



The Ready Position

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A ready position is a fundamental firearm handling techniques which enables shooters to maintain an active state of readiness while maintaining an appropriate level of muzzle discipline. The ready position provides a controlled method of deploying a firearm when circumstances require immediate access without maintaining a direct sight picture on a target and still maintaining safety.

There are two types of ready position and the selection of the appropriate one is largely dependent upon the specific circumstances and environmental conditions present.

The High Ready Position

Description

The high ready position is characterized by the handgun being held high and close to the upper center of the chest typically centered between the breasts and on top of the sternum.

The elbows are bent and held close to the body with the muzzle oriented typically downward (Although within certain applications the muzzle is maintained at an upward angle, i.e. searching upstairs or other inclined environment). The firearm remains close to the body, providing maximum retention and efficient transition to a firing position when required.

The shooter's head remains upright, allowing continuous observation of the operational environment while maintaining positive control of the firearm.

Operational Considerations

The high ready position is appropriate when:

- ˘ Operating within a confined environment or where there exists a potential or active threat that is unseen or is obscured by bystanders.
- ˘ Moving through areas containing obstacles or uneven terrain.
- ˘ Maintaining firearm retention while navigating within close proximity to obstructions or other personnel.
- ˘ Rapid presentation of the firearm may reasonably become necessary while maintaining observation of the surrounding environment.

The shooter must at all times ensure that the muzzle orientation does not present a safety risk to individuals or property to the best of their ability.

Low Ready Position

Description

The low ready position places the handgun below the shooter's line of sight typically at the center of the abdomen or waistline with the muzzle oriented downward at a safe angle. The firearm is not directed at a person or intended target but remains immediately available for presentation should circumstances require.

This position provides a balance between operational readiness and muzzle discipline while allowing unobstructed observation of the environment.

Operational Considerations

The low ready position is appropriate when:

- ~ When moving in a downward angle such as a staircase or hill, since the bodies center of gravity is already lowered at these times.
- ~ No potential for an immediate threat is present or has been identified and the circumstances require the firearm to remain readily accessible but not actively engaging, as an active threat has not been yet been fully identified.
- ~ The low ready position may be used during training or qualification exercises as it does provide acceptable muzzle discipline and control.

The environment must at all times be monitored to ensure that the muzzle orientation remains consistent with safe firearm handling.

Transition to the Firing Position

When transitioning from either ready position, the presentation smooth, controlled, and consistent.

The shooter must:

- ~ Always maintain a firm grip on the weapon throughout the presentation process.
- ~ The present of the firearm should move along a direct path to the line of sight with the minimal amount of “Arcing” as possible.
- ~ The acquisition of an appropriate sight picture or optic alignment is generally obtained by presenting the weapon in a “straight up / straight Out” type of movement.
- ~ As always, until the decision to engage has been made, finger discipline must be continually maintained by indexing along the frame of the weapon.
- ~ Continuous assessment of the environment must be performed before, during, and after the presentation or engagement.

Movement at any speed should never be allowed never compromise muzzle discipline or basic safe handling practices.

Comparison of Ready Positions

High Ready

Firearm held high and close to the upper chest.

Muzzle oriented downward (Typically) in a safe direction.

Provides excellent firearm retention in confined environments.

Generally suitable for all deployments except those involving inclined environments.

Facilitates rapid presentation while maintaining close firearm control.

Low Ready

Firearm typically at the center of the abdomen or waistline positioned below the line of sight.

Muzzle oriented downward typically in a safe direction.

Provides a natural observation posture in open environments.

Commonly employed during routine operational readiness and firearms training.

Facilitates efficient presentation while maintaining safe muzzle discipline.

In Conclusion

Both the high and low ready positions are essential components of professional firearm handling. Each provides a method of maintaining operational readiness while reinforcing the principles of muzzle discipline, trigger finger discipline, and situational awareness.

The shooter should be proficient in both techniques and understand the operational advantages and limitations of each. The selection of a ready position should always be based upon the specific environment where a situation has developed. Regardless of the ready position employed, firearm handling must remain deliberate, controlled, and consistent with the fundamental principles of safe firearms operation.

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We encourage you to continue exploring the Grey Wolf Consulting, LLC training resources and educational articles to help you build a stronger foundation of knowledge and skill.

At Grey Wolf Consulting, LLC (www.greywolfconsulting.us) our slogan reads Knowledge – Integrity – Discretion – Honor, It is these principles in addition to our belief and philosophy that the selection of proper equipment is only one part of developing a responsible and capable mindset. While tools are extremely important, they are only truly most effective when combined with proper knowledge, skill and attitude coupled with sound judgment, and quality training.

Our training philosophy is built around developing well-rounded individuals who understand that personal safety and professional performance require more than simply equipment alone. Awareness, critical thinking, communication, and disciplined decision making skills remain the foundation of effective preparation.

Through continued education with Grey Wolf Consulting, LLC, students can further develop their understanding of:

- ˆ The role equipment plays within a broader preparedness plan
- ˆ How stress impacts critical decision-making and performance
- ˆ The high value of consistent professional training and continued education
- ˆ How the correct mindset will impact informed decisions within high stress environments

Whether you are beginning your training journey, expanding your knowledge, or seeking to refine your existing skill set, Grey Wolf Consulting, LLC (www.greywolfconsulting.us) is committed to providing high quality professional firearms and tactics education focused on professionalism, responsibility, and continuous improvement.

About the Author

Brian S. Williams is a professional firearms instructor, tactical trainer, and executive security consultant with greater than 35 years of experience in firearms instruction, use-of-force training, and protective operations. As the founder of several firearms training and security organizations, he has developed and delivered firearms, tactical, and instructor certification programs for civilians, law enforcement officers, military personnel, and licensed security professionals throughout the United States.

Over the course of his career, Mr. Williams has trained and certified more than 10,500 Connecticut pistol permit applicants, instructed more than 2,000 civilians and hundreds of law enforcement and security professionals in advanced firearms and tactical applications, and provided remedial firearms training to military and correctional personnel. He served as a Marine Police Officer and Watch Commander with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and was appointed to the Connecticut State Police Firearms Advisory Council, where he contributed to firearms training and policy discussions.

Mr. Williams holds numerous professional certifications, including NRA Training Counselor, NRA Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor, General Dynamics Simunitions FX™ Instructor, The Heckler & Koch International Training Division and Sig Sauer Academy Instructor certifications, and USCCA Concealed Carry and Home Defense Instructor. He is the author of *Welcome to the Real World: A Dangerous Place to Be Caught Unprepared* and has been recognized as an expert in firearms by the Connecticut Superior Courts. His work continues to emphasize responsible firearms ownership, sound judgment, lawful use of force, and practical, reality-based training.