

The Firearm Safety Certificate (or FSC) Study Guide, as read in its entirety, will provide you with basic firearm safety information and help prepare you for the Firearm Safety Certificate test.

Firearm safety is the law in CA. Every firearm owner should understand and follow firearm safety practices, have a basic familiarity with the operation and handling of their firearm, and be fully aware of the responsibility of firearm ownership. Pursuant to Penal Code section 26840, any person who acquires a firearm must have a Firearm Safety Certificate (FSC), unless they are statutorily exempt from the FSC requirement. To obtain an FSC, a person must pass a Department of Justice (DOJ) written test on firearm safety. The test is administered by DOJ Certified Instructors, who are often located at firearms dealerships. This study guide provides the basic firearm safety information necessary to pass the test. Following the firearm safety information in this guide will help reduce the potential for accidental deaths and injuries, particularly those involving children, caused by the unsafe handling and storing of firearms. In addition to safety information, this study guide provides a general summary of the state laws that govern the sale and use of firearms. Finally, there is a glossary that defines the more technical terms used in this study guide. Simply reading this study guide will not make you a safe firearm owner. To be a safe firearm owner, you must practice the firearm safety procedures described in the following pages.

The next two pages will be the table of contents.

Firearm safety is important to all Californians. Accidents involving firearms happen daily, and those involving children are especially disturbing. There may be no way to guarantee safety, but firearm owners can take steps to help prevent accidental shootings. Studies show that easy access to loaded firearms in homes is a major cause of accidental shootings of children. This study guide will give you valuable information to help you become a safe and responsible firearm owner. The intent of enacting the FSC law is to ensure that persons who obtain firearms have a basic familiarity with those firearms, including but not limited to the safe handling and storage of those firearms. To obtain an FSC, you must pass a written test prescribed by the Department of Justice. The test consists of true/false and multiple choice questions. You will find the information needed to pass the test in this study guide. There are some exemptions from the FSC requirement. A complete list of those exemptions can be found on the Attorney General's website at www.oag.ca.gov/firearms. Ignorance and carelessness can result in firearm accidents. They often involve people who know the safety rules, but who are careless in following them. Remember that gun safety rules must be applied **ALL OF THE TIME**.

Developing a mind set for safe and responsible firearm usage and storage is the first step in actually becoming a responsible firearm owner. The next step is building your knowledge of firearms and gun safety, which you can do by reading and understanding the information in this guide. The final steps are becoming skillful in handling firearms and using the safety knowledge that you have acquired.

There are six basic gun safety rules for gun owners to understand and practice at all times. Treat all guns as if they are loaded. You should always assume a gun is loaded even if you think it is unloaded; keep the gun pointed in the safest possible direction. A “safe” direction is one where an accidental discharge of the gun will not cause injury or damage; keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot; know your target its surroundings, and beyond; know how to properly operate your gun; and store your gun safely and securely to prevent unauthorized use. For maximum security, you should use both a locking device and a storage container. Guns and ammunition should be stored separately. Please be sure to read and become familiar with each of these safety rules.

Some additional safety points are: never handle a gun when you are in an emotional state such as anger or depression; never shoot a gun in celebration. Not only is it unsafe, it is generally illegal; never shoot at water, or at flat or hard surfaces; when handing a gun to someone or taking a gun from someone, verify it is unloaded first; avoid handling and using your gun when you are taking medications that cause drowsiness or include a warning not to operate machinery while taking the drug; avoid handling and using your gun during or after alcohol consumption; always wear ear and eye protection when shooting a gun.

Now take what you’ve learned and see how you do on this practice test. Please feel free to pause the video in order to complete the test.

You can never be too careful when it comes to children and guns. It is every firearm owner's responsibility to take all possible steps to make sure a child cannot gain access to firearms and to be aware of all the laws regarding firearms and children. Child safety precautions still apply even if you have no children or if your children have grown to adulthood and left home. A nephew, niece, neighbor's child, or a grandchild may come to visit. Practice gun safety at all times. To prevent injury or death caused by improper storage of guns in a home where children are likely to be present, you should store all guns unloaded, lock them with a firearms safety device and store them in a locked container. Ammunition should be stored in a location separate from the gun. You may be guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony if you keep a loaded firearm within any premises that are under your custody or control and a child under 18 years of age obtains the firearm, resulting in injury or death.

Children are naturally curious about things they don't know about or think are "forbidden." You should address any questions children may have about firearms and be as open and honest as possible. Adults should be aware that a child can discover a gun when a parent or another adult is not present. A child should be taught the following rules in the event this should happen:

1. Stop what they are doing;
2. Don't touch the firearm – a child should never pick up a firearm they may discover;
3. Immediately leave the area – this includes never attempting to take a gun away from another child or trying to stop someone from using a gun;
4. Tell an adult!

Remember that actions speak louder than words. Children learn most by observing the adults around them. By practicing safe conduct you will also be teaching safe conduct.

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Pursuant to Penal Code section 26850 and 26860, prior to taking delivery of a firearm from a licensed firearms dealer in California, an individual must correctly perform a safe handling demonstration with the firearm he or she is acquiring. The safe handling demonstration must be performed in the presence of a DOJ Certified Instructor on or after the date the Dealer Record of Sale (DROS) is submitted to the DOJ and before the firearm is delivered.

An important part of being a safe firearm owner is knowing how your firearm works. The two most common types of handguns are revolvers and semiautomatic pistols. Revolvers are either single or double-action. The primary difference between these two types of revolvers is the function of the trigger. The next two slides identify the safe handling demonstration for the double-action revolver. Please feel free to pause the video in order to review the safe handling demonstration for the double-action revolver.

The next two slides identify the safe handling demonstration for the single-action revolver. Please feel free at this time to pause the video in order to review the safe handling for the single-action revolver.

The primary difference between revolvers and semiautomatic pistols is how the ammunition is held. Revolvers use a cylinder to hold the ammunition. Semiautomatic pistols use a magazine to hold ammunition. Another difference is most semiautomatic pistols have a “safety” that is designed to prevent firing when engaged. However, a safety is not foolproof, so you should never rely on it to prevent an accidental discharge. A safety should be considered an additional safety measure. The next two slides identify the safe handling demonstration steps for the semiautomatic pistol. Please feel free to pause the video in order to review the safe handling demonstration for the semiautomatic pistol.

NEVER assume a semiautomatic pistol is unloaded just because the magazine is removed from the handgun.

The next four slides identify the safe handling demonstration steps for six common long gun types. The following safe handling demonstration for the long guns are generally applicable to the various firearm models for each firearm “type.” However, the specified safe handling demonstration steps may not be appropriate for a particular model of firearm. If uncertain, refer to the owner’s manual or consult with a DOJ Certified Instructor. At this time, please feel free to pause the video in order to review the safe handling demonstration for the six common long gun types.

An often overlooked aspect of safe firearm operation is knowing about the ammunition being used. It is important to know which ammunition can be used safely in your firearm. A firearm cartridge, commonly referred to as a “round” is a single unit of ammunition.

Firearms and ammunition are made in various calibers. Firearm caliber refers to barrel diameter. Revolvers generally have the caliber information on the barrel. Semiautomatic pistols generally have the caliber information on the slide. Caliber information can also be found on the box of ammunition. Using incorrect ammunition could result in damage to the firearm and possible injury to yourself or bystanders. It could also cause a malfunction such as a jam or misfire. Some ammunition is illegal. A licensed firearms dealer can help identify the correct and legal ammunition for your firearm.

In order to shoot a firearm safely, you need to know not only your target but also the dangerous range of your ammunition. The dangerous range is the distance that a bullet can travel. Most ammunition can travel at least a mile, with some having the capability of traveling MORE than two miles. Another important point to remember is that most ammunition can easily penetrate the interior walls of a house and still travel some distance before losing its energy. **Remember that once you fire, you are responsible for any damage or injuries your bullet causes.** If your firearm malfunctions, you should keep the following basic safety rules in mind:

1. STOP FIRING!
2. KEEP THE GUN POINTED IN A SAFE DIRECTION.
3. WAIT TEN SECONDS
4. SEEK HELP

Now take what you’ve read and learned to see how you do on this practice test. Please feel free to pause the video in order to complete the test.

As part of firearm ownership, you should: 1. Understand the safety aspects of your firearm; 2. Carefully read all instructional material (for example: the owner's manual from the manufacturer); 3. Enroll in a firearm training course; 4. Clean and repair your firearm regularly. If you clean or repair your firearm yourself, always make sure your firearm is unloaded and remove any ammunition before you begin.

If you decide to keep a firearm in your home you must consider the issue of how to store the firearm in a safe and secure manner. California recognizes the importance of safe storage by requiring that all firearms sold in California be accompanied by a DOJ firearms safety device or proof that the purchaser owns a gun safe that meets regulatory standards established by the DOJ. The current list of DOJ-approved firearms safety devices and the gun safe standards can be viewed at the following DOJ website: <http://oag.ca.gov/firearms/fsdcertlist>. Two of the most common locking mechanisms are trigger locks and cable locks. However, neither trigger locks nor cable locks are designed to prevent access to a firearm.

As a responsible firearm owner, you need to be aware of the methods of childproofing your firearm, whether or not you have children. Always store your firearm unloaded; Use a firearms safety device AND store the firearm in a locked container; store the ammunition separately in a locked container. Always storing your firearm securely is the best method of childproofing your firearm; however, your choice of a storage place can be another element of safety. Carefully choose the storage place in your home especially if children may be around. Do not store your firearm where it is visible; do not store your firearm in a bedside table, under your mattress or pillow, or on a closet shelf; do not store your firearm among your valuables (such as jewelry or cameras) unless it is locked in a secure container; Make sure the location you store your firearm and ammunition is not easily accessible to children; consider storing firearms not possessed for self-defense in a safe and secure manner away from the home.

Now take what you've learned to see how you do on this practice test. Please feel free to pause the video in order to complete the test.

You may have heard the term “straw purchase” and wondered what it is. A straw purchase is buying a gun for someone who is prohibited by law from possessing one, or buying a gun for someone who does not want his or her name associated with the transaction. **You should be advised that buying a gun and giving it to someone who is prohibited from owning one is a state and federal crime.**

As the owner of a firearm, it is your responsibility to understand and comply with all federal, state and local laws regarding firearm ownership. There are some exceptions, but generally all firearms purchasers must be at least 18 years of age to purchase a long gun, which would be a shotgun or rifle and 21 years of age to purchase a handgun. Purchasers must be California residents and have a valid driver license or identification card issued by the California Department of Motor Vehicles. Generally, it is illegal for any person who is not a California licensed firearms dealer (private party) to sell or transfer a firearm to another non-licensed person (private party) unless the sale is completed through a licensed California firearms dealer. The infrequent transfer of firearm between immediate family members is exempt from the law requiring private party transfers to be conducted through a licensed dealer. For purposes of this exemption, “immediate family” means parent and child, and grandparent and grandchild but does not include brothers or sisters.

Some of the requirements to purchase or acquire a firearm in California are: You must be a California resident and provide proof of residency; you must have a valid FSC; prior to taking delivery of a firearm, you must successfully perform a safe handling demonstration with the firearm being purchased or acquired; all firearms purchased in California must be accompanied with a firearm safety device; with some exceptions, no handgun may be sold by a firearms dealer to the public unless it is of a make and model that has passed required safety and functionality tests and is listed on the DOJ official roster of handguns certified for sale in California. With some exceptions, no person shall make an application to purchase more than one handgun within a 30-day period.

It is illegal for any person to carry a handgun concealed upon his or her person or concealed in a vehicle without a license issued pursuant to Penal Code section 26150. A firearm locked in a motor vehicle’s trunk or in a locked container carried in the vehicle other than in the utility or glove compartment is not considered concealed within the meaning of Penal Code section 25400. The prohibition from carrying a concealed handgun does not apply to licensed hunters or fishermen while engaged in hunting or fishing, or while going to or returning from the hunting expedition. These individuals may not carry or transport loaded firearms when going to or from the expedition. The unloaded firearms should be transported in the trunk of the vehicle or in a locked container other than the utility or glove compartment. A license to carry a concealed handgun or other firearms may be granted by the sheriff of the county in which the applicant resides or the by the chief of the city police department of the city in which the applicant resides.

Federal and state laws generally prohibit a person from carrying a firearm or ammunition aboard any commercial passenger airplane. Restrictions may also apply to other carriers such as trains, ships and buses. You should consult with the specific carrier in advance to determine the conditions in which firearms may be transported. Unless otherwise unlawful, any person over the age of 18 who is not prohibited from possessing firearms may have a loaded or unloaded firearm at his or her place of residence, temporary residence, campsite or private property owned or lawfully possessed by the person. The question of whether use of lethal force is justified in self-defense cannot be reduced to a simple list of factors. The right of self-defense ceases when there is no further danger from an assailant. Thus, where a person attacked under circumstances initially justifying self-defense renders the attacker incapable of inflicting further injuries, the law of self-defense ceases and no further force may be used. A person may only use the amount of force, up to deadly force, as a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would believe necessary to prevent imminent injury.

A person who is prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm can transfer his or her firearm(s) to a licensed firearms dealer for storage for the duration of the prohibition, provided the prohibition will end on a date specified in a court order.

The next three slides identify some prohibited acts as they relate to firearms. At this time, please feel free to pause the video to review these prohibited acts.

The next two slides identify some of the prohibiting factors from owning or possessing firearms. Please feel free to pause the video and review some of the prohibiting factors from owning and possessing firearms.

Now take what you've learned and see how you do on this practice test. Please feel free to pause the video in order to complete the test.

We hope that you found this tutorial informative. If you have any questions, please refer to the Bureau of Firearms webpage at www.oag.ca.gov/firearms or call the Training, Information, and Compliance Section at area code (916) 227-7527. **Remember, firearm safety starts with you!**