly the same length as an 870 with the same 18.5" barrel length. At just 6 pounds, 6 ounces empty, the 1301T is, however, a pound lighter than the 870, making it a bit faster to mount and swing. The 1301T fires either 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " or 3" shells, although I see no use whatever for 3" shells in our context. The well designed butt stock has a 13" length of pull, suitable for modern shooting technique for the vast majority of American adults. Current standard magazine capacity is 5 rounds, plus one in the chamber.

The sights on the 1301T include a square ramp front post protected by wings, and a fully adjustable "ghost ring" type aperture sight, plus a small section of integral rail in front of the rear sight, for attaching an optic.

On my own 1301T, I have made some modifications to suit my individual preferences, although I freely admit the gun is quite suitable for defensive work right out of the box, with the one exception that I will note. On my gun, I replaced the factory rear sight assembly with the CROM (Co-Witness Ready Optic Mount) unit from Aridus Industries. The factory rear sight/optic rail unit is made primarily of plastic, and just does not look rugged to me. The CROM is steel, simpler, and more compact. The bolt charging handle on the 1301T is quite large and easy to use, so I left it alone. I also added a Nordic one shot magazine extension, giving me a 6 round magazine capacity. I have two rounds attached to the receiver via a Velcro shell holder for emergency reloads, and five more on the butt in a Velcro backed shell card. I have enough in/on the gun to handle just about any

emergency. I changed the factory butt stock for a MagPul version, but left the forend in factory configuration. That's almost all I've changed on mine, with one important addition.

The factory bolt release lever is located on the right side of the receiver, under the ejection port. It is well situated and sized for easy operation with either hand. The factory part on first generation 1301's, however, doubles as a bolt release when depressed at its front, and a quick magazine unloading device when pressed at its rear. Unfortunately, inadvertently pressing the rear of the catch results in a malfunction you have to stop and clear. This would be a deal breaker if it were not fixable, but fortunately, there are simple remedies. In my case, I installed a replacement bolt release lever from Aridus Industries. It only depresses in the front, eliminating the issue. Another way to fix this is a simple plastic shroud available from Tau Development Group or from Beretta, for under \$10.00. All three of these fixes can be installed in minutes, with just a screwdriver. They all completely eliminate the only problem I have found with this gun.

Early in 2018, Beretta started shipping this model with an improved bolt release that eliminates this problem. Be aware, however, that most of the 1301's in the field are the original version, and will need the modification described above.

The 1301T has a chrome lined barrel, with a fixed cylinder choke. This patterns very well with modern buckshot loads like Federal Flite-Control and gives excellent accuracy with slugs. Mine will put several slugs through the same hole at 25 yards, standing without support. That's as accurate as I need a shotgun to be.

If you are short enough to need a stock with a length of pull under 13 inches, Aridus makes an adaptor that allows the installation of a MagPul replacement butt-stock originally intended for the Mossberg 590 pump shotgun. With the spacers removed, this allows a 12.5" LOP. This is what I now have on my specimen.

If you want a light, fast handling, reliable autoloading shotgun, the 1301T just might be what you need. Mine has taken over duty as my house gun, which is the highest recommendation I can give it.

[Aridus Industries](http://www.aridusindustries.com/) (CROM rear sight assembly, side saddles, bolt release levers, stock adaptor) see <http://www.aridusindustries.com/>

[Tau Development Group](http://taudevgroup.com/1301/) (bolt release lever shroud) see <http://taudevgroup.com/1301/>

Beretta (bolt release shroud) see <http://www.berettausa.com/en-us/beretta-1301-bolt-shroud-kit/eu00074/>





Shotgun Training, Preparing for Success

In 2021 we have several shotgun courses, both for end users and for instructor candidates. There are some things you can do before class to maximize your learning opportunities, make things more comfortable for you, and generally allow you to have a better training experience.

The social or defensive use of the shotgun is radically different than its use in bird hunting or clay pigeon sports. To get the most out of these classes, please follow these directions.

Unless you have already had it shortened, the butt stock of your shotgun is too long. When we say the "length of pull" (LOP) that means the straight line distance from the trigger to the butt plate. For smaller stature persons, most females, and men under about 5'7" a 12 inch LOP is about right. If you are between 5'8" and 6' tall, a 12 1/2 to 13 inch LOP will probably work

fine. The factory length of pull on most shotguns runs from 13 7/8" to 14 1/4", which is just too long. You can replace a butt stock that is too long with a shorter aftermarket stock from Hogue, Mag Pul or Speedfeed, or a gunsmith can shorten your existing stock for a small fee. I recommend the MagPul, which is easily adjustable for LOP.

Your magazine needs to hold at least four rounds. If your shotgun has a plug in the magazine to limit capacity to two rounds please remove the plug before class.

You should have some means of carrying spare ammunition on the gun. A side saddle or a butt cuff are both fine, which ever you prefer. Strongly recommended, not required. A sling is optional, your choice.

Either a pump action or semiautomatic shotgun are fine for this class. The gold standard is the 870 Remington Police pump, or the Beretta 1301 Tactical for autoloaders.

Your barrel length should be between 18 and 22 inches. Barrels longer than 22 inches will be cumbersome and awkward in our context. A shotgun with a barrel less than 18 inches long is a Class III weapon. If you legally possess a short barrel shotgun feel free to use it in class. Have a copy of your ATF paperwork for the short barrel shotgun with you.

You will need birdshot for a lot of the manipulation practice. Please be aware that some really cheap birdshot has zinc or steel shell heads instead of brass and may cause extraction problems in your shotgun. Spending a little more money on quality shot shells is something you will be glad you did.

You will need a certain amount of buckshot, how much depends on the type of class. We prefer standard load eight or nine pellet 00 Buck. Magnum loads only increase recoil and will beat you up with no advantage. Standard velocity or reduced recoil 00 Buck will do just fine. Again, cheaper shells will not pattern as well as premium loads. If you want absolute maximum performance I suggest Federal Premium 8 pellet 00 Buck with the Flite Control wad, or the equivalent Hornady load with their Versa-Tite wad.

You will need a cooler with lunch, snacks, and **plenty** to drink. We will break for lunch at the range. Be sure you have what you need to sustain you through the day.

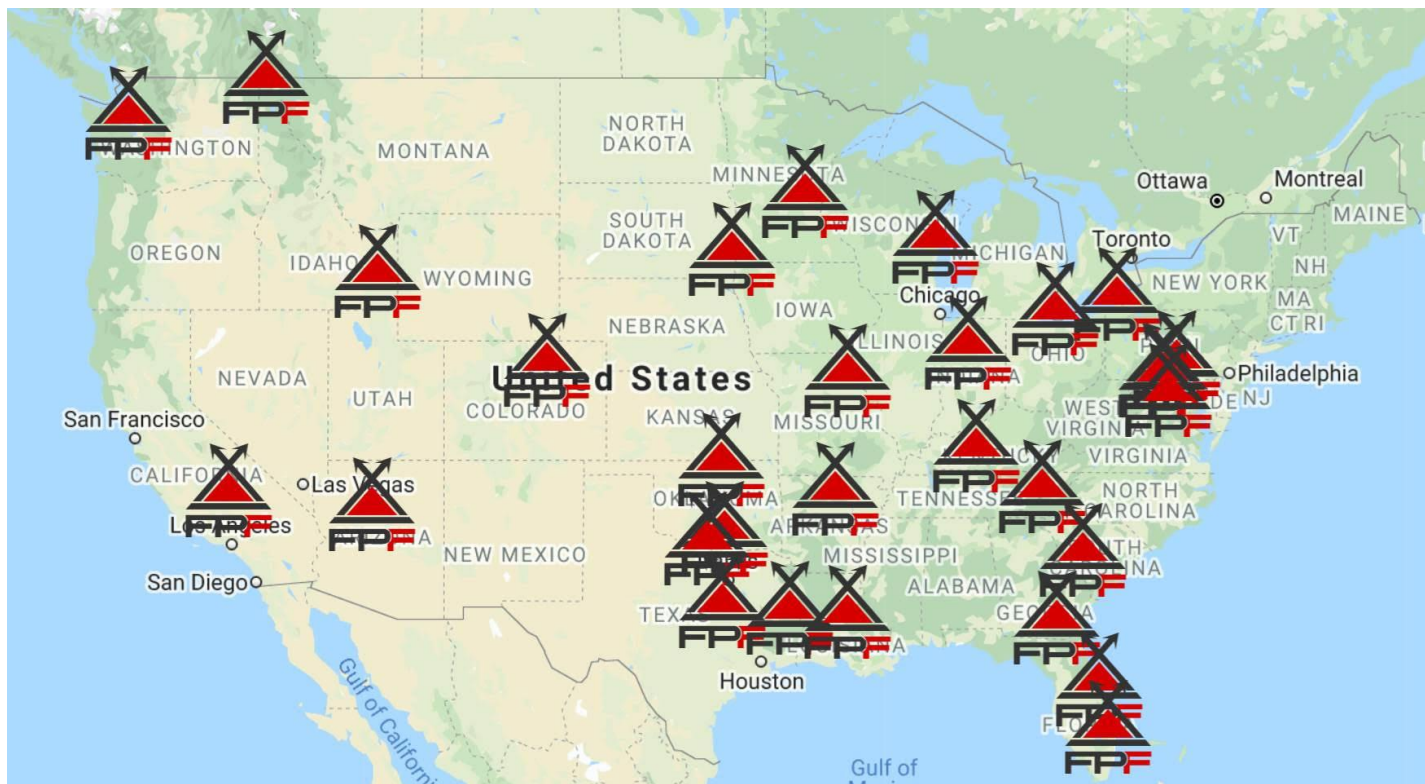
We look forward to working with you in class. The shotgun is a wonderful instrument, it can be devastatingly effective in trained hands, and shotgun classes are a lot of fun. See you there.

JOHN MURPHY, FPF TRAINING, COMING TO YOU IN 2021

John Murphy is retiring from his military/government career and transitioning to pursuing training full time. Lynn and I have been working with and mentoring Murphy since 2010, and he has developed a unique curriculum, blending awareness and verbal skills, OC deployment, immediate medical first aid, and the defensive handgun into an integrated package. I highly recommend this course, especially for newer practitioners of the defensive arts. His course is called "Concealed Carry: Street Encounter Skills and Tactics.", and it will be offered in numerous locations in 2021. Here is a link to a video preview of his coursework.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkCeN8NoHjA&t=1s>

For more information or to register for a class, visit <https://www.fpftraining.com> or email John@fpftraining.com



SHOTGUN INSTRUCTOR COURSE CLASS PIC, SHAWNEE, OK, 2020



UPCOMING COURSES IN EARLY 2021:

Jan 21-23 Pistol Instructor Development, Homestead, FL

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-fl-tickets-99755840404>

Jan 24-25 Advanced Pistol Instructor, Homestead, FL

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-fl-tickets-99757148316>

Feb 12-14 Pistol Instructor Development, Leesburg, FL

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-fl-tickets-100960062264>

Feb 20-21 Combative Pistol, Ruskin, FL

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-combative-pistol-course-fl-tickets-100974683998>



**Homestead Training Center, Homestead, Florida
South end of the Miami metro area
Weather is perfect for training in January
More content follows, keep reading!**

Splitting the Difference Between Speed and Accuracy

by Bob Jewell, Rangemaster Certified Instructor

Over the past few months, Tom has been publishing a Drill-of-the-Month in the newsletter. This month I'm presenting a Test-of-the-Month. No points or Comstock scoring on this – it's Pass/Fail. Why? Because gunfights are scored Pass/Fail. Before I present the Test-of-the-Month, let me give you some background.

For the past few years, I've been working on finding the balance between speed and accuracy. Accuracy can easily be defined as hitting what your aiming at, but on the other hand, defining speed can be quite challenging and controversial. As I wrote in my last article for the Rangemaster Newsletter (October 2019), my basis for speed is based on not shooting faster than I can make decisions. That's not a time determined by a shot timer or your skill level, but rather a time determined by your brain. For the normal individual, the brain needs between 0.25 – 0.35 seconds to recognize a stimulus and then another 0.2 – 0.3 seconds to decide how to respond to the stimulus. That puts the speed of decision making at between 0.45 – 0.65 seconds.

I created the seven shape Split-the-Difference target to evaluate speed versus accuracy in a self-defense situation. As I mentioned above, it's a pass/fail test. Misses generally indicate that you're shooting too fast (or having other issues with shooting fundamentals) and as Tom has taught us - misses in a gunfight represent wasted time and possible civilian/criminal liabilities. To survive a gunfight, you **MUST** be able to run your handgun and HIT intended targets.

The shapes on the target are sized to represent 80% of the commonly-accepted lethal hit zone on the human chest and then adjusted to the three-yard and five-yard distances. If you were to shoot this target at seven yards, the shapes would need to be larger (4.2") to meet the 80% criteria and would no longer fit on an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper. I wanted to keep the target on a standard size sheet of paper so that it would be easy to share and print out. I've seen targets with much smaller circles/squares which may be good for working trigger control or for zeroing, but I would caution that shooting shapes that are too small requires you to slow down too much in order to be accurate.

The test is set up for a handgun with a minimum capacity of 11 rounds, but it can also be used if your handgun has a capacity of 7 rounds by shooting single shots on each of the seven shapes. If your handgun has less than a 7-round capacity, I would suggest you consider a new handgun.

Split-the-Difference Test

of Rounds: 11 (or 7 with single shots on all circles)

Distance: 3 or 5 yards

Condition: Holstered & concealed (EDC handgun, holster, and garment)

Timer: Yes

On the beep, draw and fire at the shapes in numerical order. Gray shapes require two shots (unless shooting a less than 11-round capacity handgun). The center of the bullet hole must be inside the line to count as a hit. This is a pass/fail test, so slow down to ensure that all shots count. The goal of this test is to find the speed at which you can accurately hit all the shapes consistently.

If all shots fired are hits, record your Total Time and your Draw-to-First Shot Time and use the following formula to calculate your Average Split Time.

$(\text{Total Time} - \text{Draw-to-First Shot Time}) / 10 = \text{Average Split Time}$ (divide by 6 if using 7 rounds)

For 11 rounds (at both 3 and 5 yards), your Total Time should be in the range of 6.5 – 8.0 seconds and your Average Split Time should be in the range of 0.45 – 0.60 seconds.

For 7 rounds (at both 3 and 5 yards), your Total Time should be in the range of 4.2 – 5.6 seconds and your Average Split Time should be in the range of 0.45 – 0.60 seconds.

If you're shooting this test with no misses in under 0.45s average splits, you're a very good shooter, but you're shooting at a speed that's quicker than you can make decisions with a gun in your hand which in my opinion is not a skill you want to develop if you're carrying a handgun for self-defense.

If you would like to add the elements of uncertainty and decision making into the test, have a shooting partner put up the target while your eyes are closed. The partner can place the target upside down, angled, or sideways which puts the circles in different locations. On the beep, the shooter opens their eyes, draws, and engages the target. Another variation is to shoot the shapes in reverse order.

I hope you enjoy the Split-the-Difference Test. Please post your "Pass" times on the Rangemaster Facebook page. If you're not consistently hitting the range of acceptable times, then go get some training and continue to practice your fundamental shooting skills.

Here is a link to a printable target:

https://rangemaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Split_the_Difference_Target.pdf

