

Contact the Mecklenburg County
Sheriff's Office
to ask about
FREE GUN LOCKS
704-336-3664



*This brochure is a product of
Mecklenburg County
Child Fatality Prevention and Protection Team*



*To report concerns or suspicions of child abuse or neglect,
call 704-336-CARE
(336-2273)*



Adapted from a campaign developed by the U.S. Department of Justice,
the Advertising Council, Inc., and the National Crime Prevention Council
to encourage Americans to store their firearms safely.
www.unloadandlock.com

Firearms & Ammunition Safety Tips

An unlocked gun could be
the death of your family.



Please lock up your gun.

STORING FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION

Unload your gun.

- You should be certain each and every time that there is no bullet left in the cylinder of a revolver or in the chamber of a pistol. None. Not one single one.

Store the ammunition in a safe place.

- Store the ammunition in a safe place out of the reach of children, such as a reinforced lockbox or a safe. Lock it up. Keep the key on you if it's a key lock. Memorize the combination if it's a combination lock.
- Store ammunition in a cool, dry place and get rid of it when it gets old. For tips on proper disposal of old ammunition, contact your local police department or ATF office.

Lock up the unloaded gun.

- There are a number of locking devices on the market ranging from trigger locks to gun safes. Most experts agree that a gun safe is the most secure storage, especially if it is properly installed so that it cannot easily be moved from the storage location.

Ensure that keys or combinations are highly secure.

- Keep keys with you; memorize combinations, don't keep copies at home. Keep numbers as secure as you would a bank account number. Don't share them.
- Afraid of losing keys or forgetting combinations? Put keys or combinations in an envelope and give it to a trusted friend, emphasizing that it's for your use only.

Explain to your children your rules about weapons in the home.

- Make it clear that they are not to touch weapons or ammunition unless they have your express consent and your direct supervision each time they want to handle a weapon.

Take a firearm safety course on using, maintaining, and storing guns safely.

Talk with your local police department or an experienced law enforcement personnel who is trained in firearms use and handling. They can help you decide which gun lock or storage device is right for your situation.

CHOOSING GUN LOCKS

Trigger Lock

- A trigger lock is usually a two-piece, inexpensive lock that clamps on either side of the trigger and locks in such a way that, if properly installed, it prevents anyone (child or adult) from being able to pull the trigger back far enough to fire the gun.
- Be sure the trigger lock is the right one for your weapon! Some trigger locks may not be compatible with your gun because the mechanism will not fit properly behind the trigger to prevent it from being pulled and firing the gun.
- Be sure the lock is sturdy. Some trigger locks can easily be smashed and removed from the gun without the lock being opened.
- Remember: The lock is only as secure as the precautions you take to protect the key or combination.

Barrel Lock

- The barrel lock typically works by looping a high-strength steel cable and a blocking piece of metal through the barrel of the gun.
- The device locks, sometimes through the trigger guard, with either a combination or a key lock. However, a hacksaw or a cable and bolt cutter can be used to sever the cable and disable the lock.
- As with the trigger lock, poor security with respect to key or combination can render the lock useless.

SAFEGUARDING ACCESS TO GUNS

Gun Box

- This is generally a sturdy, high-grade steel box, often reinforced with some other metal. It may be opened either with a key or a combination.
- Some gun boxes have button combinations recessed into a handgrip built into the box itself. This recessed button-operated panel makes it difficult, if not impossible, for an observer to figure out the combination by watching the user open or close the box.
- Most well-made boxes have hinges on the inside to make tampering and forcing the box open more difficult.

Gun Safe

- This device is truly a safe like those in which valuables might be kept. Gun safes are heavy, usually weighing at least 50 pounds and come in a variety of grades for burglary and fire resistance.
- Gun safes tend to be the most expensive gun storage device, but they are by far the most secure of storage devices for guns.
- As with any of the other locking devices, protect the key or combination to the lock as well as safely storing the handgun.