
3-Gun practical shooting is a sport in which competitors are required to combine accuracy, speed, and power to successfully complete may different types of shooting "problems". 3-Gun competitors solve these problems with three different types of weapons. Competitors use semi automatic rifles, shotguns (typically 12 ga. or 20 ga.), and semi-automatic center fire handguns in larger calibers (9mm and up), and shoot full power loads. The handguns are carried in belt holsters, and accompanied by spare magazines or speed loaders in pouches also attached to the belt.

Unlike bullseye, skeet, or hunter's pistol, 3-Gun practical shooting matches are different every time, requiring competitors to be diverse in their training. On any given stage, a shooter may be required to shoot targets at distances varying from 2 yards to 100 yards, or further. Sometimes the targets are paper, sometimes they are steel. Shotgun targets are engaged with small shot loads. Often "no-shoot" targets which incur a penalty when hit, are placed near normal "shoot" targets. Realistic props are used to simulate a scenario that the shooter must complete.

Practical shooting competition is what you want to make of it. Some competitors emphasize the *practical* aspect, using their normal "carry" gun to develop their self-defense skills and test their equipment in realistic situations. Other competitors emphasize the *game* element of the competition, using more specialized equipment (but not "competition only" equipment) which improves their ability to generate high scores and low times. Each competitor must decide how they want to approach the match.

Competitors also approach their matches with different attitudes. For some, the match is part monthly practice, part social occasion. They enjoy the challenge, the fun and social aspects of the sport, and don't take things too seriously. At the other end are the athletes, the serious competitors.

This year GRGC has decided to adopt IDPA rules for 3-Gun competition. This means, there will have to be some modifications to IDPA rules. Specifically, no concealment garments will be required, knee pads will be allowed and firearm divisions as described below. Most of the other IDPA rules will be followed, including IDPA reloads, use of cover, tactics, targets and scoring. The IDPA rule book can be found on the web at <http://www.idpa.com>.

The following are the firearms used in 3-Gun competition and normally seen at 3-Gun matches. Finally, suggestions for the minimum equipment that a new competitor coming to his/her first 3-Gun match should bring.

All firearms used in 3-Gun matches must be safe and serviceable, as determined by the Range Officers. They are subject to inspection at any time and will be withdrawn from the match if deemed unsafe. A good basic criterion for a competition firearm is that it is accurate and reliable. Such guns are normally also safe.

For the rifle stages of a 3-Gun match, the competitor must use a center fire rifle. From a practical point of view, the rifle must be a semi-automatic weapon that uses a detachable magazine, preferably with magazines having a capacity of at least 10 rounds. We have had an occasional entrant who used a rifle that requires *stripper clips* (as do many SKS imports), but the reload times put them at a significant disadvantage. The most common rifles seen at matches include:

- AR-15 (in its many configurations, but mainly in .223)
- Ruger Mini-14 (in .223)
- M1 Carbine (in .30 carbine)
- SKS, AK-47 (in 7.62x39)
- Marlin CAMP-9 Carbine (in 9mm)
- M1A .308 Caliber

Far and away, the AR-15 is the rifle of choice at our matches. There is a split of opinion as to whether it is better to use the lightweight model, making it easier to move from shooting position to shooting position, or the heavier full-sized models, which have less recoil and reduce the target reacquisition time.

Some competitors use some sort of optical site. One problem with using too much magnification at the shorter ranges is that the field of view becomes so narrow that it is easy to lose ones place in large arrays of closely placed targets.

For the shotgun stages of a 3-Gun match, the competitor must use a common shotgun. 12 gauge and 20 gauge are the most common and 20 gauge is the smallest allowed.

Most competitors use a semi-automatic or pump action shotgun. A good shotgunner with a pump gun can shoot times that are competitive with the semi-autos, but the autoloaders definitely have

an edge, especially for someone who doesn't have a lot of pump gun experience.

Magazine capacity can be a significant factor on some field courses. The more rounds you can have in your gun initially, the fewer rounds you have to load along the way. Remember when magazine capacity is specified for a shotgun, the number includes the round in the chamber. Therefore, a "seven-round" magazine extension means the magazine holds six rounds with one in the chamber for seven. Magazine extensions are relatively inexpensive add-ons for most common shotguns.

The most common shotguns seen at 3-Gun matches are relatively inexpensive autoloaders such as the Remington 1100 and pump gun such as Remington 870's or Mossberg's. These usually have magazine extensions.

Although optic sights are catching on at the national level of competition, competitors at our matches generally use the standard sights.

A few competitors are also adding compensators to their shotguns.

Most targets for shotgun stages are steel: Pepper Poppers, US Popper, and various size round or square plates. These targets are always engaged with lead shot. Most competitors use #7 1/2 or #8 birdshot, with a few going as large as #4.

Pistol

For the pistol stages of a 3-Gun match, the competitor must use a center fire pistol that is at least 9mm (semi-auto) in caliber. The higher capacity and ability to support much faster reloads makes semi-automatic pistols the preference of most competitors. The most popular pistols used at the 3-Gun matches include the venerable Government model (made by Colt, Springfield, Armory, and others) in .45 ACP, "wide body" versions of the Government Model in .38 Super and 9x21/23/25 (made by Para-Ordinance, STI, and others), Glock (in .45 and .40), and a variety of 9mm manufacturers (including Glock, Beretta, Smith & Wesson, Ruger, etc.).

Open/Limited/Tactical/Heavy Metal Divisions

Each competitor must declare his/her division at the time of event registration, prior to beginning competition. A competitor may legitimately compete in the LIMITED division only if all three of his/her weapons (rifle, shotgun, and pistol) qualify as LIMITED division according to the constraints below. A competitor with LIMITED division weapons may choose to compete in the OPEN division. Failure of a competitor to properly register in the LIMITED division will result in the competitor being considered in the OPEN division for that match.

GENERAL DEFINITION, LIMITED GUNS: Any firearm commercially produced in quantities for sale to the general public. Prototype firearms are specifically not allowed.

- No changes in caliber from the factory standard are permitted
- Firearms with custom or factory installed electrical sights, optical sights, porting of barrels, or compensators are specifically not allowed
- Internal modifications to improve accuracy, reliability and function are allowed. For example, replacement barrels, spherical bushings are specifically allowed
- Specifically allowed are changes of stocks on long guns, including the addition of pistol grip or folding stocks

LIMITED RIFLES: The following modifications are specifically prohibited in the LIMITED division:

- The addition of any electrical sight or optical sight, whether magnified or not
- The use of any aftermarket compensator device, including porting the barrel. However, factory installed flash suppressors are specifically permitted
- The use of any magazine holding devices that attach spare magazines to the rifle or join two magazines together
- The use of any bipods

LIMITED SHOTGUNS: The following modifications are specifically prohibited in the LIMITED division:

- The addition of any electrical sight or optical sight, whether magnified or not
- The use of any aftermarket compensator device, including porting the barrel
- The addition of any magazine tube extensions greater than (10) rounds (standard 2/3/4 inch), regardless of the manufacturer's

standard capacities.

- "Speed loader" type devices, such as the TECLOADER, which allow the insertion of multiple rounds into the magazine in a single motion.

LIMITED HANDGUNS:

Authorized Modifications:

- Internal modifications to improve accuracy, reliability and function (such as spherical bushings, Acc-U-Rails).
- Replacement barrels – provided they are the same length as original factory standard.
- Exchange of minor components (springs, safeties, slide stops, guide rods).

Prohibited Modifications:

- External modifications or features such as weights or devices to control or reduce recoil (such as but not limited to thumb rests or components which could be used as such).

Tactical, Open and Heavy Metal divisions are described in the chart below. Also see "GRGC3GunDivision.xls" document on this website.

	Limited	Tactical	Open	Heavy Metal
Optics	None	Rifle Only	On All Guns	None

Max Pistol Mag Capacity	None	None	None	8+1
Max Pistol Mag Length	6.742" S.S./5.561" D.S.	6.742" S.S./5.561" D.S.	6.742"	
Minimum Pistol Caliber	.38/9mm	.38/9mm	.38/9mm	.45 ACP
Minor Pistol Power Factor Min.	125 (9 mm)	125 (9 mm)	125 (9 mm)	Not Applicable
Major Pistol Power Factor Min.	165 (.40 S&W /.45 ACP)	165 (.40 S&W /.45 ACP)	165 (.40 S&W /.45 ACP)	Not Applicable
Max Shotgun Capacity	8+1	8+1	10+1	8+1
Minimum Shotgun Gauge	20	20	20	12 (Pump Only)
Max Rifle Capacity	20	20	20	20
Minimum Rifle Caliber	none	none	none	.308 Win.
Minor Rifle Power Factor Min.	150 (.223/.30 Car/7.62X39)	150 (.223/.30 Car/7.62X39)	150 (.223/.30 Car/7.62X39)	Not Applicable
Major Rifle Power Factor Min.	320 (.308 Win./30-06)	320 (.308 Win./30-06)	320 (.308 Win./30-06)	Not Applicable
	S.S.=Single Stack	D.S. = Double Stack		

Your First Match Needs

When you come out to your first match, you will need to bring along a minimum contingent of equipment. Don't go overboard initially. Your first match equipment should include:

Rifle:

- If you have a rifle that qualifies for competition, bring it. If not, bring enough .223 ammunition and you may be able to borrow one.
- A rifle case (soft or hard). When you first arrive at our range, your rifle must be encased!
- At least 2 20 or 30-round magazines or the equivalent in lower capacity magazines. Our rifle stages can require as many as 60 rounds. If you need to take any extra shots, you're into a third magazine. You probably want to carry at least one spare in case you have a problem during the run -- it's easier to just drop the magazine and stick in a new one.
- Some way to carry around your extra magazines. Various types of

inexpensive magazine pouches are available from a number of sources, although you may be able to just stick it in your belt or pocket for your first match, but you may have to go prone and get up again.

- At least 100 rounds of ammunition. If you need extra shots, better have enough ammunition. If you have a "range malfunction" during your run and need to "reshoot", you'd better have enough ammunition to reshoot the entire course. There's no point in cutting too close on the amount of ammunition you bring, you can always use the excess at the next match.

Shotgun

- If you have a shotgun that qualifies for competition, bring it. If not, bring enough 12 gauge ammunition and you may be able to borrow one.
- At least 50 rounds of lead shot, size #4 or smaller (*i.e.*, #6, #7 1/2, #8, etc.). Some slugs may be required, so bring about 10. Some way to carry extra rounds during the running of the course. This could include holders that attach to your belt; a pouch (like a "fanny pack") that goes around your waist; special shotgun ammunition belts with elastic loops to hold individual rounds, which goes around your waist or is worn as a bandoleer over one shoulder, etc. If you don't have one, you can surely borrow something from someone on your squad.

Pistol

- Your handgun: A semi-automatic pistol in at least 9mm (no .380 or smaller)
- A holster that attaches to your belt, completely covers the trigger area of your handgun, and keeps the muzzle of the holstered handgun pointed downward in to a "zone" that is within 1 meter of the wearer. Inexpensive nylon holsters (such as those made by "Uncle Mike") are fine, but if it has a snap closure, you must snap it closed to start your run.
- At least three magazines.
- Pouches or other way to hold your spare magazines at your belt. Again, inexpensive nylon holders are available at most gun shops and even some discount stores.
- At least 100 rounds of ammunition. If you need extra shots, better have enough ammunition. If you have a "range malfunction" during your run and need to "reshoot", you'd better have enough

ammunition to reshoot the entire course. There's no point in cutting too close on the amount of ammunition you bring, you can always use the excess at the next match.

Other:

- Eye and ear protection. To shoot a 3-Gun match you must wear safety or shooting glasses and some type of ear protection (plugs or muffs). Your regular sunglasses will not qualify as safety glasses, except for certain models of *Gargoyles*, *Bolle*, etc. that are designed as sports safety glasses as well.
- Clothing that is suitable for the season and provides adequate freedom of movement without being too loose, causing catches on props. GRGC discourages the wearing of camouflage clothing that suggests a gun store commando attitude. If the weather forecast includes moisture, you might want to bring some foul-weather gear (rain suit, poncho, etc.).
- Knee and/or elbow pads, especially if you are sensitive in those areas. If some padding will prevent injury when you get too enthusiastic, consider bringing some.
- Water and food. Especially during the summer, dehydration is a constant problem. A light snack can help keep your energy up.

This may be a long list, but it is pretty much driven by common sense. Come on out and have a good time.