

## Questions to Ask a Firearms Instructor

How to find the right teacher and avoid the wrong one

Not all firearms instructors are created equal — especially for women. The right instructor makes learning empowering; the wrong one can set you back. Use these questions to find someone who will actually help you succeed.

### Before You Book

#### Background & Logistics

- What certifications do you hold? (NRA, USCCA, state-specific, etc.)
- What percentage of your students are women?
- Do you have experience teaching complete beginners?
- Do you provide firearms and ammunition for training?
- Where do you teach? (range, private facility, etc.)

*A good instructor will welcome these questions. If they seem annoyed or dismissive, that tells you something.*

### Teaching Style Questions

- Do you explain the 'why' behind techniques, or just the 'how'?
- How do you handle students who are nervous or have had bad experiences?
- What's your approach to correcting mistakes?
- Will I get hands-on practice, or is it mostly lecture?

### Red Flags to Watch For

- Makes you feel stupid for asking questions
- Physical contact that feels inappropriate, invasive, or controlling (note: gentle, supportive touch from a skilled instructor is normal — but you should never feel invaded or uncomfortable)
- Uses military/tactical jargon without explaining it
- Dismisses your concerns about recoil, noise, or nervousness
- Insists there's only "one right way" to do things

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- Pushes you to advance before you feel ready
- Makes comments about your appearance or gender
- Recommends a specific gun without asking about your needs
- Claims you don't need much training — "it's not complicated"

*If you experience any of these, you're allowed to leave. Find someone who treats you with respect.*

## Green Flags — Signs of a Great Instructor

- Asks about YOUR goals before making recommendations
- Explains everything before doing it
- Celebrates small wins and progress
- Creates a judgment-free environment
- Encourages questions at any time
- Focuses on safety without using fear tactics
- Has positive reviews from other women students

## After Your First Lesson

- Did I feel respected and heard?
- Did I learn something I can actually use?
- Did the pace feel right for me?
- Do I want to go back?

*Trust your gut. The best technical instructor in the world isn't worth it if they make you dread showing up.*