

ARC Match Tips #1

Ammo And Magazine Management

You will be asked to carry all needed ammo on your person during the program. Not in an ammo can sitting on the ground. So big cargo pockets, a dump pouch or similar conveyance will be important. Jeans might not be much help.

Practice at home how you intend to do it. With an unloaded and safe rifle hanging on its sling on your shoulder, in your intended carry position, go through the magazine loading process (don't load the rifle with loaded magazine!). Figure out what works. The COF (Course of Fire) gives you the round counts per stage.

I am guessing that if the match runs long in time, it will be because of difficulties in getting magazines loaded properly and in a timely fashion while in the field. You must decide ahead of time where your loose ammo, loaded mags., and empty mags. will be carried to prevent confusion when the dust starts flying.

Figure out your system, and practice it.

ARC Match Tips #2

CHANGING MAGAZINES

With a variety of rifle platforms likely to be used at the ARC training/match, the methods of changing magazines in those rifles will vary.

An important aspect of becoming proficient with the rifle of your choice is being able to reload it instinctively. That means practice. It has been observed that it takes 300 repetitions to develop a skill to the degree that it becomes instinctive.

With that in mind, it is time to start practicing your magazine changes.

All you need is an unloaded and safe rifle, and 2 empty magazines.

First, make sure you have 2 empty magazines, and no ammunition in your practice area. A negligently loaded and fired round in your house will ruin all the fun, likely cost you BIG time in house repairs and legal fees. Don't risk it. Put the ammo away in another place.

Point your rifle in a safe direction. (imagine downrange towards your target)

Install an EMPTY magazine into the rifle, bolt locked to the rear.

Shoulder your rifle and attempt to fire. You will experience a "dead" trigger.

Keep the rifle in the firing position, high in the shoulder.

Cant your rifle so you can see and identify an empty ejection port and magazine, actuate the mag. release by whatever means required to allow the mag. to drop free, and replace it with a new, empty mag., with a firm motion to seat the mag., and a tug downward to ensure that it is engaged.

Close the bolt via the bolt release, and point in at your imaginary target.

Reward yourself for successfully accomplishing the magazine change procedure with one perfect trigger press. (Dry practice) (as you press the trigger, make sure the front sight (or dot) remains perfectly still and on your imaginary target as the trigger breaks)

Repeat.

ARC Match Tips #3

When To Load Magazines

This course has lots of challenges to overcome. We have already discussed methods of carrying ammo and magazines on our person, and practicing getting magazines in and out of our rifle proficiently.

A few words about loading those magazines with your cartridges is in order.

Remember, you will have your rifle hanging from your shoulder, hopefully in a stable enough position that your hands will be free to load your mags. to the proper count. So far so good. (I know you will be good at this because you have PRACTICED!)

At the beginning of the program, everyone will have their mags. prepped to the proper counts. The first relay will fire their shots, make safe, score, and assume their position behind relay two while they are firing their shots.

After relay two fires their shots, and makes their line safe, and heads downrange to score, relay one should then begin prepping their mags. for the next stage. There should be enough time to get your mags. loaded to the proper counts while you're shooting partner is scoring his target.

Relay two will prep his mags. for the second stage when relay one moves downrange to score after firing the second stage.

If we proceed in this manner, we can efficiently use the time between live firing to be ready for our next string of fire.

ARC Match Tips #4

Rifle Racks

As you know, this course is designed to have the shooter carry their rifle during the match by means of the sling. The variety of slings available enables the shooter to decide what method of sling and carry he prefers. There are, however only two possibilities that will be allowed on the direction of the muzzles when your rifle is slung: muzzle up or muzzle down.

You should decide on your preferred method of carry before coming to the range. That does not mean you cannot change, but have an idea of how you intend to proceed, and do so until a better idea is revealed.

The reason this is important, is that you should rack (in the wooden rifle racks) your rifle in the direction that you intend to carry it in the sling. Muzzle up placement will indicate a muzzle up carry sling. Muzzle down placement will indicate muzzle down carry sling.

It is most common for rifles to be racked muzzle up. Those who decide to carry muzzle up will have no issues transferring rifles from shoulder to rack safely. Those who decide to carry muzzle down should transfer their rifles to the rack muzzle down.

The question may arise as to whether damage to the muzzle may occur by such placement in the rack. The only case I can think of would be if there is no muzzle device on the rifle. Most rifles have a break or flash hider which protect the crown. Resting the rifle in a wooden rack on these devices is perfectly harmless.

If one who carries muzzle down objects to placing his rifle in the rack muzzle down there is a solution to maintain safe muzzle direction and satisfy the desire of the shooter. He would simply walk over to a side berm, face it, un-sling and rotate his rifle to the muzzle up direction, and walk back and place the rifle in the rack muzzle up.

In no case can we allow shooters to approach the rifle racks muzzle down, and rotate their rifle to the muzzle up condition, and rack it. With a full line of shooters, and those watching, there will likely be people everywhere. **We must demonstrate perfect muzzle control at all times for the safety of all.**

Rifles will be racked three times during the ARC event:

1. When you arrive, after you check in, you will rack your rifle.
2. At the mid-point break, (if needed, between the 30 and 60 yard stages)
3. At the end of the program.

ARC Match Tips #5

Compensated Shots

There is a wide variety of options for the rifleman who is considering where to "zero" his sights, depending on the purpose for which those sights are adjusted.

A common, and I think the most practical, is the zero setting that is used by Marine Corps riflemen, which is known as the 50/200 yard BZO (Battle Sight Zero).

This setting on ones rifle, basically establishes the point that expected engagement of targets will be 200 yards or less. The benefit of this setting, is that with the trajectory of the standard load 556 or .223, 55-63 grain bullet, the flight path will not vary more than about 4 inches in elevation from the muzzle to the 200 yard target. So, if the rifleman were to engage a target anywhere within that range of distance, 0-200 yards, he could reasonably expect to hit within 4" of his intended point of aim. This is also known as "point blank range".

In the ARC program, shooting is done at a maximum known distance of 100 yards, so consideration should be given to a different "zero" than described above.

A 100 yard zero produces the following benefits for the rifleman that knows he must make precise shots at distances of 100 yards or less:

1. The 100 yard shot will be precisely on point of aim.
2. Shots at lesser distances will be predictable distances **below the line of sight.**
3. With known distance targets, we can determine the exact amount to compensate for those targets less than 100 yards.

Working under the assumption that the rifle is a standard AR platform rifle, the sights are installed somewhere between 2.5 and 3" above the centerline of the bore. We will use 2.75" as our average. This means that with the standard cartridges as described above, the flight path of the bullet will exit the muzzle approx. 2.75" below the line of sight, and will intersect the line of sight at the 100 target. (100 yard zero)

The flight path of the bullet is only in the upward direction towards the target, and it reaches its "maximum ordinate", (fancy word for highest point on its flight path) at the 100 yard distance.

The ARC course of fire uses target centers that are approximately 6" high, at distances of 7, 15, 30, 60, and 100 yards. Therefore, in order to hit the center of our intended target at those distances, the rifleman must **compensate** his hold (where the sights are aiming) for those lesser distances. From a basic trajectory curve chart, for the 100 yard zero, the following compensated aiming points are discovered:

1. At 7 yards, you must hold about 2.5" high of the target center.
2. At 15 yards, you must hold about 2" high of the target center.
3. At 30 yards, you must hold about 1.4" high of the target center
4. At 60 yards, you must hold about .5" high of the target center.

If you are using a different rifle and cartridge, your trajectory and compensated holds will be different.

Hope this helps you to perform your best on the range.

ARC Match Tips #6

Walk and Shoot

The second stage in our course of fire begins with shooters at the ready, just behind the 15 yard line. The course of fire calls for two mags., loaded with 5 rounds each.

The goal is to fire 5, reload, and fire the second 5, expending all 10 rounds allotted while advancing from the 15 yard line to the 7 yard line in a slow and controlled rate of advance. **DO NOT CROSS THE 7 YARD LINE!**

Since many shooters will be walking and shooting at the same time, it is the task of each training partner to control the rate of advance of his shooter. Each shooter will have a 6" carabiner clipped to his belt, providing a firm handhold by which the training partner can maintain that control, making sure that the firing line advances in a parallel line.

In order to move and shoot more effectively, a couple of tips should be followed:

- Face your target, and assume a "boxer's" stance. Slightly forward lean, nose over your toes, knees flexed.
- Steps should be small, knees close together, feet placed on the ground heel-to-toe, in two parallel lines. Picture the treads on a tank, with your feet laying down a stable shooting platform for you. Your shooting platform should be as if you were standing on a skateboard with someone towing you along over smooth pavement.
- Remember to keep moving in that same slow, controlled pace while reloading.
- The responsibility of the shooter is to get good hits and keep the rifle running.
- The responsibility of the training partner is to keep his shooter in a parallel line with all the others.

The shooter should arrive at the 7 yd line with an empty rifle, bolt locked to the rear. He then will cant the rifle to clearly see the ejection port, observe the empty chamber and the bolt locked back on the empty magazine, place the safety selector on "SAFE", and sling the rifle.

You are now ready for the transition to your holstered pistol. That description is found on Match Tips #7.

ARC Match Tips #7

Rifle to Pistol Transitions

An important skill for you to have in your toolbox is the ability to safely transition from your primary weapon, (rifle, in our case) to a secondary weapon, (holstered pistol) should the need arise. There are few reasons why one would move from a superior weapon to an inferior one, but you should know those reasons, and how to make the transition safely and effectively. One would transition to the handgun when:

- The rifle breaks. There are lots of parts on a rifle that can break. When it stops working, it is time to move on to another system.
- The rifle malfunctions. The malfunction is observed, and can be remedied, but there is not enough time to safely clear it at that moment.
- The rifle runs out of ammo.
- The situation is in a location (tight quarters) where the length of the rifle is a hindrance to your safe movement.

With those possibilities known, let's focus on how we will practice the transition on the range. In our case, we will simulate running out of ammo as our reason for the need to transition to the handgun.

At the 7 yard line, we will fire the prescribed shots with the rifle. (see: C.O.F for 7 yds.)

- As the rifle is fired dry, the bolt locks to the rear, and the shooter experiences a "dead" trigger.
- With the trigger finger straight, the rifle is canted to allow the shooter to see the open chamber, revealing the bolt locked back on an empty magazine.
- The safety selector is moved to the "SAFE" position, and the rifle slung.
- After the rifle is slung, proceed to the 5 step pistol draw.
- Count 1: Two things happen simultaneously... your firing side hand drives down onto the handle of the pistol to achieve a full firing grip, your support side hand goes flat on your midsection, or on your now slung rifle.
- Count 2: The pistol is withdrawn straight upwards, just clearing the muzzle from the holster. Trigger finger is straight, alongside pistol frame above trigger guard. Support side hand still on midsection. 1911 safeties on.
- Count 3: Firing side elbow drops and muzzle rotates towards the target. Trigger finger still straight. Support side hand still on midsection. 1911 safeties still on.
- Count 4: Weapon starts toward the target, angling upwards and forward, and as the muzzle moves past the support hand, the support hand drifts over to establish proper grip. 1911 safeties come off, and trigger finger moves to trigger

and begins removing slack from the linkage. Weapon continues moving forward and upwards into your line of sight towards target.

- Count 5: Weapon continues to eye level, while building isometric grip pressure on the frame, trigger is fully prepped and ready to release the shot.

At this time, the prescribed shots would be taken to finish the drill. Once the shots are fired, the following sequence must be followed to unload, clear and holster the pistol.

- Bring the pistol to the ready position and remove the magazine.
- Slide should be locked to the rear.
- Keeping the muzzle in a safe direction, show clear to your training partner.
- Once shown clear, and at the ready position, drop (close) the slide
- Return to count 4 (two hands still on the pistol, close to body), muzzles downrange, 1911 safeties moved to "SAFE" position.
- Back to count 3, with support hand on midsection, pistol above the holster but still pointed downrange.
- Back to count 2, with support hand on midsection, muzzle rotated downwards, ready to holster.
- Back to count 1, with support hand still on midsection, gently re-holster the pistol, making sure that it is not snagged or caught on any clothing or gear.

With the pistol safely out of the way, we must now return to the slung rifle that has not been unloaded or cleared.

- Pick up the rifle and present to the ready position.
- Remove the magazine and make sure the bolt is locked to the rear.
- Make sure the safety selector is in the "SAFE" position.
- Show clear and safe to your training partner.
- Sling
- Once slung, turn and face.

It is crucial that these fundamental steps be followed precisely. Doing so will allow us to operate safely and confidently in our training environment.