



VICTORIA POLICE

LICENSING & REGULATION DIVISION QUICK GUIDE



TRYING OUT & RECEIVING INSTRUCTION: General Category Handguns

In Victoria, people without a general category handgun licence may try using a handgun (under specific conditions and provided they meet certain requirements) to decide if they want to apply for that type of licence.

This guide is designed to provide information on the requirements you must meet in order to try out a general category handgun, as well as the roles of firearm instructors, shooting clubs and Victoria Police.

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

Section 54 of the *Firearms Act* 1996 provides that you can try out or 'receive instruction' in the use of general category handguns only if you:

- Are not a 'prohibited person' (as defined by the *Firearms Act* 1996 and explained on the Victoria Police website at www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms);
- Are twelve years of age or over;
- Do not have a medical condition which could impact on your ability to use a handgun in a manner that is safe to yourself and others (and which would ultimately make you ineligible for a general category handgun licence); and
- Have not exceeded the maximum number of times you can receive instruction without a licence.

The *Firearms Act* 1996 also states that you can only receive instruction where:

- This occurs at an approved Victorian handgun target shooting range; and
- Your instructor notifies Victoria Police **each time** you receive instruction.

NOTIFYING VICTORIA POLICE

Both you and your instructor must complete Victoria Police's 'Notification of Receiving Instruction' form **before** you receive instruction and use a handgun. This is a legal requirement. Your instructor may provide you with this form on the day of your instruction, but you can also download this form from Victoria Police's website at www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms.

Your instructor must send the completed notification form to Victorian Police no more than seven days **after** your instruction session.



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NOTIFICATION & YOU

Before you can you receive instruction you must:

1. Complete the personal information section of the notification form (i.e. your name, date of birth etc).
2. Provide your instructor with two forms of identification. These must contain your full name (i.e. the name appearing on your birth certificate) and at least one document must be issued by the government (e.g. a passport, birth certificate or driver licence etc).
3. Read and understand the definition of a 'prohibited person'. Your instructor may provide you with this definition but you can also download it from the Victoria Police website at www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms. You must indicate on the notification form whether you are a prohibited person or not, and if you are prohibited, you will not be able to receive instruction or obtain a firearm licence.
4. Check whether your health or any medical condition you are being treated for, or have been treated for in the last five years (e.g. depression, stress, psychiatric or emotional problems) may impact on your ability to use a handgun in a manner that is safe to yourself or others. If this is the case, you can only receive instruction provided you declare this on the notification form and provide your instructor with a certificate from your treating medical practitioner that indicates they believe you are fit to carry and use a handgun whilst receiving instruction.
5. Indicate on the notification form how many times you have already received instruction in using a handgun (if any).
6. Have the consent of your parent or guardian if you are a junior and aged between twelve and seventeen years. Your parent or guardian need only complete part four of the notification form to indicate that they have agreed to allow you to receive instruction.
7. Sign and date the bottom of the 'Declaration by Person who is Receiving Instruction' section on the notification form.

It is an offence to provide false information in a notification or to knowingly or recklessly give false information in response to a question your instructor asks you.

If you do so, you face up to 120 penalty units or two year's imprisonment.



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NOTIFICATION & YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Before they can instruct you in using a handgun, your instructor must:

1. Sight your identification documents and verify that the same name appears on your notification form and identification documents.
2. Provide you with a copy of the definition of a 'prohibited person' if you do not have one or refer you to the Victoria Police website at www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms.
3. Confirm that you have read and understood the definition of a 'prohibited person'. They must also be satisfied that you have correctly determined you are not prohibited and can receive instruction.
4. Confirm that you have indicated on your notification form the number of times you have already received instruction in using a handgun as well as ensure this does not exceed the legal maximum.
5. Confirm that you are a 'fit and proper' person and do not have any medical conditions which may prevent you from safely using a handgun. If you have such a condition, they must ensure you have a medical certificate from your treating practitioner indicating (to your instructor's satisfaction) that you are fit to carry and use a handgun for the purpose of receiving instruction.
6. Ensure you have completed the relevant sections of the notification form and have attached any relevant supporting documents.
7. State the details of your instruction session on the notification form and complete the 'Declaration by Instructor' section.

You will receive instruction at the discretion of your instructor. Your instructor may request more information or ask additional questions where they believe it is necessary.

NOTIFICATION, SHOOTING CLUBS & VICTORIA POLICE

Victoria Police is responsible for:

- Receiving notification forms and keeping a record of handgun instructions or lessons.
- Checking that your instruction complied with legislative requirements and that you were eligible to receive instruction.
- Enforcing the law where you, your instructor or the shooting club have not met the legal requirements.
- Auditing the records clubs keep of handgun instructions.
- Providing you with a notice acknowledging your notification form has been received and advising how many more instructions you may legally receive.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many times can I receive instructions without a licence?

Adults are able to receive instruction on no more than ten separate occasions. Juniors (i.e. those aged between twelve and seventeen), can receive instruction on no more than three separate occasions.

How do I arrange an instruction?

You will need to contact an approved handgun target shooting club to enquire about the availability of instructors attached to the club. Some handgun target shooting organisations also have open days or operate mobile ranges where members of the public can receive instruction.

Where can I get a notification form?

You can download a copy of the form from Victoria Police's website at www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms.

Does the notification form have to be provided to Victoria Police before the instruction takes place?

No, but you and your instructor must complete the form before your instruction session starts. Your instructor must then send the form to Victoria Police no more than seven days after your instruction.

Is a notice of receiving instruction required to be submitted if I sit a safety course?

A notification form is required to be submitted for anyone who has **carried or used** a general category handgun under instruction at an approved range for the purposes of obtaining a general category handgun licence (for any reason, including private security). This does not apply in the instance where theoretical training is provided only.

Can I receive instruction in or try using other types of firearms?

The *Firearms Act* 1996 also enables non-prohibited persons to receive instruction in the use of Category A or B longarms so long as the instruction is provided by the holder of a category A or B longarms licence and the instruction occurs at an approved range. Juniors (aged between twelve and seventeen years) are eligible for instruction but must obtain the written consent of a parent or guardian. In this instance, a notification form is not required but you must ensure you are not prohibited and are fit to receive instruction.

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