Drills, Qualifications, Standards, & Tests

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Introduction

This started as a collection of live fire defensive-oriented pistol drills important to me and my goals. Strictly speaking, most of what follows are not drills but rather qualifications, standards, tests, and other measures of skill and performance; I'll refer to them as "drills" for simplicity in communication (but there's a reason the title is an enumeration).

I originally chose these drills to help me ensure competency and confidence in myself in areas I believe are important for defensive pistol use. First published on my blog (https://blog.hsoi.com/) then reprinted and expanded in my and Karl Rehn's 2019 book, ***Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training***, I wrote about minimum competency for defensive pistol use. While it's important to define and meet minimum competency, I want my own skills to exceed the minimum – I expect you do too. I find drills such as these to be challenging, and I believe constant work on them and their underlying skills help maintain and grow one's abilities. Furthermore, they are quantifiable, repeatable, trackable, and thus allow for measurement and determination of progression – especially in areas that need improvement.

By no means is this a static set of drills, a set of the only things one should practice, or any sort of be-all-end-all. Really, it came down to wanting a simple, single document containing things I find value in running and referencing. It makes it easy for me to keep a PDF on my phone (don't need an Internet connection), in my pocket, so when I'm on the range I have a reference at my fingertips. If I don't know what to do at the range (I'm just thankful to be there), I can open this file, pick something, shoot it as my cold opener. It will reveal some weakness I can then work on during the practice session.

I began assembling this collection in April 2015, adding drills as I encountered them, including after taking classes from trainers such as Tom Givens, Gabe White, Spencer Keepers, Brian Hill, and Massad Ayoob – and of course, Karl. Originating in the December 24, 2017 episode of the Handgun World Podcast (episode 443), then presented in our book, is a collection of drills Karl and I selected as training standards for defensive handgun shooting. April 2020, Karl asked me to send him a couple drills he knew I had record of (Rangemaster Master), and I sent him the file of my rough collection. I don't believe I had ever shared my collection with anyone – it was always just by me for me. However, seeing how well received our book, especially the Drills section, has been received, I decided to clean up my collection and share it publicly.

While this started as a collection for me, since the initial public release it's grown into something more. I've added some drills to capture a moment in time, be it a unique match or a part of gun culture legacy. I also found this to be an appropriate venue for deeper exploration into the topic of minimum competency, including developing a course of fire that could provide you with a meaningful assessment in your personal journey of self-improvement.

This book will be periodically updated. Sign up on the KR Training mailing list (via the website) to receive notifications of updates. Thank you for downloading and reading it. Please share this book with your friends.

April 2022 Update

After the 2021 Rangemaster Tactical Conference (TacCon21) I gave a deep revisit to the topic of Minimum Competency (Claude Werner frequently inspires me). I started writing an update to this book, but got bogged down in the editing. I detoured and focused on collecting my thoughts and presenting the original topic and my new thinking – including the first public presentation of my "Minimum Competency Assessment". I delivered a talk and lead some discussion about the topic at TacCon22. That helped organize my thoughts, so now it's time to write this all down in a more formal way.

About the Drills

The drills are listed in no particular order, but you can see there is sometimes a logic to the groupings.

I don't shoot all of these always, or maybe much at all. Rather, once I add something to the collection, I like to keep it. This collection also serves is a reference, an archive, a reminder.

When recording the drills, I did my best to keep the drills to their original intent. For some drills I did rewrite the presentation and layout of the drill for consistency within this collection, and towards ease of administration on the range. I wanted the complete explanation of the drill to fit on a page: for ease of viewing on a digital device, or if printed on paper. I want the reading of the drill to be as you would perform it on the range: start with setup, shoot the drill, then scoring. As well, this includes striving to phrase each string of fire in a manner to be read/spoken on the firing line, providing clear and concise directions. As a result, some general assumptions are made unless otherwise stated:

- Shooter (at least starts) standing on the firing line, facing the target, hands relaxed at sides.
    - Or in another acceptable start position: surrender, fence, thinker, bodyguard, "cheater"/fig-leaf, etc.
- Gun starts in the holster, concealed (or duty gear with all retention engaged).
    - In short, "how YOU carry".
- Shoot with both hands on the gun.
    - "Freestyle".
- The target is the body, or other primary scoring region of the target.

If you discover inaccuracy, please send me a correction. If you have suggestions, please send them. Thank you.

Targets

Target selection is one area I occasionally deviated from the establishment. At KR Training, while we maintain a fair library of targets, our largest inventory is in KRT-1, KRT-2, KRT-3, IPSC (metric), IDPA (4" head circle), ShootSteel.com cardboard silhouettes, and B-8 repair-center targets, since those are what we use most in our classes and matches. I'd rather use what's available, instead of avoiding a drill merely because I don't have the right target. If the original drill did not specify/use one of these targets, I strove to find how a target I did have would work compared to the proper target. For example, the RFTS-Q and IDPA targets are close enough to each other, at least as far as the 8" body and 4" head circles – which to me are what matters, because to me and my standard anything outside of either of those two circles is an unacceptable hit. Yes, the RFTS-Q also has a 10" circle, but on the IDPA you can either manage it, for approximate target correspondence, or ignore it, for a tougher target. **When in doubt, just do the tougher and meet a higher standard.**

In fact, many times when I find drills (included here or elsewhere in classes or on the Internet), there may be ambiguity in the drill write-up. For example: "reload" – what sort? emergency/slide-lock? speed? tactical? reload with retention? Or "from the holster"

– concealment? open? how about if using a retention holster? My take? Consider context and pick something, be willing to try them all, or just pick ways to make it a higher standard to meet.

Advanced scoring (Hit Factor)

After taking the Rangemaster Advanced Instructors course in September 2016, I started looking at scoring the drills I shot using Hit Factor scoring (see: Comstock, Virginia Count). Shooting involves both speed and accuracy. The accuracy part tends to be covered by scoring rings/zones and points, and speed is somewhat addressed with par times. But what if the par time is generous for your ability? For example, in the Texas LTC test you shoot 5 shots in 10 seconds and also 5 shots in 15 seconds – if you can do it in 10, you can do it in 15. Shooting either version "passes" that string, but obviously your performance is better doing in 10 than in 15. So instead of simply passing the standard as the course of fire is written (with set par times), using a Hit Factor "points over time = hit factor" approach provides a more granular measure of performance. I don't intend for this to be any sort of true total/score, versus a course specifically designed for Hit Factor-style scoring; it's just another metric to track performance over time vs. simply passing the course.

As well, I think it adds pressure to shooting the drill. It's not just about passing – it's about maximizing performance. For even more pressure, shoot against someone else with whomever gets the best Par Score buys lunch.

The goal in the math is to determine an index where 100 "Hit Factor Points" is equivalent to scoring all points at the total time limit as the course was designed. Thus 100 points by this calculation is shooting the drill to its designed standard ("100%"). Start by calculating total possible points, then totaling the par times for all strings. Points divided by time gives the Index. 100 (percent) divided by the Index gives Par Factor for the drill (and then "100" is the drill's Par Score). When shooting the drill, record your total points and total time. Take your run's total points, divide by your run's total time to get your run's Index. Multiply your Index by the drill's Par Factor and that is YOUR Par Score for that run of the drill. Compare your Par Score against the 100 par: if less than 100, you're shooting under the drill's designed standard; > 100 is above standard – in theory. Really, it's just a measure of your own performance that you can track over time, hopefully seeing the score improve.

To illustrate, let's look at the FBI Qualification, 2019 edition.

Total possible points:	100 points
Total par times of all strings:	63 seconds
Index:	100 / 63 = 1.587
Par Factor:	100 / 1.587 = 63

Let's say I shot the drill clean (100 points) and (for ease of illustration) shot each string 1 second less than written (e.g. the first string was accomplished in 5 seconds instead of 6) – that totals 53 seconds. My run's index would be 1.886. 1.886 x 63 (the par factor) = par score of this run of 118.818. Since that's above the standard par score of 100, that shows a better performance – and I hope that's plainly evident since it was the same points in less time. Furthermore, I hope this

illustrates how using this sort of scoring approach can help you quantify progress on a particular drill (e.g. if you're making better scores in less time, that's good!).

Note: don't compare Par Factors across drills as a means of comparing drill relative difficulty; that doesn't work (there are other factors involved). If you wish to calculate drill difficulty, Karl explains how to in our book.

Pass-Fail

Above I said Hit Factor scoring was another metric "versus simply passing the course". While there is merit to Hit Factor approach, there is also merit in a pass-fail approach.

When I wrote on the topic of minimum competency, I also wrote on the notion of "acceptable hits"; this implies a notion of "unacceptable hits". Every bullet fired hits something – you didn't miss, you hit something – you just hit something you didn't want to, and that's unacceptable. If a hole is made in the target outside the scoring zone, that's likely to be considered an unacceptable hit. Could a drill be run such that you must have 100% acceptable hits, with anything less than 100% be a fail? Absolutely you could run some drills this way. I say some because a well-made drill has a goal, and running the drill pass-fail may be inconsistent with that goal. However you choose to do it, realize this is something to strive for, not a mandated standard, as there is validity – especially during training and practice – to "less than ideal" hits.

"Posting" the par

In an earlier life, I worked in radio as a music director and DJ. When a DJ talks over a song intro and times it just right to stop talking as the singing starts, that's called "hitting the post". When I get to a point in a drill where I can comfortably exceed the par time, for example "3 shots in 3 seconds" is accomplished in 2 seconds, sometimes I challenge myself to "post" the par time. That is, perform in *exactly* the par time: 3 shots in exactly 3.0 seconds; not 2.0, 2.5, 2.99, 3.01 – but exactly 3.0. In reality, hitting the time exactly is extraordinarily difficult, but that isn't the purpose of the exercise: it's about establishing cadence, learning speed, learning what your eyes can see, allowing time for decision-making and/or changing up actions – because life isn't always about shooting faster. For more about this topic, I refer you to my friend and colleague Lee Weems of First Person Safety, and his Deliberate Speed Pistol course.

It may seem the "post the par" approach runs counter to the aforementioned Hit Factor scoring approach. In the simplest terms it does, since the Hit Factor approach rewards going faster and the post-approach appears to reward slowing down. I prefer to view it as learning to run as required, as the situation and context dictate. Some situations require things to go faster, some to go slower, some may require a mixture, some may require stopping, or a complete orthogonal response. The goal is to build the ability to have options and execute as the situation dictates; this is as opposed to only having a hammer (e.g. "rapid spray-and-pray") and every situation is a nail.

Using this stuff
How you choose to use the material presented in this collection is up to you.

It is just a collection of stuff, not a training program. The stuff can be used as a part of a training program. We speak to such topics in our book, and some consider the progressive drill layout in *Strategies and Standards* to be program. Use this material as it best suits you.

I have two primary uses for this material:

1. A resource, when I'm teaching.
2. For my own practice.

When I'm doing my own work, one use I have for this collection is to pick and shoot something challenging as my cold start to the session – an improvement technique from Tom Givens. It always reveals what I need to work on in the practice session, as well as what I don't need to work on. Sometimes, the latter is more helpful to know.

To start "cold" means… cold, the opposite of warmed-up. You step to the line with your carry gear on, maybe you swap to practice ammo, and you go. No time to mentally prep, physically limber up, get elbow grease flowing. You go at what essentially is your most out of shape point. If you're attacked in a parking garage, you don't get to warm up… you go. Cold.

I had an interesting conversation with Brian Hill of The Complete Combatant. Every morning upon waking, Brian dry fires. Recency has great effect on our ability to perform. How cold are you when your most recent practice session was merely hours ago (compared to days, weeks, or months ago)? If we perform better when we're warmed-up, there argument for minimizing how cold you let yourself get.

#ItsColdDrillTimeAgain

Since participating in the inaugural Rangemaster Master Instructor course in November 2019, the Rangemaster Master Instructor Qualification has been my preference for my cold drill – I expect of myself to always be able to pass it cold. Other drills I frequently turn to these days, especially in times when we're concerned about ammo expenditure: Three Seconds or Less, The Test, 5 Yard Roundup, SCAT, 3M Test, The Wizard – all low-round count, diagnostic.

Not sure where to start?
In the first release of this book, I gave the following guidance on how to start if you weren't sure how to start:

> If you're not sure where to start, pick 1-3 drills that catch your eye. Next time you go to the range, shoot those drills. Try them in dry fire too. Just have some fun and explore the content. As you see what the drills reveal, you'll figure out where to go to build and improve.

That's still a valid way to start, especially if you truly aren't sure where to start, what skills you may need to work on, or just want to try something new and fun at the range. Picking a drill that looks fun to shoot, then shooting it to establish a baseline with is a fine way to start.

In April 2021, Claude Werner posted an article: "The Importance of the First Shot". His article gave me an opportunity to revisit my take on "minimum competency". Originally, I concluded one needs to be able to:

- Draw from concealment
- Get multiple acceptable hits
- In a small area
- From close range
- Quickly
- Using both hands

While I still find the above to be true, Claude's writing made me think of perhaps a refinement: perhaps a "minimum within the minimum", if you will. That is, the "draw to first shot". Claude writes:

> In a gunfight, the shooter who first scores a hit above the diaphragm of his opponent is the one who seizes the initiative in the incident. Making a good hit with the FIRST SHOT fired is key to seizing the initiative and then retaining it until the incident is over. No one's performance improves after he gets shot in a vital area.
> …
> Your dry practice should mostly focus on the first shot anyway. During live fire, the majority of our practice should be 'first shot drills.' Do a little recoil management practice but don't overestimate its priority relative to the first shot in the real world. As John Farnam put it, "Our desired range product is victory."

"Draw to first shot" involves all aspects of my stated minimums, except for getting multiple hits. So it could be said that "draw to first shot" is the most minimum of minimum skills. Viewing it through Claude's lens, I hope you're able to see the high importance of that particular skill.

I explore all of this later, in my Minimum Competency Assessment.

There are many skills for us to work on, but which one to address? Weak points are always fair game, but that's sometimes too vague or too broad. If you're not sure what specific skill to work on, try the Minimum Competency Assessment to see where you lie – that puts good emphasis on the "draw to first shot" skill, as well as general assessment of minimum competency. If ammo is tight, a good alternative is The Wizard: it's just 5 shots, 4 opportunities to "draw to first shot", and certainly addresses the notion of "minimum competency" (however while shorter and simpler, it is a tougher standard than my Minimum Competency Assessment). Once you're able to clean either of these drills cold on demand, move on to another skill (perhaps recoil control, to work on the "multiple acceptable hits" aspect).

Context

Another point of consideration is context: what is the context in which you will primarily be operating? For me, I live in a (sub)urban environment and primarily am concerned with my private life and going about town. A friend of mine has a small ranch, with 200-yard-long driveway and cattle all around. For my context, concealed carry of a handgun is suitable for the

predators I am likely to encounter. For my friend's context, his house-gun is a rifle because it's a long way to the end of the driveway, plus a more common predator are the 4-legged kind threatening his livestock. Context is important to consider when establishing and evaluating your training priorities.

If you find yourself constantly in situations of great(er) distance, you may want to spend more of your practice and training on longer-distance shooting. If you're living in tight urban confines, a fast "draw to first shot" at 0-5 yards may be more the place to focus.

The key here is to not just pick drills that are fun or that you're good at performing. Rather, to be conscientious in your choice of how to spend your practice time and training resources. Understanding the context in which you operate and seeking solutions that work within the context can provide direction and focus.

How to build and improve

Nothing helps you learn and grow like shooting under the watchful eye of a good coach. If you can afford the time, travel, and other costs of professional training, make opportunities to do so.

Lacking that, a progression often suggested in taking a drill and shooting to as-written to see how you perform. If you're able to pass (clean?) it, great! If not, see where you struggle and focus work there. To illustrate, I'll use our Three Seconds or Less test. Let's say you struggled on the first string: 3 shots, 3 yards, 3 seconds into an 8" circle. The first progression would be to strive to shoot without the timer: just 3 shots, 3 yards, into the 8" circle – focus on fundamentals of marksmanship. Once you consistently and confidently achieve this, add in a stopwatch: shoot at your level and see how long it takes you. Let's say it took you 5 seconds. Now instead of a stopwatch, use a shot timer with a par time; set it at your recorded time (e.g. 5 second). Now shoot using the par time beeps – you should have no trouble making the par time. Now slightly decrease the par time, say 4.5 seconds; try again. If successful, reduce again to 4.0 seconds. Repeat until the wheels start to fall off, which should expose where you need work. Continue to work until you meet (exceed) the standard.

Exactly what you will need to focus on I cannot comment without observation, thus my first suggestion of a coach's eye. Just be honest with yourself because you're working to build life-saving skills, so ego and false assessment have no place. Be willing to leverage tools like video provide an honest look at your performance.

More than minimum competency

Performance degradation under stress is real. Two examples.

As I worked on early revisions to this book, the third Rangemaster Master Instructor class was in progress. Karl, along with Dave & Tracy, represented KR Training (I was in the first class, back in November 2019). Reports were a couple dozen top-quality instructors, shooters, and people. The competition was tough, and the pressure/stress was high – consequently, many are shooting below their normal performance-levels.

On February 28, 2021, I was a student in Brian Hill of The Complete Combatant's Pistol Proficiency course. During the test for the purple belt rank patch, I – to my self-expectations – fell apart in a bad way (outcome focus, a topic for another day). In the grand scheme, the results of my performance were acceptable: I still earned the purple patch. Both examples illustrate the importance of training to a higher level: so when we degrade we have enough margin to allow us to continue to perform at a high level.

I wrote about "minimum competency for defensive pistol skills" because there's there is merit in attempting to define such a thing, and working to achieve at least that level. And in this book, I continue to explore that concept further. However, I strongly believe one should not be satisfied with the minimum, and should work within one's means to strive for continued improvement and growth.

Do these drills make me the best shooter in the world? Not at all. But I think most would agree the ability to meet these standards addresses a level of being above minimum competency.

What will YOU do with these drills? How will YOU leverage them into self-improvement?

Have Fun!
I hope you find these useful for your self-improvement goals.

If you're ever in Texas, come see us at KR Training. Train smart, and keep 'em in the A-Zone.

Thank you. Be strong. 🤘

John C. "Hsoi" Daub
~~Austin~~ Bryan, Texas
2022-05-03

About John

Within the context of KR Training, John is Senior Lead Assistant Instructor. He's worked with Karl since 2009.

John is a Rangemaster Certified Master Instructor, Massad Ayoob Group Deadly Force Instructor, Force Science Analyst, NRA Certified Instructor (HFS, Pistol, Rifle, PPITH, PPOTH, CCW), NRA RSO, Cornered Cat Instructor Development, DTI Instructor development, Agile T&C certified OC Instructor, Image Based Decisional Drills Certified Instructor, Texas DPS Certified LTC Instructor, Texas DPS School Safety trained, Gabe White Light Pin holder, The Complete Combatant purple rank patch, First Person Safety patch, Sig Sauer Certified P365 Armorer, with over 1000 hours of training in firearms, self-defense, emergency medical, unarmed, tactics, vehicle, and other assorted topics in this realm. He also holds a black belt in a semi-useless but sentimental martial art.

John has been a trainer/presenter at the national Rangemaster Tactical Conference. He's been a guest on a number of podcasts including: That Weems Guy, Ballistic Radio, Evolution Security, The ProArms Podcast, The Polite Society Podcast (with Marty Hayes, with Karl Rehn), Handgun World Podcast. He's been referenced in numerous articles and books, including those by Mike Seeklander and Dr. David Yamane.

NRA Benefactor Life Member, TSRA Benefactor Life Member, 2AF Life Member, GOA Life Member, FPC Donor, USPSA Life Member.

In his other life, John has moved from being a software architect and consultant to being a Director of an engineering department, husband of 25+ years, and father of 3 children. He likes to lift things up and put them down.

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About KR Training

With a staff of more than a dozen male and female instructors, KR Training offers courses in a wide array of topics including:

- Basic Pistol (level 1 and 2)
- Defensive Pistol Skills (3 levels)
- Defensive Long Gun (rifle, carbine, and shotgun)
- Red Dot Pistol Essentials
- Personal and Vehicle Tactics Skills for Armed Citizens
- Home Defense Tactics
- Low Light Shooting (level 1 and 2)
- Force on Force Scenarios
- Force on Force instructor development
- Handgun Coach development
- NRA instructor and range officer training
- Defensive Pistol with pocket and small guns
- Historical Handgun (evolution of handgun training)
- Team Tactics for Armed Citizens
- Competition Handgun training (level 1 and 2)
- Handgun: Beyond Basics
- AIWB Fundamental Skills
- Unarmed Self Defense
- Pepper Spray Essentials
- Top 10 Drills, Skill Builder and other short courses

We also host national traveling trainers offering classes in a wide variety of firearms and tactics topics, as well as classes in unarmed skills, first aid, legal issues related to deadly force, criminal behavior, and integration of unarmed and firearm skills.

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Always Remember

Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.
Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

Minimum Competency Assessment (v3)

From John Daub, KR Training

Setup

Target: Preferred: KRT-2 (only white/gray areas). Alternates: IDPA (only -0 rings), IPSC Metric (only A & B zones), RFTS-Q (only 8" and 4" rings), IALEFI-Q's (only 8", 4" rings).

Gear: Your EDC (gun, holster, belt, clothing, etc.) – shoot it how you carry. If possible, shoot your carry ammo. 25 rounds.

All shooting is freestyle unless otherwise noted. For "hands on phone", use a prop phone (e.g. empty ammo box/tray) and hold it the way you most commonly interact with your phone (held to your ear to talk, two-hands in front while texting, etc.). Be sure to drop the phone on the signal. When side-stepping, make one meaningful step either left or right; doesn't matter which direction, but consider switching up throughout the assessment.

10 yd   Hands at sides.   Draw and fire 2 to the body in 4.0 seconds.

7 yd   Hands at sides.   Draw and fire 3 to the body in 4.0 seconds. (5 rounds fired)
7 yd   Hands in fence.   Draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.5 seconds.
7 yd   Hands on phone.   Draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.5 seconds.

5 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.5 seconds.
5 yd   Hands in fence.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.5 seconds.
5 yd   Hands on phone.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.5 seconds. (10 rounds)
5 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 3 to the body in 3.5 seconds.
5 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 2 to the body, 1 to the head in 4.0 seconds. (16 rounds)

3 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.0 seconds.
3 yd   Hands in fence.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.0 seconds.
3 yd   Hands on phone.   Side-step, draw and fire 1 to the body in 2.0 seconds.
3 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 3 to the body in 3.0 seconds.
3 yd   Hands at sides.   Side-step, draw and fire 2 to the body, 1 to the head in 3.5 seconds. (25 rounds)

Scoring

Count the hits. 1 point for an acceptable hit; 0 points for an unacceptable hit, including shots over time, shots not fired.
23 of 25 acceptable hits (92%) to pass.
Safety violations result in failure.

Variations

- Ignore the side step; ignore the start positions
  - If you are having trouble making the par time and points, try starting hands at sides (no fence, no phone) and/or try standing still (no side-step).
  - These add task complexity, so simplifying the strings may help you in achieving the times and points.
  - In time, work to add these back in.
- Reduce par times
  - Try a 0.5 second reduction across the board.
  - Try a 1.0 second reduction across the board.
- Smaller target zones
  - On the KRT-2, use only the white trapezoids.
  - On another target, perhaps a 6" circle and a horizontal 3x5 card.
  - Use shootsteel.com cardboard training targets, just A and B zones.
  - All body shots become head shots, all head shots into something smaller (e.g. on the KRT-2, the A or B 2" circles)
- Hit factor scoring
  - I don't think this assessment lends to hit factor scoring. However, you could record your time for each individual string/concept and work to beat those times.

Note: you can pick one variation, you can pick multiple (e.g. 0.5 second par time reduction, with body shots becoming head shots and head the 2" circles).

If I were to pick a single way to make it more challenging, I'd start by shooting the assessment as-written but using smaller target zones. Make acceptable hits.

The Development of the Minimum Competency Assessment

It's about building confidence through competence.

Introduction

I published my original writing on the topic of Minimum Competency for Defensive Pistol on my blog on July 11, 2013. In March 2019, we expanded upon the original work in *Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training*. Since then my thoughts have evolved and refined. At the 2022 Rangemaster Tactical Conference (TacCon22) I gave a talk on Minimum Competency, presenting the originating work along with my recent thinking, including my attempt to quantify a notion of minimum competency via an Assessment.

I wanted to capture my thinking in creating this Assessment: why I chose what I chose, what I left out what I left out. Why did I create this? What was my thought process? In doing so it not only explains the Assessment, but I hope it will foster further discussion on the topic of minimum competency. I don't have the answers, but seeking them is a worthwhile endeavor.

Origination

When I say "minimum competency", what I mean is:

> When it comes to the use of a pistol for self-defense, minimum competency would be the least amount of skill and ability needed in order to use that gun to successfully defend yourself.

Why is this important? Because people need to have realistic awareness and knowledge of their capability. Do you really know what you think you know? Can you do what you think you can do? Do you know that? No really… do you *KNOW* that? There are many places in life where our illusions (delusions?) can differ from reality with little consequence – this is not one of those places.

It's fantastic when my fellow Texans tell me they obtained their License To Carry (LTC); it's a milestone worth celebrating! To me it is just that: a milestone in the journey. Too many people look at obtaining their LTC as the end, the destination – I have arrived, I am done! I disagree. Yes, you have made it this far, and there is still some road ahead. For example, the "C" in LTC is "Carry", which implies "concealed, in a holster". But where is drawing from a concealed holster in the TX LTC qual? There isn't. I'm not saying to change the qual (another topic, another day). I am saying within this context, LTC is a milestone, not a destination.

If it's not a destination, what is? I don't know the answer to that, but that's the reason for this exploration into minimum competency. Yes, it's good to "be better today than yesterday", but there's merit in knowing what is "good enough". Not everyone is a hobbyist, an enthusiast that wishes to achieve the highest levels of skill. Some people just want to "stay safe", "get home to my loved ones each night", "please leave me alone" sorts of people. In fact, given Karl's research into "the 1%", I'd assert the "get home, leave me alone" types are the majority of Gun Culture 2.0 people. As well, for each of us our resources are finite: time, money, energy,

capacity, gumption, motivation, desire. We must spend them wisely. There is merit in being "good enough" and being satisfied in that so you can pursue other things. If you want to be "the best" that's great! Please pursue that with gusto! If you wish to be "good enough", you ought to know what "good enough" actually means. Remember, there are no promises, no guarantees, but I figure if we can nail down a reasonable notion of "good enough" then well… that's good enough.

Or another way to look at it? What level of skill do you really need to win? Do you really need to be a Grandmaster (GM) level of skill? Or might it actually be sufficient to just have a gun and the wherewithal to use it?

Let me be clear. This is a floor, not a ceiling. The floor can be high. Minimum is not a synonym for low. As well, consider it a "ground floor", as you can certainly build and rise above it.

After examining a few contextually-relevant data sets (Givens, FBI, DEA) as it pertains to private citizen concealed carry for personal defense, a typical incident profile can be generated: armed robbery of some form, 1-2 assailants likely, 3-7 yards, limited response time, "3 shots, 3 yards, 3 seconds". If we break down the mechanical pistol skills relevant to such a profile, we can determine what skills may be minimally relevant towards management of a typical incident:

- Draw from concealment
- Get multiple (acceptable) hits
- In a small area
- From close range
- Quickly
- Using both hands

Originally, I wanted to determine a good drill that would manifest this notion of minimum competency. That is, if I gave you this drill to shoot now, cold, on demand, you could do it. If you could, that would raise *confidence* in the assessment of your *competence* to perform the skills. I looked at numerous existing drills, such as 5x5 (and Claude's 5^5 variation), TX LTC, Three Seconds or Less, and others (many of which make up this book!). While not ideal, I can assess skill and competency well enough using existing drills. It has enabled exploration, discovery, and learning.

I also consider defining minimum competency important because it guides how we approach teaching. One way I frame this context is: imagine you have a friend who comes to you saying they have credit threats on their life, they've never thought about a gun until now… "hey you know about guns, can you teach me?" What can you do with them in an afternoon? What SHOULD you do with them in an afternoon? Defining minimum competency can help us prioritize and improve the efficacy of training.

Evolution
In April 2021, Claude Werner wrote about the importance of the first shot. While not groundbreaking to me, something about Claude's presentation – especially knowing Claude's focus on beginners and competency – and it brought the topic into a new light. It made me think

about my minimum considerations: might the floor actually be lower? That "draw to first shot" (or really, "draw to first acceptable hit") may be the actual floor. No, I don't think we can omit multiple acceptable hits, but it makes me think about the gravity of the notion of draw-to-first-acceptable-hit. Thus, one could conclude when assessing minimum competency, the assessment should focus on these six points, with an emphasis on draw-to-first-acceptable-hit.

[Consider as well]:

> All of this thinking comes from HeadHunter as typified by his signature on TPI
>
> Quote:
> Street Survival: Tactics For Armed Encounters
> Q: What did you do wrong?
> A: The biggest thing, I think, was to miss with my first shot...
>
> He had another quote something about "after the first shot, everyone was moving and things got much harder"

I also appreciate something my friend Kirk Clark said:

> One of the less immediately apparent advantages of having the power of a fast, sure draw to shot, is that you are far more free to put the gun away once you have done your shooting, knowing you can quickly and reliably produce it if it becomes necessary again.

This doesn't mean other skills such as reloads, malfunctions, longer distances, lower strings of fire, scanning, weak-hand-only, target transitions, movement, etc. aren't important: they're just above minimum skills. Crawl, walk, run – let's first get people crawling (parts, nomenclature, basic marksmanship) to then walking upon a good performance floor.

Aside: I going to call it "draw to first acceptable hit" (DTFAH). Not just because "[acceptable hit]" is one of my on-brand phrases, but I do think it's more precise in describing the concept. A "shot" may imply hitting the intended target, but it doesn't clearly state it – is a "shot" just making noise? I would also argue that a hit anywhere on the FBI-Q bottle target may be a hit, but that lower-left corner really isn't acceptable when one considers anatomy (that's a fat roll, not something of anatomical worth). We don't just want a "shot" or a "hit", we want an acceptable hit. Words shape our mindset.

Name

I'm calling this an **assessment**. It's not a drill, but it could be with all those draw-to-first-acceptable-hit strings. It's certainly not a qualification. And I don't want to call it a test because I'm not out to grade you. I want a means by which an individual's skills can be assessed. Where are you in your journey of (minimum) competency? Are you not there yet? Are you there? Are you beyond? This is intended as a way to assess and give provide a metric, a frame of reference, a guidepost in your journey.

I fear someone may take this work – this Assessment – and want to use it as a means of codifying what is, or what should be. For example, licensure only if you can pass a standard. There is danger in that: it creates barriers, akin to a poll tax. Also, who gets to define the standard? Because for sure, I don't define minimum competency the same as others; consider the differences outlined in my original article just between myself, Karl Rehn, and Tom Givens. This is a much larger topic in and of itself. Just realize this isn't any sort of gospel, it's just a milestone in a journey and I hope it creates thought, discussion, and a desire to improve.

Equipment

The original intent of my work and thus this Assessment was focused towards private citizens. As my thoughts progressed about the topic, I realized that while yes private citizens are a core context for me, in the end self-defense is self-defense – law enforcement officers have the right too. Thus, for the purposes of this Assessment, equipment is "what you carry every day". If that's a concealed AIWB Roland Special, your issued bone-stock Glock in a Safariland Level III, or a snub in your pocket – that's what you shoot this with. Your mode of carry should be the mode you use "on the street" – not your special range kit, not your gamer rig, not the larger gun that's easier to shoot vs. the little gun you actually carry. Shoot how and what you carry.

Ammo is one place where you can vary. Ideally, you'd shoot this with your carry ammo since many people's carry ammo is different than their practice ammo (e.g. +P with more recoil, potentially a different point-of-aim vs. point-of-impact). Thus, shooting the Assessment with your carry ammo provides knowledge and confidence in your complete carry gear. However, carry ammo is expensive, so if you wish to swap your carry ammo for practice ammo that's fine. However, if at all possible, try to shoot this Assessment with your carry ammo. One way to approach this to shoot the Assessment as a part of ammo rotation. When you swap your old carry ammo for new ammo (on whatever schedule you perform this), use the old carry ammo to shoot this Assessment.

While this Assessment isn't necessarily about assessing hardware, it's certainly about your ability to perform with your chosen hardware. The attack doesn't consider what you are carrying and how you are carrying it. By knowing how you perform with your carry gear you can either build confidence with that gear, or determine how you need to change what gear you carry.

Target

Our context is that of self-defense; thus, we need a context-appropriate target, such as a silhouette. And not just any silhouette, but one with proper target zones accurate in both size and placement. I believe the best target is the KRT-2 – freely available to download and print from the KR Training website (be sure to print on 11x17" paper). Yes, the target is on-brand, but I do think it's an excellent representation of anatomical correctness; we explain why in our book. And again, the KRT-2 is freely available as a download and is cheaper to print than other commercial targets.

Other targets can work too. For example, the IPSC Metric (scoring just A & B Zone hits), the IDPA (scoring only -0 zone body and head hits), and the RFTS-Q (scoring the 8" and 4" circles). Targets such as these have similar intent in their design. You may not get apples-to-apples comparison, if say you shot it once on a KRT-2 then again on an IPSC Metric. But just keep

things in mind and work to shoot well enough so the minutia of target differences become irrelevant.

Note there are other scoring zones on these targets, like the -3 on the IPDA or D-zone on a IPSC Metric. But those are less than ideal zones when you consider actual human anatomy. Once again, Claude Werner writing about "Why I Hate the -3 Zone".

> 1. The -3 zone, or the D zone of the USPSA Metric, on the sides of the target is basically where a man's arms are when they're hanging by his side. A man holding a weapon at or near eye level would not have anything there below a line approximately even with the middle of the -0 zone.
>
> 2. The area of the -3 zone below the -1 zone very closely aligns with the area of the male body below the waist. I'm unenthused about that as a targeting area for reasons that will become obvious further on.
>
> 3. From about two inches above the bottom of the -0 zone down to the bottom of the -1 zone corresponds generally to the area from the xyphoid process to the waist. Emergency room physicians have told me that they consider this entire area to be an abdominal wound and not nearly as serious as a wound in the torso above that line.
>
> 4. Finally, by process of elimination, the area I shaded in orange is where all the "good stuff" is, as one physician put it to me. This is the area of the torso where a bullet has the best probability of quickly stopping a deadly threat to one's life. Note that this area goes all the way up to the neckless chin.

This is why I'm only considering hits to the high-center chest (heart & lungs) and head (ocular window) as acceptable for this context. And thus, the importance of considering anatomy in selecting an acceptable target.

This is also why I'm not considering other sorts of targets. The B-27 and B-21 are just not good when you consider anatomy and operating context. No zombie targets, no abstract shapes, no bullseyes, no targets that don't serve the purpose of a concealed carry context; they may be fine targets, just not applicable to this Assessment. That said, while the KRT-2 is preferred, I wouldn't want to see someone NOT shoot this for lack of having the KRT-2. Hopefully you can see from the recommended target and suggested alternatives what the general desire is for an acceptable target – so if what you have available is in that realm and spirit, go for it. Just realize you may not have an apples-to-apples comparison if you shoot again using a different target, but so long as when you shoot it you use the same target, you're at least able to compare your performance against your prior performance.

If you want to read an interesting and enlightening discussion about targets and correctness, give this discussion thread a read: https://pistol-forum.com/showthread.php?9306-A-Separate-Thread-For-Anatomical-Correctness-Of-Targets

Scoring

This goes back to my notion of "unacceptable hits": either you hit what's acceptable, or you don't. Thus, scoring simply aligns with that notion: one point for acceptable hits, zero points for unacceptable hits (including not getting the shots off, or going over time). The time element is a crucial aspect to the Assessment because when you are trying to defend your life, time matters and you typically won't have a lot of it, so you have to be able to get work done in a small amount of time. The timer adds a pressure to the shooter to perform, which can be considered part of stress inoculation because again, defending your life is likely to be a high-pressure event.

I don't think this Assessment lends to hit factor scoring. Certainly, if you are curious for your performance you can score it that way. But as this is about minimum competency assessment, if people can pass as-written, I believe that's sufficient for the purposes of the Assessment.

Distances

From data sets such as Rangemaster, FBI, DEA, and what we've seen in many Active Self Protection videos, we know typical gunfights for the private citizen are in the 0-5 yard range. Consequently, I wanted to ensure those distances were primarily represented.

I did think about less than 3-yard distances, but I felt that ran into practical limitations. For example, muzzle blast often tears up the targets; some ranges won't or can't let you shoot < 3 yards. Also, shooting at those distances is generally done from retention, and that's arguably beyond minimum competency.

If the typical distance maxes out at 5 yards, why the 7 and 10 yards? It's a combination of: the world we live in; reinforcing the application of good technique; and building confidence through challenge.

The notion of 7 and 10 yards is essentially "across a room" (see Claude Werner's Basic Self Defense Handgun Skills Test). While most private citizen self-defense incidents happen outside the home (see: transitional spaces), many people take their first steps in gun ownership around the notion of home defense. If this is the mental frame someone comes in with, I see good in helping them build confidence in their ability to perform within that framework ("yes, I could make a shot across a room"). We can consider 10 yards to be across a larger room (open floor plans).

It could be said that based upon the data, we only need to go out to 7 yards. My thinking is going to 10 is still good. When the flag flies, you're not going to know the exact yardage to your assailant. If it's truly going to be inside of 7 yards, then 10 makes for a good margin of error. Having shot competently to 10 yards means you're primed to the notion of longer distance shots; confidence is a performance aid.

Shooting at 3 yards you can get away with not using sighted fire and still get acceptable hits. The further back you get (the smaller the target gets), the more you must refine your sight picture. I had a student in class that was nailing it at 3 yards but wild at 7. The student was not using their sights. Once the correction was applied, acceptable hits were happening at 7 yards. Having longer distances in the Assessment helps reinforce good shooting technique.

And let's face it: shooting at 10 yards can be hard and intimidating, especially for someone who is working their way up to this level. Plus, it's not just shooting at 10 yards, it's shooting cold at 10 yards. It might induce some stress, some discomfort; this is good for it is through discomfort we grow. A challenge to build confidence.

Repetition

I think Ken Hackathorn's "The Wizard" is a fantastic test – when shot cold, it's an excellent low-round count diagnostic of the most crucial of mechanical skills: DTFAH. At the heart you can see how my Assessment draws inspiration from it. I think it lacks one crucial component: ensuring skill and not luck. Consider 5^5 (Claude Werner's emphasis on "and 5 times") or the TacCon21 Match or the Rangemaster Master Instructor qual – note the use of repetition. Repetition ensures you can actually do the thing instead of perhaps getting lucky on that one run.

In his talk, *Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why: Understanding Human Performance When Death is on the Line*, John Hearne speaks of the concept of overlearning – "Skills practiced until they can't be done wrong are overlearned." From the January 2022 slides of this lecture:

> What We Need
>
> We "know" with greater certainty that higher levels of skill combined with emotional control makes everyone safer. We "know" that improving skill helps improve emotional control. We don't serve people by allowing them to sit in their own poop. We serve people by giving them the tools to do better and punish them when they don't.
>
> We Need – Overlearned Skills
>
> When we look at the literature, well developed (robust) motor programs are faster and more accurate. Faster and more accurate very directly equates to higher, not lower, shooting standards. We need to reconsider what is "good enough." Most shooting problems to not require large amounts of technical shooting skill. However, one of the best ways to make sure people have enough skill under stress is to make them have more in non-stress environments.

The repetition within the Assessment aids overlearning. Some people go to the range to just enjoy shooting. They enjoy selecting drills and seeing if they can shoot them (loser buys!). That's a good day to a lot of people. In designing the Assessment, it is a goal that if the only thing someone ever does is shoot 1 box (50 rounds) of ammo once a month by running this Assessment twice (or better, shoot once then use the remaining 25 rounds to practice whatever suck the Assessment run uncovered), I wanted the runs to be meaningful in contribution to their building/maintaining of their competence.

In addition to the repetition, you'll notice the Assessment has a pattern of execution – this is intentional. It's easy to detect the pattern and drop your focus and attention, thus potentially blowing some strings. It's important to stay focused on the task at hand and not let mind games, predictions, nor outcome-focus affect good process execution.

Par Times

Determining par times was the most difficult part for me: what exactly is the right performance standard?

In a seminal discussion on the topic of "what is good enough?", John Hearne examines the concepts of overlearning and automaticity – it's the source for his "Typical Performance & Automaticity Speculation" chart:

Typical Performance & Automaticity Speculation

POST Qual-70%

POST Qual-90%

Post Qual-100%

FAM-Clean

FAM-Pass

Casino Drill-21 sec

Casino Drill-15 sec

Casino Drill-27 sec

FBI Bullseye-280

FBI Bullseye-260

FBI Bullseye-240

USPSA-GM

USPSA-Master

USPSA-A

USPSA-C

USPSA-B

USPSA-D

FAST-3.5 sec

FAST-4 sec

FAST-5 sec

FAST-7 sec

FAST-10 sec

Bill Drill-1.5 sec

Bill Drill-2 sec

Bill Drill-3 sec

Bill Drill-5 sec

Failure-1.2 sec

Failure-1.5 sec

Failure-2.0 sec

Failure-2.5 sec

Failure-3.5 sec

IDPA-Master

IDPA-Expert

IDPA-SS

IDPA-MM

| Performance too poor to suggest automaticity | Performance suggests some automaticity | Performance sufficient to strongly suggest automaticity | Performance impossible without automaticity |

I believe minimum competency requires some level of automaticity: to be able to perform the mechanical gun skills (draw, aim, press trigger, etc.) "automatically" so that your brain is freer to deal with the novel stimulus of the encounter. In the same posting where John unveiled the above chart, he said:

> I would fully acknowledge that it is possible to have some automaticity if one isn't super fast. I would offer that it is impossible to be super fast without some degree of automaticity. I would say that lower levels of performance do not exclude overlearning and the resultant automaticity, but that higher levels absolutely require it (except for some genetically gifted freaks with incredible kinesthetic intelligence and eye sight)

Over the years I've observed thousands of students and seen automaticity develop in them. I can see the students are thinking less about those base mechanical skills and instead focusing on the novelty (e.g. class is teaching movement while shooting, it's the novel movement skill they are thinking about – the drawing, the shooting, is on "auto-pilot"). Matching context to the KR Training curriculum, I look at our Defensive Pistol Skills (DPS) 1, 2, and 3 classes. DPS-1 is designed as the first post-LTC class, where a student learns to draw from concealment, getting multiple hits, in a small area, from close range, quickly, using both hands. This includes shooting our Three Seconds or Less test and passing at the 70% level. By definition, students coming in to DPS-1 are not minimally competent, but should leave class with the knowledge of the skills needed (then it's up to them to put in the practice to develop them). A prerequisite for attending DPS-2 is to pass DPS-1, meaning on paper they have the skills to be minimally competent. But do they have the automaticity? From my observations over the years, I would say that automaticity is starting to develop. The material in DPS-2 requires the student to have some degree of clue and performance in those minimal skills, especially to be able to pass Three Seconds or Less at the 80% level. You just can't do the things that DPS-2 requires if you don't have some sort of automaticity in those minimal skills. Consequently, I think this gives us some indication of a line where automaticity of these skills is starting to develop. Now how to quantify that level.

I started with Karl's outline of how to calculate drill difficulty from our *Strategies and Standards* book. It doesn't cover everything nor give me "plug-and-chug" numbers, but it does provide a good guideline and framework for getting in the ballpark. The calculation is ultimately looking at 100% USPSA/IPSC Grandmaster performance levels, so it must be scaled down. To what level should it be scaled?

Let's go back to the Three Seconds or Less test. Again, we use Three Seconds or Less as the graduation requirement from our Defensive Pistol Skills 1, 2, and 3 classes: DPS-1 must pass at 70%, DPS-2 at 80%, and DPS-3 at 90%. In our book, Karl calculates shooting Three Seconds at a 90% score to be about 50% of GM skill level. Roughly speaking then, DPS-2 passing is about 40% of GM, and DPS-1 is about 35% of GM. Thus, when calculating the par times for the Assessment, I opted for about 40% of GM-level calculation – somewhere in C-class.

Being somewhere in C-class is about right. Go back to John Hearne's automaticity speculation chart. USPSA C-class is a level where some level of automaticity is starting to be developed, and that jives with the skills and desired path. If we're talking self-defense usage context, automaticity with core skills of aiming and shooting are desired, so our brain can be freed to process the novel stimulus of the particular situation we suddenly find ourselves in.

Another consideration is the 3 shots, 3 yards, 3 seconds trope. Data generally reflects this as a typical successful situation/response. If we put credence into that as perhaps the simplest metric of skill performance, it could be viewed as an anchor for all other times. You could say a breakdown is 2.0 DTFAH, 0.5 second splits.

So, with all of this I did some math, some fuzzy adjustments. I came up with the times that you see in the Assessment. On both 5 and 7 yards being 2.5 seconds, the math actually worked out to about 2.3 and 2.7. I opted to round it to 2.5 for ease of administration.

For what it's worth, in beta-testing this Assessment, I had a class of DPS-2 students shoot it as a group. Most times were made just slightly under stated par times, but a number went over. Just over half of the participants passed, with a couple just barely not making it. I've had others shoot the Assessment as well, and given what I see, I feel the selected times are good and in line with the goals of the Assessment.

Hands, Movement

I opted to put in different hand/start positions as well as movement.

We don't live with our hands by our sides. In fact, a reality of today is we are likely to have a phone in our hands when/if we are selected to be a victim. I appreciate Lee Weems' idea of an empty ammo tray as a mobile phone stand-in/prop, especially because the reaction we want to train is discarding/dropping the phone before drawing – it's easier to practice the drop with an empty tray than your $1000 phone. The Fence is a good concept to understand and incorporate into your skillset as a means of confrontation management. If you aren't familiar with The Fence, put "the fence Geoff Thompson" into your favorite Internet search engine.

Movement was added because it's a good idea. Which is better? To shoot or to not get shot? To not get shot. To "get off the X" can help you avoid getting shot. Yes, it's just a side-step, and I know some debate side steps versus more dynamic movement (e.g. run to cover). My take? This is about minimum competency – crawl, walk, run. Allow people to first crawl, taking this first (side) step towards understanding the importance of movement.

Why not always move? From my training with Tom Givens, the side-step is really only effective in close range. When you get to 7-10 yards, the angles change enough that a simple side-step won't likely take you out of the attacker's line of sight. Why not move and shoot? Not just because I learned from Paul Howe to either shoot or move, but I'd argue that is a skill beyond the minimum.

Additionally, adding in movement and hand positions adds to the cognitive load, which in time hopefully helps you build automaticity (e.g. discarding unnecessary things from your hands). That's important towards building competence.

In the Force Science News, Chris Butler writes in *Firearms Training for Real-World Assaults*

> **Neurons that Fire Together, Wire Together**
>
> "Hebb's Law" (*Spike Timing Dependent Plasticity*) is one of the most well-researched and accepted concepts in psychology and human performance. Hebb's Law informs us that motor pathways are not formed in isolation, which means the context and conditions in which the pathways are created (i.e., the training) matter.
>
> Take, for example, the standard draw stroke of the handgun. This serial motor program consists of multiple, individual, discrete motor movements. Officers must grip the gun,

release the retention mechanisms, lift the gun from the holster, align the muzzle, drive (present) the gun towards the threat, and move the trigger finger to the trigger.

Every time an officer conducts the draw stroke, the brain's motor cortex builds stronger *motor neural pathways*. During this repetitive process, a type of insulation known as myelin forms around the involved neurons. This "myelination" can result in a connection that is 10x faster than unmyelinated nerves. For shooters, this high-speed connection can result in an efficient draw stroke that requires no attentional resources ("motor automaticity").

Butler asserts the other side of Hebb's Law can result in undesirable responses, saying an officer whose totality of live fire training is "stand (still) and shoot", it's likely this will myelinate a pathway to stand (still) while shooting, which can have severe negative consequences in a violent encounter (he references Force Science's famous "Traffic Stop Study"). The implication for training then is to mind the pathways our training myelinates, and ensure we enforce good patterns. Movement – be it getting off the X or dropping your phone, is good.

Transitions

I wanted the head shot because that may be your reality, so having some introduction, some exposure to the concept of "the failure drill" is good – again, building confidence.

What's Not Here

All those "super-minimal" things like long distances (e.g. 25+ yards), deep movement, malfunctions, position changes, equipment transitions, cover/concealment, barriers, disability, lights, etc. All good things to know, but beyond minimum.

There are no reloads… on the clock. The data is strong in showing in-fight reloads in the private citizen self-defense context just don't happen (see: Active Self Protection's corpus of video data). It is an important skill, just not minimum. Note that with the 25 rounds of this test, the shooter will have to (re)load at least twice: once to start, once somewhere in the middle. At its most basic, the skill of (re)loading the gun must be exercised to perform the Assessment, and so the act of (re)loading won't be wholly novel. This is something I picked up from Claude Werner: the fundamentals of loading and unloading a gun. We take that action for granted because we've done it thousands of times, but there was a time you didn't know how to put cartridges into a magazine, you didn't know how to load your gun, you didn't know the proper order for unloading a semi-automatic handgun – you too had to learn these things. As such, just basic operation of the gun is part of minimum competency.

What's Hidden

Hidden in here are other minimum competency factors: safe gun handling, how to load a magazine, how to load and unload a gun, grip, stance, sight picture, sight alignment, recoil management, breathing, follow-through, reaction to stimulus (timer). They may not be called out by name in the choreography, but they are absolutely there and part of achieving minimum competency.

Still Mulling

One-handed shooting

I'm still not sure if one-handed shooting is minimal or super-minimal. One-handed shooting is a skill to be taught, learned, and practiced. If I think back to my framing of "I have an afternoon to teach someone what they need to know", is that limited time well-spent by teach one-handed (in addition to two-handed and all the other things)? Maybe? I am undecided, but presently I think one-handed shooting is "one more thing", is scope creep, and it detracts from "the afternoon of teaching". I'd rather someone have a few things they can execute well, than a big toolbox they can barely utilize.

Karl raised the point that in many videos we see people shooting one-handed. True, but why are they shooting one-handed? Were they trained to do this? Or is it just some untrained response? I think that matters. And it could be argued if they just defaulted to one-handed, that perhaps the Assessment should have at least 1 one-handed string to introduce the concept. Ed Vinyard rightfully points out that if we don't measure/test things, it's easier to procrastinate training those things. So maybe there should be a one-handed string. I don't know yet.

Everything's a "shoot"

Not everything is a shoot, but everything in the Assessment is. I think it's important to train in the decision-making process, especially in terms of the shoot/no-shoot decision. Sometimes going for your gun is in response to shoot-decision, and this is basically the scenario we often drill: that the gun is holstered and only leaves the holster after the shoot decision is made (which is an argument for a rapid DTFAH). Sometimes the gun is already out but it's a no-shoot, which may turn into a shoot or may not. I think decision making is important, but I'm not sure if and how this can be quantified and reflected via the Assessment.

Administrative side-effects?

Some things in the Assessment are administrative, like rounding to 2.5 seconds at 5 and 7 yards, when the calculations came out to 2.3 for 5 and 2.7 for 7. I could justify saying that 2.5 is good for 7, with 5 being more complex since it adds in the side-step so it works out to have the same par time. But, do I have any risk of such things tainting the assessment? I was talking with Brian Hill about his Mixed 6. He admitted the reload string isn't quite in line with the rest of the drill, but it works "and Mixed 6 sounds cooler than Mixed 5". In my Rangemaster Master class, John Corriea had us shoot his "10 Round Skill Check". I saw something in there (I forget exactly what) that didn't add up. John admitted it was a fudge to make the test work out. Three Seconds or Less does start variations to keep the 3 second par time across all strings. So, if administrative stuff is bad, I guess at least I'm in good company.

I want it to be as simple as possible, but no simpler. As Paul Howe says, "selection is a never-ending process", so…

Skill level, skill degradation

Is this the floor? Is this accurately placing the floor, the line of what defines minimum competence? I don't know… time will tell, I guess. One interesting element is skill degradation. It can and often does happen under stress. Gabe White:

Still, when your skills tumble a thousand feet down the mountain, or however far they are going to fall depending on a person's 'coolness', because of stress and all the difficulty there might be when it's for real, don't you want to start at the top of the mountain rather than close to the bottom?

During the opening lecture of KR Training's Defensive Pistol Skills 1 class, we talk about "LTC vs. Reality". We call out a lesson from Paul Ford, former APD SWAT. Paul was asked for one bit of advice to give someone about a gunfight and Paul said to expect to do about 70% of your worst day on the range. When you consider how far your skills may/will deteriorate, it begs setting the bar of competency high enough so any degradation of skill still leaves you operating with high skill.

More data, please

For sure, the Assessment could use more runs and data. I'd love to know how you do at shooting it. If you feel like going for extra credit, I'd love to know some data. Shoot it cold, as written. Send me your score, picture of your target, times for each string, what you shot it with, under what conditions, etc. As much data as you'd like to provide. Thank you.

I expect a v4 will come at some point…

Minimum Competency Assessment Checkpoints

Let's revisit the six checkpoints and see how it breaks down:

- Draw from concealment
  - The drill setup is to use your everyday carry gear, including your carry ammo if you can afford it. ~~Yes, this implies carrying concealed (vs. open carry).~~
    - However, as I am changing my thinking to expand beyond the private citizen concealed carrier, it's really that first statement: using your EDC.
  - Every string starts from a draw.
    - No ready position starts, no table starts, etc.
- Getting multiple hits
  - There are strings of multiple shots, with a bias towards the "draw to first acceptable hit" (DTFAH) skill.
- In a small area
  - The body and head areas on the preferred KRT-2 target are representative of the small area to target.
    - Increased challenge (perhaps subsequent metric?) in targeting only the white-zones (body inner trapezoid, ocular)
- From close range
  - Heavy emphasis on <= 5 yard shooting.
  - Some work at 7 and 10 yards for confidence and practicalness (e.g. across a room)
    - Cold 10 yards to build confidence.
- Quickly
  - The par times are low enough, within statistical and data-reinforced thresholds.
- Using both hands

- o All strings are fired are two-handed.
- o There are different positional starts, because regardless of where our hands start, we want to get both of them on the gun.

And not much other. I am trying to keep it as focused and "on point" as possible.

I think this Assessment provides a fair attempt at realizing the skills relevant to minimum competency in defensive pistol skills. To illustrate them, to provide a means of assessing performance.

Final Thoughts

My hope for this work – the Assessment, but more so the reasoning underlying it – is that it makes a meaningful contribution towards the understanding of minimum competency. I go back to my origins: people passing the Texas LTC and thinking themselves good and done, when their targets look like they were peppered by a shotgun and they have no idea how to properly carry a gun. Is obtaining your Texas LTC an accomplishment? Yes! It's certainly a milestone along the road. And it's a far lot better than the Illinois CCL test (70% score, anywhere on a B-27 target with no time limits). The trouble with such tests is how people might weigh the test relative to their skills assessment; as Claude Werner points out, it can lead to poor outcomes:

> In the Not So Much successful incident, Calvin 'Mad Dog' Gonnigan shot at three people in Chicargo who were celebrating Independence Day. A nearby Concealed Carry Licensee shot at 'Mad Dog' but only peripherally wounded him several times. 'Mad Dog' left but then came back to murder one of his victims by shooting her in the face and even further seriously wounding the other two victims. Eventually, the POlice arrived from the District Headquarters, which was a block away, and took 'Mad Dog' into custody.…
>
> Chicargo, being an urban area, is unlikely to result in much practice. That's probably why 'Mad Dog' did most of his shooting at close range and probably why the CCL was not particularly successful. The Illinois qualification course can be passed by only hitting one shot out of 10 at 10 yards and that only has to hit an arm of the silhouette target.

We need to do better.

So what is sufficient? Is a sub-second draw necessary? Or do you just need to have a gun and the wherewithal to use it?

I want to reiterate an important point. This Assessment is intended to be a floor, not a ceiling. People want to know "Am I good enough?" Good enough for what? To be able to use a gun in self-defense. In order to make that assessment, we must be able to articulate what is involved both as a level to achieve and the means to get there.

I think it's unrealistic to have a never-ending "just get better" approach. Yes, I'm a firm believer in being better today than yesterday, but not everyone has the same outlook nor capabilities and capacity in life. Not everyone has the time, energy, and resources to get to a sub-second draw and drill out the X-ring at 25 yards. Do you need those skills to be able to successfully defend

yourself? Are they the floor? I would say no. When Gabe White talks about his Performance Awards he says:

> …these are difficult performance goals intended for use by enthusiasts who are going to devote a lot of effort, time, and resources to practicing and getting better… they are probably a lot more difficult technical level goal than you would address unless you were an enthusiast.… Again, these are goals, not standards, and they are intended for use by enthusiasts. There are lots and lots of people who have really gotten the job done in real life and they wouldn't reach any of these technical skill levels. They are very much intended for people who are self-motivated to do a lot of practicing and get as sharp as they can.

Chuck Haggard:

> I think people actually need, for the most part, far less technical shooting skill than we often think, not to say that people shouldn't train, it's just that most real world pistol fights just don't require that much marksmanship.

To understand what makes you minimally competent could influence what and how you prepare in the grander scheme. For example, perhaps you start your training with pistol proficiency, focusing on it until you achieve minimum competence. Then you put pistol skills into maintenance mode and start studying medical skills, or taking scenario/FoF training, or get to the gym, or whatever. One can only focus on so much; to know when something is "good enough" and then you can switch to study something else? There's merit in that.

Greg Ellifritz wrote an excellent article about *Skill Development – When are you good enough?*

> True mastery of any topic makes one a specialist. Becoming a specialist takes a long period of time. That time requirement is an opportunity cost that will most certainly reduce the time you have available to become adept at other survival skills.

> Beyond that, however, there are additional future consequences for attaining true mastery.

> What happens when you fail? No one can stay at the very top of their game forever. Challengers and upstarts are constantly clamoring for a shot at the title. Eventually, the "best" gets toppled. At that point, they are no longer "the best." Can your ego take that hit?

> What does it mean to make the mastery of a single topic your life's purpose when you realize that you are no longer making advancements in the field? At some point in your journey, you will reach a place where you can no longer make measurable improvement. When that happens, how will you feel?

> All of that potential pain and anguish is minimized if one seeks adept proficiency rather than absolute mastery.

Greg references trainer Dan John about the 80/20 rule:

> I like to throw myself passionately into a sport or activity until I reach about an 80 percent efficiency level. To go beyond that requires an obsession and degree of specialization that doesn't appeal to me. Once I reach that 80 percent level I like to go off and do something totally different.

Greg brings up another facet: it's not just about going up the mountain, it's also about coming down. We won't stay young and fit forever. Maybe you can hit that sub-second draw in your 30s, but can you maintain that into your 60s? Maybe. What will it take to achieve that, and is it worth it? Is it even necessary? Because even in your 60s, you'll still want to know and have the confidence in knowing you can get the job done.

Not everyone is a hobbyist/enthusiast, but everyone has limitations: limited time, budget, and even desire/gumption. Yes, I think being better today than yesterday is a solid ethos, but not everyone thinks the same as I do. We don't all have the same goals, the same operating context, the same environment, the same constraints, the same resources, the same discipline, the same benefits and blessings, time, ability, motivation, or dedication. We are all on different and unique journeys. Nevertheless, we all possess the human right of self-defense, and with the right comes the responsibility to be "well regulated". To become as such is a road one must travel, and things such as this Assessment are but a milestone.

We want to grow our tent. In that outreach, we have to acknowledge the limits and constraints we all operate within. We have to work within those limits, giving a realistic and appropriate understanding of competency and sufficiency, yet balancing against attainability and the road and motivations to get there. It is important to bust false senses of ability – you need to KNOW what you can actually do. By knowing what it means to be minimally competent, you can have an appropriate and realistic understanding of your capabilities. Even if all you are is minimally competent, you are still competent.

We need to help people learn and grow. Crawl. Walk. Run. Crawling is learning gun parts, nomenclature, basic safety and marksmanship. Walking is getting people at least minimally competent. When people have competence, that will build their confidence. I want to get people walking, and I want to help people walk through life with confidence.

5x5 ("5 by 5")

Gila Hayes is the originator (in her book). Claude Werner expanded. Greg Ellifritz provided variation… or maybe not…

https://www.usconcealedcarry.com/blog/5-5/
https://www.activeresponsetraining.net/the-5-x-5-shooting-drill-and-some-thoughts-on-training
https://www.luckygunner.com/lounge/start-shooting-better-5x5-drill/
https://www.activeresponsetraining.net/headhunters-6x6-drill

Original Concept (by Gila)
From the ready:
- 5 rounds
- In a 5" circle
- From 5 yards
- In 5.0 seconds.

Claude's Addition (5^5 – Claude calls it "5 hat 5")
The above plus:
- 5 times in a row. (To ensure consistency, not luck).

6^6 variation
- 6 rounds
- In a 6" circle
- From 6 yards
- In 6.0 seconds
- 6 times in a row.

Other Modifications
From the holster.
From holster, plus concealment.
Move on the draw.

Scoring

No misses; 100% clean.
Par Factor: Do Bill Drills instead. ;-)

Claude was a guest on Ballistic Radio (Episode 332, November 18, 2020). He said: "[5^5] is a black belt test. Several trainers have commented to me that they thought [5^5] was not that difficult, and when they applied it to their advanced students, found out people can't do that." (Note: Claude tells me that labeling 5^5 a black belt test came from Brian Hill).

Interesting Historical Note

I noticed attribution inconsistency/confusion in the naming and evolution of this drill. For sure, Gila originated it and Claude added "and do it 5 times for consistency". Claude also named it "5^5" (as opposed to "5x5") as a mathematics joke (it's not just doing one item of 5 and

repeating 4 more times; it's a multiple of 5 items repeated 4 additional times). The "6" variation? This is funny. Claude attributes to Greg Ellifritz, but Greg attributes to Claude. Says Greg: "I'm not interested in credit for anything. John can list it as 'unknown author' in his book. I wrote about it, but I certainly stole it from someone.". Says Claude: "This is probably the first shooting drill in the industry's history that two guys are arguing 'I didn't create that drill, you created it. No, I didn't come up with it, you came up with it.' Cracks me up." Claude believes it's a Greg creation because he didn't recall ever shooting a drill at 6 yards in his life; plus Claude is very big into 5-shot snubs. Well, a few months after this conversation, Claude was going through some old notes and discovered that he did in fact make it for a User of Force class he started teaching back in 2012. He attributes forgetting to the timing of the class relative to some surgery, and the post-surgery brain fog. Says Claude: "I based it on what several Federal Court decisions said cops should be getting taught but weren't. Tuttle v. Oklahoma (1984) was decided by a smart judge who really understood the subject of Use of Force at a practical level."

A good bit of fun, and a good understanding of a drill and its intent. It's a fine drill, created, evolved, and promoted by some fine people.

And the name, "5 hat 5". The caret ^ is used as a mathematical symbol of exponent – "to the power of". So it's "5 to the power of 5"… it's "5 by 5 by 5", if you will. Some people refer to the caret as a "hat", because it looks like a hat. Thus.

Texas License to Carry (LTC/CHL) Test

The required live fire test of process to acquire a Texas License to Carry (LTC).
https://www.dps.texas.gov/rsd/ltc/index.htm

General Setup
B-27 target.
Shot from (low) ready position.

3 Yards (20 rounds)
1 shot in 2 seconds; 5 times.
2 shots in 3 seconds; 5 times.
5 shots in 10 seconds; 1 time.

7 Yards (20 rounds)
5 shots in 10 seconds; 1 time.
2 shots in 4 seconds; 1 time.
3 shots in 6 seconds; 1 time.
1 shot in 3 seconds; 5 times.
5 shots in 15 seconds; 1 time.

15 yards (10 rounds)
2 shots in 6 seconds; 1 time.
3 shots in 9 seconds; 1 time.
5 shots in 15 seconds; 1 time.

Variation
From the holster.
From concealment.
Clean it.
Use a better target (e.g. KRT-2, IDPA, IPSC).
Using a better target, from concealment, shooting it clean (pass-fail).

Scoring

50 rounds total.
250 possible points.
Scored by the B-27 scoring zones.
175 points (70%) students, 225 points (90%) instructors.
Par Factor: (100/(250/115))=46

John's Notes

In the grand scheme, it's not a difficult test as written. However, if you shoot from holster and concealment, on a better target, it's decent. I think that adjustment could be argued for minimum competency.

Modified Texas LTC Qualification

Karl thought about how the Texas License to Carry course of fire could be modified to be a better standard, but still retaining most of the characteristics of the original drill. Full details can be read on the KR Training blog.
https://blog.krtraining.com/modified-texas-ltc-qualification/

General Setup
IDPA target
All shot from concealment

3yd	From ready, one-handed, 1 shot to the body in 2 seconds.
3yd	Repeat
3yd	Holstered, hand on gun, other hand on chest, two-handed. 1 shot to the head in 2 seconds.
3yd	Repeat
3yd	Hands at sides. Step left, draw, fire 2 shots to the body in 3 seconds.
3yd	Hands at sides. Step right, draw, fire 2 shots to the body in 3 seconds.
3yd	Hands at sides. Draw, fire 2 head shots in 3 seconds.
7yd	Hands at sides. Draw, fire 2 shots to the body in 4 seconds.
7yd	Hands at sides .Draw, fire 3 shots to the body in 6 seconds.
7yd	Hands at sides. Draw, fire 5 shots to the body in 10 seconds.
15yd	Hands at sides. Draw, fire 2 shots to the body standing, kneel, 3 shots to the body in 15 seconds.

Scoring

IDPA "points down", by target zone. 25 rounds total. 25 is maximum score. 18 points (70%) is passing. 20 is 80%, 23 is 90% which would be considered "instructor-level". Misses and late shots are -5 points each.

Discussion

You can read Karl's design philosophy, course details, performance video, and assessment on the KR Training blog.

I agree this is a better general qualifier in the sense of improved representation of skills required towards minimum competency in defensive handgun use. It's also a fair low-round-count-drill for someone in the post-LTC phase of their training.

As a qualifier/test, I think it's missing an important component: repetition. Yes there are 2 repeated strings, but I don't think it's enough. Consider the 5^5 and Claude's reason for doing it 5 times in a row – consistency. If something is done once, what achieved it: luck or skill? Repeat and collect more data points for your assessment. Consider a simple case: repeat all the strings twice (first string is now shot 4 times). How does that change testing and assessment?

Three Seconds or Less (v6)

Created by Karl Rehn of KR Training. Learn more about the drill and its development in our book: *__Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training__*.

Target: KRT-2 center zone, IDPA (4" head circle), IPSC, HC-1, F.A.S.T.

Setup: 20 rounds total, either as: 2 magazines: 9+1 in the chamber, 10 round reload; or 4
magazines (or snub/revolver setup): 4+1, 5, 5, 5.

YARDS	START POSITION / INSTRUCTIONS
3	Hands at sides, gun concealed. **Step left**, draw and fire **3 body** shots, **2 handed**. *(after) Holster, step right.*
	Firing hand on gun, support hand on chest. Draw and fire **2 head** shots, **2 handed**.
	RELOAD OR VERIFY THAT GUN HAS 5 AND ONLY 5 ROUNDS, HOLSTER
	Hands at sides, gun concealed. **Step right**, draw and fire **3 body** shots, **2 handed**. *(after) Holster, step left.*
	Take one step forward (2 yards), firing hand on gun, support hand on chest. Draw and fire **2 body** shots, **firing hand only**, while backing up.
	(after) UNLOAD GUN, LOCK SLIDE, HOLSTER GUN WITH SLIDE LOCKED, *MOVE TO 7 YARD LINE*
7	Start with magazine in support hand, slide-locked gun in firing hand. Magazine 1"-2" from mag well, ready to insert to complete the load. On signal, insert mag, rack slide, fire **1 body** shot, **2 handed**. *(after) Return to ready position.*
	Ready, finger off trigger. Fire **2 head** shots, **2 handed**. *(after) Holster.*
	Firing hand on gun, support hand on chest. Fire **2 body** shots, **firing hand only**.
	RELOAD OR VERIFY THAT GUN HAS AT LEAST 5 ROUNDS
	Face 90º to the left (*LH shooters, face right*), hand on gun. Turn, draw and fire **3 body** shots, **2 handed**. *(after) Transfer gun to support hand.*
	Firing hand on chest, gun in support hand, aimed at target, finger **OFF** trigger. Fire **2 body** shots, **support hand only**. *(after) Transfer gun to firing hand, unload/reload and holster.*

Scoring

Count hits

DPS1: 13 body, 1 head; total 14+ to pass. **DPS2**: 14 body, 2 head; total 16+ to pass.

DPS3: 15 body, 3 head; total 18+ to pass. **100%**: 16 body, 4 head; total of 20.

Par Factor: (100/(20/27))=135

Three Seconds or Less – Low Light

Created by Karl Rehn, KR Training

The skills tested on each string correspond to the tasks a skilled, trained shooter should be able to perform in 3 seconds or less, at 3-7 yards. Any ready position that is not full extension, aimed at target, can be used.

Setup

Target: KRT-2 or IPSC/IPDA overlay

Gun concealed

Flashlight, using your choice of flashlight technique (neck-index is the KR Training preference)

All strings have a 3 second par time.

3yd	Hands at sides, gun concealed, no flashlight. Step left, draw, fire 3 to the body 2-handed. (After: holster, step right).
3yd	Hands at sides, gun concealed, no flashlight. Step right, draw, fire 3 to the body 2-handed. (After: holster, step left; reload and/or verify gun has a least 7 rounds).
5yd	Draw to ready, gun in dominant hand, no flashlight. Fire 4 rounds to the body, dominant-hand-only. (After: transfer gun to non-dominant hand).
5yd	Gun in non-dominant hand, at ready, no flashlight. Fire 3 rounds to the body, non-dominant-hand-only. (After: transfer gun to dominant hand, reload with at least 7 rounds, holster. Obtain flashlight in non-dominant hand).
5yd	Flashlight in non-dominant hand, pistol at ready in dominant hand. Illuminate the target. On signal, light off, step left, illuminate target, fire 2 rounds to the body dominant-hand-only. (After: light off, return to ready position, step right).
5yd	Flashlight in non-dominant hand, pistol at ready in dominant hand. Illuminate the target. On signal, light off, step right, illuminate target, fire 2 rounds to the body dominant-hand-only. (After: light off, holster, step left).
7yd	Flashlight in non-dominant hand, pistol at ready in dominant hand. On signal, illuminate the target, fire 1 shot to the head. (After: light off, return to ready position).
7yd	Repeat
7yd	Repeat

Scoring

IPSC target – only A/C zones count.

IDPA target – only -0 zones count.

KRT-2 target – only gray & white zones count.

Score 5 points for a hit, 0 for a miss. 20 rounds, 100 points possible.

Passing: 80 or better, must have at least 2 head shots.

16x16x16 Drill

From KR Training:
https://blog.krtraining.com/the-16x16x16-drill/

- 16 rounds
- At 16 feet
- Within 16 seconds
- On a KRT-1 target

Setup

Divide 16 rounds between two magazines; 8 & 8 is a good starting point, but it's encouraged to use random and varying counts between the two magazines to avoid predicting and gaming the drill. Load the gun with one of the magazines, and holster; the other magazine placed in a magazine pouch on the hip. Stand 16 feet from a KRT-1 target, gun concealed, hands relaxed at side. Par time of 16 seconds.

On the signal, shoot each numbered shape on the target. The shapes marked "1" shoot with 1 round. Those marked "2", shoot with 2 rounds. Marked "3" with 3 rounds. The "A" triangle is shot with 3 rounds, the "B" triangle with 1 round. When the gun runs empty, reload and continue until you've shot all the shapes with the required number of rounds. You can shoot the shapes in any order you wish.

Scoring

Base score is your time.
Add 1 second for every miss.
Add 1 second for every procedural (e.g. failing to shoot the correct number of rounds for the drill, or the right rounds on each shape).

Total score under 16 seconds is good. Times under 12 seconds are excellent.

Farnam Drill

It was in a Rangemaster class (maybe Combative Pistol 2 in 2010) where I first shot what was to become the 3M Test (see also: The Farnam Drill). Back then, I thought it was an interesting examination of "all the things you need" in a tight testing package. I used to have in this collection the favor of the drill as I recall Tom introducing me to it, but I have removed it in favor of the 3M Test. If you are curious about The Farnam Drill, read:
https://blog.hsoi.com/2013/06/06/the-farnam-drill/

3M Test (Marksmanship, Movement, Manipulations) – August 2021

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Over the years, Tom has made refinements to his 3M Test. Says Tom: "Many of our drills evolve over time. Sometimes, the reason is adoption of a new target, or to add some skill. When we used the VSRT target, we did not yet have proprietary Rangemaster targets. Hence one change. I added the head shot as the final shot of the drill, because I wanted to have a transition from a large target to a small one (same as close target to far one). That has this one drill testing/practicing almost everything we need to do with the pistol."

This is the version of the 3M Test as printed in the August 2021 Rangemaster Newsletter. I like it: it's simpler, tougher, and holds you to a higher standard.

Setup
- Intended to be shot cold.
- Target: RFTS-Q, IALEFI-Q, IDPA (i.e. 8" chest circle, 4" head circle)
- At 5 yard line.
- 7 live rounds in the gun
  - 1 round in the chamber.
  - 6 live & 1 dummy in the magazine; dummy is in 3rd, 4th, or 5th position, neither top or bottom round. This magazine goes in the gun.
- 1 reload in hip pouch, with at least 3 rounds.
  - (You will shoot a total of 10 live rounds (and 1 dummy)).
- Starts in holster, from concealment.

On Signal:
- Side step
- Draw & fire into the chest circle until malfunction
- Side step, remedy malfunction
- Continue to fire at the chest circle until the gun runs empty
- Side step, reload
- Fire 2 to the chest, 1 to the head.

Scoring

Pass/fail. To pass, you must shoot it clean with no procedural errors (within time). Any round outside a ring is a fail. You must move on draw, on malfunction, and on reload; failure to move is a procedural error (thus a fail).

Time limits:
- Regular Earth People   15 seconds
- Proficient shooters   12 seconds
- Instructors   9 seconds

3M Test (Marksmanship, Movement, Manipulations) - Old

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Target & Scoring Style
1 silhouette target: RFTS-Q scored 5/3/0; VSRT scored 5/3/0; IDPA scored 5/3/0.
You can shoot this Pass/Fail or Comstock. Pass/Fail, only highest hit zones count.

Setup
- 5 yard line.
- 6 live rounds in the gun
  - 1 round in chamber.
  - 5 live & 1 dummy in magazine; dummy is in random location, neither top or bottom round. This magazine in gun.
- 1 reload in hip pouch, with at least 4 rounds.
  - You will shoot a total of 10 live rounds (and 1 dummy).
- From holster.
- Hands in interview.

On Signal:
- Side step
- Draw & fire until malfunction
- Side step, clear malfunction, continue to fire
- When the gun runs empty, side step, emergency reload
- Fire 3 to the body, 1 to the head.

Scoring

Must move on draw, malfunction, and reload. 10-point penalty for any misses (Comstock). If pass-fail, any round outside the highest value hit zone is a failure.

Comstock: Possible score 50 points. Points divided by Time = Index. Index x 20 = score.
Par score = 100. Over 100 = very good. Over 125 = very high skill.

Pass-fail: Shooter fails if:
- Doesn't move on draw, malfunction, and reload.
- Doesn't tap the magazine before running the slide on the malfunction.
- Places a single hit outside the highest scoring zone on the target.
- 15 seconds for student; 12 seconds for instructor.

Rangemaster Firearms Instructor Handgun Qualification (Feb 2013)

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Target & Target Scoring
IALEFI-QP scored 5/4/3/0. FBI-QIT99-RM: 5/3. VSRT 5/4/2. IDPA 5/3/0

3 yd	Side step, draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Side step, draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds.
5 yd	Side step, draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds, dominant hand only.
5 yd	Gun in non-dominant hand, at the ready. Fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds.
5 yd	Side step, draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest, 1 to the head, in 5 seconds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 6 rounds in 6 seconds.
7 yd	Start with 4 (3+1) rounds only in gun. Draw and fire 4 rounds, empty chamber gun reload, and fire 3 rounds, all in 8 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds.
15 yd	Repeat.
25 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds standing, 3 rounds kneeling, all in 18 seconds.

Scoring

50 rounds total.
250 possible points.
225 (90%) or better to pass.
Par Factor: (100/(250/68)=27

Rangemaster Master Instructor Qualification (Nov 2019)

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Target & Target Scoring
RFTS-Q Target scored 5/4/2. In a pinch, I've used an IDPA with head circle scored 5/2/0 (arguably tougher target).

2 yd	From position 3. Start muzzle averted to left or right of target. On signal, rotate on target, fire 3 rounds in 2 seconds (from position 3).
2 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds strong-hand-only, switch hands, 3 rounds weak-hand-only, all in 7 seconds.
3 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest, 1 round to the head, all in 4 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	From the ready, fire 1 round to the head in 1.5 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	From the ready, fire 4 (3+1) rounds in gun. Fire 4 rounds, reload, 4 rounds, all in 8 seconds.
7 yd	From the ready, empty chamber, loaded magazine in place. On signal, attempt to fire (it must go click!), apply remedial action, fire 2 rounds, all in 5 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds in 5 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 6 seconds.
25 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds standing, 5 rounds kneeling, in 20 seconds.

Scoring

60 rounds total.
300 possible points.
270 or higher (90%) to pass.
Par Factor: (100/(300/78))=26

Rangemaster Defensive Revolver Qualification (Nov 2019)

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Target & Target Scoring
RFTS-Q Target scored 5/4/2. In a pinch, I've used an IDPA with head circle scored 5/2/0 (arguably tougher target).

3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Repeat again.
3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds, strong-hand only.
3 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Start in weak-hand, fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds, weak-hand-only.
3 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest, 1 round to the head, all in 4 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Draw and fire 5 rounds in 6 seconds. Move to cover or drop to kneeling, and reload (the move & reload is not on the clock, but you have to do it).
10 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds in 5 seconds.
10 yd	Repeat.
15 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 10 seconds.
15 yd	Repeat.

Scoring

50 rounds total.
250 possible points.
225 or higher (90%) to pass.
Par Factor: (100/(50/71))=142

Rangemaster Handgun Core Skills Test (Comstock Count)

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

During my 2016 Rangemaster Advanced Instructor class, Tom insisted this be shot from concealment for "apples-to-apples" comparison to our other skills and qualifiers.

Target & Target Scoring
IALEFI-QP scored 5/3/0; RFTS-Q scored 5/3/0; IDPA (4" head circle) scored 5/2/0.

3 yd	Side step, draw and fire 4 rounds.
5 yd	Side step, draw and fire 4 rounds to the chest, 1 to the head.
5 yd	Start with gun in dominant hand only, fire 4 rounds.
5 yd	Start with gun in non-dominant hand only, fire 5 rounds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 6 rounds.
7 yd	From the ready, 3 (2+1) rounds in the gun. Fire 3, reload, fire 3.
10 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds.
25 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds.

Scoring

40 rounds total.

Score targets. Divide points by total time, for index. Multiply index by 20 for final score.

Par score = 100.

80-100 = Very good. 100-124 = Advanced. 125+ = Master.

Notes

What's listed here is the version from the September 2020 Rangemaster Newsletter. The version I originally shot was slightly different (2nd string: 3 chest/2 head; scoring arguably easier such as IDPA was 5/3/0, IALEFI-QP was 5/4/2, RM-Q 5/5/3). I also have a version where string 2 is simply draw and fire 5, and scoring on the IALEFI-QP was 5/3/2). Let's go with Tom's latest version, because higher standards are good.

Rangemaster Bullseye Course

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Setup
NRA B-8 Repair Center Target
All strings shot with pistol loaded, using both hands, starting at the low ready.

25 yd	5 rounds in 60 seconds (think of it as 5 1-shot strings; come down, relax, breathe in between each shot).
15 yd	5 rounds in 15 seconds.
15 yd	5 rounds in 10 seconds.
7 yd	5 rounds, slide-lock reload, 5 rounds, in 10 seconds.
5 yd	5 rounds in 5 seconds.

John Note: I've seen the 7 yd string listed two ways:
1. Start with exactly 5 rounds in the gun: shoot 5, slide-lock reload, shoot 5
2. Shoot 10 rounds total, and must reload at some point in the string, regardless of weapon capacity

Both are valid approaches to the 7 yard string, with the key being a reload must occur. Shoot it both ways, be proficient and high-scoring regardless of approach.

Scoring

Score by the rings.
Anything outside the 7-ring is a miss (10 points down)
30 rounds total.
300 possible points.
Shooting 285 (95%) under the time limits is very good.
270 (90%) to pass.

Rangemaster Advanced Bullseye Course

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Setup
NRA B-8 Repair Center Target, FBI-IP1, or bullseye on an LTT-1.

All strings shot with pistol loaded, starting from the low ready.

25 yd	5 rounds in 30 seconds.
15 yd	5 rounds in 10 seconds.
7 yd	Start with exactly 5 rounds in the gun. Fire 5 rounds, slide-lock reload, 5 rounds, in 12 seconds.
5 yd	5 rounds in 5 seconds.
5 yd	3 rounds in 3 seconds, dominant hand only.
5 yd	2 rounds in 3 seconds, non-dominant hand only.

Scoring

Score by the rings.
Only hits in the 8, 9, 10, and X ring count; all others are misses (10 points down).
30 rounds total.
300 possible points.
270 (90%) to pass. If you can shoot 270 or above, cold, you're a very good shot.

Rangemaster TacCon 2019 Pistol Match

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Target & Target Scoring
RFTS-Q target, scored 5/4/3/0

5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	From ready, gun in dominant hand only, fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	From ready, gun in non-dominant hand only, fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 4 seconds.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest, 1 round to the head, all in 5 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
10 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds to the chest, 1 round to the head, all in 5 seconds.
10 yd	Repeat.
10 yd	From the ready, 3 (2+1) rounds in gun. Fire 3, reload, fire 3, all in 8 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 6 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 2 standing, 2 kneeling, in 10 seconds.

Scoring

40 rounds total.
200 possible points.
Rounds below the belt line count as zero points.
Rounds fired after the target begins to turn count as misses, if the resulting bullet tear in the target is more than 2" in length.
Head shots count as 5 points if inside the head circle, 3 points anywhere else in the head.

Rangemaster TacCon 2021 Standards Match – "4 Second Standards"

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

Setup
Target: RFTS-Q, shot on turning targets.
All stages with a 4 second par (exposure) time.
All stages shot from concealment or duty gear, unless otherwise noted.

5 yd	Begin holstered. Draw and fire 4 rounds to the body.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Repeat again (12 rounds total)
5 yd	Begin holstered. Draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest, 1 to the head.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Repeat again (12 rounds total)
5 yd	Begin low ready, gun in dominant hand only. 3 rounds to the body, dominant hand only. (3 rounds total)
7 yd	Begin holstered. Draw and fire 3 rounds to the chest.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Repeat again (9 rounds total).
10 yd	Begin holstered. Draw and fire 2 rounds to the chest.
10 yd	Repeat (4 rounds total).

Tie Breaker Stage

This was only shot by attendees who scored 190 (95%) or above. Fired one person at a time, using a timer.

Setup
Target: B-8

7 yd   From low ready, fire 5 rounds. Record time.

Scoring

Standards: 40 rounds total, 200 possible points.
8" ring & head – 5 points
10" ring – 4 points
Bottle – 3 points
Misses, over time, outside the bottle, or below the belt line – 0 points

Breaker: 5 rounds total. 50 possible points.
Scored by the ring's points. Holes that break (not touch – break) a line get the higher value.
Score is Comstock: points divided by time.

Commentary

A good standard with a fixed par time. To get perspective on difficulty, consider other courses of fire:

- TacCon 2021
    - Draw, fire 4 shots in 4 seconds at 5 yards.
- TacCon 2019
    - Draw, fire 3 shots in 3 seconds at 5 yards.
- Rangemaster Instructor Qualification
    - Draw, fire 3 shots in 3 seconds at 3 yards.
    - Draw, fire 5 shots in 5 seconds at 5 yards.
- Rangemaster Master Instructor Qualification
    - Draw, fire 4 shots in 3 seconds at 3 yards
    - Draw, fire 3 shots in 3 seconds at 5 yards.
- Rangemaster Baseline Skills Assessment
    - Draw, fire 5 shots in 5 seconds at 5 yards.
- Playing Card Test
    - Draw, fire 5 shots in 5 seconds at 5 yards (into a 3x5" playing card)
- FBI Pistol Qualification (2019)
    - Draw, fire 3 shots in 3 seconds at 5 yards
- 5^5
    - From the ready, 5 shots in 5 seconds at 5 yards (into a 5" circle)

Additionally, consider the tie-breaker stage. About it, Karl stated:

> Good runs were 50 pts under 4 seconds. The top scores were 50 pts under 3 seconds. Match winner K Clark reportedly ran it in 2.79. He's USPSA GM level. Almost all the top 16 working from appendix carry.

I tried to get a count on appendix vs. strong side for the 16 men and 8 women in the shoot-off. I don't have official numbers but I THINK 2 women and 4 men were strong-side (one in a duty rig); the rest carried appendix. Regardless of the exact numbers, the overwhelming carry mode was appendix. Take that data point for whatever it's worth regarding speed of draw relative to carry location.

Rangemaster Baseline Skills Assessment Drill

From the Rangemaster Firearms Training Services December 2020 Newsletter's Drill of the Month.

https://rangemaster.com

Setup

B-8 repair center, FBI-IP-1 bullseye, or the bullseye on an LTT-1 target.
This drill is intended to be shot cold, from concealed carry.

5yd	Draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds, using both hands.
5yd	Start gun in hand, at ready, in dominant hand only. Fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5yd	Start gun in hand, at ready, in non-dominant hand only. Fire 2 rounds in 3 seconds.
7yd	Start gun in hands, loaded with 3 rounds only. Fire 3 rounds, conduct an empty gun reload, and fire 3 more rounds, all in 10 seconds.
10yd	Start gun in hands, at ready. Fire 4 rounds in 4 seconds.

Scoring

Bullseye target scored as printed.
20 rounds total. Possible score = 200

Interesting Tidbit

I saw a Facebook post from Tom:

"My friend and master trainer Dave Spaulding and I were discussing the Baseline Assessment Drill. Dave suggested shooting the drill, but substituting a 3X5 card for the B-8 bullseye. Obviously, this would be quite a challenge.

Intrigued, I went by the range today. I first shot the drill cold on a B-8, scoring 197. I'll take that cold. I then put 3X5 labels on two used bullseyes and tried Dave's suggestion. I got 18 hits out of 20 the first time, and 19 hits the second run. The one round I dropped was the second shot of the non-dominant hand string, which went high. I knew it while the bullet was still going down the barrel. This is hard. Give it a try."

https://www.facebook.com/tom.givens.37/posts/10222100626697158

Rangemaster Short Combat Accuracy Test (SCAT)

From the Rangemaster Firearms Training Services February 2021 newsletter's Drill of the Month.
https://rangemaster.com

Setup
Use an RFTS-Q or IALEFI-QP silhouette.
Shot from a concealed carry setup.

5yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds to the chest.
5yd	From Ready, fire 1 round to the head.
5yd	Repeat.
5yd	From Ready, fire 3 rounds using dominant hand only.
5yd	From Ready, fire 3 rounds using non-dominant hand only.
7yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds to the chest.
10yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds to the chest.

Scoring

Hits to the center chest ring or head ring count 10 points
Hits in the secondary chest ring count 6 points
All other hits count 2 points; Zero points below the belt line.

Hit Factor Scoring
Record time for each stage, add together for a total time.
Add up the points on the target (200 points possible)
Divide total points by total time, for an Index.
Multiply Index by 12.5 for a final score.
Par score = 100. Goal is a score above 100.

Example- 184 points divided by 22.3 seconds = 8.25 x 12.5 = 103.1 score.

Ratings:
100-125	Competent
125.1-140	Advanced
140.1+	or higher indicates a very high skill level

5/5/5 (Playing Card Test, "Old West Test", "The Ace Drill")

I believe that's what Tom Givens called it. Shot it in my Rangemaster Advanced Instructor class.

It's simple:
- 5 shots
- 5 yards
- 5 seconds
- Into a 3x5 index card (placed vertically).
  - Last time I did this with Tom, he had a special printing of Old West-style Rangemaster playing cards with the Ace of Spades for us to use. Nice souvenir.

Variations

Can be shot from ready, or a holster (and concealment) for additional challenge. During class, Tom had us first shoot from ready, then again from concealment.

Scoring

You do it, or you don't.
Par Factor: you do it or you don't.

In the Rangemaster September 2020 newsletter, Tom mentioned from the ready his goal is 2.0-2.5 seconds; from the holster 3.0-3.5 seconds.

Handgun Disability Course

From Tom Givens, of Rangemaster Firearms Training Services, LLC
https://rangemaster.com

This course tests the shooter's ability to function despite physical limitations, mechanical problems, or other misfortunes.

Setup

Target: IALEFI-QP, RFTS-Q, IDPA, or equivalent.

5 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 3 seconds, dominant hand only.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Start with gun in non-dominant hand only. On signal, fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 to the body and 2 to the head, dominant hand only in 6 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Start on both knees, gun grounded. On signal, pick up gun and fire 4 rounds in 5 seconds, non-dominant hand only.
7 yd	Start at ready, gun in non-dominant hand only, 3 rounds only/total in gun. On signal, fire 3 rounds, reload, and fire 3 more using non-dominant hand throughout, in 20 seconds.
10 yd	Start at ready, stove-pipe malfunction in place. On signal, remedy the malfunction and fire 3 rounds in 8 seconds.
10 yd	Repeat.
10 yd	Start at ready, double-feed in place. On signal, go to kneeling, fix the malfunction, and fire 2 rounds in 10 seconds.
10 yd	Repeat.

Scoring

50 rounds total
250 possible points
200+ to pass (80%)

Interestingly, the write-up I have does not indicate scoring. I would go with 5/3/0.

John's Notes

I was flipping through my handbook from the 2013 Rangemaster Instructor course and this was in there. I added it to this collection because these are skills few if any drills focus on. For sure, these are skills beyond minimum competency. It will be tough to train these live fire on most ranges, but one can always work dry on the underlying skills.

FBI Pistol Qualification (Jan 2019)

Target & Target Scoring
QIT-99 silhouette. RFTS-Q scored 5/4/2 (tougher standard). In a pinch, I've used an IPSC metric target treating A, B, C zones as inside the bottle. Or an IDPA with -0 as 2 points, everything else 0 points.

All fired from concealed carry.

3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds strong-hand-only, switch hands, 3 rounds weak-hand-only, all in 6 seconds.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Ready, fire 3 rounds in 2 seconds.
5 yd	Ready, fire 6 rounds in 4 seconds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds
7 yd	From the ready, 4 (3+1) rounds only in gun. Fire 4 rounds, empty gun reload, fire 4 rounds, all in 8 seconds.
7 yd	From the ready, 5 rounds in 4 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 6 seconds.
15 yd	From the ready, fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds.
25 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds standing, 4 rounds kneeling, in 20 seconds.

Scoring
50 rounds total.
100 possible points.
90 points/percent for instructors.
Par Factor: (100/(100/63))=63

FBI Pistol Qualification (Jan 2013)

Target & Target Scoring
QIT-99 silhouette target. In a pinch, I've used an IPSC metric target treating A, B, C zones as inside the bottle.

All fired from concealed carry.

3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds, strong-hand-only.
3 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds strong-hand-only, switch hands, 3 rounds weak-hand-only, all in 8 seconds.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Repeat again.
5 yd	Repeat a fourth time.
7 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 4 seconds.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Start with 4 (3+1) rounds in the gun. Draw, fire 4 rounds, empty gun reload, fire 4 rounds, all in 8 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 6 seconds.
15 yd	Repeat.
15 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 8 seconds.
25 yd	On the signal, move to cover, fire 3 rounds standing, 2 rounds kneeling, all in 15 seconds.
25 yd	Repeat.

Scoring

60 rounds total.
60 possible points; scored 1 point per bottle hit.
54 points (90%) to pass (instructor level). 48 points (80%) to pass (agents).
Par Factor: (100/(60/92))=153

BATFE Handgun Qualification

Target & Target Scoring
BAFTE target scored 2/1/0. In a pinch, I've used an IDPA target scored 2/0/0 (IMHO approximate but tougher than BAFTE target).

Shot from holster, concealment (unless otherwise noted). Hands at side, or interview.

3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds both hands, 3 rounds weak-hand-only, all in 7 seconds.
3 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds to the head in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Draw and fire 4 rounds in 3 seconds.
7 yd	Start 3 rounds (2+1) in gun. From the ready, fire 3 rounds, emergency/slide-lock reload, fire 3 rounds, in 8 seconds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds to the chest, 1 to the head, all in 5 seconds.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	From the ready, 1 round to the head, in 2 seconds.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Start with empty chamber, slide closed, loaded magazine in place. On signal, attempt to fire, tap/rack, fire 5 rounds, all in 7 seconds.
15 yd	Start with 3 (2+1) rounds in the gun. From ready, fire 3 rounds, drop to kneeling, emergency/slide-lock reload, fire 3 rounds, all in 12 seconds.
15 yd	From kneeling, from the ready, fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds.
15 yd	Repeat.
25 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds in 8 seconds.

Scoring
48 rounds total.
96 possible points.
Par Factor: (100/(96/75))=78

F.A.S.T. (Fundamentals, Accuracy, & Speed Test)

Designed by Todd Louis Green. http://pistol-training.com/drills/the-fast

- 7 yards
- Target: horizontal 3x5 card (head), 8" plate (body). Can use a number of similar targets in a pinch.
- Start position: weapon holstered and concealed, or in duty condition with all retention devices active. Shooter facing downrange, relaxed stance, hands down at sides.
- Gun loaded with 2 rounds (1+1), reload available.
  - 6 rounds total.
- On signal:
  - Fire 2 rounds at head.
  - Slide-lock reload.
  - Fire 4 rounds at body.

Ranking

- 10+ seconds – Novice
- < 10 seconds – Intermediate
- < 7 seconds – Advanced
- < 5 seconds – Expert

Use of a retention holster and flap (covered) magazine pouches, subtract 0.5 seconds from the recorded time. If using an open-top retention holster (e.g. ALS) with no concealment, add 0.50 seconds to the recorded time.

The Test

From Ken Hackathorn. Larry Vickers uses it too, scores it differently.

Shot on a B-8 repair center target. (Ring diameters: X – 1.7", 10 – 3.3", 9 – 5.5" – thus "the black" is 5.5" diameter; 8 – 8").

In a pinch, the 6" x 6" head box of an IPSC/IDPA target could be used. Better: the 4" circle in the IDPA head box. But I only say that for a quick pass/fail; to do The Test right, you really need a B-8.

Standard Version
- 10 yards
- 10 rounds
- 10 seconds
- From the ready position of your choice.

Tougher Version
- 10 yards
- 10 rounds
- 10 seconds
- From the holster.

1911 Neutral Version
- 10 yards
- 8 rounds
- 10 seconds
- From the holster.

Half & Half Version
- 5 yards
- 10 rounds
- 5 seconds
- From the ready position of your choice.

Scoring

Ken scored by the rings: 100 (80 – 1911 version); 80% to pass, 90% good, 95% excellent

Larry scored by time: Record actual time to shoot the drill. Any shot out of black but still on B-8 adds 1 second to your time; any shot off the paper adds 3 seconds. Score is drill time plus penalties. If under 10 seconds, you pass; else fail.

Super Test

From Wayne Dobbs & Darryl Bolke of Hardwired Tactical Shooting.
http://www.hardwiredtacticalshooting.com

All variants shot on a B-8 repair center target.

Super Test
Shot with a semi-auto. All strings start from low ready.

15 yd	Fire 10 rounds in 15 seconds.
10 yd	Fire 10 rounds in 10 seconds.
5 yd	Fire 10 rounds in 5 seconds.

Score by the rings. Goal 270 or better (90%).

Advanced Super Test
Same, but from the holster.

Advanced Super Test on Steroids
These times were added by Ernest Langdon.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEb0mIWmbn8

Shoot the Advanced Super Test with par times of 7.5 seconds (15 yd), 5 seconds (10 yd), 3.5 seconds (5 yd).

Snub Super Test
Shot with a 5-shot snub. All strings start from low ready.

10 yd	Fire 5 shots in 8 seconds, both hands.
5 yd	Fire 5 shots in 5 seconds, both hands.
3 yd	Fire 5 shots in 3 seconds, strong-hand-only.

If you use a very lightweight gun (e.g. sub-15oz scandium frame), on 3 yards you can use 2 hands and 3.5 seconds.

Score by the rings. I saw no stated goal from HiTS, but I reckon 90% (135 points) is tough but workable; 80% (120 points) might be more realistic, especially with very lightweight guns.

Advanced Snub Super Test
It's the Snub Super Test drawing from concealment holster. If using a pocket holster, start with your grip established in the holster. Also, at 3 yards, two hands can be used, and 3.5 seconds is in line with what they were comfortable with to hold black with sub-15 ounce guns.

The Wizard

Ken Hackathorn

https://www.activeresponsetraining.net/ken-hackathorns-wizard-drill
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTZoi_3fE_Q 2018 video from Wilson Combat of Ken explaining and demoing the drill.

A simple test of fundamental skill necessary to survive a conceal carry encounter at realistic distances. Ken himself says: "Good, skilled, competent shooters will find this is a walk in the park, no big deal. But for a lot of people who think they're armed, will find out that without practice and training, they're going to shoot the Wizard Drill and find you may be armed but you're certainly not competent. This is my gold standard for whether or not you're really ready to face the threat."

Setup
- 5 rounds – preferably with the ammunition you carry
- IDPA target or equivalent; 4" head, 8" body.
- From concealment – in the manner in which you normally carry a concealed weapon
    - No gamer or "for class" rigs.
- If you are carrying in a pocket, you are allowed to start with your hand in the pocket on the gun.
- All strings have a 2.5 second par time.

3 yd   Draw and fire 1 head shot, strong-hand-only.
5 yd   Draw and fire 1 head shot, both hands.
7 yd   Draw and fire 1 head shot, both hands.
10 yd   Draw and fire 2 body shots, both hands.

Note: the 5 yd string can be shot 1 or 2 hands, but typically is shot with 2.

Scoring

Shots: 3 head, 2 body
Using an IDPA target, it is scored by the rings (-0, -1, -3).
You can drop 2 points and pass the drill.
Exceed any time limit – fail.
Miss a headshot – fail.

Personally, I don't bother with scoring: it's a simple pass-fail, you do it or you don't.

Bill Drill

Bill Wilson (If you don't know who Bill Wilson is, you've just assigned yourself homework.)

- 7 yards.
- IPSC or IDPA target.
- Gun in holster, hands at surrender position.
- 6 rounds total.
- Draw and fire 6 rounds, all A-Zone / -0 Zone.
- As fast as you can shoot it clean.

Bill Wilson gives a par of 3 seconds from open carry as a goal for a good shooter. Brian Enos states a goal of 2 seconds from competition gear as a Master class benchmark. In our book, *Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training*, we give a par time of 5 seconds. You can also look at Gabe White's metrics for additional perspective.

Bill Drill 2

Same setup as the traditional Bill Drill, but specifically on an IDPA target, and with 5 strings of fire:

- Draw and fire 1 shot.
- Draw and fire 2 shots.
- Draw and fire 3 shots.
- Draw and fire 4 shots.
- Draw and fire 5 shots.

Scoring is standard Vickers, with a 0.5 second penalty per point down. 10 second total score is the goal.

5x5 Skill Test / IDPA 5x5 Abbreviated Classifier

This test came from Bill Wilson, and it eventually became the IDPA 5x5 Abbreviated Classifier.
https://www.idpa.com

Setup
- 10 yards.
- Standard IDPA target, with 4" head circle.
- Start gun holstered, hands at sides, no concealment garment necessary.
- 25 rounds total.

Course of Fire
1. Draw and fire 5 shots, freestyle.
2. Draw and fire 5 shots, strong hand only.
3. Draw and fire 5 shots freestyle, reload from slidelock, fire 5 shots, freestyle.
4. Draw and fire 4 shots to the body, 1 shot to the head, freestyle.

Scoring

Score is sum of times for each string. Bill's original scoring was Standard Vickers with 0.5 second penalty per point down, with a ranking of:
- <= 15 seconds – Grandmaster
- <= 20 seconds – Master
- <= 25 seconds – Expert
- <= 32 seconds – Sharpshooter
- <= 41 seconds – Marksman
- <= 50 seconds – Novice
- > 50 seconds – Not proficient enough to carry a handgun

IDPA Classifier scoring is 1.0 second per point down, with rankings:

	ESP	SSP	CDP	CCP	REV	BUG
MA	20	20.3	20.8	21.7	23.1	24.7
EX	20.01-25.00	20.31-25.4	20.81-26.1	21.71-27.1	23.11-28.8	24.71-30.9
SS	25.01-32.00	25.41-32.4	26.11-33.3	27.11-34.7	28.81-36.9	30.91-39.6
MM	32.01-41.00	32.41-41.6	33.31-42.7	34.71-44.4	36.91-47.3	39.61-50.7
NV	41.01-50.00	41.61-50.7	42.71-52.1	44.41-54.2	47.31-57.7	50.71-68.8

One Magazine, No Misses

This isn't so much a drill as a challenge.

At the KR Training facility, there is a steel hostage target. It's shaped like an IPSC metric target, with a 6" flapper plate (only 4" exposed) above the left shoulder. It's usually set up at the back of the small/steel range, so it's about 25 yards back from the range cover.

The goal is to shoot 1 full magazine at the flapper with no misses. Pass-fail.

Shoot it however you want. From the ready, drawing from concealment (only once, with every single shot), par times or not, two hands, strong hand only, weak hand only, vary the distance, dual against a buddy. Shoot it cold.

Really – do whatever you want. The goal is that under any circumstance you can shoot 1 full mag on demand, whatever the constraints, with your carry gear, scoring 100%.

If you don't have a flapper target, just set up a 4" circle (sticker, paper plate, head box of an IDPA target, etc.) and do the same.

Failure Drill (Mozambique)

- 7 yards
- IPSC or IDPA target
- Gun in holster, hands at surrender
- Shoot 2 to the body, 1 to the head. Record time.
- Repeat a total of 5 times.

Walk-Back Drill

I believe I learned about this from Todd Louis Green.

Shot on a 3x5 index card.

If you have a striker-fired gun, you'll fire 5 rounds. If you have a DA/SA gun, you'll fire 3 pairs of 2 (6 rounds total), so you get a DA and an SA shot each time.

No time-limit, no true starting position (aimed at target is fine). You're welcome to change it up however you want to: the point of the drill is accuracy.

Start at 3 yards. Shoot the 5 (or 6) rounds into the card. If you get all hits, step back to 5 yards and repeat. If you pass, step back to 7 yards. From there, when you pass step back 1 yard (8, 9, 10, etc.) until you cannot get all the hits.

How far back can you go and still get all hits?

Depending upon your gun and ammo, you may reach mechanical limits at 15+ yards.

MAG-40 Qualifier

From the Massad Ayoob Group.
https://massadayoobgroup.com

Listed is the base qualifier, as shot during MAG-40. In other classes (e.g. MAG-80, MAG-30) there are variations such as halving, thirding, or quartering par times; shooting from holster/concealment, etc..

Target: IPSC Metric

All strings start from low ready.

4 yd   Fire 6 rounds, weak-hand-only in 8 seconds.
4 yd   Fire 6 rounds, strong-hand-only in 8 seconds.
7 yd   Fire 6 rounds, reload, 6 rounds. (Two-hands, standing, stance of your choice: Isosceles, Weaver, Chapman).
10 yd   Fire 6 rounds cover crouch, reload, 6 rounds high kneel, reload, 6 rounds low kneel, all in 75 seconds.
15 yd   Fire 6 rounds Weaver, reload, 6 rounds Chapman, reload, 6 rounds Isosceles, all in 90 seconds.

Scoring

60 rounds total.
300 possible points.

A – 5 points
B/C – 4 points
D – 3 points
Miss/unfired – 0 points

Gunsite 250 & 350 School Drills

https://www.gunsite.com

The School Drills from the legendary Gunsite Academy. Jay Tuttle provided Karl with updates.

Setup

Can be shot on an IDPA target (8" body, 4" head circle) or similar. **Updated**: on the official target (Gunsite Option Target) the 8" scoring ring was replaced with a smaller "gumdrop" shape that's smaller in area and more anatomically correct.

According to Tuttle: "All school Drills start holstered. Concealment is an option in 350 beginning Wednesday morning."

Tuttle continues: "In Cooper's heyday, drills started and ended with a whistle, and as long as the shooter was finished with his/her string before the end of the stop whistle, all was good. The upshot was that the allotted times were actually significantly longer.… When turning targets were implemented, there was a very audible hiss before the targets actually faced, again adding a bit of a grace period. We began replacing the turners a couple of years ago and they now face and edge very very briskly. My personal opinion is that anyone today scoring in the mid to high 30s is doing pretty well." (that's at least 70%)

250 School Drill

3 yd	Draw and fire 1 shot to the head in 1.5 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
10 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 2.0 seconds.
15 yd	Draw, kneel, and fire 2 shots to the body in 3.5 seconds.
25 yd	Draw, prone, and fire 2 shots to the body in 7.0 seconds.

Updated version:

3 yd	Draw and fire 1 shot to the head in 1.5 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
10 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 2.0 seconds.
15 yd	Draw, kneel, and fire 2 shots to the body in 3.5 seconds.

350 School Drill

All strings start with movement. At 3, 7, and 10 yards, the movement is a lateral step while drawing. At 25 and 35 yards, start a few steps behind the designated firing line; begin walking forward on command, and as you approach the firing line, draw and assume the appropriate position.

3 yd	Move, draw, and fire 1 shot to the head in 1.5 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Move, draw, and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
10 yd	Move, draw, and fire 2 shots to the body in 2.0 seconds.
25 yd	Move, draw, kneel, and fire 2 shots to the body in 3.5 seconds.
35 yd	Move, draw, prone, and fire 2 shots to the body in 7.0 seconds.

Scoring (both drills)

10 rounds total.
50 possible points.
Head & Chest rings: 5 points; Paper, but outside the rings: 2 points (exception: 2 head shots score 0 if misses).
Par Factor: Original 250 & 350 both have a Par Factor of 34, but the 350 is tougher (this is what I mean that you can't use Par Factor as a way to compare across drills – only tracking within the drill itself). Updated 250 has a Par Factor of 23.

John's Notes

There's no telling exactly how much longer the times were when you factor in the hiss, the whistle blow, and the human reaction times of the instructor (watching the stopwatch, blowing the whistle). However, if you can meet the standards as written, from concealment, that's very good. If you cannot, my suggestion would be incremental:

- From open carry.
- Add 0.5 seconds to each string (to account for hiss/whistle difference).
- For example: 3yd, open carry, draw and fire 1 to the head in 2.0 seconds.
- Then move to concealment.
- Then decrease the par time.

Bottom line: ignore the minutia and strive for a higher standard.

Modified Chuck Taylor Basic Live Fire Drill

By Karl Rehn, based upon Chunk Taylor's "Basic Live Fire Drill" in his book: ***The Complete Book of Combat Handgunning***.

Setup

Target: Gunsite "Option" target. An IDPA (4" head circle) or KRT-2 can work in a pinch.

"All starts are from Condition One, weapon holstered and locked, hands clasped medially, held shoulder high, or at one's sides. An assistant must be recruited for timing. It is recommended that the drill should be conducted from a concealed carry once smoothness is obtained."

1 yd	Both hands touching shoulders of the target. Draw and fire 2 in 1.5 seconds.
1 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Hands at sides. Draw and fire 2 shots in 1.5 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Face right. Turn, draw, and fire 1 shot in 1.5 seconds.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Face left. Turn, draw, and fire 1 shot in 1.5 seconds.
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Draw and fire 2 to the chest in 2.0 seconds, return to ready for a 2 second pause, then 1 shot to the head in 2.0 seconds. (Failure Drill, aka "Mozambique").
7 yd	Repeat.
7 yd	Start with 1 round in the gun & 1 round in the magazine. Draw and fire 2 shots to the chest, reload, fire 2 shots to the chest, in 6.0 seconds.
10 yd	Hands at sides. Draw and fire 2 to the chest in 2.0 seconds.
10 yd	Repeat.
15 yd	Hands at sides. Draw and fire 2 to the chest in 3.0 seconds.
15 yd	Repeat.

Scoring

30 rounds total
Target scored 5/3/1 for a maximum of 150 points

John's Notes

What we have here is Karl Rehn's take on Chuck Taylor's "Basic Live Fire Drill". If you read Chuck's book, the core of what Karl captures is Chuck's Warm Up Exercises, pivots, and Failure Drill. What's left out are multiple targets and repetition (e.g. the pivots are performed 5-times each). Karl made this flavor of Chuck's drill as a part of his Historical Handgun course. I opted to include Karl's flavor over Chuck's original merely because of ease of administration – if you have the logistics to perform this drill, you likely have 1 target; but not everyone has the logistics and facilities to set up 4 targets.

So why include this drill at all? It includes something not often seen in drills: turning. That helps us work with the reality that threats aren't always going to be squared up facing us. It helps to work target acquisition.

I should also note that the par times are spicy but not unattainable. Consider this book was published in 1982 and certainly the drill predates that time. Like the Gunsite 250/350 drills, I'm confident this drill was timed with a human and a stopwatch, thus the actual par times were more generous.

For a little more about Chuck, check out some of Karl's historical notes:

https://blog.krtraining.com/1980-chuck-taylor-course-notes/

Gunsite Pistol Standards

This is the Rangemaster September 2020 Drill of the Month.

Target & Target Scoring
RFTS-Q or IDPA target. Score hits inside chest ring and head ring only. Anything outside the 8" chest ring or the head ring are misses. All shots go to the chest ring except the designated head shot. Must have 100% hits to pass.

All strings begin from the holster, except the reload stage.

Shot from open carry, not concealed.

3 yd	Draw and fire 1 shot to the head in 1.5 seconds.
3 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
7 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 1.5 seconds.
10 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 2.0 seconds.
10 yd	From the ready, fire 2 shots to the body, reload, 2 shots to the body, all in 5.0 seconds.
15 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 3.5 seconds.
25 yd	Draw and fire 2 shots to the body in 7.0 seconds.

Scoring

15 rounds total
Pass/fail – you get all acceptable hits (14 body, 1 head) or you don't.

If you want to make it harder, draw from concealment with the same par times.

Ed Head's CHL Practice Drill

Ed Head, of Gunsite.

https://www.shootingillustrated.com/articles/2017/8/18/skills-check-concealed-carry-pistol-drill/
http://blog.krtraining.com/minimum-standards-shooting-ed-heads-chl-practice-drill/

Target: 8" circle with 3x5 head, so a F.A.S.T. target works great. But a USPSA or IPDA can work too.

Shot with carry gear, from concealment.

3 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds in 2 seconds, strong-hand-only.
3 yd	Repeat.
3 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds to the body, 1 to the head, all in 3 seconds.
3 yd	Repeat.
5 yd	Draw and fire 2 rounds to the body on 2 separate targets (4 rounds total), in 4 seconds.
10 yd	From the low ready, 2 rounds to the body in 4 seconds.
10 yd	From the low ready, 2 rounds to the body on 2 separate targets (4 rounds total), in 5 seconds.

Scoring

20 rounds.
Scored pass/fail.

In 2017, Karl and I filmed ourselves shooting this. This was back when I was still carrying IWB (I started carrying AIWB in 2018).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NuMAKKPK6E

Gabe White Technical Skills Test

From Gabe White.
http://www.gabewhitetraining.com/technical-skills-tests/

- All tests shot at 7 yards.
- USPSA Metric or IDPA target, with 3x5 card or 4" circle added to the head.
- Start can be: hands at sides, hands high torso, hands surrender.
- At signal, draw and engage per the drill.
- No extra shots allowed.

It's a combination of 4 drills:

- Bill Drill (6 body shots)
- Failure to Stop (Mozambique; 2 body, 1 head)
- Immediate Incapacitation (2 head)
- Split Bill Drill (4 body, 2 head)

Scoring

Score is your time, with penalties: B/C/-1 adds 0.25 seconds per shot; D/-3 adds 1.0 second per shot. Misses add 2.0 seconds. Head shots that land in the body count as misses. Body shots that land in the head count as lucky shots and are scored.

Times listed are for open-carried, non-retention gear. Concealment or duty gear (SLS+ALS minimum) gets a 0.25 second bonus (subtraction) on all drills.

Turbo Pin - A highly developed level of excellence in core technical skills of drawing and shooting.
Bill Drill, 2.00 (1.00 + .20 + .20 + .20 + .20 + .20)
Failure to Stop, 1.70 (1.00 + .20 + .50)
Two to the head, 2.00 (1.50 + .50)
4 body 2 head, 2.60 (1.00 + .20 + .20 + .20 + .50 + .50)

Light Pin – An early stage of excellence in core technical skills of drawing and shooting.
Bill Drill, 2.50 (1.25 + .25 + .25 + .25 + .25 + .25)
Failure to Stop, 2.25 (1.25 + .25 + .75)
Two to the head, 2.50 (1.75 + .75)
4 body 2 head, 3.50 (1.25 + .25 + .25 + .25 + .75 + .75)

Dark Pin – A tactical level of proficiency in core technical skills of drawing and shooting.
Bill Drill, 3.50 (1.50 + .40 + .40 + .40 + .40 + .40)
Failure to Stop, 2.90 (1.50 + .40 + 1.00)
Two to the head, 3.00 (2.00 + 1.00)
4 body 2 head, 4.70 (1.50 + .40 + .40 + .40 + 1.00 + 1.00)

5 Yard Roundup

Created by Justin Dyal

https://www.swatmag.com/article/five-yard-roundup-timed-close-shooting-drill/
https://www.luckygunner.com/lounge/start-shooting-better-episode-8-five-yard-roundup/

5 Yard Roundup is a good test of skills, cadence, and ability. Karl believes being able to shoot this drill clean is indicative of say IDPA Master or USPSA B level shooting (which is pretty good shooting).

Setup

B-8 repair center target

5 yd	From concealment, draw and fire 1 shot in 2.5 seconds.
5 yd	From the ready, fire 4 shots in 2.5 seconds.
5 yd	From the ready, fire 3 shots in 2.5 seconds, strong-hand-only.
5 yd	From the ready, fire 2 shots in 2.5 seconds, weak-hand-only.

Scoring

10 rounds total.
Scored by the rings.
Misses are -10.
Late hits -5

90 – good (expected of instructor-level shooters)
95 – very good
100 – awesome

Spencer Keepers' Test

This is a test Spencer likes to use in his classes.
http://keepersconcealment.com

It's simple:
- From concealment
- 3 shots
- To a horizontal 3x5 index card
- At 7 yards.

Scoring

You do it or you don't.

If you can do it in 3.0 seconds, as Spencer says, "You're a pretty salty shooter." If you can do it in 2.5 seconds, that's really damn good.

Active Self Protection 10-round Skill Check

From John Correia, introduced to me during the inaugural Rangemaster Master Instructor class, November 2019.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsE_m2z1NrvF2ImeNWh84mw

Setup
Target: USPSA/IPSC (alternate: IALEFT-Q), scored 5/3/1
Distance: all strings at 7 yards

Gun holstered (strong side IWB, AIWB, pocket, ankle) and concealed. Or, duty gear with at least Level 2 retention. Hands at side, in fence, or fig-leaf positions. No grasping of clothing.

Stage 1 – Draw to first shot
Draw and fire 1 round to the body.
Repeat.

Stage 2 – Dave Spaulding's Skill on Demand drill
Draw and fire 2 shots to the head.

Stage 3 – Bill Drill
Draw and fire 6 shots to the body.

Scoring

10 rounds.
50 possible points.
Virginia-style (no makeup shots).

Record time and points for each of the 4 strings.

Take total points, divided by total time, to determine hit factor. Take hit factor and multiply by 12.5 for 100 point normalization.

Standards

	Beginner (learning pistolcraft)	**Intermediate** (competent CCW carrier)	**Advanced** (highly competent CCW, or pro)	**Master** (highly developed skill set)
Stage 1	3.0 sec	2.0 sec	1.4 sec	1.0 sec
Stage 2	7.0 sec	4.0 sec	2.5 sec	1.5 sec
Stage 3	12.5 sec	5.0 sec	3.0 sec	2.25 sec
Points	25 – 49.9	50 – 74.99	75 – 99.99	100+

The Trifecta

From Brian Hill of The Complete Combatant
http://www.thecompletecombatant.com

Setup
Target: Rangemaster "Q" target (RFTS-Q). Three separate target sizes matter:
- Body: 9 3/4"
- Head: 4 3/8"
- Parrot: 2 1/2"

All strings shot from concealment, hands down position.

3 yd	Draw, fire 1 round to the body. Record time.
3 yd	Draw, fire 1 round to the head. Record time.
3 yd	Draw, fire 1 round to the parrot. Record time.

Scoring

Add up your times.

Under 5 seconds: Pretty darn good shooting!
Under 4 seconds: Very very well done!
Under 3 seconds: EXCELLENT! Film and send the vid to Brian!!!

John's Notes

First, it's important to understand the underlying premise of this drill is shooting quickly, carefully, or precisely. It's three different shooting speeds, three different shooting approaches. You should not shoot all 3 targets with the same speed, with the same approach. You should shoot the body circle quickly. You should shoot the head circle carefully. You should shoot the parrot circle precisely. Those three words – quickly, carefully, precisely – mean different things and should be in your head and influencing how you approach shooting the target. For more commentary on the topic, here are two videos:

- Tom Givens discussing quickly, carefully, precisely
- Brian Hill discussing the concept

I shot this during my weekend with Brian in February 2021. It's only 3 rounds and a great diagnostic within those 3 rounds. Again, it speaks to the need to vary shooting speeds depending upon the size of the target. It speaks to shooting quickly (body), carefully (head), or precisely (parrot). For reference, a human performance standard would have times increase by 0.2 seconds per string. Say you shot the 1 to the body in 1.5 seconds. You should expect the head in 1.7 seconds, and the parrot in 1.9 seconds. This isn't to say you should aim for 0.2 increases or stop at 0.2 increases (if you can consistently shoot faster and still make acceptable hits, great!), rather it's an understanding of human performance to help you improve. It also sets expectations: that the parrot should be shot precisely, which will take more time than shooting the body quickly.

For me, I don't always have a RFTS-Q target available, or simply the 8", 4", 2" circles. While it's certainly not apples-to-apples, in a pinch I could use a KRT-2 target with the body being within the gray trapezoid, the head being within the white body trapezoid, and the parrot being either of the A/B 2" circles. Again, it's not apples-to-apples for The Trifecta, but it's conceptually similar towards the concept of quickly, carefully, and precisely.

Mixed 6

From Brian Hill of The Complete Combatant
http://www.thecompletecombatant.com

Setup
Target: M3 Strategies Multi-Purpose Training Target (version 3), or a B-8 repair center with a
  horizontal 3x5" index card as a head/ocular box.
At least two magazines.
Phone & flashlight, or prop equivalent.
Typically shot from concealment with EDC equipment.

6 yd	From low ready, issue a verbal command. On the beep, fire 2 shots in 3 seconds.
6 yd	Hands in fence, draw and fire 2 shots in 3 seconds.
6 yd	Support hand on phone, held to the ear. Draw and fire 2 shots in 3 seconds.
6 yd	Hands at sides, draw and fire 2 to the body, 1 to the head in 4 seconds.
6 yd	Flashlight in support hand in eye/neck index. Draw and fire 2 shots primary hand only, in 5 seconds.
6 yd	Start with 2 rounds in the gun (1 chamber, 1 magazine). Draw and fire 2 shots, slide-lock reload, and fire 2 more shots in 9 seconds.

Scoring

15 rounds
B-8 scored by the rings (10, 9, 8, 7, 0)
Head shot: 10 in the ocular (3x5) box, 9 in the head box (6x6 box), 0 otherwise.
150 points total
135 points (90%) to pass

Brian's Notes

From The Complete Combatant's website, regarding Mixed 6:

> The armed citizen must have a trustworthy draw, and the ability to hit the target quickly
> and efficiently. Since our starting position will be different depending on the context of
> the encounter. The following six positions are the most common in personal protection.
> The par times relative to the bulls eye ring require visual patience, and strong grasp of the
> fundamentals of shooting.

Brian says this drill is nothing new under the sun, it's just a different reformatting of information.
In watching Active Self Protection videos, he observed how the armed citizen interacts with
violent criminal actors (VCAs): where were their hand positions? what was required of them?
Five of the drills are things you'd see in the fight, and the 2-reload-2 is simply a processing thing
(and it sounds cooler to say "Mixed 6" than "Mixed 5"). There's an effort here to stack
complexity with movements: it's not just draw, it's draw with a command, a reload, etc. This is a
drill of cognitive stacking; it's not a speed and accuracy drill (although that does play a
component).

John's Notes

Mixed Six is an excellent low-round count drill that brings starting position variation into the mix. Once you have a grasp on these positions, bring them into other drills and your general live fire and dry fire practice. A few notes on the positions:

- Verbal command can be something like "STOP!" or "DON'T MOVE!"
  - To aid in executing this on the range: if you are by yourself, your timer likely is set to a variable start time, so once you press the button issue the command then go on the beep; if you have a partner running the timer, you issue the command then your partner starts the timer shortly after you issue the command.
- If you are unfamiliar with the concept of "The Fence", look up "Geoff Thompson The Fence" in your favorite internet search engine.
- Don't use your actual phone; use a prop, such as an empty ammo box or tray. When the timer starts, you will want to drop the phone/prop – ridding your hands of unnecessary objects is one of the learning objectives.
- If you don't have an actual flashlight, you can simply hold your hand in the eye/neck index position (and shoot one-handed). Note: in this context a flashlight is a necessary object, and not one you want to drop.
- On the 2-body-1-head (Failure to Neutralize) string, Brian doesn't actually specify a start position. In a video of Brian explaining this drill he stated you can start from any position, and he chose to start in the hands-down position (although slightly cheater: fig-leaf with hands already grasping the hem of his shirt – and while it's a "cheater" start, it's a legitimate start position, especially if you carry AIWB). My take is since this drill is supposed to be about different start positions, while you could take any position, consider taking at least a different position from the ones explicitly specified in other strings of the drill. Perhaps even novel start positions like bodyguard (arms crossed), "the thinker" (one arm across body, other arm rests elbow on the crossed arm with hand at your chin), or hands clasped behind your body.
- On the 2-reload-2 string, you can start from any hand position.

FWIW, I've encountered different orderings of the strings. The order doesn't seem to matter: it's just the execution of all 6 strings.

I saw a video of Brian stating the drill was shot from 5 yards. I think he misspoke because his website write-up says 6 yards, the video's description said 6 yards, and 6 makes sense given the name of the drill. I'll say this: as I wrote at the start of this book about how to build and improve, start where you can succeed and progress from there. If you need to start at 3 yards, do so. Once that's easy, move back to 5 yards, then 6 yards. Strive to always improve.

Hip To Be Square

John Johnston
Citizens Defense Research https://www.citizensdefenseresearch.com
Ballistic Radio http://ballisticradio.com

Setup

Target: 1" squares (an LTT-1, a paster, various "1 inch target grids" can be found online and printed at home)

5 yd   Draw and fire one round to the 1" square. Record time.

Says John:

> This is one of my favorite low round count exercises. I'll run these in sets of 10 with a par time. If I hit the par time 7 out of 10, I'll bump the par time down and do it again. 50 rounds like that twice a month would get you pretty far.

John (Daub's) Notes

I saw John (Johnston) post a picture to the Ballistic Radio Facebook page on April 18, 2021. It was a picture of a hole in a 1" square (of an LTT-1 target) along with a shot-timer capture of 1.19 seconds. John said, "I'll take a 1.19 draw to a 1" square at 5 yards. Not quite a P.R. but pretty close." The rest of the post was the above description of how to execute this drill.

Knowing John, I'm sure this was shot from concealment. I think it's a valid drill no matter how you might carry or start. For example, I think it's valid to start from a ready position, or even starting aimed at the 1" square – all depends upon your skill level and what you're trying to work on. While challenging for a newbie, why not let start aimed at the target to see what you can do? Perhaps for a more advanced shooter, starting aimed at the target and reacting to the beep to help improve your reaction time and still apply a good trigger press without the additional distractions of draw. Or maybe you shoot from your duty gear with all retention activated. You may not be able to compare apples-to-apples across these variations, but that's fine – it's a flexible drill that will still tell you much – and as John says, it can get you pretty far.

As for the drill's name? When I first wrote this up, I wasn't aware of any official name for it, so I named it "A Drill With No Name". I named it as such as homage to John's "The Test With No Name". When I asked John he told me it does have a name – which is the name you see above – and hopefully you now have that Huey Lewis & The News song stuck in your head. :-)

The Common Tater Drill

Created by Ka Clark

https://www.facebook.com/tamara.keel/posts/10158561216954825?comment_id=101585612700
79825

https://booksbikesboomsticks.blogspot.com/2021/04/it-doesnt-work-like-that.html

Setup

Target: A 3x5" index card.

Start position: Can be either: gun in pocket, hand gripping gun; or gun in belt holster, hand
                 gripping gun.

5 feet   Draw and fire 5 rounds, strong-hand-only, in 2 seconds.

Scoring

Must have all 5 hits in the index card to pass.

To earn the Advanced Common Tater Ranking, begin from surrender position, hands above
shoulders, with the same par time and drill specifics. Even better: do it with an NAA Mini,
strong hand only, cocking only with the strong hand. If you can accomplish the Advanced
Common Tater ranking, send me a video and we will send you a prize.

John's Notes

This "drill" was born in response to Internet braggadocio. Tamara Keel noted on her blog:

> So, some dude on the gunternet made the claim that he could draw a .22WMR NAA Mini
> from his pocket and put all five rounds into a playing card sized target at five feet in less
> than two seconds, strong hand only.
>
> Pardon my bluntness, but that claim is simply bullshit and is the sort of gun forum
> nonsense spouted by people who wouldn't know what button to push on a timer to make
> it go "beep" in the first place.

Read the rest – including a detailed explanation as to why this claim is false – in her blog post. If
you're not familiar with the NAA Mini Revolver, take a look at Chris Baker's video on Lucky
Gunner to see the gun in action. Props to Ka for standardizing a way for us to laugh at this
ludicrous claim. But seriously, if you can pull this off (even with your Roland Special), we'd
love to see the video.

By the way, the term "Common Tater" comes from Claude Werner. He uses it in reference to a
person afflicted with Dunning-Kruger.

99 Drill

Designed by JodyH
https://pistol-training.com/shooting-drills/99-drill/

This was developed as a way to practice fundamentals (marksmanship at speed, draws, and reloads) with limited time and ammunition. Individual drills are shot multiple times to provide actual traning benefit rather than just serving as a test of current skill level.

Setup

Target: 4x6 card (advanced: 3x5 card)
Start position: holstered, concealed, hands relaxed at sides
Rounds: 99

7 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 2.5 seconds; 10x (30 rounds total)
7 yd	Draw and fire 1 round, reload, fire 2 rounds, in 5.0 seconds; 10x (30 rounds total)
10 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3.5 seconds; 10x (30 rounds total)
15 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 5.0 seconds; 3x (9 rounds total)

Scoring

Either 4x6" or 3x5" cards can be used as targets. The 3x5 version is obviously significantly more difficult. All shots must be fired before the end of the par time; shots fired after the par count as misses.

John's Notes

This is a great and simple drill. I love the focus on the draw-to-first-acceptable-hit (DTFAH) skill. I love the use of repetition both as an assurance of skill vs. luck, as well as the contribution to overlearning.

There's also a mental component to this drill. Cleaning this drill requires you to remain in the zone for a while, being present in the moment. An important facet to build.

In terms of minimum competency, 99 Drill is super-minimal. The first string might be broken down to a 1.5 second draw and 0.5 second splits. Many people regard a 1.5 second concealment draw to an "A-Zone" at 7 yards to be "the acceptable" standard of performance. I would agree if you can hit that metric reliably, cold, on-demand, you're in pretty good shape. Put that skill into maintenance mode and focus on building something else.

3456 Drill

Designed by Andy J. Anderson

Setup

Target: 6" circle (A printable version can be found here). An alternative is a Q-PT target using the inner (white outline) center of mass circle. Or again, simply any 6" circle.

5 yd	From concealment, draw and fire 3 rounds, two-handed. Record time.
5 yd	From concealment, draw and fire 3 rounds, strong hand only. Record time.
5 yd	From ready, fire 3 rounds, weak hand only. Record time.
5 yd	From concealment, draw and fire 3 rounds, two-handed. Record time.

Scoring

12 rounds total.
Any shot outside the 6" circle, add 1 second to your time.
Total the times and penalties for all four strings to determine your overall score:

- Basic score total time with penalties is: 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 = 18 seconds
- Intermediate is 4 + 5 + 6 seconds = 15 seconds
- Advanced is 5 + 6 = 11 seconds
- Expert is less than 11 seconds.

The 3456 Drill was inspired by Chris Edwards & Todd Green's 4567 (which was inspired by Gila Hayes' 5x5 Drill) which requires 20 rounds and is shot at 7 yards. This drill requires **three** rounds per run, is run **four** times, at **five** yards on a **six** inch circle. A shot timer is used to begin each string of fire.

As a part of the Rangemaster Master Instructor certification course, each candidate had to present an existing or original drill. The 3456 Drill was Andy's creation for that course. Regarding its creation Andy said:

> My theory when I was working on this was:
>
> 1. Realistic distance. If you can hit a 6" target at 5 yards you should be able to hit at 0-5 yards. If you can hit a 6" target at 5 you will hopefully be able to hit an 8" upper chest hit at 5-10.
> 2. Two hands are more likely than one hand so we do that run twice. But, we still get to practice with strong hand and support hand only.
> 3. Low round count due to ammo shortage.
> 4. Scoring system that encourages improvement.

No-Loader Test

From Lee Weems, of First Person Safety

https://firstpersonsafety.com/2021/03/29/no-loader-test/

Setup

Target: 8" circle with a 3x5 vertical box in it, e.g. FPS-1 body, Handgun Combatives Chest Cavity Target.

If working from a pocket, holstered strings can begin hand in pocket gripping the revolver. If working from an ankle rig, holstered strings may begin in a kneeling position. Otherwise, it's suggested the shooter vary their hand positions between holstered strings (e.g. hands at side, hands in fence, etc.). Concealment strongly suggested, unless using duty gear.

Shooting is freestyle unless otherwise specified. Ready is defined as the revolver being in the shooter's hands with the shooter being prepared to fire but with the muzzle not covering any part of the target or the human it represents (no muzzle covering meat). The shooter may vary ready positions.

3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
3 yd	From ready, fire 2 rounds in 1.5 seconds. Load & holster.
3 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds, strong hand only.
3 yd	From ready, fire 2 rounds in 2 seconds. Load & holster.
5 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
5 yd	From ready, fire 2 rounds in 1.5 seconds. Load & holster.
7 yd	On command, draw to ready and give verbal command. On beep, fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds.
7 yd	From ready, fire 2 rounds, manually reload with only 2 rounds, and fire 2 rounds, all in 15 seconds. Load with 3 rounds and holster. (A speedstrip may be used for manual loading)
10 yd	Draw and fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds.

Scoring

25 rounds total.

This is a 100% accountability course of fire. Any shot outside of the primary or secondary target zone is a failure for the entire course. To pass with distinction, 20 rounds (80%) must be in the primary scoring area. Any string over time is a failure. The course of fire is shot individually on a timer (vs. in a group/class).

+P version

When your skills are to a point you are consistently shooting the course to a "pass with distinction" level, add a 3x3" Post-it to represent a head box, and shoot the third shot of all three-shot strings to the head (failure drill). The shots must be within the 3x3" box.

Philosophy

The problem doesn't change because you only have a five-round firearm to solve it. This course is designed to evaluate basic revolver marksmanship regardless of whether the shooter is using a revolver as a primary or backup option. There are no timed reloads using speedloaders, but they may be used to administratively load the revolver.

John's Notes

People like to carry snub-nosed revolvers, but they are harder to shoot and shoot well. Here, Lee has developed an excellent test of minimum competency for effective use of that tool. He is correct that the problem doesn't change because you only brought a 5-round gun to the fight, so you best be certain you can be effective. I appreciate his approach of scoring being 100% accountability – it goes along with my philosophy regarding "unacceptable hits".

I also read a few comments Lee made regarding his development of this test.

> In preparation for presenting Revolver Essentials at TacCon21, I created this test. It's not a drill; it's a test. Use it to periodically test your skills.

Also:

> String 9 is an homage to history as it was a string in the qual course I shot in the academy. It was based on the Newhall Incident and was to teach/test getting the gun partially loaded to face an immediate threat. It is valid today for those who walk about with only a speedstrip for a loading device.

There are revolver techniques to facilitate effective partial reloads of a revolver. If you do not know these techniques or struggle to achieve good results on this test, seek out quality revolver instruction from people such as Lee Weems, Claude Werner, Wayne Dobbs, Darryl Bolke, Chuck Haggard, Tom Givens.

Snub Assessment Drill (SAD)

Originally devised by Greg Ellifritz, hit factor scoring added by Tom Givens.
See Rangemaster April 2021 Newsletter

Says Tom: "The acronym SAD is appropriate for this drill, as that is how many who try it end up. This drill was originally devised by ace trainer Greg Ellifritz. I added the hit factor scoring to give us a more detailed assessment of snubby shooting skill. This course is meant to be shot with a 5 or 6 shot revolver with barrel length not to exceed 2.5 inches. If you carry such a revolver as a BUG or an NPE sidearm, you need to have a measure of your skill with it."

Setup
Target: B-8, B-8 repair center, FBI-IP1 bullseye, or the bullseye on an LTT-1 target.

Use an electronic timer and record the time for each string.

5 yd	From ready, fire 2 rounds non-dominant hand only.
5 yd	From ready, fire 3 rounds dominant hand only.
5 yd	From ready, fire 5 rounds, both hands.

Scoring

10 rounds total

Score hits by the rings: only 8, 9, 10, and X rings count. Hits outside those rings score 0.
Maximum possible points: 100.

Total the time recorded for each of the three strings. Divide the total points by the total time, which will give you your index. Multiply the index by 8 for the final score. Par score is 100, so your goal is to score above 100.

Examples:

90 points in 9.8 seconds, index = 9.18 x 8 = 73.5 score
95 points in 8.1 seconds, index = 11.7 x 8 = 93.8 score
100 points in 8.0 seconds, index = 12.5 x 8 = 100

Dot Torture
Dave Blinder
https://pistol-training.com/shooting-drills/dot-torture/

^^^^^ Go to the website ^^^^^

If you're not familiar with Dot Torture, shoot it. Don't worry about sucking at it: you probably will. That's ok. The first step to being good at something is sucking at something.

I cannot reproduce the drill fully here, because it requires a special target – a target which also explains the course of fire. So, just go to the website and print out the target.

That said, I did want to type out the COF in a manner that helps me administer it:

Dot 1   Draw and fire one string of 5 rounds for best group. One hole if possible.
String rounds 5; total rounds 5.

Dot 2   Draw and fire 1 shot, holster and repeat X4.
String rounds: 5; total rounds: 10.

Dots 3 & 4 Draw and fire 1 shot on #3, then 1 shot on #4, holster and repeat X3.
String rounds: 8; total rounds: 18.

Dot 5   Draw and fire string of 5 rounds, strong hand only.
String rounds: 5; total rounds 23.

Dots 6 & 7 Draw and fire 2 shots on #6, then 2 on #7, holster, repeat X4.
String rounds 16; total rounds: 39.

Dot 8   From ready or retention, fire 5 shots, weak hand only.
String rounds: 5; total rounds: 44.

Dots 9 & 10 Draw and fire 1 shot on #9, speed reload, fire 1 shot on #10, holster and repeat X3.
String rounds 6; total rounds 50.

Claude Werner's Basic Self Defense Handgun Skills Test

Over the years, Claude Werner, Karl, and I have had discussions about Minimum Competency/Standards for those having handguns for personal protection. Tom Givens' student data set is an oft-cited example of how things actually happen. Claude took Tom's "Lessons from the Street" DVD and came up with his own idea for a basic test, which is presented below. The formatting is Claude's – I wanted to preserve it as there's nuance and detail in his approach, which provides not only a reasonable test but also solid insights into what can enter into skills for minimum competency.

For further discussion of minimum competency, check out my and Karl Rehn's book, *Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training*.

When Claude first posted it for feedback, this was my response:

> I dig this. I like how you looked at a data set and structured from that data set (very Claude Werner of you).
>
> While at first I was bummed at the "not drawing from holster" – since that often seems to be considered as a "minimum requirement" – I know how you often work to address the reality that a lot of folks don't have access to ranges where they can draw. Plus, you do mention how drawing is not necessarily a live fire skill. I think a useful edit here would be to explicitly state that draw and present is a skill that SHOULD be worked dry (if you can't work it live; or even if you can). The current write-up comes off as implying this; I think it'd be good to be explicit about this.
>
> I like how you suggest "loading to 7" to force practice on loading and unloading. That too is an important skill, and one that's often taken for granted and not explicitly taught.
>
> On the use of the IALEFI-Q. Is it "minimum" to use the whole bottle (maybe we just define minimum differently)? I guess it comes back to something I picked up from Karl, where we try to have students getting hits in 6-8" circles (instead of somewhere on a B-27, thinking Texas CHL/LTC test). Reasoning being that if under pressure skills degrade, if a 6" pattern expands to a 8"-10"-12" pattern, wouldn't it be better to hold folks to that higher standard of that tighter target (and consider that "minimum")? Thus "a bottom-corner bottle hit" doesn't expand and become an unacceptable hit (miss)? Again, you allude to this in your write-up ('more desirable hit area"), but it's the "an adequately sized target for Testing purpose" that I guess I'm kinda stuck on.
>
> One other thing I wonder about…is the time aspect. How do you envision running this if you were teaching a private lesson to a single student? How do you envision a student using this same drill to assess and track their own progress? Or, do you only see using this as a "group test"?
>
> Anyways, I'm generally digging this. I think this addresses a lot of practical concerns, on many levels.

Claude acknowledged my questions and feedback. He felt the Q target was acceptable because it is a lot smaller than a B-27 (which is agreed is huge). He also acknowledged the Q target could be difficult to find; he said 3 pieces of paper in landscape mode stacked vertically offer about the same square inches as a Q and could be an easy substitute (Claude is admirably practical). As well, he felt an IDPA/USPSA target with the -3/C Zone visually eliminated would be a suitable substitute.

I suspect some will look at this and say "That's easy!" or will scoff at the lack of time limits.

To the former, if you find this easy, fantastic! I applaud you for building your skill above minimum competency levels, and this test facilitates demonstration of your skill level. I encourage you to continue building your skill, and to help others build their skill.

To the latter, I refer back to the beginning of this book when I spoke of "How to build and improve". An initial requirement in skill building is to just be able to do the thing, regardless of pressures such as time limits. As we each travel the road of defensive pistol competency, it's important to have checkpoints and milestones to measure and know our progress. So many tests are high-level – look at the bulk of this book! Where are the checkpoints for those just starting out? Yes, we have some (look at the first few of Karl and my list of "Top 10 Drills"), but I strongly believe in the worth of more validations for those just starting down the road. Time standards are certainly important, but let's allow the beginners to first "do the thing", then we can work on "doing the thing faster".

The course requirements are as follows:

A. **Target** – IALEFI-Q
B. **Distance** – 3 yards, 5 yards, and 7 Yards
C. **Time Limit** – None.
D. **Shooting Position** – As indicated in **Procedure**
E. **Starting Position** – As indicated in **Procedure**
F. **Number of Rounds** – 15 rounds total for 5 shot revolvers, 18 rounds for all other handguns
G. **Procedure** – You will shoot 6 (5) rounds at 3 yards, 6 (5) rounds at 5 yards, and 6 (5) rounds at 7 yards.
   a. Place the target at 3 yards.
      i. Load with 7 rounds if possible; revolvers load to capacity. Come to High Compressed Ready holding the pistol with your Dominant Hand Only.
         1. On signal, extend the pistol and fire 1 round with your Dominant Hand Only. Return to Compressed Ready.
         2. On signal, extend the pistol and fire 2 rounds with your Dominant Hand Only. Return to Compressed Ready.
         3. On signal, extend the pistol and fire 3 rounds (5 shot revolvers fire 2 rounds) with your Dominant Hand Only.
         4. Safely unload and holster or case handgun.
   b. Place the target at 5 yards.

    i. Load with 7 rounds if possible; revolvers load to capacity. Come to Low Ready with both hands.

      1. On signal, raise the pistol and fire 2 rounds, shooting with both hands. Come to High Compressed Ready with both hands.

      2. On signal, extend the pistol and fire 1 round, shooting with both hands. Remain aimed at target.

      3. On signal, fire 3 rounds (5 shot revolvers fire 2 rounds), shooting with both hands.

      4. Safely unload and holster or case handgun.

  c. Place the target at 7 yards.

    i. Load with 7 rounds if possible; revolvers load to capacity. Aim at target with both hands.

      1. On signal, fire 1 round, shooting with both hands. Come to High Compressed Ready with both hands.

      2. On signal, extend the pistol and fire 2 rounds, shooting with both hands. Come to Low Ready.

      3. On signal, raise the pistol and fire 3 rounds (5 shot revolvers fire 2 rounds), shooting with both hands.

      4. Safely unload and holster or case handgun.

  d. Bring the target back and count your hits.

 H. Success measurement – To successfully complete the Test, all of your rounds must have hit the silhouette, preferably in the large circle. Nose of the bullet must hit within the outline of the silhouette to count.

Analysis of shooting tasks

Lessons from the Street				
Shooting Tasks	**Distance**	**rounds fired**	**opponents**	**Stance**
Fire 3 shots Strong Hand Only at single target	at arm's length	3 shots	single target	Strong Hand Only
Fire 3 shots Strong Hand Only at single target	slightly past arm's length	3 shots	single target	Strong Hand Only
Fire 2 shots at single target	slightly past arm's length	2 shots	single target	Two Hands
Draw pistol from concealment and fire 5 shots at single bent over target	slightly past arm's length	5 shots	single target	Two Hands
Fire 1 shot at single target across room	5 yards	1 shot	single target	Two Hands
Draw pistol from concealment and empty pistol at single target	5 yards	11 shots	single target	Two Hands
Draw pistol from concealment and fire 2 shots at single target	5 yards	2 shots	single target	Two Hands
Fire 2 shots at single target across parking lot	5 yards	2 shots	single target	Two Hands

Fire 2 shots at single target across room	7 yards	2 shots	single target	Two Hands
Fire 2 shots each at 2 targets	7 yards	2 shots	2 targets	Two Hands
Fire 3 shots at single target across room	7 yards	3 shots	single target	Two Hands
Fire 1 shot from kneeling at a single target at an outlier distance	22 yards	1 shot	single target	Two Hands

Atypical aspects of some situations

- 3 of 10 incidents involved accessing the pistol from off body locations
- 2 of 10 incidents involved establishing an ambush for the criminal
- 1 incident involved firing more than 5 rounds at one target
- 1 incident would have been more appropriate handled by an execution type head shot rather than 5 body shots
- 1 incident involved firing from a kneeling low cover position at extended range (22 yards)

Concept of Basic Skills Test

Design a Course of Fire that mimics the shooting tasks involved in Lessons From the Street. Structure the Test so that it can be used on any accessible range by any gun owner or Proctor, whether the Testee is Licensed to Carry or not.

- Accept that two outliers (22 yards and execution shot) will not be included.
- Demonstrating the ability to draw and reholster the pistol safely is not necessarily a live fire task. It also excludes most gun owners, who do not have Weapons Carry Licenses. It is therefore not included.
- Timing is problematic on indoor ranges, which are the only facilities available to most gun owners. It is therefore not included.
- Reacting to a stimulus was an inherent part of each incident and is therefore included. The nature of the stimulus varied among incidents. Therefore, any signal; horn, whistle, turning lights on, etc., the Proctor has available may be used.
- Testees should be run as a line rather than individually. This increases the pressure on the Testees to shoot with a sense of urgency in the untimed environment.
- The ability to safely load and unload the pistol is a requisite skill and is therefore repeatedly included.
- Five shot revolvers are a very common weapon. Therefore, the Test is designed to accommodate them.
- Using the IALEFI-Q provides a visual indicator of a more desirable hit area for training purposes while still providing an adequately sized target for Testing purpose by using the full bottle.

And for an extra treat, here's a video from 2017 of me shooting the test:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0CIDIkkh24

American Pistol Institute, Basic Drill, 1980

As a part of Karl's Historical Handgun research, he posted an artifact from Bob Hanna: notes from classes he attended at the American Pistol Institute (aka Gunsite) in 1980 & 1981. Karl posted a picture of the typewritten notes to the KR Training blog, and I have transcribed them here, doing my best to keep the transcription as close to the original as possible.

https://blog.krtraining.com/1980-american-pistol-institute-gunsite-class-notes/

A.P.I.

FROM: The American Pistol Institute, Gunsite Ranch, Paulden, Arizona
TO: Students who have completed the Basic Defensive Pistol Course.
SUBJECT: Basic Drill.

This project is suggested for those who have completed the Basic Course. It requires 100 rounds and should be conducted twice monthly. It does not supplant handling and dry-firing exercises which should be practiced 15 minutes daily at home until coordination becomes reflexive.

All starts are from Condition One, holstered and locked, hands clasped medially. An associate must be recruited for timing. As soon as satisfactory smoothness is achieved, drill should be conducted from under a coat.

1. Eight (8) singles at seven (7) yards, one-and-one-half (1½) seconds each. As this becomes easy, and groups average eight (8) inches, increase speed, working toward one (1) second.
2. Ten (10) singles at seven (7) yards, one-and-one-half (1½) seconds each. As this becomes easy, increase distance one (1) yard at a time, working towards ten (10) meters.
3. Ten (10) singles at fifteen (15) meters, two-and-one-half (2½) seconds each. Work out at two (2) meter increments towards a "possible" twenty-five (25) meters.
4. Five (5) pairs at ten (10) meters, two (2) seconds each. As this becomes easy, increase speed, not distance.
5. Five (5) quads at ten (10) meters; two (2) shots, reload, and two (2) shots. Allow eight (8) seconds initially, and work down to five (5) – all hits in the ring.
6. Three (3) sextets at ten (10) meters. Start with a 90-degree pivot and hit each of the three (3) targets twice. Repeat twice for eighteen (18) rounds. Work toward a "possible" in four (4) seconds.
7. Two (2) "Presidentes". Three (3) targets, three (3) paces apart, at ten (10) meters. Start with back toward center target, pivot 180 degrees, hit each target twice, reload, and repeat for twelve (12) shots. Work toward ten (10) seconds. (Each run is twelve (12) shots. 2x12=24 shots in all.)

Basic

Dry Practice Drill

This program is intended to develop and maintain the proper degree of handling skill with the handgun. It should be performed in the privacy of your quarters 30-45 minutes daily.

Remember to insure that your weapon is cleared, no live ammunition is nearby, and that you are not disturbed while practicing. Work hard and push yourself to increase your skill. An associate must be recruited for timing. 7 rds. of inert ammo is also required.

1.   The Ready Position: Stand with body in proper firing position, weapon empty but cocked and locked, safety on, trigger finger outside trigger guard, eyes on target. On command to fire, bring weapon up to eye level and dry fire. Time: 1 second. Time starts when firing command is giving, stops when hammer falls. Purpose of this drill is to develop safety and trigger finger manipulation skill and hand & eye coordination. Remember to bring eye focus in to front sight from target as weapon reaches eye level. Practice time: 10 minutes.

2.   The Draw: Stand in proper firing position with weapon cocked, locked, and holstered. (If revolver is used hammer should be down.) Practice the 5 steps of the Draw until smoothness is obtained, then work on speed. Draw Time Goal: 1 second. Time begins with command to fire, ends with hammer fall. Practice time: 15 minutes.

3.   Malfunction Drills:

   a. Position 1: Individual Drill Time: 2.5 seconds
   b. Position 2: Individual Drill Time: 1.5 seconds
   c. Position 3: Individual Drill Time: 6 seconds

Practice Time: 10 minutes

4.   Stress Reloading:

   a. Automatic time: 2.5 seconds
   b. Revolver time: 4.0 seconds

Practice Time: 10 minutes

It should be noted that these are <u>minimum</u> time expenditures to build satisfactory skill levels.

Basic Drill

This program is suggested for those who have completed the Basic Defensive Handgun Course. It does not supplant handling and dry-firing exercises which should be practiced 30-45 minutes daily.

All starts are from Condition One, weapon holstered and locked, hands clasped medially, held shoulder-high, or at one's sides. An assistance must be recruited for timing. It is recommended that drill should be conducted from a concealed carry one smoothness is obtained.

1. Warmup Exercises, perform each three (3) times.
    a. 1 meter, both hands held touching shoulders of silhouette target. On command to fire, clear target, place two center hits, time 1.5 seconds per pair.
    b. 3 meters, 2 shots, 1.5 seconds.
    c. 10 meters, 2 shots, 2.0 seconds.
    d. 15 meters, 2 shots, 3.0 seconds.
2. Multiples, perform three (3) times.
    a. Two silhouette targets, 5 meters, placed 2 meters apart edge to edge. 1 center hit each. 1.5 seconds.
    b. Three silhouette targets, placed 1 meter apart edge to edge. 1 center hit each, 2.5 seconds.
    c. Four silhouette targets, placed 1 meter apart edge to edge. 1 center hit each, 3.0 seconds.
3. Pivots, Turns, etc. Perform three (3) times.
    a. Five (5) singles, 90-degree right pivot, 7 meters, 1.5 seconds each.
    b. Five (5) singles, 90-degree left pivot, 7 meters, 1.5 seconds each.
    c. Five singles, 180-degree complete turn, 7 meters, 2.0 seconds each.
4. Failure Drill (Mozambique). Perform three (3) times. Two in chest, come down to Ready position and pause, then center hit in head. Time: 2 seconds, pause, 2 seconds.

Mike Waidelich's Bakersfield P.D. Qualification

Created by Mike Waidelich, who joined the Bakersfield P.D. back in 1967, and was their Range Master. Mike elevated the standard of performance for his department, and this qualification demonstrates why. You should read all about it on Greg Ellifritz's website:

https://www.activeresponsetraining.net/requiem-for-an-unsung-hero

Setup

Target: It used a silhouette target with a top-scoring ring of 7", then the next zone measured 9" x 13". I'm unaware of any off-the-shelf target like this. A KRT-2 would make a tougher stand-in, with the gray trapezoid as the top ring, and the black tombstone as the next zone (but not much "anywhere else" zone). Lee Weems suggested an IDPA scored: -0 = 10, -1 = 8, -3 = 6; a more generous but readily available target.

As it is a department qual, I would assume it is run as you would carry: duty gear (all retention enabled), or your concealed EDC rig.

10 ft   Draw, fire 2 rounds in 1.5 seconds ("No one should be closer than that.")

20 ft   Draw, fire 2 rounds in 2.0 seconds ("The length of a car.")

30 ft   Draw, fire 2 rounds, reload, fire 2 rounds, in 6.0 seconds (8.0 for revolvers). ("From the curb to the front door."). *Note: reload type was not specified.*

60 ft   Draw, fire 2 rounds in 3.5 seconds ("From the opposite curb to the front door.")

Scoring

10 rounds total, 100 points total
On the original target: top ring 10 points, next zone 9 points, anywhere else on the silhouette 6 points.
1 point penalty per 0.25 second over time. e.g. At 10', 2 in 1.5 seconds no penalty; 1.6 seconds loses 1 point; 1.8 loses 2 points, etc.

Initially the standard was 80 out of 100 on either string out of two tries. If the shooter failed to pass, they were given additional training and more chances to pass, with great motivation as a failure to improve could result in them being designated unfit for duty – you were motivated (read the article for complete details).

John's Notes

It's spicy but do-able, especially on the original target. The approach brings in a good balance of speed and accuracy. Mike also used a stopwatch, so there may be some "0.25 second human reaction" involved in the pacing and the times are actually slightly higher (Wayne Dobbs agrees, suggesting adding 0.3 seconds). Regardless: strive for a higher standard.

Other Books from KR Training

Another way we teach at KR Training is through books on topics of self-defense and preparedness.

Signed copies available! Contact us through the [KR Training website](#).

Strategies and Standards for Defensive Handgun Training by Karl Rehn and John Daub

What percentage of carry permit holders attend training beyond the state minimum? What are the barriers keeping people from attending firearms training that isn't mandatory? What are realistic standards for minimum defensive handgun competency? What are the best drills to practice? How can you compare the difficulty level of one drill to another? Written by two trainers with decades of experience, this book explores those questions and others related to defensive pistol training.

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pivot Points: Creating A Culture Of Preparedness And Resiliency In America by Paul Martin

Too many Americans lack the know-how and provisions to adequately handle even a small disaster—be it man-made or natural. In Pivot Points, experienced disaster "prepper" Paul T. Martin argues for a shift in how America views disaster preparation. Martin challenges readers to discover their "pivot points," those sources of motivation for preparing both themselves and their communities for disaster. For some, motivations might center on family safety. For others, a sense of citizenship or religious beliefs might drive their preparedness.

[Buy on Amazon](#)
[Paul's Website](#)

Appendix – Change Log

- 2022-05-03
  - Added the Minimum Competency Assessment and write-up
  - Added Hsoi logo
  - Added 2022-04 Introduction update
  - Updated Introduction
  - Minor adjustments in the opening discussion area
  - Added Mixed Six
  - Fixed typos in American Pistol Institute, Basic Drill, 1980
  - Added attribution to 5^5 that "black belt" came from Brian Hill.
  - Ensured it was always "Three Seconds or Less" not "3 Seconds or Less".
  - Added more in-document hyperlinks
  - Added Mike Waidelich's Bakersfield P.D. Qualification
  - Added the August 2021 version of the 3M Test
  - Fixed Rangemaster Short Combat Accuracy Test (was missing WHO string)
  - Adjusted formatting so bulleted lists have the same font as the main body
  - Added 99 Drill
  - Added Dot Torture
- 2021-05-22
  - Expanding the intro section on "Not sure where to start?" to cover the importance of the "draw to first shot" skill.
  - Added illustration to Comstock-like scoring explanation. Also reworded it as "Hit Factor" instead of "Comstock" (since Comstock involves a bit more than simply points over time).
  - Expanded commentary on The Trifecta
  - Added 3456 Drill
  - Added TacCon 2021 match, including some brief analysis on the deceptive difficulty level of the match.
  - Added Advanced Super Test on Steroids
  - Added No-Loader Test
  - Added Snub Assessment Drill
  - Clarified parts of the Advanced Snub Super Test
  - Added additional notes about the 7 yard string in the Rangemaster Bullseye Course
  - Slight adjustments to The Wizard drill's phrasing and presentation.
  - Added Hip to Be Square
  - Added Common Tater Drill
  - Added Modified Chuck Taylor Basic Live Fire Drill
  - Adjusted notes on Rangemaster Handgun Core Skills Test
  - Added Handgun Disability Course
  - Adding hyperlinks within the document to make it easier to reference drills during discussions.
  - Minor wording improvements.
  - Bug fixes and performance improvements.
- 2021-03-18

- o First public release