

CLEANING FIREARMS

Before using a firearm, check for obstructions and clean excess oil from the barrel with a cleaning rod.

After using a firearm and before storing away:

- ▲ Check the firearm is completely unloaded
- ▲ Clean the barrel with a rod, clean cloth and solvent. (Where possible, insert the rod into the chamber end to avoid damage to the muzzle)
- ▲ Oil the barrel with the rod and cloth
- ▲ Clean the action and all metal with a lightly oiled rag

SAFETY CATCHES

- ▲ Ensure the firearm is always pointed in a safe direction, whether the safety catch is on or not
- ▲ If you are able to readily load and unload the firearm, do this as opposed to using the safety catch
- ▲ Never rely on the safety catch as it is mechanical and can be prone to malfunction
- ▲ Test the safety catch regularly
- ▲ Never use live ammunition to test the safety catch

If you are testing the safety catch yourself:

- ▲ Check that the firearm is completely unloaded
- ▲ Point the muzzle in a safe direction
- ▲ Cock the action
- ▲ Apply the safety catch
- ▲ Pull the trigger several times and bump the firearm to see if it will fire
- ▲ Take off the safety catch to check this does not release the firing pin
- ▲ Repeat the sequence

For all malfunctions and repairs or if you have any doubts about the safety catch, take the firearm to a qualified gunsmith.

CORRECT AMMUNITION

- ▲ It is important to check that you have the correct ammunition for the firearm you are using
- ▲ The calibre of ammunition is usually stamped (headstamp) on the base of the cartridge case
- ▲ For re-loaded ammunition the headstamp may not be correct for the reloaded cartridge
- ▲ Do not use old or corroded ammunition
- ▲ Store ammunition in a cool, dry place
- ▲ Be aware of the dangers of using modern ammunition in old shotguns

CROSSING FENCES

- ▲ If there is a gate use it. Never climb a fence while carrying a firearm.
- ▲ If there are two or more people, one should climb over the fence without a firearm. Then pass the unloaded firearms across with the actions open and pointed in a safe direction
- ▲ If you are on your own, unload the firearm and place it muzzle first, through the fence. Lay the firearm on the ground and then climb over the fence



IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION

Persons, including children, who do not hold a firearms licence are able to shoot 'A' and 'B' category firearms under the immediate supervision of the holder of a firearms licence. The supervisor must not be using a firearm at the same time and must be close enough to the unlicensed shooter to be able to control the muzzle direction of the firearm being used by the unlicensed shooter.

SAFE SHOOTING AT THE RANGE

A range is a place that has been designated as safe for shooting. Shooters fire from clearly marked 'firing points' down range toward targets. Range Officers supervise range shoots from a set of rules known as Standing Orders.

On any range:

- ▲ Instructions of the Range Officer must be obeyed
- ▲ Safety glasses and ear protection must be worn
- ▲ Never handle another person's firearm(s) or ammunition without their permission
- ▲ If the Range Officer gives the command 'STOP' all firing must cease immediately
- ▲ The Range Officer will inspect each firearm is unloaded completely before releasing shooters from the firing line.

CHAMBER SAFETY DEVICES

Most clubs now require you to use CSD's in your firearm while on the range. These clearly show when the firearm is unloaded. They are also helpful when using huts or when encountering non-hunters. They are available to purchase from the Mountain Safety website.

JOIN A CLUB

- ▲ There are many shooting clubs that will cater for your shooting discipline. These include deerstalkers, clay bird, target shooting or collecting
- ▲ Joining a club will provide the opportunity to practice safe shooting alongside experienced fellow enthusiasts
- ▲ You can get a list of clubs in your area by asking your local police arms officer, local arms dealers or from searching a phone book or the internet

New Zealand Mountain Safety Council RESOURCES

PAMPHLETS

- ▲ Avalanche Rescue
- ▲ Avalanche Safety
- ▲ Firearms Safety
- ▲ Going Bush?
- ▲ Going Hunting?
- ▲ Hypothermia
- ▲ Let It Breathe - Camping appliance safety
- ▲ Outdoor Communications
- ▲ Selecting a firearm
- ▲ Whakatūpatō

EQUIPMENT

- ▲ Avalanche Cards
- ▲ Chamber Safety Device
- ▲ MSC Packliner
- ▲ MSC Pocket survival bag
- ▲ MSC Safety Whistle
- ▲ MSC Survival Bag

DOWNLOADS

- ▲ Mountain Radio Contacts
- ▲ Plan to Survive
- ▲ River Safety
- ▲ Snowsports

MANUALS

- ▲ Abseiling
- ▲ Alpine Rescue Techniques
- ▲ Alpine Skills
- ▲ Avalanche Accidents
- ▲ Bushcraft
- ▲ NZ Firearm Handbook
- ▲ Outdoor First Aid
- ▲ Outdoor Safety

DVDs

- ▲ On Target
- ▲ Outdoor Safety Code
- ▲ River Safety

Order from: www.mountainsafety.org.nz/resources

USEFUL CONTACTS

- ▲ AdventureSmart www.adventuresmart.org.nz
- ▲ Fish & Game NZ www.fishandgame.org.nz
- ▲ MetService www.metservice.co.nz
- ▲ Metvuw - www.metvuw.com
- ▲ National Incident Database www.incidentreport.org.nz
- ▲ National Rifle Association of NZ www.nranz.com
- ▲ NZ Clay Target Association www.nzclaytarget.org.nz
- ▲ NZ Deerstalkers' Association www.deerstalkers.org.nz
- ▲ NZ Pistol Association www.pistolnz.org.nz
- ▲ NZ Police - www.police.govt.nz
- ▲ NZ Shooting Federation www.nzshootingfed.org.nz
- ▲ Target Shooting NZ www.targetshootingnz.co.nz

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www.mountainsafety.org.nz
www.adventuresmart.org.nz
www.avalanche.net.nz
www.incidentreport.org.nz



FIREARMS SAFETY

Visit: www.mountainsafety.org.nz



FIREARMS SAFETY & THE ARMS CODE



DISCOVER
MORE, SAFELY.▲

INTRODUCTION

In New Zealand we have a high level of firearm ownership and use. There are a large number of shooting organisations and clubs throughout the country that cater for a diverse range of shooting disciplines.

Hunting, target, clay bird, and pistol shooting are amongst a number of these recreational shooting activities that are enjoyed by many enthusiasts each year.

However, firearms ownership comes with a responsibility for safety. Each year in New Zealand, injury and sometimes death results from the careless use of firearms.

Although the numbers of incidents are relatively low in comparison to the large amount of recreational shooting activity, no injury or death is acceptable.

All incidents could have been avoided if the firearm user had followed basic safety rules and rejected unacceptable risk and complacency.

This pamphlet has been developed to remind and refresh firearms users of their responsibilities and to ensure that you and others remain safe at all times.

The information contained in this pamphlet is based on *The Arms Code* which is produced by The New Zealand Police.



THE ARMS CODE

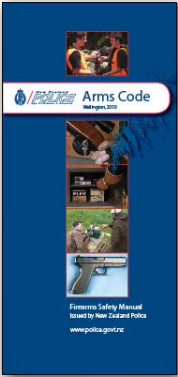
The New Zealand Mountain Safety Council assisted the New Zealand Police to develop *The Arms Code*. First published in 1975 it has been revised several times.

The Arms Code is a firearms safety manual. Its purpose is to ensure that rigorous procedures for firearms safety and security are maintained.

All firearms users need to know *The Arms Code* thoroughly and apply all parts of it, at all times.

The Arms Code contains valuable information on all aspects of firearms safety, firearm types, legal obligations of firearms ownership and the firearms licensing process plus the seven basic rules of firearms safety also known as the Firearms Safety Code.

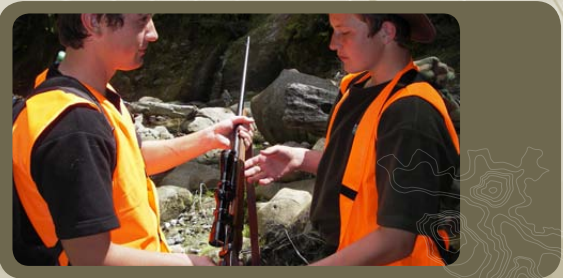
You can obtain a free copy of *The Arms Code* from any Police station or download it from the Police website: www.police.govt.nz/services/firearms/arms-code-introduction



THE SEVEN BASIC RULES OF FIREARMS SAFETY

1. TREAT EVERY FIREARM AS LOADED

- ▲ Do not take anyone's word that a firearm is unloaded. Check the firearm yourself
- ▲ Only pass or accept an unloaded firearm that has the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and the action open
- ▲ Keep your finger off the trigger



2. ALWAYS POINT FIREARMS IN A SAFE DIRECTION

- ▲ A safe direction will depend on where you are – bullets can go through ceilings, floors and walls
- ▲ Never point a firearm at anyone else or at yourself
- ▲ Be particularly careful when placing firearms in, or removing them from vehicles, boats or storage

3. LOAD A FIREARM ONLY WHEN READY TO FIRE

- ▲ Only load your magazine after you reach your shooting or hunting area
- ▲ Do not load the chamber until you are ready to fire
- ▲ Unload the chamber if game gets away
- ▲ Unload the firearm completely (magazine and chamber) before leaving the shooting or hunting area



4. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET BEYOND ALL DOUBT

- ▲ You must positively identify your target beyond all doubt before firing
- ▲ Never fire at movement, colour, sound or shape only
- ▲ Wear a bright colour that contrasts with the environment and helps you to be seen by other hunters
- ▲ Take care in the early morning or late evening when poor light can make it more difficult to identify your target
- ▲ Keep your finger off the trigger until you are certain it is safe to fire
- ▲ Be aware of 'buck fever', where emotions can affect your perception and judgement
- ▲ Identify your target with your eyes (binocular vision), not the rifle scope
- ▲ Ask yourself: "is this a person?" If in doubt, don't shoot!

5. CHECK YOUR FIRING ZONE

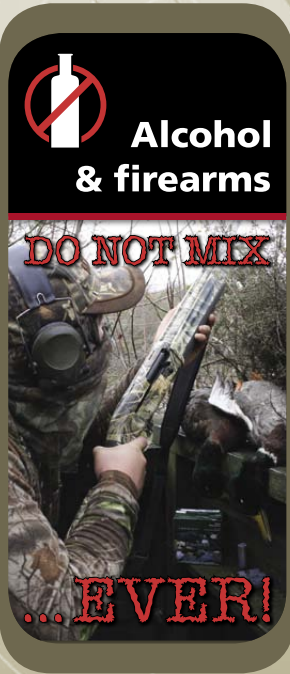
- ▲ Be aware of what is in front, around, and behind your target
- ▲ Don't shoot at a target on the skyline, because you can't see what you might hit if you miss
- ▲ Use extra care when shooting at a moving target because your firing zone can quickly change
- ▲ Be aware of potential ricochets off flat or hard surfaces like rocks, snow, water or trees
- ▲ The spread of pellets from a shotgun can be wide, particularly at long range
- ▲ Never shoot if you lose sight of your hunting companions

6. STORE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION SAFELY

- ▲ A firearm must not be stored where a child has ready access to it
- ▲ Ammunition must be stored separately or the firearm made incapable of firing (i.e. by using a tigger lock and removing the bolt where possible)
- ▲ Firearms must be stored in a locked place to secure against theft

7. AVOID ALCOHOL AND DRUGS WHEN HANDLING FIREARMS

- ▲ Alcohol and drugs must never be taken before you go shooting or while you are shooting
- ▲ Do not shoot with others who are, or have been, drinking alcohol or taking drugs



STATE OF SEMI-READINESS

HALF-OPEN BOLT OR ACTION IN A STATE OF SEMI-READINESS

(This can be achieved with bolt, pump and lever actions but not semi-automatics)

Only the person at the front can be in a state of semi-readiness. The semi-ready condition with half open bolt can be taken up when a hunter has seen game or expects to flush game. Hold the firearm in both hands, with the cartridge pushed partly forward into the chamber so there is part of the cartridge showing (at least 2cm of brass visible). Hold the bolt with the thumb so it does not slide backwards and eject the round.

Hold the firearm in both hands, with the cartridge pushed partly forward into the chamber so there is part of the cartridge showing.



Never close the action completely unless you know you have correctly identified your target and you have time to make a safe shot. If you do close the action but then do not take a shot, go back to the semi-ready state with a half-open bolt.

Note: Some firearms users think that the 'half open bolt' is when the bolt is pushed completely forward and the bolt handle is in an up lock position. This is not a half-open bolt position and is potentially dangerous. On some models of firearms, if the trigger is pulled or bumped while the bolt is in this position, the bolt will drop into the cocked position and the firearm will discharge. There is also the risk that the bolt will be unintentionally knocked down into the cocked position which again is extremely dangerous.



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