

# Section 1: Firearms

## Chapter 3: Handguns

In this section, the student should learn:

1. The four primary safety rules
2. The differences between a handgun and other firearms
3. The similarities between handguns and rifles
4. The four types of actions
5. To safely and legally use a holster
6. The difference between single-action and double-action revolvers

### Parts of a Revolver Handgun



### Parts of a Semi-automatic Handgun



### The Handgun

What is a handgun? A handgun, also known as a pistol, is simply a short rifle. The stock/grip is smaller and held in the hand, not against the shoulder. Like its parent, the rifle, the barrel has a **rifled bore**, or *spiral grooves cut on the inside of the barrel*. Because of the shorter barrel, the handgun is more of a challenge to aim with conventional sights. This requires more skill and more caution to control the muzzle direction. The shorter distance between the

front and rear sights makes it more difficult to shoot a handgun accurately.

### HANDGUN KEY TERMS

action	rifled bore
cartridge	caliber
sights	rimfire
magazine	centerfire
safety	holster

**Hinge Action**  
**Closed**                      **Open**



**Double Action Revolver**  
**Closed**                      **Open**



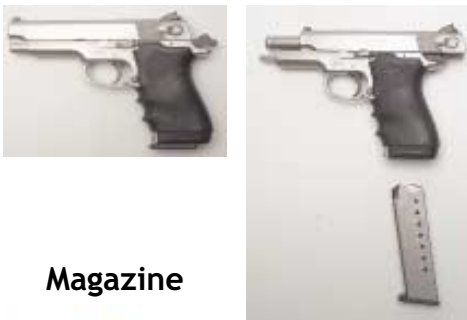
**Single Action Revolver**                      **Cylinder**



**Bolt Action**  
**Closed**                      **Open**



**Semi-automatic Action**  
**Closed**                      **Open**



**Magazine**

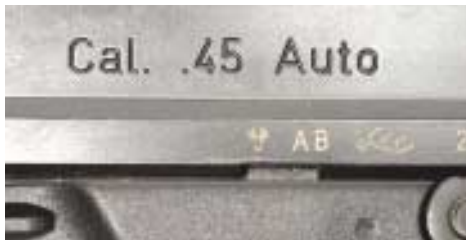


**Barrels**

Handguns and their ammunition are identified by caliber, which is stamped on the barrel of the handgun. Handgun or pistol barrels are rifled to spin the bullet. This makes the bullet more accurate. Because handgun barrels are much shorter than rifles, it is very important to control the direction of the muzzle.



*.357 Magnum Caliber*



*.45 Auto Caliber*

**Actions**

There are four basic types of **handgun actions\***, (the part that loads, fires, and unloads the firearm). They are:

1. **Hinge**- This operates like the hinge on a door to open and close the action.
2. **Revolver**- The revolver gets its name from the rotating cylinder that holds the ammunition. In a revolver, the cylinder is the **magazine**, or the part of the repeating

*firearm that holds the ammunition until it is needed.*

Revolvers are sometimes referred to as a single action or double action. Single action means that you must manually draw the hammer back each time the gun is fired. Double action means that you can fire the gun just by pulling the trigger, which causes the cylinder to revolve and the hammer to rise and fall. You can also manually draw the hammer back to fire a double-action revolver.

3. **Bolt action**- The bolt-action handgun operates just like the bolt action on a rifle.

4. **Semi-automatic**- This type of action cycles and reloads one new cartridge by itself each time you pull the trigger. The ammunition is put into a magazine that is inserted into the grip of the gun.

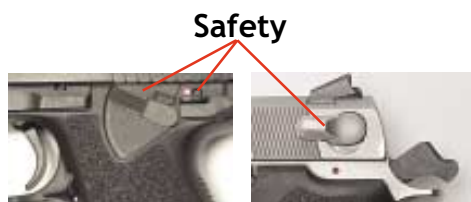
**\*IT IS NOT LEGAL TO HUNT WITH A FULLY AUTOMATIC FIREARM.**

**Stock/Grip**

A handgun is really a short rifle, but it is more difficult to shoot accurately than a rifle. This is because the shooter must hold the stock/grip in the hand instead of braced against the shoulder. A handgun also has less distance between the front and rear sight, making accurate aiming much more difficult.

## Safety

**Safety** - The "safety" is a mechanical device that locks the trigger on the firearm to prevent pulling the trigger. **The firearm may still fire if it is dropped or otherwise jarred. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.** Again, you must remember that the safety is a mechanical device and it may fail. Always remember and practice the four primary rules of gun safety, even when your safety is on. The safety on a handgun can be mounted in many different places. Read your gun's instruction manual or ask a knowledgeable person where the safety is located and how to operate it. Always keep the safety on until you are ready to fire. Remember some handguns do not have safeties therefore it is important to keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.



Double

Single

### Open Sight

Front

Rear



Correct Open Sight Alignment



## Sights

**Sights** are devices that help the shooter to aim. Like a rifle, the sights found on a handgun can be open, peep, telescopic, or electronic.

## Ammunition

Ammunition for handguns is identified by caliber. **Caliber** is the diameter of the inside of the barrel. Ammunition for a handgun or rifle is called a **cartridge**, which can be either rimfire or centerfire. **Centerfire** gets its name from the fact that *the primer is in the center of the rear of the case*. Centerfire ammunition will have the caliber stamped on the case. **Rimfire** means that *the primer that ignites the powder is located in the rim of the case*. Only use the exact ammunition your handgun was designed to use. The ammunition box lists important information about caliber, powder charge, length of cartridge, and type of bullet.

## Main Components of Handgun Ammunition:

1. **Case**- The case is the metal tube that holds the primer, powder, and projectile. The case can have either a straight or tapered wall.
2. **Primer** -The primer ignites the powder when hit by the fir-

## Handgun Ammunition

### Rimfire

### Centerfire



### Projectiles

#### Lead

#### Jacketed



#### Wadcutter

#### Hollow point



ing pin. The primer can be centerfire or rimfire.

3. **Powder** - powder is the fuel that burns to create the pressure that propels the projectile.
4. **Projectile**-This is the bullet that comes out of the muzzle of the firearm when it is fired. Bullets are made of many different types, depending on their purpose.

## Parts of a Handgun Cartridge



## Holsters

A **holster** is a carrier that allows a handgun to be carried for safe, easy access. There are two commonly used holsters: the hip holster and the shoulder holster.

Handgun Holsters  
Shoulder                      Hip



# HUNTERS BEWARE!

**The holster, containing the handgun, MUST BE ON THE OUTSIDE OF THE OUTER MOST GARMENT. Do not cover the holster containing the handgun with any poncho, vest, coat, sweater, etc. If the holster containing the handgun is covered with clothing, it is considered as, “CARRYING A CONCEALED FIREARM,” WHICH IS AGAINST THE LAW IN OHIO!**