



JULY 2022 NEWSLETTER

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2022 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/>.

Reston Group Standards

Jared Reston is well known in the training community. He is a recently retired Florida deputy sheriff who prevailed in several gunfights, including one in which he was shot seven times. He is now a traveling trainer. See <https://restongrouptesting.com/>.

Reston has a set of pistol standards meant to be shot cold, as a personal skill check. It is a simple, quick to run, low round count test, and I believe it has a lot of merit. It is a pass/fail exercise.

The target can be anything with an 8 inch circle. An IDPA cardboard or a Rangemaster Q will work fine. A B-8 bullseye will work, as the 8 ring is 8" in diameter, and the bullseye on an LTT-1 is the same. All 16 rounds must impact inside the 8" circle, under the time limits, to pass.

This drill is to be shot cold, no warm-up, from concealment or duty gear.

Stage 1- 25 yards- six rounds in 20 seconds

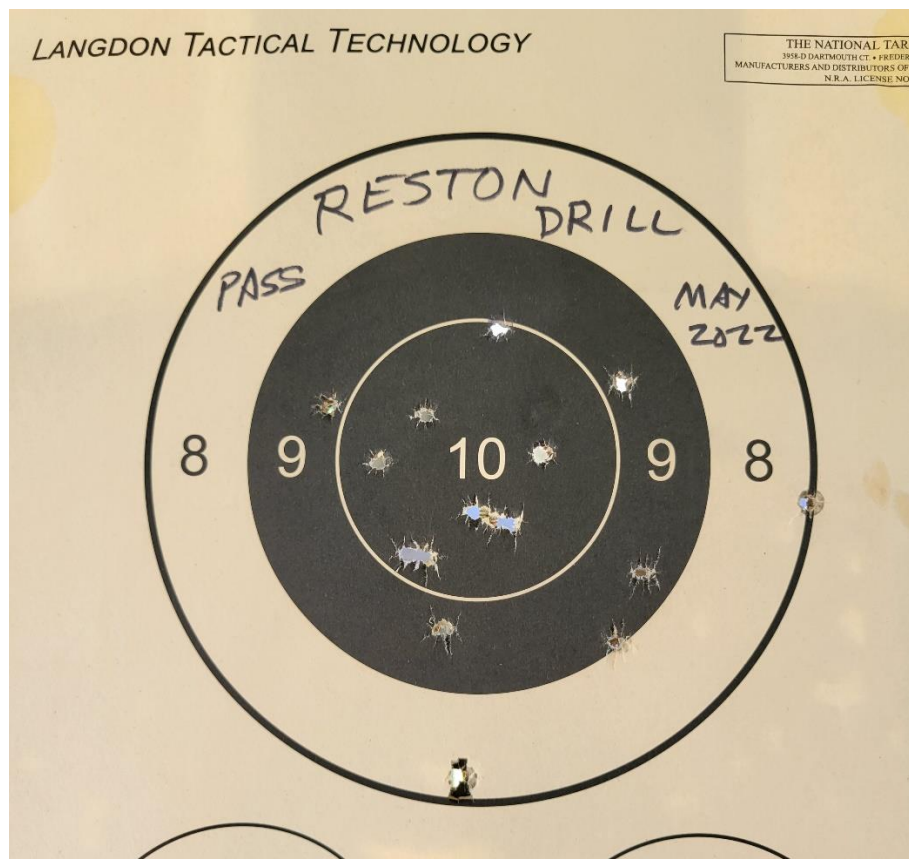
Stage 2- 7 yards- one round in 1.5 seconds

Stage 3- 7 yards- seven rounds in 4.5 seconds

Stage 4- 7 yards- fire one round, reload, fire one round. No overall time limit. Split time between shots before and after the reload should be less than 2.5 seconds.

Stages 1-3 begin in the holster, concealed or secured in duty gear.

Give this drill a try. It looks simple enough, but it is actually pretty challenging. If you can pass this cold, your pistol skills are pretty squared away.

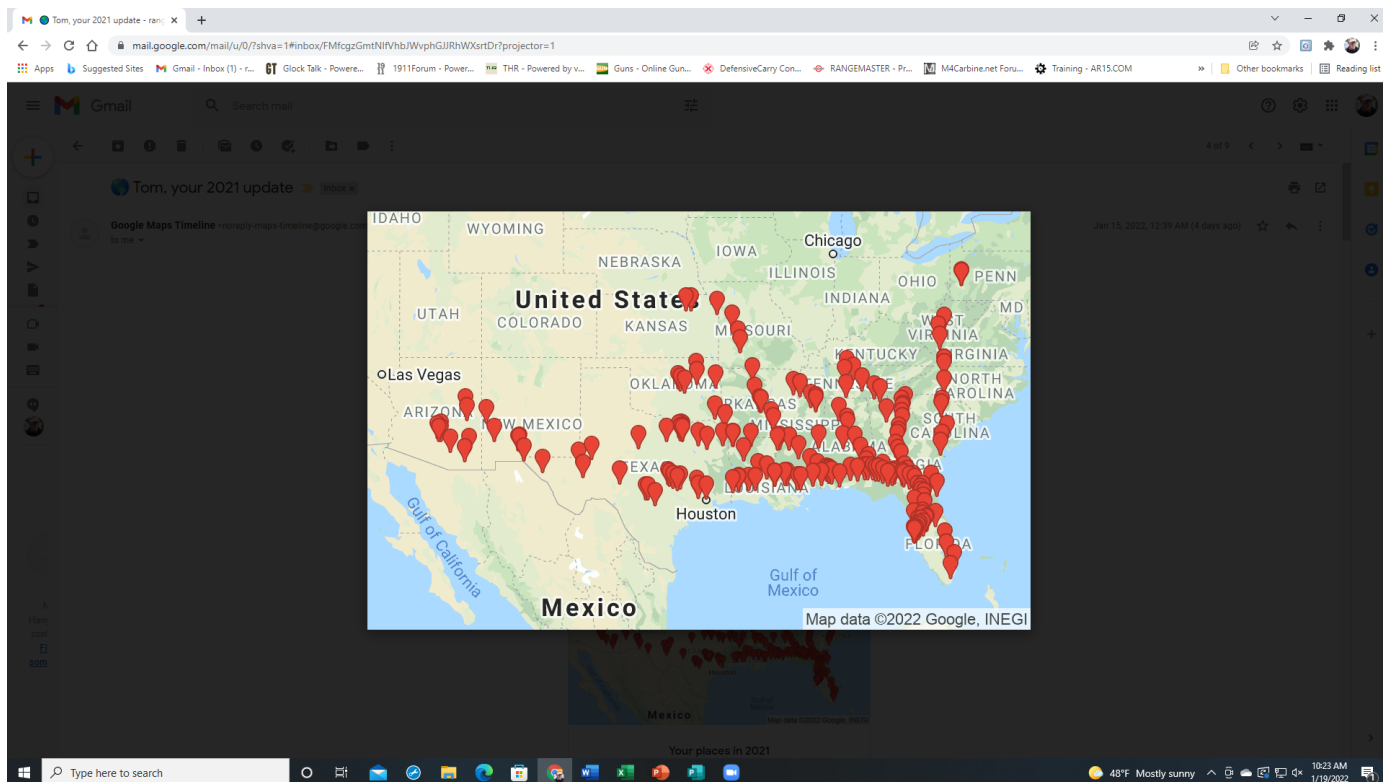


So, You Want to be an Instructor?

I get a lot of inquiries about how to get started and then how to be successful as a defensive firearms instructor. I'm afraid there is no magic--- it's mostly a matter of commitment, hard work, and passion.



Seriously, be prepared to put in a lot of effort for some time before you will start to see significant returns. Also, be prepared to spend a lot of time in hotels and away from home and family. Here are my travels in 2021, just driving. Add a few more for air travel trips.



If you're still here, I do have some concrete suggestions. I really believe this is the best path toward getting what you want, while providing real value to your students (that's what it should be about).

First, take several basic classes, from different sources. The first, or entry level class from every school/instructor is where the real meat is. Any competent organization is going to teach very similar doctrine, but with subtle differences. For one thing, you need multiple ways to explain the basics to your students. The easiest way to come up with several ways to explain something is to take classes from several trainers. Only after taking multiple entry level classes should you then seek a few advanced level courses.

You then need a couple of courses specifically geared toward teaching the techniques. Adult learning/teaching methodology and effective coaching are not taught in normal shooting classes, this

is what instructor courses are about. If you are in law enforcement, the NRA LE Instructor programs have some merit, as does the FBI Field School for instructors. In the private sector, Paul Howe (CSAT) in Texas has a strong instructor program. Specialists like Jedi Jedlinski (red dots) and Tim Herron (coaching) can fill in more detail about their niches. Of course, I am biased toward the Rangemaster instructor development series, which have high, strict standards for instructor candidates.

I encourage you to shoot in some form of competition. USPSA, IDPA, Steel Challenge, GSSF all give you experience running your gear under peer/competiton pressure, major wins give you some credibility as a shooter, and you will meet and network with others on the same path. This is crucial. Back in the IPSC days in the 1970-1980's, while competing I got to know people like Ken Hackathorn, Clint Smith, John Farnam, Rob Leatham, and others. In IDPA, I got to meet Ernest Langdon, Rob Haught, Todd Green, and others who influenced my teaching.

Work to develop your skills as a shooter. You don't have to be a world champion to teach, but you should be able to demonstrate anything you tell your students they should be able to do. At a minimum, you should be able to shoot the Casino Drill under the par time, qualify for a Light Pin from Gabe White, and shoot the F.A.S.T. drill under 7 seconds. Those are reasonable, attainable goals, if you do the work.

Attach yourself to an established school and volunteer to help with classes as an Assistant Instructor (AI). Everyone who has AI'ed for me has told me they learned more the first time they helped with a class than they did when they took the class as a student. How to run a firing line safely and efficiently, how to handle problem students, how to manage time with a group—these are all skills that must be learned through practice with a

more experienced instructor to act as your example and guide. It may take a few years of such “apprenticeship” before you are really ready to run a class on your own. Remember, in our line of work we are dealing with real guns, live ammunition, and armed strangers. This is not a good environment for learning “the hard way”.



Finally, attend training conferences, such as Tac Con, the ILEETA conference, the A Girl and a Gun Conference, our annual Instructor Conference, and others. These are great opportunities for networking, and what is often called “cross pollination”. Some of the best ideas and the best exchanges of ideas and techniques/tips/tactics/ have occurred over a shot of good whisky at the end of the training day at these events. This is a priceless resource for the budding trainer.

There it is, a master plan all laid out for you. Now it’s up to you to do the work.

Training Disciplines

There are three different areas, or disciplines, in which the armed person must train. These are mindset, gunhandling, and marksmanship. Each is equally important, and you must be at least competent in all three areas.

First, let me point out that training does not necessarily consist of going to the range. Training can consist of reading a book, watching a DVD, conducting dry practice at home, live role play exercises, or a live fire range session. Training can even include sitting in an easy chair and having an introspective conversation with yourself about some of the issues involved in self-defense. We must use all of these training tools to achieve mastery of the subject of fighting.

Mindset – – refers to all of the mental issues involved, including your commitment not to be a victim, and the cultivation of your awareness skills. You must develop a winner's attitude.

Gunhandling – – refers to the skills involved in managing your weapon and related equipment. Imagine your embarrassment if you aim your gun at a bad guy, press the trigger, and it went “click” because it wasn't loaded! The presentation, reloading, and malfunction clearance techniques are all gunhandling skills.

Marksmanship – – refers to the simple physical, mechanical act of hitting that at which you shoot. It can be referred to as directing bullets from Point A to Point B rather than just tossing them out and hoping for the best. This is the simplest of the skill areas to master, but it does require both live fire and dry practice.

Most of us make the mistake of concentrating our effort on one of the skill areas and neglecting the other two. We tend to concentrate on marksmanship. Why? *Because it's the only part that is fun.* We get immediate positive feedback and ego reinforcement from shooting well, and that is what humans live for.

Devote adequate time and attention to the other areas, as well. They are the legs of a three-legged stool. All three must be adequate to support you.

Getting More People Into the Tent

After years of working on it, I am very happy to see a much larger percentage of participation in training activities by women and minorities. The right to self defense is an inherent civil right and basic human right, regardless of color, ethnicity, or gender. At Tac Con 2022 we had 59 women in attendance, not counting another 7 women who were presenters or on the event staff. The Tac Con 2023 roster has 70 registered female attendees. Here are some pics from Tac Con 2022 to illustrate my point.





I have had the pleasure of working with Steve Moses since 1999. I now have my instructor liability insurance coverage

through the Firearms Trainers Association. Here is an article from Steve about why you should, too.

WHY MEMBERSHIP IN THE FIREARMS TRAINERS ASSOCIATION IS “THE WAY”

I have been a professional firearms trainer for nearly thirty years. I have always wanted to be the best possible version of one that I could be, and at no time have I rested on my laurels. The firearms classes that I teach today are far different and definitely superior to the classes that I taught 28 years ago. At least one reason was that I never stopped being a student myself and spent considerable time and money taking classes and attending clinics working on becoming a better shooter/practitioner myself and constantly searching for material that could help me be a better instructor. I listen intently to the tips, suggestions, and recommendations of other instructors whenever the opportunity is presented, and on occasion I contact one of my mentors and ask direct questions.

When I heard the announcement of the formation of the Firearms Trainers Association (“FTA”) several years ago I was intrigued. The FTA mission statement included the development of an organization that was designed to legitimize, serve, and develop the profession of firearm trainers without getting mud-sucked into politics. Benefits included written safety briefings, waivers of liability, pre-class medical checklists, assistant instructor waivers, and use of the FTA logo. The FTA constantly publishes videos and articles that offer training tips and tackle challenging situations and scenarios that firearm trainers may encounter in future classes.

A significant benefit of FTA membership is comprehensive liability coverage through the FTA by 2A Insurance Captive. Defensive firearms instructors that are providing training to others do so at no little financial

risk. No matter how hard we strive to maintain a safe class, we are not able to control all of the actions of all of the students all of the time. Negligent discharges are possible, and students can fall and break wrists and ankles or blow out knees. I can only imagine how my life plus that of my wife might be affected if I were bankrupted due to a lawsuit. In addition, all of the ranges at which I teach require evidence not only that I have liability coverage but that they have been added as an additional covered party. The FTA will furnish its members with unlimited Range Endorsements for no additional fee.

The actual parties that will be directly involved in the event of a claim are members of the same team that handles CCW Safe claims. Set out below are the names of the FTA team members that will be directly involved in the event that a FTA member is in need of assistance.

- **Kyle Sweet** is both an owner of and General Counsel for the FTA and CCW Safe. As an attorney, Kyle owns Sweet Law Firm and specializes in defending many of the largest insurance companies and health systems in the United States in catastrophic injury cases. Sweet has won national Attorney of the Year on two occasions for two of the largest systems in the area. He also defends police officers in Use of Force cases, in-custody deaths, and allegations of police brutality, and is part of the CCW Safe Critical Response System to law enforcement agencies in officer-involved shootings throughout the region. What most people do not know is that Kyle is also a former police officer.
- **Stan Campbell** is also an owner of both the FTA and CCW Safe. Stan sits as Chairman of the CCW Safe Claims Committee. Campbell has worked hundreds of Use of Force cases as a police lieutenant and spent over twenty-five years developing and teaching self-defense, tactics, de-escalation techniques and other curriculum and was responsible for training over 4,000 officers. He is also part of the same team that defends police officers in Use of Force cases, in-custody deaths, and allegations of police brutality.

- **Gary Eastridge** is a retired law enforcement officer. He spent twenty-one years with the Oklahoma City Police Department and retired as a detective in the homicide unit. Gary also served as a department firearms instructor. Subsequent to retirement he worked homicides as a police officer with the International Police Task Force in support of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo. He became Chief Investigator for the Oklahoma County District Attorney's office in 2007 and retired in 2017 to accept the position of Critical Incident Coordinator for CCW Safe. Gary is the FTA Account Manager.
- **Rob High** is a Use of Force expert, content specialist, member of the Critical Incident team for CCW Safe, and content specialist and training coordinator for the FTA. Rob retired as a detective assigned to the robbery unit from the Oklahoma City Police Department after twenty-five years of service. High is recognized in the United States Federal Court as an Expert Witness on Use of Force and was a department firearms instructor. He earned nationally recognized certifications in Control and Defensive Tactics, Police Use of Force, and Arrest and Control. He was also the Training Coordinator for their police academy from 2003 to 2010.

I joined the FTA team as an off-site customer support representative in late 2020 and my duties include generating Certificates of Liability Coverage and Range Endorsements for members, answering questions posed by prospective and existing members, and writing training-related articles. I frequently field calls from trainers interested in joining the FTA that ask if members have to teach a FTA-approved curriculum. The answer is a definitive no, although all classes taught by FTA members must require their students to sign an approved safety waiver (the FTA provides a downloadable safety waiver). Firearms trainers who also teach force-on-force, OC/Pepper Spray, defensive combatives, and emergency

gunshot-wound classes should be pleased to find that they are covered when teaching those blocks of instruction.

The FTA is a strong supporter of the Rangemaster Tactical Conference and the Rangemaster community as a whole. Undoubtedly, one of the smartest things that I ever did was join the Rangemaster family in 1999. Surrounding myself by an ever-growing number of highly intelligent and accomplished firearms trainers exposed me to knowledge, skills, and tactics in a far shorter time than I likely would have ever learned through my own direct experience, and I have developed some great friendships with people from all over the United States. The FTA is a strong supporter of the Rangemaster Tactical Conference and the Rangemaster community as a whole, and it pleases me to know that Tom Givens has arranged for Rangemaster-certified instructors to receive a 10% discount on the \$400 annual subscription fee by using Code RM10 when enrolling.

And just when it sounds like it will be impossible for this to get any better, the FTA provided early-morning coffee at the annual Rangemaster Tactical Conference in Carrollton, Texas for the last two years...

UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS

July 15-17 Instructor Course , Top Gun, Memphis, TN (indoors)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-147010936669>

July 22-24 Instructor Course, Royal Range, Nashville, TN (indoors)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-158244502567>

Aug 5-7 Firearms Instructor, Shreveport, LA (indoors)

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-144277908107> (sold out)

Aug 17 Defensive Shotgun, One Day, Xenia, OH

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/one-day-defensive-shotgun-course-tickets-158244761341>

Aug 18-20 Firearms Instructor, Xenia, OH

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-158245363141>

Aug 26-28 Firearms Instructor, Pittsburgh, PA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-158247662017>

Sept 9-11 Shotgun Summit, Dallas, Texas

Sept 16-18 Instructor Course, Culpeper, VA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-158247082283>



TAC-CON TRAINER PROFILES

Throughout the next several issues of this newsletter, I'll profile some of the newer trainers who will be presenting at Tac Con 2023 in Dallas. These are very talented individuals whom I have recruited after watching them perform and excel. The first is Tim Kelly and his crew from Apache Solutions.

Why the name Apache?

I get this question frequently and fail to elaborate it as well as I can on paper. So, why not just share an excerpt from my journal discussing how and why Apache got its name.

The callsign for my last squad was Apache IV. I took great pride in this band of degenerates. We fought together, bled, laughed, and cried together. Shared experiences that I will NEVER experience again with another human being. We were a small family. I led my squad and strived to stand by the Golden rule. Treat others the way you wish to be treated. I also never adopted the "I love me" mentality that many around me had done. Taking pride in yourself is one thing but, as a leader, I took greater pride in my Marines' accomplishments and guided them through their mistakes instead of forcing paperwork and senseless punishments that did nothing to benefit their growth as a man or a Marine. Instead of one man getting all the credit and advancing, I believed in helping my Marines succeed to the best of my abilities and advancing as a team.

That deployment to Afghanistan was one of the best/worst times of my life.

It was only made the best because of my squad of Marines. No matter how difficult it would get for me, their loyalty NEVER left. Even when we watched other Marines turn on each other. No matter if I made a mistake, or an accomplishment, THEY STOOD BY ME when no one else would. Even coming home to public figures and politicians turning their backs on us as a Battalion. Our own command disowning some of our own men who fought and bled with us without blinking an eye, much less admitting to their own faults. Apache IV never budged. We knew that if we stuck together, ALL of us would make it through.

This is what needed to be re-created. A place for others to succeed and be a part of a real change. To go against the grain and to stand for something even though many doubt and stand against you. A different fight but, a fight still. Our community had a hole in it. And a massive gap of misinformation and a new standard that needed to be made. Some would say that I am talking about Quality Firearms Instruction but, that is just the catalyst. This is about making a change and setting a standard for others to follow. It is about helping others work through problems be it with carrying a handgun or dealing with their problem with school or work. Helping that afraid single - mother running from a crazed ex-husband who is stalking her and threatening her. Not just teaching her to use a gun but, empowering her with data driven, street-proven knowledge and skill that may help her save her own life. Helping others realize that there may be no one coming to save you but, WE are here to make sure you can save yourself. We needed a team of competent, qualified, humble, and resilient leaders to stand by each other and make a difference. That is why I chose the name Apache.

Apache now has grown to nearly a dozen instructors with several coming up through our apprenticeship program. Together, we have taught over 4,000 students in the last 3 years, built a range, classroom, and pro-shop. I am proud to say, even if it is only in the small community of Yadkin County, NC., we are making a difference.

Tim Kelly

