

Learn about Points Down
Full Circle Shot
FTN, DNF, etc.

LEARNING SCORING FOR DUMMIES[®]

*A Reference
for the
Rest of Us!*

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Dummy-in-Chief



Did you know you get
200 points down for
hitting a Non-Threat
in PAR time?



Edited by Roger Zimmerman

IDPA Scoring for Dummies

Who has not seen this picture? A guy with a clipboard surrounded by at least three other shooters looking at bullet holes in a target and trying to decipher the score? Welcome to IDPA Scoring, perhaps the single most confusing part of our wonderful sport. What I am trying to do here is to come up with a simpler guide to scoring and hopefully clarify the issue for everybody.

So, let's start with the basic and most important rule:



This is the most important rule in IDPA Scoring. We are an inclusive sport and thrive on people learning and enjoying themselves and the surest way to create trouble among the ranks is to be a petty inflexible dictator when it comes to scoring.

The Math

A shooter's score can be defined by the following formula:

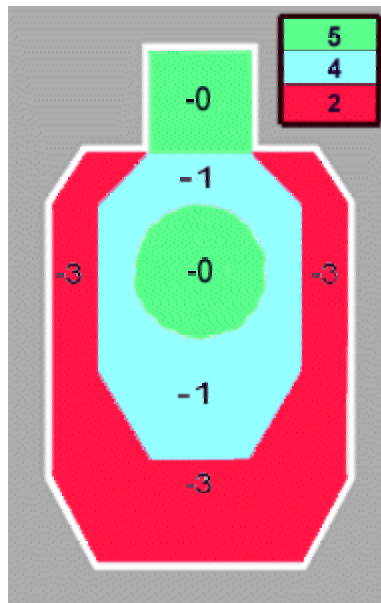
$$\text{Time} + \text{Points Down} + \text{Penalties} = \text{Score (in seconds)}$$

That pesky person running behind you with a shooting chronometer, the Safety Officer, gives time. Points Down is the possible penalties you may incur for not placing your shots properly in the target and Penalties are additional goodies for not following IDPA rules. At the end, whoever has the smallest score (less time) wins.

Scoring Zones.

According to the manual, an IDPA target has a 5, 4, and 2 zones. It also has a -0, -1 and a -3 zone. And let us not forget the 'A' zone. And you are going “Yeah yeah, I only see a -0, a -1 and a -3 and I do not see the other numbers or the letters.” Well, here comes the explanation.

Although it does not say in the IDPA rulebook, I got it from a good source that the A zone is the one depicted in green on the illustration below and that we know as -0 and (5 points). The B zone is the Blue zone known as -1 (4 points) and the C zone is the Red Zone or a.k.a.-3 (2 points.) See? It got complicated again so just look at the illustrations.



| | | |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|
| -0 | A zone | 5 points |
| -1 | B zone | 4 points |
| -3 | C zone | 2 points |

Let's just stick with the -0, -1, -3 for now and make it easier on the brain. We will see this applied later in Failure to Neutralize and the A zone is mentioned in the Rule Book regarding cover so check it out.

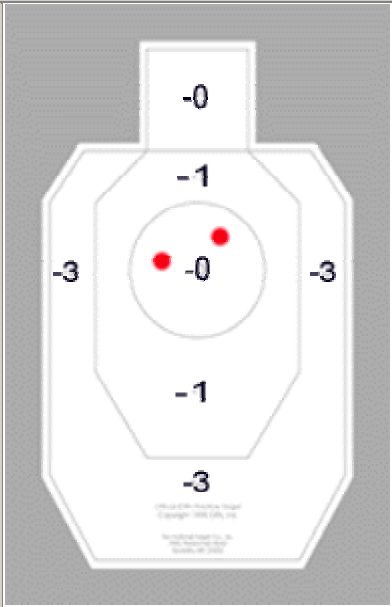
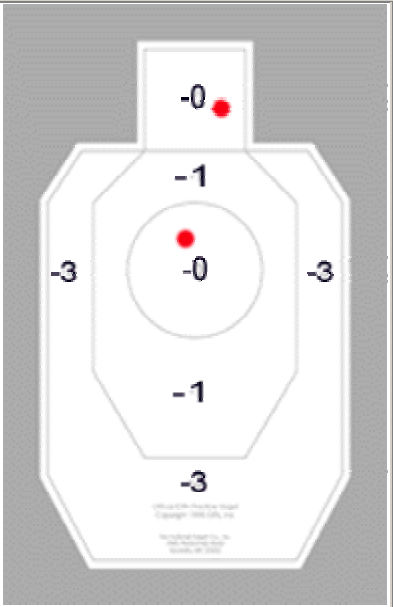
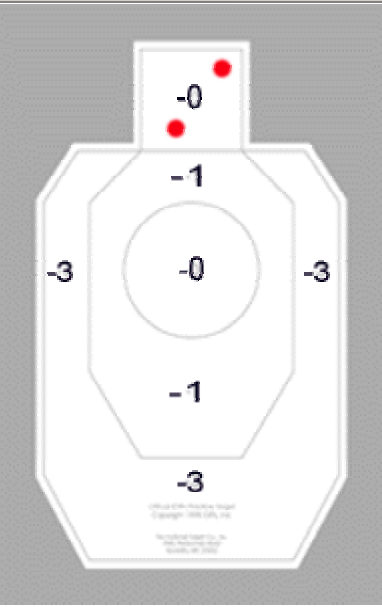
Points Down.

In IDPA, time is the final yardstick used to measure the shooter. But IDPA also cares about shot placement so it is also important where the shots end up. Therefore not placing the shots where they can do the most will get you Points Down or a Penalty.

So, to keep it simple, we will say that the IDPA target has three (3) defined scoring zones: **-0**, **-1** and **-3** and the idea is to put all the holes in the **-0** zone. Although it would make the job of the scorers much easier if this happened all the time, it does not. So we gotta score and that is done simply by adding the numbers where the bullet holes are located. Then we take the result of that addition (Points Down) and multiply it by **0.5** (or just simply divide the result by half) and we get the time to be added to our COF time and that will be our score.

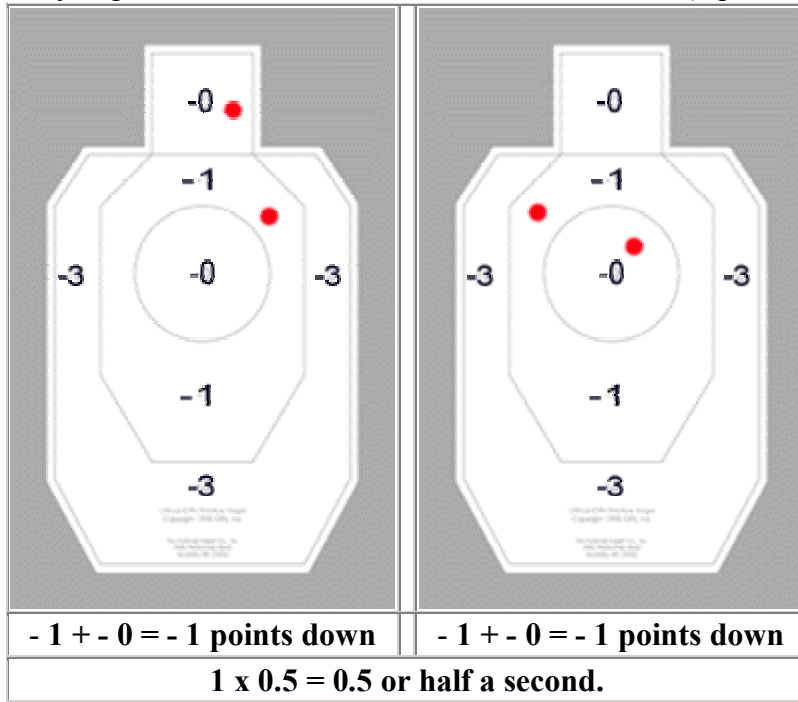
| |
|--|
| -0 equals 0 points down equals 0 seconds added to your time |
| -1 equals 1 point down equals 0.5 seconds added to your time |
| -3 equals 3 points down equals 1.5 seconds added to your time |

Let's say we shot our target and the COF says we needed a minimum of 2 shots per target. In order to get a total of **-0**, you must have the 2 holes in one of the following three versions:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
|  |  |  |
| 2 shots center mass (-0) = 0 points down | One shot center mass (-0), one shot head (-0) = 0 points down | 2 shots head (-0) = 0 points down |
| -0 + -0 = 0 points down - 0 x 0.5 = 0 seconds to be added to your time | | |

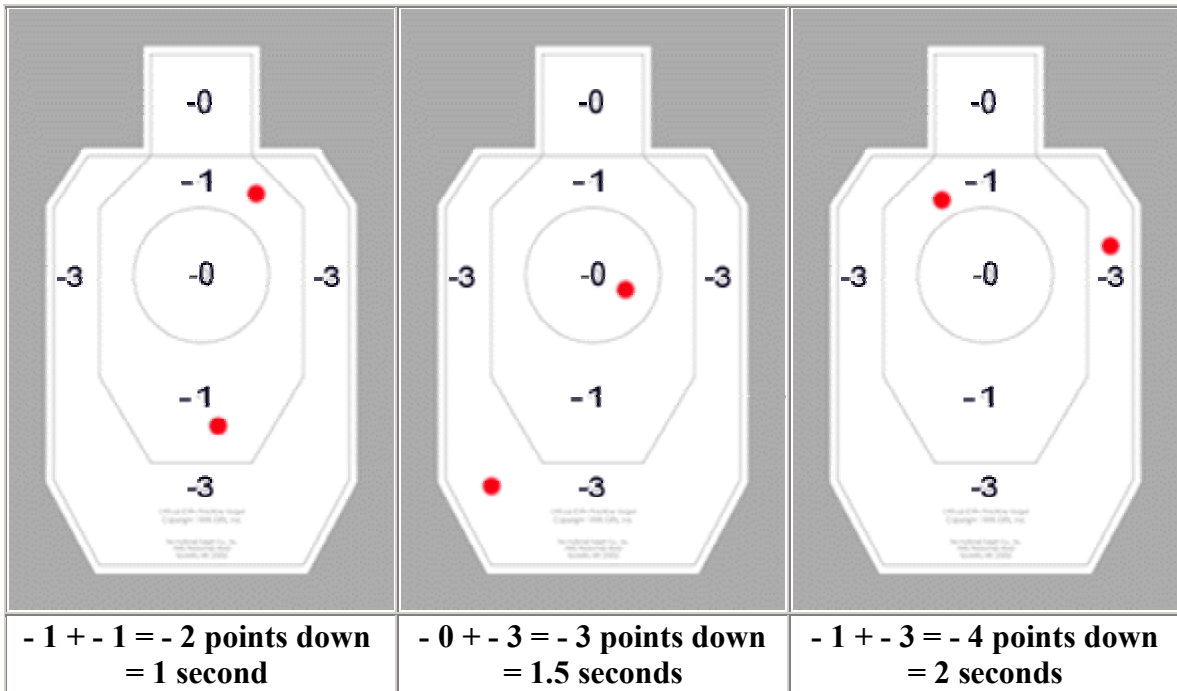
So, your score would be your time plus 0 seconds added.

Now here you put one shot in the -0 and one in the -1 zone (2 possibilities):



So, your final score would be your time plus half a second

And we keep going with the possibilities:



And we should add to our time 1 second for the first target, second and a half for the second and two for the third and so on.

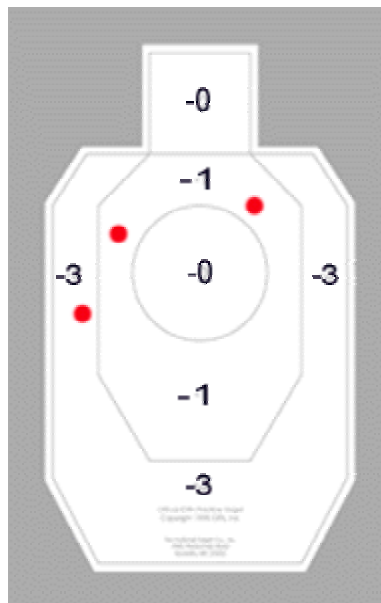
Of course, we do not start doing the math right there during the match, so, **we just write the time, points down and penalties** in the score sheet and leave the heavy work for the Scorer-In-Chief and his advanced software.

Vickers Count

The IDPA Rule Book defines Vickers Count the following way:

*"Vickers Count simply take the time it took to complete the string of fire (raw time) and **ADD** five tenths (.50) of a second for each point down from the possible score. Add any applicable penalties and total to get the Final Score. As many shots as desired may be fired but only the best hits as specified by the course description will be scored"*

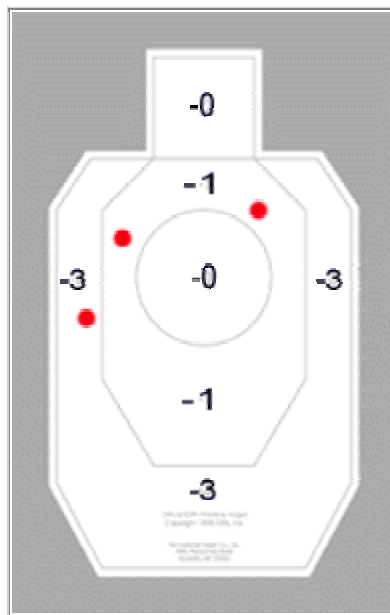
Nice, huh? Ok, Vickers Count is simply shoot till you are happy, but only the best 2 shots (or whatever number of shots the COF calls for) count for the score. That's it! Check the example below.



Still with our COF of 2 shots minimum in Vickers Count, we see that the shooter got three shots in the target. Since we **always score in favor of the shooter**, we ignore the lowest score (-3) and score the 2 best shots $(-1 + -1) = -2$ or 2 points down (1 second).

WARNING! You may feel the urge to empty the gun in order to get the best score possible. But you must remember that: 1) The clock is running and you may lose whatever advantage you are trying to achieve by taking too much time getting no points down. 2) You may run out of ammo and most COF's have more than one target and you are going to be in serious trouble when you start accumulating FTN's and 3) Whoever is pasting the targets will offer you an assortment of 4-letter words for the extra holes.

Limited Vickers Count



Things change in Limited Vickers Count. In Limited Vickers you are to shoot only the number of shots as specified in the COF description. If the COF said 2 shots only, the scoring for the same target changes dramatically: you lose your best shot and you get a Procedural for your extra trigger pull. So, instead of going $(-1 + -1) = -2$ or **2 points down (1 second)** you end up with $(-1 + -3) = -4$ or **4 points down (2 seconds)** PLUS 3 seconds courtesy of the Procedural for a grand total of 5 seconds added to your score. Now that has got to hurt.

$$(-1 + -3) = -4 \text{ (4 points down = 2 seconds)} + 3 \text{ seconds Procedural} = 5 \text{ seconds}$$

PAR Time

In PAR time you get squeezed for both time and number of shots. You must shoot a specified amount of shots in the time given by the COF, (At the signal, draw and shoot 3 rounds in 2 seconds.) Your score will be the time (2 seconds) plus the Points Down you get plus any penalties applicable. Penalties may differ from Vickers: a Procedural in PAR gets you 5 points (2.5 seconds), a Hit on Non-Threat target gets you a single 10 pointer (5 seconds) and a Failure to Do Right nails your hide with 200 points (100 seconds).

Example: You managed to put the 3 rounds in the allotted time but you got 4 points down and a procedural:

2 seconds Par Time + [- 4] points down (2 seconds) + 5 point procedural (2.5 seconds) = 6.5 seconds

And all PAR time points will be computed to time to fit with the other stages running in Vickers or Limited Vickers. Like I said before, time is the final yardstick used to measure the shooter.

DNF - Did Not Finish

If a shooter is unable to finish a match, we still need to give him/her a score. This is done always trying to be kind to the shooter. There are 2 ways.

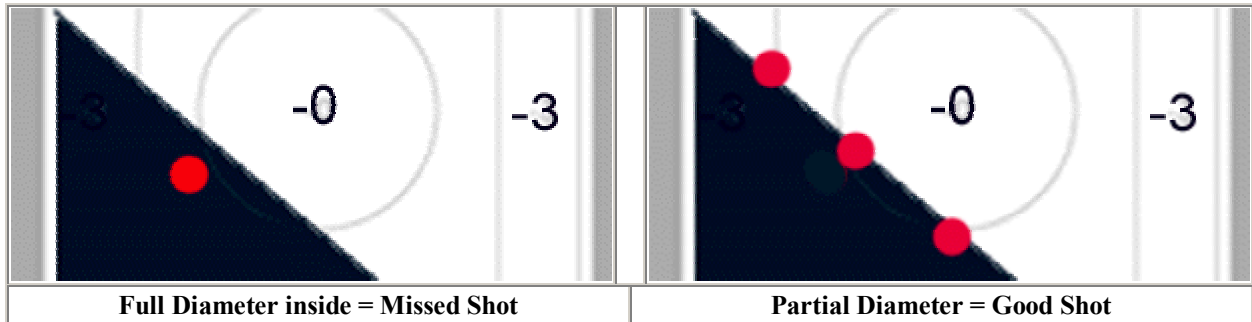
1) **Incomplete stage**, we calculate all shots NOT FIRED for Points Down (5 a piece) and a Failure to Neutralize. IE: The stage has 5 targets (T1 to T5) and requires 2 shots per target. The shooter has shot 3 targets when the gun ceases to work and cannot be fixed. And let's say that the 3 targets shot normally had one point down per target, the remaining 2 will be scored like this:

(T1, T2, T3, 1 point down each = **1.5 seconds**.
(T4, 2 shots missing x 5 seconds per shot = 10) + 5 seconds down for FTN = **15 seconds**.
(T5, 2 shots missing x 5 seconds per shot = 10) + 5 seconds down for FTN = **15 seconds**.
Total = **31.5 seconds**.

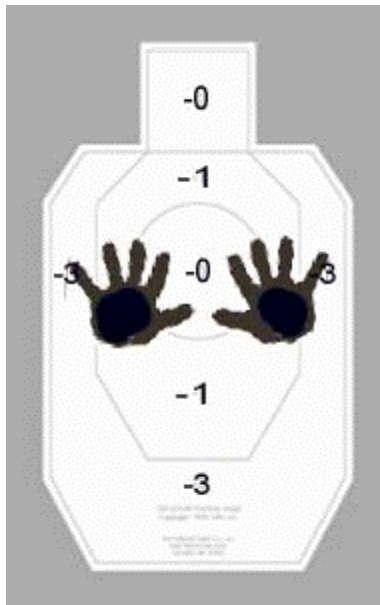
2) On **Stages not done**, the score is the minimum number of shots required for the stage multiplied by three seconds (3). IE: The stage had a total of 10 shots minimum (5 targets, 2 shots per target) so the DNF score would be $10 \times 3 = 30$ seconds.

Scoring Hardcover

Scoring Hardcover is simple. Anything but a full diameter hole inside the full cover is a valid shot and gets scored accordingly.

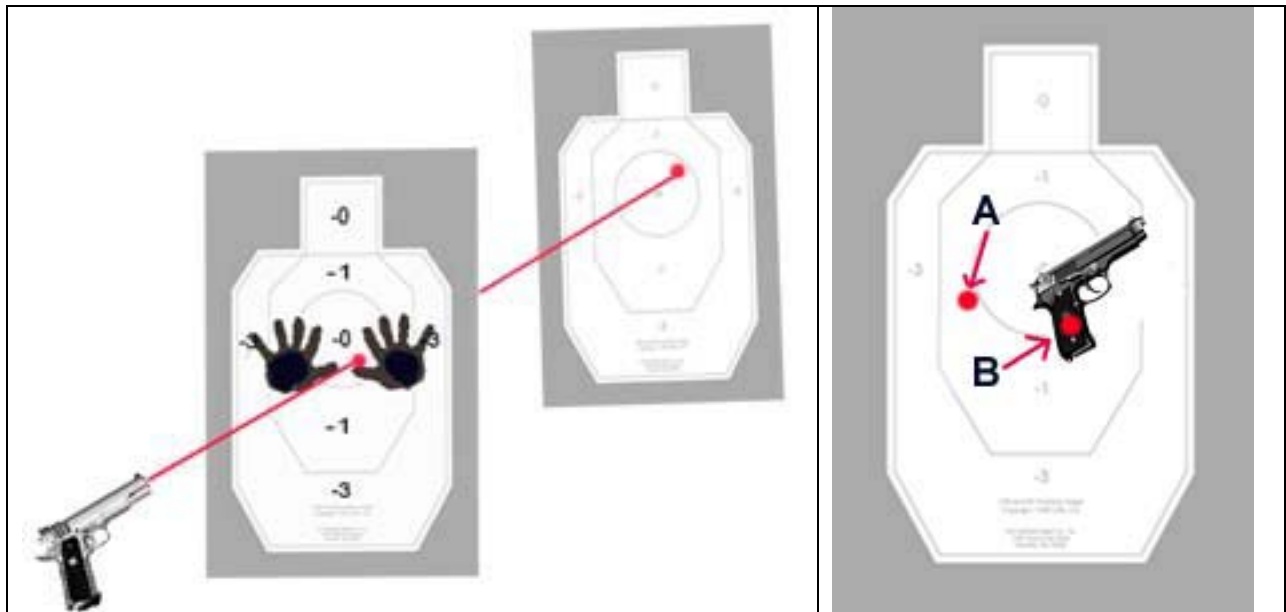


Hits on a Non-Threat-Target



Whenever you happen to see a target like this, **DO NOT SHOOT IT!** Shooting it will get you a **full 5 extra seconds** in your score. However, it does not matter how many times you shoot a Non-Threat-Target, you will only get ONE 5 second penalty.

What if the shooter hits a Target after the bullet has gone through a Non-Threat-Target? You score the hit on the Target as valid. Non-Threat-Targets are considered soft cover and, therefore penetrable.



As a matter of fact, ALL targets are penetrable unless they depict some hard cover such as a painted gun. The picture on the right shows ‘A’ as a good “scorable” shoot while ‘B’ has to be considered full hit on hardcover. The rules for scoring hardcover apply here too.

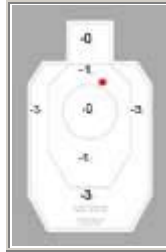
The Mother of All Penalties

I am going quote directly from the IDPA Rule Book

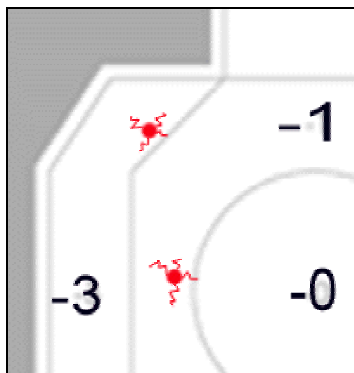
Any attempt to circumvent or compromise the spirit or rationale of any stage either by the use of inappropriate devices, equipment, or technique, will incur a twenty (20) second penalty (Vickers Count Stage) or a two hundred (200) point penalty (PAR Time Stage); this is the "FAILURE TO DO RIGHT RULE".

So, if you cheat, you will not only earn the scorn of your fellow shooters, but your score will read like the mileage of my truck.

How close is close?



Is it hitting the line? Is it a -0 or a -1? Sometimes, holes will be close enough to present a doubt. If you cannot be sure and you have to get too close to the target, then automatically score the shot in favor of the shooter.



And then again some other times, the hole is clear enough, but there are tears in paper that break the line. Again you score in favor of the shooter. In the illustration, instead of scoring a (-3 + -1) you must score a (-1 + -0). The only exception to this is radial tears in the paper exceeding two bullet diameters.

What's Next?

If this basic guide has helped you clear any basic questions you had about IDPA Scoring, your next step is to pick up the IDPA Rule Book and check on Procedurals and the other points not covered here. After that, volunteer to score at the next match and ask questions if you have any doubt. Keep you rule book handy and have fun!



Tropical Sport Shooting Association

www.tssa.net