

Ten Tips for Firearm Safety in Your Home

National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF)

“Top Ten” list of safety tips firearm owners should remember to help ensure they are taking responsible precautions with firearms in their home.

“Nearly all firearm accidents in the home can be prevented when gun owners take simple precautions, and proper storage is the number one way to help prevent accidents” said Steve Sanetti, NSSF president and CEO. “Anyone who is going to own a firearm should respect it and secure it when not in use to help prevent firearm accidents and misuse.”

NSSF’s Top Ten Safety Tips include:

- Always keep the firearm’s muzzle pointed in a safe direction. A “safe direction” means that the gun is pointed so that even if an accidental discharge occurred, it would not result in injury.
- Always keep your finger off the trigger until you actually intend to shoot. When handling a gun, rest your finger outside the trigger guard or along the side of the gun. Don’t touch the trigger until you are actually ready to fire.
- Firearms should be unloaded when not actually in use. Whenever you pick up a gun, such as when removing it from or returning it to storage, remember to point it in a safe direction and make *sure* it is unloaded.
- Be sure you know how your firearm operates: read the manual on your firearm, know how to safely open and close the action of the firearm and know how to safely remove any ammunition from the firearm and its magazine.
- Store your firearms in a locked cabinet, safe, gun vault or storage case when not in use, ensuring they are in a location inaccessible by children and cannot be handled by anyone without your permission.
- Store your ammunition in a locked location separate from firearms.
- Use a gun locking device that renders the firearm inoperable when not in use. A gun lock should be used as an additional safety precaution and not as a substitute for secure storage.
- Make sure young people in your home are aware of and understand the safety guidelines concerning firearms. Have them sign the [Project ChildSafe Pledge for young people](#)—a reminder that if they find an unattended firearm in their home or a neighbor’s to not touch it, and tell an adult.
- Always unload, clean and place your firearms in their secure storage location immediately after returning from a hunting trip or a day at the range.

- Educate everyone in your family about firearms safety. Visit the [Project ChildSafe website](#) for safety information and to find out where to get a free firearm safety kit in your area.

The “SAFE” in “S.A.F.E. Summer” serves as an acronym for **S**ecure your firearms when not in use; **B**e **A**ware of those around you who should not have unauthorized access to guns; **F**ocus on your responsibility as a firearm owner; and **E**ducate yourself and others about safe firearm handling and storage. The S.A.F.E. Summer campaign focuses on equipping gun owners take responsible action to help keep their families and communities safer, particularly while children are home from school and more likely to be unattended.

These tips and others tools and information about safe and responsible firearm storage are available at www.projectchidsafe.org.

NSSF launched Project ChildSafe in 1998 (prior to 2003 the program was called Project HomeSafe) as a nationwide initiative to promote firearms responsibility and provide safety education to all gun owners. While children are a focus, Project ChildSafe is intended to help young people and adults practice greater firearm safety in the home. The program has provided more than 36 million free firearm safety kits to gun owners in all 50 states and five U.S. territories. That’s in addition to the more than 60 million free locking devices manufacturers have included with new firearms sold since 1998 and continue to do so today.

Project ChildSafe was originally supported by federal grants provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Since 2008, when this funding was cut, the firearms manufacturing industry has solely funded the Project ChildSafe program through the members of NSSF.