



Range Etiquette: Your Complete Guide to a Safe, Smooth Day at the Range

1) Before You Go: Prep & Mindset

Know your range. Rules vary between indoor and outdoor ranges. Always plan for safety first. Ensure transport complies with local laws, and pack PPE, chamber flags, tools, targets, and first aid.

2) Non-Negotiables: The Four Universal Safety Rules

1) Treat every firearm as if it's loaded. 2) Never let the muzzle cover anything you're not willing to destroy. 3) Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on target and you've decided to fire. 4) Be sure of your target, what's in front of it, and what's beyond it.

3) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Bring ANSI-rated eye protection, NRR 25+ hearing protection, closed-toe shoes, hats, and lead-removal wipes. Proper PPE is essential for safety.

4) Range Flow & Commands

Common commands: 'Range is Hot' (live fire starts), 'Range is Cold' (no handling guns), 'Cease Fire' (stop immediately). Always follow Range Safety Officer instructions.

5) Firing Line Etiquette

Always keep muzzle downrange, case/uncase at the bench, shoot only your target, and keep gear tidy. Respect others' space and avoid touching firearms on a cold range.

6) Ammo, Targets, & Gear Rules

Check if steel-core, tracer, or reloads are allowed. Use approved targets, keep shots within your lane, and follow posted ammunition restrictions.

7) Conduct With RSOs & Other Shooters

RSOs have full authority. Be polite, accept corrections, keep language professional, and avoid alcohol or drugs at the range.

8) Malfunctions: What to Do Safely

For misfires, keep muzzle downrange and wait before clearing. Stop immediately if you suspect a squib. Ask the RSO if unsure.

9) Emergency Procedures

Know the range's address for 911 calls. Stop bleeding with pressure or tourniquet, treat for shock, and follow RSO direction. Carry a small first-aid kit.

10) Special Situations

When bringing new shooters, start simple. Only practice holster draws, movement, or steel shooting where allowed. Suppressors still require hearing protection.

11) Cleaning Up & Checking Out

Unload, open actions, case at the bench, pick up brass, and clean your lane. Always thank the RSO.

12) Quick Start Checklist

Bring ID, PPE, chamber flags, ammo, first aid, and cleaning supplies. Always follow safety rules, handle malfunctions correctly, and leave the range cleaner than you found it.

13) Common Mistakes to Avoid

Never handle firearms during cold range, sweep others with the muzzle, cross-shoot lanes, or ignore malfunctions. Respect the rules and other shooters.

14) Final Word

Range etiquette is about safety, courtesy, and consistency. Follow the rules, respect others, and enjoy your time at the range.

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