

ACCURACY—In firearms using single projectiles, the measure of the dispersion of the group fired. The optimum would be one hole no larger in diameter than a single projectile.

ACCURACY LIFE—An estimated, or empirically determined, number of rounds that can be fired in a particular gun, of a particular caliber, before it fails to meet a particular accuracy specification. Wide variations may occur due to caliber, ammunition characteristics, firing schedules and firearm design.

ACTION—The combination of the receiver or frame and breech bolt together with the other parts of the mechanism by which a firearm is loaded, fired and unloaded.

BARRELED ACTION—A combination of barrel and receiver or frame and breech bolt together with the other parts of the mechanism by which a firearm is loaded, fired and unloaded.

AUTOLOADER--A firearm in which each pull of the trigger results in a complete firing cycle from discharge through reloading. It is necessary that the trigger be released and pulled for each cycle. Also called a Self-Loader.

SINGLE-SHOT--A firearm requiring the manual cocking of the hammer before sufficient pressure on the trigger releases the firing mechanism.

SLIDE ACTION--A firearm which features a movable forearm which is manually actuated in motion parallel to the barrel. Forearm motion is transmitted to a breech bolt assembly which performs all the functions of the firing cycle assigned to it by the design. This type action is very prevalent in rimfire rifles and shotguns and to a lesser extent in centerfire rifles. Also known as Pump Action.

PUMP ACTION--A firearm which features a movable forearm which is manually actuated in motion parallel to the barrel. Forearm motion is transmitted to a breech bolt assembly which performs all the functions of the firing cycle assigned to it by the design. This type action is very prevalent in rimfire rifles and shotguns and to a lesser extent in centerfire rifles. Also known as Slide Action.

BREAK ACTION —A design in which the barrel or barrels are connected to the frame by a hinge-pin below the barrels. Upon release of the locking mechanism, the barrel or barrels rotate around the hinge-pin away from the standing breech.

AIMING POINT—A point on the target upon which the sights are aligned.

AMMUNITION—One or more loaded cartridges consisting of a primed case propellant and with or without one or more projectiles.

METALLIC AMMUNITION—A generic term for rimfire and centerfire ammunition derived from their metallic cases - in contrast to shotshells which have plastic or paper cases.

ANVIL—An internal metal component in a primer assembly against which the priming mixture is pinched by the firing-pin blow. See Primer.

BACKSTOP—A structure intended to stop a fired bullet or other projectile(s).

BALLISTICS—The science of projectiles in motion. Usually divided into three parts: 1) Interior Ballistics, 2) Exterior Ballistics, and 3) Terminal Ballistics.

BALLISTIC COEFFICIENT—A term used in the science of ballistics. Expressed as a number that indicates the efficiency of a given projectile's ability to overcome air resistance and maintain initial speed (or muzzle velocity) during flight. The higher the ballistic coefficient number, the more efficient the projectile.