APPLIED FUNDAMENTALS COURSE

NEXT LEVEL TRAINING

COURSE CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO APPLIED FUNDAMENTALS

OVERVIEW:

Welcome to this course! The purpose of this course is to provide an instructor an additional curriculum to confidently provide a 3 to 4 hour course (possibly over one or two days) to your existing students.

WHY DO THIS COURSE?

Our research has found a good number of instructors do not have follow-up curriculums. The best client is an existing client. Many students are thirsting for more information. This course (and possible additional courses to come) are geared towards more of a hands-on, total participation involvement (TPI) type course.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS?

The hands-on integrated safety with the skill development is the single-most benefit to this drill based course. We all know the main rule, keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot. Or perhaps your main rule is always point the pistol in a safe direction. Either way, these rules are heavily integrated into the curriculum. When the students have a SIRT pistol in their hands, they are engaging in the drills and skill development, but moreover applied safety. If nothing else, you will stack the woodpile higher by integrating the safety habits heavily in each block of instruction.

HOW IS THIS COURSE STRUCTURED?

The on-line portion of this course has several main videos set up in different lessons on SIRTliving.com. If you're reading this in the PDF version then you can use the QR code at the end of each lesson to quickly go right to the section you want to view. Further,

TOPIC POINTS:
Look for points related to the topic in these sidebars. Feel free to use this border for your own handwritten notes!

TOPIC POINT:
Look for the class video demos on the related topic pages on the site SIRTliving.com. You will see examples where I catch students isolating a rule and we correct it!

we provided a slide presentation if you want to use that to help you guide along, but by no means do you need a slide presentation, particularly if it's a logistical pain to set up a projector, computer, power, etc. in your training area. You can definitely teach this course with just a brief outline (or by memory if you really got it down).

DO I HAVE TO WATCH ALL THE VIDEOS?

The execution and content of this course is for your choosing. It's a bit flexible and it's intended to give you some ideas and confidence to put on an additional course. There are many other wonderful follow-on curriculums, many of which are fairly standardized and "Ray Kroc" modeled. For example the NRA Protection Outside the Home is highly structured to make sure the NRA maintains integrity since the NRA's name is on the course.

This curriculum is a bit different because in the end, this is your curriculum. You take ownership of it. You modify it to your liking taking into account the needs and the nature of your students. We don't intend this course to be a labeled NextLevel Training curriculum because honestly it's really not. This curriculum is cultivated and developed from the instructors like yourself. NextLevel Training is a spoke-and-hub arrangement where ideas comes to the hub with a lot of information and we at the hub try to redistribute such information to instructors like yourself. We take pride in the final product, but we don't take sole authorship. It's a true collective endeavor. Your constructive feedback helps chart the direction and course and is always welcome.

So let's get started!

GO TO THE ON-LINE COURSE

Each one of these sections has a corresponding dedicated web-page with the video overview and even videos demoing how to teach the actual block (showing just one example with my style just as an example).
The QR code allows you to quickly scan and get right to the page from your phone!
Instead of typing in:
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/applied-fundamentals-intro/

Simply scan this QR code with your smart phone if you have one and you will go right to the web page lesson.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Common frequently asked questions are here.
A: This section is where we have questions answered. If you have further question when taking this course, please contact customer service at customerservice@NextLevelTraining.com

Q: How long is this course?
A: This course will take about 2-3 hours to go through depending on whether you watch the actual course sample videos and your familiarity with each block of instruction.

Q: Do I have to use the power point to teach this class?
A: No, in fact the sample class video is instructed without a slide presentation. It is helpful to have at a minimum the outline and coaching points, but in the end, this is your course to safely take your students to the next level.

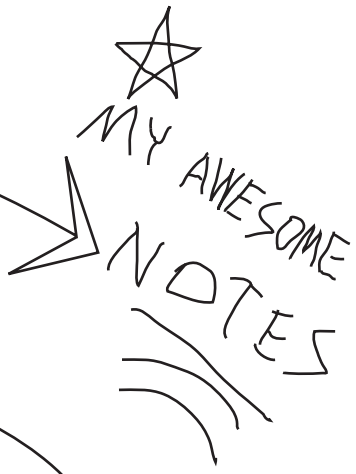
QUICK TIPS:

Look for tips here in lessons
These expandable sections include tips and tricks related to each block of instruction.

NOTES ON THIS COURSE INSTRUCTOR BOOKLET.

The formating is broken out in an **Overview** providing the lion's share of the background and description. There will further be blocks of frequently asked questions, **FAQs** with commonly asked questions. Further, there are sections with **Quick tips** that relate to the lesson and general notes are in the side sections. Finally you will see some Key Concepts or which generally relate to concepts that have broad applicability to training.

You can take any hand written notes in the side portion margins. The more notes you take, the more ownership you will have in the course! Remember this is your course. We are just providing support and a starting point.



Further, the lower portion of each lesson will show the corresponding presentation slide(s) you can download and copy from our Google Drive (presentation is actually a Google Document Slide) or download and present as a PDF. Feel free to make a copy of the slide presentation and add your own images, slides, text, etc. https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1EE3eOUzbV4EkFWJLdVGpkMwmD0WggLaecSWoyXi2qAo/edit?usp=sharing

Note: These QR codes relate to the nearest hyper-link. If you scan this funny square with your phone it will go to the web-page.

DELIVERABLES:

Here is a quick-list of some main benefits of this course and areas of emphasis for this course. In general, the goal is to integrate apply and develop fundamentals in practical pistol skills namely:

- Refine the grip
- Develop consistent grip establishment
- Proper stance (platform)
- Build index shooting and knowing the limits thereof
- Trigger control and how to refine it.
- Sights and knowing when and how much crisp sight picture we need.
- Build awareness of moving no-shoots (the Progressor drill)
- Further integrate safe gun handling skills, and above, all be safe and have fun.

1 - INTRODUCTION TO SAFETY

OVERVIEW:

Preparation is key for a safe course. Location is a critical element to have save training. Make sure there is good footing (no slippery floors or weird unleveled edges in the floor etc.), ensure good lighting, and finally, well-defined entrance/exit points. You don't want people wandering in and out through your training area and you want to have your training area very well delineated and separate from the outside world. It is critical to not allow any live fire tools (including live pistols, rifles, knives, crossbows, ...) inside your training area.

OTHER THOUGHTS REGARDING PREPARATION AND SAFETY:

Of course practically speaking you want to have some form of targets on the wall. Here's a list of a few things that I like to have in any SIRT based class.

- Stickies (they just simply make great targets in a pinch)
- A simple stapler (sometimes I can staple targets to the wall, but for some reason I always need a stapler for any class, in particular on the range!).
- Make sure your stapler can open all the way with very lightweight staples for indoor use particularly if there is a cork-board wall where you'll want to put up some targets and use that wall for a targeting area.
- A card table
  I have so many uses for a simple 3½ foot-by-3½ foot card table. I can lay SIRTs on it, sign-up forms, sometimes have an intro video on an iPad, etc.

PRACTICAL TIPS:

- Note the flooring and lighting are adequate.
- Make sure you have exclusive access to the room and if possible a PACE plan (primary, alternative, contingency, emergency) in the event the room gets unavailable but you still have to put on the class.
- Find an alternative location if your location falls through, even if it costs you a bit of money.

NOTE

The Applied Fundamentals course is not a "force on force" course where the students will actually point the SIRTs at each other. Quite to the contrary this course strongly adopts the safety rules (as discussed in the next block) and applies these rules diligently with the SIRT pistols.

- Sign-up forms, pens, etc.
- Name tags
  If you know their names great, but sometimes it's a great idea to have name tags so you can focus on the teaching and not remembering their names. It also helps with students building rapport with each other calling one-another by their first names.
- A white board (even a small one) and of course dry erase pens.
  No matter what I always needs a white board somewhere even if I didn't plan to have a learning opportunity point emerge in the course of a class.
- Laptop computer,
- Laptop power cord!
- Extension cord
- An extra old computer with your slide presentation on the hardrive
  Yes bring an extra computer in case that primary one goes down.
- A projector with the correct attachment cables (HDMI, the RGB pinned kind, etc)
- Possibly secondary extension cord for the projector
- Extra card table for the projector

If you use LASR in your classes:

- Your Laptop with LASR installed and updated.
- Your webcam and tripod
- USB male-female extension cable
  If you do use the LASR system which has a lot of benefits, you'll want to have these on hand in your instructor toolbox. **More on the LASR system https://nextleveltraining.com/improvewithlasr/**
- Duct tape to lock down the tripod for the LASR camera.
  If you do use a simple web cam you want to make sure the thing doesn't move when you set up your targets. See this short course on the LASR system implementing it in a law enforcement academy.
- Painter's tape for attaching targets to the wall, it won't stick or mark the wall (like duct tape).
- SIRT pistols!
  Yes your SIRT pistols and prep them up as described below.
- Possible holsters that fit your SIRT
  Sometimes it's nice to have some holsters in particular to plug in next follow-on class for a conceal carry draw.
- A lockable case to store firearms
  This is a good place to store a firearm away from the class as well as store any students' firearms if they accidentally bring one to class and you catch it in the mandatory safety briefing.

Well that's a fairly comprehensive list and of course I'm sure you have your own bag of goodies as well (possibly an easel etc.) It

NOTES ON LOCATION

Those are some very practical aspects of picking your location such as making sure you actually have it locked down and have exclusive use to the area. I find it best to **have an actual living breathing point of contact** who you can call and make sure that it is going to be open and everything is a go for your class. You do not want to be that instructor where you show up 5 minutes before and the facility is not available for some reason. This is a nightmare and you can lose a lot of credibility with your students very, very quickly with this simple lack of preparation.

helps to visualize every step of the course and think what would I need? Will I need an extra pen? My own holster for my personal SIRT pistol? A table for my notes? Possibly a highlighter to check off what I covered?

I'm sure you've developed your own style for instruction but when in doubt , error on the side of organization and preparation. I find personally that even though I develop a bit of a flow and do not want to be restricted by a slide presentation, I definitely want to be prepared and have the material before me to make absolutely sure I can pull off the course with minimal stress and the highest probability of satisfaction for the students.

ACTUALLY RUNNING THE CLASS:

The video explaining the safety block covers the main points and concepts for safety and the actual class videos help out show one form of a comprehensive upfront safety brief.

Why have such a comprehensive safety brief?

Probably one of the biggest critiques I have in many trainings is glossing over the safety brief. I have noted that in some very squared away military units, the safety brief is consistent, thorough and categorical. A safety brief should not have any corners cut. However, a safety brief does not have to be a long lengthy boring ordeal either. A safety brief can be run high and tight and get people squared away very quickly. Here are some of the basic steps for a standardized safety brief.

ELEMENTS TO COURSE INTRO AND SAFETY BRIEF:

INTRODUCTION:

An introduction introducing yourself, the objective of your course, and above all, making them feel comfortable. The students absolutely have to have a level of comfort to learn and moreover, bring about any immediate safety concerns or general considerations that related to their involvement in the class.

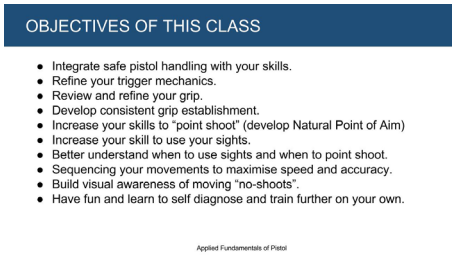
NO LIVE-FIRE TOOLS:

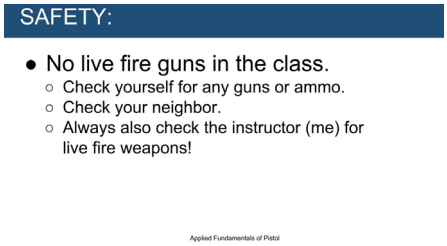
Start the brief straight away that the deliniated training area is a a cleansed environment where there are absolutely no live fire guns whatsoever. This is a good time to have a SIRT pistol in your hand and introduce the pistol if they are not aware of it and let them know these particular devices do not go boom. SIRTs cannot fire a shot; however, they are to be treated just like a live-fire gun in accordance to the safety rules which will be covered shortly.

I want to stress the importance of not making anyone feel stupid if they did bring a live-fire tool. Yes they should have probably read your introductory course materials etc., but nonetheless we want to promote conceal carry. They may have been busy. They may have forgot, so be diligent about removing the live-fire guns but also be gracious, understanding and facilitate their efforts to get

KEY CONCEPT:
PACE PLANNING

It's best to have a PACE plan (**Primary, Alternative, Contingency, and Emergency**) when finding your location to train. If something crazy happens and you have to change your venue, have that lifeboat ready for another venue even if it might cost you some emergency money. Perhaps you have to drive a little further, but it is a good idea to have all your students' contact information readily available to fire off a group text or preferably a group email when have you if you absolutely have to change your location. At the very least your students will appreciate your efforts and understand (hopefully) that the circumstances inevitably forced this inconvenience. However, you are communicating you are on top of it and prepared with the PACE plan.





the guns in a locked container in their car or have a locked case in a separate room where you can comfortably put their live-fire pistols away in a secure location.

If you do have to handle a student's live firearm. Be sure to clear it pursuant ot NRA Basic Pistol instructional standards and clear it. Remove the magazine and all ammo, rack the slide several times, if available keep the pistol and slide lock and store it in the locked container. It's not a bad idea to have one in your car. Store the ammo in a separate location. If you have to use a bit of masking tape to identify the magazine.

Again being prepared is key and you want to get the area cleansed very quickly without loosing momentum while not having anyone feel too stupid all the while being excruciatingly thorough.

DESIGNATING ENTRANCE AND EXIT POINTS

Definitely inform the people that there are defined entrance and exit points and that anyone leaving has to go through a mandatory safety check.

GENERAL INQUIRIES ON ANY INJURIES.

Make a general inquiry if anyone has an injury like a crinked knee, back, etc. A lot of people will probably not raise their hand but you might get the guy or gal who just had their MCL torn or some other injury. It's good to be aware of this, in particular, if you progress to a drill having any kind of compromise shooting positions, bending down on low cover, etc.

Designate someone to call 911 and someone to transport. Make the students aware that you have your cell phone handy and your vehicle if there is some form of injury that have to go to the hospital.

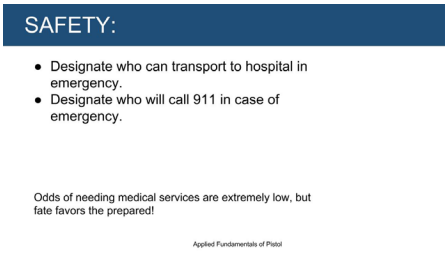
It's a good idea to know the exact route to a local hospital wherever you go. This is good general principle on any vacation etc., but in particular for a class. What are the odds of such a catastrophic injury in a SIRT fire class? Negligible; however, the mere fact that you are so diligent in covering this point shows your competence and thoroughness to the students right off the bat. I guarantee you they willll be impressed that you cover logistics and transportation.

Designate a person, a volunteer, who can call 911 in the event you cannot. Also designate someone who has a vehicle in a situation where you cannot provide transportation. Again this takes about 20 to 30 seconds and you definitely do not want to freak anyone out like there's going to be some dangerous stuff ahead, but you're covering all bases. When you prepare to this level, the odds of anything happening catastrophic are further diminished. It's like insurance with the minimum premium of a few well invested minutes.

OTHER CLASS EXAMPLE:

We once ran a very large course at United States Concealed Carry Association where we had to check in numerous firearms in a conference room. This was obviously a logistical challenge, but it was handled very well by having a strict entry choke point, a dedicated safety officer who cleared the pistols who put them in a sequestered area, and utilized some painter's tape with a marker to identify the pistol and the magazines. This had to be done for about 40 students 25 of which approximately had pistols (one guy had four guns!).

That was a unique setting at a conference for USCCA which of course wanted the people and attendees to carry and get the training in. With smart preparation it can be done But for purpose of this class save yourself the grief and put in the flier that students are not to bring live-fire tools to the classroom.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why do I have to be so darn thorough on a safety brief? Isn't this the students' second class with me?
A: Yes this is the students' second class. Presumably they've taken NRA Basic Pistol or some other similar type of introductory curriculum to get a general idea of how to clear a gun etc., but how many students can recite the safety rules? I would say a small percentage actually have the rules committed to memory. Further, very few students have the actual rules hardwired into their brain, meaning, they will eventually put their finger on the trigger and point the muzzle in an unsafe direction unless they have hands-on, drill-based training like you're going to provide. The safety brief can go by very quickly and it is mandatory.

Q: Do I really have to designate someone to travel and call? It's not like we're on the range?
A: You are not on the range and you do not have live-fire tools, but this is good practice for any kind of course having any physical component. Someone could slip, have a concussion, or even have cardiac arrest. We don't know. But moreover, you are communicating that you care about your students, that you are prepared, and you plan ahead for their safety and wellness.

QUICK TIPS:

Have a very clear entrance area so students can know exactly where to go and put their stuff down etc.

If possible, have some kind of welcome video on a little iPad. Even if you film it yourself on your iPhone/Android a nice little welcome video can keep their attention. We provided a standardized welcome video but please feel free to replace this with your own content. It kind of helps sometimes to have some fun action-type shooting in the video. Be sure to have the sign-in sheet and waiver all set up. Of course it's great to greet people when they come in but you may be doing some final tasks. A sign-in sheet with the waiver form as well as name tags works great. You can even use the PDF document that's clearly put on the wall to give them instructions.

You can copy the text below to make a print out form spelling out the steps students need to take when coming to your class.

Step 1: Make sure you have no live-fire tools (handguns) on your person or in your bag/purse.

Step 2: Please read and sign the waiver form.

Step 3: Please fill out a name tag.

Step 4: Get ready to learn and have fun.

Here is a link to a simple PDF you can quickly print out if you are tight on time. :)

https://sirtliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/applied-fundamentals-welcome-sign-2.pdf

FINAL ROOM SETUP RIGHT BEFORE CLASS.

POST THE CAUTION FORMS ON EACH OF THE ENTRYWAY DOORS.

If you want to be extra diligent, you can use the spiral lights. Sergeant Don Gulla formerly at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center used these whenever he did training at the academy. They're definitely a good idea when doing force-on-force training (pointing the SIRTs at each other doing interactive drills) but it can be a good idea in these kind of classes as well just to give a clear identifier of "Hey, behind these doors there are training pistols with and firearm training going on."

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/introduction-to-safety/

THE FINAL WORD...

Safety comes first! We want to be sure that everyone has an enjoyable injury-free experience.

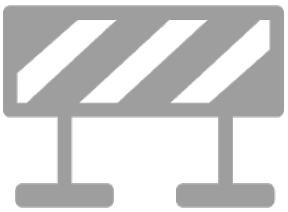
Inquire about preexisting injuries.

Designate someone to call in case of emergency.

Designate someone to transfer to hospital in case of emergency.

Again no live-fire tools in our designated training area!

Everyone (including instructors) gets checked when entering room returning to the training area.



GUN SAFETY

2 - SAFETY RULES

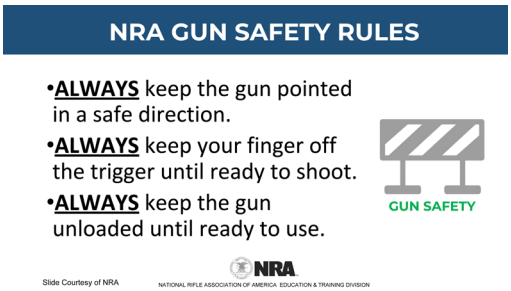
OVERVIEW:

It's incredibly important to cover the safety rules. I like to utilize the basic NRA three safety rules and interject Jeff Cooper's beware of your target and what's behind it. Many of you may want to keep that fourth rule as a range rule. Others might be avid Jeff Cooper fans and say his four rules are the gun rules.

Without stirring up a lot of unnecessary debate, practically speaking, the fourth Jeff Cooper rule is very relevant with drive fire and in particular with SIRT. **Be aware of your target and what's behind it** is incredibly important with SIRT in a dreadful event where the other rules were not followed and someone brings a live fire tool into the designated training area. Therefore, the SIRT-fire area should be suitable with reasonably ballistic walls to absorb a live fire round in a catastrophic event that a live fire tool came into the area.

COVERING THE THREE NRA RULES.
ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.
ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.

I personally found I cover the rules in order referring to a SIRT and making reference first from the grip, to the trigger, to the muzzle. The reference to the SIRT can be a "memory hook" for the student. The grip/magazine relates to the **gun unloaded until ready to use**. The trigger relates to the very important rule of keeping the **finger off the trigger until ready to shoot**. Finally, the muzzle relates to always **point in a safe direction** or only point at what you're willing to destroy.



The Jeff Cooper Rules are commonly used in other camps:

All guns are always loaded.

Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.

Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.

Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.

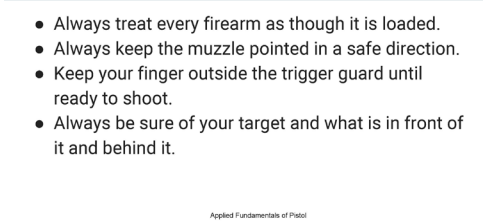
These rules are similar but have the addition of, "be sure of your target and what is beyond it." This is a range rule under the NRA, but at any rate, this rule is very appropriate for SIRT training. Out of an abundance of caution, we want to SIRT fire against a reasonably ballistic wall. Now practically speaking, we don't always have concrete walls or bullet catching pits to train with. But when given the choice, pick the best wall with minimal liabilities (people) therebehind. Again, this measure is out of an abundance of caution.

WHAT DOES A REASONABLY BALLISTIC WALL MEAN?

We have to be somewhat practical when we talk about terminal ballistics and catching bullets. Do we have Brinell Armor 500 walls all the way around in training areas? No. Should we never ever SIRT fire because we don't have such live fire, shoot-room walls? Absolutely not. That would be a horrible state of zero training going on and society would be much, much worse off. A reasonable ballistic wall is some form of the thickest wall with lowest probability of people immediately therebehind. Just as an example, never drive fire/SIRT fire in a wall where people are immediately there behind such as a bathroom, your kid's bedroom, etc. There is a better wall to train against, like an exterior wall.

Even when training at home, pick exterior walls which are generally

Slide Courtesy of NRA Basic Pistol
*Note this course not affiliated or endorsed by the NRA.



PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TRAINING AT HOME

Be cautious during home training that someone else doesn't come into your training area. One possible risk is where someone else comes in your area, they are carrying concealed, they go on auto-pilot and draw fluidly firing a round. The better they are, the more likely they can "chunk" the actions Now granted, there are other rules to address this situation, but remember all of these rules are completely redundant. If this unfortunate event happened, be sure to set up your training area with reasonably ballistic walls so the round will be caught and not cause damage to any person. It is a layered independent precaution.

thicker have a lower probability of any person behind it. I like to dry fire in the corner of my house because it's a nice thick ballistic area (and the log walls help) in the minuscule odds a live fire tool will be in my training area... on top of that protocol there is now even lower odds of a round doing damage to a person (again these rules are redundantly layered).

When it comes to safety and training, we have to be practical here. There's a huge common-sense factor that goes into all of this and the mere fact that there are discussions and awareness of these rules will significantly increase the probability of 100% safe training for your class **and your students when they leave your class**.

DO STUDENTS HAVE SIRTS IN THEIR HAND WHEN DESCRIBING THE RULES?

This depends on the nature of your previous class. If your previous class stressed the safety rules then you may want to hand out the SIRTs and go over the rules at that point. If you don't feel confident that the students will adhere to the rules right off the bat, then give the brief first and then hand out the SIRTs.

BENEFITS OF HAVING SIRTS IN THE HAND WHILE GOING OVER THE RULES.

The total participation involvement (TPI) aspect of adult learning is significant where a tactile feel of an object related to the verbal cues significantly increases retention. If the students have SIRT pistols in their hands while you go over these rules the retention may be stronger as they understand what it feels like to have that finger along the frame high-slide orientation. As you describe the flinch response clinching your hands they can right then and there try it themselves and understand, "Oh my finger has to be well outside of that trigger guard." It just helps retention and actual implementation of the rule.

However, if you feel your class might be little bit more on the novice side, then go over the rules and thereafter hand out the SIRTs. You want them to start off comfortable and not screwing up right off the bat. Also, if they grab the SIRT pistols and be immediately stupid, you have to redirect them forcefully which might not be the way you want to kick off the class. We don't want to set them up for failure. I've personally done it both ways and I find it's always a judgment call based on reading the competency of your class.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Do I really have to cover those rules?

A: Yes, absolutely grind it in them. Remember you're creating students who are going to pass the word on and they need to memorize these rules to tell their friends, family, circles of influence, etc.

OUR MAIN TRAINING TOOL:

Q: Do I use the NRA rules or the Jeff Cooper rules?

A: Oh boy, do we want to open Pandora's box here. I cover both. Reason being is they may see these rules somewhere else and you want to make sure what they see outside your class is consistent with what you have recited. If you Google "firearm rules" the Jeff Cooper rules come up right away (as of the time of this writing). I find it best to explain that the rules overlap and the fourth rule of "beware of your target and what is behind it" is a range rule for the NRA accompanied by the other NRA range rules (not drinking on the range etc.)

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/safety-rules/

QUICK TIPS:

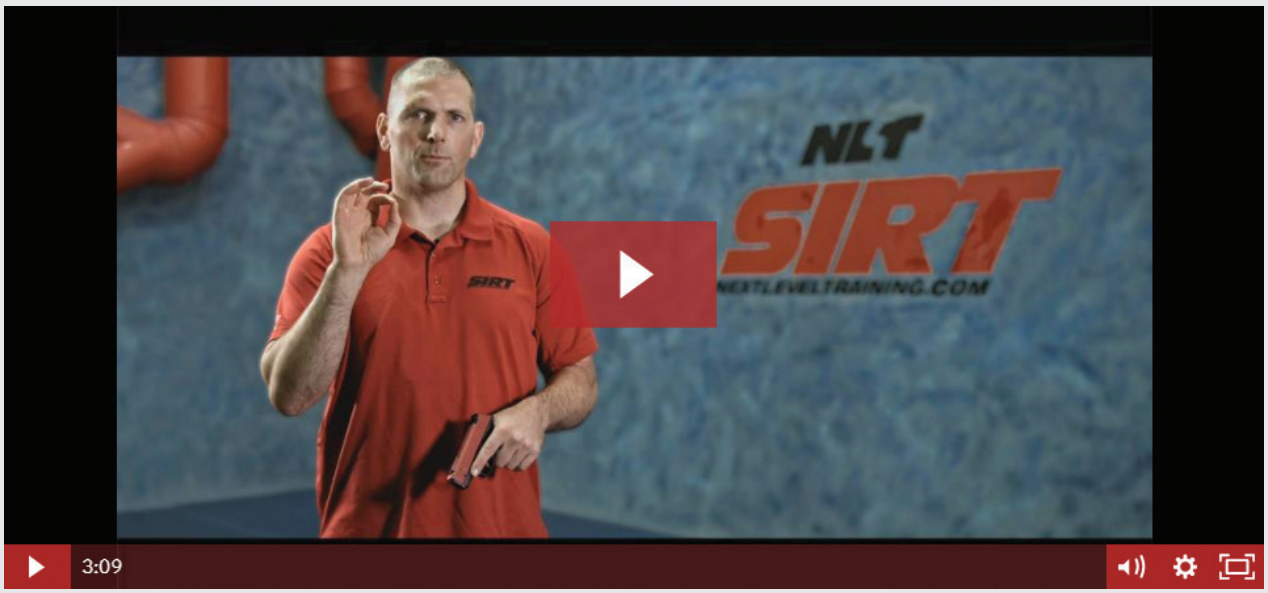
DEMO WITH THE SIRT AND BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN YOU HAVE GOOD MUZZLE AWARENESS.

Be sure to talk about "tacit communication" with a pistol regarding muzzle awareness. If the student nonchalantly swings the pistol down by their side, they are not communicating proficiency and safety to other people. Your demonstration will be critical in setting their nonverbal gun handling skill communications. As you can see in the class video, the students naturally adhere a good Sul position during the whole class.

ALWAYS WATCH FOR SAFE GUN HANDLING

Be absolutely vigilant checking for muzzle awareness and finger on the trigger. You will most likely catch a student breaking a safety rule. As note in the video with my actual class, the students where overall very safety competent, but yet they still got the finger on the trigger at inappropriate times (the film caught Boots with finger on trigger!). Set the tone that safe gun practices are very serious, but you're not making them feel unnecessarily defensive. I'm not saying be touchy feely here, but I've seen some instructors scream at students with their finger on the trigger and learning immediately shuts down. The constant repetitions of safe practices is the way to instill these rules without A-hole-like barking with sprinkled in "I caught you" attitude. Be firm, but understand they are learning and you have to keep them in your circle so they take additional classes to continue their safe training.

3 - TRIGGER CONTROL STRONG HAND ONLY



INTRODUCTION:

After a safety brief, we have to jump in quickly to some instruction. In general, students might be getting a little bit antsy and want to **get to the meat of the course**, so to speak. The big question is, what fundamental to attack first. It might help to first think about the objectives of the course.

New shooters (actually, in my opinion almost all shooters) need review of their technique and refinment of their hands-on skills with a pistol. Therefore, jumping into two handed grip drills is not very wise because they are just reiterating their potential bad habits over and over again. It's best to take an approach looking at the fundamentals and progressively marching through each fundamental, stacking on additional coaching points and different emphasis of other additional fundamentals.

Again, the big question is where to jump into first. Personally, I think it's a toss-up between grip and trigger control. However, I think (at this time) the best fundamental to start off with is trigger control. There are a few reasons listed out below.

1. When you shoot strong hand only, trigger control is isolated and trigger mechanic deficiencies are easy to see (dots, not dashes).
2. It is best to train trigger control single-hand only (because a strong grip won't cover up trigger mechanic issues) and therefore people are not doing reps with a two-handed grip at this phase.
3. Most all of the blocks of instruction hereafter involved pressing the trigger, so let's start with some ideas and best practices for how to pull the trigger without moving the muzzle.

WHAT IS TRIGGER CONTROL?

Trigger control is breaking a shot without moving the muzzle but not just breaking a shot slow and controlled, breaking a shot "at speed". That is, to break the shot without moving the muzzle on demand as fast as possible under time constraints. **All shooters need to be able to break a shot without substantially moving the pistol.**

INTRODUCTION TO DIAGNOSTICS:

It's nice to start with trigger control because we start to go down the lane of **diagnosing each shot**. Every shot can be diagnosed for good quality of movement. With trigger control we try to strive for "dots not dashes" with the SIRT Training Pistol. A dash signifies muzzle movement and we want to mitigate muzzle movement caused from the trigger finger.

INSTRUCTION:

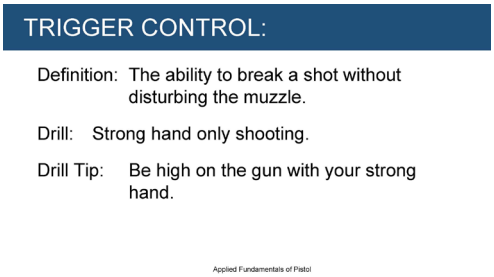
Start with getting hands on with the SIRTs with a simple drill of grabbing the SIRT Training Pistol with your support hand at the muzzle and getting a nice high grip on the pistol with your strong hand. Ensure the strong hand thumb is upward in a "flagged" position. The base of the thumb is pressed firmly against the beaver-tail region of the pistol. Then have the students wrap their fingers there around the pistol in the front and draw upon a target (see video link at end of chapter for best description).

CLASS SET-UP:

You may want to have your class lined in an L-shape like pattern towards the outer walls, or a U-shape pattern if you have a lot of students and space is tight. Or, you can have a straight firing line along the best wall in your training area to SIRT-fire against. Your set up depends on the size of your class and the makeup of your room. As shown in the sample class video, for this particular training area at NextLevel Training, I prefer an L-shaped pattern to set the firing line.

CONCLUSION:

Shooting single-hand only will make sure that a "strength does not mask a weakness". A good solid grip will stabilize a gun which is good, but single-hand grip will expose the trigger mechanic issues.



BULLSEYE TRAINING:

If you're not familiar with bullseye shooting, bullseye is a classic NRA discipline with single-hand shooting five shots on a target through various strings of fire.

Bullseye is actually a phenomenal discipline if you like to measure your growth every week in your bullseye league practice/matches. Personally, I think bullseye is a great discipline in particular with Type A personalities who like to see measured progress. I also find that bullseye personally honed in my trigger mechanic skills which helped out immensely for other endeavors such as on USPSA training and Top Shot Season 3.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why go strong hand only?
A: As noted in the overview, strong hand only isolates trigger mechanics where a good grip can mask potential weaknesses of trigger control.

Q: Why go for dots, not dashes?
A: A nice clean dot shows a muzzle not moving when the trigger breaks. Oftentimes a low left laser swipe towards an 8:00 o'clock position (imagine a clock around the target) signifies trigger mechanic issues (for righthanded shooters).

Q: Do we start slow or fast when pulling the trigger?
A: Start off with nice, slow, controlled trigger pulls. As discussed further herein there are tricks to modify the trigger pull and further solidify the trigger mechanics by going faster (see Lesson 7).

QUICK TIPS:

Figure out how you want to set up the room beforehand as an L-shaped, U-shaped, or a straight firing line. Set up will depend on your room structure and how many people you have in the class. You should start your first drill fluidly explaining the protocol of turning from the targets to the center and demo how to not muzzle another student (or you) and keep your finger off the trigger.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sho-trigger-intro/

4 - TRIGGER CONTROL WITH SIGHT ALIGNMENT

OVERVIEW:

WHAT ABOUT SIGHT ALIGNMENT?

Sight alignment is a critical skill but remember, this is a second course where they probably had some introduction to sight alignment in a previous course such as NRA Basic Pistol. They might need a refresher on this fundamental, but equal height and equal light is the general rule and I generally find that people will figure it out pretty quick.

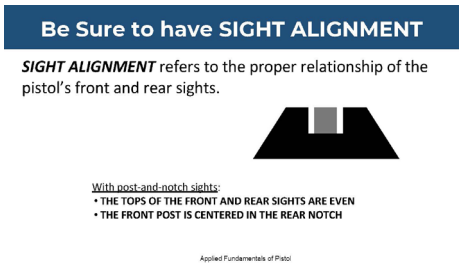
SETTING UP THE DRILL:

Direct the students in the U-shape, L-shape or straight line and simply tell them to shoot at a target in front of them on the wall. If you need to have additional targets or if the students are spaced out a bit; it's a good idea to have extra stickies handy so you can quickly put them on a wall as targets. Note, if you're going "downrange" tell them to put their muzzles down to the Sul position before you go downrange. Remember this not a true live fire range and as you will see further herein, we definitely want the students to practice with moving no-shoots downrange (the Progressor drill) and build the awareness and ingrained habit of not "muzzling people" (pointing the gun at others).

Tell your students that when you go down towards the targets they are to not muzzle you. However, explicitly let them know in a live fire range, no one would not go down range unless the range is "cold" where no one will be handling guns. But for purpose of flow and logistics of this class, have them adopt a Sul position as you go down to fix or created a target. Just make sure they follow the safety rules of finger off trigger and have their muzzle pointed in the safe direction (Sul position). This is actually part of the practical

CAUTION:

If people start point-shooting and shoot from the hip or they're clearly not using the sights, correct them to lift the pistol up to that line of sight so the pistol is between the eyeball and the target. Even though we're focusing on trigger control. Let's get them building the muscle memory of bringing the gun up to their line of sight with their sight alignment and sight picture.



skills they are learning in the class, their muzzle awareness and not muzzling another person.

HOW SHOULD WE INSTRUCT THE TRIGGER FINGER LOCATION ON THE TRIGGER?

What is the best place to put the finger on the trigger on the tip? In the middle of the pad? The first knuckle? I've heard people adamantly stress each one of these areas. For purpose of the class, I would not get into the details on this subject and just let the student put their trigger finger where it naturally goes. I know some law enforcement instructors absolutely stress they only touch the first knuckle on the trigger. I know some performance shooting coaches absolutely stress the fingertip. Honestly the answer this depends a lot on the physiology of the student dependent on the mobility and flexibility of their trigger finger big knuckle.

DRILL EXECUTION:

Separate the students out and have them start shooting the targets on the wall. The greater the distance the more laser sweeps you will see which is good because you are going to further illuminate and unearth their trigger mechanic deficiencies.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Should I go into lengthy details on how to pull the trigger?

A: I would suggest not too much instruction at this point but let them get their feet wet starting the drill. Simply get their strong hand high on the pistol and give them a few reps. You can use a slide presentation to touch on sight alignment and sight picture so that you have a general notion of sight alignment. Otherwise simply tell them to get a nice clean dot on the small targets on the wall.

Q: How deep should I go into diagnostics?

A: For now I would just simply tell them they want a dot not a dash. If they get a dash ,they are moving their pistol when breaking a shot. As they get under stress and have time pressure, that dash would become longer, more pronounced and greater chance of missing. This simple coaching cue of "try to get a dot not a dash" starts them down the path of self-diagnosing.

Q: Should they go as a group or one-on-one or one at a time?

A: Definitely have them go as a group. When they are one-at-a-time they're very much singled out and potentially can feel very

uncomfortable and stupid. When they go in a group they're kind of **hidden in the herd** so to speak and can start their self-learning with their reps.

Q: What is Sul Position?

A: This is a good topic to research on the internet. I believe it is Hebrew for South. The Sul position is where the pistol in near your chest and pointed down and your support hand is either covering the pistol or inbetween your chest and the pistol.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/strong-hand-only-trigger-control-2/

QUICK TIPS:

DEMO!

Demo the drill but definitely make sure you got this drill figured out. ☺ You want to show the nice dots not dashes so that you probably want to practice-up the week before class with you trigger control to show what it looks like. If you want to cheat, you can get slightly closer to the target so the dash is less pronounced, but you're their coach, you're their instructor. Show them how it's done!

PROTOCOL WITH MUZZLE AWARENESS OF SIRTS

This is a first drill so take extra time to explain clearly the protocol about a turnaround, address targets and bring the muzzle back and turn back to the center without muzzling anyone. Yes the main drill is for trigger control and strong hand only, but the bigger lesson here is their muzzle awareness of not muzzling each other when turning around 180 degrees to the center of the class when you are talking.

5 - TRIGGER CONTROL: DIAGNOSIS AND COACHING

OVERVIEW:

After they finished their first few repetitions on the strong hand only drill, you can call them to the middle and give them a few coaching points. One quick coaching point is to "flag their thumb" when gripping the pistol. I learned this from Seeklander where that flagpole like thumb where it's upright actually helps out right now because the base of the thumb locks into the upper rear flank beavertail area of the pistol. It's almost as if your strong hand kind of open ups a bit (see lesson video on website). This helps stabilize the pistol a bit which doesn't directly effect trigger control but this does eventually help downstream with their grip where their strong hand thumb will not get in the way when they establish a two-handed grip.

ANATOMY OF OUR TRIGGER FINGER WITH RESPECT TO A TRIGGER.

If you look at our trigger finger it's comprised of several joints. A joint rotates about each knuckle along a plane. That plane goes left and right. The trigger pivots forward and back in an up and down plane. Therefore, there's a tendency for the fingertip to go to the left. It's very awkward to pull (press) that trigger straight back and the path of travel is not even straight back. The rotational movement of the trigger changes just a little bit up and down because the trigger is rotating (except for a 1911 of course).

Therefore, it's pretty tricky to train the finger to press straight back and not move the muzzle low and to the left (for a right-handed shooter, low and to the right for a left-handed shooter).

Take a look at the second knuckle of the shooter with respect to

Note how the second knuckle is in front of the trigger. This can tend to hook the shot to the right.

the pivot pin (see photo on low left of last page). If the second knuckle is in front of the rotary pin (which is very common for a Smith and Wesson M & P (functional features of our SIRT 107), you may see the pistol actually go the right for a right-handed shooter. If they have smaller hands then it's likely the second knuckle is behind or aft of the pivot point of the trigger so it's very common that they will push it to the left.

SECOND COACHING POINT:

As noted in the video on this lesson about 3 minutes in, tell the students to press the trigger so the contact point on a trigger finger is high and to the right (for right-handed shooter) so they are not necessarily pressing the trigger straight back. Cheat a bit and take the part of the trigger finger touching the trigger and push it towards your right shoulder (and a little bit above). If anything, this coaching point makes the shooter focus a little bit on how they are pressing the trigger, understanding how the trigger feels against their trigger finger, where the pad of their trigger finger contacts and puts pressure thereupon the trigger.

POTENTIAL ISSUES:

As noted about 4 1/2 minutes in this chapter's accompanying video, be cautious of the shooters becoming overly target focused in this drill. Again we want the muscle memory for the gun presentation to be right in their line of sight (so when they need sights, they're right there for them).

WHAT DO I DO IF I SEE THEM GO TARGET FOCUSED AND LOWER THE GUN OUT OF THEIR SIGHT LINE TO THE TARGET?

If the students start to clearly not use their sights in this drill (even though you're stressing trigger control) just simply tell them to take one shot at a time on the target where they take a shot, pull the SIRT back to a high ready position and re-extend the pistol and take another shot. This will force them to reacquire the sights and not "walk in the shots" if they start to lose their sight alignment sight picture awareness.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why not just tell them to pull the trigger straight back if that's the end result we want?

A: Sometimes we give coaching points to overcompensate where they have a bio-mechanical deficiency. That's a complex way of saying exaggerate a motion in the other direction where the body kind of naturally wants to go. The trigger finger wants to go down and to the left so we really have to train it to push straight back.

OVERCOMPENSATE:

Have the trigger press in a direction high and to the right behind the shooter. This allows the shooter to place more focus on what they're doing with the trigger. Now when they advance and execute with speed, the over compensation results where the trigger ends up going straight back.

Note how the second knuckle is about perpendicular to the front face of the trigger. The 90 degree arangement of the second knuckle to the half way "trigger prep" location tends to allow for better trigger control. But we have to be able to shoot any gun no matter its size and fit to our hand.

Q: How many reps (trigger pulls) do they execute on the target?

A: They will likely pace themselves and it's very possible their trigger finger may get quite tired. They'll likely take a break on their own, but you really only have to have them do this drill for two to three minutes before you pull them back in and give them a coaching point.

Q: So what again are the coaching points for trigger control?

A: As stated in the overview, coach them to have an awareness where they're pressing the trigger and press it high and outside (high and to the right for right-handed shooter and high and to the left for a left-handed shooter).

Tell them to flag their thumb have their thumb go high and straight up like a flagpole. It will lock them in a bit and it's going to help a little bit later when they establish their grip so the thumb does not get in the way.

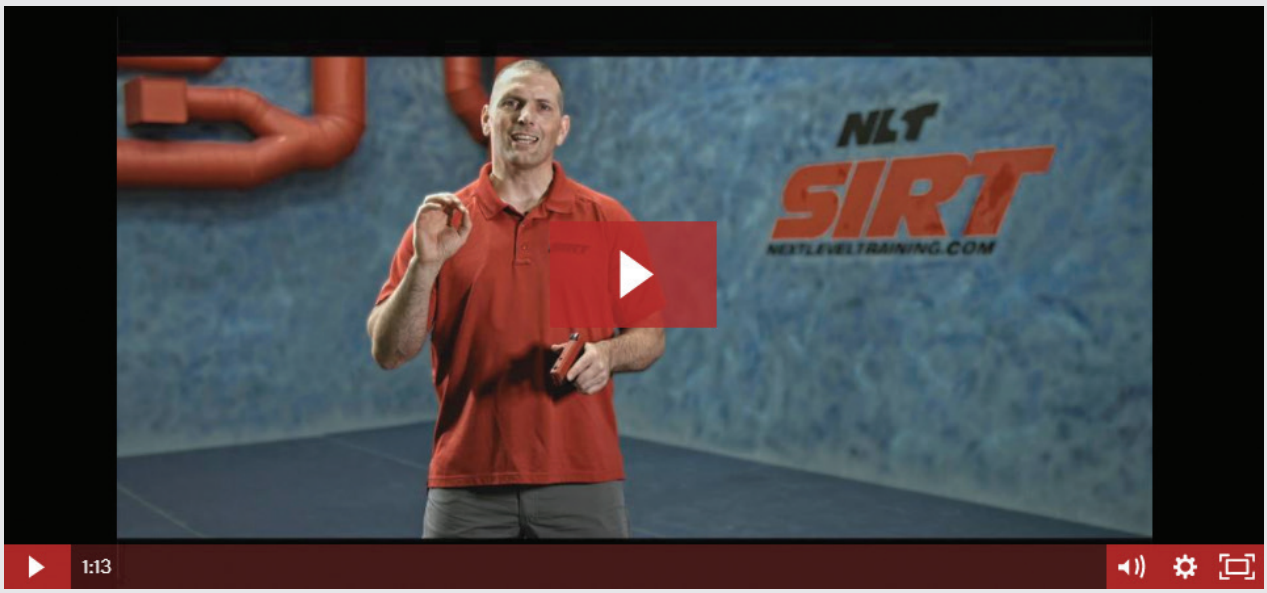
GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/trigger-control-3-pull-magic-string/

QUICK TIPS:

Let them learn a bit on their own. Perhaps generally observe their trigger control and see if they're making a little bit of gains rep by rep. If they're indiscriminately just throwing dashes then give that student a little bit more attention reminding them they're trying to get a dot. About 80 to 90 percent of the students naturally know that they need to get a dot but there is that 10 or 20 percent that thinks a long, oscilloscope-like laser slash is fine. Feel free to demo next to them what it should look like or give them a smaller target.

6 - TRIGGER CONTROL USING SECOND STRONG HAND (SUPPORT HAND)



OVERVIEW:

It's very possible after a few iterations of doing this strong and only drill, their strong hand trigger fingers getting very tired. A simple progression/variation is to do the same drill but use the weak hand (second strong hand). So if they are right handed, they simply switch the pistol to their left hand. Make sure they are still high on the gun with a flagged thumb of their weak hand. They are basically just doing the same drill with their other hand.

WHY IS SHOOTING WITH MY WEAK HAND BENEFICIAL?

First and foremost, this helps the class logistics of keeping things moving without too much trigger finger fatigue. A beginning shooter can have an incredibly weak trigger finger. Not to mention, they might even get some tendinitis-like cramps in their second knuckle of their trigger finger; this is not uncommon. If trigger finger fatigue occurs, switch to the weak hand. Further, you can give them a SIRT with a lightened trigger. (See armors course at NextLevelTraining.com how to lighten the 107s and 110s and pocket pistols). The SIRT 107 and the SIRT PPs have an externally accessible adjustment port for easy access to adjust the trigger break weight.

THE SCIENCE (OR LACK OF) BEHIND USING THE SUPPORT HAND TO HELP THE STRONG HAND:

There is anecdotal evidence that using the support hand actually helps out on the strong hand. We have investigated this hypothesis and found there is absolutely no medical explanation from what we observe and personally experience. However, a many instructor's swear that getting good reps with the support

CAUTION:

If people really start point-shooting and shoot from the hip or they are clearly not using the sights, correct them. Lift the pistol up to that line of sight so the pistol is between the eyeball and the target. Even though we're focusing on trigger control, let's get them building the muscle memory of bringing the gun up to their line of sight with their sight alignment and sight picture.

TRIGGER CONTROL:

Objective: Train your non dominant hand.

Drill: Support hand only shooting.

Drill Tip: Give your strong hand a rest.
Get clean shots on target.

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

hand has an additional benefit of increasing the skill of the strong hand (in addition to being competent with the support hand). Whether support hand work makes us focus a bit more about what we're doing and facilitates deeper learning or there's an actual neurological connection between the lobes of the brains...we don't know, bu, I definitely know allocating a time block for support hand training is valuable.

You may want to stress that all shooters have to be good with their non-dominant hand. You can pose a question in your class, "Do you feel comfortable that you will categorically have your right hand (strong hand) available? What if your strong hand is damaged?" Therefore, it's generally a good idea to have some experience pulling the trigger with their non dominant hand.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Should I go deep into science on how this definitely makes their strong hand better?

A: No, you may want to generally mention that for some reason there's anecdotal evidence that using your support hand helps out your strong hand but this is not "scientifically proven" so address the "science" with a fair amount of modesty. But, I would stress that being good with your support hand is important and you want to give your strong hand a bit of a break. When they have their pistols in their support hand, again, tell them to press that trigger high and to the outside, which would be high and to the left, just outside the left ear for a right handed shooter (shooting with his or her left hand).

Q: How long should this block of instruction take?

Honestly, with the explanation and hitting some reps, this is probably less than 5 minutes. They're basically just doing the same thing but using their other hand.

QUICK TIPS:

INDIVIDUALIZED COACHING WHENEVER YOU CAN

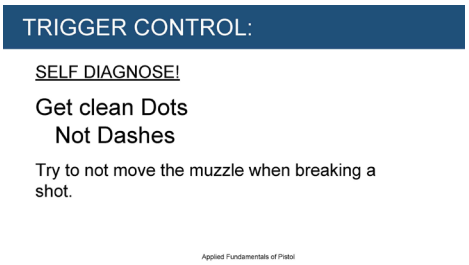
Use this time to coach up additional students. The nice thing about a hands-on class is you have time to go one on one with all the students. So, defiantly take advantage to touch upon some of the students that may need a little bit of attention.

THE INDESCRIMINATE RIPPER....

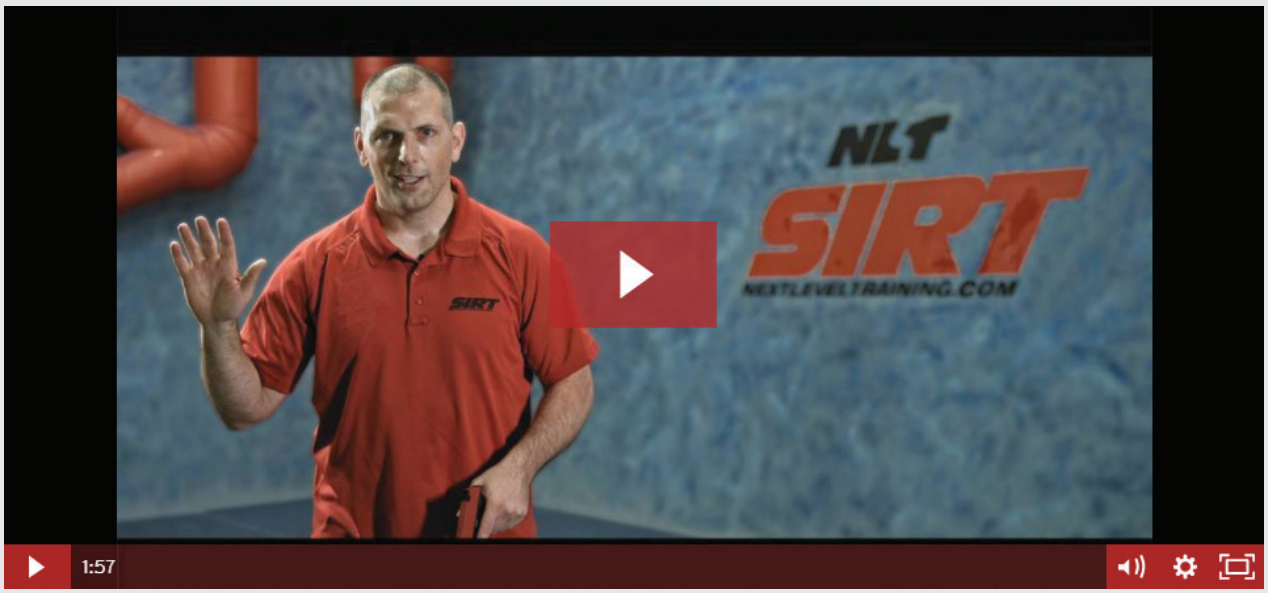
If a student is indiscriminately ripping off shots rapidly and getting a bunch of dashes, slow them down and perhaps even make a little contest out of it to see if they can hit within a sticky note at a distance. If you can, sometimes you can even back them up a little bit, but just be careful not to be too disruptive of your "firing line" with the other adjacent students. You want to strongly stress quality of movement with trigger control, because things are going to speed up here in a bit.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/trigger-control-second-strong-hand/



7 - TRIGGER CONTROL AT SPEED



OVERVIEW:

Okay now we're getting to some fun stuff! Shooting is all about speed and accuracy. It's always the combination of trying to maximize your speed and maximize your accuracy. This block of instruction gets pretty fun. The gist of this drill is do everything we've done so far, but do it fast (to put it simply).

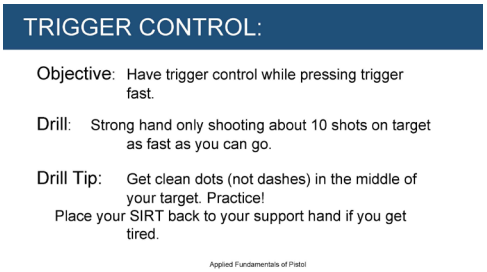
WHY DO TRIGGER CONTROL AT SPEED? SHOULDN'T WE GO SLOW, SLOW, SLOW?

Practically speaking, no, we absolutely have to exercise our mechanics at speed, full speed. If you can imagine any kind of scenario where you actually have to use a gun defensively, things are going to be moving fast and you want to be able to act fast. So very practically speaking, we have to at least train at some form of speed, but there's another good reason to train at speed.

SOLIDIFYING THE MECHANICS:

For some reason when we exercise our mechanics at full speed, our mechanics tend to get "solidified". Our mechanics get locked in a bit, so to speak. As noted in the video, I analogize this to basketball practice:

> A basketball player can get very good at free throws and they need to. But a free throw is generally done without any time pressure. They have all the time in the world (sometimes too much time) to get in a groove and exercise the nice mechanics to hit a shot (utilizing BEEF: Base, Eyes, Elbow, and Follow through). Now a basketball player may be a great free throw shooter, but if they don't train "at speed" their mechanics go bad when there is time pressure, that



is, a defender gets in their face and closes the distance to force them to exercise these mechanics faster. It's not to say that all the free throw practice was bad, quite the contrary, deep and focused learning at a slow pace is incredibly valuable, but we have to train fast and at speed to get the most benefit from the slow reps. At a cellular level, training at speed might build additional myelin that is the coating around the nerves that builds the "muscle memory".

DEFICIENCIES UNEARTH

Trigger mechanic deficiencies will unearth when people try to exercise their mechanics at speed. Remind your students to press the trigger high and outside and strive to continue to get those dots.

DRILL PROGRESSION

You can actually progress them by pulling them back from the target a little bit and make it a little bit more challenging. You can further have some fun by using a countdown timer such as a par timer in our Drill of the Day web pages (see SIRTliving.com/dod to sign up for drill of the day) and have the students count how many shots they can get between the first and second beep. In other words have them present the pistol and start a countdown timer. They start on the first beep and they simply count how many trigger pulls they get before the second beep. The time between beeps (i.e. the par time) can be say 3 seconds. You can make a little bit of a game out of it and then if someone has a pretty high number you can hone in on them and see how their trigger mechanics are.

If they're shooting tight dots, great praise them. If they're getting a bit wobbly throwing a lot of dashes off of the sticky target then **don't tell them to slow down, but rather, give them coaching points** to break the shot more correctly. Again probably the best coaching point is pressing the trigger back to the high and outside. If their fingertips are driving into the side of the pistol take note of that student (you can even snap a quick picture of their grip with your phone) because we will be talking about how to press straight back with a C-clamp grip which will isolate their trigger finger from their gripping fingers. However, I would not correct them at this time to do a C-clamp grip individually because you'll cover that block in the whole class in a bit, so I'd let it go for now.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Shouldn't you pull the trigger slow, slow, slow and have the brake be a surprise?

A: In a word, no. At least not categorically. A slow trigger pull with a surprise brake works well for pure accuracy particularly with rifle-craft and in some bullseye teachings. But the mechanics for a shooter need to be "at speed". There is an overabundance of evidence that many defensive scenarios are in incredibly tight time constraints. Therefore, let's put our students in a position for success; prepare them for such potential adversity and give them some exposure at pulling a trigger at full speed.

Q: Should I demo this?

A: Ahhhh, how courageous are you as an instructor and in your form! Ideally we should demo all drills. But yes this is a tough drill. It will very much expose deficiencies. I personally am all about demo-ing even if I screw it up. If I screw up it's a great learning opportunity point to say, "Hey I need to work on this too! Look at my filthy trigger mechanics with all those dashes." The modest approach can go a long ways. If you happen to just be nailing it with tight dots, then great; you're showing them how its done!

QUICK TIPS:

A HAPPY HERD:

If the class is pretty large and you really want to focus on what they're doing then split them up to say four at a time. I would not go one at a time because I found learning is better when they are in small groups/herds. If they are in a class like this they might be a little bit insecure and not want to be singled out. I know that sounds so touchy-feely but when students are comfortable they generally learn better and associate the positive experience with you and your class.

A LOOK AT EQUIPMENT AND THEIR TRIGGER FINGER PLACEMENT:

Now is the time to possibly change where they put their trigger finger placement on the trigger. If you have someone with very, very small hands and they have their first knuckle on the trigger, you may want to reposition their trigger finger pad placement to the center of the finger or the front. You can manage student's expectations by saying this might work but generally speaking they may go to the first knuckle because they're not strong enough to pull the trigger and the muscular fatigue is settling in. If that's the case I would lighten up the trigger or even possibly switch them from a 110 to a 107 (if you have different models of SIRTs in your trainer kit if not, Trainer Support Services can help you out, 360 933-4640)

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/trigger-control-speed/

8 - TRIGGER SHOOTING RESET

OVERVIEW:

FULL FOLLOW THROUGH: TRIGGER RESET AND RE-PREP.

There are few misconceptions of shooting off the reset. Shooting off the reset does not mean slowly, slowly, slowly letting the trigger come forward after a shot is fired until you just hear that click and you go no further forward with the trigger. Indeed,the shooter is shooting off the reset, but that's not the point of this skill.

To shoot off the reset we want to **let the trigger finger go sufficiently forward as fast as possible, but more importantly, change direction of the trigger from going forward to going rearward and re-prep the trigger** back to that "wall", the half-way point of the trigger pull.

WHY HAVE FULL FOLLOW THROUGH AND RE-PREP THE TRIGGER AFTER EACH SHOT?

This skill is basic and fundamental for beginners and is also relevant all the way up to expert mastery of the pistol for speed and accuracy. In context of defensive or even competitive shooting, we have to shoot multiple shots accurately and fast. In defensive shooting one round is not going to do the job (or at least very unlikely). We also have to be accurate where the follow-up shots will be in close proximity to the previous shot.

DO WE REALLY WANT SHOTS WITH ONE RAGGED HOLE OR SHOULD THERE BE SOME SPREAD FOR MORE TERMINAL BALLISTIC DAMAGE?

Okay, this is a loaded question. Ideally, yes you want some spread in your shots for maximum terminal ballistic damage. This gets

DEMONSTRATING RESET RE-PREP:

As best shown in the video you want to emphasize that the shooter should break a shot but he has not finished full "follow through" until the trigger finger comes forward sufficiently beyond the click of the reset and then re-prep the trigger. This is a good time to introduce the functionality of the SIRT Training Pistol take-up laser where that second lower red laser comes on when they re-prep the trigger. So you can demo on the floor or against the wall. They break, reset the trigger finger going forward and then take up as slack and re-prep.

TRIGGER CONTROL:

Objective: Attain full "follow through" after breaking a shot.

Drill: Reset the trigger after breaking the shot and re-prep the trigger.

Drill Tip: The lower red "trigger take up" laser on the SIRT should substantially stay on during the break, reset and re-prep.

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

a bit graphic, but if you're taking out an imminent threat that is putting you in imminent lethal harm and you have no means for reasonable escape (defensive shooting), you want to neutralize the threat with multiple shots to vital organs such as the heart. Therefore some spread of the bullets is more effective than one bullet right on top of the other. However this is all very academic. First off, most shooters will not have one ragged hole. There is shot spread just by the nature of our skill (or lack of it). Secondly the target is likely moving and there's other dynamic factors.

At any rate, this is one of those topics which people can get into the weeds and shot spread is often used to justify a shooter's inaccuracy where at a relatively close distance they might have a very large shot group and play it off as though it is intentional for better terminal ballistic damage. The reality is, we want to strive for one ragged hole because overall the accuracy of returning the muzzle down to a consistent location and breaking off shots in rapid succession in a tight group has broader benefit, allows us to shoot accurate at greater distances and overall reduces the probability of one of those shots missing the target being a liability.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: I heard shooting off the reset is not a good idea?
A: Yes, that is true. Shooting truly off the reset where you slowly just go far enough just to get that click is generally a bad idea because there's no reason to just barely let the trigger creep forwards slowly to hit that click of the trigger reset. We are instructing the trigger to travel sufficiently forward, change direction and re-prep the trigger so this process is almost instinctive after each shot.

QUICK TIPS:

Keep the red laser on during the drill. The drill is pretty simple. Try to keep the red laser on as much as possible where it goes off slightly as the trigger goes forward beyond the reset point and becomes re-prepped.

JUST WATCH THE RED LASER.

You as the instructor can simply watch that lower red laser and it shouldn't go off for very long after they break the shot and reset and re-prep. If it's off for a considerable amount of time, they have to more aggressively reset and re-prep.

Adjust the red take-up laser down way out of sight picture. Before class have the lower laser further down out of their sight picture. The lower red laser is not a sighting aid. It's a visual indicator telling you when they're on the trigger.

WHAT IF THEY UNINTENTIONALLY SHOOT TWICE IN A ROW?
If the shooter shoots a second time upon re-prepping, remember, this is practice and now is the time to make such a mistake. Secondly, with a good grip, that second shot should be aligned on target anyways. One common deficiency is for a shooter to pull the trigger, reset and take the finger completely off the trigger. Although at a very beginning stage this might be safe, but we have to progress our students to shoot multiple shots accurately minimizing the time.

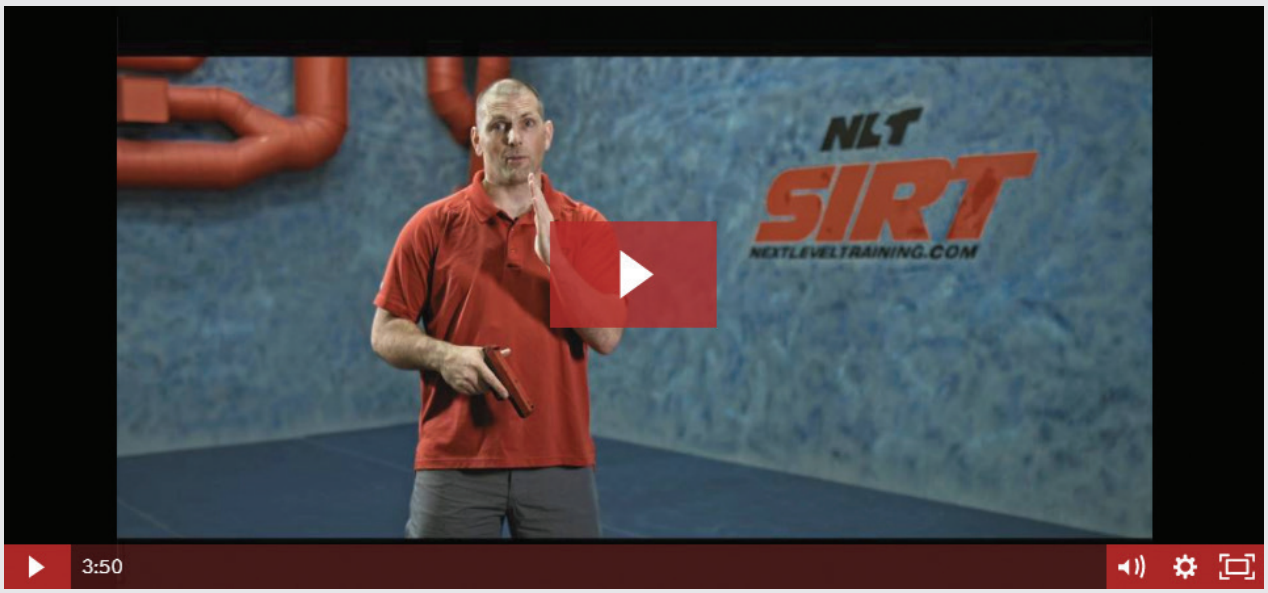
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF RE-PREPPING THE TRIGGER AFTER EACH SHOT?

When you train yourself to instantly re-prep after resetting the trigger, you are automatically doing "a lot of the work" for the next shot. In other words for that next follow-up shot, you only have to apply a bit more force for on the trigger for the follow up shot.

If someone lets their trigger finger come all the way off the trigger after each shot, it takes considerable time to get ready for the next shot. Automatically re-prepping after each shot eliminates a lot of the deficiencies and as I noted in the beginning, it's a very basic skill to get in now which puts them on a glide path from mastery of a pistol as they continue their training journey training with a SIRT.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/strong-hand-only-trigger-control-5/

9 - TRIGGER CONTROL CLOSING



OVERVIEW:

This concludes the fairly in-depth discussion on trigger control. But I want to reiterate some key points on teaching and coaching, not just for trigger control but any subject in general.

DON'T LEAVE THEM IN A VALLEY:

Make sure that the skills and concepts you are teaching are not so advanced, or take so long to master, that the student walks away from your class worse off than when they started. Now whenever a new technique is introduced, generally speaking, they are going to be a slight dip in performance. We want to do all we can to make sure that we apply the resources (time and energy) to bring them through that valley to a higher point than they started.

Secondly, make sure the mechanics work for a beginner but are also a guide path to mastery. We never want to teach any kind of mechanics that are just for a beginner but as soon as you get to a higher level you have to unlearn everything and do something completely different. The basic mechanics for a beginner should be the same trajectory for mastery. Mastery of any neural motor neuron mechanic activity is simply doing the fundamentals very well, very consistently, very fast and under a variety of circumstances.

I give a stupid example is in this lesson's video regarding Brazilian Jujitsu. I personally found spider guard (where you have your feet on the hips of your opponent when in guard position) is very difficult to master. I learned a little bit of spider guard, but I found a lot of times I would get caught and actually put myself in a

worse position based on my novice skill level. I personally would have to devote about 40 hours to get to a level where I can use this technique effectively in any form of competition or physical confrontation.

So, I basically only know enough to be dangerous. Point being, I as a student have to be aware that I'm in the valley and I probably don't even know what I don't know on how I will screw up in a technique such as spider guard. That is just a tangent example but there are many, many examples where we learn some technique and with only a modicum of practice and explanation, we are actually worse off than we we started.

As instructors, we want to be cautious that we apply the correct amount of time and resources so the students will walk out at a minimum, a little bit better and also know how to go home and train with their own coaching points and self diagnostics to get better and better on their own with practice.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS WITH RE-PREPPING THE TRIGGER?

Speed and accuracy. Probably first and foremost accuracy because when the trigger's full prepped up it doesn't take much force to break that shot and cook off that next round on demand.

WHY DID YOU SAY YOU LIKE STOCK GUNS (IN THE LESSON VIDEO)?

If you shoot stock guns with heavy triggers frequently. Your trigger control will actually get much better. I've seen a lot of 1911 shooters with really sweet triggers who have horrible trigger mechanics when they pick up other (non 1911) guns. If you do shoot a stock gun or at least train with one then you're building substantive confidence to pick up any gun you come across and shoot effectively. Believe me when you travel and get on different ranges with different people's equipment, you want to be able to pick up any gun and ***drive it*** to not lose credibility as a shooter.

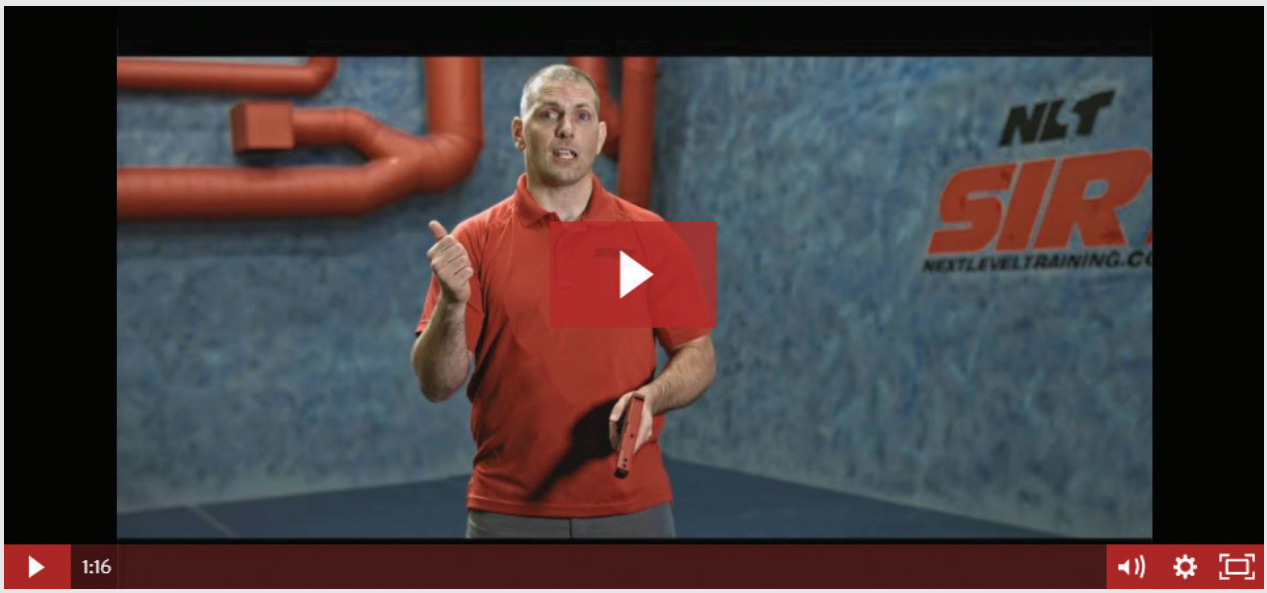
GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/trigger-control-trigger-take-up-after-each-shot/

QUICK TIPS:

Please provide comments and feedback on these blocks of instruction. As noted in the video a class like this is a spoken of arrangement where your input can get redistributed to many other individuals. Of course please be courteous and respectful to anyone else's comments as you would like to be respected yourself. To make your trigger mechanics all the better take your SIRT (or one of them) and increase the trigger weight so that's very heavy. Check out the armors course on how to do this for the 107 or the 110 and try adjusting the trigger to be very, very heavy. This will make your trigger mechanics all the better as you build and isolate your trigger finger muscles from your gripping muscles.

10 GRIP INTRODUCTION



OVERVIEW:

The next fundamental to tackle is grip. Grip is probably the most important fundamental. A good grip can actually hide bad trigger control. With a consistently established grip, you can have amazing first shot placement. With consistent presentation and grip establishment your sights are consistently aligned for easier perfect sight alignment and sight picture. A solid, locked-in grip as discussed herein will provide a foundation and base near the thumbs to mitigate any flinch which some shooters may develop after experiencing recoil.

Grip is a generally under-taught subject, or it gets glanced over to quickly. These next blocks of instruction go into great detail on the physiology of grip to isolate the trigger finger from the lower three gripping fingers, the correct muscle contractions to have the correct muscles applied for the most effective grip, the best way to consistently establish a grip, and an objective-based approach to meet two core objectives of a grip.

OBJECTIVES OF GRIP:

The first objective of grip is to establish a grip on the pistol to align the pistol by the feel of the gun to where the shooter is looking. Basically build the shooter's natural point of aim or otherwise referred to as index shooting.

The second objective of grip is where all of the follow up shots are in the same location, where the grip returns the muzzle down

to a consistent location shot after shot, after shot. Whatever mechanics achieve these objectives with a high degree of speed and accuracy are good mechanics.

However, we further must have consistent grip when we are un-warmed up and in a variety of potentially diverse circumstances. Not to mention, we have to have a grip that is established in different contexts such as grabbing the gun from a safe, off a table, out of our holster, etc. There is a lot of great things to cover in grip and I think you'll very much enjoy the following lessons that break down grip and grip establishment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why is grip the most important fundamental?

A: Well, I guess all the fundamentals are important, but a good grip can mask trigger mechanic issues when a gun is locked in solid grip. This masking is a little bit bad because it does cover up that deficiency which is why we shot single hand in the last lesson set. The grip helps consistently return the muzzle to a consistent location shot after shot. A good grip also allows for tremendous accuracy by feel of the gun for first shot placement. Finally a solid grip with locked in muscles behind the gun provides a solid platform to mitigate flinch by the shooters.

Q: What about Weaver stance?

A: The primary teachings of this course are the isosceles stance. I always want to keep an open mind that as long as someone meets the objectives of grip a first shot placement and returning the muzzle down to a consistent location, I don't care what they do. However the isosceles stance/technique is very much taking storm where the FBI Academy teaches the isosceles, most all competitive shooters who strive for speed and accuracy shoot isosceles, etc. Again, this is a hot topic issue where some instructors are adamant about weaver or modified weaver, but either way, if students consistently and quickly hit a first shot where they're looking and the muzzle returns to a consistent location; the grip is doing its job.

QUICK TIPS:

I strongly suggest playing with a SIRT while watching this block. There are many things you want to examine in your own grip. Further you want to review your own anatomy of the base of your thumbs regarding the girth, width, angle of your thumb with respect to your radius ulna, etc. A lot of people have very different physiology and it's important you understand your own physiology so you do not make the mistake of teaching others a very particular technique based on what works for you because of your bone-muscle physiology of your hands.

KEY TERMS:

Natural Point of Aim - Point Shooting
Index Shooting - Kinesthetic Aim

All of these terms generally mean ability to align the muzzle within the target (acceptable accuracy zone) by the feel of the gun (as apposed to using the sights of the gun).

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-introduction/

11 - GRIP OBJECTIVES

OVERVIEW:

It's not a bad idea to take any fundamental and break it down into the objectives of that particular fundamental. What are we trying to achieve with this particular "fundamental".

FIRST OBJECTIVE OF GRIP:

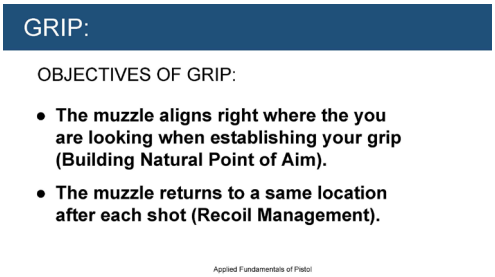
The muzzle points where the shooter is looking when establishing their grip.

The first objective deals with point shooting/index shooting/natural point of aim. Basically, the feel of the gun in the hand aligns the pistol. Some instructors believe that you absolutely have to have perfect sight picture before breaking a shot. Either way, when the grip (and grip establishment) aligns a pistol right where the shooter is looking, the sights are already (or at least substantially) aligned. In short, consistent grip will point the muzzle right where a shooter is looking. Now this objective has a little bit more to do with the grip establishment block taught further below, but we want to make sure that all of the mechanics of grip meet this first objective of consistently bringing a muzzle right on target even before we pull back our focus to the sights.

SECOND OBJECTIVE OF GRIP:

Muzzle returns to a same location after each shot.

This fundamental has to do with recoil management. A proper grip will return the muzzle down to a consistent location shot after shot after shot. A consistent repositioning of the muzzle to the same location does **not require any post ignition muscular contraction**. In other words, we do not want the shooter to flinch. The **shooter has no particular timing to return the muzzle down to the**



same location. With proper muscular contractions and a solid base behind the gun (described further below) the muzzle will naturally return down to a consistent location after each shot.

Therefore, when a gun goes off (even for example if someone else pulls the trigger for you and it's a surprise shot), the isometric muscular contractions around the gun with a C-clamp and chest squeeze (described further herein) will return that muzzle down right to the same location.

MUZZLE FLIP: ...WHO CARES

Now, the muzzle will flip and some guns flip higher than others. For example, a SIG P226, P229 may flip higher because it has a higher bore axis; the bore is positioned higher with respect to the shooter's wrist. But nonetheless, **the objective is to simply return the muzzle to a consistent location, not necessarily mitigate muzzle rise.** Generally speaking, excessive muzzle rise shows a weak grip without a locked in upper base behind the pistol, but excessive muzzle rise is just an indicator of a problem. Muzzle flip is not necessarily the problem itself.

GRIP DEFICIENCIES:

There are further common deficiencies with a grip such as support hand slippage, where the support hand will slip and move forward after each shot, thus applying different forces upon the gun after each shot. Support hand slippage does not allow a consistent base to return the muzzle down to that consistent location.

Therefore, the hands should remain consistently upon the pistol as described further herein. The path of the muzzle will generally take the characteristic pattern where the muzzle rises after a shot then dips down below the target and then rise gain a little bit above the target and then settle back down right on target (as described about three minutes into the video). This heartbeat like osculation is about optimal. If there's excessive up and down action of the muzzle, the grip might be a bit weak.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: How do we know a bad grip? What are the common deficiencies in grip? How do we teach the grip?...
A: All these questions answered in the blocks below. ☺

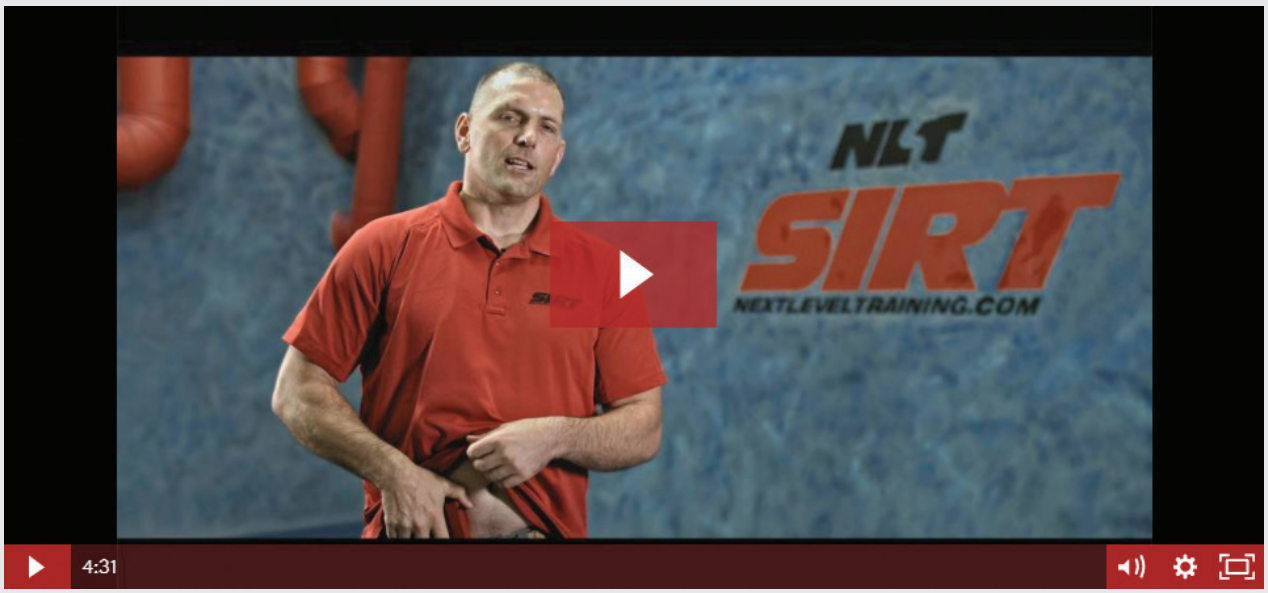
QUICK TIPS:

Stress the two objectives to students so they clearly understand that the mechanics are all driving towards good solid first shot placement and returning the muzzle down to a consistent location. It's not a bad idea to introduce point shooting/index shooting where you can hit a target without the sights and also the importance of recoil management.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-01-objectives-of-grip/

12 - ACTUALLY TEACHING C CLAMP GRIP



OVERVIEW:

HOW OUR PHYSIOLOGY EFFECTS GRIP

As best noted in the video and I strongly suggest watching the instructional block of the actual class on the website at https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-02-c-clamp-grip/, but we want the students to understand our physiology and how contracting our fingertips has an indirect effect on involuntary movement of our trigger finger.

Again, it's much easier to demo this on video than in text, but nonetheless, put your strong hand up in front of you with your lower three fingers dangling and your trigger finger (index finger) extended somewhat vertically, and for dear life, contract your lower three fingers with a "rope style" grip. This is where the lower three fingers come in violently grabbing a rope as if you had a small imaginary rope in your hand. Notice the co-contraction of the trigger finger even if you try to isolate the lower three fingers from the trigger finger.

Our tendons in our fingertips are all connected to one muscle in the base of our forearm. Therefore it's almost impossible to isolate one finger from the other when we do a rope style grip and bring the fingertips inward towards our palm.

Therefore, instead of a rope grip, try a "C-clamp" grip where you pivot about your big knuckles and just press the back of your second knuckles rearward. The rear part of your second knuckles on your lower three fingers are going to press out along the front part of the gun. This is where we want pressure to be applied to

History of C-Clamp Grip

I personally learned a C-clamp grip from a friend of mine Larry Yatch. I try to give credit where credit's due and remember where I learned things to pass it on and pay it forward. But the big lesson here is Larry told me about a C-clamp grip and illuminated a whole world of looking at grip for myself as well as instructing others. Larry had to find a better way of getting his student shooting better more quickly at Sealed Mindset in Minnesota. This is not just a tip but this is an analysis of a human physiology so we think about how our body moves (and in this case how the fingers moved together) and how we can teach ourselves right out of the gate the best mechanics to isolate our gripping muscles from our trigger finger muscles.

the pistol to help control recoil and return the muzzle down to a consistent location. Any pressure on the side portions of the handle of the pistol are very ineffective because we are relying on friction.

HOW DO I TEACH A C-CLAMP GRIP IN CLASS?

It's best to look at the class demo video on the website because when the students contract their lower three fingers you'll see a fairly significant trigger finger movement when they contract their lower three fingers. Explain to the students that you want to isolate your trigger finger muscles from your gripping muscles so if you grip harder it's not going to affect your trigger finger movement.

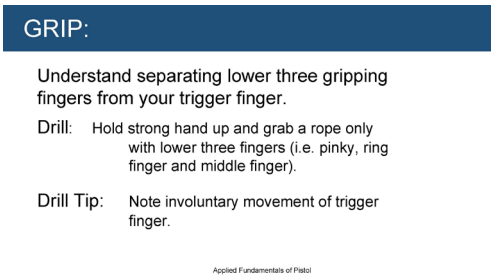
TEACHING TIPS:

This is a great interactive drill and in fact it's a good one even to do on NRA basic pistol. This lesson is perfect right after such intense discourse on trigger mechanics. I find most students are very curious about their bodies and how they grip the gun after they see a fairly significant co-contraction of their trigger finger as they grip the gun with a rope grip. Further, you are not leaving them in a valley but rather you're showing them an easy way to succeed by just putting pressure on the front of the gun with a C-clamp grip.

Again if you are reading the text only version please click on the link below to watch the video because this is one area which is much better displayed through video then explained just with text.

INSTRUCTION TIP:

Find the person with the biggest movement of their trigger finger and iso on them. You're not necessarily picking on them and they shouldn't feel embarrassed, but generally there is one person in the class when they contract the lower three gripping fingers there is a massive trigger finger contraction. Therefore give everyone a quick break and just have that one person do it and then show the massive trigger finger movement and remind them that we just did trigger control drills and we have to isolate our trigger finger from our gripping fingers.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What is a co-contraction?

A: A co-contraction generally means that muscle strands contract together and are not easily isolated from one another. In the case of our trigger finger and our gripping fingers, the tendon attached to the tips of all of our fingers (particularly the lower four excluding the thumb) are all pretty much attached to one muscle so they contract as a full on unit. There is another term called sympathetic response, but that has a slightly different meaning. A sympathetic response generally means another whole set of muscles may contract with another whole set of muscles because of some form or learned movement pattern.

Q: Why do you say C-clamp grip?

A: C-clamp is Larry Yatch's term but the fingers essentially rotate about the big knuckles and the fingertips might move in a little bit but we are really trying to put emphasis of putting pressure of the second knuckles of the lower three fingers on the front part of the handle poriton of the pistol.

Q: What if my trigger finger moves just a little bit with a C clamp grip?

A: The trigger finger might move a little bit with a C-clamp grip but that's mainly just because the skin folds at the base between the middle finger and the trigger finger. But remember as you putting pressure with your lower three fingers in a C-clamp style they don't necessarily really move. In other words they are already hitting the base of the gun so the increased pressure will not move these fingers with respect to the thumb hence the fold of the skin to the trigger finger doesn't really matter. But when the fingertips come into the side of the gun is when there is an actual different muscular contraction which will cause the trigger finger to involuntarily move as well.

Q: Does this have anything to do with the 40/60 rule of 40 percent grip on the strong hand 60 percent on the weak hand?

A: Yes this has everything to do with that rule, in fact, if you grip the gun correctly you don't have to worry about teaching the 60/40 or 40/60, whatever. You can grip with a tremendous amount of force on both hands (strong and weak hands) and your trigger mechanics will remain isolated and independent from your gripping fingers.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

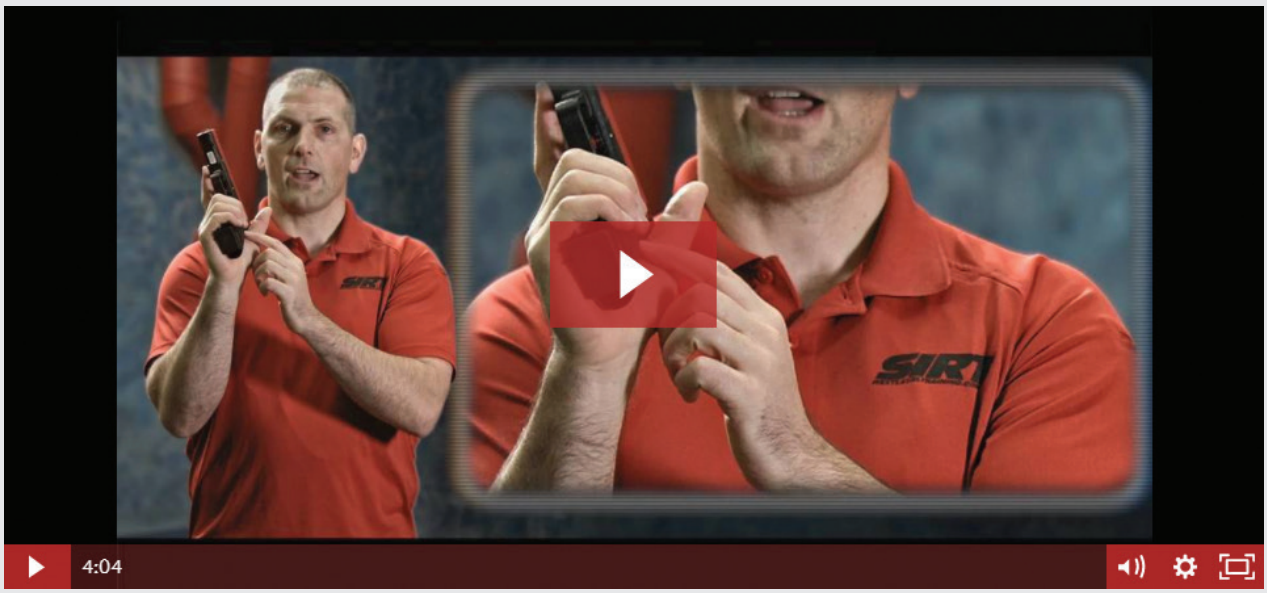
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-02-c-clamp-grip/

QUICK TIPS:

Definitely teach this block and let the students self-explore. Not only should you demo but let them do it on their own as shown in the class demo video (see class video in less on the upper right margin).

Do not tell them in advance about a C-clamp just have them contract the lower three fingers violently as shown in the video and watch their results. If they're not contracting hard like they would a gun with the fingertips coming in they will not see as much of a trigger finger movement. But we want to grip the gun with a tremendous amount of force to control the muscle and mitigate flinch so give them a verbal cue of "Contract like there's a rope in your hand for dear life just with your lower three fingers." This will get the concept across very quickly of their physiology.

13 - ESTABLISHING TWO-HANDED GRIP



OVERVIEW:

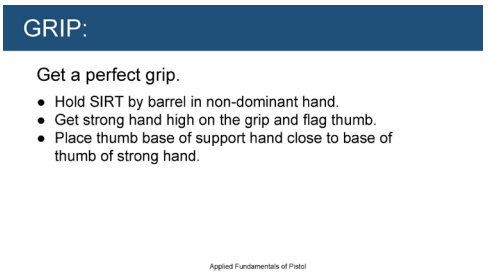
Take the pistol and grab it with your non-dominant hand by the barrel and with your dominant hand get a nice high placement on the pistol. Now wrap your fingers around the front of the pistol and give a C-clamp-type grip. Note how your fingertips will more or less float and not necessarily be pressed against the sides of the pistol.

Note the canal-like region between the base of your thumb and the rear of quarter flank of the pistol. This canal-like region is a great place to position the base of the thumb of your support hand. Again, it's best to look at the video to best understand establishing a perfect grip.

AWARENESS OF THE BASE OF THE THUMB OF THE SUPPORT HAND.

One aspect about grip which is important is a strong awareness of the base of the thumb of the support hand on the rear quarter flank area. If there's one area to really focus on the weak hand, it's this base of the thumb area. The feel of that rear quarter flank of a pistol, that is, the curvature of the handle of the pistol, aids tremendously in aligning the pistol. The curvature provides a bit of feedback to that support hand at a subconscious level to help the shooter know when it feels right to align that pistol on target to meet our first objective of grip which is to get that first shot on target by the feel of the gun.

Furthermore the base of the thumb is a recoil buffer where when providing the chest squeeze (discussed further below), this is a great impact area to help absorb recoil and return the muzzle



down to a consistent location (the second objective grip).

Ideally the front of the pistol is where your knuckles will overlap but if your hands are smaller then it's more important to have the base of the palms clam shelled together then to have the knuckles (the second knuckles) overlap in the front of the pistol.

INTERFACING WITH EQUIPMENT

It's a good idea to talk about equipment and the different sizes of pistols. Granted all shooters should be able to shoot any gun whether it's a Desert Eagle .50-caliber Action Express or a small .22. But certainly some guns fit some hands better. It's not a bad idea to talk about adjustable back straps and even the skeletonized M & P (our SIRT 107 has functional features of the Smith and Wesson M& P) for very, very small hands such as youth. (Watch our "Be the Hero" on teaching youth course, https://sirtliving.com/courses/be-the-hero/).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Which is more important, the base of the thumbs are squeezed together creating a tight seal or the front knuckles (second knuckles) of the hands overlap?

A: Without question the thumb base clinch at the rear portion of the gun is more important. That's where the recoil is absorbed and that's where support hand slippage can occur. With smaller hands make sure the base of the thumbs are pressed together and that support hand is pressed as much as possible in that canal region with chest squeeze (discussed in further blocks below).

Q: What if my hand's so big I can't fit my support in that rear quarter flank of the gun?

A: You'll definitely find some shooters (about 10 to 15 percent) that have big enough girthy hands that the whole rear of the gun fits in one hand. The support hand basically absorbs no recoil. That's fine. That's just how they're built. It's just that all the recoil is going to go through their dominant hand. But a gross majority of shooters do not have hands that large and generally speaking the base of the thumb has some placement in that canal area.

Q: Does the support hand really help in the first objective a grip for point shooting?

A: Yes, at a sub-conscious level. The feel, the curvature of the rear quarter flank of the gun provides a lot of feedback (if not just sub-conscious feedback) to the shooter where the gun is aligned. You can test this yourself by purposely misaligning the gun and put some mental awareness of the feeling in the base of the thumb of our support hand area where it just simply doesn't feel right. With proper grip establishment (discussed further herein), the

OTHER COURSES:

The "Be the Hero" course is a bit unique. We are treating an end user as an instructor, but in a very prescribed restrictions of one on one training with a young one. This is a course to help a parent/ grandparent properly coach up their kids, grandkids, etc. The course has ingrained safety with some practical coaching progressions so granddad can "be the hero" and positive influence our youth desperately need.

base of the thumb is consistently positioned on a rear curvature area of the pistol. The feel of that curvature on that support hand correlates to the alignment of the muzzle. This correlation is created from SIRT repiitions from feedback of the laser impacts on target to build the muscle memory for perfect grip and grip establishment. As a side note, smaller guns are difficult to shoot because the rear base is so thin in most all small sub-compact single stacks (like our pocket pistol). The thin rear base makes it difficult to build natural point of aim with these smaller guns.

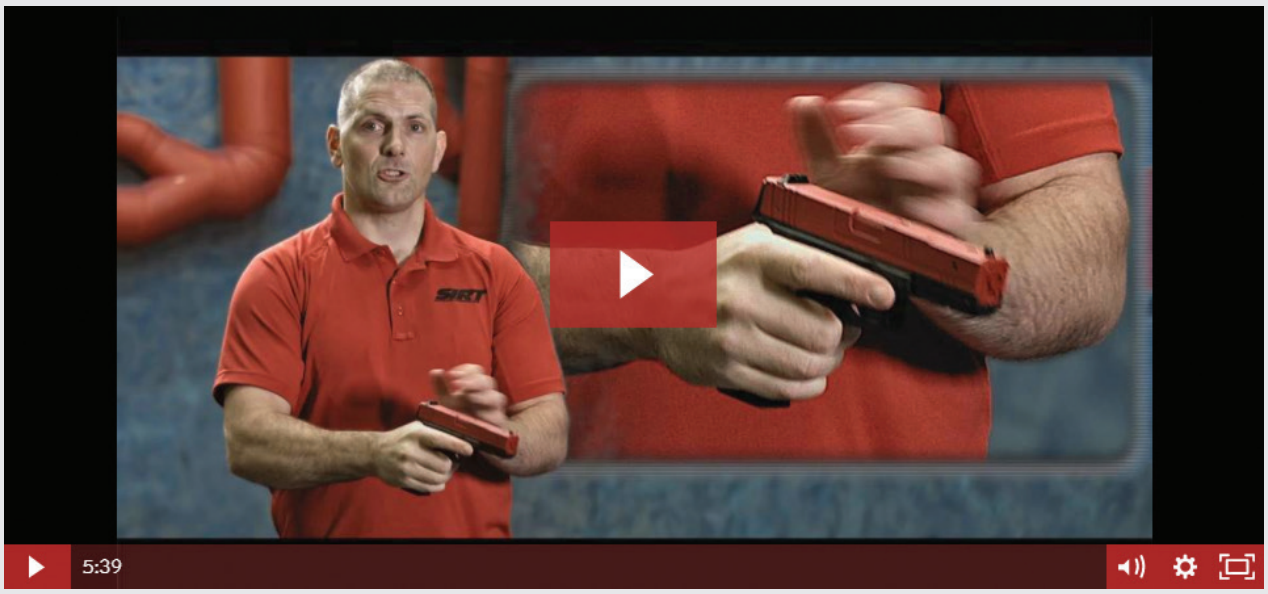
GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-03-two-handed-grip/

QUICK TIPS:

Bring the shooters in closer like in a semi-circle and point the pistol at a high port area (not muzzling anyone as you go to high port) and show them the rear quarter flank area and as you demo with the gun pointed up let them demo pointed downwards right in front of them. Don't worry there's a lot of time and drills allocated to fixing their grip. We want to start with the perfect end grip, then train grip establishment to attain this perfect grip.

14 - GRIP PLIABLE THUMBS AND DEFICIENCIES



OVERVIEW:

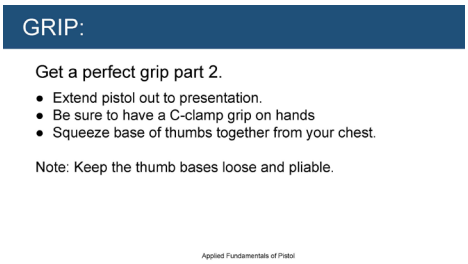
After people have formed their grip, you can look around the room and check each person's grip. Pay special attention to their thumbs where a common deficiency is the thumbs get curled in and get in the way of the support hand. Thumbs (the top part of the thumbs not the base of the thumbs) have very limited utility in establishing a good grip. More often than not, thumbs just get in the way, and get curled in underneath the support hand causing a inconsistency in grip.

Make sure there's not a gaping space between the base of the thumbs. The base of the thumbs should be very tight and pressed together from a squeeze of the chest.

Take note of the physiology of the student, in-fact, it's not a bad idea to show the different types of hands in the class. Some girthy thumbs are so big, all the recoil will only go through the strong hand (strong arm). There's simply no room for the support hand to engage the rear quarter flank of the grip of the pistol. As noted above, a common deficiency is having the support hand slip when there is recoil. Support hand slippage is where shot after shot, after shot, after shot the support hand just slides forward (see grip course for a live fire drill to validate grip https://sirtliving.com/lessons/validate-your-grip-with-live-fire/.

HOW DO WE KEEP OUR SUPPORT HAND IN PLACE?

Chest squeeze. Squeezing the upper chest to where the base of the thumbs become tightly pressed together does a lot of desirable things to attain the second objective of grip, returning the muzzle



OTHER COURSES:

This end user grip course is actually not too crummy. ☺ I made it to help shooters start a path with a SIRT training proper straight away. However, our goal is to get end users connected with Instructors like yourself in your area. Look for a local instructor referral program in the future.

QR link Grip Course lesson on validating grip with livefire. (note you may have to sign in for this course).

down to a consistent location after each live fire shot. As described in the videos, the chest contraction squeezing the pliable thumbs together is a great way to get a consistent base padding behind the pistol.

KEEP THUMBS PLIABLE AND BUILD THAT SOLID BASE BY CHEST SQUEEZE.

You should not have any muscular contraction in your thumbs. As a human, we as shooter's tend to like to have some firm padding at the base of the gun, otherwise the acute explosion and acceleration of a bullet round produces a significant equal and opposite of force so the gun literally strikes the base of our hands. If the base of our hands are mushy, this acute force builds a reflexive response known as "the shooter's flinch". When all of **our flesh is pre-compressed on the gun**, ***the felt recoil significantly less***, and we are mitigating the probability of the undesirable flinch to take foothold. However, we don't want this "compressed thumb tightness" to come from the muscles within the base of the thumbs themselves. This **feeling of tightness in the base of the thumbs comes from the squeeze of the chest** so our pliable gasket like thumbs get crushed together and provide that extremely consistent base padding. Note, I learned "chest squeeze" from Rodney May, an accomplished shooter and amazing instructor.

KEY CONCEPT:

Only contract the muscles necessary to accomplish the desired task. This concept is at the core of grip. We have introduced chest squeeze and a C-clamp grip. These are the only two muscle groups contracted.

Generally speaking we don't want to contract excess muscles in any athletic movement. That unnecessary contractions tend to cause tightness which in turn causes slow movements, unnecessary fatigue, and general lack of athleticism.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why do you say the thumbs are like gaskets?

A: When the thumbs are very pliable and do not have any muscular contractions then they consistently come together and we have consistent forces acting upon the pistol, ***when they are squeezed together by the chest***. Therefore, the base we provide for the pistol is consistent. As noted in the corresponding video, our grip on our training days (e.g. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, whatever) are the same without any "warm up".

Q: And what do you mean by un-warmed up reps?

A: We do not have the luxury to warm-up with shooting, so we have to be consistent right from the get-go. Therefore, the "big dumb muscular" contraction of our chest on our pliable thumbs provides a consistent base without any warm-ups any day of the week (meaning any mental or physical state).

Q: What do you mean by no extra muscular contractions after the boom?

After a shot goes off, the shooter does not contract more muscle

fibers or less muscle fibers; the shooter keeps the same amount of muscular contraction before, during, and after the shot. If the shooter contracts muscles when the gun goes off, invariably the shooter will move the muzzle and miss, this is a flinch.

We all know the flinch is difficult to overcome in some shooters. However, the best way to combat a flinch is to have a significant amount properly contracted muscle behind the gun (i.e. C-clamp muscles and chest squeeze) so the "boom" of the gun does not get a running start and violently slam into your hands.

Q: What do you mean about Charles Atlas's dynamic tension (from the video on the corresponding lesson page)?

A: Charles Atlas prescribed isometric muscular contractions, or I believe he called it dynamic tension. Basically, Atlas taught pushing the arms together to get a workout and not move your arms. It's amazingly effective but takes a heck of a lot of will power. (If you travel a lot it's not a bad workout in the car or on the plane if you're in a pinch). I think the program is still sold, nostalgically awesome!

But the chest squeeze is similar to that isometric contraction workout where you're squeezing the chest to press the base of your thumbs together. Further you are squeezing your C-clamp grip for both hands down in the front of the pistol, and nothing is really moving. It's very fatiguing, but if you think about it, shooting only takes a few seconds until you move and you snap out of shooting position. But again, we're not contracting every muscle in our body, just the ones that accomplish our desired task, which in this case is a hard, flesh and bone bedding at the rear upper portion of the pistol to return the muzzle down to a consistent location and help mitigate the possibility of a shooter's flinch.

QUICK TIPS:

Play with the grip a lot and really self-examine how you're gripping the gun. Gripping the gun should be fairly tiring, but remember you don't grip for long durations of time when shooting. Generally, after you present out (or rather when you really commit to shooting) you only shoot for several seconds. Thereafter, you de-contract and go to the movement phase where loose muscles are fast muscles (describe for the herein).

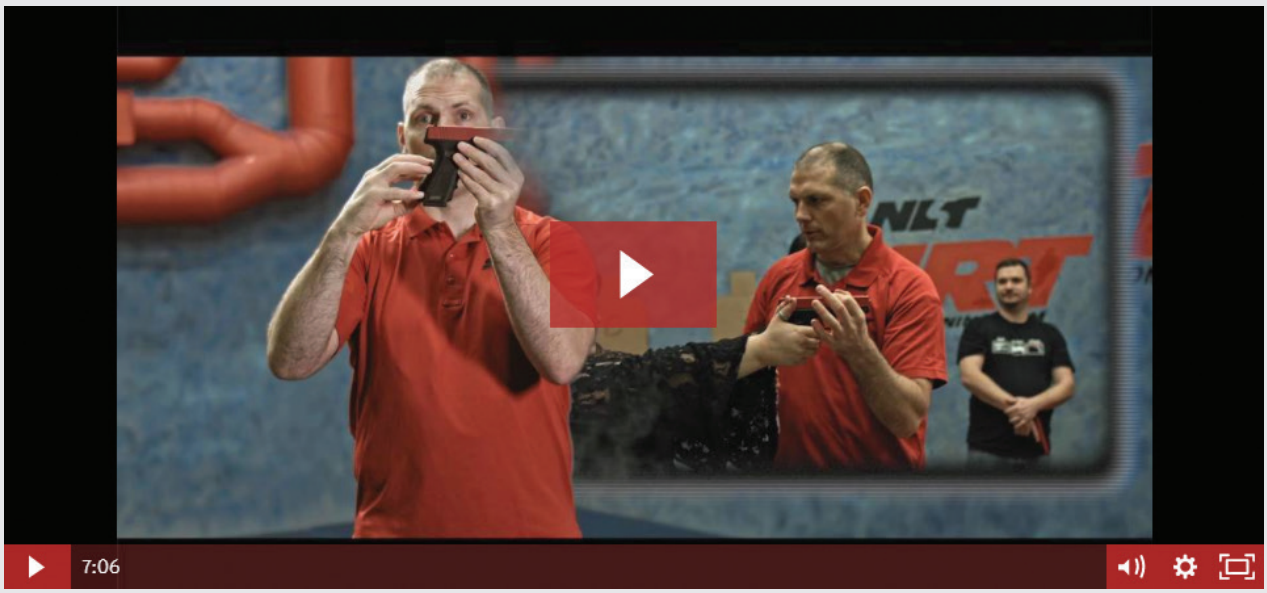
SHOULD YOU TOUCH YOUR STUDENTS IN THE UPPER PECTORALS TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE CHEST SQUEEZE?

Its a judgment call, tactile cues are a necessity in sports performance training and I don't go towards the breast area at all. Personally I just tap the upper chest, front deltoid area. If you don't feel comfortable providing a tactile cue to ensure there's muscular contraction in the upper pectorals or the student seems like a wackjob, grab the wrist and try to pull them apart, but tell them to not let you pull their hands apart so the base of the thumbs are squeezed together to form the tight compressed support for the gun.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-04-pliable-thumbs/

15 - GRIP RECOIL VALIDATING WITH THORNTON DRILL



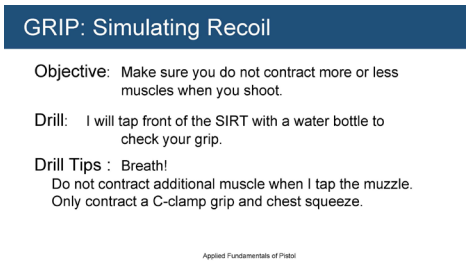
OVERVIEW:

WHAT IS RECOIL?

If we're going to address recoil, we have to clearly define it. Recoil is the impulse force upon the body for a very short duration of time. A recoil is a bit more complex and tricky to define because we have felt recoil and actual recoil. The actual recoil upon the body can be analyzed with the basic Newtonian physics equation of Force = Mass x Acceleration. The amount of force on the body is directly proportional to the mass of the bullet multiplied by its acceleration curve. This rapid acceleration creates an equal and opposite force to the gun, which is transferred to the hands, which is finally transferred to the entire body of the shooter. Furthermore, the force vector is above the hands along the center line of the barrel, so there is a torque or otherwise referred to as a "moment" on the shooter's grip and upper arm platform which torques the gun back.

Recoil does not have much to do with slide movement. Slide movement can help reduce "felt recoil" because some of the energy is first transferred to the slide and the time the slide takes to reciprocate back and forth increases the amount of time the force is applied to the frame, hence, reducing felt recoil. But nonetheless, the recoil is predicated upon the mass and acceleration of the bullet. Slide movement is not recoil, otherwise why would we feel recoil with a revolver where there is no slide?

Therefore, we have to handle recoil with our grip to meet our second objective of returning the muzzle down to a consistent



location. How do we emulate recoil off the range, or rather, how do we train a shooter to handle recoil and validate their grip is effective before we even get to the range? We found a pretty effective way of doing this we call the Thornton drill named after Sean Thornton. As best shown in the videos, the Thornton drill simply takes a water bottle where you impact the front of a SIRT in clipping the front of the pistol to put some force (an impact-type force) upon the pistol.

As best shown in the videos, use the water bottle to impact the front of the pistol. I would not suggest using the palm of your hand because you don't want to violate the rule of putting something you are not willing to destroy in front of the muzzle. You want to clip the upper front of the pistol with an upward angle of about 30 degrees to flip the gun back and up just a little bit.

Miss the muzzle with the water bottle every now and then and make sure that the shooter has "rationalized apathy", where the shooter is basically **apathetic to the impact**. The shooter's "big dumb muscles" around the pistol naturally return the muzzle to a consistent location and as noted in the previous lesson, the **muscles are not reactive**. Essentially, the muscles are apathetic to the fact the sights of the SIRT lift because the shooter is building confidence the muzzle returns down to the consistent location.

Make sure you do not swing too hard and come near their face which is unnecessary *noxious stimuli*.

BREATHING:

It is very common to see students hold their breath when you start impacting the pistol. **Simply tell them to breath**. You can generally tap their upper abdomen with the back of your hand just let them know to breath.

As shown in the video of this lesson, grab the pistol around the sides where your forefinger and thumb are in the upper portion of the pistol without covering the sites and provide a slight torque. Basically, apply a rotational force about the trigger pin so you can identify if their grip is loose. Don't torque too hard because you don't want them to push back against you. You can immediately tell if they have a tight locked in grip or if their grip is loose. **If the grip is loose in the wrist area they will inevitably flinch on the range.** When their wrists are locked and their chest is squeezed in tight then they will be in a good position to absorb recoil.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Does air soft or any air-powered guns provide recoil?

A: No. It's impossible to emulate recoil because you have to have an accelerating mass to provide an equal an opposite force on the shooter. Now there is some benefit of some sight disturbance and there is benefit of progressing people with light recoil such as a .22, or possibly Simmunitions or UTM and then progressing to

WHY DON'T WE HAVE A RECOIL TRAINING TOOL?

You do have a tremendous recoil training tool, it's your live fire pistol. It is nearly impossible to create a recoil tool because you have to accelerate a mass away from you. In theory you could do this with gas but the gas has to travel about 7,000 feet per second and as anyone knows with blanks, this creates a deadly tool the first few inches away from the barrel not to mention it's noisy as hell. In theory you could accelerate some kind of heavy weight at a slower velocity, but you won't get the same impulse as a live fire gun. At any rate we absolutely have to shoot live fire so train your recoil on the range. The range is the only place to train recoil with your gun, your slide, your recoil spring, your bullets, etc. (and of course also train slide lock recognition and malfunction recognition and clearances also only can be done on the range).

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THE LOOSE GRIP?

A loose grip basically gives the gun some free travel before it impacts your wrist. In other words, we want to be pre-engaged on the gun so we immediately apply that equal and opposite force. When the gun goes off and flies backwards, if it gets that "running start" then there's a much more felt high impact impulse upon the shooter. The shooter therefore responds "oh no you don't" and comes back with a reactive push. This horribly reactive push is a flinch. Granted some shooters develop a PIP (post ignition push) where they basically time a contraction with the boom, but this is a more advanced skill which kind of natural evolves after thousands of live fire rounds, and still nonetheless, it's better to have that locked in grip to complement a post ignition push.

lighter 9 millimeter loads all the way to full defensive loads. All the while making sure their grip is locked in. Upstream from any firing, make sure their grip technique is dialed-in while in the proper learning environment within the classroom/dojo and validate their grip with the Thornton drill.

Q: Is there any special kind of water bottle?

A: Not really but some thin walled water bottles will tend to break after clipping the metal in the front part of the SIRTs. Also a water bottle that is not completely full but more full then empty will work a little bit better.

Q: Should I torque hard on the gun to validate their grip?

A: No, absolutely not. Torque the gun very, very softly because they will definitely want to react to your torque and **reactively** push back which is bad. All you're doing is simply checking that there's no slop-like movement in the wrist when you torque the gun a little bit. You can look at the hairs in the base of the thumb near the wrist to see if those hairs move when you torque back to identify some slop.

Q: What do you mean by locking the wrist?

A: This is probably the most difficult thing to explain on text and show in video but when the wrists are forwardly canted and tensed up coupled with some chest squeeze bringing the base of the thumbs together, this collectively eliminates all the "slop". The best answer I can give is canting the hands forward with respect to the forearms and making the wrists rigid. Some wrists will lock all the way downward with the some bent elbows to provide a very nice arrangement of fully canted locked wrists and bent, shock absorbing elbows.

QUICK TIPS:

Practice the Thornton drill before you do a class! Practice on your spouse, friends, etc. Have someone do it to you. Note that when validating slop in the grip how annoying it is if they cover up the sites so keep the forefinger and thumb wide on the edges of the upper part of the slide of the SIRT.

Note: Hitting the front of the pistol takes practice. You'll definitely get a little bit of rhythm how you catch the front edge and roll off it and when someone does it right to you it feels surprising like recoil. You can even develop your skill to provide some pretty good wallops, but be careful to not induce a flinch.

Definitely miss every so often and make sure their muzzle is not moving downward when you miss. If their muzzle dips a bit, tell them to breath and ease off on your impact and further tell them to have the "rationalized apathy" they shouldn't care if the muzzle lifts off a bit because their big dumb muscles will return it down naturally requiring no reactive force whatsoever.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-recoil-validating-thornton-drill/

16 - PROGRESSION ON THORTON DRILL

OVERVIEW:

There is another progression on the Thornton Drill where you just have them pull the trigger rapidly (similar to a Bill drill) so they are exercising their trigger control but also getting a little bit of umph with the water bottle.

Now your thumps with the water bottle may not coincide completely with them pulling the trigger but that's okay. In fact we found it's kind of good to have them pre-occupied with just pulling the trigger, and again, have "rationalized apathy" to the initially noxious stimuli of the muzzle flip. In fact, we want to turn the initially perceived "noxious stimuli" of a boom (a round firing) to only some visual sight disturbance and a little bit of felt impact of energy to the body.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Do you have to exactly time your impacts with the trigger pull?

A: No. It's almost impossible to time your hits with their trigger pulls on the SIRT, and in fact, it doesn't really matter because remember we want them to be apathetic to the boom. That is, contract those big dumb muscles and don't change the amount of the muscular contraction while they're pulling the trigger.

Q: Is this Thornton drill time take a lot of time since it is one on one with each student?

A: Yes, it is. This drill is very much one-on-one with each student. But there is a good return on investment. Students actually might be getting a little bit tired at this point in the course an like the downtime when you are not focusing on them. Their shoulders might be getting a little bit sore, their gripping muscles, their upper chest muscles, etc. So if they have to take a break as you go around the room one-on-one, that's not a bad thing.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

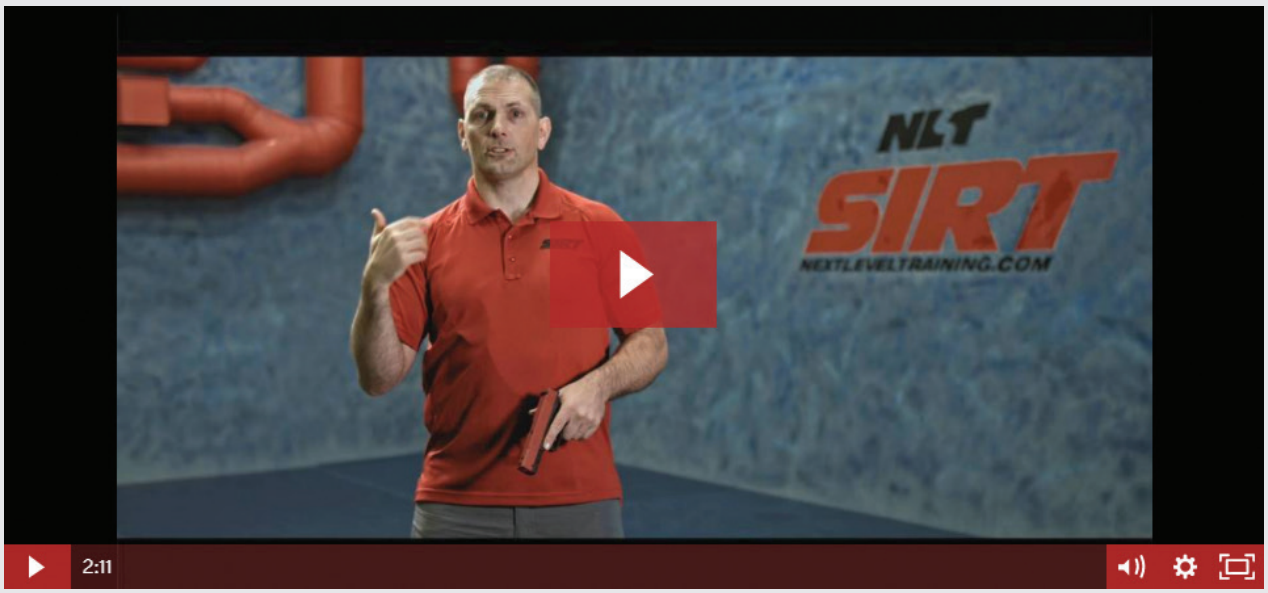
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-recoil-thorton-drill-pulling-trigger/

QUICK TIPS:

Practice this first! Make sure you're adept at striking the front of the muzzle because there is a specific technique to doing this which is much easier than just showing a hands-on type course. (If I ever see you at a show like NRA, Shot Show, USCCA, Carry Guard, etc. stop by the booth and let's talk this. ☺

Don't strike too hard and don't strike too close to their face. Make sure that your strikes are not too hard to induce a flinch but you can definitely start progressing and noting if they have any flinch when you intentionally miss the pistol. Also, again do not swing when you miss and go past the rear sight where you're starting to induce a flinch by bringing the water bottle to their face which is unnecessary noxious stimuli.

17 - GRIP PERCENTAGE NOT RELEVANT



OVERVIEW:

Oftentimes we get in a pattern of applying a rule or standard based on our current experience and knowledge. In the case of grip, conventional wisdom dictates do not squeeze the strong hand very hard on the gun. I believe this rule has been in place because of some of the reasons I've mentioned above with the sympathetic response between the fingertips of the lower three gripping fingers and the trigger finger. It very much makes sense, if, the shooter is going to squeeze hard with a rope-style grip. Therefore, if the shooter is trained right off the rip just to simply push back with the lower three fingers so right behind the second knuckles of the middle finger, ring finger (and kind of the distal knuckle of the pinky finger) on the front part of the grip, the trigger finger is free to move very much independently independent of the amount of force applied to these lower three fingers. That's a mouthful, but basically simply grab your SIRT pistol and squeeze as hard as you can without bringing the fingertips in and see if you can rattle off shots quickly. By all means validate this for yourself, but in the end, you should be able to squeeze as hard as you like and not compromise your trigger mechanics.

Therefore, with the correct muscular contractions, we can throw out the 60/40 rule or any kind of grip percentages between strong hand and weak hand. Just grip it and rip it.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Are you saying to discredit the 60-40 rule in the class?

A: I wouldn't discredit the 60-40 rule. They may hear that rule

OLD DOG NEW TRICKS.

You may have a lot of reps doing a certain thing a certain way. Remember trying something new is not going to completely screw you up even if you don't adopt some form of technique change. As noted in above lessons, I started the C-clamp grip based on recommendation from Larry Yatch. Did I shoot better than Larry? Yes raw mechanics-wise he and I could both agree on that. Could I have dismissed Larry's recommendation? Well I probably could have and figured, "Well what I do works for me" but thank goodness I didn't. I gave it a full go, and in fact, I invested a full month consciously gripping the gun differently. The results worked for me, but I had a question, "how does it work for others?"

I started telling student with a C-clamp grip and, anecdotally speaking, I saw much better results attained much more quickly. My experience is sufficient proof for me; however, me just saying this is not enough proof for you. (con't)...

from other instructors and generally speaking, I don't like to say anything which causes unnecessary perceived lack of continuity between instructors. I would not say grip with less force from your strong hand. Rather, I would instruct students to keep increasing their C-Clamp grip on the gun as hard as they can and press the trigger as rapidly as possible while self observing if their trigger finger feels different based on their grip pressure.

Q: What did you mean by a large performance envelope (in the video)?

A: Generally speaking we don't want to perform in a very narrow range of circumstances. We cannot build "substantive confidence" when we can **only** perform when: we are warmed up, when the range is between 70 and 85 degrees, when we have out special tricked out gun with its lightened recoil spring, extended mag release, custom slide stop, Dremeled mag bases, … oh and grip tape. I am not just talking about equipment and warming up, we should all strive for a broad performance envelope based on our stress level and potential environments. If I have to dial-in my grip with a "fine touch" and precise ratio of grip pressure…, I am setting myself up for failure downstream when my circumstance for performance might be very different from all my training.

I want to strive for mechanics that have broad range of functionality, where in this case, I can grip very hard and performance (of my trigger finger) is not effected.

QUICK TIPS:

Try running to a shooting position and stopping aggressively, presenting the pistol and squeeze the gun literally as hard as you can with dual C-clamp grips of your strong and support hands (with the knuckles and fingers overlapping in the front part of the gun) and rip off ten rounds on a relatively far target 12 yards or more. Self-observe if you have any trigger finger lock (where your trigger finger locks up and doesn't properly come forward enough to reset), if you have any trigger mechanic issues with a low left laser sweep (for right-handed shooters) or any other deficiencies.

Further, observe when you run into position with a mindset of locking down the pistol with as firm of a grip as you can. Where you lower and more aggressive in your stance? Meaning were your knees bent a little more, a little more hip flexion, a little more forward lean, overall a bit more aggression in your stance? When we lock the gun in aggressively in our grip, our whole posture changes to that wonderfully aggressive orientation and mindset. Generally speaking that aggression is transferred to the gun to return that muzzle down to a consistent location and absolutely obliterate targets.

(OLD DOG NEW TRICKS. con't)…

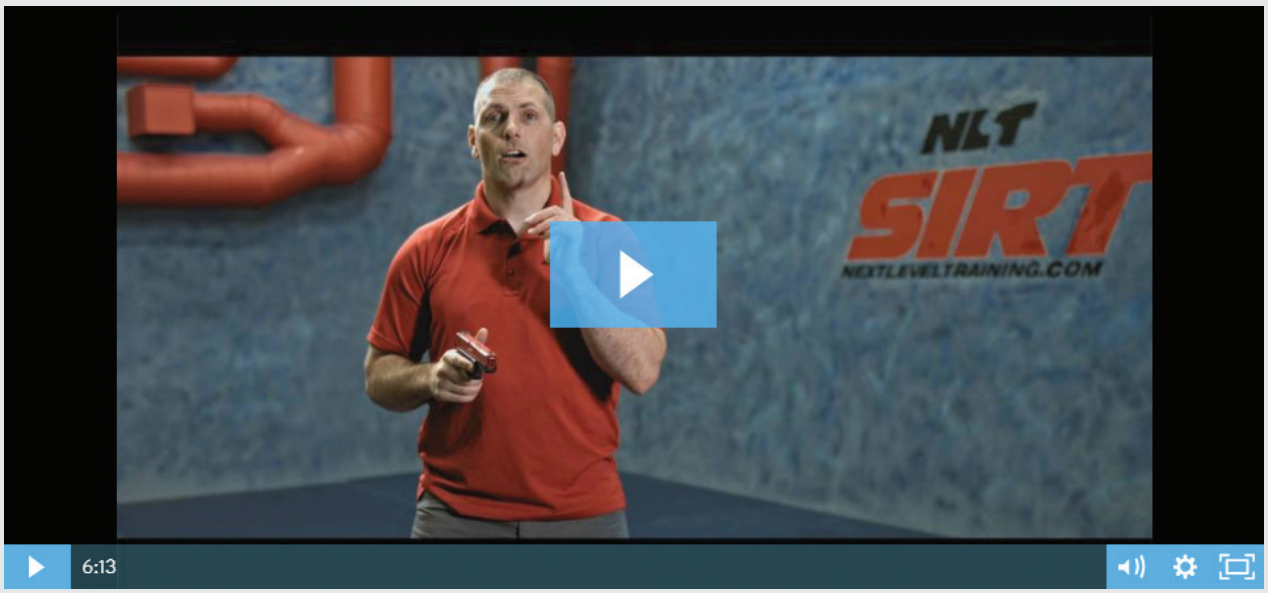
We have to personally experience techniques for buy in. Such a self journey allows us to understand our own physiology, apply our own knowledge, and in the end… pass on what we think is best practices to students. Ideally we have solid academic-based testing with control groups, test groups, proper measures, etc., but in reality we simply don't have enough time and resources to test every darned thing as much as we'd like to.

Test this yourself where you squeeze both hands as much as possible and see if you can rattle off shots without trigger mechanic issues, and a loss of trigger mechanic speed. This is one of those things where you have to validate for yourself. As noted about a minute in the accompanying video, we absolutely have to validate things for ourselves. We should not be a projectionist and think, "Oh, this works for me, it should work for everybody," but rather, we should understand how the mechanics work on ourselves to best teach others. If we understand our own physiology, how our own mechanics work and our capabilities, we can begin to empathize more with a student with the understanding their physiology may be very much different than ours.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-hand-force-60-40-or-not/

18 - GRIP ESTABLISHMENT



OVERVIEW:

Having a great final grip is fantastic, but the bigger question is how do we establish this grip every time we grab the pistol. We have to consistently establish a grip no matter where we grab the gun, out of our holster, out of a safe, off a table, etc.

STEPS FOR GRIP ESTABLISHMENT:

Start with the end in mind. As we have already done, start with a perfect grip where the pistol is in the hands just as prescribed in the previous blocks. The thumbs are pressed together, the correct muscles are contracted, the wrists are locked and tight all working together to return the muzzle down to a consistent location.

As shown in the video about 1 ½ minutes in, the first step for grip establishment is extended the pistol with all of the chest muscles contracted and then pulling back the gun just a few inches and going from the significant amount of correct tension (C-clamp and chest squeeze) to instant relaxation. Very much similar to throwing an electrical switch turning off all of that isometric tension instantly.

Even though the grip has a fairly significant firm upper body platform, as soon as we get in the realm of grip establishment we need to have loose, fast muscles.

Once you go from tension to instant relaxation, the position of the hands on the gun should not move or shift whatsoever. As you pull your hands back from full extension, have your joints and body maintain a fluid, natural alignment as shown about

GRIP ESTABLISHMENT:

Objective: Be able to consistently establish a perfect grip.

Drill:
- Start with a perfect grip fully extended.
- Pull your SIRT back a few inches and go to instant relaxation.
- Note the last part of support hand to touch the SIRT as you go to high ready.

Drill Tips: Keep trapezius muscles relaxed and shoulders un-shrugged when not extended.

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

KEY CONCEPT:

Loose muscles are fast muscles.

This concept compliments the previously stated concept, **"Only contract he muscles necessary to accomplish a desired task."**

These are general athletic principles you can apply to any motor neuron movements, but they certainly pertain to dynamic shooting.

2 ½ minutes into the video. Note the last part of your support hand to touch the pistol is the upper portion of the index finger which touches the lower edge inner portion of the trigger guard. Therefore, the first portion on your support hand to touch the pistol should be the upper portion of your index finger.

COMMON DEFICIENCY:

A common deficiency is where the support hand flings out and lands the pistol about the same time the pistol is fully extended. This makes it incredibly difficult to establish a consistent grip. The support hand tends to always "slop on" in a slightly different location each time the shooter presents the pistol.

WHY GET THE SUPPORT HAND IN CONTACT WITH THE GUN EARLY IN THE PRESENTATION PROCESS?

If you think about it, there's a significant amount of time from the gun being near the lower chest to full extension. This provides time to make small sub sub-conscience adjustments of the pistol as it goes to full extension. In other words, at a subconscious level the **support hand is finding its home** so to speak, nestling in next to the strong hand near the base of the thumbs. Further, when the support hand is engaged to the pistol and one location (on top of the index finger near the trigger guard) the rest of the hand tends to consistently engage the rest of the pistol in a consistent location, in particular in the rear quarter flank area of the grip of the pistol.

QUICK TIP:

Try extending the pistol out and back very quickly with the pistol while keeping the index finger in engagement and constant contact with the inner portion of the trigger guard. Notice how consistently the support hand will roll into a same spot. Try repositioning your body with awareness of your chest plate towards a new target, and close your eyes with the gun low ready position with the index finger of your support hand in contact with the trigger guard. Punch out the gun rolling the support hand into the fully locked out position and open your eyes, and note the alignment of the sights. Practice this drill a few times and build further awareness of the feeling of the gun as the base of your support hand engages the rear quarter flank of the pistol, and you are basically building your natural point of aim (the first objective of grip).

LOOK FOR TENSION:

Observe the shoulders and watch for **unnecessary shrugging in the trap muscles**. This is a tell-tale sign of tension, in particular unnecessary tension when not fully extended with the pistol.

GRIP ESTABLISHMENT TIPS:

- Keep top of index finger of support hand engaged to lower edge of trigger guard in low ready position.
- Roll support hand to full grip.
- Lock in grip at full extension.

LAYING OUT A TARP ANALOGY:

As noted in the lesson video at about 4 minutes and 20 seconds, I discuss an analogy where imagine you cover a 10-foot by 10-foot area with a 10-foot by 10-foot tarp. In other words, you have to cover this area edge to edge, corner to corner, in an exact location. You could simply throw the tarp down and push it left, right, forward, twist it clockwise, counterclockwise, etc., until all the corners and all the edges match. That will work, but it will take a heck of a lot of time.

A much simpler way to accomplish this task is to nail down one corner of the tarp right on the exact corner of the ground and pull the other three corners out right on spot, boom, you're done. This is analogous to finding that one key spot on your index finger of your support hand on the pistol and extend out to consistently establish that grip. Now it is possible just to throw our hand arbitrarily on the gun and eventually get it to feel right, but it's much, much less consistent and much slower.

QUICK TIPS:

Train in front of a mirror and watch how your body changes from the tension to instant relaxation as you pull the pistol back to that low or high-ready position. Your head position should not change much but your upper body should be noticeably less contracted as soon as your break from that full extended position with the pistol.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What do you mean by start with the end in mind?

A: A lot of time with mechanics it's best to start with the end position and work your way backwards on how you get there. We want to have a perfect, consistent grip. Let's start with a perfect, consistent grip and then work our mechanics backwards to figure out how we most efficiently and consistently get to that state.

Q: Why are loose muscles fast muscles?

A: Look at a boxer who is very fluid and powerful. They're very loose. Now, tighten up your muscles and try to punch a heavy bag. We're slower and even less powerful. The trick is to go from all that dynamic tension when we're fully locked out to instant relaxation as soon as well pull back the pistol. Look at yourself in the mirror and take special notice on the tops of your shoulders to make sure they are low and relaxed when you pull away from your fully extended position.

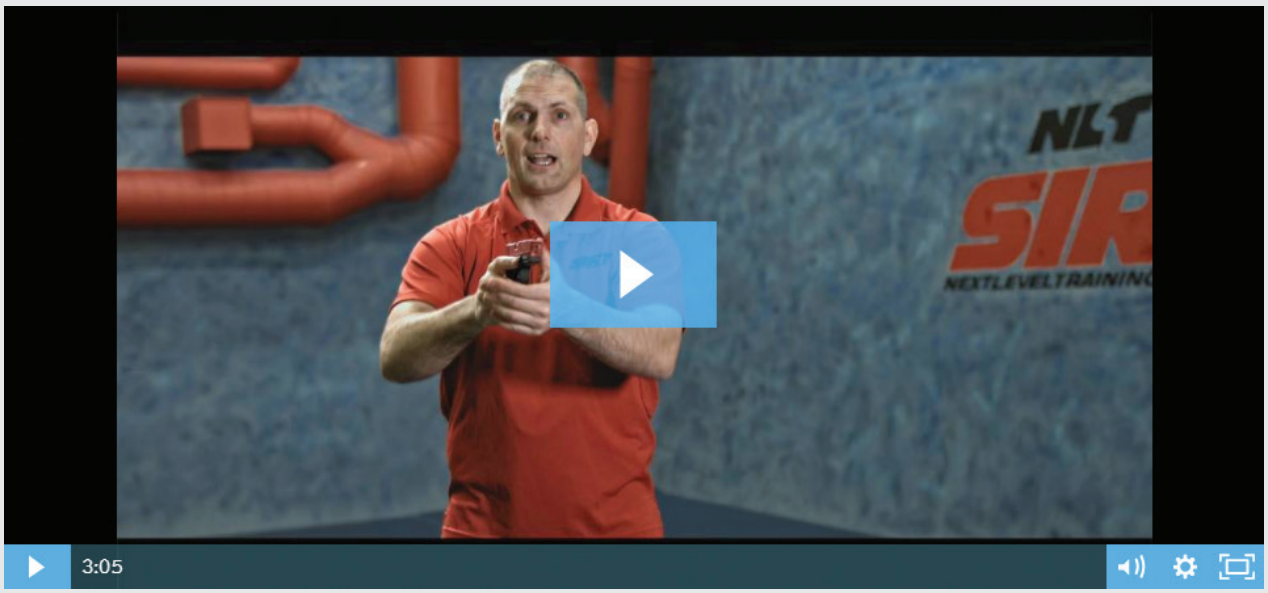
Q: What do you mean by only recruit the muscles necessary to accomplish the desired task?

A: This is a general athletic principle where often times some athletes contract too many muscles to try to do a simple task. Tension really does not help anything (unless you're extending a pistol and trying to keep it locked down ☺). Whenever you're moving you want to have loose muscles and only contract the necessary muscles. You generally don't want to be that stiff bodybuilder walking with everything flexed, but rather a loose, athletic fluid athlete when establishing your grip. A common deficiency established in the grip is a significant amount tension when people are pulled back and drawing the gun. This is very evident with many law enforcement officers drawing from their retention holster where for some reason there is a common deficiency for a significant amount of overall body tension which is counterproductive for a fluid, fast draw to defeat retention and get the pistol out into action.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/af-grip-establishment/

19 - GRIP ESTABLISHMENT DRILLING



OVERVIEW:

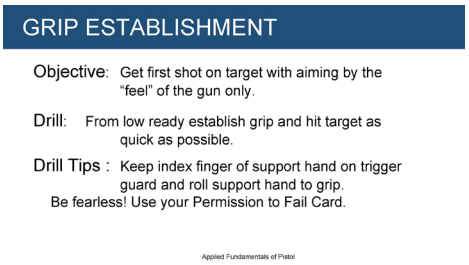
When teaching grip establishment, start very slow and build upon what you've already taught. Have the class extend out with perfect grips and demo that from that dynamic tension when fully extended you pull the gun back a few inches and you go to instant relaxation. Stress instant relaxation where they should be able to now stand with that gun pulled back slightly for literally hours and not get tired. You may want to grab the SIRT around their hands and "shake out" the tension. It's all too common to have unnecessary muscular contraction when handling a firearm (or a training device as a SIRT).

Now have the students position the SIRT in a slightly in a pulled back position, then extend the pistol out aggressively and lock down the pistol again. Now have them pull the pistol back again a little bit further and demo this in front of the class where you pull the pistol back slightly further to that high ready-type position and re-extend the pistol to that same consistent locked out position.

It's probably best to look at the actual class video in the accompanying lesson web page on our web site. In that particular class I clearly show how to establish grip to students with varying experience.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What do you mean by make a dent in their index finger of their support hand? (as mentioned in the lesson video)



A: When you press with a modest amount of pressure on the trigger guard, in the corner edge region, the flesh of the support handle make a slight temporary indentation. It's not painful to do this but you definitely want to have permission from the student to make this quick little reference marker to show where the index finger engages the trigger guard. This brings acute awareness to this area so the student will make contact between the trigger guard and the index finger when establishing the grip and extending the pistol out.

Q: Is it important to have the pistol aligned at the chest when establishing grip?

A: Some instructors feel it's incredibly important to have the muzzle aligned on target as much as possible when at that high ready position where the base of the thumb of the strong hand is near the chest. If you choose to instruct this, that's fine but just note that I would strongly recommend validating that you can shoot accurately from that chest position and do further study on the context of when you would shoot from the chest. In general I think it's a good idea to have that pistol aligned on target as long as it doesn't compromise a consistency of the grip establishment. But I want to stress this is highly contextual. Meaning, if you shove and shoot, there's a risk of shooting your support hand when you are shooting one hand only. If you spend a considerable amount of time aligning the pistol that's on your chest, this is wasted time that could have been invested in simply establishing the grip quicker to the fully extended position. I'm not saying don't teach align the pistol from the high ready, but think about some of these questions and discussion points with any stressed technique point.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

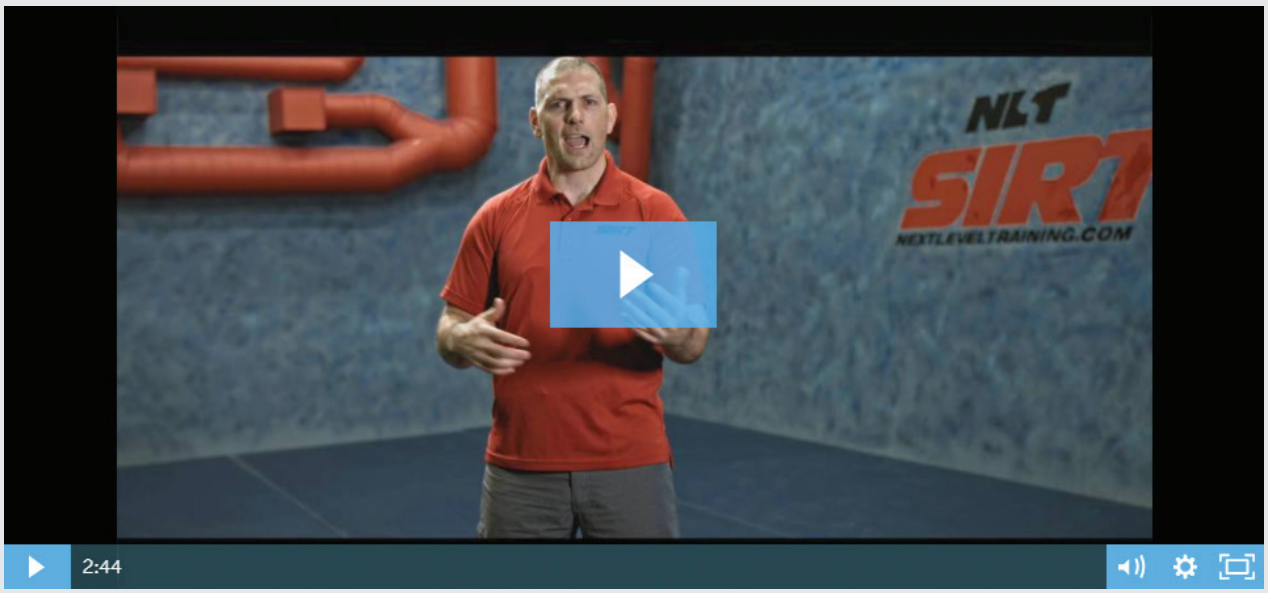
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-establishment-drilling

QUICK TIPS:

CONTINUE PRACTICING, BUT DON'T GET PARALYSIS BY ANALYSIS.

Practice grip establishment and notice how and when your support hand gets on the pistol. Also correlate that first contact of your support hand to the pistol and how that affects the consistency of each final grip as you lock it in. But don't think too much to where you start becoming very awkward in establishing your own grip. Open your mind for some self-awareness of how naturally the grip can feel in your hands rolling to a amazingly consistent hand position. Progress from picking a gun up off a table, (to emulate a safe), drawing from your preferred holster etc. where the grip establishment should be very consistent no matter how your dominant hand initially grabs the pistol.

20 - GRIP ESTABLISHMENT GETTING STRONG-HAND ON FIRST



OVERVIEW:

This course is intended to be an approximately 3 hour course when you deliver it to your students (possibly broken up in two 90 minute sessions). You could have a longer course and bring in other elements and drills by all means, but there's only so much we can cover in each block of instruction when we're face to face with a student. However, it's perfectly fine to touch on other topics so at least the student has some exposure to additional topics if not wet their appetite to take an additional class from you.

In this case regarding grip establishment, it's not a bad idea to introduce the concept and notion of the draw. Drawing the pistol is probably one of the least-taught skills in firearms and yet one of the most critical. Or rather, it's likely one of the least practiced skills amongst shooters across the board. It's not because shooters are lazy, but rather, we simply can not draw our live fire pistols at a good majority of the ranges.

Honestly, this is where our SIRT pistol is so freaking awesome (sorry for the shameless self-promoting plug). With a SIRT we can work draw over and over again with the respect to the SIRT as if it's a firearm but also with the inherent safety to build substantive confidence of drawing the pistol consistently, safely and effectively in a variety of circumstances (un-warmed up, seated, standing, while on the move, etcetera). At any rate, Grip establishment very much lends itself to training the draw and you can certainly touch upon draw in this class.

I made a course to be called Sub Second Concealed Draw. Yes that's a bit cavalier, lofty, and possibly misleading (and in the course when I demoed it cold I got 1.02 seconds so I am on the

same journey to strive for an elusive sub second concealed carry appendix draw). But feel free to check out that course for some more tips and tricks on drawing the pistol from concealment (primarily appendix carrying). But at any rate, think about teaching another follow-on course of drawing the gun. A drill-based course similar to this one where students get reps, reps, reps, and a few more repetitions after that. :)

I don't want to go on a tangent, but we are not only talking about coaching-like instruction, but also very hands on and very repetition-based learning. You want to keep the students in our own tribe where they come back to you and continue their journey in mastering pistolcraft. They might like the social environment, they may love you as an instructor but either way, your competition is indirect competition. Your competition is not Instructor Bob down the street, but rather, some worthless junk at a large department store like a new flat screen TV, where your students' funds should be allocated towards your valuable training!

Point being, I would strongly encourage to emphasize additional training that promotes a follow-on class the students can check out and take from you. We at NextLevel Training are striving to help your training business by working on marketing automation to allow you send some automated content to your students to help out the marketing reminding them of your next class and other custom information which you can enter in your portal page. Look for this in the future.

At any rate, you can put grip establishment into context of drawing the pistol from concealment and demoing the proper technique and context for grip establishment.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-establishment-getting-strong-hand-on-first/

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

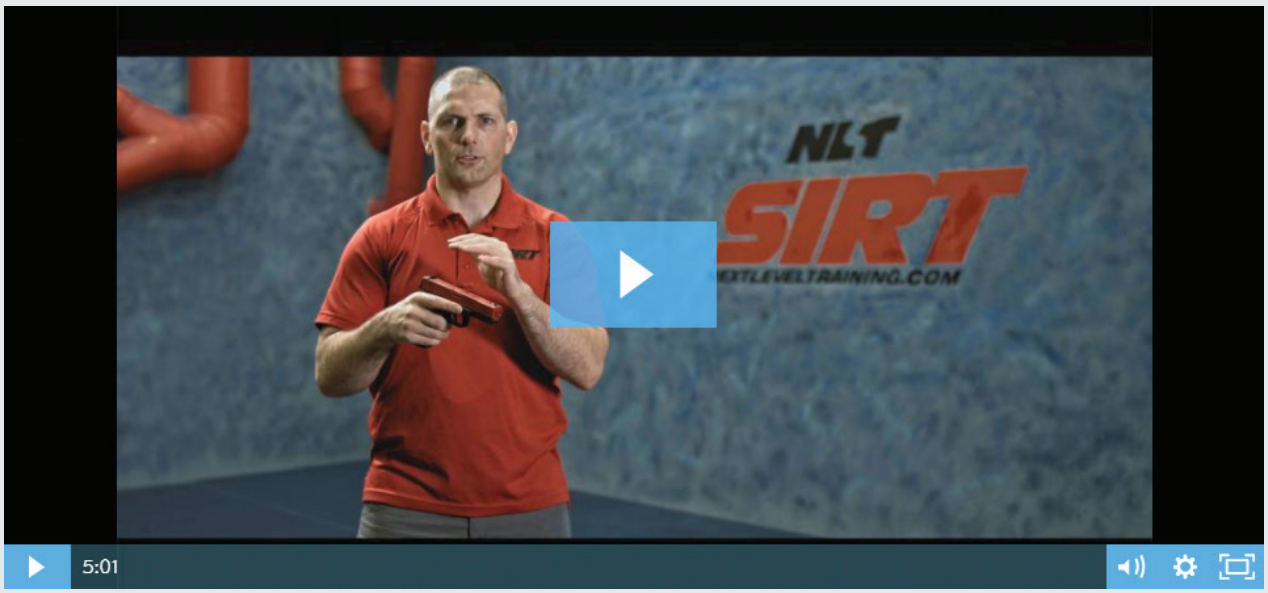
Q: Will you have more courses like this in the future?

A: Yes I absolutely hope so. I do realize that part of this course is my own "gun foo" meaning practices I have learned to be very effective for the fundamentals in a very systematic approach. I obviously might offend instructors, but so be it. But in the future, we want to provide additional very simple courses that instructors can put on and add a lot of value to their students, make money and have fun doing it. We definitely want to cover all bases and make these "train the trainer courses" as comprehensive and easy as possible to send you on a glide path to teach additional courses to your tribe.

Q: Should I draw concealed in class or from an open holster?

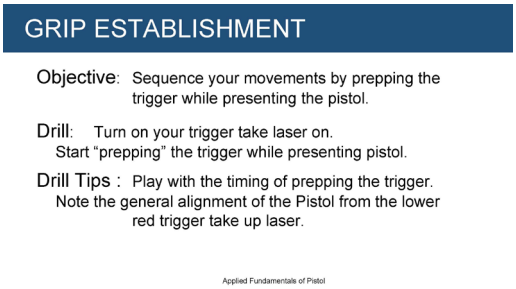
A: I would strongly recommend drawing from concealment in a proper context where people have a higher probability of using a pistol in the future. Or draw from a handbag or purse or basically anything which is a high probability of your students using. As cool as a thigh holster may look and as relevant as it may be in the upcoming Zombie apocalypse, such a holster generally is not the most relevant unless you're instructing this course to a SRT team or some other open carry group/team.

21 - GRIP ESTABLISHMENT AT SPEED



OVERVIEW:

While you're working your grip establishment drills you can integrate "sequencing." **Sequencing is the timing of overlapping activities to reduce the amount of overall time when establishing the grip and firing off the first shot.** In other words, you can start prepping the trigger while extending out the pistol to speed up your first shot. Using the take-up laser is great for seeing when the student is prepping the trigger and generally noting the alignment of the pistol when extending out in the pistol.



The drill is very simple, tell the students to start to prep the trigger (that is take out the slack by pressing rearward slightly) while extending the pistol out before full extension. When the pistol is fully locked out you can then apply more pressure and break the shot.

When drilling this grip establishment with sequencing the trigger prep, it's best to let the students have an opportunity to fail. That is, not get so caught up with accuracy that they go slow, slow, slow and never push themselves. As noted in the class section video, I always like to give out the virtual "permission to fail card" meaning ultimately they are accountable for every shot they fire, but in training, we have to know the limits and "where the wheels fall off", where the gun is not aligned on target. When we go too fast and outrun our ability to execute the mechanics properly and safely.

In the big picture the SIRT pistol just shoots a laser, and a few reps of pushing it hard is not any kind of a permanent training scar which is going to do permanent neurological damage to the

students. Quite to the contrary, a few reps of going very hard first of all might expand their ability more quickly, and secondly, will illuminate where their deficiencies are and how it feels to go too fast and be inaccurate.

A STRENGTH OF GOOD SIGHT ALIGNMENT AND SIGHT PICTURE CAN MASK A WEAKNESS OF AN IMPROPERLY ESTABLISHED GRIP.

A student may have very good sight alignment and sight picture where they can consistently realign the sights and put the target behind it for solid sight picture and break a shot. However, if they're doing this for every repetition they have a very poor grip. So again ***a strength can mask a weakness*, strong front sight awareness can mask a fundamental issue of a poor grip establishment, or they are not meeting the first objective of grip of aligning the pistol on target by the feel of the gun.** That is why for the purpose of this drill we want to establish the grip very quickly while prepping the trigger and breaking that shot fearlessly and just simply observing where that shot lands. This is a great drill to allow the students to self-explore and get better on their own.

VARIATIONS AND PROGRESSIONS OF THE DRILL:

As shown in the video you can hit this drill on a wall and eventually start moving them further and further away from the target. I like to go further away from targets as opposed to shooting small targets so they build in their intuitive database intuition of the distance of a pie plate target (a threat neutralizing size target like a pie plate or an upper T zone for a headshot) and start to understand the distances of where they are effective with point shooting (even though by this time they are very warmed up and probably going to shoot better than they would cold).

If they use their permission to fail card properly, they will not beat themselves up for missing, but rather, make slight grip adjustments in their grip establishment so they can break that shot fearlessly and eventually build all the feeling in their hands of the curvatures of the grip of the pistol to instinctively line that pistol up by the feel of the gun.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Can you have permission to fail in the range?
A: Well kind of, but not really. As noted in the video about 3 minutes in, the ephemeral nature of the laser allows for greater permission to fail where the permanence of a bullet hole tends to be a mark on someone's manhood. It sounds stupid, but it's hard for a lot of people to push it on the range because of the stigma (and practical liability) of missing. Further, it's much safer to train with a SIRT pistol in a SIRT environment which has everything except for the boom. But with a locked-in grip, the recoil will not be an issue when transferring the skills to the range. In other words, we want to treat the SIRT with respect as a live-fire tool but also understand it is indeed a training tool and we can push

NOTE THE ISSUES OF A WARM UP:

When the students are becoming very proficient in ripping off shots quickly remind them that they have got a lot of reps under their belt the past hour or so. In other words, they're very warmed up and likely more dialed in than they would be when they are cold.

It's not a bad idea to remind them that sometimes they have to shoot completely un-warmed up. In fact in a life threatening situation they will most definitely not be warmed up.

Therefore, a lot of un-warmed up (uncalibrated) repetitions with the SIRT throughout the day are great training opportunities to 1) gauge your performance of speed and accuracy and consistency when you're not warmed up and 2) build your skill of shooting fast and accurate as possible un-warmed up or at least **know your limits when you're not warmed up**. It's a good idea to know the difference between your performance in an un-warmed up state and a warmed up state. As we mature as shooters we try to strive for at least a 95 percent performance un-warmed up as when we're fully warmed up.

ourselves hard and it's better to fail with the SIRT than it is with a live fire or heaven forbid when we're shooting a live fire in a critical incident.

Q: What do you mean in saying, "is your grip failing you?"
A: The grip is failing you when you cannot consistently establish a grip and the muzzle is pointed right where you are looking, at the target.

QUICK TIPS:

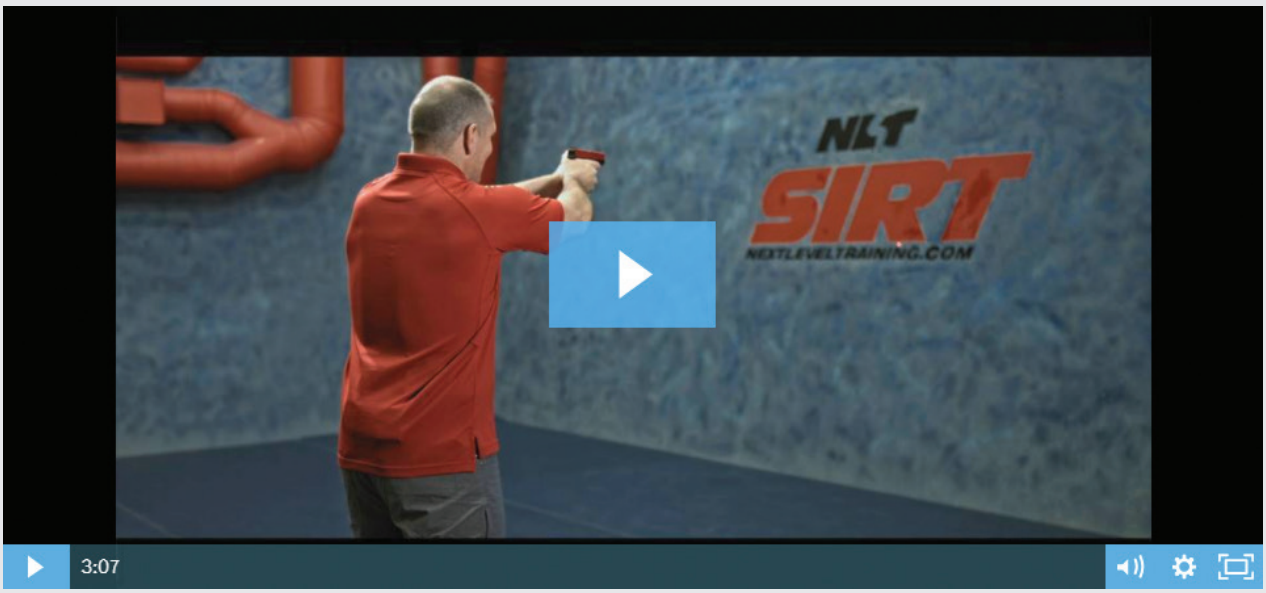
GO FAST AND BE AWARE OF THE SIGHTS.

I would never tell a student to completely ignore the sights, but I would advise a student to not invest time in picking up the sights when establishing the grip quickly, prepping the trigger and ripping off a shot. You might be amazed how fast how students can rip off shots from a low-ready position to full presentation and be shockingly accurate.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/grip-establishment-drilling-at-speed/

22 - SEQUENCING



OVERVIEW:

Now that you have ran a drill of prepping the trigger while extending out the pistol, you can further explain a bit more the notion of sequencing.

I personally learned the concept of "sequencing" from training with Dave Sevigny, one of the best shooters in the world. Sevigny overlaps each body movement as much as possible to minimize the time to shoot. In other words, Sevigny does not simply run to a position and fully stop, and then present out the pistol, and then prep the trigger, and then pull his vision back to the sights (if needed) and then break the shot. That would take forever. Sevigny runs to position and while he's decelerating he starts to extend out, and while he's extending the pistol out he's starting to prep the trigger, and as soon as the trigger is fully prepped out he breaks a shot. Further, if it's a far shot while extending out he's pulling his vision back to the front sight to see what he needs to see the sights to get the shot. All these steps are overlapped to some degree (or rather an **optimal degree**).

This concept of sequencing is applied to trigger manipulation where as shown in the video about 1 minute and 8 seconds in that the student can learn upon presenting the pistol when the muzzle is reasonably aligned on target and begin to get the finger on the trigger and a take up laser will "generally indicate the alignment of the muzzle at this point." Generally speaking, shooters are shockingly on target while presenting out the pistol. Note, the take up laser should be very much below sight picture where you can adjust the impact of the red take-up laser under the front part of

the SIRT with a 1.5-millimeter hex wrench screwing in clockwise (see the armors course at https://nextleveltraining.com/107-armorer-course/.)

At any rate, you may want to first run the drill as mentioned in the last block of prepping the trigger upon presenting and then talk about sequencing so people understand the concept a little bit more after they have had some hands on practice. Or alternatively if you like you could explain it first and then engage the drill. Ideally I think give them some hands on first, then explain the why and then hit the drill again.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Is it dangerous to get your finger on the trigger when you're not fully presented?

A: It's best to understand the alignment of the pistol when presenting out and it's important to note that we have already decided to destroy the target. If you're pointing the muzzle at a target you've already made the decision to destroy what's behind that muzzle. Therefore, in context, it's an extremely important skill to break off that first shot as quickly as possible.

Q: Should I have my sights absolutely on focus with a crisp sight picture?

There's definitely some instructors that are categorical of a sight picture before breaking the shot. However, if you are in this camp you definitely want to balance that rigid application of mandatory 100 percent sight alignment with the time and context it takes to get that sight alignment. Meaning, if it takes an extra half second to always get perfect sight alignment that might be a half second too long a critical incident. Further, in other extreme close quarter disciplines with retention shooting (where you're shooting at a target less than 3 yards), best practices are to not fully extend the pistol because there's a severe risk of the muzzle being grabbed and now it's a fight for the gun not a gun fight. Therefore in that context it's widely acceptable to have some form of retention shooting. Retention shooting does not have any sight awareness whatever, aiming is done strictly the feel of the gun near the waist area with the support hand preferably defending the head.

At any rate, obviously there's some debate in the industry about categorically having sight alignment before putting the finger on the trigger or balancing the need for speed where the muzzle is sufficiently aligned while presenting the pistol to put the finger on the trigger and prepping the trigger.

QUICK TIPS:

ADJUST THE TAKE UP LASER FURTHER DOWN OUT OF SIGHT PICTURE.

As shown in the armors course have an extra 1.5-millimeter hex wrench handy when you teach a class for sure adjust the lasers as needed, but I would suggest putting the red trigger take up laser way out of sight picture as far down as possible. Try adjusting the distance to the targets to make it more fun and build substantive confidence on how accurate the students can be when they're moving fast and fearless. Stress the reality that speed can be a very necessary component in critical incident shooting. For defense purposes where things move fast they want to have the skills to be able to keep up with the pace of potential violence. I'm not saying freak the students out, but some awareness and appreciation of the speed required to be effective with a pistol is certainly relevant in an applied fundamentals class such as this.

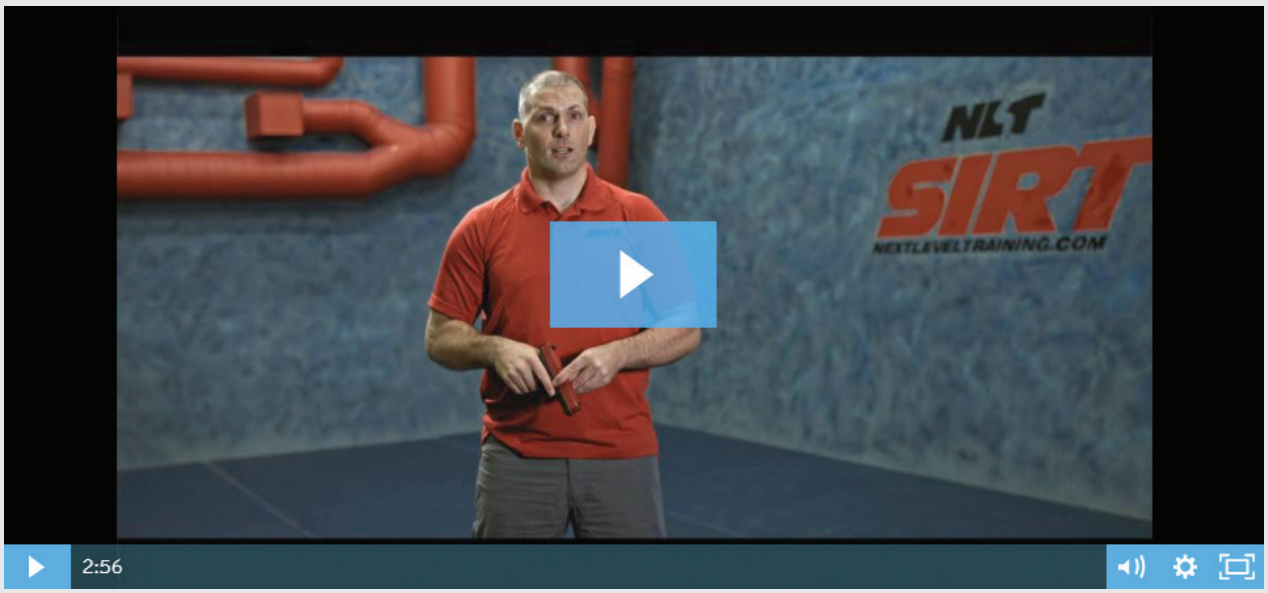
SAFE TIMING OF FINGER ON THE TRIGGER

Watch for the red laser coming on too early. Occasionally a student will put their finger on the trigger right out of a low ready or holster (when you are doing a conceal carry draw class) and the red laser is on the floor all the way up to the target. This is obviously a case where the finger is on the trigger much, much too early which is unsafe.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sequencing/

23 - NPA AND SIGHTS- UNDERSTANDING WHEN TO USE NPA AND ITS IMPORTANCE



OVERVIEW:

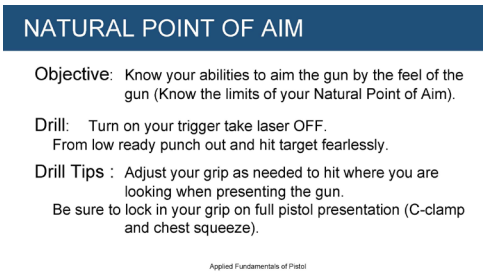
THE RELATIONSHIP OF NATURAL POINT OF AIM AND SIGHTS.

When you have great natural point of aim you make sight alignment/sight picture much easier. In short, the sights are already lined up when you present the pistol out; it is really that simple. Working the grip and grip establishment, in particular with the drills we discussed above, will build a natural extension of the pistol where the muzzle is aligned right where we are looking at. Visually picking up our sights will be very easy when the target is further away and smaller and we need to have that extra bit of information to more properly align the muzzle and break off the shot over (hopefully with clean trigger mechanics to keep that muzzle alined on target!).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: When do you use sights when do you use natural point of aim?

A: Let's look at the extreme cases of distance first. At a very close distance you definitely use peer natural point of aim. With any amount of consistent training with the SIRT pistol, the shooter can build substantive confidence to align that pistol on target and break shots within an acceptable accuracy zone. I'm talking short distances such as 5 yards or so. Note, in extreme close distances such as 1 or 2 yards the context is different where a gun could get grabbed. This relates to extreme close-quarter shooting where retention shooting is another skill to train which is beyond the scope of this course. Just be cautious to not have the targets



too close to the shooters because you want them to understand that full-extension shooting is in context for imminent threats (or simple targets if they're competing) at ranges beyond the risk of getting the muzzle loader gun grabbed and taken away from you.

At very far distances, say 25 yards, the shooter obviously uses sights (unless you and can point shoot 8 inch steel at 25 yards which I'm not even sure Robbie Letham can do). Therefore at very far distances we have to be able to pull our focus back to 22 to 24 inches to a sharp front sight focus with equal height -n- equal light on the sights and break off a shot.

Q: The big question: what about these intermediate distances to the target?

A: Do you point shoot at 8 yards? 12 yards? Well you may not have to have complete front-sight focus but you may have to reference the sights more at 8 yards and yet a little bit more at 12 yards.

Q: How much do you reference the sights?

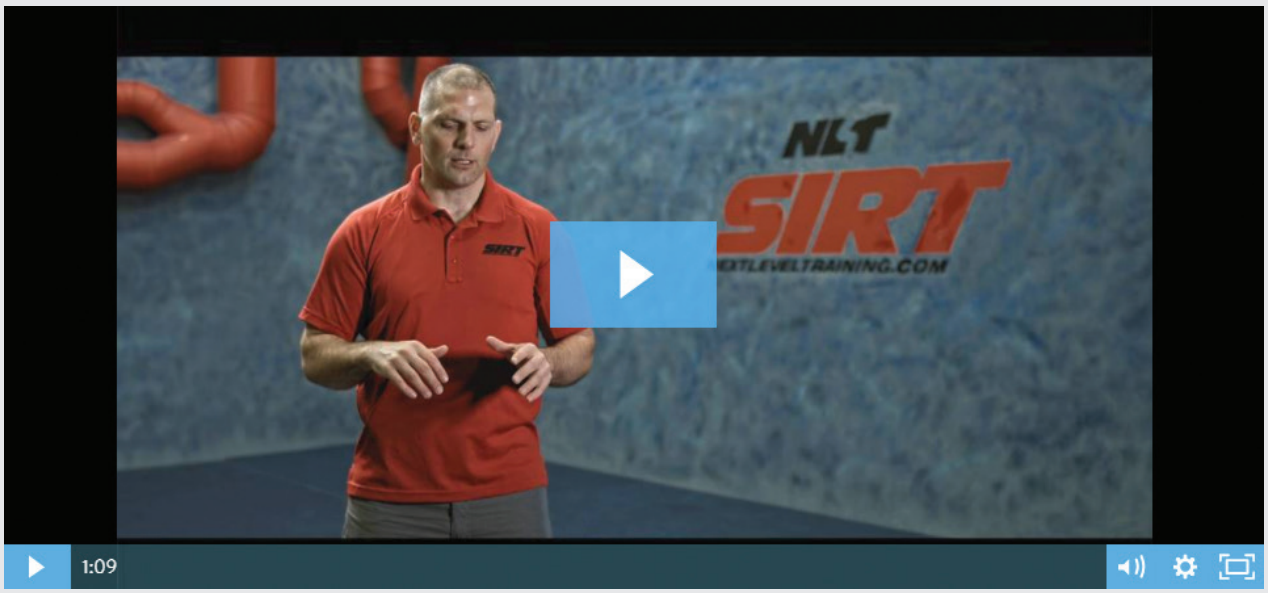
You as a shooter, answer this question by simply getting the reps in with your SIRT pistol throughout the day. If you setup a target in your house and throughout the day pickup the SIRT and rip off shots sometimes very fast point shooting at say 10 yards and other times observing more of the sights. Each of these repetitions is an addition to your "intuitive database", meaning you are starting to **build your intuition and awareness of how much sight you need at what distance**. It's important to push yourself and occasionally go to failure where you know your limits of your point shooting. It's probably more important to know the limits of your index/point shooting than anything else so you can safely stay within those limits when having to shoot on demand, un-warmed up in a critical incident. Also reference your sights, but don't slow down to capture your sights.

You can always, and should, reference your sights as much as possible, but don't slow down unnecessarily to see your sights. In other words, if you have sight awareness and constantly building a lot of sight awareness or perhaps naturally pulling your vision back to the front sight while extending the pistol, excellent. But don't unnecessarily slow down to get sights just for the sake of getting sights, in particular when you confidently can hit an acceptable accuracy zone target at a given distance. This distance may start out at 5 yards and work its way up to 12 yards, the only way you will find out is by practicing un-calibrated, un-warmed up reps throughout the day as a lifestyle. I strongly suggest adopting this lifestyle training as an instructor, because honestly, daily lifestyle training is: extremely rewarding, makes you more competent, it's great leadership for your students and... it's fun. It's rewarding to have minimal setup get some trainings in during the day and watching the growth happen when you go to the range to validate.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/npa-and-sights-understanding-when-to-use-npa-and-its-importance/

24 - ORDER OF FUNDAMENTALS AND WHY HAVEN'T WE TALKED ABOUT STANCE?



OVERVIEW:

There's been a tremendous amount of discussion of grip and grip establishment and now we are revisiting sights and the relationship of sites to natural point of aim. But what about stance/platform? Stance is very important, but stance is very often taught rigidly with instructional points that are not relevant. ***Foot placement does not matter with stance.*** You can quickly prove this notion by putting your feet in any position and pivoting your knees, hips and thoracic vertebrae to the left and to the right pivoting about these three mobility systems (i.e. knees, hips and thoracics). You should have about 180 degrees from left to right independent of your foot placement. Now run to a position and stop abruptly with the SIRT and present out and shoot. Your feet land where they land depending on a plethora of factors in context. Do you want to take time to adjust your feet? No, adjusting the foot placement is completely unnecessary. Furthermore, since most shooting is dynamic, as you run to position and stop, you are already in a good stance/platform (I like the term **platform** instead of stance which I learned from Gary Drake).

Granted, in some disciplines such as standing positions with rifle and bullseye stance can have some effect on our natural ergonomic aim in particular with a single hand, extended grip in bullseye. But remember in bullseye shooting, we are talking about trying to reduce the natural aiming area movement to an absolute minimum for extreme accuracy. In that context a very prescribed stance with a single hand extension grip on the pistol

is critical for maximizing your performance. However, for a lot of action shooting, in particular defensive shooting, time is critical from grabbing the gun to firing off the first shot. Therefore, do not teach specific foot placement with a stance. If anything, teach awareness of a breast plate to align the breast plate to the target and punch out to help build the natural point of aim.

Therefore, I would not stress stance too heavily at this point. I think it will come into play more when we hit the progressor drill (below in lesson 33). You may note some "weeble wobble" stances in your class where their hips are protruded forward and their leaning back. When I teach a class I let this go for a short amount of time knowing that I will remedy stance problems further on in the course.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/why-introduce-natural-point-of-aim/

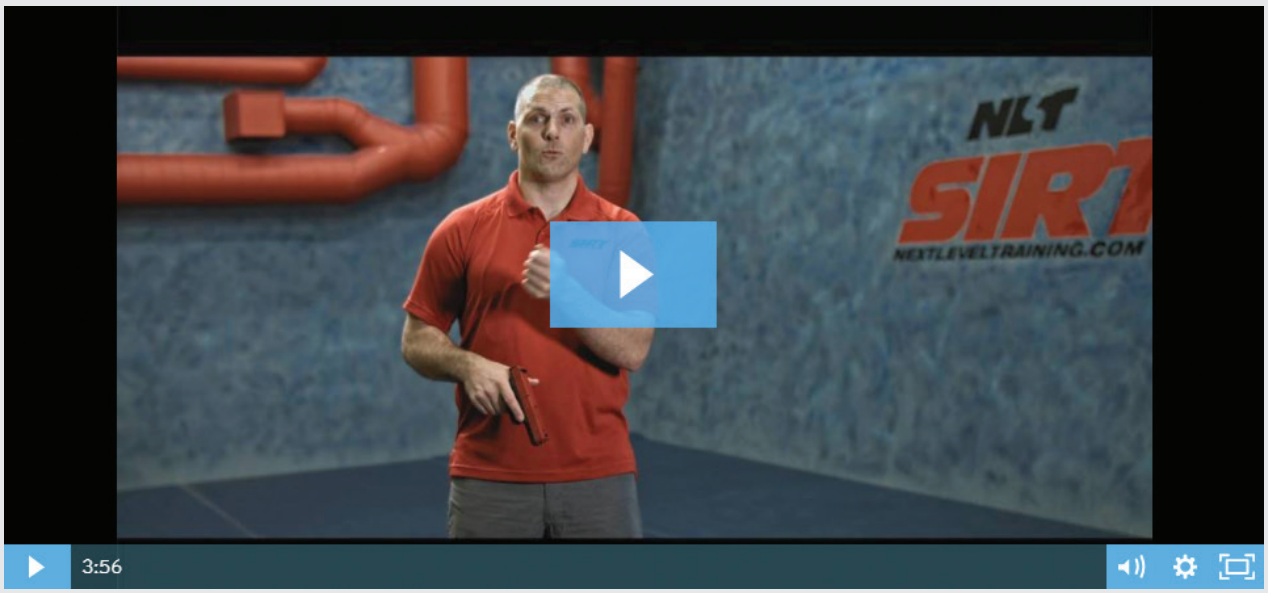
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Is stance not important?
A: Stance is incredibly important, but stance is interesting because it can be taught very well when you start to get into moving and shooting, more particularly, decelerating into a position and shooting. It's crazy but I've seen better stances (where the head of the shooter is not rocked back during recoil) when a shooter runs into a shooting position. They tend to be in a more athletic position and better suited to absorb recoil. See the grip course at NextLevelTraining.com/grip for more information about purpose of stance and rocking back.

Q: Why do you use the term platform?
A: I got the term "platform" from Gary Drake who trained at a law enforcement academy where platform addresses movement more related to shooting where the legs are moving which seems like a better term than just "stance". I've seen some tremendous "stances" where people are moving where their head is not rocked back while shooting, their upper body's incredibly stable and they almost shoot better when shooting on the move than when they do and they're static. (See video https://youtu.be/MesZvbmjqvU for more info).

A lot of this is just semantics and we definitely don't want to make terms for the sake of new terms, but the term platform makes a little bit more sense to describe our lower body relationship to our upper body to provide an upper body turret a good foundation for ripping off shots and keeping the muzzle aligned on target.

25 - NPA DRILL CONFIDENCE BUILDER AND KNOWING LIMITS



OVERVIEW:

Even though this section is focused on “natural point of aim” we’re not doing much more than they’ve already done in the class. However, this block is a bit more of a confidence builder. Your current range setup whether its a single line of fire, L-shaped or U-shaped, ...the distance to the targets is likely 7 yards. However, for this drill, get the students a little bit closer say 4 to 5 yards from the target to simply punch out and break out shots inside an acceptable accuracy zone that’s a lot larger than the post it notes. You can use, for example 8½ by 11 sheets of paper or paper plates taped to the wall (use painter’s tape, it won’t stick or mark the wall).

Do not get too close such as 2 yards from the target because in such extreme close quarters other techniques have to be utilized becaue it’s possible someone can reach out and grab the gun.

UTILIZE A PAR TIMER:

If you’re not familiar with a par timer, on many shot timers you have what’s called a par time. The par time is basically a second beep after a start beep where you have to accomplish a drill before that second beep. You can set the “par time” to whatever you like. If you look at our drill of the day on-line resource, we have a par time which is on each page you can utilize. (See sirtliving.com/dod). Now you can have some fun with this drill and set the par timeto, say for example, 2 seconds so they have to punch out (from the high ready) to break off a shot before the second beep. So they start on teh first peep and have to break the shot by the second beep, keep it simple. Everyone should very easily get this shot, but you can keep lowering the time lower, lower and lower

until their probably punching out and breaking off a shot in literally sub one-half a second. Now this task is different from the draw because obviously the gun is already in their hands at high ready, but it forces them to go fast and build the substantive confidence in their natural point of aim.

VARIATIONS OF DRILL:

If you have the space you can do a variation where they have to take a step to the left or the right to introduce a little bit of movement and then set up, punch out and prep the trigger and break the shot. Be sure to space them out first.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What is a par time?

A: A par time is a time between a start beep and a second beep which can be considered the stop beep or otherwise complete your task before this next beep. Now par timers and shot timers are a little bit different because a shot timer actually records your shots from the loud noise from a live fire pistol. But nonetheless a par time is useful in dry fire or in a class because it basically is nothing more than just a countdown timer to complete a drill between the first and second beeps.

Q: Have we already worked natural point of aim?

A: Yes, we actually have since the very beginning of this class. However this block is more about pushing them harder until they solidify their skills and start to really see how they good are (or their limitations) with their natural point of aim.

Q: What is natural point of aim?

A: Natural point of aim can be called index shooting, point shooting, kinesthetic aim or simply NPA for natural point of aim. It is basically aiming the gun by the feel of the gun without a hard core front side focus.

Q: I believe in only a front sight focus before breaking a shot, how does natural point of aim help my teaching?

A: Even if you are in the camp of absolute rigid front sight focus before breaking any shot, developing a strong natural point of aim makes sight alignment easier because the sights would be more readily available and aligned as the shooter pulls their focus back to their front sight and finds the equal height / equal light of the sights.

QUICK TIPS:

Bring them closer to the target but not too close. Imagine if someone were to present on you and you were able to grab the muzzle. It's crazy but the grip on the muzzle will beat out a grip on the handle/grip portion of the pistol in a fight for the gun. For extreme close quarter shooting different techniques such as hip shooting such as shown by Yong Lee, see https://nextleveltraining.com/2009-training-classic-retention-shooting/ (one of our first videos we ever made).

Alternatively GWRAPS by Don Gulla where you grab the muzzle to retain control of the pistol in extreme close quarters. see https://nextleveltraining.com/cqweaponretention/

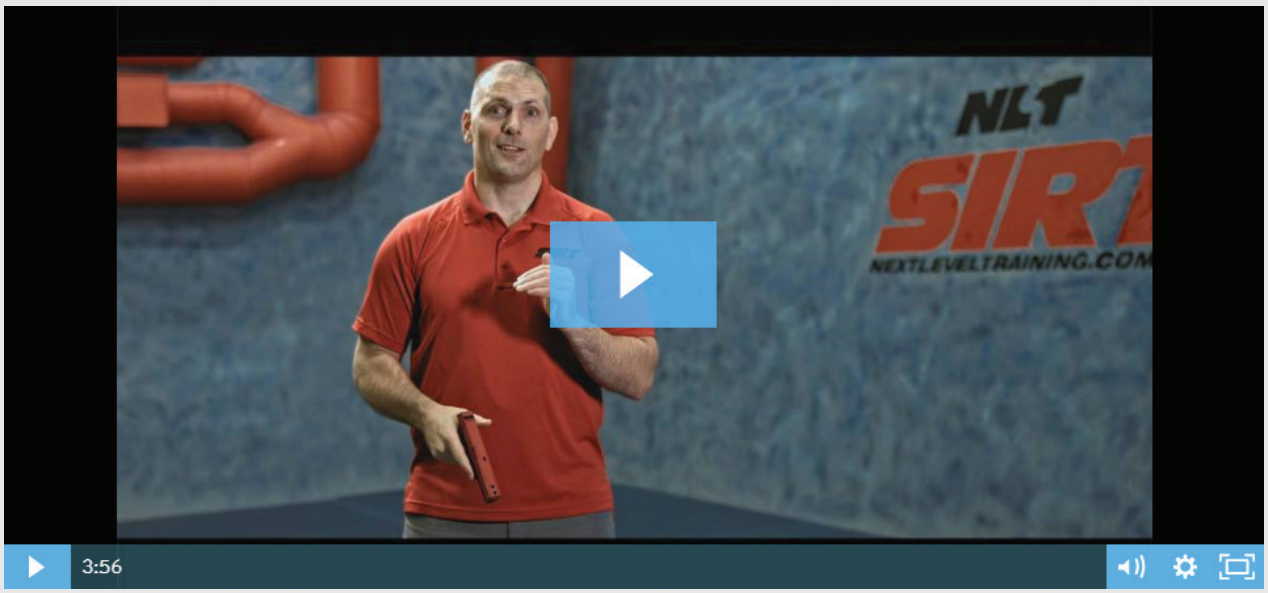
HOW BIG SHOULD THE TARGETS BE?

I would not go bigger than an 8½ by 11 sheet of paper because that's actually a rather generous acceptable accuracy zone. If you're under a time constraint, a big target like this will work. Personally I like to fold the width and length about into thirds for a little bit smaller acceptable accuracy zone. Folding 8½ by 11 sheet of paper into halves top and bottom (making it 4¼ by 5½ inches) is a little bit too small, but I wouldn't get too caught up in the acceptable accuracy/combat accuracy size of the target. We definitely want to be bigger than post it notes for this drill though.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/npa-drill-confidence-builder-and-knowing-limits/

26 - CHANGE DISTANCE TO TARGETS



OVERVIEW:

The acceptable accuracy zone is really a cone angle the muzzle which is a function of target size and target distance. A big target at a further size in theory has the same minute of angle as a smaller target closer. However, this one key difference between the bigger target at a further distance, eye focus needs to shift further and secondly, learning how accurate you are at certain distances with commonly sized acceptable accuracy zone targets.

When you keep the acceptable accuracy zone the same but you put more distance between the shooter and the target, you're building an awareness of how accurate you are at that distance. In other words, whether we're talking about neutralizing threats or scoring points in some form of pistol competition like IDPA or USPSA, the acceptable accuracy zone (i.e. the target) is the same size, what changes is distance. **One of the best skills we can develop regarding natural point of aim is simply knowing how accurate we are at what distances.**

IS DISTANCE THE ONLY FACTOR FOR HOW MUCH SIGHT PICTURE WE NEED?

Actually distance is not the only factor where there's a plethora of other factors to know how accurate we need to be.

Un-warmed up: First and foremost how accurate are we when we're un-warmed up? That's quite a bit different than after we've done a few repetitions and a drill on the range.

Temperature: The hands can act quite a bit slower and less

functional when they are cold. Particularly when the knuckles are cold and numb.

Target Movement: The target moving in particular moving at us. Things coming at us tend to make us a lot more flinchy and less accurate.

At any rate, the equation isn't totally simple where you go to the range and you can point shoot at 8 yards and that's your distance to draw and point shoot. The best we can do is train un-warmed up at home with the SIRT pistol in many different contexts and build substantive confidence in our ranges we can point shoot. Of course validate on the range with live fire as much as possible (hopefully you can find a range you can draw at, etc.).

EYE SHIFTING FOCUS

When you're further from the target the eyes have to do different things as far as look at the target and pull the focus back further which is a little bit more of a muscular contraction on your eyeball changing the focus more extreme distances. The repetitions at random distances build knowledge of the distance we are accurate at a learned mixture of point shooting and sight awareness. This is a key skill to develop and it takes a lot of time to develop over weeks and months even years. We're not talking about a lot of work, but just getting some daily reps with the SIRT pistol around the house on targets at varying distances. I mentioned this before in other parts of this book but I can't stress how important this is for building the substantive confidence by "adding records to the intuitive database."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why not use just a really small target like a few inches high and wide and shoot close?

A: For two reasons. First off it's much easier for your eye to pull back focus to the sight when close to the targets.

Secondly, a smaller target fails to give us a judge of distance for how accurate we are based on a normal-sized acceptable accuracy zone. As noted in the video for this lesson, a USPSA target A-zone hit is 15 centimeters wide 28 centimeters high. I do not know if this represents organs exactly or if there's any science behind that particular dimension, but it's not a bad standard to go by where any shot within that 15x28mm area is a pretty good hit if you superimpose that onto a person who is an imminent lethal threat. Therefore, when you shoot an acceptable/combat accuracy zone target around your house and note the hits and misses, you learn about your accuracy at a given distance. You are also subconsciously taking note of those distances to build your substantive confidence to know the mixture of sights and natural point of aim and moreover, know your (current) limitations.

Q: Why is warming up bad?

A: Warming up isn't bad it's just that we actually get better after we warm up and **shooters have to be good un-warmed up**.

WHAT EXACTLY IS "ACCEPTABLE ACCURACY" AND "COMBAT ACCURACY":

Acceptable accuracy means any shot in an acceptable accuracy zone has no more or less value than any other location in this zone. Meaning, any shot in an acceptable accuracy zone is a good shot. A dead center hit has no more value than a hit near the edge.

Combat accuracy generally means the same thing (but sounds cooler). However, depending on who you talk to and in what context, combat accuracy can include misses, but had the effect of changing the threat's behavior. For example, with long gun shooting, an 800m shot at a combatant's feet might have the desired effect of changing that opposing combatant's behavior.

At any rate, I just use the term "acceptable accuracy zone" and make sure students understand any hit in this zone is good. Taking time for a perceived better hit in the dead center is bad (waists time without benefit).

Q: Can you leave a SIRT around the house to train with?

Yes, the SIRT is inert, it can't go boom and it's not a live fire tool. We strongly encourage people to have the SIRT visibly available to sneak in reps. Be cautious you are not carrying a live fire pistol and get weapons confusion. Also pick good target areas in your house with no people immediately therebehind. Corner areas on exterior walls are pretty darn good safe target areas.

Q: Is it dangerous to train in the house even with a SIRT pistol?

A: I would say with 100 percent confidence it's much more dangerous to not train at all. We try to absolute mitigate the risk of any injury and that is one reason why I developed the SIRT training pistol. The biggest concern I have is weapons confusion where people do not follow the protocol and interject a live fire pistol in their training area. Place the SIRT pistol in the house where you do not carry live fire to get quick trainings in during the day. The skills that are developed over weeks, months, and years are astonishing. If you do it, your students will do it, and you can build your local tribe and continue to teach additional drill-based classes to help sustain your training business.

Q: How much time does it take to get "un-warmed up" between short trainings?

There's no hard data on this but after 1 or 2 hours away from a SIRT we are not as warmed up and calibrated. I would get as many reps in as you can with the SIRT throughout the day your schedule allows. If you have the choice, spacing out your motor learning skills in more of a "distributed learning" manner as opposed to just one "block learning" has a lot of benefits of: 1) training un-warmed up, 2) allows greater growth of myelin around your nerve cells and 3) is most efficient learning for the total given amount of training time.

Q: What is the affiliate program?

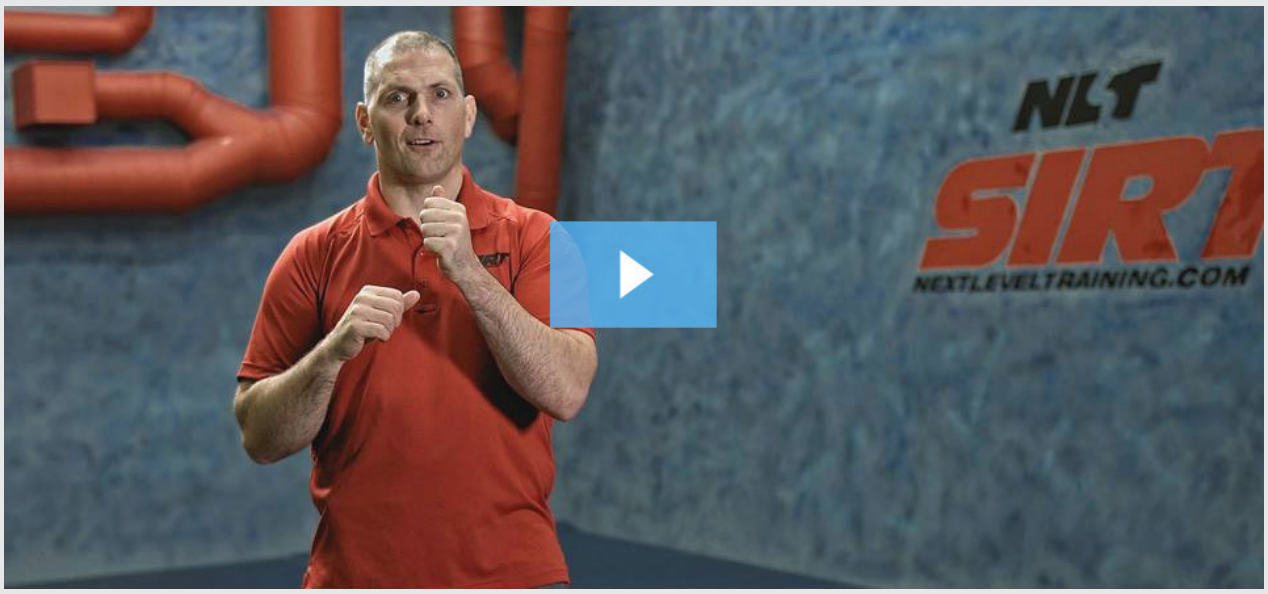
A: The affiliate program provides you as an instructor with a link to give to your students as well as a code. So for example if you send out your proprietary link to your students and they click on it, if they eventually buy a SIRT (even if it is later on) you get designated for a commission. It's a real easy way to get credit for the purchase because you're probably likely the root cause for them purchasing and we want to reward you. There's no reason for them to go somewhere else to purchase the SIRT if you are the reason why they made the investment.

Contact customerservice@nextleveltraining.com for more information if you haven't signed up already. The affiliate program is a win, win, win. Of course it's a win for us because we get another off SIRT into a shooter's hands, it's a win for you because the students train more at home and are more likely to take a follow-up class as well as give you a monetary commission. Finally, it's a win for the student because they have invested in their training and hopefully more training with you (as opposed to wasting their money on a second useless flatscreen TV 6 inches bigger than their current one).

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/npa-drill-confidence-builder-and-knowing-limits-warm-up-issues/

27 - SIGHTS INTRO AND DRILL FOR FAR TARGET- ONE SHOT



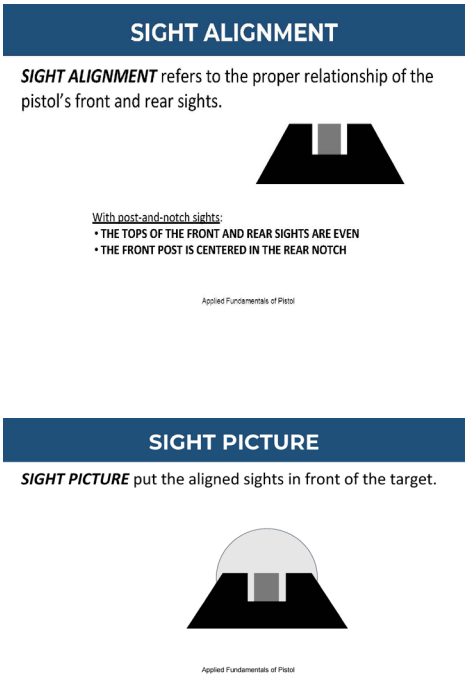
OVERVIEW:

SIGHT ALIGNMENT

Hopefully your students already understand equal height and equal light but you can definitely show the presentation slides just to make sure they understand sight alignment. You can use a red take-up laser and take one of your targets with one of your designated SIRT Training Pistols and get perfect sight alignment, sight picture on the exact center of a small target and note the red laser impact. You may want to just red laser this far down out of sight picture as possible and put a small mark on the wall at that red laser dot. Now if you have any students with a sight alignment problem, have them go to the exact spot (the exact distance to the target). Tell them to line the sights up on the target and prep the trigger. Note the red laser impact and make any corrections rotating the gun necessary to get the red laser on your reference dot (again which is way below the target, way out-of-sight picture). It's kind of a trainer's parlor trick to see if they have sight picture before they even break a shot and when they break shot after you have corrected them, they may look at you in awe but it's your secret.

TRAINING SIGHT ALIGNMENT

One of the best ways to train hardcore sight alignment is to grossly separate natural point of aim from sight alignment by increasing the distance to the targets as far back as your room will allow. You can reposition the firing line far back from the wall and simply tell the students to shoot the target with one shot. You do not want the student to walk-in the shots, so instruct them to present the pistol from the high ready position, prep the trigger while



extending and make sure the red laser (trigger prep laser) is turned off. Then when the sights are aligned, they break the shot. You may very well notice a lot of trigger mechanic deficiencies at this further distance, but notice the first impact of the shot indicating laser and see if that impact is consistently off. For example, if the impact is consistently high, they probably have the front sight sitting high in the rear notch.

Demo this where you extend out and break the shot and then pull back to low ready, take a breath and extend out and do the same. This is not a drill where you drive the target to the ground with multiple shots, etc. This is a drill to train the ability to acquire the front sight with equal height and equal light with the target blurry therebehind, and break a shot.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What is equal height and equal light?

A: This is a quick little saying where the top surfaces of the front sight and the rear sight are all equal collinear, that is they have equal height. Equal light means the air gap left and right between the front sight and the notch in the rear sight are equal distance. Hence equal light.

Q: Why not use just a smaller target at a closer distance?

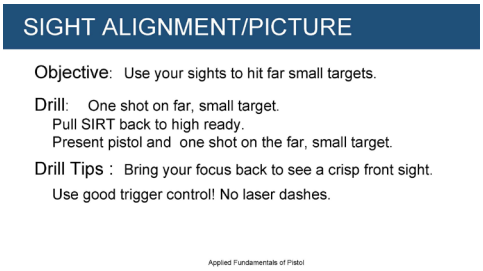
A: Shooters need to know how accurate they can be at what distance on regular sized acceptable accuracy zone sized targets. Secondly and more importantly, the shooter has to pull the focus back from the target a considerable more distance to the front sight. Further, the target is blurrier so they have to learn how to have a blurry target behind sight picture when they have that crisp front sight focused.

Q: Do I shoot one eye or two eyes open?

A: This is a big topic ,but you could tell them to close their non-dominant eye when they go with hard core front sight. There is some weird stuff that can go on with their non-dominant eye which I'm not going to go into this course, but just to plant a seed, it's possible that your non-dominant eye will remained aligned on target which your focus length pulls back 22 to 23 inches to the front sight. This is way, way, way beyond the scope of this course, but super interesting stuff!

Q: What is a T-zone target?

A: The T-zone is another acceptable accuracy/combat accuracy zone for the headshots. I'm honestly not sure of the exact terminal



ballistic science of how this represents head shots but it's a common term in the industry. In all honesty it's probably worth someone to investigate exact target areas. I know there are some anatomy targets as well as 3-D targets out there which could be worth looking into.

Q: What is walking in the shots?
A: When a shooter walks in the shots, they're taking the feedback from the shot impact to adjust the pistol for their next shot. You may see this on the range when the bullet holes gradually "walk in" from the perimeter area into the center portion. Walking in the shots can happen with a SIRT Training Pistol if people miss and they use the shot impact information to realign the pistol. It's not the worse thing in the world, but for purpose of this drill where we want the sights to be the root cause for the good hit, we shoot, pull back the SIRT to high ready (or Sul position if you like) and present the pistol again, re-acquire sight picture/sight alignment, prep the trigger, break the shot. Then repeat.

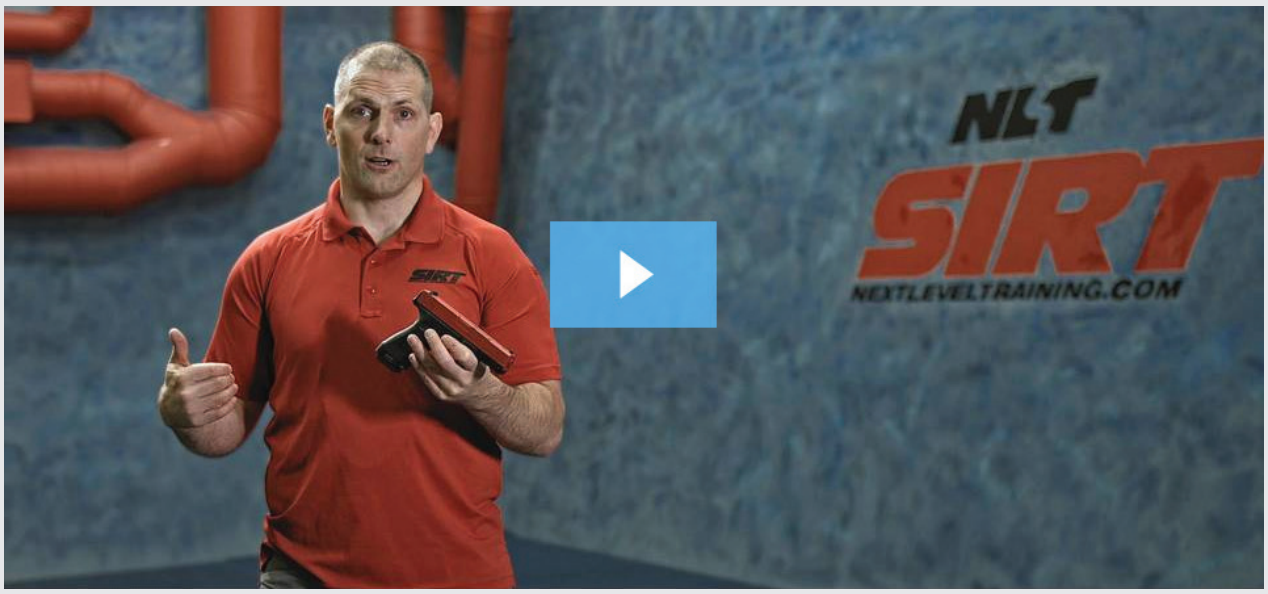
GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sights-intro-and-drill-for-far-target-one-shot/

QUICK TIPS:

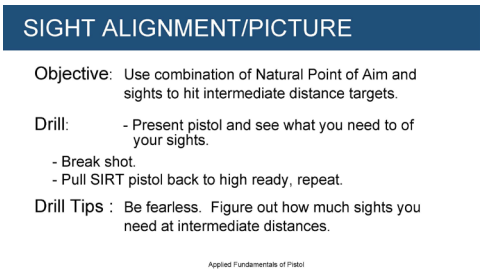
Be sure your pistol is 100 percent sighted in before doing this drill. Even if you sighted your personal SIRT in before class, make sure you have a 1.5 millimeter hex wrench handy (I keep mine in my wallet right by my concealed carry card) and make any fine tune adjustments so that impact laser (green laser in a pro model) is absolutely right behind the sights at the particular distance you are shooting. It feels best to have a nice clean shot exactly where your sights are and you want to put your best foot forward for your students. But hey, if you miss, it's a good opportunity to be modest and tell them that you need to train more just like they do. ☺

28- SIGHTS POINT OF IMPACT LASER NOT ALIGNED TO SIGHTS



OVERVIEW:

This drill is not so much a progression but a variant on the sight alignment drill. Instead of having the shot indicating laser aligned right behind sight picture (which you definitely want to do for your own high-volume training), adjust the shot indicating laser as far from sight picture as possible, preferably downward, if you can, and off to the side. If you have a choice probably off to the left side so the shot indicating laser is down and to the left (since most people are right-eye dominate). With a partner, set up your room where you have this one particular SIRT at on particular target and aim a perfect shot on the target and note the impact of the laser. Put a reference dot on the wall like a tack or one of those small circular stickers and test it many times to make sure that laser impact truly is consistent and you do have sight alignment and sight picture. Now during class you can use this one special SIRT (granted this takes a SIRT to be dedicated for this one drill but you can adjust it during break if you like). Let students aim up on target and for purpose of this drill look at the target when they break the shot and notice the green laser impact. If the impact is high, then their sight alignment is high. If the shot indicating laser impact is left or right from that lower reference dot, the their sight alignment is left or right. Now if the laser moves a ton as far as sweeping low left, obviously they have a trigger mechanic problem, but note the first portion of that laser impact and that's where their sights were aligned when that shot finally broke. Make sure, of course, your reference dot is visible to you from this distant location when you're standing by the student.



WHAT'S THIS DRILL DO?

This drill further removes any visual distraction from the laser. Normally, the laser impact is not a distraction but reaffirms their quality (or unfortunately sometimes lack of quality) of movement. There's something about that instant feedback of a blurry laser impact. Even though the laser dot is blurry and in the background (because we are focused on the front sight) it's sufficiently visible at almost any target distance to give that quick feedback on quality of that shot. Basically, did you get a hit or not. Did you do things right or not. But there are times when you want to isolate this feedback from the shooter and just keep them "in the dark" so to speak so you can get a sense of their true pure sight alignment when they are breaking the shot.

This is not an earth-shattering drill and I haven't done it that much personally just because it takes time to set up and run people through it. I have not found a huge benefit to hiding the shot indicating laser, but it is an option you have as a variant when doing a sight alignment drill.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: How long does it take to set up? Can I set it up myself?

A: This can be very easy to set up. Make sure you have a 1.5 millimeter hex wrench and adjust the shot indicating laser and make sure the red trigger take-up laser switch is turned off. One way of setting this up you can adjust the laser low and to the left as far as possible by taking the upper hex screw in the front part of the slide and going lefty loosey turning it counterclockwise (not too far to remove it from the trigger module) but far enough to lower the laser down and then for a 110 model, turn the hex wrench on the right side of the SIRT to the left (counterclockwise so the laser move to the left. You don't have to move it to the left but you want the impact laser in some obscure area. Now shoot the target with both eyes open keeping perfect sight alignment and notice the laser impact. Walk down to your target area and make a mark where that laser impact was and walk back to your designated shooting area and shoot again and make sure you got it right. Otherwise it's a lot easier to have two people to set this up.

Q: What are the benefits to this variation?

A: One benefit is you make the feedback completely removed and the shooter has less reliance on anything external except for those front sights.

QUICK TIP:

PRACTICE BEFORE HAND:

I wouldn't do this in a class without practicing it quite a bit. Generally just practicing the set up and doing it on some friends or family and gaging their reaction.

ONE SHOT!

Again instruct them to take only one shot on the target. You can tell them that they one shot to light up the sights and it the target. Make sure the target is clearly identifiable at a far distance.

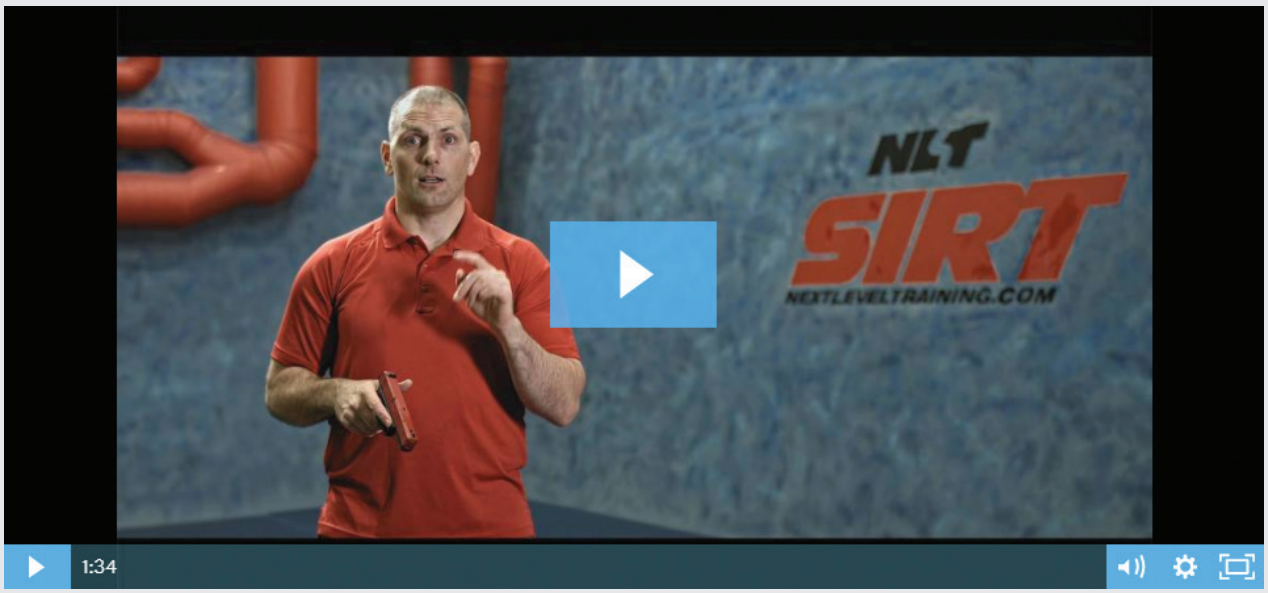
WHAT DISTANCE ARE ALL THESE DRILLS DONE?

Again, as far as room will allow but I like to go back even as far as 15 yards if the room allows for such distances. That tends to be the limit for many rooms, but I would play around with it and even go as far back as 20 yards if your room is big enough.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sights-points-of-impact-laser-not-aligned-to-sights/

29 - RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURAL POINT OF AIM IN SIGHT



OVERVIEW:

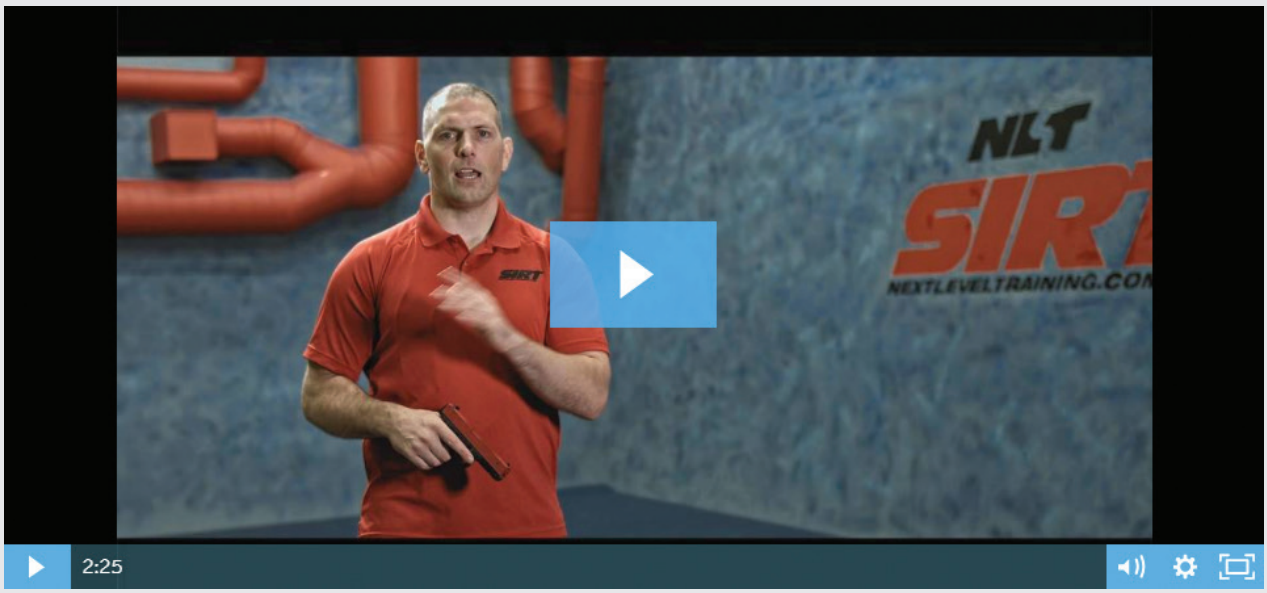
This is actually quite obvious, but this concept is worth mentioning and explicitly focusing upon. **When we have great natural point of aim the sights are already aligned.** Now granted some people could shoot from the hip and have great natural point of aim from the hip (like the infamous Taran Butler), but a great natural point of aim extension of the gun already aligns the sights. Now if the size and distance is appropriate for sights, there's not much work of pulling the focus back getting the final equal height and equal light and applying the final bit of trigger pressure to break off the shot.

This topic indirectly deals with sequencing where the shooter presents the pistol, preps the trigger, and simultaneously pulls their focus back to the front sight so as soon as sight picture is confirmed the trigger's already prepped and the shot is ready to break.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sights-npa-helps-achieve-sight-picture/

30 - WHEN DO YOU NEED YOUR SIGHTS?



OVERVIEW:

To really answer this question fully we have to discuss open-loop v. closed-loop systems. An open-loop action is where the movement of your action is fast enough you don't get the 100 percent feedback to make corrections. For example in baseball, when swinging a bat at a ball, the baseball player is very much committed to the swing. He can only adjust his swing so much as a ball comes barreling in at say 90 miles per hour. When shooting a pistol, when we rip off a shot doing a natural point of aim shot, this is an open-loop shot. Meaning we're not getting a lot of feedback from the sights to make corrections. We are just going off the feel of the gun and ripping off the shot.

A closed-loop system can be best described in another example. If I am connecting two dots together on a white board with a pen, as I trace from the first dot to the second dot I might adjust up, down, up, down based on my visual perception where the marker is and eventually guide the marker right to the second dot. This is a closed-loop system where I'm taking in information to complete the task. A hard core front sight focus is a closed loop shot where the shooter is taking information from the sights to make small adjustments to the align the gun before breaking the shot.

I would strongly suggest researching this much further because it's very important with any type of motor neuron learning.

The main point here is don't teach a closed-loop suggestion to an open-loop activity. That's probably not completely stated technically correct but we can't instruct a technique requiring a lot of feedback where there's no time to get that feedback to

execute the task (in an open-loop manner). Therefore, to know when to point, shoot a natural point of aim you have to simply know it from mere repetitions at the given distances you have trained and experienced success and failure. It's not possible to look at the target and reference a target to the back of the sight and then figure out whether you're going to focus on the sight or not. That's crazy. It takes too long. If you're going to do that you might as well just always look at the sights (if possible which it may not be in a critical incident with a live threat in front of you viscerally demanding your focus and attention). All the repetitions and successes and failures in those repetitions will give a shooter the intuitive knowledge when they need sights. Their natural point of aim will continue to grow and be functional at greater distances. It's easy to natural point of aim close and it's easy to know you'll need sights at very far targets say beyond 15 yards but the intermediate distance of 7 to 12 yards are a little bit more difficult to know how much to use and need the sights.

Using the "permission to fail card" is important because the self exploration of knowing how good you are at what distance in part as failure intermixed therein where they push themselves harder to new distances with a greater amount of speed and ultimately to the point of failure.

This is a good time to interject that the student is "warmed up", that is, they are more calibrated than when they shoot "cold" just grabbing their gun from their gun safe. Plant the seed they should train at home with some of these quick drills. Also we provide Drill of the Day where they can get daily drills text messaged to them on the days and time they choose. See SIRTLiving.com/DoD.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Why is there so much focus on the balance between natural point of aim and sights?

A: This is a big topic which is really not sufficiently trained in the shooting community. For example, everyone on a live fire range is on the same firing line for safety reasons. Of course, we absolutely have to have a straight line of shooters for live fire training, but with the SIRT Training Pistol, we can vary up the distances extremely quickly in our own home. All these repetitions at the varying distances, fearlessly delivered, build intuitive records in our mental database to intuitively know how accurate we can be at given distances.

QUICK TIPS:

To demo this drill. Walk up relatively close to the target but not within grappling extreme close quarter distance (about 4 or 5 yards) and extend the pistol out (or draw from

NOTE: Warmed Up

- You are very warmed up (you have had 100's of reps the past few hours).
- Your will perform better when you are warmed up.
- You need to train and know your limits when you are **un-warmed up**.
- Train these drills at home with a SIRT (and train more daily drills, SIRTLiving.com/dod).

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

concealed to plug your conceal-carry draw class) and hit the target. Use one of the bigger targets like an 8½ by 11 sheet of paper or paper plate. If you haven't already, you can talk about an acceptable/combat accuracy zone where any shot within the area is a good shot. Now gradually take steps further and further back telling your students that you're getting an idea of how good your natural point of aim is and also let them know when you start to naturally pull your focus back to the sights. As you are getting further back say 8 yards, 9 yards, 10 yards, you may start referencing your sights more.

You are leading by example showing the students this blended notion of natural point of aim blending into more sight awareness. If you have the time you can keep going back to where you tell them you now have to have complete sight focus to get the sufficiently accurate shots.

Further, tell them that you're obviously warmed up and your natural point of aim is aligning those sights practically immediately on the draw. So you could probably point shoot at a far distance because you're warmed up, but of course you want to know your performance when you're un-warmed up. Hence you may repeat this drill from a further distance in a few hours casually around your house in between whatever projects/tasks you're doing at home.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/sights-when-do-i-use-sights/

31 - HOW ALIGNED TO THE SIGHTS HAVE TO BE?

OVERVIEW:

If you choose to do this drill, you can very simply demo misaligned sights on a target for a given distance and show the laser impact. An easy way to do this is just tell the students that you are looking at the front sight for example, all the way to the left side of the notch and you break the shot, then you move it all the way to the right and break the shot. All you're doing is observing the laser impact (bullet hole impact/muzzle alignment) with these different sight misalignments. You can further put the sight up and down. It basically gives a student a general idea of the correlation of the sight "misalignment" and shot location.

This is generally interesting information, but I find its practical implementation not extremely useful. If the sights are off and you need sights then generally you just correct for sight picture and break the shot. The feedback loop of seeing the sights misaligned and correcting sight alignment is fairly quick. But it's generally good to know these angles of far the sights can be off and how much does the misalignment really matter at what distances.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: How do you implement this in the class?

A: You can implement this in a similar manner as all the other drills and students really utilize your permission to fill a card deliberately and misalign the sights, break the shots and observe the laser impact. You can also run this to where they take a guess on how

far they can misalign the sights and still hit the target. This is kind of strange because they have to maintain sight picture with the misaligned sights all aligned in the center of the target. Then they observe where the front sight is which can be difficult when it is to the left of the notch. Generally speaking they may pull the front sight to the left or the right but also raise it a little bit so they can see how far it is off. I found this to make for some fairly interesting discussion on how "accurate" pistols can be at close range. The problem is though when you couple other factors of moving targets, trigger control issue, general stress in shooting, etc. This all becomes a little bit theoretical where handguns can get shockingly inaccurate with all of these factors combined.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/misaligned-sights-but-good-nuff/

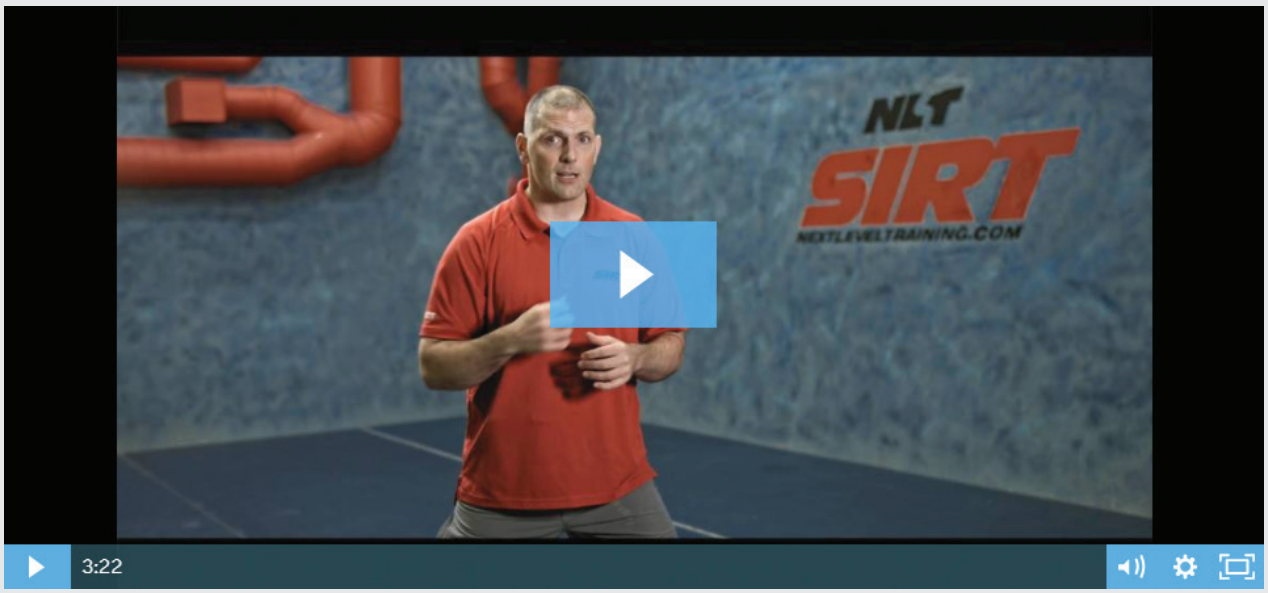
QUICK TIPS:

I would suggest doing this drill on a large target such as an 8½ by 11 piece of paper on the wall. Now in the class video shown below I did this on a sticky which was kind of a mistake because I do want to show the impact still being within a target area.

NOTE:

I did not make a slide for this, but you can interject this concept if you so choose. I am honestly iffy on presenting this because sometimes more information is too much information. This concept has some inherent issues where we are asking them for a sight awareness and yet they are not aligning the sights when having this crisp sight focus. There might be some benefit because they can note the "feel" of the gun in the hand, correlate this feel to the laser impact and also note how the sights are aligned and how this further relates to the laser impact (where the shot hit).

32 - STANCE (PLATFORM)



OVERVIEW:

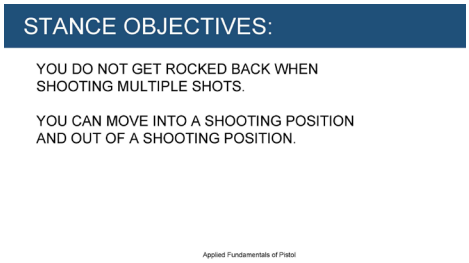
Stance or otherwise referred to as platform is basically the orientation of the knees, hips and angle of the upper body. You can think of stance with two objectives.

FIRST OBJECTIVE OF STANCE:

The first objective of stance is maintain the upper torso aligned and on target very similar to the second objective of grip returning the muzzle to a consistent location after each shot. A common deficiency is getting rocked back during rapid shots completely changing the orientation of the upper body. The amount of shift of the aim of the pistol vertically can actually be quite significant when a shooter gets rocked back. Try facing a wall and rock back when you pin the trigger with the SIRT and notice how much the laser imact lifts up. If you're trying to do an open loop, rip 'em out hard, shots at a point shooting distance, you have now changed your whole base platform. This forces you to do a closed loop, require sights or otherwise make some feedback corrections by seeing you bullet hits rise to realign the muzzle down to keep it on target.

SECOND OBJECTIVE OF STANCE:

The second objection of stance relates to movement and can be broken down in two prongs. The first prong is movement into position. Generally speaking shooting is not about standing still but running into position and sequencing our movements to shoot as quickly as possible. So we have to be able to shoot running into a position.



The second prong relates to getting out of that shooting position. We want to have a stance where our knees are already bents and we're ready to move to a new location without any false steps. We don't want a stance where we have to re-bend our knees, drop our center or gravity, take a false step (where we step backwards to go forwards) to reposition ourselves to a second location (whether that be cover, concealment, etc.).

DRILL TO GET A PROPER STANCE:

I do not spend a lot of time on stance because the foot placement is irrelevant of aligning the breastplate on target. From any foot placement you can rotate to the left or right from the knees, hips and thoracic vertebrae to get a wide array of shooting positions and any movement of the feet will be simply a waste of time, precious time. However, there is something about the overall body position and moreover the almost, "attitude" of the shooter with a forward aggressive lean.

A quick way I have found to get stance in super fast (as best shown in the lesson video) is to do the defensive basketball drill where the students mirror me left and right and when I say "freeze", they have to freeze and stand still. Inevitably, I say "freeze" and they stop but a few students immediatly stand up and I have to run the drill again, but after I get them to actually freeze in place I'll pick the one student with the best stance and note some of their stance qualities.

They are basically moving into a position so they will already have a naturally athletic stance with pretty good balance in their feet generally, bent knees, hip flexion, slightly arched back with their butt out, and chest up. Again I don't care about specific foot placement. This drill works incredibly fast to get them in a stance and I like to reiterate that it's more mental to be aggressive in your stance than it is about particular body orientation.

As noted in the grip course at Video https://nextleveltraining.com/grip-development/filming-livefire/ you could utilize a conventional cell phone on the range on videotape yourself to see if you're rocking back. When the back your head rocks back in say a bill drill (rapid shot drill), there is generally stance deficiency. One way to remedy this is to simply run into position and shoot. The best stances I've ever seen are right after someone had ran into a position. The worst stance with the greatest deficiencies is when someone draws static is standing tall and gets significantly rocked backward after each shot.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Isn't foot placement critical for building your natural point of aim?

A: Foot position definitely adds a factor on how your hips naturally align based on your physiology, which in turn, affects naturally

STANCE DRILL:

Objective: To quickly get into a good shooting stance.

Drill:
- MIRROR ME LEFT AND RIGHT.
- When I say "freeze" don't move
- Self observe your overall body orientation.

Drill Tips: Don't worry about your specific foot position.

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

STANCE:

Key components of Stance
- Bent knees
- Knees over midfoot
- Nose over toes
- Hips flexed and cocked back
- Arched lower back
- Forward, aggressive lean

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

STANCE BODY MOBILITY:

Note rotational mobility in:
- Knees
- Hips
- Thoracic vertebrates

DRILL: See you far you can turn left and right (without moving feet).

DRILL TIP: Align breastplate to target to help align gun when you present pistol.

Applied Fundamentals of Pistol

how you align your breastplate which in turn affects how you punch out and align the gun. However, since we're focusing on speed and accuracy with a pistol you do not have the luxury of aligning our feet with minor little shuffle steps left and right to get a great foot position to then in turn punch out and break off a shot. The amount of time to shuffle the feet is so long we might as well punch out the pistol and align the sights and further it's very questionable in a critical incident would take that time to get that super-precise foot placement.

Q: What do you mean aligning your breastplate to the target?

A: If you want to give one cueing point to help your natural point of aim, have the shooter be aware of their sternum/breastplate where it is completely perpendicular and squared up to the target. This awareness will aid them in aligning their knees, hips and thoracics (their three mobility systems) to get right on the target and help build that natural point of aim. Eventually, the breast plate alignment awareness is driven into the **subconscious competence** where the shooter sees the target, subconsciously aligns the breastplate while they are drawing and presenting out on target, and bam the sights are right there (if they need them).

GO TO THIS SECTION IN THE ON-LINE COURSE

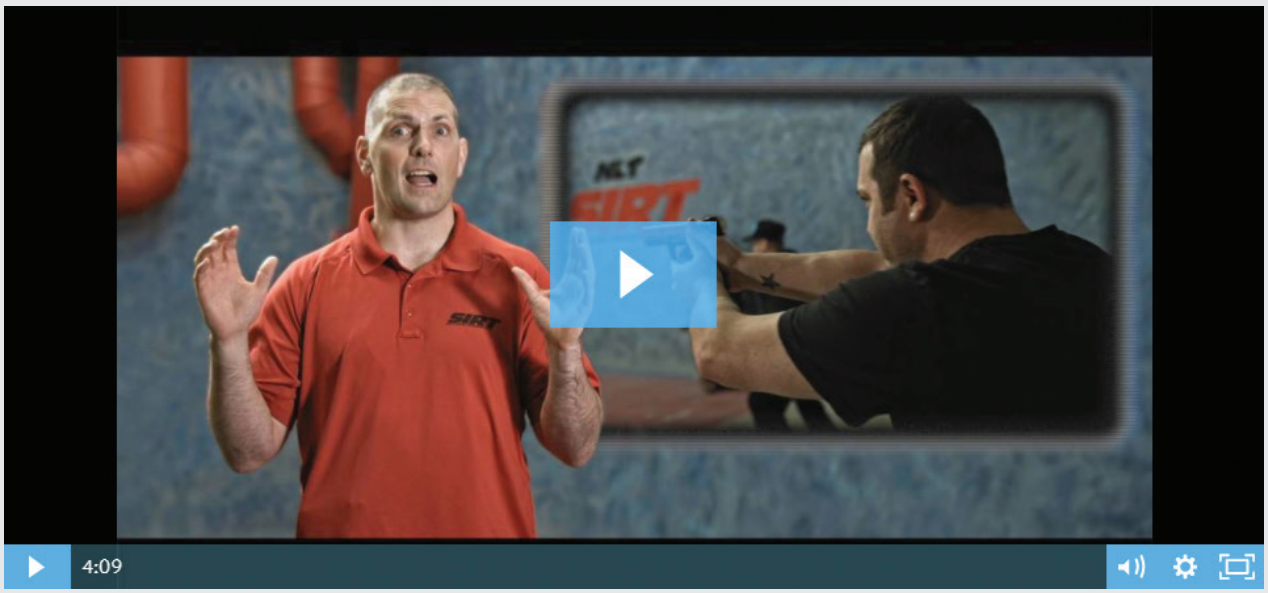
https://sirtliving.com/lessons/stance-platform/

QUICK TIPS:

Try practicing this "getting a stance" drill with some friends or family members before doing it in a class. You may notice that sometimes their stance is a little bit wider than may be ideal but that's okay. In fact, that wider foot placement might be more realistic where they'll end up if they ever really have to shoot in a critical incident since that's where they naturally stop as you do this "defensive basketball drill".

If you have to repeat the drill because someone stood up right after you said freeze, take note in the room who has the best natural athletic stance with those main cueing points of knees over mid foot, butt out with flexed hips (the angle between their lumbar and femur is flexed meaning a sharper angle), they have a slight arch in their back and their butt is out (athletic stance) and ideally their chest is up with shoulders slightly back with their shoulder blades pulled back just a little bit. Sometimes I identify that person and when I run the drill again, I focus the class around him or her and I will apply some energy by pushing them back at their shoulders or near their breastplate or have them extend their hands out like they have the pistol and push on their hands and show how their low aggressive athletic stance aids in their balance to absorb recoil. Thereafter I'll demo that rocking back and how much shifting backwards will adjust the point of aim using the lasers of the SIRT.

33 - PROGRESSOR DRILL



OVERVIEW:

This is one of my favorite drills to do in groups as well as just individually. Let me first start off just by explaining the drill. Set up five cones or markers, at the farthest distance possible up to 25 yards all the way up to 5 yards. I will generally set up at a zigzag pattern left right, left right all the way up to the close distance. You can use one target or set up a target for each shooting position. It doesn't really matter. With SIRT pistol move to the first position at the far distance, present out and break the shot on the target. Then simply run to the next position, break down, extend the pistol, prep the trigger and break the shot. Thereafter, move to the next position and shoot, the next position and shoot, until you are at the front most forward position and fearlessly break off shots utilizing a lot of natural point of aim.

In one sense you're going from hard core sight alignment all the way to natural point of aim as you progress forward. It is a few shooting positions (note shoot one to several shots at each shooting position). This is a super fun athletic drill and it's almost a workout. When I'm on the live fire range, I will shoot this drill once live fire completely cold (one person at a time absolutely on the live fire range). Thereafter, we ensure our exclusively controlled range has no live fire pistols on anybody and we go SIRT only doing the drill to get in more reps. I do have some specific progressions of one shot, multiple shots, etc. described further in this video https://youtu.be/-p3c0kUsrxI.

But for class implementation there's a much bigger benefit we can achieve with this drill and that is simply being aware of moving no-shoots (people). Logistically, this is a great drill because as people progress to the more forward targets, these students are moving no-shoots for the people just beginning the drill from far away. Everyone is part of everyone else's drill which is great logistically speaking. The safety protocol is of course as strict as it is during your whole class. Absolutely no live fire tools whatsoever.

CONTROVERSY!

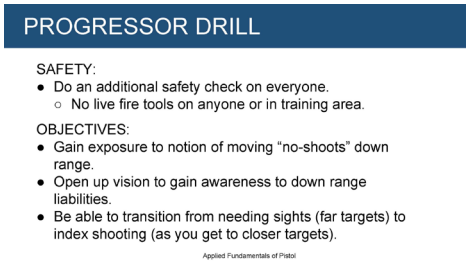
A few instructors are hard-nosed about the safety rules and categorically applying the rules with absolutely no person down range whatsoever when you are shooting a SIRT Training Pistol. Of course it is absolutely critical we have extremely safe ranges with strict 180 degree rules. However, are we not training people for self-defense? In a self-defense scenario are we 100 percent guaranteed there are bistanders down range? And what does down range exactly mean? Is the bad guy only going to be down that alley with absolutely no liabilities therearound? Now I'm not saying thread the needle and take super risky shots. But we absolutely have to have the skill to not become so hyper-focused on targets we lose absolute peripheral awareness where a bistander (a no-shoot) runs into our line of fire.

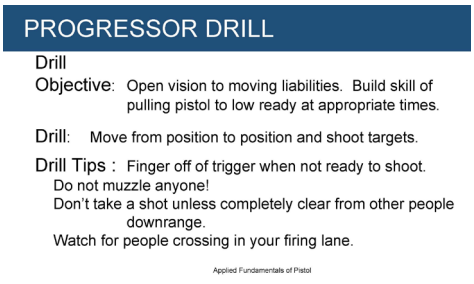
Stress to your students do not sneak the round just to the left or right of anyone. Don't take chances. They should only take shots that's absolutely sure they can align the muzzle without putting the muzzle on another student downrange.

Remember this is just a drill. You have to tell them you would never do this live fire obviously because the benefits are not worth the risk. There are other variants of this drill such as I've seen Todd Fossey and his FIREarmed class do really cool drills where people run left and right in a hectic manner emulating crowd-like running bistander situations and the students in the drill have to negotiate these people to address an imminent, lethal, clear threat. In the big picture, we have to get some awareness and develop our peripheral vision to open up so we don't get hyper focused just that narrow line of of fire straight to the target.

HOW DO YOU SET UP THE CONES?

Set up the cones so the people in front clearly cross in front of the line of fire of that person shooting on the first position in the far back area. If your first cone is back and to the left and the next cone is a little bit more forward to the right, make that third cone much, much further to the left so people running from the second and third position clearly crosses between the shooter at the first position and their target. This will force a student at the first postion to get their finger off the trigger and get the gun down and not muzzle their fellow student in front of them. Again, this is a fairly integrated drill bringing all their fundamentals together, but





moreover, this drill integrates applied safety to build the skill to get their muzzle down and finger off trigger to not muzzle a bistander (a moving no shoot). It is not just about neutralizing the threat, its about practical safe practices.

DO I HAVE TO HAVE FIVE CONES AND FIVE TARGETS?

No, you don't need to have five shooting positions, but this number seems to generally work out well. I usually use five targets for a class because one target doesn't work as well because it gets to "busy" with laser impacts from all the students pounding it. When I shot this live fire (again only one shooter at a time of course), I like to have five targets so I see my hits at each shooting position. Of course I shot this with a shot timer and look at my splits, my time between shooting positions and generally note the time between shots (if for example I do about three shots per shooting location).

If I'm training by myself, I can get away with just one target with the SIRT and set up my semi-arbitrary shooting positions from far to close. If I am the only shooter, the single target does not get to "busy" with laser hits, so one target works for a quick drill set up.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRESSIONS ON THIS DRILL?

You can actually set up shooting positions with barricades, low ports, etc., so you practice getting down and fluidly into an awkward compromised shooting position breaking off shots and getting out of that position. In fact you can set up one position in your applied fundamentals class as a compromised shooting position and inform the students you have follow on class dedicated to compromised shooting positions (look for curriculums in the future from us). ☺

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Isn't this breaking some of the firearm rules we instructed?

A: No absolutely not. We're not pointing the SIRTs at anyone we're not willing to destroy, our finger is definitely off that trigger when we pull back to a Sul position. In short, this a practical application visual awareness drill (not to mention just getting good practical reps).

This is not a force on force drill with the SIRTs deliberately pointing at anyone. That requires another level of safety protocol. This is great opportunity to make sure they got true muzzle awareness and the ability to get that finger off the trigger when they're not ready to shoot.

QUICK TIPS:

Make sure the flooring is good with no slippery spots so no one slips when they step into position.This drill can be fairly athletic and actually almost a workout.

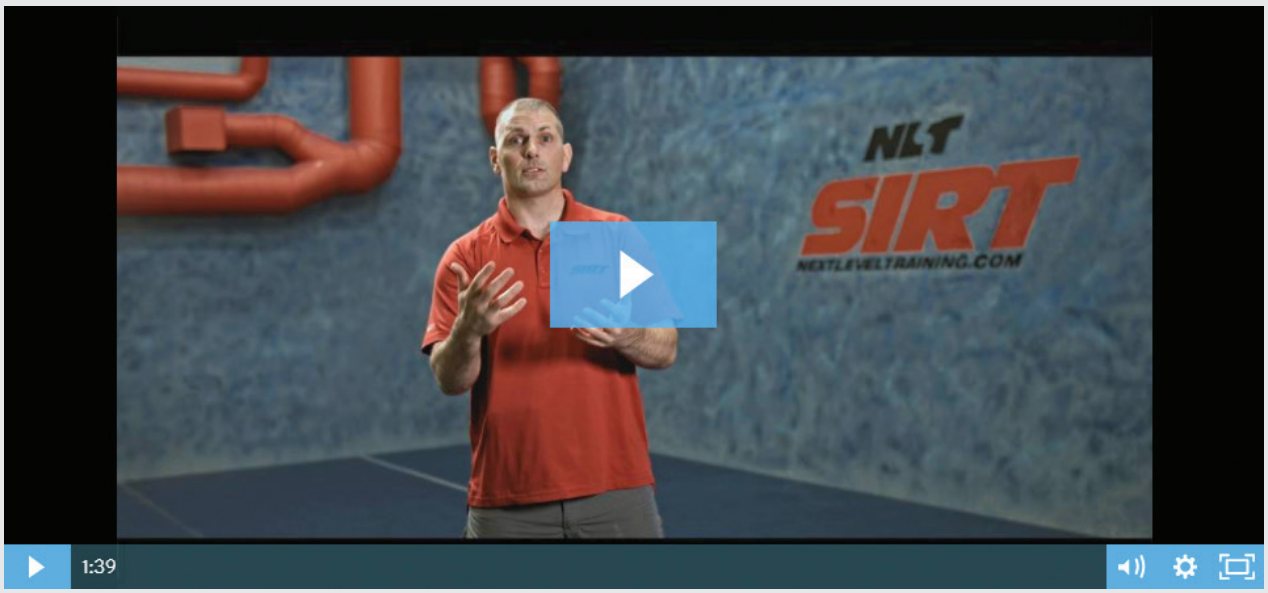
If you can move on shoot on your local live fire range, I highly recommend this drill. This is one of our core drills and a measure of our performance because it taxes so many skills. A preferred protocol is where we go live fire on this drill only once, un-warmed up to see where we are at and look at our times from out shot timer. We generally do 3 shots per shooting location so we burn up about 15 rounds in this set. Then execute four to five sets with SIRT pistol only at the same time (Britt Lentz and myself) and basically get more reps in. After about four to five sets with the SIRT, we go back to hitting the drill live atain (I reiterate only one person at a time live following all the range rules).

Not only does this save ammo, but it allows us to use ammo most effectively actually getting better on the range, making ground, real training. We have several progressions we do which can be seen in this youtube video (same one noted above, https://youtu.be/-p3c0kUsrxI).

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/progressor-drill/

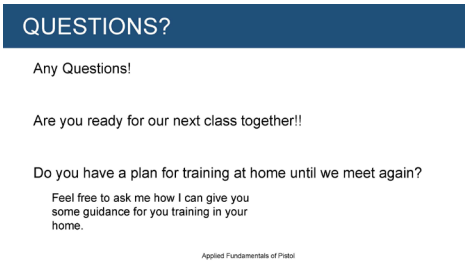
34 - CLOSING



OVERVIEW:

Congratulations! You made it to the end and I hope you've picked up a few tips, thoughts on progressions, and ultimately a complete set of tools to put on an additional course. Now this "train-the-trainer" course is directed towards instructors of varying levels of background and experience. Some instructors might already have a second follow-on course and may pick up a tip or two in this train-the-trainer course. We found many instructors don't have a follow-on course and are thirsting for some form of a curriculum to provide a more **drill based follow-on course**. Of course we highly recommend the NRA courses such as Personal Protection Inside and Outside the Home and such. These courses are fantastic along with United States Conceal Carry courses as well as getting into other instructor development programs such as ICE Training. The void we see in the training community is more of a simple straightforward, drill-based course comprising a lot of repetitions and coaching where perhaps the students might even break a little bit of a sweat with the activity.

There is a tremendous amount of coaching you can do with the students to hone in their grips and grip establishment. You can do a tremendous amount of diagnosing as far as they have a natural point of aim sight alignment problem with the first laser impact or trigger control type problems with severe dashes on the target. You can teach a student how to diagnose themselves and get them a SIRT in their hands to train at home.



WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?

I would strongly suggest looking into even another follow-on course after this one. As you can see, a drill-based course allows you to get a lot of drills in, where students need a lot of repetitions to hone in their motor neuron mechanics. Further, these courses are important because we have to **drill in the applied safety of finger off trigger when not ready to shoot and muzzle awareness**. If people take one course, whether it be the NRA Basic Pistol or what have you, there is simply not enough time repping the practical safety. It takes repetitions in a course like this, with feedback and a watchful eye from yourself, to make sure they deeply learn and understand: keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot as well as muzzle awareness, not pointing the SIRT and anything they are not willing to destroy.

FEEDBACK:

Please give feedback in the forum of the on-line portion so you can have your "hand on the rudder" of the ship as we build and expand these types of curriculums. Again this is your course, this is not a restrictive NextLevel Training course with rigid guidelines. Take ownership of it, embellish it with the ways you like to instruct these blocks. This is intended to be a catalyst to help instructors have that follow-on course to capitalize on their key asset, existing clients.

The best client is an existing client. You've already developed a relationship with your students. Additional courses to your students are not only fun, but it builds a great sense of local tribe-like community.

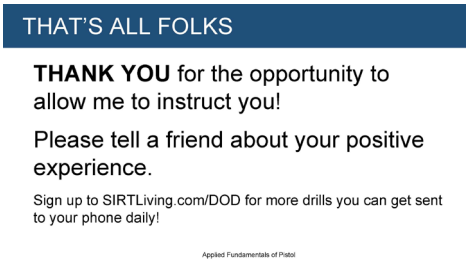
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Look for follow-on courses we want to produce in the near future. We're exploring some very practical topics such as diminished light, compromised shooting positions and of course concealed carry draw curriculums. We have to charge a little bit to maintain the upkeep and make these courses sustainable, but we at NLT, want to do the most we can to help support instructors. Again your feedback on what you would like us to provide will go a long ways. If you have any ideas for additional hands on, drill-based curriculums, please let us know.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: Where do I go from here?

A: Please fill out this form in the overview section (in the lesson on the website) and let us know what general types of curriculums you would like to see? As noted in the overview, we want to have drill-based classes in particular with awkward shooting positions (practically how often will we ever shoot in a perfect



stance upright), diminished light (statistically most shootings occur in low light situations so it makes sense we get some reps and practical instruction in a diminished light environment), and of course a concealed carry draw class. A course devoted towards concealed carry draw providing students reps, reps and more reps at drawing from concealed from a seated position, from standing, from appendix carry, from 4:00 position, clearing the garment, establishing the grip, fighting through snags, etc., ... a tremendous amount of fantastic material in a concealed carry draw course. But again let us know what you think would be most helpful for you.

GO TO THIS SECTION IN
THE ON-LINE COURSE

https://sirtliving.com/lessons/closing/

QUICK TIPS:

You can put on a course like this to a friend or family member just to get your verbiage down and work out any kinks. You can either use a slide presentation as a stimulus to hit each block, or as I like to do, just have a quick set of notes with the main coaching points. This printed-out book can be handy and you can use it similar as you would if you teach the NRA Basic Pistol class. Logistically speaking, because this is a hands-on class, it is can be difficult to have a pedestal or table for a book due to all the hands on drilling. The one-page cheat sheet with all the coaching points can be helpful where you can download the text editable version and change it to your liking or print it out and scribble down your notes so you boil it down to a one-page cheat sheet to guide you through each block of instruction.

Good luck! You are not alone in your journey, feel free to contact us anytime.