

## INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL SHOOTING 101

# **MID** 1982 **PACIFIC**



# **PISTOL LEAGUE HAWAII**

MPPL matches are conducted using the current USPSA or SCSA rule book.  
A copy of the these rules can be found online at <https://uspsa.org/rules>.

## **THE MID PACIFIC PISTOL LEAGUE**

Who are we? Good question...you can say that MPPL has been around since 1982. The primary function of the club is to provide a safe and organized vehicle for competitive pistol shooting. MPPL is affiliated with the following organizations: The National Rifle Association, The Hawaii Rifle Association, and The United States Practical Shooting Association. To throw some alphabet soup at you... MPPL is affiliated with... NRA, HRA,USPSA. We offer Multi-gun, Steel Challenge (SCSA), and United States Practical Pistol Association (USPSA) matches. The match type we emphasize most often is the USPSA match; a shooting format that test the shooter's abilities to solve practical shooting problems. Times are quick and the targets are placed at various distances.

Steel Challenge matches are also offered during the year (see <https://scsa.org/> for more information).

Match Fees for MPPL regular matches are:

\$25 members

\$35 non-members

Annual Membership Fee is \$55.

Join MPPL at:

<https://practiscore.com/clubs/mid-pacific-pistol-league-1/membership/join>

**Or Contact us at [mppl@mppl.net](mailto:mppl@mppl.net)**

**To register for MPPL matches go to Practiscore**

<https://practiscore.com/clubs/mid-pacific-pistol-league-1>

# PRACTICAL SHOOTING

Welcome to an introductory course on the sport of practical pistol shooting. The Board of Directors of the Mid-Pacific Pistol League, Inc. affectionately refer to this course as **Practical Shooting 101**. This class is not a course on the use of firearms in self-defense, rather it's an introduction to a exciting, fun-filled, recreational sport.

When you complete this class, you will be able to:

1. recall the history and philosophy of IPSC and USPSA.
2. recite and explain the range commands.
3. score and record a standard USPSA target.
4. understand the basic vocabulary used in IPSC and USPSA.
5. make use of various shooting positions and techniques.

## GUN CONTROL

There are four laws of gun control which cover the basics of safe gun handling. They are:

1. The gun is always loaded! (Never assume that it is not!!! Check it.)
2. Don't point it at anything you are not willing to destroy!
3. Be sure of your target and what is behind it.
4. Keep your finger off the trigger until your muzzle is pointed down range.

## *Gun safety begins with the Practical Shooting Code of Ethics...*

The Practical Shooting Code of Ethics transforms the 4 laws of Gun Control into personal statements of safe gun handling. Remember, if you violate any of the safety regulations at a match you will be immediately disqualified.

1. I will treat every gun as if it were loaded.
2. I will not point a gun at anything I am not willing to destroy.
3. I will be sure of my target and what is behind it.
4. I will keep my finger off the trigger until my muzzle is down range.

The rules are important.... safety first and always.... **you** are the one in control. No one else is responsible, no one else is to blame if something goes wrong.

# GENERAL RANGE RULES

## The Safety Areas...

There are only two places where you can handle a gun at a match, in a Safety Area or on the firing line, under the supervision of the Range Officer. No Ammunition is ever handled in any safety area. Safety Areas are designated by signage and tables located at the side berms in both bays of the ranges. Competitors are permitted to use the Safety Areas for the activities stated below provided they remain within the boundaries of the Safety Area, and the firearm is always pointed at the berm. Casing and uncasing firearms are only allowed at the Safety Area. Casing and uncasing at parked vehicles are not allowed. Violations are subject to match disqualification.

- Casing, uncasing, and holstering unloaded firearms.
- Practice the mounting, drawing, dry firing” and re-holstering of unloaded firearms.
- Practice the insertion and removal of empty magazines and/or to cycle the action of a firearm.

## Cold Range

MPPL runs a **cold range**. This means that guns are loaded only by order of the Range Officer and only on the Firing Line. Behind the line they are holstered, magazine out or cylinder unloaded, hammer down on an empty chamber or carried that way in a gun bag. For PCC the firearm will be carried muzzle up with visible chamber flag inserted. Casing and uncasing only in the safety areas or on the line under the supervision of an RO.

## Eye and Ear Protection...

The proper protection is required to compete or observe the sport. Eye and hearing protection will be always worn while on the range.

## FAQ...

Q: Where can I load my magazines? A: Anywhere but in a Safety Area.

Q: Where can I put my equipment on (i.e. belt, holster)? A: Anywhere you wish. The only place you can uncase your firearm, other than on the firing line, is in a safety area, and that's where you must uncase a handgun and holster it prior to starting the match.

Q: Where can I wear my pistol? A: Standard Protocol followed by MPPL says that you may wear your equipment anywhere in the Range Facility, however your firearm should not pass beyond the extent of the action shooting bays.

## HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Origins of the sport...Our sport grew out of the Leather slap contests first held in Big Bear, California, in 1956. Beginning as western style fast draw contests with single action revolvers, wax bullets and light loads, these contests helped determine what types of guns, gear and techniques work best in a gunfight. In 1958, Jack Weaver violated generations of cowboy movie tradition and revolutionized the young sport by holding the gun in two hands. They laughed at him, until he began winning everything in sight. Then they stopped laughing and started imitating. The spirit of innovation and pursuit of excellence continues today in Practical Shooting competitions.

The formal organization of the **International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC)** occurred in 1976. In 1984 the **United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA)** was incorporated as the US Region of IPSC. Membership in USPSA automatically includes membership in IPSC. The Principles of Practical Shooting include:

1. The sport is open to all reputable persons.
2. Accuracy, Power and Speed are equivalent elements of practical shooting and practical competition must be conducted in such a way as to evaluate these elements equally.
  - Accuracy is measured by your score on target.
  - Power is factored by cardboard targets, which score less for minor hits.
  - Speed is measured by your time.
3. Practical Shooting tests your expertise in the use of Practical firearms and equipment.
4. Practical Shooting matches use Practical targets.
5. Practical Shooting courses must be realistic.
6. Practical Shooting is Diverse.
7. Practical Shooting is Freestyle. In Essence, the competitive problem is posed in general, and the participant is permitted the freedom to solve it in the manner they consider best within the limitations of the competitive situation as provided.

# PRACTICAL SHOOTING TERMS

Every sport develops its own inner language; Practical Pistol shooting is no exception. This worksheet is an attempt to teach you to talk the talk....

**180 line-** The muzzle can't break the 180 line which is visualized as a line that runs parallel to the back berm and moves downrange (or uprange) as the competitor moves. The competitor needs to keep the muzzle on the downrange side of the 180 line to prevent being disqualified.

**AD- Accidental Discharge.** Your gun went off when it should not and your bullet went where it should not. You are Disqualified (DQ) from the entire competition.

**Array** - A grouping of more than one target.

**Barrier-** A wall or other range prop which helps define a course of fire. Typically, these are "vision barriers" as well either by construction or rule.

**Berm-** A raised structure of sand, soil, or other materials used to contain bullets and/or to separate one shooting bay and/or COF from another.

**Brain fade-** A situation common to IPSC shooters. Usually followed by the comment, "Why did I do that? "

**Classifier Stage-** A stage used to determine a shooter's national classification. It takes at least 4 matches to get your card (USPSA).

**Course of Fire-(COF)** An expression used interchangeably with "Stage".

**DQ** - Disqualified because of a safety violation or gross unsportsmanlike behavior.

**DVC** - "DVC" is the UPSA Motto- It stands for "Diligentia, Vis, Celeritas" (Accuracy, Power, Speed) and symbolizes the challenges of the sport.

**Fault line-** A physical ground reference line in a course of fire which defines the limit(s) of the shooting area.

**Mike** - A miss on a target.

**No Shoots** - White target(s) that incur penalties when hit.

**Reshoot** - A competitor's subsequent attempt at a course of fire, authorized in advance by the Range Officer or an Arbitration Committee.

**RO-** Range Officer, one of the many volunteer officials responsible for the safety of the shooter and running of the stages.

**Safety Area-** This is a designated area where the handling of firearms is allowed, other than on the firing line. No handling of ammunition or loaded magazines in the Safety Area.

**Shooting Area** - A designated shooting position, usually defined by fault lines.

**Stage-** a competitive problem, usually consisting of multiple arrays of targets.

**Start Position** - The location, shooting position and stance of the competitor as prescribed by the Written stage Briefing prior to issuance of the “start signal”. The start position **MUST** be clearly defined by the Written Stage Briefing

**USPSA-** United States Practical Shooting Association/IPSC, Inc.

**Walk-through-** The time when the RO will brief you on how the stage is shot.

**WSB** - Written Stage Briefing, describes the scoring method, targets (type and number), minimum number of rounds, firearm ready condition, shooter start position, and procedure.

## RANGE COMMANDS

The Range Officer has to say only 5 things to you, not that they're unfriendly, that's just what they have to do.

1. **MAKE READY** - The competitor will face downrange, or in a safe direction as specified by the RO, put his/her firearm in the correct ready condition specified in the stage briefing, and then assume the specified start position.
2. **ARE YOU READY?**- If the competitor is not ready at the command, he must say that they are "not ready" or somehow notify the RO.
3. **STANDBY**- this will be followed by the cue to commence firing. Cues may be verbal, audible, visual, or self-starting.
4. **IF YOU ARE FINISHED, UNLOAD AND SHOW CLEAR**- When the competitor is finished, the firearm is unloaded and held ready for inspection by the Range Officer. Self-loaders will have the magazine removed and the slide/ bolt locked back. Revolvers will have the cylinder swung out and empty. The unloading procedure must be carried out with the muzzle pointed down range at all times.
5. **IF CLEAR, HAMMER DOWN, HOLSTER** (self-loaders) or **IF CLEAR, CYLINDER CLOSED** (revolvers) or **IF CLEAR, HAMMER DOWN, FLAG** (PCC). The competitor must perform a final safety check of the firearm as follows:

Self-loaders/PCC—release the slide/bolt and pull the trigger (without touching the hammer or decocker, if any); PCC the bolt is pulled to the rear and chamber flagged.


If the firearm proves to be clear, the competitor must holster/ flag their firearm. A carbine must then be transported with the muzzle reasonably vertically up or down, while scoring is done, and then off the stage to a rack or case. Flagged carbines/ handguns may also be cased at this time and transported off the stage in the case

### There are 3 types of fingers...(?)

- A Question of Personal Safety: What kind of finger do you have?
1. The unknowing/uncaring finger, it doesn't know anything.
  2. The Knowing/Thinking finger, it knows but must be told to do it.
  3. The Intelligent Finger, safety is always first, actions become instinctual.

**The SAFE finger never touches the trigger until you are ready to fire**





Hand Talk...When the RO holds up his/her hand with an Open Palm it is the signal that the Shooter on their stage has a cleared weapon and has holstered. When all stages display an open palm...then and only then does the RO give the command to go forward and score.

A Closed hand or fist is the sign for a stage ready to shoot or in the process of being Shot . Verbalized as "range is hot".

Only the RO holding the timer should be giving the signals.

## SHOOTER AND SQUAD RESPONSIBILITIES

MPPL is a club based on volunteerism. Your match fee pays for supplies and the cost of range equipment. You are not paying to have others work for you. Each and every shooter contributes to the smooth running of a match. Every shooter should display a willingness to help and assist their squad. Such duties include, but are not limited to:

1. Stage setup and teardown of stages. If people don't help the matches become and less enjoyable for everyone.
2. Taping targets and resetting steel.
3. Picking up brass and keeping the stage rubbish free.
4. Recording Scores- everyone does it... ignorance is not an excuse.
5. A simple rule of thumb.... if everyone else is doing something and you're not ...you are one of two people. Either you're the person about to shoot or the next person in the shooting order or you just shot.

## SCORING

In days past, before computer applications... match officials would huddle around primitive calculators and scratch paper... they determined the winners of each match. It was a real pain in the butt. A simple explanation is as follows:

1. A shooter's score divided by the time results in a value called the "hit factor".
2. The highest "hit factor" for the stage is given full points possible for the stage.
3. All other hit factors are a percentage of the high hit factor and receive the appropriate percentage of the possible score. This value becomes your "match points" for the stage.
4. Match winner is the person with the highest number of match points.
5. The USPSA target is divided into three scoring zones. A hit in the A-zone is worth 5 points regardless of Major or Minor. A hit in the C-zone when scoring Major is worth 4 points, and only 3 points when scoring Minor Power Factor. Similarly, a hit in the D-zone is worth 2 points scoring Major Power Factor, but only 1 point scoring Minor Power Factor. No Shoot (NS) are -10.
6. Occasionally the course of fire requires more than two hits on a target. Pay attention to the stage briefing this will be announced. Hits that touch a scoring line count as a hit to the higher scoring zone.
7. Assuming Minor Power Factor, what is the score for this target if two hits are required?



## Power Factor

For the scoring of standard IPSC cardboard targets, competitors are divided into two groups: Major and Minor power factors. The power factor of a pistol and its ammunition is determined by the bullet weight (in grains) and its velocity (in feet per second) when fired from the competitor's weapon. Competitors shooting Minor power factors receive lesser scores for all but A-zone hits on the IPSC targets. Steel targets are all scored the same, regardless of the power factor of the weapon firing. However, in some cases, the higher power factor helps the poppers to fall faster and thereby give Major loads a time advantage, even if just slight. The power factor for a competitor's pistol is determined by using a scale to weigh the bullet and a chronograph to measure its fired velocity. These measured values are plugged into the following equation to determine the power factor:

$$\text{Bullet Weight (grains)} \times \text{Velocity (fps)} / 1000 = \text{Power Factor}$$

For pistols, all ammunition must make a minimum power factor of 125 to be used in competition. Ammunition with a power factor between 125 and 164.999 is considered "Minor", while power factors of 165 and above are considered "Major". Power factor is verified at major matches by use of a Chronograph station where range officers measure the velocity of the competitors rounds and verify the weight of the bullets used in the competitors' ammunition.

For most MPPL matches Power Factor is an honor system. But, be warned – other competitors are quick to notice the sound of low powered "bunny" rounds.

## Three Types of Scoring

**Comstock** - Each target must have a stated number of hits on it. For example, if the stage description says, "Best two hits will be scored," then the best two hits (assuming there are at least two hits on the target) are counted in the shooter's score. The shooter may take as long as desired and fire as many rounds as he/she finds necessary. The electronic timer reads out after each shot is fired, so the time on the display when the shooter is finished is the time at which the last shot was fired. The designated number of hits are scored on each target. If a target has fewer than the specified number of hits, or a steel target is left standing, then a miss is assessed as a penalty that is twice the A-zone score (i.e., -10 points for misses on cardboard or 5-point steel targets or -20 points for 10-point steel targets). The score is the sum of the earned points minus all penalties divided by the recorded time for the stage. This ratio of points to time is called the "hit ratio". Negative hit factors (due to more penalty points than earned points) are not counted, so a 0.0 hit factor is the lowest possible hit factor (called

zeroing the stage). The greatest hit factor on each stage wins. The hit factor typically runs from 0.0000 to about 10.0000.

**Virginia Count** - Places a premium on gun control by limiting the number of rounds that may be fired. Unlike Comstock scoring, the shooter is penalized for firing more than the designated number of rounds. The shooter may take as long as desired, but a penalty (normally 10 points) is assessed for each extra round fired and for each extra hit. Because there is a penalty for making up for a miss, there is a greater need for every shot to be fired accurately. As with Comstock scoring, the total score for all hits, less any penalties for misses, extra shots, and extra hits is divided by the total time to compute the hit factor.

**Timed Fire** - The maximum time is specified by the stage description. For example, it might call for 16 rounds to be fired in 6 seconds. The timer is set to sound twice, first at the start (as for all types of scoring) and then again at the specified time. The shooter is normally given a 0.3 second reaction time after the finish time has expired. If the maximum time is 6 seconds, then no "late shot" penalty is assessed unless a shot is fired at 6.31 seconds or later. As with Virginia Count scoring, penalties are also assessed for taking extra shots and having extra hits. No-shoot and miss penalties can combine quickly. One common scoring situation occurs when a shooter fires two rounds at a target that is closely guarded by a no-shoot. One shot scores on the target, but the other lands in the no-shoot. Assuming Comstock or Virginia Count scoring, the target would be scored for the one hit (according to which zone the shot hit), and a no-shoot penalty and a miss penalty would be assessed. Thus, the shooter has lost a total of 25 points for the one shot: -10 for the miss, -10 for the no-shoot, and (possibly) -5 for the points an A-zone hit would have scored. The miss and no-shoot penalties quickly wipe out points scored on other targets. A slow hit scores higher than a fast miss - or worse, a fast miss and a no-shoot.

## WHAT DIVISION AM I IN?

**Limited/Limited -10 Division/Limited Optics-** Single-action autoloaders in .40 S&W and .45 ACP rule the roost here. Since "L-10" shooters are limited to 10 rounds in the magazine, this is the place to be for shooters that live in states where high-capacity magazines are restricted. Competitors can make various minor changes to make the gun more shootable (change sights, grips, slide stops, magazine releases, mainspring housings, etc.), but they MAY NOT add porting or a recoil compensator. To score "major" a Limited or Limited-10 pistol

must use a .400 caliber or larger bullet. For Limited Optic all requirements for Limited division are followed, but with the option of mounting an optic.

**Open Division-** Dominated by cutting-edge high-capacity 1911's and CZ-75's, Open is the top fuel drag racing division within USPSA. Shooters can make all the modifications allowed for Limited and then add several more. Magazines may extend to 170mm overall, optical sights may be used, and recoil compensators are practically required. (Hawaii is still limited to 10 rounds in the magazine.)

**Revolver Division-** This division has a minimum caliber of .38 Special, with eight rounds allowed for minor power factor and six for major power factor. Otherwise, there are no size or weight restrictions, but compensators and ports are not allowed, and iron sights are required.

**Production Division-** This is the place for the striker fired, double action only, or double action first pull and single action subsequent in design. DA/SA pistols must start hammer down. All scoring for this division is minor, so most pistols are chambered in 9x19 for the reduced recoil and the economy of the ammunition. Magazines in Hawaii are limited to 10 rounds. This is a stock division so iron sights of the notch and post design only. Shooter may change the sights, add skate tape, mount a functional flashlight, and tune the internal parts of the gun; externally- visible changes are not legal. Holsters and allied equipment must be "non-race-type" and "suitable for everyday use".

**Single Stack 1911-** The equipment rules are identical to Limited-10, except that shooters must use a single-stack 1911 pistol and may only use standard-capacity magazines (8 rounds for "major calibers, 10 rounds for "minor"). As far as holsters, Single-Stack shooters must adhere to the Production division guidelines: the holster must be a practical "non-race-type" and "suitable for everyday use".

**Carry Optics-** USPSA recognized the progression of lightweight carry pistols outfitted with slide mounted electronic optics. Most of the other requirements are the same as production division. Free states would be allowed to use full capacity 140mm magazines, in Hawaii you are limited to 10 rounds.

**Pistol Caliber Carbine (PCC)-** The Pistol Caliber Carbine (PCC) division is open to any semi-auto carbine chambered for 9mm, .357 SIG, .40 S&W, 10mm, or .45 ACP. The maximum velocity allowed is 1600 FPS. All scoring will be under Minor Caliber (125 PF) rules.

*USPSA will modify the requirements or add a new division from time to time. To stay current go to [www.USPSA.org](http://www.USPSA.org) and click on "rule book".*

## THINGS TO BRING TO A MATCH

**Pistol-** Your handgun: a revolver that chambers at least .38 Special or semi-automatic pistol in at least 9 mm (no .380 or smaller). A holster that attaches to your belt completely covers the trigger area of your handgun and keeps the muzzle of the holstered handgun pointed downward into a "zone" that is within 1 meter of the wearer. At least four magazines or speed loaders. It is not unusual for a stage to require one to three mandatory magazine changes. A single stage may require 35-40 rounds, so even without mandatory changes, you may use three or more magazines in the execution of a stage. Pouches or other way to hold your spare magazines at your belt. At least 150 rounds of ammunition. If you need extra shots, it is better to have enough ammunition. If you have a "range malfunction" during your run and need to "reshoot," you'd better have enough ammunition to reshoot the entire course.

**Rifle-** For the occasional rifle match calibers allowed start with the .223. However, magnum calibers are not allowed due to range rules.

**PCC – Pistol Caliber Carbines** -9mm and .45 are popular choices. Power factor is always Minor. Currently PCC are allowed to use standard capacity magazines if the magazine cannot fit in a pistol. However, the law could change so stay tuned.

**Eye and ear protection.** To shoot a match with MPPL, you must wear safety or shooting glasses and some type of ear protection (plugs or muffs). Your regular sunglasses may not qualify as safety glasses, except for certain models that are designed as ballistic rated or sport safety glasses.

**Clothing.** Suitable for the usually hot weather that provides adequate freedom of movement without being too loose, causing catches on props. Also be sure your clothing and headgear will protect your skin from sun damage by the intense tropical sun (bring sunscreen). If the weather forecast includes moisture, you might want to bring an umbrella.

**Knee and/or elbow pads** If some padding will prevent injury if you get too enthusiastic, consider bringing some.

**Water and food.** Dehydration is a constant problem. A light snack can help keep your energy up as well. **Lawn chair:** Bringing your own lawn chair gives you a reserved seat and a chance to rest your tired feet. This may seem like a long list, but it is pretty much driven by common sense.

*Come on out and have a good time!*