

# Gun Safety

Storing guns securely is a key element of gun safety, although not having guns in your home is the safest option of all.

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## I own a gun. How can I keep it safe?

Storing your gun in a safe and secure way is important and will help prevent injuries. It is also the law in Massachusetts.

- Consider storing your gun in a location outside the home, such as a secure storage unit or bonded warehouse for gun storage.
- Keep ammunition separate from guns and in its own locked container.
- Store your gun broken down and unloaded in a secured and locked metal container. You can buy one at gun stores, sport and hunting stores, and large department stores. The chart below has a list of storage and safety options.
- If you are worried that you or someone else in your home is at risk of hurting themselves or others, consider removing all guns from your home, especially during possible periods of crisis.
- If there is a child in your home, make sure that your gun is locked securely and that the key is inaccessible to the child. Make sure that any child living in your home has been taught about the danger of guns.

Storage/Safety Option	Details	Cost
Cable lock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unlocked with a key or combination</li><li>• Usable on most firearms</li><li>• Can be cut</li></ul>	\$10-50
Trigger lock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unlocked with a key or combination</li><li>• Blocks the trigger, but does not prevent loading</li><li>• Not usable on lever-action guns</li></ul>	\$10-50
Lock box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unlocked with a key, combination, keypad, or biometrics (e.g., fingerprint)</li><li>• Smaller than a safe</li><li>• Firearm can be stored loaded or unloaded</li></ul>	\$25-350
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unlocked with a key, combination, or biometrics</li><li>• Most secure option for multiple guns, especially long guns</li></ul>	\$200- \$2500
Taking apart the firearm when it's not in use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires knowledge about how to take the gun apart</li><li>• Not always practical</li><li>• May lead to gun parts getting lost</li></ul>	(none)

## How do I learn more about gun safety?

Take a firearm safety course. All members of your household should take one.

- Visit the Massachusetts State Firearm Safety website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/firearms-safety>
- See firearms safety course by area: [goal.org/nra-instructors-listing-firearms-safety-goal-massachusetts](http://goal.org/nra-instructors-listing-firearms-safety-goal-massachusetts)

## What are other options besides owning my own gun?

- If you enjoy shooting for sport, you can visit a shooting range or hunting ground and rent a gun on site, or store your guns in a location away from the home.
- If you have a gun in your home for protection, consider alternatives for keeping you and your loved ones safe. Some other home safety options include installing strong locks on doors and windows, motion-sensor lights, and/or home security system.

## I own a gun, but I want to get rid of it. How can I do that?

- You can legally dispose of unwanted guns, ammunition, and other weapons to your local police station. *Call your police department in advance* to schedule a time to drop off your gun. You will not be in legal trouble for having these items. However, you could get in legal trouble for crimes committed with the weapon.
- Find out if your local police department has gun buy-back programs. These programs give you money or gift cards in exchange for your guns.

## Owning a Gun: Risk Facts

- Most people who choose to own a gun do so for personal protection. But data shows that they're more likely to hurt themselves or a household member than a home intruder.
- Gun owners are more likely to be injured or die from a gun than people who don't own guns.
- Children are more likely to be injured or die with a gun in the home. Every day, 20 children are admitted to the hospital from gun-related injuries.

**Partners Care Advice (PCOI)** documents are available under **Resources** on your Patient Gateway home page.

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