

Rangemaster Firearms Training Services

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NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2024 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/> .

25 Round Dot Torture

This month let's shoot this at 5 yards

#1	1 round from the ready	3X
#2	2 rounds from the ready	1X
#3 & #4	1 round on each, from ready	2X
#5	5 rounds, from the holster	1X
#6 and #7	2 rds on each, from the holster	1X
#8	2 rds Dominant Hand Only, from ready	1X
	2 rds Non-dominant Hand Only, from ready	1X
#9 and #10	Start with only 1 rd in gun, at ready. On signal fire 1 rd to #9, emergency reload, and fire 2 rds to #10	1X

The proper target can be printed from here:

<https://pistol-training.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/04/dot-torture-target.pdf>

Thanks to pistol-training.com for the downloadable target.

PLEASE, VOTE!

This next general election will determine a lot about the fate of the US over the coming decades. Please consider these items. The Supreme Court has not always had 9 justices. There have been as few as 5 and as many as 10. The current number is set by Federal law, which is easily changed. The Left wants to retain the White House and gain control of both the House and Senate, primarily so they can add some super liberal justices and overturn the decisions from recent years that solidified our self defense rights, and other decisions they don't like. This is critical.

In addition, the middle class and working poor cannot survive another four years of these disastrous energy and budget policies.

I don't like Trump's personality. I do like \$2.00 gas and groceries I can afford. I travel constantly and my hotel bills have nearly doubled since he left office. The country needs your vote.

What is Good Training?

Rangemaster Staff Instructor Lee Weems recently interviewed two giants in the training community, John Holschen and Randy Watt. I encourage you to listen to the entire thing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6euiBLFCdl&t=1352s>

Critical Outreach

If you want to keep your self defense rights, your guns, and your training business, you need to think about outreach to people outside the gun world. Here are a couple of strategies that worked very well for us when we operated our range in Memphis for 18 years.

The Media- Any time there is a news story that involves guns, “gun violence”, or firearms legislation, the TV news crews need a place to video their 2-3 minute report. They need “B roll”, which is video playing while the reporter voices the content. We made it very easy and convenient for news crews to do their stories at our range, essentially getting free advertising every time they ran a story. The other thing we did was offer a free permit class to any on-air reporter or anchor, any news producer, and all cameramen, and to reporters or editors for the local newspaper. We were able to convert a lot of them from anti-gun to pro-gun by simply educating them.

The Legal System- We also offered free classes to any sitting judge or prosecutor. This proved to be invaluable. Having friends in those roles is a game changer. I actually had sitting judges tell me they learned a lot about self defense and self defense law in class. This also allows them to work in class alongside other normal concerned citizens. This helps dispel the notion that people who want gun permits must be rednecks or radicals.

These efforts cost you practically nothing, but can result in enormous benefits.

Homicide Weapons in the US

The FBI broke down the weapons used in 13,922 murders in the US for the year 2019. Here is the breakdown:

Handguns	6,365
Rifles	364 (includes all rifles, including AR's)
Shotguns	200
Unknown Firearm	3,326
Hands, Fists, Feet	600
Knives or cutting instruments	1,476
Other Weapons	1,591 (hammers, screwdrivers, etc)

Please note that more people were murdered with Hands, Fists, Feet than with all rifles and shotguns combined. Attempts to ban AR's and so forth are not about public safety, they are about control.

A Hierarchy of Rights?

Some of our Constitutionally enumerated and guaranteed civil rights outrank others.

The single most basic and valuable civil/human right is the right to be alive, and by extension, the right to self defense. I don't see how any sane person can argue this. If you are not alive, you have no rights.

The right to self defense, then, trumps property rights. American courts and American legislatures have, for many decades, held that human life is more valuable than any property, regardless of that property's intrinsic or extrinsic value, or your emotional attachment to it. This is why if someone is running away with Aunt Tillie's silver service that goes back to the Revolutionary War, you may not legally shoot him.

Although he is a criminal, and he is stealing your property, and that property is of extreme value, you simply may not legally shoot him. That is because the law holds his life to be of more value than your property.

The same thing applies to my life. My life is more valuable than your property rights. So, just because I stepped onto your property gives you no authority to tell me I have no right to self defense. My right to be alive outranks your property rights.

To say one has the right to self defense but he may not be armed, is like saying he has the right to a free press, but he may not possess ink or paper. If I have the right to be alive, I have the right to defend my life. If I have the right to defend my life, I have the right to be armed.

Tactical Anatomy Course, Dr. Andy Anderson Review by John Hearne, Rangemaster Staff

It's been said that the best way to learn something new is to read an old book. This is because as years go by, what was once common knowledge becomes lost and forgotten. The

information is still good but often taken for granted by more experienced folks and not intentionally passed along. Such is the case with the so-called idea of “tactical anatomy.”

In the early oughts, Dr. James Williams made a splash with his book and program on tactical anatomy or as he called it, “shooting with X-ray vision.” Using his extensive medical knowledge, garnered from years as a trauma doctor, SWAT medic, and competitive shooter, Doc Williams put together a concise program that taught officers the most effective locations to place bullets to stop a threat as quickly as possible.

In recent years, the topic of tactical anatomy has had a bit of a renaissance as some instructors have begun to emphasize the topic again and integrate it into their coursework and some (this author) make it a primary focus. What has been lacking is someone with the medical, teaching, and tactical background to authoritatively teach the subject. This where Dr. Andy Anderson appears on the scene and why I recently took his class “Tactical Anatomy and Officer Survival for Law Enforcement Officers.”

Dr. Anderson has been in the medical field for over thirty years. Unlike many ivory tower physicians, Dr. Anderson started his career as a field paramedic, serving nine years in and around Jackson, MS – an area with all the violence and trauma one could ever hope for. After graduating from medical school, Dr. Anderson headed to the emergency department of the state’s only Level 1 trauma center where he has worked for 21 years and has earned the title of Professor of Emergency Medicine.

When he wasn’t interfering with natural selection, Dr. Anderson cultivated his knowledge of firearms and his ability to teach effectively by attending numerous “gun schools” and earning

multiple instructor certification from Tom Givens of Rangemaster and others. Instead of simply collecting certificates, Dr. Anderson has been a staff instructor at the phenomenal Boondocks Firearms Training Academy. Recently, Dr. Anderson has been a staff instructor for Boondocks, teaching a variety of basic and advanced classes. Finally, for over ten years, Dr. Anderson volunteered to serve as the Medic for the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics SWAT team and the Lauderdale County Sheriff's SWAT team.

All of this background has allowed Dr. Anderson to develop an amazingly concise program, designed to teach the basic tenets of tactical anatomy to law enforcement officers in just four hours. While not specifically outlined by Anderson, we need to define the topic of "tactical anatomy." As I understand it "tactical anatomy" is the idea that if one understands where the vital structures are located in the body and how their locations change based on angle of engagement, one can use this knowledge to more quickly and efficiently stop an immediate threat when using lethal force. How quickly a threat stops is an obvious officer survival advantage. The efficiency of stopping a threat means that less force is used, less bullets are fired, and less media attention can be garnered in a particular instance of force, ensuring that surviving the aftermath of a critical event becomes more likely.

To accomplish this, Dr. Anderson starts in the classroom but uses every instructional modality imaginable. The classroom time is spent reviewing a beautifully developed PowerPoint using incredible medical imagery to show the student where the important "stuff" is located. Anderson doesn't just show us where the good stuff is but uses multiple videos from real world shootings to emphasize the value of this knowledge. As if that

wasn't enough, Anderson solidly ties these concepts to officer survival priorities (win the assault, protect from the civil ramifications, and survive the emotional aftermath) and demonstrably shows why most conventional training targets are actually harmful to solving real-world problems by creating training scars.



After 90 minutes of classroom time, the class moved to the range for the remainder of the instruction. Using a well-established crawl-walk-run process, Anderson taught and tested the students proper shot placement & using photo-realistic targets with anatomy that was visible at close distances. Using these targets, the students could imminently see if their rounds were hitting the vital structures discussed in the classroom. The next logical step was to remove any visible landmarks and have the class shoot the same course of fire on a target with scoring only available on the back. To reinforce the idea that training scars had been developed in conventional range training, the quality

of hits rendered to the “blank slate” target were typically worse than same course of fire shot on a well-marked target.



So far the course had been fairly typical of any live fire range exercise. To move into new territory, the class transitioned to six three-dimensional targets that Anderson had improvised. Using a curved plastic shell and a cardboard face, Anderson created six unique shooting problems by changing the orientation of the target to the shooter. Students were presented with threats that had to be properly engaged from the front, side, and back. Each student worked their way down the target array so that everyone in the class got to solve each problem using good hits. After each engagement, the location of the hits and the anatomical structures they would have struck were examined by Anderson and his assistant instructors. Once the correct solution was understood, the target was “repaired” for the next shooter. While it took some time to work all twelve students through the three-

dimensional targets, this was the most valuable part of the class. By seeing and shooting the problem and getting immediate feedback, the student quickly learned how to apply the concepts using experiential learning – one of the best ways for adults to learn.



The final shooting exercise involved a man-on-man competition to see if the students could demonstrate their understanding of the material while under duress. Each shooter was confronted by a clothed target with a clay pigeon imbedded in its chest at the optimal location for a fight stopping hit. To prevent any “cheating” the target was painted black so that it could not be seen behind the black clothing worn by the cardboard silhouette. On the “fight” signal, student raced to break their clay pigeon before the other student did. This portion of the course really emphasized that slowing down slightly and delivering a higher quality of fire was the best solution to end the fight quickly.

Before leaving the range, Anderson provided the class with several pieces of ballistic gelatin. We were invited to fire our duty rounds into both bare gelatin and gelatin covered in four layers of denim to see how the various loads performed. Anderson noted that it does little good to place rounds precisely if your bullets don't perform well. A consistent theme that emerged from this exercise was that most defensive rounds perform well in bare gel but struggle to perform well when fired through an obstacle that most closely correlates with real-world bullet performance.

We returned to the classroom for an excellent review of the day's material, an opportunity to ask questions, and to receive our certificates. Overall, I found the class to be an excellent use of four hours of training time. Anderson is a gifted teacher who clearly understands the adult learning model. All of his instructional materials were professional, and his selection of information and range exercises consistently showed the most important and relevant learning points. Anderson possesses a deep understanding of the material but he can relate it in "plain English" that allows the student to immediately gain benefit.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention the incredible facility that hosted this event. While you may not think of Jackson, MS as a destination for premium training, you probably should. The sprawling campus features an excellent classroom, a fully-stocked Pro Shop, shoot houses, numerous ranges and other amenities such as heated and cooled bathrooms. The range we used had a large (75' x 60') roof with lights and fans for cooling. This cover allowed us to train in the shade of a hot summer day and was really appreciated during an afternoon rainstorm that would have ended training on an uncovered range.

While the next offering of this class has not been scheduled yet, training with Dr. Anderson at Boondocks should not be missed by any LEO who wishes to enhance their odds of survival or wants to learn relevant information that should be part of any firearms training program.



“Hell, I Grew Up Around Guns”

Not long ago I was enjoying a steak dinner with several other full time firearms instructors. We had two from Rangemaster, two from Gunsite, two from the American Institute of Marksmanship, and a couple of law enforcement firearms instructors from local agencies. During dinner, the topic came up, “What phrase really darkens your day when you hear it?”. The unanimous answer was “Hell, I grew up around guns.”

This simple six word sentence is guaranteed to cause dread among firearms trainers, and is usually the signal that a long, stressful and

frustrating day lies ahead. Why is that? It's because this is usually a sign that the speaker is both ignorant and stupid. The word "ignorant" is not an insult. It simply means that the person in question does not have some required knowledge of the subject at hand. "Ignorance" can be fixed. In fact, I make my living fixing it. Stupidity, however, is another matter entirely. The person uttering "Hell, I grew up around guns" tends to be so dull witted that he actually doesn't even realize that he is ignorant. He doesn't know that he doesn't know.

Pretty much without exception, these are the people who commit the most serious safety violations, as well as being horrible shots. In fact, there are six errors these folks commit so regularly that it seems to be standard operating procedure among those who use the dread phrase. Three of these errors are directly safety related, while the other three are the reason they shoot so poorly. Let's look at them.

First, let's discuss the safety issues. Invariably, the **H,IGUAG** shooter has no concept of trigger finger discipline (#1) or muzzle discipline (#2). One day while we still operated our fixed facility range, a 70'ish gentleman on my indoor range was sitting on the bench behind the firing line, holding a Glock pistol in a firing grip, with his finger on the trigger, carelessly pointing it at several people as he examined something on the side of the slide. When I took the pistol from him and gave him some "counseling", it came up that he had no formal handgun training, but had "grown up around guns". Sigh.....

The third area of safety concern I typically see with these folks is a sloppy and dangerous manner of drawing and re-holstering a handgun. Presenting a handgun from a holster and subsequently re-holstering it is quite safe, IF done correctly. I rarely see untrained people with any clue how to do this, though, and a lot of negligent shootings result from poor habits.

The other three errors are more related to poor shooting than to safety, and we see them just as often in these folks. The first is an improper grip. For reliable function, proper trigger manipulation, and recoil control, there is more to gripping a handgun than "just pick it up". A little bit of proper technique here can make a big difference in shooting ability. The same goes for trigger control. I rarely see self taught shooters who understand trigger finger placement issues,

slack, trigger re-set or other nuances of good handgun shooting. Precision with a handgun is probably 90% trigger control, and some competent instruction can often do wonders for your shooting. Follow through, or more precisely the lack of it, is the third shooting issue I see most frequently among the un-trained.

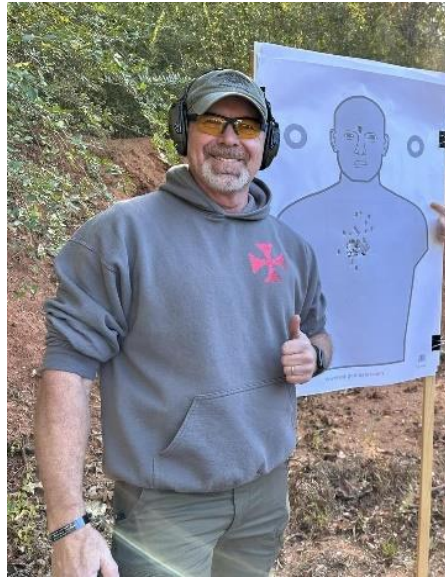
American males seem to think they are born with genes for driving a car well at high speed and for shooting a handgun well under stressful, demanding conditions. Suggesting they seek professional training in these pursuits seems to be akin to questioning their virility. In truth, a handgun is a hand tool, easier to use well than a violin but a bit more complex than a shovel. Admitting you need training in its use does not make you less of a man, trust me.

Firearms Instructor Courses—Why?

In a recent online discussion, Craig Douglas posed the question, “Why do you want to take an instructor course? Is it to check a box, pad a resume, or increase your skills as a trainer?” (slightly paraphrased). That was a good question, and it got me to thinking about why I teach and encourage participation in instructor development courses. There are actually several reasons why I think they are important, whether you plan to train others or not. First, some background.

Rangemaster has four levels of instructor development courses, with each building on the skills and knowledge gained in the previous course. If one takes all four courses, that amounts to 11 full days of training, or about 99 hours. Roughly half that time is spent in the classroom and the other half on the range.

The first benefit of taking this type of training is building one’s own skills as a shooter. I firmly believe that trainers should be able to shoot very well, and should be able to demo anything they tell their students they should be able to do. In the first instructor course, we go over the technical side of shooting, with a focus on the “Why ?” as well as the “How ?”. In addition, all shooting is done with a coach, one on one. This helps identify and correct any deficiencies in technique. Graduates of our program shoot very well.



The second is learning to coach. Again, using the information about technique, our instructor candidates learn to observe and identify their students' errors, devise a way to correct the error, and communicate that to the student. In all levels of our instructor development classes the students get coached extensively and spend a good bit of time learning to coach others.

One area I find personally important, is the almost total lack of “institutional memory” the tactical/defensive training community has. In the 1920's and 1930's, for instance, there were numerous highly experienced gunfighters who studied both shooting and the mental aspects of fighting, and who wrote books about their experiences. They pre-date Instagram and YouTube, so most modern practitioners have never heard of them. Pierce Brooks wrote a book in 1975, Officer Down, Code Three . This was an excellent book about the common errors gun-toters commit that cause them to lose a fight for their life. Sadly, we see the same errors committed every day, 49 years later.

The next subject area is how to run a line with students who are strangers. As a trainer, you don't know their capabilities or limitations yet, and there are inherent risks involved in live-fire firearms training. The trainer has to be familiar with everything from managing multiple relays, and range safety procedures, to selecting relevant targets, and designing drills and courses of fire that build good habits. Designing

visual aids, from printed hand-outs, to manuals, to Power Point presentations are all skills the trainer must possess, along with an understanding of how human adults learn and retain physical skills. None of these topics are covered in a “shooting” class.

A competent defensive skills trainer must not only know how to teach the physical manipulation of firearms. That is actually not the most important aspect of defensive training. Students come to us now with a lifetime of cultural indoctrination as victims, and as trainers we have to find ways to fix that.

This is why we refer to our courses in this realm as “instructor development courses”. That development is a life-long process, that requires a commitment to continual learning, skill building, and adaptation as new equipment, new skills, and new knowledge about human performance becomes available to us.

There used to be a trainers organization called ASLET, the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers. Their motto was “Qui Docet, Discet”, Latin for “Who teaches, learns.” The best way to master a subject is to learn to teach it. Whether you plan to train others or not, I recommend instructor development as a path to mastery.

UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS

Nov 2-3 Instructor Reunion/Conference Bandera, Texas

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/annual-rangemaster-instructor-conference-tickets-688837911737?aff=ebsdoporgprofile>

Nov 9-10 Advanced Pistol Instructor Decatur, TX

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-716198016547?aff=oddttdcreator>

Nov 16-17 Combative Pistol (Aqil) Cisco, GA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-combative-pistol-course-tickets-688844571657?aff=ebsdoporgprofile>

Dec 7-8 Advanced Instructor Buford, GA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-706078338317?aff=oddtcreator>

Dec 7-8 Combative Pistol (Aqil) Dallas, Texas

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-combative-pistol-tickets-902464945947?aff=oddtcreator>

Jan 17-18, 2025 Combative Pistol, (Aqil) Ruskin, FL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6027e4e7e7f3ba0c6090>

Jan 17-19, 2025 Instructor Development Course, Lakeland, FL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668ad788e4e7e7f3ba6a1deb>

