

Zia Rifle & Pistol Club

Action Handgun Rules

Action Handgun is a low key, low stress, enjoyable competition geared for new shooters and experienced shooters alike. It stresses simple courses where all types of handguns are competitive. It is a great way to learn to handle your gun competently and have fun at the same time!

Action Handgun is a sport dedicated to the informal shooting of handguns.

- Our sport sharpens the skills the average citizen should exercise in the safe handling and operation of typical, standard handguns.
- At Action Handgun, you learn by observation of others and following standard sport shooting and safety procedures. It's more like on-the-job training than a class. You'll learn by having fun.
- We are an equal opportunity sport. Shooters with special needs are encouraged to take a look. Challenged, Senior Citizens or disabled persons that feel they might benefit from the safety of a firearm are encouraged to join us. As necessary, appropriate, and safe, accommodations will be made for Shooters.
- We have two strict rules: You must be a safe Shooter, and you must have fun.

Basic Rules

Any safe handgun can be used. Any safe holster that covers the trigger guard can be used. The belt must be at waist level. Hip mounted tactical holsters may be used, provided all tie down straps are fastened. A concealed carry holster may be used but is not required. A Shooter must never use or wear on his person more than one firearm during a course of fire.

Firearms must be serviceable and safe. Range Officers may demand examination of a firearm or allied equipment, at any time, to check they are functioning safely. If any such item is declared unserviceable or unsafe by a Range Officer, it must be withdrawn from the match until the item is repaired to the satisfaction of the Range Officer.

Handguns offering "burst" and/or fully automatic operation are prohibited.

Classification of Firearms (Divisions)

- Optics (Optic)
 - Any handgun using red/green dot or laser
- High Capacity (HiCap)
 - Semiautomatic
 - No limitation on rounds in magazines
- Limited 10 (Lim10)
 - Semiautomatic
 - No more than 10 rounds in any magazine
 - Higher capacity magazines may be used but may not be loaded with more than 10 rounds.
- Big Automatic (BigAuto)
 - Semiautomatic
 - .45 caliber or larger
 - No more than 8 rounds in any magazine or the gun at the start signal
- Carry Semiautomatic (Carry-S)
 - Semiautomatic
 - Barrel length 3.5" or less
 - No more than 6 rounds in any magazine
- Revolver (Rev)
 - Revolver
- Carry Revolver (Carry-R)
 - Revolver
 - Barrel length 3" or less
 - No more than 6 rounds in the cylinder
 - At Carry Matches (5th Saturday), 5-shot revolvers receive an automatic "A" on each 6-shot string
- Pistol Caliber Carbine (PCC)
 - Acceptable calibers: 9mm, .357 SIG, 40 S&W, 10mm, .45 ACP

Scoring

Targets:

- USPSA style with A, C, and D scoring zones.
- Unless otherwise specified:
 - there are two scoring shot per target
 - black zones are "hard cover" and considered a miss
 - white targets are no-shoots

Points:

- A 5; C 4; D 2
- Miss -5; No-shoot -10
- Procedural (failure to follow stage procedures) -10

Score: Points/Time(in secs)

Safety Area

Shooters must use the Safety Areas for the activities stated below provided they remain within the boundaries of the Safety Area and the firearm is pointed in a safe direction.

- Casing, uncasing, and holstering unloaded firearms.
- Practice the mounting, drawing, "dry-firing" and re-holstering of unloaded firearms.
- Conduct inspections, stripping, cleaning, repairs and maintenance of firearms, component parts and other accessories.

Dummy ammunition (including practice or training rounds, snap caps and empty cases), loaded magazines, loaded speed loading devices and live rounds must not be handled in a Safety Area under any circumstances.

Holsters and Other Shooter Equipment

Carry and Storage – Except when within the boundaries of a safety area, or when under the supervision and direct command of a Range Officer, Shooters must carry their handguns unloaded in a gun case, gun bag or in a holster securely attached to a belt on their person.

Shooters carrying their handgun in a holster must have an empty chamber, empty chamber (if revolver), empty magazine well (if semiautomatic), and the hammer or striker must be de-cocked.

Spare ammunition, magazines and speed loading devices should be carried in retention devices specifically designed for that purpose, to reduce the risk of loss during a course of fire. Magazines may be loaded with rounds at all times but, as noted elsewhere, must not be handled in the Safety Area.

Shooters must not be permitted to commence a course of fire wearing:

- A shoulder holster or "tie-down" rig (visible or otherwise)
- A holster which does not completely prevent access to, or activation of, the trigger of the handgun while holstered.

Shooters deemed by the Range Officer to be disabled may be given special dispensation in relation to the type and/or placement of their holster and allied equipment, and the Range Officer will remain the final authority in respect of the safety and suitability of using such equipment.

Eye and Ear Protection

All persons are advised that the correct use of adequate eye and ear protection is in their own interest and of paramount importance to prevent injury to vision and hearing. It is required that eye and ear protection be worn at all times by all persons while on hot ranges.

If a Range Officer notices that a Shooter has lost or displaced their eye or ear protection during a course of fire, or has commenced a course of fire without them, the Range Officer must immediately stop the Shooter. The Shooter will then be required to re-shoot the course of fire after the protective devices have been restored.

A Shooter who inadvertently loses eye or ear protection during a course of fire, or commences a course of fire without them, is entitled to stop, point their firearm in a safe direction and indicate the problem to the Range Officer, in which case the provisions stated above will apply.

Any attempt to gain a competitive advantage by removing eye and/or ear protection during a course of fire will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

If a Range Officer deems that a Shooter about to make an attempt at a course of fire is wearing inadequate eye or ear protection, the Range Officer may require the Shooter to rectify the situation before allowing the Shooter to continue. The Range Officer is the final authority on this matter.

Range Communications

The approved range commands and their sequence are as follows:

“Range is hot, eyes and ears!”

Firing is about to commence. Everyone on the range must ensure they are properly wearing eye and ear protection. Except for the Range Officer, Scorekeeper, and Shooter, everyone should be up-range of the designated safety indicator (usually an orange bucket).

“Do you understand the course of fire?”

Once the Shooter moves to the start position, the Range Officer asks the Shooter if the Shooter understands the course of fire. If the Shooter has any further questions or requires clarification of the stage requirements, he may ask the Range Officer at this time. If the Shooter indicates assent, the Range officer will proceed to the next command.

"Load And Make Ready" (or "Make Ready" for starts with an unloaded firearm)

This command signifies the start of "the Course of Fire". Under the direct supervision of the Range Officer the Shooter must face down range, or in a safe direction as specified by the Range Officer, and prepare the firearm in accordance with the stage briefing. The Shooter must then assume the required start position. At this point, the Range Officer will proceed. Once the "Load and Make Ready" (or "Make Ready" for starts with an unloaded firearm) command has been given, the Shooter must not move away from the start location prior to issuance of the "Start Signal" without the prior approval, and under the direct supervision, of the Range Officer. Once ready, the Shooter may not handle the firearm whatsoever prior to the start signal without the prior approval, and under the direct supervision, of the Range Officer.

"Shooter Ready?"

If the Shooter is not ready, they must state "Not Ready". It is suggested that when the Shooter is ready they should assume the required start position and clearly indicate his readiness to the Range Officer; the Shooter may indicate ready by a clear nod of the head or verbal statement such as “Ready!”.

"Shooter indicates Ready. Standby."

This command should be followed by the start signal within 1 to 4 seconds.

"Start Signal" (auditory indicator from timer)

The signal for the Shooter to begin their attempt at the course of fire. If a Shooter fails to react to a start signal, for any reason, the Range Officer will confirm that the Shooter is ready to attempt the course of fire, and will resume the range commands from "Shooter Ready?" In the event that a Shooter inadvertently begins shooting prematurely ("false start"), the Range Officer will, as soon as possible, stop and restart the Shooter once the course of fire has been restored.

"Stop or Cease Fire"

The Range Officer may issue this command at any time during the course of fire. The Shooter must immediately cease firing, stop moving, point the firearm safely downrange, clearly remove finger from trigger and to the outside of trigger guard, and wait for further instructions from the Range Officer.

"If You Are Finished, Unload and Show Clear"

If the Shooter has finished shooting, he must lower his handgun and present it for inspection by the Range Officer with the muzzle pointed down range, magazine removed, slide locked or held open, and chamber empty. Revolvers must be presented with the cylinder swung out and empty.

"If Clear, Hammer Down, Holster"

After issuance of this command, the Shooter must not resume shooting. While continuing to point the handgun safely downrange, the Shooter must perform a final safety check of the handgun as follows:

- Self-loaders – release the slide and pull the trigger (without touching the hammer or de-cocker, if any).
- Revolvers – close the empty cylinder (without touching the hammer, if any).
- If the gun proves to be clear, the Shooter must holster his handgun. Once the Shooter's hands are clear of the holstered handgun, the course of fire is deemed to have ended.

"Range Is Clear"

Shooters must not move forward of, or away from, the firing line or final shooting location until this declaration is given by the Range Officer. Once the declaration is made, Shooters may move forward to score, patch, reset targets etc.

Handgun Ready Conditions

The ready condition for handguns will normally be as stated below. However, in the event that a Shooter fails to load the chamber when permitted by the written stage briefing, whether inadvertently or intentionally, the Range Officer must not take any action, as the Shooter is always responsible for the handling of the handgun.

Revolvers:

- Single Action: hammer fully down on an empty chamber or, if a safety notch is fitted, hammer down over a loaded chamber (transfer bar designs excepted).
- Double Action: hammer fully down and all chambers may be loaded.
- Non-traditional revolvers (e.g. those which operate in a "self-loading" mode) are subject to the Self-Loading Pistol rules below and/or any other requirements stipulated by the Range Officer.

Self-loading Pistols:

- "Single action" – chamber loaded, hammer cocked, with external safety engaged.
- "Double action" – chamber loaded, hammer fully down or de-cocked.
- "Selective action" – chamber loaded hammer fully down or de-cocked, or chamber loaded and hammer cocked with external safety engaged. The term "safety" means the primary visible safety lever on the handgun (e.g. the thumb safety on a "1911" genre handgun). In the event of doubt, the Range Officer is the final authority on this matter.

If a handgun has a de-cocking lever, that alone must be used to de-cock the handgun, without touching the trigger. If a handgun does not have a de-cocking lever, the hammer must be safely and manually lowered all the way forward (i.e. not just to a "half-cock notch" or to another similar intermediary position).

Courses of fire may require ready conditions which are different to those stated above. In such cases, the required ready condition must be clearly stated in the stage briefing. When a handgun ready condition requires a handgun be prepared with an empty chamber (or cylinder), the slide of the handgun must be fully forward (or the cylinder must be fully closed) and the hammer, if fitted, must be fully down.

Shooter Ready Condition

This designates when, under the direct command of a Range Officer:

- The handgun is prepared as specified in the stage briefing, and is in compliance with the safety rules.
- The Shooter assumes the start position as specified in the stage briefing. Unless otherwise specified, the Shooter must stand erect, facing downrange, with arms hanging naturally by the sides. A Shooter who attempts or completes a course of fire where an incorrect start position was used may be required by a Range Officer to re-shoot the course of fire.

A course of fire must never require or allow a Shooter to touch or hold a handgun, loading device or ammunition after the "Standby" command and before the "Start Signal" (except for unavoidable touching with the lower arms).

A course of fire must never require the Shooter to draw a handgun from the holster with the weak hand.

A course of fire must never require the Shooter to re-holster a handgun after the start signal. However, a Shooter may re-holster provided this is accomplished safely, and the handgun is either unloaded or in a ready condition. Violations will be subject to match disqualification.

Loading, Reloading or Unloading During a Course of Fire

When loading, reloading or unloading during a course of fire, the Shooter's fingers must be visibly outside the trigger guard, and the firearm must be pointed safely down range or in another safe direction authorized by a Range Officer.

Movement

Except when the Shooter is actually aiming or shooting at targets, all movement must be accomplished with the fingers visibly outside the trigger guard. The firearm must be pointed in a safe direction. "Movement" is defined as any of the actions below:

- Taking more than one step in any direction.
- Changing shooting position (e.g. from standing to kneeling, from seated to standing etc.).

Shooters confined to wheelchairs or similar devices may be given special dispensation by the Range Officer in respect to mobility assistance at the Range Officer's discretion.

Sight Pictures and Range Inspection

Shooters are always prohibited from taking a sight picture with a loaded firearm prior to the start signal.

No one is permitted to enter or move through a course of fire without the prior approval of the Range Officer.

Malfunctions and/or Unsafe Equipment

Spare magazines, speed loading devices or ammunition dropped or discarded by a Shooter after the start signal may be retrieved, however, their retrieval is, at all times, subject to all safety rules.

A Shooter who experiences a firearm malfunction while responding to the "Load And Make Ready" or "Make Ready" command, but prior to issuance of the "Start Signal", is entitled to retire, under the authority and supervision of the officiating Range Officer, to repair his firearm. Once the repairs have been completed (and the Range Officer is satisfied), the Shooter may return to attempt the course of fire, subject to scheduling as determined by the Range Officer.

In the event that a Shooter's firearm malfunctions after the start signal, the Shooter may safely attempt to correct the problem and continue the course of fire. During such corrective action, the Shooter must keep the muzzle of the firearm pointing safely downrange and within the shooting area at all times. The Shooter may not use rods or other tools to correct the malfunction.

While rectifying a malfunction that requires the Shooter to clearly move the firearm away from aiming at a target, the Shooter's fingers must be clearly visible outside the trigger guard.

In the event that a Range Officer terminates a course of fire due to a suspicion that a Shooter has an unsafe firearm or unsafe ammunition (e.g. a "squib" load), the Range Officer will take whatever steps he deems necessary to return both the Shooter and the range to a safe condition.

Under no circumstances is a Shooter permitted to leave a course of fire in the possession of a loaded firearm.

Match Disqualification

A Shooter who commits a safety infraction or any other prohibited activity during a match will be disqualified from that match, and will be prohibited from attempting any remaining courses of fire in that match regardless of the schedule or physical layout of the match.

Match Disqualification – Negligent Discharge

A Shooter who causes a negligent discharge must be stopped by a Range Officer as soon as possible. A negligent discharge is defined as follows:

- A shot, which travels over a backstop, a berm, or in any other direction, specified in the stage briefing by the match organizers as being unsafe. Note that a Shooter who legitimately fires a shot at a target, which then travels in an unsafe direction, will not be disqualified.
- A shot which strikes the ground within 3 meters of the Shooter, except when shooting at a paper target closer than 3 meters to the Shooter. A bullet which strikes the ground within 3 meters of the Shooter due to a "squib" load is exempt from this rule.
 - Exception – a detonation, which occurs while unloading a firearm and does not violate the above conditions, is not considered a shot or discharge subject to a match disqualification.
- A shot which occurs during remedial action in the case of a malfunction.
- A shot which occurs while transferring a handgun between hands.
- A shot which occurs during movement, except while actually shooting at targets.
 - Exception: When it can be established that the cause of the discharge is due to a broken or defective part of the firearm, the Shooter has not committed any safety infraction in this Section, and a match disqualification will not be invoked. The firearm must be immediately presented for inspection to the Range Officer or his delegate, who will inspect the firearm and carry out any tests necessary to establish that a broken or defective part caused the discharge.

Match Disqualification – Unsafe Gun Handling

Examples of unsafe gun handling include, but are not limited to:

- Handling a firearm at any time except when in a designated safety area or when under the supervision of, and in response to a direct command issued by, a Range Officer. The expression "handling a firearm" includes holstering or unholstering a firearm, whether or not the firearm is visible (e.g. while concealed by a protective cover, etc.) together with adding or removing a firearm to/from the Shooter's person whether or not the firearm is wholly or partially holstered.
- Allowing the muzzle of a firearm to point up-range, or past the default, or specific safe angles of fire during a course of fire.
- Allowing the muzzle of a handgun to point at any part of the Shooter's body during a course of fire (i.e. sweeping). A match disqualification is not applicable if sweeping occurs while drawing or re-holstering a gun, provided the Shooter's fingers are clearly outside the trigger guard.
- Allowing the muzzle of a loaded handgun to point up-range beyond a radius of 1 meter from a Shooter's feet during drawing or re-holstering.
- Wearing or using more than one handgun at any point in time during a course of fire.
- Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard while clearing a malfunction where the Shooter clearly moves the firearm away from aiming at targets.
- Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard during loading, reloading, or unloading except where specifically permitted.
- Failure to keep the finger outside the trigger guard during movement.
- Having a loaded and holstered handgun, in any of the following conditions:
 - A single action self-loading pistol with the chamber loaded and the safety not applied.
 - A double action or selective action pistol with the hammer cocked and the safety not applied.
 - A revolver with the hammer cocked.
- Handling live or dummy ammunition (including practice or training rounds, snap caps and empty cases), loaded magazines or loaded speed loading devices in a Safety Area. The word "handling" does not preclude Shooters from entering a Safety Area with ammunition in magazines or speed loading devices on their belt, in their pockets or in their range bag, provided the Shooter does not physically remove the loaded magazines or loaded speed loading devices from their retaining or storage device while within the Safety Area.
- Having a loaded firearm other than when specifically ordered to by the Range Officer. A loaded firearm is defined as a firearm having a live or dummy round in the chamber or cylinder, or having a live or dummy round in a magazine inserted in the firearm.
- Dropping a loaded firearm.

- Retrieving a dropped firearm. Dropped firearms must always be retrieved by a Range Officer or, at the direction and under the direct supervision of the Range Officer who will ensure, after checking and/or clearing the firearm, it is placed directly into the Shooter's gun case, gun bag or holster. Dropping an unloaded firearm or causing it to fall outside of a course of fire is not an infraction; however, a Shooter who retrieves a dropped firearm is in violation of the safety rules.

Match Disqualification – Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Shooters will be disqualified from a match for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unsportsmanlike. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, dishonesty, failing to comply with the reasonable directions of a Match Official, or any behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute.

A Shooter who is deemed by a Range Officer to have intentionally removed or caused the loss of eye or ear protection in order to gain a competitive advantage will be disqualified.

Other persons may be expelled from the range for conduct which a Range Officer deems to be unacceptable. Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to, failing to comply with the reasonable directions of the Range Officer, interference with the operation of a course of fire and/or a Shooter's attempt thereof, and any other behavior likely to bring the sport into disrepute.

Match Disqualification – Prohibited Substances

All persons are required to be in complete control both mentally and physically during matches.

Zia Rifle & Pistol Club considers the abuse of alcoholic products, prescription, non-prescription and nonessential drugs and the use of illegal or performance enhancing drugs, irrespective of how they are taken or administered, to be an extremely serious offense.

Except when used for medicinal purposes, Shooters and Range Officers at matches must not be affected by drugs (including alcohol) of any sort during matches. Any person, who in the opinion of the Range Officer is visibly under the influence of any of the items described herein, will be disqualified from the match and may be required to leave the range.

Zia Action Pistol Pistol Caliber Carbine (PCC) Rules

PCC: carbine chambered in 9mm, .357 SIG, .40 S&W, 10mm, or .45 ACP

Except when within the boundaries of a safety area, or when under the supervision and direct command of a Range Officer, competitors must carry their pistol caliber carbine:

- With hammer down and/or safety engaged
- With no ammunition or magazines inserted
- Cased

To be considered cased, the PCC must be in a case or sleeve which covers from the muzzle past the trigger guard and prevents access to or manipulation of the trigger.

Ready Condition: carbine will be prepared with a loaded chamber, loaded magazine inserted, and safety engaged.

Ready Position: After ready condition, the weapon is held with strong hand at belt level and muzzle pointing down range.

After the course of fire the Range Officer will instruct person to: "Show Clear, Bolt Down, Hammer Down, Case". The PCC may be re-cased once it has been demonstrated to be in a safe condition.

A course of fire must never require or allow a PCC competitor to touch or hold ammunition, loading devices or magazines after the "Standby" command and before the start signal. Fingers must be outside the trigger guard and the safety engaged if the carbine is loaded. Start positions may not require the competitor to start facing up range while holding the carbine.

A course of fire must never require a competitor to start with the carbine held on the weak side, and stage briefings may never require the PCC to be fired using only one hand.

A course of fire must never require a competitor to place his PCC in any location after the start signal. However, a competitor may place his PCC on any stable object provided this is accomplished in a safe manner and the PCC is unloaded or in a ready condition

Failure to point the muzzle in a safe direction during casing/uncasing, while removing /replacing on a conveyance, or sweeping any person with the muzzle - even if unloaded - will, at the discretion of the Range Officer, result in a DQ

All other gun handling with the PCC, e.g., sight pictures, turning red dots on/off, etc., must be accomplished in a safety area or under the direct supervision of a Range Officer with an unloaded weapon.

Strong side: Carbine is mounted to the shoulder on the strong hand side of the body and trigger must be pulled with the strong hand. A shooter must utilize the same side of the body as their strong side for the duration of the match.

Weak side: The carbine is mounted to the shoulder on the weak side of the body and trigger must be pulled with the weak hand. A shooter must utilize the same side of their body as the weak side for the duration of the match.

Folding Carbines (e.g., Kel-Tec Sub 2000): When casing/uncasing a folded weapon, the muzzle must be pointed in a safe direction at all times – including while the weapon is folded/unfolded.