



Shotgun Shooting

Scouts BSA · Sports

Name

Started

Completed

Shotgun Shooting is about safety, focus, and steady practice. You will learn firearm safety rules and protective gear, then build real skills on a range with certified supervision. Many Scouts find it builds patience and confidence.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/shotgun-shooting/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

1 Firearm safety and responsibility

Tips for this section: Learn and repeat the safety rules until they're habit, and talk through safe storage and eye and ear protection.

Example for this section: Be ready to explain each safety rule with a real example, like "Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction, even when you think the gun is unloaded." Then talk through why eye and ear protection matter and what safe storage looks like, with guns locked and ammunition stored separately. And if a friend asks to see a gun in your home, say no and tell an adult right away.

- ☐ **1a** Define a projectile. Explain why anything that launches one at high speed calls for careful, respectful handling and should be used only at approved locations

- ☐ **1b** Explain the basic safe gun-handling rules that apply to every firearm

- ☐ **1c** Describe what you would do if a friend at your home asked to see a gun that belongs to you or your family

- ☐ **1d** Explain why eye and hearing protection are needed, what kinds there are, and how to use them

- ☐ **1e** Explain the key points of your community's and state's laws on owning and using guns

- ☐ **1f** Explain how hunting ties in with wise use of renewable wildlife resources

- ☐ **1g** Pass a state hunter education course, or get a copy of your state's hunting laws, then do 1g1 and 1g2

- ☐ **1g1** Explain the key points of your state's hunting laws and any special rules about guns and ammunition

- ☐ **1g2** List the kinds of wildlife that may legally be hunted in your state

- ☐ **1h** Explain to your counselor the hygiene practices to follow when shooting

- ☐ **1i** Name and explain three shotgun sports. Find places nearby where you could practice them, and explain how you could get involved in range and target activities

- ☐ **1j** Review with your counselor where you could go, or whom you could contact, to learn more about firearms and their use

2 Shoot with a certified instructor and range officer: Choose 1 of 2

Tips for this section: Shoot only on an approved range with a certified instructor or range officer. Ask lots of questions as you learn.

Example for this section: At camp, keep a short log for each range session: what the range officer coached you on, such as stance, mount, or following through on the swing, and how many targets you hit. Seeing your progress written down helps you stay patient.

2a Option A: modern shotshell shotgun

- ☐ **2a1** Identify the main parts of a shotgun and the action types, and explain how they work

- ☐ **2a2** Identify and demonstrate the rules for storing and handling a shotgun safely

- ☐ **2a3** Identify each part of a shotgun shell and explain its job

- ☐ **2a4** Identify the different shotgun gauges and explain which you'd pick for a given use and why

- ☐ **2a5** Identify why a shotgun may fail to fire and explain misfires, hangfires, and squib fires. Explain and demonstrate how to prevent each and what to do when one happens

- ☐ **2a6** Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitude to shoot a shotgun safely on a range, following range procedures and commands

- ☐ **2a7** Explain the safety rules to follow when cleaning a shotgun and name the materials you need

- ☐ **2a8** Demonstrate cleaning a shotgun correctly and safely

- ☐ **2a9** Discuss what you would think about when choosing a shotgun

- ☐ **2a10** Using position, mount, vision, and movement, hit at least 12 of 25 moving targets in each of two 25-target rounds (50+ shots; rounds needn't be in a row or on one day). Follow the pamphlet's skill rules, including: 12-, 16-, or 20-gauge; factory ammo only, no reloads; targets thrown the same way at a fair speed, rising; trap station 3 straightaways or skeet station 7 low house

2b Option B: muzzleloading shotgun

- ☐ **2b1** Discuss with your counselor a short history of how the muzzleloading shotgun developed

- ☐ **2b2** Identify the main parts of a muzzleloading shotgun and discuss how each works

- ☐ **2b3** Identify and demonstrate the rules for storing and handling a muzzleloading shotgun safely

- ☐ **2b4** Identify the grades of black powder and explain how to use each correctly and safely

- ☐ **2b5** Discuss safe procedures for storing black powder

- ☐ **2b6** Discuss the correct components of a load

- ☐ **2b7** Identify the correct procedures and accessories for loading a muzzleloading shotgun safely

- ☐ **2b8** Identify why a muzzleloading shotgun may fail to fire and explain misfires, hangfires, and squib fires. Explain and demonstrate how to prevent each and what to do when one happens

- ☐ **2b9** Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitude to shoot a muzzleloading shotgun safely on a range, following range procedures and commands

- ☐ **2b10** Explain the safety rules to follow when cleaning a muzzleloading shotgun and name the materials you need

- ☐ **2b11** Demonstrate cleaning a muzzleloading shotgun correctly and safely

- ☐ **2b12** Discuss what you would think about when choosing a muzzleloading shotgun

- ☐ **2b13** Using position, mount, vision, and movement, with a muzzleloader, hit at least 5 of 15 moving targets per round over two 15-target rounds (30+ shots; rounds needn't be in a row). Follow the pamphlet's skill rules, including: 10 gauge or smaller; no matchlock, wheellock, or flintlock; standard clays; straightaway targets only, 8 yards behind a trap house or skeet station 7 low house

- ☐ **3** Find out how the safe, responsible firearm skills you learned could lead to a career or hobby. Research extra training and experience, likely costs, and groups that could help, then discuss it with your counselor along with your short- and long-term goals

Tip: Talk with your counselor about how safe, responsible habits carry into hunting, sport shooting, or life at home.

Example: If shooting has hooked you, look into what it would take to keep going: a youth trap or skeet program, a hunter education course, or helping at a range, plus costs like shells, range fees, and gear. Share a short-term goal, like finishing a full round of trap, and a long-term one.