

Rangemaster Firearms Training Services

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DECEMBER 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/> .

Baseline 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. If using a full size B-8, nothing further out than the 7 ring counts as a hit.

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

I make this the DOTM about twice a year as this CoF was designed specifically as a periodic skill check. By running this course every six months or so, you can tell if your skill is holding, getting better, or degrading and train accordingly.



Once Again, You Are On Your Own!
I have been trying for a very long time to get people to understand that they are on their own when it comes to personal safety and family security. In a recent conversation with OG trainer Karl Rehn, he related the stories of a couple of “motivated students” he has trained recently. From Karl:

A student last week was an "anti-gun guy from Chicago" who is now an armed citizen after a home invasion in his Austin apartment, having a gun pointed at his head, and waiting 14 hours (!) for Austin PD to show up to take a crime scene report after the invaders took everything of value in his apartment.

Austin PD now claiming that 90% of 911 calls are answered without people being on hold. That means 1 caller out of 10 is **not** getting through to a call-taker without being on hold. That's better than far worse numbers last year. I had a student last year sit on hold for an hour waiting to report that someone shot at his neighbor's house in a drive by.

Intensive Pistol Skills

As the name implies, this is an intensive two day course intended to polish, refine and elevate one's skill with the concealed defensive handgun. This is not a course suitable for beginners. To attend, one should have first graduated from Rangemaster's Combative Pistol Course or Instructor Development Course, or a course at Gunsite or Thunder Ranch or equivalent, or a course with a competent migrant trainer. You will be working to develop speed and accuracy with the concealed handgun under a variety of demanding and stressful conditions.

For this course you will need a concealed handgun, at least three magazines, eye/ear protection, and 600 rounds of ammunition. This course is taught in two days, normally on Saturday-Sunday. Your primary instructor will be Aqil Qadir, a very highly trained and experienced Rangemaster staff instructor since 2009. A retired police officer, Aqil has been conducting training since 1993.

The first iteration of this course will be in Slidell, Louisiana on March 15-16, 2025. See

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/66df26b2e228cea24e0b2d51>

Interview

Daniel Reedy has been through numerous Rangemaster courses as well as having trained with several other notable instructors. He maintains a blog that always has interesting

topics and good information. He recently interviewed me about the background and genesis of Rangemaster. Here is a link:

[Living Legends | Interview with Tom Givens \[2024\] ★ Primer Peak](#)

Primacy Matters!

Two of the factors that really heavily impact performance under high stress are Recency and Repetition. When the flag flies, if you recently practiced a skill, that particular neural pathway has been recently “greased” and is more likely to work. This is why dry practice can be so important. Almost none of us can get to the range for live fire every week, but we could do a dry practice session once a week or even more often. That would ensure that our skills were refreshed recently. Repetition is also critical. Every correct repetition of a skill set helps build up a file in your procedural memory, which can be accessed and executed in response to outside stimuli. This takes a lot of *correct* repetitions.

An often overlooked aspect of this learning process is **Primacy**. Under stress, the brain tends to fall back on the first way it learned to perform a skill, even if a better way was later learned. Thus, starting out *doing it right* is critical.

For a detailed technical explanation of this mental process, I recommend Dustin P. Salomon’s book, Hitting in Combat. This is one of the best over-views of the process of learning physical skills that I have seen.

If you are a trainer, especially, it is critical for you to understand this system of learning. Starting students out incorrectly can have life-long, and even life-ending results if they are engaged later in a violent confrontation.

As an example, there is a national organization that still includes Siddle’s highly flawed work in their course manual. Siddle’s main

thesis in Sharpening the Warrior's Edge, which was written in the 1990's, has been thoroughly debunked by researchers since then, and everything he proposed is now known to be wrong. Still, there are organizations that cling to this b.s. In a recent period of several months, we put 376 students through our basic Instructor Development Course. Of those 376, 47 failed to achieve certification. Of those who failed, over 21% identified themselves in their introduction in class as instructors certified by that organization. During the course of their training and coaching, they all showed a significant improvement in their shooting. However, on qualification day, the stress of shooting a make it or break it qualification caused them to revert to the original crap they were taught, and they failed to qualify. It will take a lot more than two range days to overcome the primacy of the really poor training they earlier received. If they do not put in that significant work, they will likely never shoot well under stress because of their initial training.

We owe it to our students to set them up for success, by training them from the very beginning in techniques that get hits under truly stressful conditions.

https://www.amazon.com/Hitting-Combat-Science-Training-Gunfights/dp/1952594103/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3MU85WEHJDB0K&keywords=hitting+in+combat+the+brain+science+of+training+to+win+gunfights&qid=1666039454&qu=eyJxc2MiOiIwLjQ4IiwicXNhIjojoiMC4zMCI sInFzcCI6IjAuMDAifQ%3D%3D&srefix=hitting+in+combat%2Caps%2C98&sr=8-1

Minnehaha Falling, A Memoir of the 2020 Minneapolis Riots

Michael Treat is a Rangemaster certified firearms instructor who operates his own training company in Minneapolis. He has

a strong background in law enforcement, corrections, and private security work, and he lives two miles from the site of George Floyd's death. Mike was able to watch the riots firsthand and up close. He also spent a great deal of time researching and documenting the circumstances and events that led up to the riots as well as the pathetic responses from the powers that be in Minnesota.

The book is 435 pages of extremely well researched and well presented information, with an additional 26 pages of citations and references. There are numerous lessons throughout this book, many of which can help you prepare your home and your family for similar violent events. I think we have more of these in store in the near future, and you would be wise to prepare.

Available in print from Amazon for only \$19.99 or on Kindle for just \$8.99. Recommended.

Why Won't They Train?

I was asked again recently why I think it is so hard to get the majority of gun owners to take serious training. Here is my reply.

Prior to WWII, the country had just gone through the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, and other upheavals. In 1945, the US population was only 140 Million people, and most were rural. During the depression and the war years, most had

supplemented their food supply with game animals, and could not afford to waste a cartridge that did not bring down something edible. Firearms training was often rudimentary by our standards, but the stakes were an empty/full belly, not a little trophy. Right after the war, TV and the internet did not yet exist, so normal people actually went outside and did stuff for recreation. All of the gun sports: skeet, trap, rifle and handgun bullseye were very popular and many of the older gun clubs now in existence were built right after the war.

But, check out the population growth:

1945	140 million
1965	194 million
1995	266 million
2024	327 million

So, in the first 50 years after WWII, the country's population almost doubled. All that excess population moved into the cities. In the 1980's we tipped over from majority rural to majority urban population. Now, younger family members were not tasked with killing food, and a safe/legal place to shoot was now outside the city, requiring travel and expense.

Add TV and internet, and now we have a population that watches (football, baseball, basketball, NASCAR, wrestling, etc, etc) rather than doing. TV is a pernicious influence. On TV, a person unfamiliar with a firearm can pick one up, point it in the general direction of a person and fire 1 shot. That

person immediately falls, dead. One study claimed that by the time a child is 12, he has seen 100,000 such simulated killings on TV. That amount of repetition equals reality for 99% of people.

So, take a nation of watchers, programmed to think guns automatically hit their intended targets, and you have our current situation. Only intelligent, pro-active people will seek firearms training. As one of my colleagues said 25 years ago, “We’ve already trained all the smart ones.”

Selecting Carry/Duty Ammunition

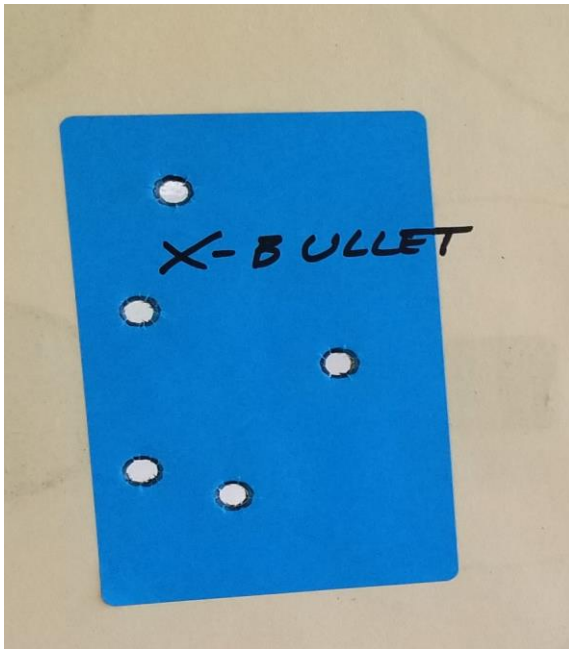
In terms of accuracy, reliability and terminal effect, we have the best ammunition ever made available to us today. In fact, in the past 15 years or so, great strides have been made in manufacturing pistol ammunition that reliably expands in real flesh while still penetrating enough to reach vital structures deep within the body. Not all ammunition, however, is created equal. There is a bewildering array of ammo available to us, so how do we pick what is best for our use? First, we have to define our context. In this discussion, I am limiting the context to the personal self defense of a private citizen CCW carrier or off duty law enforcement officer, who share essentially the same threat profile and equipment. For our use, ammunition selected for carry, as opposed to practice, should meet these criteria:

As close to absolute mechanical reliability as possible. The ammo needs to feed and cycle reliably in your gun. I would not trust a load I had not fired at least 100 rounds of consecutively in my pistol with no malfunctions.

Acceptable terminal effect, consisting of adequate penetration and reliable expansion. Vetted authorities like Dr. Gary Roberts have done this step for you, and published the results. Beware of results obtained in shooting pot roasts, water bottles and similar test media. The US Army Wound Ballistics Laboratory

went to great lengths to come up with 10% ordnance gelatin as a reliable, repeatable, consistent substitute for muscle tissue. Properly prepared and calibrated ordnance gelatin gives us a result that has correlated very closely with actual field results in many, many shootings. Bear in mind the 14" to 18" recommended range for penetration is in gelatin that has no skin and no bones, thus the need for deeper penetration than the depth of an average torso. If you hit the chest, for instance, with the sternum and rib bones right where you are aiming, there is an 80% chance of striking bone, which will reduce penetration in many cases. Dr. Roberts has assembled a comprehensive list of factory loads that meet our requirements and they are listed below.

So, we have quite a list of quality loads that meet our reliability and terminal effect requirements, what's left? **The load needs to shoot accurately in your gun, and if you have fixed sights, the point of aim and the point of impact need to coincide. In others words, the bullets need to hit right where you aim them!** This can be tricky. Many handguns shoot different loads, especially with different bullet weights, to widely varying points of impact. My approach is to select several loads from Dr. Roberts' list, then shoot them in the specific gun I want to use them in. I then choose the load that shoots closest to point of aim with no larger than a 2.5" to 3.0" five shot group size, fired off-hand at 25 yards. In the photo below, I was checking various loads in my EDC Glock 17. The targets are 3X5 labels. I just fired two of my carry HST 124+P loads at one. One hit dead center, and one a bit high, which was probably my fault. These were the first two rounds of the day, fired at 25 yards, standing. The 9mm 147 grain 9MS load from Federal is an earlier generation load. It shot very well, but repeated testing has shown very rare expansion. I only use that one for practice/training, and shot it just as a standard to compare the HST load against. The third load was a 115 grain Barnes all copper hollow point loaded by ASYM, a high-quality small ammo company. The Hornady 135 grain Critical Duty +P load also shot pretty well, and pretty close to point of aim. This particular load was used in two recent student involved shootings, and in both cases performed splendidly.



The 124 +P HST or the 147 HST are my personal choices, as they have a great street record and shoot right to the sights in my guns. My second choice is Hornady 135 gr +P Critical Duty.

The following is Dr. Gary Roberts' list of loads that provide adequate penetration and expansion in laboratory gelatin testing. I would trust any load on this list. If it's not on this list, I would not select that ammo.

"The following loads all demonstrate outstanding terminal performance and can be considered acceptable for duty/self-defense use:

9 mm:

- Barnes XPB 115 gr JHP (copper bullet)
- Federal Tactical 124 gr JHP (LE9T1)
- Federal HST 124 gr +P JHP (P9HST3)
- Remington Golden Saber bonded 124 gr +P JHP (GSB9MMD)
- Speer Gold Dot 124 gr +P JHP
- Winchester Ranger-T 124 gr +P JHP (RA9124TP)
- Winchester 124 gr +P bonded JHP (RA9BA)
- Winchester Ranger-T 127 gr +P+ JHP (RA9TA)
- Federal Tactical 135 gr +P JHP (LE9T5)
- Hornady Critical Duty 135 gr +P
- Federal HST 147 gr JHP (P9HST2)

Remington Golden Saber 147 gr JHP (GS9MMC)
Speer Gold Dot 147 gr JHP
Speer G2 147 gr PT
Winchester Ranger-T 147 gr JHP (RA9T)
Winchester 147 gr bonded JHP (RA9B/Q4364)

Notes:

-- Obviously, clone loads using the same bullet at the same velocity work equally well (ie. Black Hills ammo using Gold Dot bullets, Corbon loads using Barnes XPB bullets, etc...)

-- Bullet designs like the Silver Tip, Hydra-Shok, and Black Talon were state of the art 20 or 25 years ago. These older bullets tend to plug up and act like FMJ projectiles when shot through heavy clothing; they also often have significant degradation in terminal performance after first passing through intermediate barriers. Modern ammunition which has been designed for robust expansion against clothing and intermediate barriers is significantly superior to the older designs. The bullets in the Federal Classic and Hydra-Shok line are outperformed by other ATK products such as the Federal Tactical and HST, as well as the Speer Gold Dot; likewise Winchester Ranger Talons are far superior to the old Black Talons or civilian SXT's."--- **Dr. Gary Roberts, well known ballistics expert.**

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Jan 17-18, 2025

Combative Pistol, Aqil Qadir instructor

Ruskin, FL

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

Jan 17-19, 2025

Instructor Development Course Lakeland, FL

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

Feb 8-9, 2025

Advanced Instructor Lakeland, FL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d63fbe4e7e7f3ba0d942d>

Mar 7-9, 2025

Master Instructor Lakeland, FL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6538e4e7e7f3ba0de2a0>

March 15-16, 2025. Intensive Pistol Skills (Aqil instructor)
Slidell, Louisiana

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/66df26b2e228cea24e0b2d51>

April 4-6, 2025 Instructor Development Course

Mead Hall, Shawnee, OK

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6697e4e7e7f3ba0e2821>

April 26-27, 2025 Intensive Pistol Skills (Aqil instructor)

Dallas Pistol Club, Carrollton, Texas (Dallas)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/66eb2a6836fb002cd74ff2c4>