

GUN SAFETY RULES IN TENNESSEE

TENNESSEE

Accidental Firearm Injuries and Deaths

Year	Deaths	Injuries treated in ER
2013	19	820
2014	5	850
2015	30	1,182
2016	19	1,374
2017	24	1,707

Suicides Involving Firearms

Year	Total Suicide Deaths	Suicides involving firearms	Percent of total
2013	1,017	674	66.3%
2014	945	595	63.0%
2015	1,065	636	59.7%
2016	1,110	674	60.7%
2017	1,063	711	61.1%
Total	5,300	3,290	62.1%

*Source: Tennessee Department of Health, 2019

Most firearm accidents can be prevented. As any gun expert knows, what you don't know about guns can hurt you. This pamphlet is part of a statewide effort to educate people who own, use, sell, and rent firearms about how to handle them safely.

It's also part of an effort to prevent suicides involving guns. If you notice that a family member is going through a difficult period-suffering from depression, a relationship break-up, a drug problem, etc.- make sure the person does not have access to guns.

WHERE TO GET HELP



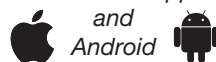
www.tspn.org

If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline will automatically connect you with a certified local crisis center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Get the TSPN App:

Available on Apple



615-297-1077 • www.tspn.org



www.tennessee.gov/behavioral-health
1-855-CRISIS-1 or 1-855-274-7471



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"Saving Lives in Tennessee"

GUN SAFETY

RESPONSIBLE FIREARM OWNERSHIP

- 1. Take action to ensure ALL of your firearms are secured at ALL times.** Hiding firearms from visitors and children is not enough to ensure that they are secure. Lock each of your guns up and be very cautious and deliberate in providing anyone access to those firearms. Keep only those guns you rely on for protection loaded and keep the rest unloaded and store the ammo in a separate (and secure) location.
- 2. Seek proper instruction.** Attend a reputable firearms safety education class or seek private instruction before attempting to use a firearm. Before handling a new gun, learn how it operates. This includes knowing its basic parts, what kind of ammunition it requires, how to open and close the action, and how to remove any ammunition if the gun is loaded. Remember, the mechanical safeties on the gun will only prevent an unintentional injury or fatality if the owner practices safe handling habits.
- 3. Invest in quality gun storage products that will meet your needs.** There are a lot of cheap options for gun storage but if they don't meet your needs as a gun owner then you probably won't use them. Take the time and resources to invest in something that you will actually use to keep your firearms secured.

- 4. Consider temporary off-site storage if a family member may be suicidal.** When an emotional crisis (like a break-up, job loss, or legal trouble) or a major change in someone's behavior (like depression, violence, or heavy substance abuse) causes concern, storing guns outside the home for a while may save a life. Friends as well as some shooting clubs, police departments, or gun shops may be willing to store them for you until the situation improves.

HANDLING AND SHOOTING A GUN

- 5. All guns are always loaded.** If you are handed a gun and told that it is unloaded, do not believe them. If you remember unloading a gun you have since put down, do not trust your memory. Always verify by inspecting the chamber for yourself as soon as you have a gun in your possession. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- 6. Never let the muzzle of the gun cover anything you are not willing to destroy.** If a gun is being handled, it is capable of firing at whatever it is pointed at. Whether you are shooting, cleaning, or merely inspecting a gun, never forget where the gun is pointing.
- 7. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.** All of the many safeties on modern firearms are designed to ensure that the gun will not fire unless the trigger is pulled. When your finger is on the trigger, any flinch, reflex or other unintended movement can result in the gun firing. Keep your index finger above the trigger guard along the frame or slide of the gun until you are on target and ready to fire.

- 8. Be sure of your target.** Know what or who your target is. Never shoot at anything without first positively identifying it. Also, know what is around your target, and especially what is behind it. Weigh the risks of a missed shot before firing, not after.
- 9. Wear eye and ear protection as appropriate.** Guns are loud and will cause permanent damage to your eardrums. They also emit debris and chemicals (such as lead) which can damage your body, particularly your eyes.
- 10. Don't use alcohol or drugs in the presence of guns.** This is non-negotiable. Handling and shooting a gun requires judgement and coordination, both of which are completely compromised when drugs or alcohol are used. Do not even keep guns in the presence of anyone who is using drugs or alcohol.

