

Here is another great breakdown on how IDPA works:

Stages are generally short and targets are close (compared to IPSC). The ideals are to set up stages that represent scenarios that could actually happen, although, many times it's a matter of opinion as to whether that actually happens. The majority of the stages should be shot from concealment.

Also, in accordance with those ideals, you may only shoot a standard carry type of gun. Limited modifications are allowed, with no competition only modifications or add-ons. Ammo must meet certain criteria also. Guns are divided into five basic groups, and pistols may be in calibers of 9mm/.38 super or larger (generally up to .45 ACP):

STOCK SERVICE PISTOL (SSP)

Basic service pistols, such as Sig, Glock, Ruger, Beretta, etc. in any caliber of at least 9mm. This would generally include most double action or double action only pistols. The maximum number of rounds allowed is 11 to start and 10 in subsequent magazines.

ENHANCED SERVICE PISTOL (ESP)

Single action models, such as Browning High Power, SV, STI, Springfield, Colt, Kimber, etc. in calibers of 9mm/.38 Super or larger. Glocks of any caliber may be shot in this division also. Also, generally, any SSP pistol may be shot in this division if it meets the caliber requirement, but it may be a disadvantage to shoot a double action or double action only in this division as you shoot against mostly single action guns. The maximum number of rounds allowed is 11 to start and 10 in subsequent magazines.

CUSTOM DEFENSIVE PISTOL (CDP)

Single action models, such as Springfield, Colt, Kimber, etc. in .45 caliber only. Any gun that meets SSP criteria may be shot in this division also, if it .45 caliber. The maximum number of rounds allowed is 9 to start and 8 in subsequent magazines.

STOCK SERVICE REVOLVER (SSR)

This is simply, revolvers of any caliber. Revolvers may be 5 or 6 shots only, and reloads may be performed using loose rounds or speedloaders.

ENHANCED SERVICE REVOLVER (ESR)

This is revolvers that hold more than 6 rounds, and shooters can use moon clips.

BACK UP GUN (BUG)

Back up guns can be single or double action, either pistol or revolver, and be of .32 auto, .380 ACP, 9x19mm, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, .40 S&W, 10mm, .45 ACP and meet the following criteria:

Pistols must have a barrel length of 3.8" or less (factory installed cone style barrels with or without a barrel bushing are permitted), revolvers a barrel length of 3" or less. Maximum (total) number of rounds that may be loaded into the handgun is five (5).

SKILL LEVEL

IDPA shooter skill classes, from lowest to highest, are: Novice, Marksman, Sharpshooter, Expert, Master.

Skill level is determined by shooting a 90 round classifier match. You can move up in rank voluntarily, by winning matches, or by reshooting the classifier.

BASIC RULES

There are basic rules that cover what you can and cannot do, some of which are:

STAGE DESIGN

Stages should resemble a scenario that might actually happen. The maximum number of shots that may be required on any one string of fire is 18.

USE OF COVER

You may not expose too much of yourself to one target and you may not expose yourself to more than one target at the same time.

TARGET ORDER

You must shoot targets in the order they are the greatest threat. For purposes of IDPA competition, threat is determined using one of the following methods:

A. If the shooter is not behind cover, threat level is close to far, in relation to the shooter. In other words, a target 5 yards away is a greater threat than 7 yards away.

B. If behind cover, threat level is the order targets can be seen as the shooter leans out from behind cover.

TARGET SEQUENCE

If multiple targets are of equal threat level, they are sometimes engaged in tactical sequence, which means, one shot each, before any target gets a second shot, however, tactical sequence is not required, unless the specific stage description calls for it.

SHOOTING ON THE MOVE

Usually, if you are not behind cover, you engage targets while moving to cover. In IDPA, while moving means you must actually be in motion while firing the shots.

RELOADS

You may not drop a loaded magazine. When performing a reload, you must retain the partially loaded magazine in a vest or pant pocket or waistband. The only time you may drop a magazine is in the event of a slide-lock reload or a malfunction. You may also only carry a limited number of spare reloads.

AIRGUNING

In IDPA, you are not allowed to "airgun" stages, which means pantomiming the actions of shooting to practice the stage before you shoot it.