



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

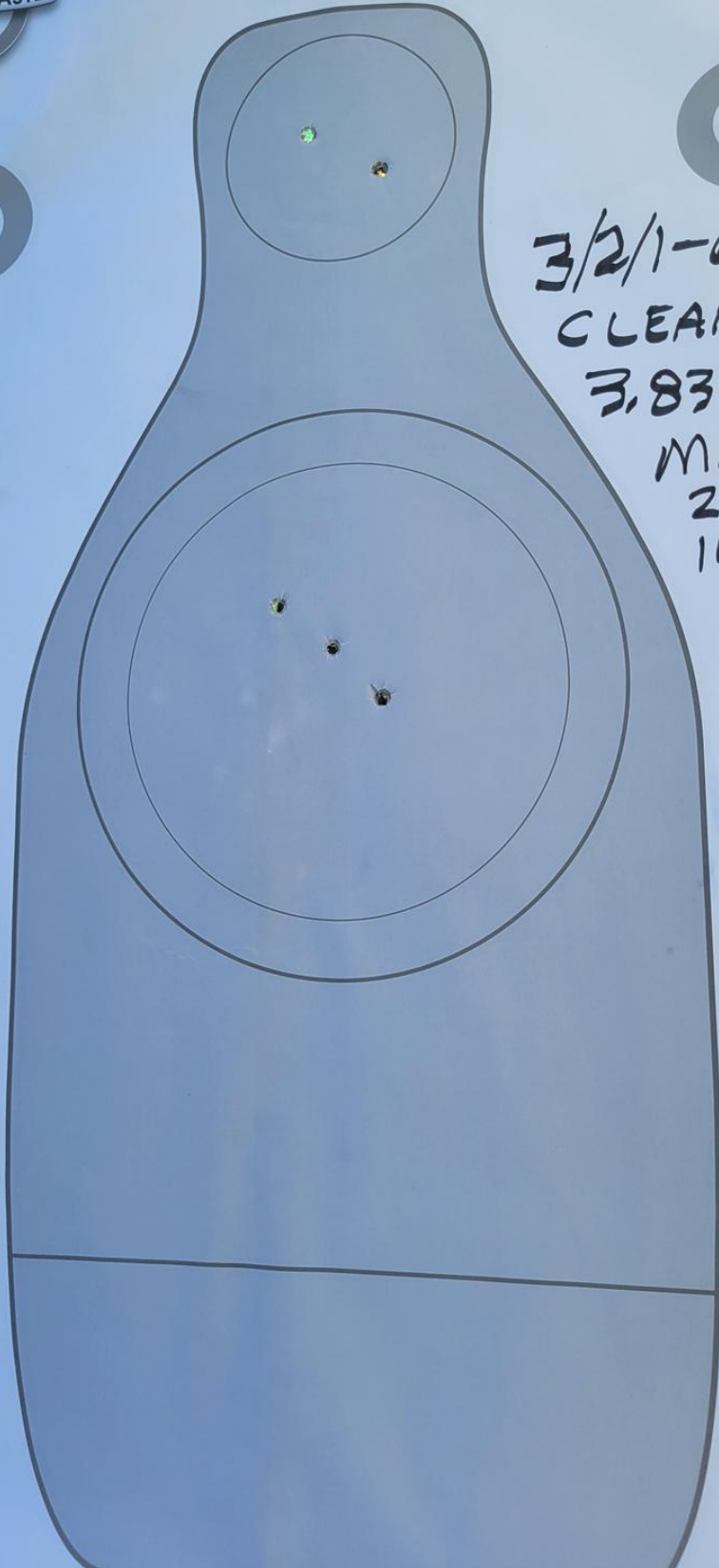
DRILL OF THE MONTH

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/>.

3/2/1 at 6

This is a simple, low round count drill that works on several skills in a very brief exercise. The target is the RFTS-Q silhouette, an IALEFI-Q, or an IDPA cardboard target. If the IDPA target is used, add a 2" circle to one shoulder. The drill is fired at 6 yards, about the length of a typical SUV.

Shooter starts holstered, concealed. On signal, draw and fire 3 rounds to the 8" chest circle, 2 rounds to the head circle, and 1 round to the zero circle above the target's shoulder. Use an electronic timer or have an accomplice



3/2/1-6,6
CLEAN
3.83 SECS
M&P
2.0A
147 Ball

time you with a stopwatch. Record the time for each run. All 6 rounds must hit the indicated area for a run to count.

Shoot the drill 3 times, for a total of 18 rounds. A single miss is a disqualification. If all 18 rounds hit the intended target zones, total the times for the 3 runs. The total time becomes your score. Your goals are as follows:

Normal earth people who carry- 30 seconds or less

Well trained shooters- 18 seconds or less

Instructors- 15 seconds or less

This drill tests a rapid concealed presentation, varying cadences, a vertical transition and a horizontal transition, and a strict accuracy/accountability requirement, all in very few rounds. Give it a try.

Normalize Wearing a Gun

Here are some interesting figures for you:

Current US population- 325,000,000

Percentage under 20 years of age or over 80 years of age= 28.7%

That leaves 71.3% of the population between 20 and 80 years old.

According to the US government, there are now 21,800,000 pistol carry permits in the US. This number is down slightly from 3 years ago, because 27 states now allow carry without a permit. Thus, many who had a permit in those states did not renew when their permits expired.

This means that not counting people who can legally carry a handgun in public in permit-less states, 1 person out of every 10.6 people between the ages of 20 and 80 have a carry permit. That's 9% of the population! So, don't let anyone make you think you are a rarity, or somehow crazy to carry a personal defense handgun.

NLEFIA

If you are a law enforcement firearms instructor, I recommend joining the National Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor Association (NLEFIA). See <https://nlefia.org/>

This organization is doing everything it can to raise the standards and performance of police firearms training in the US. This is an uphill battle, but it's easier when you can connect and exchange information with others who are working toward the same goals.

NLEFIA recently published a small scale study of police OIS (Officer Involved Shooting) incidents in which the officer used a pistol mounted optic. Nothing earth-

shattering or unexpected, but it's good to see someone actually collecting data. The study can be downloaded from their home page, even if you are not a member. There are other useful publications on their website, as well as their class schedule.

Snubby Practice/Evaluation Drill

<https://www.americanrifleman.org/content/snub-work-a-10-shot-carry-revolver-quiz/>

Hat tip to Greg Ellifritz for finding this gem.

Justin Dyal is a top tier trainer. Recognizing that many people carry a snub revolver, such as a Ruger LCR or S&W J-frame at least some of the time, Justin devised a simple, easy to run, low round count drill to keep up your skills with the pocket revolver. Most people don't practice with these little guns, because they are frankly uncomfortable to shoot. Justin's drill is only 10 rounds, and could be easily worked into your normal practice sessions.



Book Review

Gangster Hunters, How Hoover's G-Men Vanquished America's Deadliest Public Enemies, by John Oller

John Oller is a retired lawyer and author of seven books, including this extremely well-researched look at "The War on Crime", from 1932 to 1936.

In that time, there were no two-way radios, no computers, most US homes did not even have telephones yet. Detective work consisted of 12-18 hour days of burning shoe leather, recruiting

and managing informants, and running down leads in person. These investigations culminated in furious gun battles with heavily armed killers armed with BAR's and Thompson submachineguns, in addition to pistols and shotguns. Many of the brave men who carried out these hunts are virtually unknown today, an injustice Oller has sought to remedy.

Available from Amazon for \$35.00 in hardcover or \$18.99 in Kindle format. Contains 403 pages, lots of photos, numerous references—highly recommended.

Information on Repeat, Career Criminals

Here is some un-biased information about repeat criminals. If society were serious about reducing violent crime, we would lock people up for good after say, the third conviction. Sadly, that is not the case.

https://www.gunfacts.info/blog/recidivism-and-violence/?fbclid=IwY2xjawHfzWJleH-RuA2FlbQIxMQABHev3JV_G9nrIFAEg0EL2yiL9GZRHT-vgbRD3vF6g_dX2EGyM9_fzVpuBFKA_aem_7RJsD-tAie6E_hLFk_x0D6Q

Self-Defense Related Insurance/Protection

I get a lot of inquiries about insurance or other forms of protection for those who carry a defensive firearm, and for those who teach firearms classes. These are two separate issues, with separate answers. Let's start with instructors.

I use and recommend the Firearms Trainers Association. See ftaprotect.com . I have worked as an expert witness on firearms and firearms training lawsuits in state and federal courts all over the US. Part of that usually consists of educating the lawyers who hire me about the issues involved in their case. Most attorneys are not familiar with firearms or firearms training. From the FTA website:

“Conversations between legendary trainer Ken Hackathorn and gun industry attorney Kyle Sweet provided the spark for creating FTA. With the additional input and guidance of respected and distinguished trainers Jeff Gonzalez, Dave Spaulding, Scott Reidy and the leadership team from CCW Safe, the Firearms Trainers Association was born in a conference room in Las Vegas at SHOT Show.

FTA provides best in the industry Professional Liability Coverage benefits to members for any legal action stemming from their firearms training business. Furthermore, FTA protects the profession of firearms training through standards, business development services, curriculum sharing, safety and risk management. The Board members have decades of training experience in military/law enforcement and have dedicated their professional lives to training all levels of civilians. Their recognition of the need to create a mechanism to serve the interests of firearms trainers as well as increase the professionalism of the craft through their experiences, resources and core values led them to create FTA.”

I would much prefer to be defended by experts in my field, rather than an attorney who may not know a lot about firearms training.

Cost for a One Million Dollar/Two Million Dollar aggregate policy is only \$400 per year, and if you use the promo code RM10 you get a \$40.00 discount.

As for the private citizen who carries a defensive weapon and wants some legal back-up in the event of an incident, I recommend the

Armed Citizens Legal Defense Network (ACLDN). See <https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/> . From their website:

• With over \$4,000,000 in our Legal Defense Fund now, and after an assessment that your incident constituted a legitimate act of self defense, the Network will work with you and your attorney (paid for by the Network), to assure the best possible legal defense. This includes supplying bail money if necessary, hiring experts and investigators, and other consultants if required to bring your story to the jury. For a full description of our assistance to members, [click here to read more](#).

- Education: 13 full-length video lectures and a 332-page book so you know what's justifiable, what to expect and how to best interact with the criminal justice system.
- Guidance from our [Advisory Board](#) comprised of the recognized leaders in self-defense training: Massad Ayoob, John Farnam, Tom Givens, Emanuel Kapelsohn, Dennis Tueller, Karl Rehn and Marie D'Amico led by Network President Marty Hayes.
- Access to a growing nationwide network of attorneys and legal experts. [Read more here](#).
- Monthly education and updates through our [online journal](#).

I have been on the Advisory Board of ACLDN since its' inception in 2008. This is an unpaid advisory position, and I have no financial interest in the organization. I do have full confidence in their commitment to the membership. ACLDN now has 22,000 members, and so far have successfully handled 35 cases in which members were charged criminally in a self defense situation.

Appropriate Use of Force

Specific laws vary from state to state, but in general, American law authorizes a citizen to defend himself against an unlawful assault by using a like degree of force. Simply put, you may legally respond with the same level of force that your attacker is using, or attempting to use against you. The various degrees of force can be envisioned as a stairway, starting with the minimal force at the bottom step and escalating all the way to the top at deadly force.

The stairway concept discussed here consists of several degrees of force, from presence, to verbal commands, to pepper spray, to hard hands, all the way up to deadly force. It may help to imagine two parallel stairways, with you on one and your attacker on the other. If attacked you may respond to the same level (the same step) that your attacker is on, but you may not climb higher on your stairway than he has under normal circumstances.

Any force used by you in defense has to be minimal: the least amount of force that can get the job done; and reasonable, a typical sane, sober, decent person, under the same circumstances, would do the same thing.

Many people misunderstand this stairway concept, and think it means that one must move up one step at a time trying each available option. No, that is not what it means. It is simply a way to conceptualize that there are lower levels of force, higher levels of force, and intermediate levels in between. Wherever on his stairway your attacker is, you may automatically and immediately go to that level without taking other steps first.

Let's look at two of the keywords in the description above. First, we said your actions had to be "minimal". That simply means the least amount of force that will actually stop the unlawful assault against you. Notice I did not say the least amount of force you could possibly employ, it's the least amount of force that will actually get the job done. An easy way to remember this is that you have no right to punish someone. You have no right to punish him for scaring you or even for hurting you. What you do have is the right to make him stop his aggressive behavior against you. Once that aggressive behavior has been successfully stopped you have no right to pile on anymore punishment.

The other word was "reasonable". In any use of force, your actions must be objectively reasonable. That means that a normal, sane, decent, ordinary person, given the same facts and circumstances you had at the moment, would have done essentially the same thing you did. Neither of these concepts are mysterious or hard to understand.

Remember this stairway concept, as it is vital to legally justifying your actions. If a person stares at you in a menacing manner (presence), for instance, you cannot lawfully shoot him. Why? Because you are going much further up the ladder than he has. Does this mean that if a person shoots at you, you must first go to the steps of persuasion, commands, physical control, etc., before resorting to deadly force? No, it does not. An emergency situation requires you to skip over to the same plane the suspect is on, namely deadly force.

If the assailant's actions move downward on the stairway, you must also de-escalate your response. For example: a man shoots at you and misses. You draw your gun and prepare to fire. Seeing

this, he throws down his gun, puts his hands up, and shouts that he surrenders. You are no longer legally justified in firing, and must de-escalate, move downward on your stairway.

Before we go any further we probably ought to define some terms. What exactly do we mean by the term “deadly force”? Deadly force is any type or degree of force that can be reasonably expected to produce death or serious bodily injury. Thus, deadly force can consist of many acts other than firing a gun at a person. Stabbing or cutting a person with a knife or other edged weapon; deliberately hitting a person with a car; striking a person in the head with a club, whether a nightstick or a fireplace poker or tire iron; could all be examples of the use of deadly force. In my state, the legal definition of serious bodily injury includes broken major bones, protracted unconsciousness, a large bleeding wound, or loss of use of a limb or organ. In many states the definition also includes the forcible rape of either sex.

I do not think one has to be a doctor or lawyer to understand the concept of death. Serious bodily injury includes the sort of injuries we noted above. In really simple terms it would be life threatening injuries or the types of injuries that you would expect to have to stay in the hospital and have surgery in order to survive. Please note we are talking about serious injury here, **not** black eyes or split lips.

There is only one jurisdiction in the entire United States (Texas) that authorizes use of deadly force to protect property. In Texas, one can use deadly force to prevent the theft of property, but only at night. No other state in the US allows this. The law’s position is that no property has either intrinsic or extrinsic value greater than

that of a human life. If someone is running off with Aunt Tillie's silver service that goes back to the Revolutionary War and you take a shot at him, whether you hit him or not, guess which one of you has committed the more serious offense under the law? You have. I suggest you remember the acronym IDOL, which stands for "immediate defense of life". That is the only circumstance in which you are legally entitled to use deadly force.

You also may not use deadly force to stop a fleeing criminal. Police officers in this country, ever since the Supreme Court decision *Garner versus Tennessee*, have had strict limitations on when they can use deadly force to stop a fleeing felon. That applies only to police officers, however, who are acting as agents of the state. Private citizens simply do not under US law have the right to use deadly force to stop a fleeing criminal. Fleeing, by definition, means they have broken off the attack and are attempting to escape. If they have broken off the attack, exactly what are you defending against? Since you only have the right to use force in self-defense, shooting a fleeing person would not be lawful.

When then, are we justified in using deadly force in self-defense? Traditionally, there are four elements that must be satisfied before you can use deadly force against another human being. These are not complicated and they are not hard to judge in the real world. There is nothing subtle about someone trying to kill you. If it is a legitimate self-defense action it will be obvious to you and everyone else.

The first of the four elements is **ability**. Your attacker must have the physical capability, or the means, or be able to cause your death, or serious bodily injury. Ordinarily, he must have a weapon capable of causing such damage, and you must be within the

useful range of that weapon. A man waving a tire iron at you from 50 feet away, shouting obscenities, has no real ability at this point to cause you harm. A man with a tire iron at 10 feet is a different story. If your assailant has a weapon, and you are within the useful range of that weapon, he is said to have **ability**.

Weapons can generally be divided into two main categories: guns and everything else. The entire purpose of the gun is to project violence across a distance. Before guns became common violence was typically hand-delivered. With the gun violence can be sent by airmail. So, if your assailant has a firearm and a clear line of sight to you, you are in danger whether he is 5 feet away, 15 feet away, 50 feet away or further because he has the **ability** to harm you from where he stands.

Most other weapons fall into the category of contact weapons. This would include knives, razors, swords, tire irons, fireplace pokers, baseball bats, sections of 2 x 4, machetes, axes and hatchets, and claw hammers. It might surprise you to find out that more people are murdered in the US each year with hammers than with assault rifles. In fact, the third most commonly used weapon in US homicides is the screwdriver. Every thug carries one in his back pocket. It's what he breaks into your house with, what he breaks into your car with, what he starts your car with, and if you interrupt him in the course of one of these crimes he'll stick it between your ribs and wiggle it around and you'll be dead. An implement does not have to be designed or intended as a deadly weapon if that is what the user is attempting. All of the weapons listed here would have to touch you to cause harm. Does that mean your assailant must be within arm's reach before

an impact tool or contact weapon could be considered a legitimate threat? **No!**

The problem is people can and do move very quickly. Many years ago my friend Dennis Tueller conducted a series of tests in which randomly selected grown men were asked to stand 21 feet from him in an open area. On Dennis's signal the man would run forward and touch Dennis. Dennis would start a stopwatch when the man would start moving and stop the watch when the subject touched Dennis. Over the course of many iterations of this experiment, Dennis found that the average grown man starting standing perfectly still could cover that 21 foot distance and touch him in a second and half. Thus, if you're standing on an open parking lot, someone brandishing a knife or tire iron from as much as 20 feet away could still be considered to be an immediate deadly threat because he could close that gap and cut or strike you in as little as a second and a half. Over the years many people have completely misconstrued Dennis's findings. This does not mean you can automatically shoot someone holding a contact weapon 20 feet away. Factors you have to consider include your assailant's apparent age and physical ability and what intervening obstacles you could place between yourself and him, which might buy you time. There is no hard and fast line at 21 feet or anywhere else. Let's say there is an adult male holding a knife, 8 feet away from you, and threatening to cut you. However, he is 85 years old and in a wheelchair. That changes the equation. Or, you have an athletic looking 6'5", 25-year-old male holding a big knife 30 feet from you on an open parking lot with no obstacles between you and him. How long would it take him to get to you? Again the equation is changed by the exact circumstances involved.

There is another aspect of **ability** that we should mention, which is a concept known as “disparity of force”. Despite uninformed opinions you may have heard, you may in fact have to use a deadly weapon in self-defense against another person who is not armed. This circumstance arises when your attacker has an overwhelming advantage that forces you to move to a higher level of force in order to defend yourself. This rule will require two things on your part: unusual circumstances, and your ability to articulate your decision-making process. To keep this from being mysterious I will give you two examples.

First, let’s say a 105 pound woman has been backed into a corner by a 275 pound thug who looks like he just got out of prison pumping iron four hours a day. He has made it clear, through his words, actions, or combination of those that he intends to rob, rape, and murder her. He does not have a gun, knife or club, but does he have the ability to kill her or cripple her with his bare hands? Of course he does. When she articulates her decision-making process these are some of the key points she will need to point out to justify her decision to use her pistol against this “unarmed man”.

First, he is male and she is female. Males have a significant upper body strength advantage, and a huge reach advantage over females. Second, he had her backed into a corner. She cannot escape to her rear and she would not be able to get past him. She is trapped. Third, he is almost 3 times her size, and has an enormous strength advantage. If he got his hands on her he would be able to strangle or beat her to death easily, and the only way she could be reasonably expected to stop that would be to employ her

firearm. A reasonable person would conclude that she had no other choice.

Another example: an elderly gentleman is walking down the sidewalk when three 19-year-old thugs knock him down and begin kicking and stomping on him. Would he be justified in using his pistol to make them stop, although they are not armed with guns or knives? Of course he would. Here are the reasons. There are three of them and only one of him. They are younger, tougher, stronger and meaner. They have him down on the ground in a position of extreme disadvantage-- he cannot get out from under them and he cannot strike back effectively from there. If they continue kicking and stomping on him he will almost certainly be killed or permanently crippled. His only reasonable alternative is to produce a pistol and shoot in self-defense. He shoots one and the others run? He can't shoot them. The danger is over.

As you can see, it is not difficult to envision circumstances in which you would have to use deadly force against an "unarmed man". You have to be able to articulate why he had the ability to cause your death or serious bodily harm and why your action was the only reasonable alternative.

The next element is **intent**. Your assailant must, through his words, actions, or combination of those show that what he intends to do is cause your death or serious bodily injury. I actually had a student once in a permit type class say to me, "I'm not a mind reader, so how am I supposed to know what someone else's intent is?". Please! It is not hard to deduce someone's **intent** in this context.

Let's say a man is walking down the sidewalk outside the athletic field, toward you, with a baseball bat on his shoulder, whistling "Take Me Out to the Ball Game". What do you suppose his intent is? On the other hand, if an angry, screaming, cursing man draws a bat back behind his head in both hands a few feet away from you and says, "kiss your ass goodbye!", what do you suppose is his intent? If someone deliberately points a gun at you, that strongly implies **intent** to do you harm. If someone is holding a weapon and says, "I'm going to kill you!", that establishes **intent**. A reasonable person would have to believe that what this person is about to do is to attempt to kill or cripple you.

The third element is **imminent jeopardy**. You must reasonably believe that your life is in grave, immediate danger. This must be a reasonable belief, based on the facts and circumstances as you know them at that time. Please note that what you know or perceive at that moment is all that counts. If, after the incident, investigation shows that your assailant had prior convictions for manslaughter or murder, that is not part of your justification process unless that was known to you before you fired.

Again, your conclusion that you are in **imminent jeopardy** must be reasonable, that is, it would be shared by any other normal, sane, decent person given the same facts and circumstances. For instance, if someone points a banana at you and says, "This is a Martian ray gun, I am going to disintegrate you", that would not be a credible threat, so you would not be justified in using deadly force. On the other hand, let's say an armed robber points a gun at you, puts you in fear for your life, and you shoot him. Later, it turns out that his pistol had a broken firing pin, or an empty chamber, or was completely unloaded. That does not change the fact

that when you shot, your reasonable perception was that your life was in immediate danger. Again, a reasonable person would conclude that when an armed robber points a gun at you, your life is in immediate danger. The law does not require you to know things you cannot know. There was no way for you to know if the firing pin was broken, the chamber was empty, or the gun was unloaded, therefore when you acted your actions were reasonable.

So, if your attacker has the **ability** to cause your death or serious bodily injury, his words or actions manifest that is his **intent**, and you reasonably believe that your life is in **imminent jeopardy** then you may be justified in using deadly force in self-defense. I said, “may be” because of the last element, **preclusion**. **Preclusion** simply means that you had no other option. In some states, there is a statutory “duty to retreat”. This is often, however, misunderstood. It does not mean you have to back away or run away from an assailant who is capable of killing or crippling you. It means you must not have some other viable alternative that would protect you. Also, you must be able to retreat in safety. Here is an example. You are sitting in your car, which is stopped. It is running and in gear. A man on foot is waving a tire iron and threatening to beat your head in. What would be your reasonable action at this point? Do you draw your gun and defend yourself or do you simply drive away? Drive away! Driving away removes you from the danger zone without risk of death or injury, so this would be required under this set of circumstances. No rocket science involved here.

A lot of people try to make this far more complicated than it actually is. If someone is attempting to kill, rape or cripple you it is usually pretty obvious. “Is he capable of causing such damage to

me?” “Is this what he is trying to do?” “Do I have any other option?”

Many people make the mistake of asking, “If he does (fill in the blank) can I shoot him?” The question should never be, “Can I shoot him?” The question should always be, “Do I have to shoot him?” Here are some suggestions that will go a very long way toward keeping you out of legal trouble anywhere in the United States:

1. I will not seek a fight, and if at all possible I will avoid one, but if one is forced upon me I will do what it takes to win.
1. My sidearm is neither a status symbol nor an emotional crutch. I will not reach for it unless out of dire necessity, but if I must use deadly force to preserve my life or that of an innocent person, I will use it skillfully and without hesitation.
2. I will forget I have a pistol, unless I need it to stop an immediate and otherwise unavoidable deadly threat to me or to someone for whom I am responsible.

Actually pretty simple, eh?

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

April 4-6, 2025 Instructor Development Course (Givens)
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 16-18, 2025 (Givens)
Defensive Shotgun Instructor Lakeland, FL
<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6a70e4e7e7f3ba0f31ef>

May 31-June 1, 2025
Combative Pistol Aqil Qadir, Instructor
Stafford, Virginia
<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/673a37c8aa4a19177007be27>

June 13-15, Master Instructor (Givens)
Private Range, Stafford, Virginia
<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d7638e4e7e7f3ba1243cd>

June 20-22, 2025 Instructor Development Course
(Givens)
Marianna Field & Stream Club
144 Hufford Run Rd
Marianna, PA 15345
<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/668d6f23e4e7e7f3ba1077a9>

June 28-29, 2025 Combative Pistol (Aqil instructor)
Sherwood, Oregon

<https://manager.corsizio.com/events/676efdab99d74784f785341b>



“Happiness is the by-product of achievement”- Jeff Cooper

This young lady overcame some equipment obstacles and graduated from our Advanced Firearms Instructor Development Course. The smile says it all.