



## **Rangemaster Firearms Training Services**

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# **JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER**

## **DRILL OF THE MONTH**

Throughout 2026 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/> .

## **AMBIDEXTROUS SKILLS**

This simple 10 shot drill tests your ability to draw quickly and shoot accurately with both hands, and with either hand, plus a quick reload under time pressure. Target is a B-8C or FBI IP-1, scored as printed. The range is 7 yards. Use a timer to measure the time for the drill. Hit factor scoring- divide total points by total time. Your goal is a score of 6 or higher.

Start with 5 rounds only in the gun, holstered, concealed. On the beep, draw and fire 5 rounds, using both hands. Conduct an empty gun reload, then fire 3 rounds using the dominant hand

only, switch hands, and fire 2 rounds using the non-dominant hand only.

## Clunker to Combat Ready

John Browning designed a semi-automatic shotgun in 1898 that worked awfully well. He sold the design to FN in Belgium and they produced the gun as the Browning A5 for almost 100 years, making 2.7 million of them. He slightly modified the design for Remington in this country, and they brought it out in 1911 as the Model 11, and it remained in production for over 40 years with 850,000 made. Those numbers are a testament to the reliability and durability of the design.

There are lots of used Model 11's around in pawn shops and older gun shops. I recently picked up one for \$250 that had a lot of finish wear but was mechanically sound. I had my local gunsmith go over it and modernize it a bit. New specifications:

Barrel cut to 18", new fiber optic front sight installed.

Stock cut to 12.5" length of pull, with high quality recoil pad installed.

Action cleaned and lubed, friction rings replaced.

Entire gun coated in matte black Duracote. All of the work came to just \$300.00, making the total cost \$550.00.

I now have a handy, fast handling auto shotgun for 1/3 the cost of a new Beretta 1301. If you are on a budget or want a low investment spare gun, there are lots more of these where this one came from.



## Semi-automatics- New? Hardly.

If you wish to continue to enjoy your gun/self defense rights, you have to be willing to educate your friends, relatives and co-workers about the endless propaganda the Left pushes.

There are several bills pending at the state and federal level to ban all guns with a “semi-automatic action”, as they allow one to shoot successive shots with just another pull of the trigger, “making them ideal for mass killers”. They address this as if this is something just invented and too dangerous for mere private citizens.

Note in the article above, the Remington Model 11 and the Browning A5 design go back to 1898. Pictured below is a Model 1907 Winchester, in .351 SLR caliber. “SLR” stands for “self loading rifle”. The Model 1907 replaced the Model 1905, and they are both semi-automatic rifles with detachable 10, 15 and 20 round magazines (assault rifles of 119 years ago!). The Left depends on a public that doesn’t know the difference and buys their constant lies and distortions.



# TACTICAL CONFERENCE 2027

The dates for the next Tactical Conference will be April 2-4, 2027. We will be back at the outstanding facilities of the Dallas Pistol Club in Carrollton, Texas, one of the best venues in the whole country. Over half of the tickets have already been sold, so don't procrastinate. There will be over 40 nationally recognized trainers conducting live-fire, empty hand, and edged weapon training on the ranges, plus medical, legal, and tactical training in the classrooms. This is the premiere training event of the year. See <https://taccon.info/register/> . Pics from the 2026 event.







## Performance Metrics vs Complete Capability

This was written by Jim Shanahan. Jim is a Grand Master in IPSC/USPSA, and a Master in multiple IDPA divisions. He is also a retired soldier and a former contractor in the Sandbox.

Modern firearms culture has become increasingly obsessed with measurable performance. Shot timers, classification systems, standards drills, qualification scores, hit factors, split times, and social media target photos dominate much of the discussion surrounding skill with a handgun.

To be clear, measurable performance matters.

In fact, one of the largest problems in the training world for many years was the absence of objective measurement entirely. Too many people discussed mindset, tactics, equipment, and “gunfighting” while possessing little or no validated shooting performance. The industry needed measurable standards, and in many ways the rise of performance-based shooting helped expose that reality.

The problem is not performance metrics themselves.

The problem begins when people mistake performance metrics for complete capability.

Those are not the same thing.

A shooter who demonstrates high-level measurable performance almost certainly possesses a significant degree of automaticity. Grip establishment, trigger management, recoil control, visual processing, presentation efficiency, and gun handling have likely become deeply subconscious processes. That matters tremendously.

In fact, automaticity may be one of the most important components of high-level firearms performance.

The more subconscious the mechanical aspects of shooting become, the more cognitive bandwidth becomes available for solving the actual problem. Observation improves. Decision-making improves. Environmental awareness improves. Communication improves. Processing speed improves.

This is where measurable performance becomes valuable far beyond score alone.

Strong performance often suggests a level of subconscious competency that frees the mind to perform higher-order tasks under pressure.

But even that still does not equal complete capability.

A shooter may possess extraordinary shooting performance while lacking emotional control, judgment, awareness, communication skills, or decision-making ability. Likewise, a person may possess excellent tactical awareness, maturity, and restraint while lacking refined handgun performance under measurable conditions.

The two are related, but they are not interchangeable.

This is one of the areas where modern firearms discussions often become confused. Some individuals dismiss measurable standards entirely, claiming that “real world” encounters cannot be measured on a timer or scored on paper. Others go to the opposite extreme and begin treating shooting performance as the sole indicator of preparedness or capability.

Both positions miss the larger picture.

Performance metrics are indicators. They are not complete representations of the human problem.

A clean FAST drill, a Grandmaster classification, a high FBI Bullseye score, or an excellent qualification run certainly demonstrate something important. Those performances are difficult to achieve without efficient subconscious processing and disciplined mechanical execution. They strongly suggest that the shooter has invested serious effort into building repeatable skill.

What they do not automatically demonstrate is:

- judgement,
- tactical wisdom,
- emotional control,
- restraint,
- observation quality,
- or decision-making under ambiguous conditions.

Conversely, the absence of elite-level shooting metrics does not automatically indicate incompetence in all other areas of defensive preparation.

The issue becomes even more important when discussing law enforcement and defensive firearm use. Real-world performance problems rarely occur in isolation. Officers and armed citizens must solve complex situations involving movement, communication, environmental awareness, unknown contacts, legal considerations, emotional stress, and compressed timelines.

Under those conditions, subconscious competency matters enormously.

If an individual must consciously process every aspect of grip pressure, sight alignment, trigger control, reload mechanics, or handgun manipulation, cognitive workload increases rapidly. As workload increases, observation and decision-making often begin to deteriorate.

This is why automaticity matters.

Not because shooting fast is impressive.

Not because scores create status.

But because subconscious competency allows the mind to focus on solving the larger problem.

That distinction is critical.

The ultimate goal should never be to become a shooter who can simply perform well on demand under controlled conditions. The goal should be to build enough subconscious competency that measurable shooting performance no longer consumes excessive mental bandwidth during complex problem solving.

This is where performance standards and complete capability begin to intersect properly.

Measurable standards provide accountability.

Automaticity provides efficiency.

Judgment provides restraint.

Awareness provides options.

Decision-making provides direction.

All of those components matter.

The problem is not that modern shooters value measurable performance too highly.

The problem is that many have started confusing one component of capability for the entirety of capability itself.

Performance metrics matter.

They simply are not the whole story.



Our annual Instructor Conference will be held on Dec 5-6, 2026 in Nashville, TN, at the fabulous Royal Range. This is one of the nicest indoor training complexes in the US. All of the Rangemaster staff instructors will be presenting, with a brand new program this year. See

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/685ec45cf02127913e36f6e7>

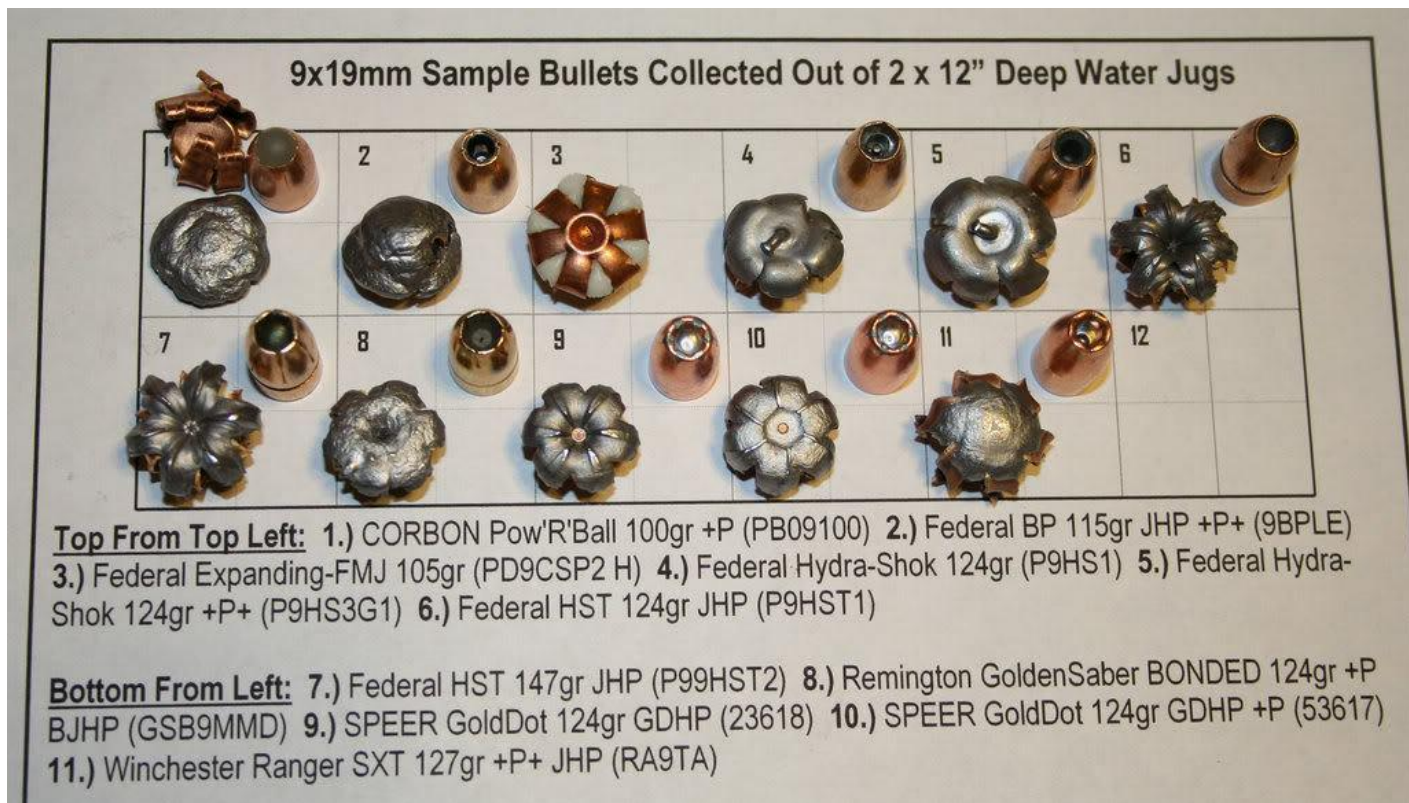


# New- Armed Lifestyle Magazine

Armed Lifestyle Magazine is an on-line magazine dealing with all manner of self defense/personal safety issues. In issue number 25, long time student Gary Glemboski wrote a very nice piece about our training programs. See page 36.

<https://www.armedlifestylemagazine.com/read/issue-25>





Our old friend and Rangemaster certified instructor, Shane Gosa fired these common 9mm defense loads into two plastic jugs of water, one behind the other. Water is not a direct analog to tissue, but it is a stable medium that allows multiple bullets to be compared “apples to apples”. Number 7, the Federal 147 grain HST, P99HST2 is my carry load in my M&P’s, because in my guns they are very accurate and shoot right to my fixed sights.

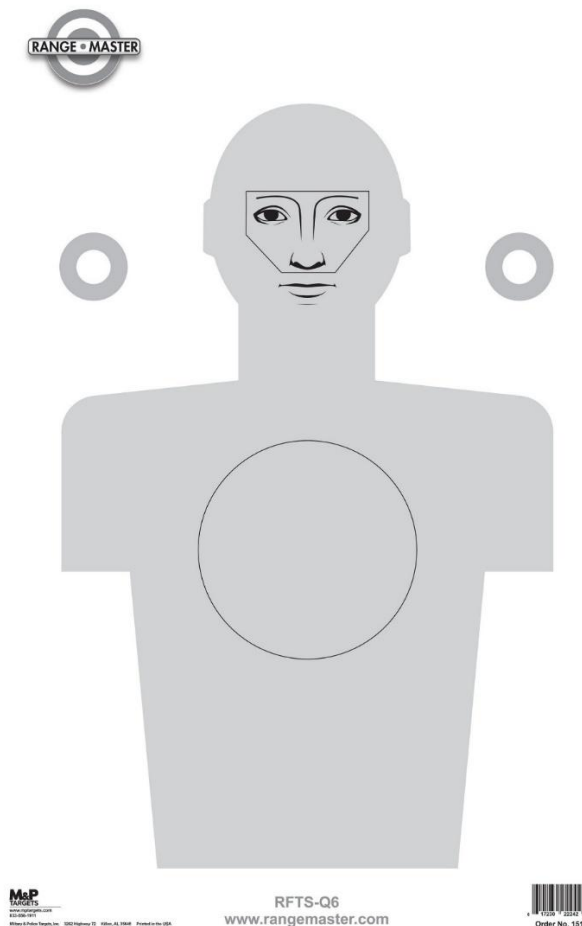
Gunwriter James Tarr recently contacted Federal and Speer and asked them about their current police sales. By far, the most popular 9mm loads among law enforcement agencies were the Speer 124 grain +P Gold Dot, and the Federal 147 grain HST. Both have an excellent record in actual shootings.

## New Target Now Available

The RFTS-Q6 silhouette is now available from M&P Targets.

<https://mptargets.com/shop/rangemaster-rfts-q6-151/>

This is a slightly reduced size silhouette, with a more human shaped torso and head. It is a neutral gray color. The chest includes a single 8" circle for a vital zone. The head includes a properly shaped ocular window. For a 50 round course of fire, we score this as 2 points inside the chest ring or ocular box, and 1 point anywhere else on the target. It also has 2 zero circles above the shoulders.



# Teaching The First Shots: Handgun

By Tim Kelly



## **First shots: Explaining fear response.**

New shooters almost always flinch, startle, or otherwise exude tension after that first “bang.” We call that the fear response. One of the best ways to mitigate the anxiety is to identify the fear response early and normalize it among students. Knowing what to expect can minimize their stress and embarrassment when they feel it firsthand.

Discuss the steps that will occur after the shot is fired in detail, and ensure the students understand the safety precautions relevant to each portion.

## Components to consider

- Loud bang — Use quality hearing protection to dampen the scare factor of the sound, as well as to protect your hearing.
- Muzzle flash — Wear eye protection to minimize the physical and psychological sensations.
- Muzzle rise — The gun will not fly out of your hand.
- Hot Brass — Avoid low-cut shirts and open-toed shoes to prevent skin contact. Wear billed cap to deflect any casings headed for your face.

Ultimately, you want to get across to the student that whatever their initial response is, they **MUST keep the gun pointed in the direction of the target and remove their finger from the trigger.**

As for the trainer, you must expect something to happen after a student fires their first shots. Don't get caught off guard. Position yourself on the dominant side of the student and just behind them with your hands ready in case you need to physically control them. Allow some room. Speak confidently without an intimidating tone. Reassure them that they are in a controlled environment. Be ready.

## After the first shot

Some people's fear response manifests as a subtle flinch. Some may drop the gun. Some may freeze with their finger still pulling the trigger back and "white knuckling" the grip. Some may turn to ask you how they did, forgetting the gun is still in their hand. As a trainer, you must have a ready response for any scenario. Your priorities are:

- First, keep their firearm pointed in the direction of their target.
- Second, ensure they remove their finger from the trigger.

After you have observed the student handling those two important safety rules on their own with consistency, you may begin directing more of your focus on the result: marksmanship.

As the student begins to acclimate to the first few shots fired, you may still see a few snippets of the fear response from time to time. The occasional flinch or tightening of the dominant hand are the most common. But, sometimes you may catch them closing their eyes right before the gun goes off or even turning their head away. Address those issues delicately. Identify the issue with the student, and have the student take a few deep breaths and try again.

## **Marksmanship: The ability to shoot accurately**

Most any Basic Pistol class that I have ever attended lists at least six fundamentals of marksmanship: grip, stance, aiming, trigger control, breath control, and follow-through. Each one of these fundamentals are explained in detail, demonstrated, and then maybe some practical application in between. I am not discounting this approach, but sharing a different tactic we often use for training fundamentals during private sessions at the Apache range.

## **Simplify the skill**

After discussing all the essential constituents of range safety, emergency procedures, firearms handling and safety rules, we then move on to the essentials of pistol marksmanship. That is A

LOT for the student to take in and retain. So, why not just focus on what is the most important? The two most important marksmanship fundamentals are trigger control and aiming. If the student understands aiming and can press the trigger without disrupting the sight alignment, they will perform well in terms of accuracy.

**Accuracy: The quality or state of being correct or precise.**

**Precision: The quality, condition, or fact of being exact and accurate.**

Now let's break this down a step further. If marksmanship is the ability to shoot accurately, then what does it mean to shoot precisely?

- Target: 8.5"x11" standard sheet of paper with a 3"x5" index card in the center
- Distance: 5 yards
- 10 shots were fired. 6 were in the index card and 4 were on the standard sheet of paper. How well did this student perform?

The answer is 100% accuracy and 60% precision. If the student missed the standard sheet of paper (the target), then it would deduct from the accuracy percentage. If the student had more hits inside of the index card (the refined target), then we would add to the percentage for precision. You can also use a standard B-8 or B-8 repair center for this considering the black for the refined target and the tan for the standard of accuracy.

Why are these two measurements so important? The student needs to understand that accuracy can be tuned to precision by

developing the skills of trigger press and aiming. The trainer can use this to adjust the level of competency in the subject. Create or close distance, adjust target sizes, and begin stacking more fundamental skills to facilitate the marksmanship learning process.

For example, if the student demonstrates a high level of accuracy, you may want to begin adjusting their grip, stance and follow-through. These will help students achieve more consistent growth and set them up for success for future skillsets.

At Apache, we have found that the more early emphasis we place on the concept of “Press trigger, don’t disrupt sights,” the more efficient the learning process becomes. It also allows the student to process their fear response without becoming overwhelmed with instruction. In the end, it makes the learning process more enjoyable and less stressful.

## **UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS**

**Aug 14-16, Instructor Development, Bonfield, Illinois**

(John Hearne)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/69ac52cd4ae3804c4147cf5>

**Aug15-16 Advanced Instructor** Royal Range,  
Nashville, TN (Tom Givens)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/685eba6bf02127913e3503e5Aug>

**Aug 15-16 Enhanced Coaching Skills**, Georgia  
Gun Club, Buford, Georgia

(Lee Weems) - Very nice, modern indoor complex,  
Atlanta suburbs

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/69f1368b370441efb2334a8e>

**Aug 22-23 Intensive Pistol Skills**, Royal Range,  
Nashville, TN (Tom Givens)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/685ebb3ef02127913e351a41>

**Sept 11-13 Master Instructor** Terre Haute, IN  
(Tom Givens)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/685ebc58f02127913e353333>

**Sept 18-20 Instructor Course** Buford, GA

(Tom Givens) (excellent indoor facility)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/685ebd40f02127913e3537>

18

