



JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2025 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/> .

2/2/1 Drill

IALEFI-Q, IDPA Cardboard, or RFTS-Q target. 10 points for any hit inside the 8 inch circle in the chest, or inside the head ring. 5 points for any hit inside the silhouette but outside the circles. (Except on IDPA target, D Zone is zero points.)

Drill- Begin with the weapon holstered and concealed, loaded with two rounds only. On signal, draw, fire 2 rounds to the chest, conduct an empty gun reload, fire 2 more rounds to the chest, then one to the head circle. Record the time for the string.

Fire the drill at 5 yards and record the time.

Fire the drill at 10 yards and record the time.

10 rounds total. 100 points possible. Add all the times up.

Total points divided by total time = score.

Par score = 6 Goal is a score of 6 or higher.

This drill covers a concealed presentation from the holster, fast accurate shooting, an empty gun reload, and both a spatial transition and a transition to a smaller target. It also requires a timing shift when changing from 5 yards to 10 yards. This integrates a number of important skills in one fairly quick, low round count exercise. Give it a shot. Here is a video demo:

https://youtu.be/by6kGXGb_es?si=2hoZYhn5mfMaBM4R

Here It Comes Again!

As I often point out in class, very little of what we do in training today is actually new. As a community, our biggest failure is our total lack of institutional memory. This means we have to re-learn the same lessons over and over again. For instance, some Instagram hero surely invented the process of placing a B-8 bullseye target on the chest of a silhouette. Right? This forces the student to strive for accuracy (keeping them in the black), at speed. What a novel concept! Here is a picture of Border Patrol officers doing this in the 1930's.



Pierce Brooks (retired LAPD detective) wrote Officer Down, Code Three in 1975. He listed ten deadly errors that got Good Guys killed frequently. Now, 50 years later, we are still committing the same errors. Sad...

7 yard line? Why???

Over the years, the question has come up repeatedly, “Many, many courses of fire and almost all police ranges have firing lines at a marked 7 yards from the targets. How did such an odd distance become so standard?” Good question.

I have done a lot of research into this over the years, and I stand by the assertion that 7 yards was selected, first by the FBI and then widely copied, as a simulation of the width of a large room.

I have the US War Department’s 1913 issue (hard cover book) “Small Arms Firing Manual”. For the Mounted Pistol Course (Cavalry) the distances specified are 8-15 yards, 10 yards, and 5-15 yards. For the Infantry and Field Artillery troops, the specified distances for training and qualification are 15,25, 50 and 75 yards. For the Organized Militia (forerunner of the National Guard) the specified distances were 15,25 and 50 yards. So, the 7 yard line did not originate with the military.

In J. Henry Fitzgerald’s 1930 book, he recommends the New York State Police Pistol Qualification Course, “which has been in use for several years”. The specified distances are 10 feet, 25 feet, 12 yards, and 25 yards.

I have photos of the original FBI pistol ranges at Quantico. (The original ranges were replaced a few years ago.) The firing lanes are concrete, to avoid the mud so common at Quantico. The paved firing lines are at 7, 15 and 25 yards.

In his 1960 book, *Combat Shooting for Police*, Inspector Paul Weston, NYCPD, has this to say:

“Hip shooting is meant for what might be termed ‘room sized’ situations. It is effective within the confines of a small store, a narrow hallway, any room, or when what appears to be a harmless traffic violator piles out of his car and starts a gun moving in the direction of the approaching policeman.

In determining the distance at which directed fire from the hip should be practiced, the Federal Bureau of Investigation settled upon seven (7) yards for this phase of their fine Practical Pistol Course. That’s twenty-one feet. Pace off any room, store, or hallway, and learn just how far- or rather how close- seven yards seems to be.”

In the book, *An Introduction to Modern Police Firearms*, by Roberts and Bristow, published in 1969, mention is made that the FBI’s PPC changed from its original 60 round version to a 50 round version in 1949. The course description lists the first stage as being fired at 7 yards.

So, photographic record and numerous sources cite the FBI as the origin of the 7 yard distance, way back in the 1930’s and 1940’s, fifty years before Dennis Tueller’s work. I think Weston’s explanation of “room range” is probably pretty much it. Check your own living room. I’m willing to bet it is 20 to 22 feet across.



Best practices by Dan Brady of Apache Solutions

In policing, there's been a list of "Best Practices" with regard to officer safety for decades. The purpose being to give officers an outline to follow in training while establishing officer safety habits that should last an entire career with minimal training upkeep. So, while there are tons of articles and YouTube videos on different aspects of everyday carry gear and to a lesser extent mindset, there's not much available from reliable sources for a quick reference guide to best practices for the everyday armed citizen.

What I want to encapsulate here is a quick set of guidelines to reference as you start or expand on a personal security journey. This will not be an exhaustive list and I'll avoid recommending brands, people or other specific resources as much as possible while still giving you a framework to validate gear, people, and resources.

1. Avoid, Evade, Escape, Deter.

Using defensive force of any kind carries with it inherent risk. No matter how skilled you are, there is always a risk that you lose. Even when you win, there is a risk of legal proceedings that may or may not turn out in your favor. You will win every fight you don't engage in. Leave your ego at home. Deterring someone's intent may take some verbal engagement. Cops get "Verbal Judo" training, it would be wise to seek similar education. You're unlikely to be as eloquent as usual under duress.

2. Have a usable level of fitness.

There is always room for improvement but if you can't sprint 100 yards, run up three flights of stairs, do 25 push-ups without stopping or grapple for 1 minute, you absolutely do not have an acceptable level of fitness. The less fit you are the lower your chances are of prevailing in any stressful set of events. Also, heart disease and obesity kill way more people than violent felons. Be wise and get a little more fit.

3. Carry an intermediate force option.

Having something available for using force that falls "in between a harsh word and a handgun" is probably wise. For most people, in most instances, the most useful option is pepper spray. There are a couple manufacturers that make quality, low profile, carry friendly, effective pepper spray canisters. Get one and get some training on its use.

4. Get some empty hand training.

Self-defense is not strictly about the use of tooled force. Being able to use your body to aid in defending yourself is crucial. In addition to technical skills gained, having a familiarity with physical problem solving in real time, with real opponents, even in a safe training environment, is a skill whose importance cannot be overstated. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Boxing, Wrestling, and Muay Thai are recognized as highly effective by most trainers.

5. Carry a quality, effective, reliable firearm.

Opinions vary on what make and caliber are "best". However, there are manufacturers that have long standing reputations for quality, reliability and accessibility at a reasonable price, start there. Gun store clerks are there to make sales NOT help assure your personal security. The vast majority of them are not subject matter experts, so be cautious about taking their advice. Generally speaking, firearm price is related to quality control. Most quality handguns cost \$450 or more for the most basic model. If you're buying cheaper than that, you're venturing into more risk. When it comes to ammunition, select one that passes the FBI duty ammunition testing protocols. Say what you want about the FBI, no other organization on the planet does more pistol ballistics testing than they do. Make certain the ammunition you select is accurate and reliable in your chosen gun and then carry it as close to 100% of the time as possible.

6. Buy quality holsters.

A good holster should be: Reasonably Comfortable, Completely Concealable, Secure, and Provide Fast Access from any position your body might be in (standing, seated, supine, etc.) A good belt and a gun specific holster that completely covers the trigger and trigger guard and retains its shape when the gun is removed is of critical importance. True everyday carry is not as simple as buying a cheap holster online and slapping it on your regular belt. Understanding the principles of concealment will make the adaptation of carrying a gun daily much quicker, more comfortable and less expensive by reducing the number of holsters you end up trying out.

7. Carry a pocket light

A pocket flashlight is an incredibly useful tool for everyday tasks, it is a necessity for anyone taking personal security seriously. There is a great deal of internet debate as to the need for a weapon mounted light on an EDC firearm and there are pros and cons to them. There is no debate on the legal and moral requirement to have a positive target identification for self-defense, which under many circumstances will require artificial lighting, the light on your cell phone is not sufficient or ergonomic enough for this task. Quality pocket lights that provide sufficient lumens and candela can be found in the \$75 range and up. Certain manufacturers even

within this price range have had catastrophic failures causing injury and even death, due diligence is advised.

8. Get training and practice.

Yes those are two different things. Training is the acquisition or improvement of a physical skill under the direction of a trainer, teacher, instructor, or coach. Practice is the concentrated repetition of those skills to build a pathway to automaticity, often on one's own. There are any number of tests and standards within the self-defense shooting community that have objective relevance to life saving abilities. Instructors you train under should be able to articulate why the standard or test they use for measurement is relevant.

9. Locate vetted resources for more information.

The problem is not locating information, the problem is identifying a resource as reputable to obtain quality, helpful information. We are awash in information from all manner of people who market themselves as experts, but many of them are not. Proven sources of quality information will reference where their information came from and be able to articulate why their information or technique is important and/ or relevant.

10. Basic medical training is important.

You're more likely to use medical training to save a life or make an impactful difference in someone's survivability in dire circumstances than you are to use a firearm to do the same. Learn CPR, take a "Stop the Bleed" type class and carry a tourniquet at a minimum.

11. Don't advertise your armed status.

Don't open carry. Don't put gun stickers on your vehicle. Don't wear gun branded clothing. Don't have visible gun racks in your vehicle. Don't use your car as a holster. Yes, there are awesome pieces of gear to show off, funny slogans on tee shirts and hoodies, and the patriotic desire to support and defend the second amendment. Do it with your friends at the range or competition or in the game lands and with your vote at the polls.

12. Have quality legal representation available.

If the terrible and unavoidable circumstances arise that you must physically defend yourself, especially with deadly force, even when you win, your troubles might just be starting. Have immediate access to quality legal representation that has experience with self-defense law. This might be a familiar family attorney or one of the popular self-defense insurance

programs that are available throughout most of the country. Understand that even basic representation in legal self-defense matters can cost tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars.

There are thousands, probably tens of thousands of books, articles, videos, training classes, and subject specific schools that cover each of these major points in a breadth and depth it is impossible to see the end of. There are in subject nuances to each of these that could nearly be another bullet point unto themselves. There are also times and circumstances that violating some of these best practices is the thing to do under that specific circumstance and for a specific reason but you'll need to get a fair way down the path to start differentiating what those circumstances might be for you.

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Unless noted otherwise, Tom Givens will be the primary instructor.

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 28-30, 2025

Tac Con 2025

Sold out/full

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

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

May 2-4, 2025

Firearms Instructor Development

White Hall, AR

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/66e22f99e228cea24e2fe96a>

May 16-18, 2025

Defensive Shotgun Instructor Lakeland, FL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6a70e4e7e7f3ba0f31ef>

May 24-25, 2025

Dynamic Pistolcraft **Aqil Qadir, instructor**

Eastaboga, AL

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/673a3962aa4a19177007f433>

