

How to Prepare for a 25m Rifle Event



This guide will help you prepare for a traditional Project Appleseed™ 25-meter rifle event. Each range can be a little different. If something is significantly different from the advice in this guide, the Shoot Boss will reach out in advance and let you know.

Our class is about improving the rifle shooter, not the rifle. Most factory rifles (centerfire or rimfire) are capable of the accuracy required to complete this course successfully. You don't need expensive equipment upgrades, just a willingness to persist. Installing a USGI-style sling is the biggest investment you can make in your accuracy (more on this below).

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Finding & Signing Up for an Event

Finding an Event

We recommend beginning with a traditional 25m Rifle event or an Appleseed Pistol Clinic.

To find all events near you, check out this link: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedulemap/>

For other events:

Rimfire Known Distance: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=rkd>
Known Distance Rifle: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=kd>
Appleseed Pistol Clinics: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=pistol>
Ladies Only events: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=ladies>

Pricing

Read about our current pricing here: <https://appleseedinfo.org/pricing-information/>.

After Appleseed...

Once you have attended your class, consider joining us to help pass on what you have learned to other Americans. Volunteer opportunities for both instructors and supporters are available! Ask your event leader how to join us!

What to Bring

We compiled this list from the experiences and feedback of previous Appleseed students. It includes things that made or would have made their experience more enjoyable. Keep in mind that not all items are essential.

Personal Items

- *A Teachable Attitude (A desire to learn and improve and a mind open to new things are the most important things you can bring to the event.)
- *Ear protection (earmuffs and/or earplugs. Electronic ear muffs are helpful, but not essential.)
- *Eye protection (We recommend clear shooting glasses. Impact resistant prescription glasses may be okay.)
- Shooting mat (You can substitute a thick blanket or rug remnant.)
- Tarp (for under the shooting mat to catch spent casings – this makes cleanup much easier)
- Elbow pads or elbow-padded shooting jacket (If you don't have elbow pads, take an old pair of socks and cut off the toes)
- Dress for the weather. We shoot unless the weather is hazardous. (It rarely is.) We recommend long sleeves and long pants. We recommend a crew-neck shirt, as low-cut shirts can catch hot brass. Closed-toe shoes are a necessity.
- Weather-appropriate hat (360° brim for sun or with ear coverage for cold)
- Sufficient water - you must stay hydrated (1 gallon per person recommended)
- Trail mix or high-protein snacks (Protein is fuel. Sugary carbohydrates may make you sleepy.)
- Light, high-protein lunch (lunches at Project Appleseed are working lunches)
- Folding chair
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- Small notebook & pencil. A Sharpie is helpful as well to mark your targets.

Rifle-specific Items

- *Rifle. Maximum caliber of 8mm, but some ranges may have other restrictions. We recommend a semi-auto rifle with detachable magazines, but bring what you already have! Zero your rifle at 25 meters, if possible. (A 25, 50, or 100 yard zero will be *close enough* to begin this class.)
- *USGI style cotton web sling, 1-¼" wide. **Much of our teaching centers around the use of this type of sling!** Tactical slings can be used but are not ideal.
- Iron/peep sights are not required at Project Appleseed. We are scope friendly!
- *Ammunition: 400 (2-day event) or 200 (1-day event) rounds of the same type and brand of ammo unless the Shoot Boss contacts you and recommends you bring more.
- *2 magazines that hold at least 10 rounds, though we recommend bringing spares.
- Sight adjustment tool
- Rifle cleaning supplies. (Bore snake and rifle oil are helpful.)
- Trash bag and light-colored towel (to protect your rifle from sand, snow, rain, or intense sun)
- Large pushpins (preferred) or a staple gun & staples
- Rifle operator's manual & sight/scope manual, if you have them
- Rifle case (recommended)

* Critical item.

Equipment Preparation

Ready your Equipment

- Depending on the range facility, you may shoot on a concrete firing line. If we do, it's good to remember that concrete is HARD. Bring your shooting mat/blanket and some extra padding. An old towel will help save your elbows.
- Be prepared for seasonal and range conditions. Blowing sand and dust, rain, snow, and intense sun are all conditions you may encounter. In event of blowing sand and dust, you'll need to totally degrease your rifle in favor of a dry lubricant like graphite. Be ready to protect your rifle with a plastic bag or a simple waterproof wrap for the action.
- Protect ammo and mags from the same conditions. Ziplock bags are great for this.
- Have your rifle oiled appropriately (light oil) and ensure all fasteners are appropriately snug.
- Function-test your rifle with the type of ammo you plan on shooting. (If you've already done this, no need for a special range trip.)
- Read the owner's manual for your rifle on how to operate your rifle. Do the same for your sights/scope if they have a separate manual.

Special Equipment Considerations

1. Due to a firearms safety bulletin, we do not recommend .17HMR semi-automatic rifles.
2. Owners of the Smith & Wesson M&P 15-22 rifles must comply with the Smith & Wesson Safety Alert. We will make every effort to have a S&W Bolt Inspection Gauge on-hand for owners to check their bolts for compliance. We encourage you to review the following links to the Smith & Wesson websites for information about the Safety Alert and how to check the M&P 15-22 bolt to determine that it is within specification:
 - <https://www.smith-wesson.com/mp15-22-consumer-safety-alert>
 - https://www.smith-wesson.com/sites/default/files/MP1522_Alert_030619.pdf
 - See this video on how to check your S&W rifle. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJO0gJRmc_c
3. Project Appleseed requires an additional liability waiver for any student at a Project Appleseed clinic who chooses to use a semi-automatic .17HMR rifle or a Smith & Wesson M&P 15-22 firearm.
4. We permit legal short-barreled rifles and pistol caliber carbines up to .45 caliber at our events. Select-fire rifles must stay on the "semi" setting.
5. Legal suppressors are welcome at our events.
6. AR-type pistols (with or without stabilizing brace) are not suitable for use at Project Appleseed events.

Safety

Safety is paramount at Project Appleseed. We will cover the below information at the beginning of our class, but it's provided here for those who would like to read up on it.

Project Appleseed's Four Safety Rules

Project Appleseed has four event-specific safety rules. They are:

1. **Always Keep the Muzzle in a Safe Direction.** The muzzle is the pointy end of the rifle. You must keep it in a safe direction, which is usually up or downrange. Host range rules may be more restrictive.
2. **Do Not Load Until Given the "Load" Command.** A student may insert a prepared magazine into the rifle only after he receives the "Load" command.
3. **Keep Your Finger Off the Trigger Until the Sights are On the Target.** A student should keep his finger straight alongside the stock until his sights are on the target (or target backer). At that point, he may place his finger on the trigger.
4. **Make Sure Those Around You Follow the Safety Rules.** We all share the responsibility that we all go home without any extra holes. If you see anything you remotely think might be a safety issue, immediately take corrective action!

We expect every student and Appleseed instructor to abide by these rules.

"Safe Rifle"

Throughout the day, we will ask you to make your rifle safe. We do this to ensure it is safe for us to go downrange and check targets.

In order, the steps to making a rifle safe are:

1. **Magazine Out.** Remove the magazine from the rifle.
2. **Bolt Back.** Lock the bolt to the rear.
3. **Safety On.** Engage the mechanical safety.
4. **Chamber Flag In.** Take the (provided) chamber flag and insert the stem through the ejection port and all the way into the chamber.
5. **Rifle Grounded.** Place the rifle on the ground with the ejection port up and the muzzle forward of the firing line.
6. **No One Touching the Rifle.** Neither the student nor any instructor will touch a rifle once the line is clear. We will clearly advise students when it's time to handle rifles again.

If you do not know how to perform each of these steps with your rifle, that's OK! We're happy to teach you when you arrive.

Other Safety Points:

1. *We do not transition (move from standing to prone or sitting/kneeling) with loaded rifles.*
2. *"Hot reloads" (shoot one & change the mag) are **not permitted** in any Project Appleseed rifle class.*

What to Expect

Class Times

Project Appleseed 25m Clinics *normally* begin at 8:00 AM and end no later than 5:30 PM. However, if times for your course are different, the event leader (Shoot Boss) will contact you in advance. We'll try to get you out earlier if we can. Please arrive at least 30 minutes early to fill out the paperwork and get set up.

Arriving

When you arrive at your Project Appleseed event, we will attempt to meet you in the parking lot. We'll let you know where to park. Also, we'll ask you to leave all firearms (including concealed carry) in your car and give you directions to the check-in table.

Check-in

Once you get to the check-in table, we'll have you take care of some boring paperwork. (It'll be short.) If range fees are required, they will be collected (cash only please) and remitted to the host range. We'll give you a chamber flag and a t-shirt. Then, we'll share directions to get to the firing line.

At the Firing Line

You'll likely return to your car and retrieve your gear, EXCEPT for firearms. Someone will be at the firing line to help you pick out a spot. You'll place your shooting mat on the firing line and all your other gear behind the equipment line. After the safety briefing, we will inform you when it's time to retrieve your rifle.

Lunch

Lunch at Project Appleseed is a "working lunch." There will not be time for you to leave the range to buy food, so bring lunch with you. The host may provide lunch at a reasonable cost, but this is the exception rather than the norm.

Instruction

At a Project Appleseed 25m rifle event, we will help you develop rock-solid fundamentals for rifle shooting. During lunches and breaks, we'll tell you the true story of the earliest days of our nation, including the events of April 19th, 1775.

The fundamentals you learn at 25m work at distances out to 500 yards. On day two of a 25m event, you'll learn about the Three Challenges of a Rifleman: Target Detection, Range Estimation, and Making the Shot.

Assembling a Liberty Training Rifle

You're signed up for an event and want to make sure your rifle is ready for the job. Aside from making sure it's cleaned and oiled, there are some options for your rifle you should consider to be best prepared.

Participating in a Project Appleseed event does not require an expensive rifle or ammo. A .22 rimfire rifle is a great place to begin your journey to becoming a Rifleman. It's an inexpensive solution to learn skills that will benefit you when graduating to a centerfire rifle.



The Ruger 10/22 rifle is a good choice because of its low price, accuracy, and many available aftermarket parts. However, other rifles such as the Marlin 795 will work fine. In fact, the Ruger 10/22 rifles out of the box are more accurate than the

skills of most shooters. Many Appleseeders have earned their Rifleman patch with a standard factory Ruger 10/22 or Marlin.

The essentials of creating a Liberty Training Rifle comprise adding the following components:

- sling swivels
- USGI style sling
- adjustable sights (iron sights or scope)

Sling Swivels

Much of what you're going to learn at Project Appleseed centers using a USGI-style sling for support. A sling is normally attached to a rifle using swivels. We recommend 1- $\frac{1}{4}$ " swivels.



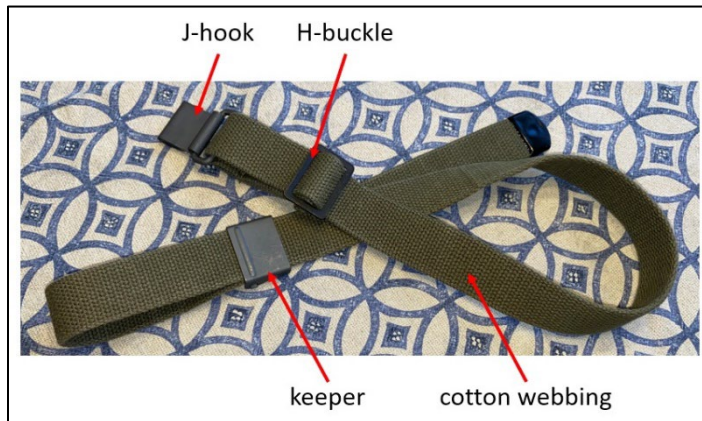
If your rifle stock doesn't have sling studs, Amazon sells them as part of a swivel kit. Installation is relatively simple on a wood rifle stock. This video details how to do it:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4FyAfQHi_U

Swivels: <https://store.rwvaappleseed.com/page13.html>

Swivel kit with studs: <https://www.amazon.com/Uncle-Mikes-Detachable-Carbines-Swivels/dp/B000LDY2MS>

USGI Style Sling



We recommend the cotton USGI sling because it's lightweight, easy to use, and very low cost.

The USGI sling is easily adjustable. It significantly increases the accuracy of any shooter. Many shooters are amazed at the difference it makes.

Much of the instruction in Project Appleseed rifle classes is based on the use of this type of sling.

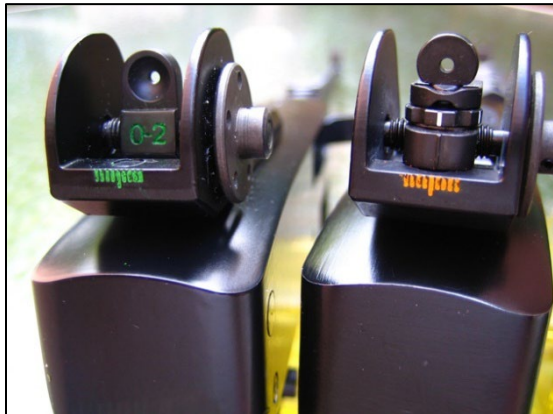
Many places sell cotton USGI slings, including the Project Appleseed store:

<https://store.rwaappleseed.com/page13.html>

Project Appleseed is iron sight and scope friendly! See options for both below!

Adjustable Sights: Tech-Sights

A set of Tech Sights (<http://www.tech-sights.com/>) will make shooting your .22 rifle much more enjoyable. They are durable, relatively inexpensive, and easy to use.



These sights will provide easy windage (side to side) and elevation (up and down) adjustments. The sight picture is like the M1 Garand, Springfield M1A and the AR-15 style rifles. We recommend getting a sight adjusting tool to match your sights for ease of use.

The Appleseed store offers Tech-Sights and adjusting tools: <https://store.rwaappleseed.com/page13.html>

You can also get them direct from the manufacturer: <https://www.tech-sights.com/>

Adjustable Sights: Scopes

Most shooters do not need a scope unless they struggle to focus on the front sight. In that case, shooting with a scope is advantageous. However, optics will be more expensive than a set of Tech-Sights.

There are three items to consider when mounting a scope on a .22 rifle:

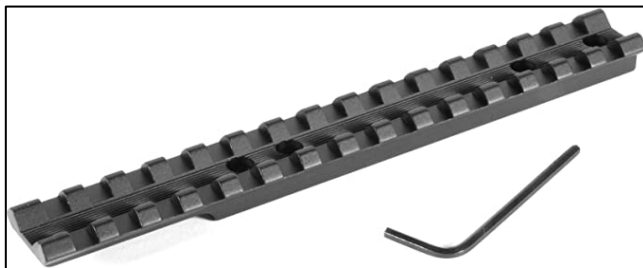
1. Appropriate scope
2. Scope rings of proper height
3. Mounting hardware (a rail) that gets your scope far enough forward to prevent neck strain



The choice of a **scope** itself is often a matter of personal preference, but you don't need to spend a lot of money to be successful. At Project Appleseed, you don't need a scope that will zoom like the Hubble telescope. Vortex Optics offers a value-priced solution with their Crossfire II 2-7x32 BDC scope (pictured left). Vortex offers a lifetime warranty, making this ideal for any Appleseed shooter.



Parts called **rings** hold your scope firmly in place. The rings should be the same diameter as your scope tube. Vortex Optics offers a set of medium 1" rings (part number RING-M, pictured left) that will fit on the rail described above. Please follow manufacturers installation instructions regarding torque and thread locker.



Rings mount to your rifle using a part called a **rail**. The factory-rail is usually not suitable for the type of shooting we do in Appleseed. We recommend a *cantilevered* rail, which allows you to mount the scope forward enough to prevent neck strain while shooting.

We recommend a rail with additional elevation designed-in (+20 MOA), so you can use the same rifle for a Rimfire Known Distance class as well!

Evolution Gun Works (EGW) offers a well-made and reasonably-priced rail (pictured above) in versions that will fit most popular rifles. Many Appleseed instructors recommend and use this product.

There are many options for scopes. We sell complete scope packages in our online store which are competitively priced and easy to assemble at home. Our packages are complete solutions with scope, rings, and rail. No guessing if it's going to fit your rifle!

Rimfire packages: <https://store.rwaappleseed.com/scopes.html>

AR-15 (centerfire) packages: <https://store.rwaappleseed.com/centerfire-scopes.html>

Of course, Appleseed shooters have been successful using other optics options. For more information about setting up a rifle, visit the Project Appleseed forum at <https://www.appleseedinfo.org/smf/>.