

Massad Ayoob Group Safety Rules: Dry Fire

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Like virtually every training school, MAG recommends dry-fire practice to maintain manipulation skills. However, we have seen over the years that many unintended discharges occur in dry-fire, perhaps because “the empty gun” lulls the practitioner into complacency.

1. Follow the MAG live fire safety rules. These include, but are not limited to: treat every weapon as if it is loaded; never point it at anything you are not prepared to see destroyed; do not place your finger in the trigger guard until you are in the very act of intentionally pulling that trigger; and always be certain of your target and what is behind it.
2. Always check by sight and feel to confirm that the gun is in fact unloaded. **THERE SHOULD BE NO LIVE AMMUNITION IN THE SAME ROOM WHERE YOU ARE PRACTICING DRY-FIRING.**
3. Always aim the gun at something that can safely absorb the most powerful round that particular gun can fire...because one day, it may indeed fire that round unexpectedly. Thickly packed bookshelves with no airspace, or cartons packed with books or magazines, serve nicely as dry fire backstops; so does body armor and the dedicated Safe Direction™ dry-fire backstop.
4. Never practice trigger-pulling and reloading in the same session. It is a good idea not to even practice them on the same day.
5. When practicing reloading, disable the gun. A field-stripped auto pistol with only frame, slide stop, and magazine(s) suffices for practice, and guarantees no shot can be fired. With a revolver, wrap a handkerchief or rag through the topstrap of the frame so the cylinder cannot be closed into firing battery. Opening and closing the cylinder is easy: getting the cartridges into the chambers is the hard part you want to work on.
6. When using dummy ammunition, take great pains to be sure that live ammo has not migrated into the “dummy cartridge” supply, and vice versa.
7. After a dry-fire session, do not reload and holster for “street carry.” Give mind and body time to absorb the fact that “draw gun, pull trigger” practice is **OVER.**