

How to Prepare for an Appleseed Pistol Clinic



This is a general guide to prepare for a Project Appleseed Pistol Clinic. Each range can be a little different. If something is significantly different from the advice in this guide, the event leader (Shoot Boss) will reach out in advance and let you know.

Our class is about improving the pistol shooter, not the pistol. Most factory pistols (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.

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Finding & Signing Up for an Event

Finding an Event

Thank you for your interest in an Appleseed Pistol Clinic.

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

To search for just Pistol Clinics: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=pistol>

For other events:

Rimfire Known Distance: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=rkd>

Known Distance Rifle: <https://appleseedinfo.org/schedule/?eventtype=kd>

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 become and passing 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!

Note: The term “pistol” is used generically in this guide and refers to both pistols and revolvers unless otherwise specified.

What to Bring

We compiled this list from the experiences and feedback of previous Appleseed Pistol Clinic attendees. It includes those things that did 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 (clear shooting glasses are recommended. Impact resistant prescription glasses may be okay.)
- 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.

Pistol-specific Items

- *A quality, full-size, mid-size or compact pistol or revolver. We prefer centerfire, but rimfire is acceptable. It's fine to bring both. If you bring two pistols, make sure you have ammo for each.
- *Ammunition: 500 (2-day event) or 250 (1-day event) rounds of the same type & brand of ammo unless the Shoot Boss contacts you and recommends you bring more.
- *At least two magazines, though we recommend bringing spares.
- Four speed-loaders for revolvers.
- Sight adjustment tool if your pistol or red dot requires one
- Pistol cleaning supplies
- Light-colored towel (to protect your pistol from sand or intense sun)
- Large pushpins (preferred) or a staple gun & staples
- Pistol operator's manual & sight/scope manual, if you have them
- Pistol case

* Critical item.

Equipment Preparation

Ready your Equipment

- Be prepared for seasonal and range conditions. Blowing sand and dust, rain, snow, and intense sun are all conditions you may encounter. Be ready to protect your pistol 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 pistol oiled appropriately (light oil) and ensure all fasteners are appropriately snug.
- Function-test your pistol to ensure it cycles correctly with your chosen ammo. (If you've already done this, no need for a special range trip.)
- If your pistol has adjustable sights or a red dot, confirm your sights are roughly zeroed using a 8.5x11 piece of paper.
- Read the owner's manual for your pistol on how to operate your pistol. Do the same for your sights/red dot if it has a separate manual.

Special Equipment Considerations

1. Please *do not* bring any pistol that you are not familiar with or are not certain of its absolute reliability. Our friend Murphy is alive and well. If anything can go wrong, it will.
2. Although we will primarily be shooting two-handed, we will also do some one-handed shooting - both right- and left-handed. Because of that, grips with features like thumb rests will cause a distinct disadvantage and could even be dangerous.
3. Legal suppressors are welcome at our events.
4. AR-type pistols are not allowed at Appleseed Pistol Clinics.

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 pistol. 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 or individual cartridges into the firearm 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 frame above the trigger 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 Pistol"

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

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

1. **Magazine Out.** Remove the magazine from the pistol.
2. **Slide Locked Back / Cylinder Open.** Lock the bolt to the rear or open the cylinder.
3. **Safety On.** Engage the mechanical safety, if your pistol has one.
4. **Chamber Flag In.** For pistols, take the (provided) chamber flag and insert the stem through the ejection port and all the way into the chamber. For revolvers, insert the flag into the forcing cone.
5. **Pistol Grounded.** Place the pistol on the table with the ejection port up and the muzzle toward the firing line.
6. **No One Touching the Pistol.** Neither the shooter nor any instructor will touch a pistol once the line is clear. We will clearly advise students when it's time to handle pistols again.

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

Note: Unlike our rifle clinics, Project Appleseed volunteers are not permitted to offer "loaner pistols."

What to Expect

Briefly, this is what you can expect when you arrive at a Project Appleseed Pistol Clinic.

Class Times

Appleseed Pistol 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 can place your gear behind the equipment line. After the safety briefing, we will inform you when it's time to retrieve your pistol.

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 Pistol Clinic, we will help you develop rock-solid fundamentals for pistol shooting. You'll learn the building blocks for success in defensive or competition shooting: safety, speed, control, and accuracy. 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.

You can expect to learn and practice: proper gun handling; grip, stance and trigger control; rapid target acquisition and transitioning from target to target.

For more information visit <https://www.appleseedinfo.org/smf/>