

Rio Salado Sportsmans Club (RSSC)

Intro To Steel SAFETY Guide

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE: The RSSC Practical Division strives to provide a safe, friendly, supportive and informative platform as competitors enter the practical shooting sports. Practical Shooting is fun, exciting and challenging, but can also be overwhelming, as there are many concepts to learn as shooters begin their journey.

At our matches, **SAFETY** is always the number one priority and safety is the responsibility of all participants. **Note that Gun Safety rules apply, whether the gun is loaded or unloaded!**

Prior to shooting the **Intro To Steel Match (I2S)** for the first time, print and review this SAFETY guide. Remember to bring it with you to your first match so we know you have reviewed the safety rules. There will be a short quiz during the Sunday morning I2S Safety Briefing.

I. NRA SAFETY RULES:

- a. Treat all firearms as if LOADED
- b. Keep your finger OFF of the trigger and OUT of the trigger guard UNTIL you are on target and ready to shoot
- c. Never point your gun at anything you're not willing to destroy
- d. Be certain of your target and what's behind it

II. RANGE SAFETY RULES:

- a. **RSSC is a COLD Range** - No **LOADED** firearms are allowed unless under the supervision of a Range Safety Officer, Match Range Officer or Instructor.
- b. **ARRIVAL** - Firearms must be **UNLOADED** upon arriving at the range. If you have a **LOADED** gun, **proceed immediately to the Public Range and a Range Safety Officer will escort you to an UNLOADING area.**
- c. **GUN TRANSPORTING** - Your **UNLOADED** gun should be carried in a range bag or case that **zips or latches closed.**
- d. **GUN HANDLING** - **Allowed ONLY in the SAFETY AREAS or on the SHOOTING LINE** - NEVER in your car, in the parking lot, in the restrooms, etc.!
- e. **90 DEGREE RULE** - Always keep the gun pointed **DOWNRANGE** (toward the BACK berms), never breaking 90 degrees from the median intercept of the berm with the muzzle (right or left). Muzzle must NEVER be pointed **UPRANGE**, toward the sky or toward the ground.
- f. **SAFETY AREAS** - **To HOLSTER the gun PRIOR to shooting a match**, take your range / gun bag to a safety area, face the back wall, take the unloaded gun out of its bag (make sure the muzzle is pointed at back wall), **check to ensure that it is unloaded.** UNLOADED gun MUST have the slide closed forward and the hammer / striker **DOWN.**
TO HOLSTER:
- Face down range and keep the muzzle pointed down range.

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- Keep your finger OFF the trigger and OUT of the trigger guard.
- Do not cover any part of your body while holstering, i.e. Feet, legs, hands.
- Keep your **support** hand clear of the gun and the holster.
- Keep your finger OFF the trigger and OUT of the trigger guard.
- CANT the gun toward the ground just enough to enable it to go into the holster.
- Do NOT cant the gun uprange / toward competitors or you will be disqualified.
- Keep your finger OFF the trigger and OUT of the trigger guard.
- **WATCH** the gun go into the holster WHILE your finger is STILL off the trigger / out of the trigger guard.
- When the gun is securely and safely holstered, you may turn around / uprange.

Once you have holstered your gun, you are NOT allowed to handle the gun again until you are the current shooter under the direction of a range officer - or back in a safety area.

- g. **SAFETY AREAS - To BAG your gun to go home, use the restroom, etc.** - Take your range / gun bag to a safety area, face the back wall, take the UNLOADED gun out of the holster, **check to ensure that it is unloaded.** UNLOADED gun MUST have the slide closed forward and the hammer / striker DOWN. Place UNLOADED gun in bag, respecting the aforementioned 90 degree rule.
- h. **SAFETY AREAS - NO handling of ammunition or LOADED magazines** in the safety areas, this includes dummy ammo. You may clean, repair, dry fire your UNLOADED gun in the safety areas.

III. MATCH SAFETY RULES:

- a. **VIOLATIONS** - Any breach of the rules results in DISQUALIFICATION (DQ) from the match. Competitors are allowed 3 WARNINGS at I2S before they are additionally DQ'd from the match.
- b. **GUN HANDLING** - NEVER handle your gun unless you are in a Safety Area OR you are the current shooter on a stage and under a Range Officer's command.
- c. **TRIGGER FINGER** - a competitor's finger should only be on the trigger / in the trigger guard area when **pointed at a target and ready to shoot.** Keep finger OFF of trigger and OUT of trigger guard while loading, unloading, holstering, reloading, negotiating props and moving.
- d. **MUZZLE DIRECTION** - If at any time during the course of fire, a competitor allows the muzzle of his gun to point **rearwards**, that is further than 90 degrees from the median intercept of the backstop, or in the case of no backstop, allows the muzzle to point up range, whether the gun is loaded or not he / she will be disqualified. **The 90 degree rule applies to ALL directions:** Up, Down, and sideways. Keep the gun muzzle pointed STRAIGHT DOWNRANGE. Do NOT point muzzle toward the sky or ground.
- e. **MUZZLE DIRECTION** - NEVER COVER any part of your body with the muzzle of the gun; NOT while holstering, drawing, reloading, moving, etc. If you need to reload with a magazine on a table, make sure the mags are placed on your support side so you never reach in front of the gun. If you need to pick up magazines or ammunition from the ground, keep the muzzle straight downrange OR do so AFTER you have unloaded & shown clear.
- f. **ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE (AD)** - An AD while loading, unloading, holstering, reloading, or moving results in immediate disqualification. Shooting a prop or table during the Course of Fire (COF) also results in disqualification. Keep your finger OFF of the trigger and out of the trigger guard UNLESS YOU ARE ENGAGING A TARGET AND READY TO SHOOT!

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- g. **SQUIB LOAD - STOP SHOOTING!** Keep the muzzle pointed straight downrange, remove finger from the trigger / trigger guard. The RO will provide further instruction. **A squib load** is a firearms malfunction in which a fired projectile does not have enough force behind it to exit the barrel, and thus becomes stuck.
- h. **OBEY THE RANGE OFFICER (RO) COMMANDS - STOP** immediately if the RO says STOP at any point during the COF. Keep the gun pointed downrange, take your finger off of the trigger / out of the trigger guard and wait for further instruction.
WARNINGS - If the RO says “**MUZZLE**” during the COF, your muzzle is close to breaching the 90 degree rule. Make the proper corrective action.
WARNINGS - If the RO says “**FINGER**” during the COF, your finger is on the trigger or in the trigger guard when it should NOT be. Make the proper corrective action.
- i. **PROPER GUN HANDLING** - Always load, reload and unload your gun by **holding your gun in your STRONG HAND** and your magazines in your support hand.

IV. EQUIPMENT:

- a. Check the website for Gun, Magazine and Ammo information.
- b. **Eye protection must be worn at all times. Hearing protection** is mandatory when in the shooting bays and while shooting.
- c. **Holsters: As of March, 2013 you MUST have a holster to carry your gun at the match.**
 - NOT ALLOWED - Shoulder, cross-draw, pocket, tie down or fanny pack holsters!
 - Holster must be snugly secured at waist or hip with a belt, through a minimum of 3 belt loops.
 - Holster must be worn on competitor's STRONG side.
 - Intro To Steel Match does NOT allow any holsters that utilize a trigger finger release mechanism, i.e. Black Hawk Serpa

V. SHOOT THE MATCH!

- a. Stage / COF BRIEFINGS are posted up-range of the 4 stages. Read the briefings THOROUGHLY and note starting position, number of required rounds, location of targets, boxes, & any special instructions.
- b. If you have questions, ASK for clarification (before you shoot). There are many friendly, experienced shooters waiting at each stage to help.
- c. **RANGE OFFICER (RO) DUTIES:** An experienced shooter will act as the RO in charge on each stage. The RO's responsibilities are:
 - To take charge of safety on the bay.
 - To closely monitor safe competitor action.
 - To declare the time, scores and penalties achieved by each competitor.
 - **NEW shooters MAY NOT RO.**
- d. **STAGE SCORER:** Each stage will also have a scorer with a clipboard. Give your scorecard to the scorer AFTER you have read the stage description and you are ready to shoot.
- e. **LISTEN** for your name to be called. The scorer will call the **Shooter**, the **Shooter On-Deck**, the **Shooter in the Hole**. **When it's your turn to shoot**, the RO will clear the line and issue the

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command to “**MAKE READY**”. Do **NOT** handle your gun **PRIOR** to the **MAKE READY** command. “Make Ready” is your signal to prepare for the stage. Note that the **LOADING** process is **NOT** a timed event. Be deliberate and watchful.

f. **RANGE COMMANDS - LOADING:**

1. “**MAKE READY**” - Once given the “Make Ready” command, **load gun and put in SAFE ready condition, per Stage Description.**
2. “**ARE YOU READY?**” - No need to respond unless you are **NOT** ready.
3. “**STANDBY**”
4. “**BEEP**” - Within 1 to 3 seconds, the timer will **BEEP**. The beep is the signal for you to engage the COF.
5. **SHOOT THE STAGE!** When you appear to have completed the COF, the RO will issue the command, “**IF YOU ARE FINISHED, UNLOAD & SHOW CLEAR**”. That is your signal to safely **UNLOAD** and holster / bag your gun. Note that the **UNLOADING** process is **NOT** a timed event. Be deliberate and watchful.

g. **RANGE COMMANDS - UNLOADING:**

1. “**IF YOU ARE FINISHED, UNLOAD & SHOW CLEAR**”
 - Remove the magazine from the gun & place in pouch/pocket.
 - Rack the slide back, extracting any rounds from the chamber.
 - Visually inspect the chamber to ensure it is clear.
 - **Allow the RO to examine the chamber.**
2. “**IF CLEAR, HAMMER DOWN**”
 - Release the slide forward.
 - Point the gun downrange at a target & pull the trigger to ensure the gun is unloaded.
3. “**HOLSTER**”
 - Safely holster your gun (or **BAG** your gun if you don't have a holster)
 - Do not use your support hand to holster.
 - **WATCH** your gun go into the holster.
4. “**RANGE IS CLEAR**”
 - You are clear to turn around.
 - Get your scorecard from the scorer. Make sure your time is written down.
 - **Congratulations - You safely completed the stage!**

When you have finished the match, remember to go to the safety area to **BAG** your **UNLOADED** gun. We hope you enjoy our events and look forward to your regular participation!

*Intro To Steel Safety Guide adopted from Pete Carstensen and modified by Kippi Leatham.
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