

## Dry Fire 1

**Dry fire 1** - will be centered on safety and safe gun handling, carrying a weapon is common denominator in everything we do as soldiers on the battlefield. The rifle is our primary weapon and we must be experts with our primary tool. Being expert with a rifle is about more than just shooting it is about handling the rifle safely, efficiently and precisely.

The four basic rules of safe weapons handling are the same no matter what organization you train with whether it's the NRA, CMP or whatever.

**Rule number one** - treat all weapons as if they're loaded at all times

**Rule number two** - never let the muzzle point at anything you are not willing to destroy.

**Rule number three**- keep your finger straight and off the trigger until you can see the target through your sights. This happens after you determine it is a threat and decide to engage.

**Rule number four** – be sure of your target know what it is, what's in line with it, what is in front of and behind it. Never shoot at anything you have not positively identified. **Stay switched on.**

**Bottom line if you cannot handle the weapon safely you shouldn't be handling a weapon.**

I would also include some videos in this section – chose from these or some others that reinforce the things you have been discussing in regard to safety.

**Video number one** - DEA agent in the classroom. The big take away on this are he broke **rule number one** (treat the weapon as if it was loaded). He then unloaded the weapon incorrectly failing to remove the magazine. Then he disregarded **rule number two** when he pointed the weapon at himself and eventually broke a **rule number 3** when he put his finger on the trigger and fired the weapon.

There are some other take a ways that are not as obvious but are important none the less.

First, I want to point out that at the very beginning that video he's talking to the students and parents and says something very telling, he says "I have a whole lot I want to tell you but I don't have a whole lot of time". **Do not let time be a factor when you are administratively loading on loading your weapon**, yes there are times when you need to load your weapon quickly (combat) but in general time is not a factor. Unfortunately, many unsafe incidents can be attributed to someone cutting corners because they felt like they did not have enough time.

Another secondary but also important take away from Video, the DAE agent may actually have been distracted by the situation he was in (standing in front of the class) so instead of paying very close attention to what he was doing he may have some conscious thought conscious effort directed at what was actually happening in front of him. **Avoid being distracted when you are trying to load or unload your weapon administratively.** When you're loading and unloading administratively and there is

something else that is vying for your attention decide whether you can ignore that something and continue or stop to pay attention to what is happening and then go back to the weapon. In the end, you want to be in the moment with conscious thought and conscious effort when you're loading and unloading your weapon.

Another important thing that happens during this video, at the point the DEA agent is going to unload his weapon he locks the slide to the rear and goes to show it to another gentleman just off the camera. While he's doing that he declares "this is an empty weapon" the gentleman just off the camera was supposed to double check it for him, I'm not sure that really happened but **If anyone ever asks you to check that their weapon is clear it is your responsibility to make sure it is clear.**

Remember all of this could be avoided had he cleared his weapon in the correct sequence which would be to remove the magazine first, then to lock the slide to the rear, then to check the chamber and magazine well to ensure the weapon is clear. He wouldn't have had this problem had his buddy done his part and noticed the magazine was still in the weapon. He wouldn't have had an issue had he chosen just to holster rather than point it at himself and squeeze the trigger. As is the case in many accidents there were several things that went wrong and several times that disaster could've been avoided.

**Video number two** - female officer fires into the ground in front of her partner and a suspect on the ground.

Big take away from this one- **When you are done firing and you are pulling your weapon away from the target your finger needs to be straight and off the trigger.** If you can imagine shooting a pistol, when your elbow bends and you're bringing the gun back your finger needs to be straight and off the trigger. Conversely, as you bring the weapon out toward your target so that you can see the target through your sights your finger can move towards the trigger. **If it any time you are no longer looking at your sights your finger needs to be straight off the trigger.**

Secondary take away, I am going to embellish a little bit here as I don't know any of the individuals on the video or any of the background information associated with this situation. Obviously, this is an exciting moment as the officer has needed to pull her gun out. This was probably some sort of felony arrest proceeded potentially by some car chase. Who knows there may have even been some shots fired prior to this moment? I'm not sure how long ago the officer who fired into the ground had her training, it is hard to tell from the video but it looks like she may be a little bit older. With that entire scenario in mind, let's imagine you are properly prepared and trained when you graduate this course and years go by before you need your shooting skills, will you be ready? **If you are going to carry a weapon you need to be prepared to use it, that includes all aspects especially safety.**

**Video number three** - gentleman walking with a pistol in his hand he trips and falls, as he is falling he fires the gun once and when he hits the ground he fires again.

Big take away from this video is to **keep your finger straight and off the trigger until your sights are lined up on the target.**

Secondary take away, when you fall down, and you will, natural reaction is to complete your grip or try to grab onto something nearby. If your finger is already on the trigger and there's no secondary safety on your weapon (like the weapon this gentleman was carrying) the weapon is going to go off when you fall. Remember, finger straight and off the trigger until your sights are in line with the target.

**Video number four** - silent video of a US Marshall retrieving his gun in a courthouse / jail.

Obvious take away, something got in his trigger, it may have been his finger, whatever happened it occurred as he was holstering and the weapon discharged hitting him in the leg and hitting the officer behind him.

Secondary take away, unfortunately many modern pistols do not have any other safety than one located on the trigger itself and holsters carry the weapon so that it is pointed at the wearer. Watching the video it appears that the US Marshall does not visually clear his holster prior to trying to insert his pistol. Holsters are designed for the pistols to come out quickly and easily not necessarily to be put away quickly and easily, this becomes more of a problem as you start to add kit to your body and accessories to your pistol. The proper technique is to take a quick flash snapshot of the holster and to be paying attention to what you're doing whenever there is a possibility that you are flagging yourself, which happens when you're going to holster your pistol.

**Video number five** - gentleman is hunting and his barrel explodes.

If you watch closely during the slow motion portion of the video you will notice something flying off to the right that had been in the barrel. It may have been an old bore brush or maybe he had fallen and a large amount of mud had gone up his barrel? If you ever think that your barrel may be obstructed take the time to check.

**Last video** - gentleman shooting high caliber rifle at a distant target. He shoots and appears to hit what he is aiming at. Then suddenly something, potentially a part of the target, the bullet or maybe even a rock, comes flying back at a high rate of speed and hits the ground right before striking him on his ear protection.

Big take away - **know what your target is, what is behind it and what the possibilities are for a shoot through or ricochet.** This is not normally a problem on a military range here in the US but may become an issue on an ad hoc range set up somewhere else. **When shooting stay switched on!**

In this first dry fire I would also cover the following –

**When to manipulate the safety** - once you have identified your target and you're getting into position or bringing your weapon up to the target you may place weapon on fire.

How to manipulate the safety - Demonstrate how to manipulate it for both right-handed shooters and left-handed shooters this would not include putting a finger on the trigger just the safety.

It would also be an appropriate time to discuss when exactly you are allowed to put your finger on the trigger. Generally speaking you place your weapon on fire once you have identified your threat and are bringing the rifle towards it and **you may place your finger on the trigger once you can see your target through your sights**. When you are looking away and cannot see the target through your sights your finger must be straight and off the trigger. When you move your rifle so that there is no target visible any longer through your sights your finger must be straight and off the trigger. When you're done with the engagement and are bringing the rifle back to the carrying configuration you need to place the weapon unsafe.