



GUNS AND SHOOTING CHECKLIST

Universal Firearm Needs

You will need the basic items on this first page no matter what weapons platforms you purchase or train with.

- ❑ **Eye protection**
 - ❑ **Your basic prescription eyewear or sunglasses are not appropriate;** you need dedicated ballistic protection. In the US, that means ANSI Z87.1 or MIL-PRF-31013. In Europe it is EN166
 - ❑ It is a good idea to have multiple pairs of glasses and/or interchangeable lenses for different conditions. [Oakley](#), [Smith](#), [ESS](#), and [Wiley X](#) offer excellent choices:
 - Sunglass lenses for daytime outdoor use
 - Yellow/amber/rose lenses for indoor or reduced visibility
 - Clear lenses for nighttime
- ❑ **Ear protection**
 - ❑ **In-ear plugs** are available in inexpensive [rollable foam](#), or more expensive [molded rubber](#).
 - **Relying solely on in-ear protection WILL permanently damage your hearing if you shoot a lot. You NEED over-the-ear muffs to properly protect the small bones in and surrounding your ears from damage.**
 - ❑ **Over-ear muffs**
 - [Passive earmuffs](#). Available at any shooting range or hardware store for cheap \$5-20. These are the minimum you should be wearing at the range.
 - **Electronic active hearing protection.** Prices range from \$20 on the low end to well over \$500 for active hearing protection with microphones and connections for outside communications. [Howard Leight](#), [3M Peltor](#), and [MSA Sordin](#) make excellent models at various price points.
 - **The best approach involves coupling active hearing protection muffs with in-ear plugs. You get the most protection while maintaining the ability to hear conversations and range commands.**
- ❑ **Cleaning Supplies**
 - ❑ Cleaning Kit: [Otis Tactical Cleaning System with 6 brushes](#) or [Otis Elite Cleaning System with Optics Cleaning Gear](#)
 - ❑ FrogLube [Solvent](#) and [CLP](#) (or [buy the kit that includes both](#))
- ❑ **Trauma Kit**
 - Accidents can happen. Do not go to the range or attend courses without having a trauma kit with at least a [tourniquet](#), [hemostatic dressing](#), and [trauma bandage](#).
- ❑ **Range bag**, hard case, or other method to carry your weapon(s), eye and ear protection, ammunition, trauma kit, etc.



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Pistol Needs

- **Pistol**
 - If you want a pistol for home defense and range use, get a [Glock 19](#). If you don't want the Glock, get a [S&W M&P9 M2.0 Compact](#).
 - If you want a pistol for concealed carry use, either of the two above choices are good. If you absolutely need a thinner profile, get the [Glock 43](#) or [S&W M&P Shield](#).
 - There are other great pistols like the FN, HK, Sig, Walther, Wilson, and others, but they fall short of the Glock or M&P in market support. **Unless you have a specific reason for choosing something different, stick with Glock or S&W.**
- **Aftermarket sights** (mandatory for Glock; optional but recommended on everything else)
 - [Ameriglo](#), [Dawson Precision](#), [Heine](#), [Trijicon](#), [Warren Tactical](#), and [10-8](#) are all good choices, as are special editions like the [HSP TH1RTE3N](#) and [Proctor Y-notch](#).
 - If you're not sure where to start, get a set of black [Defoor sights from Ameriglo](#) for \$40. If you decide you need tritium, fiber optics, etc. you can upgrade later.
 - Stay away from gimmicky sights like big dots, dark diamond, ghost ring, pyramid, snake eyes, etc. All the pro's sights look the same for a reason: they work best.
- **Magazines (5-10)**
 - For the Glock, either stock Glock or [Magpul](#) magazines are good
 - Everything else, use only brand name magazines
- **Holster**
 - [Blade-Tech](#), [Custom Carry Concepts](#), [Galco](#), [G-Code](#), [Raven Concealment](#), [Safariland](#), [The Maker's Innovation](#), and others make quality holsters.
 - Inside the Waistband (IWB) offer the best mix of speed, concealment, and comfort, with appendix carry (AIWB) being the most popular option today.
 - You may need an outside the waistband (OWB) holster to attend certain training courses or CCW wearing a suit or jacket.
 - AIWB holsters are specifically prohibited by certain shooting instructors; check class information before attending.
 - You will likely try multiple holsters before finding what works best.
 - When purchasing your holster, purchase at least one magazine holster so you can carry a spare magazine.
 - If you plan to attend shooting courses, 2-3 magazine holsters are good.
- **Case**
 - Some ranges require that you bring your pistol to the range unloaded and cased. Check the ranges in your area and see what their requirements are.
 - A small, [TSA-approved case](#) and lock is a good idea if you travel a lot. Checking a firearm virtually guarantees that your luggage will never be lost or delayed.
 - The plastic case your pistol came in may be sufficient, but check to make sure.



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Rifle Needs

- **Rifle**
 - **A quality AR-15 with a 14.5" to 16" barrel chambered in 5.56x45mm NATO or 300 Blackout.** [Bravo Company Manufacturing \(BCM\)](#), [Colt](#), [Daniel Defense \(DD\)](#), [Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal \(FN\)](#), [Heckler & Kock \(HK\)](#), [Knight's Armament \(KAC\)](#), [Larue Tactical](#), [Lewis Machine & Tool \(LMT\)](#), [LWRCI](#), [Noveske](#), [Ruger](#), [Sig Sauer](#), [Smith & Wesson](#), and others make quality rifles at various price points.
 - Unless you have a specific reason to use something different, stick with a regular AR-15 style rifle. Other options like the AK, AUG, FAL, MCX, MDR, SCAR, M-14, HK433, etc. are not as widely available, supported, or used as the AR or AK.
 - If you live, work, or travel extensively to areas where a different platform is more prolific, focusing on that might be a reasonable choice; otherwise, stick with a basic AR style rifle.
- **Optic**
 - **Red dot:**
 - **For home defense or an urban general use carbine, a quality red dot optic is your best bet.** [Aimpoint](#) and [EOTech](#) own this market - for good reason - while [Bushnell](#), [Holosun](#), [Vortex](#), and others round out different price brackets.
 - **Magnified:**
 - The current breed of low power variable (1-4x, 1-6x, 1-8x) optics are excellent for a general use carbine and have taken over the competitive world of 3-gun competition because of their overall utility. [Burris](#), [Bushnell](#), [Leupold](#), [Swarovski](#), [Trijicon](#), [US Optics](#), [Vortex](#), and others offer excellent choices at various price points.
 - **Optic Mount**
 - [American Defense Manufacturing \(ADM\)](#), [Bobro Engineering](#), [LaRue](#), and others make quality quick-release optic mounts.
- **Backup Iron Sights**
 - Folding iron sights from [KAC](#), [LMT](#), [Magpul](#), [Troy](#), etc. are a good choice on any platform. If using a magnified optic, consider offset iron sights like those from [KAC](#), [Magpul](#), [Dueck Defense](#), etc.
- **Light** (200 lumen minimum for rifle use, 500+ is better)
 - [Inforce](#), [Streamlight](#), or [Surefire](#)
- **Sling** (2-point adjustable):
 - The [Blue Force Gear Vickers Combat Applications Sling \(VCAS\)](#), [Magpul MS-1](#), [Rifles Only](#), [Sheriff Of Baghdad B-Sling](#), [Viking Tactics \(VTAC\)](#), and [Way Of The Gun Proctor Sling](#) are all solid choices for an all-purpose carbine sling.
- **Magazines** (5-10 or more)
 - [Magpul PMAG](#) has become the standard magazine across the industry, for good reason.
 - [Lancer](#), USGI magazines, and others are also good choices
- **Case**
 - Some ranges require that you bring your rifle to the range unloaded and cased.
 - If you plan on flying to attend shooting courses, you will need a [lockable hard sided case](#); otherwise a soft case might be okay, or get a [combination that include both a soft case inside a matching hard case](#).



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Shooting Course Packing List

- ☐ **Clothing appropriate for season**
 - ☐ Outdoor clothing
 - ☐ Pants
 - ☐ Shirts
 - ☐ Appropriate exposure protection
 - ☐ Jacket
 - ☐ Pants (?)
 - ☐ Sunscreen
 - ☐ Boots
 - ☐ Socks (wool)
- ☐ **Protective gear**
 - ☐ Eye protection
 - ☐ Ear protection
 - ☐ Hat
- ☐ **Gun belt**
 - ☐ Belt mount pistol holster
 - ☐ Magazine holsters (generally at least 2 pistol magazines and/or 2 rifle magazines)
 - ☐ Dump pouch (optional)
 - ☐ Blowout kit (optional)
- ☐ **Weapons**
 - ☐ Pistol, rifle, or both
 - ☐ Cleaning gear
 - ☐ Lubrication
 - ☐ Magazines
 - Quantity depends on course; often 5, 6, or more
 - ☐ Ammunition (check class equipment list for quantity)
 - ☐ Hard-sided travel case large enough to fit weapon, magazines, protective gear, and ammunition (if not purchasing ammo at class)
- ☐ **Other gear as required**
 - ☐ Hydration
 - ☐ Note taking tools
 - ☐ Backpack or bag to carry equipment
 - ☐ Food
 - ☐ [Shooting mat](#)
 - ☐ [Knee pads](#)
 - ☐ Etc.