

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
GALLERY RIFLE AND PISTOL BASIC SKILLS

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1 INTRODUCTION

The National Rifle Association (NRA) is the National Governing Body for all meetings in which competitors take part with the firearms used in Gallery Rifle and Pistol (GR&P) shooting.

This brief guide is intended to give a newcomer to the GR&P discipline an understanding of the sport and how to take part safely. It sets out the types of firearm used, how to handle them safely and what to expect when you take them to a range. The GR&P community is a friendly one and as soon as you say you don't have much experience you will be given lots of help and advice.

It is not intended to be a training guide for the individual events nor does it contain all the rules and courses of fire. This information is beyond the scope of a general introduction and is available elsewhere. Your point of contact for further information is the GR&P sub committee whose members are responsible for rules and training matters. Please email gallery@nra.org.uk.

GR&P events are usually shot at short ranges between 10m and 50m on a variety of targets and will often involve time limits for the completion of each series of shots.

Competitors can take part at all levels with most of the popular events run in classes. This allows all competitors to have a realistic chance of doing well against others at a similar level of achievement.

Many gain experience in club competitions and then move on to other clubs and to the National Shooting Centre (NSC). There are teams for England, Wales and Scotland and Great Britain which compete internationally.

Meetings are held in clubs around the country as well as the NSC at Bisley. Clubs hold competitions for their members and some of them also host meetings that are open to competitors from the whole country. In addition, there are four meetings each year at the NSC which are open to all.

2 TYPES OF FIREARM

These are divided into four main types and they have separate events in which you can compete. Many competitors own more than one type.

The majority of Gallery Rifle events are "open" which allows you to use either red dot, telescopic or iron sights. Most events also require the use of a holster when shooting with an LBP or LBR. The maximum muzzle velocity for GR&P is 2150 ft/sec and the maximum is 1496 ft lbs.

2.1 Gallery Rifle Centre Fire (GRCF)

Three sub types are recognized to ensure that all compete without any disadvantage.

2.1.1 GRCF Standard

This is the type that most competitors use. They are a lever action design (often referred to as underlevers) with an integral tubular magazine and fire a centre fire cartridge.

The most commonly used are Marlin rifles which eject the empty cases out sideways, making them very easy to use when mounted with either electronic or telescopic sights. Winchester and Rossi lever action rifles are also used but eject the empty cases out of the top meaning that they



are more suitable for use with the supplied iron sights.

2.1.2 GRCF Open

These also fire centre fire cartridges but are operated by either a straight pull, bolt action or lever release design and have removable box type magazines.



2.1.3 GRCF Classic

Many of these rifles are similar in design to the lever action rifles in GRCF Standard and there are others of different designs as well. Most of them are based on designs of the late 19th and early 20th century and use iron sights.



2.2 Gallery Rifle Small Bore (GRSB)

These rifles are either semi automatic (or self loading), bolt or lever action in design and use either detached, fixed or tubular magazines and fire .22lr rim fire ammunition. Some GRSB also have pump or slide actions. By far the most common GRSB used for competition purposes is based on the semi-automatic Ruger 10/22 rifle.



2.3 Long Barrelled Revolver (LBR)

These are revolvers which fire centre fire cartridges. They have a minimum barrel length of 30cm and a fixed rod protruding from the rear to give an overall minimum length of 60cm. Loading is either done by hand for individual cartridges, or by the use of "speed loaders" that hold and insert several at time. The Taurus revolvers are the most popular due to their availability although there are some others.



2.4 Long Barrelled Pistol (LBP)

These are semi automatic .22lr rim fire pistols that are magazine fed with a minimum barrel length of 30cm and a fixed rod protruding from the rear to give a minimum overall length of 60cm. The Browning Buckmark LBP is by far the most commonly used.



2.5 LBR and LBP legal issues

LBRs and LBPs cannot be used by either Probationers or other Firearm Certificate (FAC) holders unless they specifically have the authority to possess the firearm in question on their certificate. This is simply due to faulty drafting of the legislation.

3 TRANSPORTING FIREARMS

The Firearms Acts require certificate holders to take reasonable precautions as to the security of firearms and ammunition when not secured at home in the approved cabinet. What is "reasonable" is a matter for the opinion of each police force although quite detailed advice is contained in the relevant police and Home Office publications. These are available on the Home Office and individual Constabulary websites.

4 BASIC SAFETY RULES

Never point a firearm at either yourself or anyone else.

Always treat firearms as if they are loaded at all times.

Never place your finger on the trigger until you are safely aiming at your target.

Always know your target and align yourself accordingly so that every round fired will land safely in the designated backstop.

Eye and ear protection MUST be worn at all times when shooting or standing close to someone who is.

5 SAFE PRACTICES

On arrival at a shooting club session it is common practice to un-bag and prove all firearms clear, before placing them in an appropriate rack (with magazines removed) with their actions open.

This should ideally be done on an empty range between firing details, and the bags should be placed in such a way so that the muzzle of each firearm when taken out is pointing safely down range at the backstop.

Each firearm should be proved clear to either a designated Range Officer (RO) or another person before being placed in a rack. If it is not possible to do this on the range, then a designated safety area (within which ammunition is strictly prohibited) should be used for this purpose.

Firearms should always be carried "muzzle up" and if no racks are available for holding LBRs or LBPs, then they should remain bagged or boxed at all times when not on the firing point - not carried around in holsters.

When you have finished shooting for the day, an RO or another person should check that each firearm is clear before placing the firearm back into its bag.

At a competition venue, firearms must ONLY be un-bagged / bagged on the range whilst under the direct supervision of an RO. Handling firearms in any other area outside of the range must be done only with the express permission of an RO.

Unless specifically disallowed by a club, detachable box magazines and speed loaders may be pre-charged before going onto a range, but care should be taken for their safe keeping.

6 RANGE SAFETY

An RO is always in charge. The RO's instructions **MUST** be followed at **ALL** times for your safety, and everyone else's. Failure to comply will usually lead to being removed from the range and your actions being reported to your club.

In the case of an emergency, an RO will shout Stop – Stop – Stop! Without exception, **ALL** shooters will immediately **STOP FIRING**, place their fingers outside the trigger guard and keep their firearms pointing at the target until the RO gives further instructions. A competitor or bystander may also shout out this order to stop firing should they witness an act or occurrence that requires an immediate cease fire.

When moving onto the range to take part in a shooting detail, do not touch any firearms until instructed to do so by the RO and do not place any equipment on the line until the range forward of the firing point is clear.

Both eye and ear protection **MUST** be worn at **ALL** times and should be put in place before picking up your firearm.

Do not use any unsupported shelves or worktops that are placed either on, or between individual firing points for leaning on or against whilst shooting, unless they are of a substantial construction. Likewise, any chairs or benches that are used for zeroing purposes should be checked for safety before using them for support with a loaded firearm.

For safety reasons, once the command to load and make ready has been given the noise on the range should be kept to an absolute minimum until every individual has finished shooting. This is to make sure that it is fair for all taking part and ensures that no confusion arises due to a range command not being heard. Excessive noise or disturbance on the range will not be tolerated and offenders risk being dismissed for the rest of the day.

Only authorized targets are to be used and you must make sure that you check the height of the target to ensure that every round fired (from every position adopted) will hit the designated backstop area.

If screens are used between individual firing positions you must ensure that you do not move forwards, crossing the firing line or out of view of the RO once firing has commenced.

If an occasion arises during a detail where an RO needs to go forwards of the firing line to make a repair you will be given the order to unload and show clear. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** must anyone go forwards when there are loaded firearms on the line. Applying safety catches and / or pointing muzzles in the air under these conditions is an unsafe practice and will not be tolerated at any Gallery Rifle meeting.

The applying or use of safety catches is not required on any Gallery Rifle due to the course of fire requirements. The safety **MUST** be applied when using an LBP from a holster, due to the muzzle direction that it is held in and the way that it is released from the holster.

7 RANGE SAFETY VIOLATIONS

GR&P has an excellent safety record which is why it is important that people coming into our sport learn safe firearm handling, safety awareness and safe practice from the very beginning. Here are some classic examples of what will not be tolerated at any time on the range.

Pointing a firearm, whether it is loaded or not, in an unsafe direction. This includes pointing it at another person or more than 45 degrees to either side of the target line or above the target line.

Dropping a loaded firearm.

Firing a shot that does not land in the backstop area behind the targets.

Handling a firearm on the range, whether it is loaded or not, when not under the direct control of an RO, before the range has been officially declared clear or while there are still people down range.

Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs at any time whilst on the range.

8 PREPARING TO START SHOOTING

When given the order to pick up your firearms and equipment and move forwards to the firing line you should do so keeping the barrels held vertically and place your shooting bag and equipment directly in front of you so that it doesn't get in the way of anyone else.

You should make sure that you have the required amount of ammunition to hand and that it is easily accessible so that you do not have to bend down to get it.

When you are told you can take a sight picture, make sure first of all that your index finger is placed outside the trigger guard and then position your body so that when the muzzle is brought down from the vertical position, it falls directly in line with the target and does not sweep sideways pointing towards another shooter. You should then line your body up so that the muzzle points naturally at your target and adjust your sights so that they are clear and set for the correct distance that you will be shooting at.

The RO will then state if there is a time limit for that detail, whether it is free practice, or tell you the course of fire for that particular stage in an event.

9 RANGE COMMANDS

The range commands at the start have been simplified in GR&P to just three and these should be used during normal club sessions as well so that people moving on to take part in competitions in the future will already be familiar with them.

The GR&P range commands are:

1. *"With 6 (or alternative number) rounds load and make ready."*

After an appropriate amount of time this will then be followed by

2. *"Are you ready?"*

If there are no problems this will be followed by

3. *"Stand by"*

If static targets are being used and there is no time restriction then you may commence firing. During a competition the targets will then turn away for a short time and when they turn to face you again you may commence firing.

If you are not ready, shout out "not ready" and raise your hand. The RO will acknowledge *"Not ready called"* and you will be given time to prepare yourself.

The RO will then again call *"Are you ready?"* and if all is well call *"Stand by"* and the targets will turn away.

At the end of the practice, the command *"Unload and show clear"* will be given. At this point you must keep the muzzle pointed downrange at the targets and unload.

10 LOADING

Once you have lined yourself up properly and the muzzle is pointing towards the target, when the command to load is given, follow one of these procedures.

10.1 GRCF

Close the lever and insert the required number of rounds into the integral magazine through the loading gate.

Bring the rifle up into the aim and rack the action fully forwards and then rearwards again to the close the action. During this action the shooter must ensure that their index finger remains away from the trigger until the action is fully closed. Then place the trigger finger along the side of the stock until the sights are aiming directly at the target.



10.2 GRSB

With a semi automatic GRSB it is usually far easier for a right handed shooter to support and control the rifle and muzzle direction with the left hand on the fore end. Inserting the magazine, racking the action, holding the bolt open and clear any jams / malfunctions is easier with the right hand. A left handed shooter should support and control the rifle by holding the grip with the left hand, and also use the right hand for the other tasks.

Insert the magazine into the action and then, placing the index finger outside the trigger guard along the side of the stock bring the rifle up into the aiming position on the target. Then use the right hand to pull back the bolt handle to release the bolt forward and load a round into the chamber.





10.3 LBR

Place the middle two fingers of your left hand through the frame so that, together with the thumb, they can support the revolver by gripping onto the cylinder which allows you to insert the rounds into the chambers. If you need to insert one round less than the cylinder actually holds, then the empty chamber should be located at the top when the cylinder is closed.



Once the required number of rounds has been loaded, a firm grip should be taken with the right hand making sure that the trigger finger remains against the outside the frame before the thumb and middle fingers of the left hand close the cylinder. Note that the left hand may need to rotate the cylinder slightly in either direction to ensure that it locks up properly in the action before it can also be used to hold the revolver.



10.4 LBP

The pistol should be gripped in the shooting hand with the trigger finger placed along the frame outside the trigger guard. The other hand should then be used to insert the magazine into the action before bringing the pistol up into the aim. Then pull the slide to the rear and allow it to travel forwards freely to load a round into the chamber.



11 FIRING

11.1 GRCF

Once a good sight picture is achieved the index finger can then be placed lightly onto the trigger and the shot can be released under control. Following the shot being released, the index finger should be placed back outside the trigger guard along the side of the stock and the muzzle of the rifle should be lowered down to take a short rest. The stock can either remain in the shoulder whilst the barrel is lowered to the 45° ready position or the whole rifle can be lowered down by the side of the body so that the muzzle remains pointing at the target in the parallel ready position. When ready, the shooter can then bring the rifle up into aim and repeat the cycle until all the rounds have been fired.





11.2 GRSB

Taking care to place your trigger finger outside the trigger guard whilst regaining a grip on the rifle, it can then be rested lightly on the trigger once a good sight picture has been acquired and the shot can be released under control. Once the shot has been released, place your finger outside the trigger guard and lower the rifle into either the 45° or parallel position to take a short rest. When ready, the rifle can be brought up into aim again and when on target, the finger can then be placed lightly onto the trigger and the cycle repeated until all the rounds have been fired.



11.3.2 LBR - Single action

Keeping the trigger finger outside the guard, use the left hand to cock the hammer to the rear. This requires a much lighter pressure to be exerted on the trigger before each shot is released.

11.3 LBR

11.3.1 LBR - Double action

The index finger should only be placed on the trigger once the revolver is pointing at the target. Pulling the trigger smoothly all the way to the rear until a round is fired is known as double action. It requires more pressure to achieve than single action.



Note: The “rest” position for both LBRs and LBPs is held with either one or two hands and the finger off the trigger with the barrel pointing down at around 45° or pulled in towards the body with the muzzle pointing at the target. For safety reasons a revolver should not be brought down into the rest position with the hammer cocked back. Cocking the hammer back for single action shooting should only be done when the muzzle is pointing at the target.



11.4 LBP

Whether a single or two handed grip is used the index finger should only be placed on the trigger once the sights are directly on the target and the rest positions are as described above.

12 UNLOADING

When the RO gives the command to unload and show clear, follow these procedures while keeping the muzzle pointing at the target.

12.1 GRCF

Rack the action three times and turn it slightly sideways so that you and the RO can check that the chamber and magazine tube are clear. Once it has been checked and cleared the RO will tell you what to do next.



12.2 GRSB

Support the rifle in the left hand and use the right hand to release the magazine. Then rack back the bolt and lock it open before canting it over slightly to the left so that both you and the RO can check that the chamber is clear. Once it has been checked and cleared the RO will tell you what to do next.



12.3 LBR

Support the revolver, open the cylinder and eject the fired cases into the right hand and hold the cylinder open with the left hand so that both you and the RO can see that the chambers are clear. Once it has been checked and cleared the RO will tell you what to do next.



12.4 LBP

Remove the magazine first and then lock back the slide while canting it over slightly to the left so that both you and the RO can check that the chamber is clear. Once it has been checked and cleared the RO will tell you what to do next.



13 AFTER UNLOADING

Once the practice has finished you will then be told to either ground, bag or put your firearms into a designated rack. If grounding your firearms this should be done as follows:

13.1 GRCF, GRSB and LBP

Muzzles pointing down range and detachable magazines removed with the lever open or the bolt or slide locked back and placed down on the ground or bag on its left side, so that the empty chamber can clearly be seen on top.

13.2 LBR

Muzzle pointing down range and placed on the ground or bag on its right side with the cylinder open so that it can be seen to be clear.



If you are instructed to bag your firearms make sure that the muzzle remains pointing down range whilst insert the firearm muzzle first into the bag. You should always place your bag closely in front of you on the line so that you can simply pull it rearwards again when you need to re-bag your firearm. This will ensure that you maintain a safe muzzle direction at all times as you won't have to move forward or backwards to reach your bag and possibly "sweep" someone or yourself during the process.

If you are required to place your firearms in a rack, make sure that the muzzle moves directly upwards into the vertical position from pointing at the target and does not wave around sideways. Carry it in this position until it is placed in the rack, with the action open.

For any firearms that do not have a bolt "hold open" device the magazine should be removed and a breech flag or similar device placed inside the chamber to indicate that the action is clear.

14 MISFIRES AND MALFUNCTIONS

14.1 GRCF

If when firing you hear a muted report instead of the usual louder "bang", this indicates that the bullet may not have left the barrel. You should immediately stop firing, bring the rifle down and hold it securely at waist level, ensuring the muzzle remains aimed at the target and raise a hand to attract the attention of an RO. As soon as it is safe to do so, the RO will empty the rounds from the magazine tube and inspect the barrel to check whether or not the bullet has exited. If it hasn't, the obstruction will be removed with a rod.

If you hear a "click" instead of a "bang" you should attract the attention of an RO as above. Tell them they may have experienced a "light strike" and the RO will place a hand around the ejection port and ask you to rack the action slowly so that the suspect round can be caught. If the primer

has received a light strike, the RO will keep the round and dispose of it safely once the detail has finished and you may carry on the firing.

14.2 GRSB

It is unusual to hear a muted report from a GRSB round but not impossible. If this happens follow the procedure outlined above for GRCF.

The most common malfunction with this type of rifle is for the ejecting empty case to be trapped between the bolt and the receiver. If this happens, lower the rifle into the horizontal hold at waist height and control the rifle with the left hand keeping it pointing at the target. Using the right hand to release and catch the magazine put it safely in a pocket. Place the thumb on top of the cocking handle and pull it rearwards, making sure that the fingers are held underneath the magazine well to catch any live rounds that may fall out in the process. The bolt should then be locked open and the chamber checked for any live rounds inside it before replacing the magazine and starting shooting again.

If just a “click” is heard, this can either mean a round hasn’t been chambered and the hammer has fallen onto an empty chamber, or that a round has been chambered but the round has failed to fire when hit by the hammer – a “light strike”. If this happens, support the rifle keeping it pointing at the target and remove the magazine. Lock the action back as above and then look inside to see if there is a round in the chamber or if one has dropped into your hand. If there is a round in the chamber or in your hand that has a dent on the edge of the rim then it was a “light strike”. Raise your hand to get the attention of an RO who will dispose of it for you.

If there was no “light strike” and no round in the chamber then simply start the loading cycle again and carry on.

If the rifle fails to fire and upon inspection a round can be seen stuck half way between the magazine and the chamber, lower and secure the rifle keeping it pointing at the target and pull the bolt back and lock it into position. Catch the magazine, and live round if possible, and carry on.

14.3 LBR

If the pressure needed on the trigger is much more than usual when trying to cock the hammer back or during a double action pull, then this usually means that one or more of the rounds has a “high primer” sticking up. You should stop trying to force the cylinder around immediately and indicate to the RO that you have a problem.

Making sure that a safe muzzle direction is maintained at all times, push forward on the cylinder release catch with the right thumb and use the middle two fingers of the left hand to push the cylinder open. The left hand should then rotate the barrel upwards so that you can push the rounds out into the right hand using the ejector rod.

After removing the offending rounds, you can carry on.

If when firing you hear a muted report instead of the usual louder “bang”, this indicates that the bullet may not have left the barrel. You should immediately stop firing, bring the revolver to waist level ensuring the muzzle remains aimed at the target and raise a hand to attract the attention of an RO. As soon as it is safe to do so, the RO will empty the rounds from the cylinder and inspect the barrel to check whether or not the bullet has exited. If it hasn’t, the obstruction will be removed with a rod.

14.4 LBP

The causes of malfunctions are similar to those for the GRSB and you should follow similar procedures.

Everyone who either shoots, or is considering shooting Gallery Rifle in the future should download the free Gallery Rifle & Pistol Handbook, updated annually, directly from the NRA website. It is in PDF format and covers absolutely everything from rules and regulations, to the full courses of fire and complete sets of notes that are used by the ROs to run the matches.