



I Know how to Shoot, Why Should I Take Lessons?

Many of us learned to shoot as kids. Our dads or granddads brought back lessons learned from “the war”. Many of these lessons were outstanding. Some were not. They must be good if your dad told you about them, right? We learned to iron and cook from our moms, but we’ve adapted our skills over time. Why is it that we rarely adapt our firearm skills?

Taking lessons from certified firearm instructors can ease us away from bad habits. Even when we reflect back on what we learned from others, trained instructors can see tendencies of which we were unaware.

As a new student we are unaware of our mistakes and have yet to build the muscle memory and habit patterns. As we gain proficiency through practice, we begin to increase our skills. This is when we begin to develop bad habits. Our grip or posture will not be stable and our shot groups will not improve as expected. Then we are turned out on our own to practice as we prove that we are consistently safe. Now bad habits can become habit. Our progress is stalled. We decide that it is the gun or the sights or maybe that our shooting proficiency is just good enough.

Instruction can short circuit that path and ensure that you practice specific skills in a specific pattern. Autonomous practice will now show rapid improvement. Both accuracy and speed can improve if the proper skills are applied. When we are seduced by speed, accuracy suffers. That is when I find myself jerking the trigger and my shot groups go wide. It is easy to say “slow down”, but it is hard to do. An instructor can help you and watch for your personal habits. They will evaluate your grip, stance, sight alignment, and trigger press. Then the instructor should give you only one or two things to work on for the next round. If you are given more than two skills to concentrate on for the next round, you will be frustrated. This is a path toward marksmanship, not a race. Your success will surprise you. Your progress will accelerate. Proper practice insures accuracy.

Remember: When you are in a threatening situation it is a practiced response that keeps you safe!

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