

Being A Gun Professional

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What's it take to be considered a gun professional? Should that term be reserved for law enforcement or military members only? Maybe only top end competitors? How about being a full-time firearm instructor with pages of credentials? Can a gun professional be only someone of some elite status? Certainly those suggestions might give the appearance of being a gun professional. But, I humbly submit for your consideration that a person can be defined as a gun professional by the following 5 tests. And, no matter how professional a person claims to be, if they fail one or more of these test, a professional they certainly are not.

1) The Professional follows all gun safety rules, always and forever.

In some case law the gun is declared an inherently dangerous object. This places it in a unique category of items because their very use (shooting them) imparts a serious risk of harm or death. Extra care is required in the handling and shooting of firearms. For practice we have specifically and carefully constructed ranges. We have rules that demand that we be certain of our target, and what is beyond it. The first of Coopers Rules demands that we treat the firearm as if it were loaded, even when it is not. A firearm can kill and we must always remind ourselves of that. It is why we never point the gun at things we are unwilling to destroy (innocent people being foremost on the list) and we don't place our finger on the trigger until we intend to fire it. The professional is intentional about every handling of the gun. This brings us to the second rule of being a gun professional.



Photo: Wikipedia

2) The Professional is never cavalier about un-holstering.



Photo: unknown

Properly holstered, the firearm cannot be discharged. Removing the firearm from the holster makes it "fireable" and therefore un-holstering should always be an intentional act. The reason or purpose for un-holstering should always be reasonable and the professional considers how they will un-holstering and conduct all subsequent handling before "skinnin' that hog leg". A professional gun handler never finds themselves with an un-holstered gun in hand and then tries to figure out what is the safest way to do whatever they were trying to do. Examples of cavalier gun handling includes things like, "Hey check out my new gat/holster/ammo." Or, "I am the only one professional enough in this room (that I know of) to carry this Glock 40." Please know that the constant carrying of a gun can quickly lead to a very cavalier attitude towards the firearm with the resulting unintentional discharges. Professionals can discuss a particular model of gun, holster, carry ammo, or anything gun related without yanking the gun. Speaking of holsters.

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3) The Professional uses quality equipment.

A professional does not carry a gun of dubious reputation or in an inferior holster. A high end holster is essential. Professionals do not carry in low cost, poorly designed holsters. Tom Givens of Rangemaster will not let you participate in classes with a cheap, floppy, nylon holster. I will tell you that the holster is the most under rated piece of safety equipment and that you should be spending around \$50 or more on your holster alone. I'll also tell you not to string a cheap, flimsy, light-weight belt through that holster. Some instructors will not let you attend instruction with a Serpa holster (rightly or wrongly). Of course, the Professional invests in a firearm of sufficient quality and then confirms that quality with much practice.



Photo: We The People Holsters

4) The Professional improves.

A professional constantly seeks improvement and is not satisfied with attending a single Conceal Carry class. The professional practices regularly; weekly if not more so. Are you aware that the FBI interviewed criminal who had attacked cops and found that they practiced, on average, 23 times each year? That's almost twice a month. If you are not practicing at least that much how could you ever consider yourself a gun professional? The professional is above average in skill amongst the gun carrying community, not the general population. It's entirely too easy to be better than the average American. The average American sucks at gun handling and shooting.



Photo: Women's Outdoor News

The consensus amongst quality trainers is that you should be able to draw and place an accurate shot in under 2 seconds, and the closer you get to one second the better. Most persons who carry will be at three to four seconds when tested cold and rarely approach the sub two second standard when warmed to the draw. We've all watched in horror as the West Freeway Church of Christ safety team member fumbled his draw for four seconds before being shot. Four seconds and he hadn't even managed to bring the gun to bear. I can't believe if the man knew his draw was that slow he would not have been carrying under a suit jacket and an untucked shirt. He didn't know his ability.

5) The Professional knows their ability, intimately.

A professional is not afraid to know their real skill level by competing in shooting competition, under a timer, and in front of witnesses to hold them accountable. Many a cop and military member got a rude awakenings attending a shooting competition and found that virtually everyone there was far better (faster and more accurate with less fundamental errors). Many took the lesson to heart and sought to improve. Sadly, the unprofessional ones offered excuses and never returned less the truth be reinforced. A professional knows how fast their draw is. They know their ability to make a shot at various distances. The amateur cannot tell you how long their splits are (the time required for them to

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recover from recoil, reacquire a sight picture, and reset the trigger and properly press it a second time). This knowledge comes from practice and competition with a timer.



In summation, you could say that the professional is never lazy in their thinking or doing as it relates to guns. If you are careless and inattentive when you un-holster your gun, sweep others while touching the trigger, carry in a cheap holster on a flimsy belt, never practice, never improve, have no idea how poor of a shooter you are, and are relying on a single training class years ago then you are the very definition of a gun amateur. If that observation convicted you, then buy a better holster and belt, practice, get some additional training, compete, and start following the fundamental rules of firearm safety. If you passed the above five tests, welcome to the ranks of the gun professional.