

# Steel Challenge

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## Safety

- All firearms will be kept unloaded and in the staging area until competitor steps to the line.
- All competitors will wear eye and ear protection when the range is hot.
- Leaving the Line: No competitor may leave the firing line position until the firearm has been unloaded, inspected by the Range Officer. The firearm will then be holstered.
- A minimum of 2 Range Officers (RO) must be present, one being a certified Range Safety Officer (RSO). The RSO oversees the shooting event and is responsible for ensuring safety and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are followed. It will be made clear to all participants who the Range Officers are.
- Participants will sign in on the signup sheet.
- Non-members must sign a waiver.
- Anyone can call for a cease fire.

## General Match Rules

1. Pistol calibers are limited to 22LR, 38SP, 9mm, 40 and 45. No magnum or +P ammo. No solid copper ammo.
2. Any sights are permitted. Open, scoped or dot sights, etc.
3. Holsters are permitted, but not mandatory.
4. Holsters must be worn at the 3 O'clock or 9 O'clock position.
5. Three or more magazines or speed loaders are required.
6. Scoring is optional.
7. Each competitor will shoot 5 steel plates per string and 5 strings per stage.
8. For holstered shooters, the start position is standing in the box with both feet flat on the ground. Participants who shoot from a holster will have their hands raised above their shoulders. When the competitor is ready they will assume the required start position to indicate their readiness to the Range Official. The competitor must remain in the appropriate position until the start signal.
9. Shooters who opt to not use a holster will start with their handgun in the low ready position.
10. Ammo will be kept separate from handguns. Handguns will be set on the designated safe table.
11. Handguns will have their breach open, unless holstered, at all times. Before holstering, the gun must be shown clear to an RO.
12. All targets are painted white prior to each string.

## Commencing Firing

1. The RSO will call out the name of the next shooter.
2. The shooter will retrieve his/her handgun and ammo and proceed to the firing line.
3. The shooter will indicate if they are firing with or without a holster.
4. A RO will time the shoot, standing just behind the shooter off to the side.
5. Once the shooter steps into the box, and the RO confirms no one is forward of the firing line, the RO will declare the range "Hot"
6. The RO will give the command "*Make Ready*" indicating the shooter can load their handgun.
7. The RO will ask if the shooter is ready with the command "*Are You Ready?*"
8. If ready, the RO will issue the command "*Stand By*" at which time the timer will be started.
9. When the stage is finished, the shooter will place his handgun in a safe condition. The RO will confirm this before allowing the shooter to leave the firing line.
10. If the shooter is finished, they may leave the range. If the shooter intends to participate again, they will place their handgun on the designated table.

## Scoring

Your time is your score. Worst/highest score per round be dropped.

Each stage consists of five steel plates. Four are standard plates, and the fifth is designated as the *stop plate*. The stop plate has a red stand. Each of the standard plates must be hit at least once before hitting the stop plate. The time stops when the stop plate is hit.

The maximum time allowed for an individual string is 30 seconds. Any hits made after the maximum time allowance will not be counted. The competitor will be stopped and asked to reload if they reach the 30 second limit.

Any plate which has not been hit before the stop plate will count as a miss. Each miss on a standard plate will result in a 3 second penalty, added to the shooter's time for that string.

If the stop plate is not hit, the score for that string is 30 seconds. It is the competitor's responsibility to stop the time by hitting the stop plate with a clear hit on the edge or face of the plate.

## Range Officers

All RO's will be familiar with range commands. They will also be knowledgeable about proper handgun operations and safety. Including how to deal with malfunctions. ROs will keep current with all club range policies and SOP. The RSO will ensure RO's are qualified to officiate at range events.

## Range Commands

**Make Ready** - the competitor must face down range and prepare their handgun. The competitor must then assume the required start position. At this point, the Range Official will proceed.

**Are you ready?** - The lack of any negative response from the competitor indicates that he/she fully understands the requirements of the course of fire and is ready to proceed. If the competitor is not ready at the "Are you ready?" command, *he must state "Not ready"*.

**Stand by** - This command should be followed by the start signal within 1 to 4 seconds.

At the audible start signal the competitor is to begin their attempt at the course of fire. If a competitor fails to react to the audible start signal, for any reason, the Range Official will confirm that the competitor is ready to attempt the course of fire, and will resume the range commands from "**Are You Ready?**"

**"Prepare for your next string"** After the completion of a string, if the shooter has not completed the required number of strings he/she will be instructed to prepare for the next string. The shooter should reload if necessary and assume the appropriate start position.

**"Stop"** Any Range Official assigned to a stage may issue this command at any time. The competitor must immediately cease firing, stop moving and wait for further instructions from the Range Official.

**"If you are finished, unload and show clear"** After the completion of the final string, the Range Official will issue this command. If the competitor has finished shooting, he must lower his handgun, completely unload it and present it for inspection by the Range Official with the muzzle pointed down range.

**"Range is clear"** This declaration signifies the end of the stage. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score/paint targets.

## The 4 Most Common Firearm Stoppages

*If you are not comfortable handling the situation on your own, there's no shame in getting the attention of your instructor or a range officer and asking them to assist you.*

### Failure to Feed

**What happens:** You pull the trigger and the gun goes click instead of boom. While it's often a dud cartridge that just won't fire, it could also mean the magazine failed to load a new cartridge into the chamber.

**What to do:** Keep the gun pointed down range for 30 – 60 seconds. Tap the bottom of the magazine with the palm of your support hand to ensure it's fully seated. Invert the gun and rack the slide to clear any stoppage and load a fresh round into the chamber.

### Failure to Eject

**What happens:** Also known as a stovepipe, this stoppage occurs when you pull the trigger and nothing happens, similar to a Failure to Feed. But with this stoppage you'll notice the cartridge from your previously fired round is now stuck in the ejection port, resembling... a stovepipe. This jam will also cause your slide to not sit completely forward.

**What to do:** Like with a Failure to Feed, the Tap, Rack and Assess will suit you here. Tap the bottom of your magazine to make sure it's seated, rack the slide to feed a new round into the chamber and force the jammed cartridge out, and assess downrange.

### Failure to Go into Battery

**What happens:** A Failure to Go into Battery occurs when the cartridge is not fully seated in the chamber, forcing the slide to not fully sit forward. A variation of this stoppage, known as a Double Feed, happens when the slide picks up a fresh round before the previous cartridge can be ejected and attempts to seat them simultaneously.

**What to do:** A Tap, Rack and Assess should work, although you may have to rack the slide a little more vigorously than with the other two types of stoppages. Occasionally you may have difficulty clearing the chamber due to pressure applied by the magazine's spring. In this case you should remove the magazine, which may take a little force, and rack the slide several times until the chamber has been cleared. Then reload your magazine, give it a good tap on the bottom, rack the slide to load a new cartridge, and assess the target area.

### **3 Golden Rules for Safe Gun Handling**

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

### **A Clear and Safe Gun**

A gun is considered clear and safe when the following conditions apply:

1. The gun is unloaded, the action is open, and the magazine is removed (If detachable.)
2. The slide is locked open.
3. For a DA revolver, the cylinder is open and empty.
4. The firearm is on the bench with the muzzle pointed down range or in a safe direction.