

Training the Immediate Action Drill

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The purpose of this article is to share information with all shooters that I feel may save your life in a Gunfight.

What do you do when you pull the trigger on your fully loaded semi auto handgun and instead of a bang you get a click? ‘This may not be a problem on the range while you are training however if you are in a gunfight and this happens you need to know what to do?’

We have a saying in the Tactical Training community:

In a gunfight you will not rise to the occasion..... You will default to the level of training you have mastered.

The answer to the above referenced question: What do you do when your fully loaded semi auto goes click instead of bang should be: Conduct an Immediate Action Drill.

Please note what I teach is “A” way to operate or train not “THE way to operate or train.

How do you properly execute an (IAD) “Immediate Action Drill”?

The first step is to define what an IAD is....Their are (3) components of an IAD they are as follows: TAP, RACK, FIGHT.

Tap-Rack-Fight- This process clears malfunctions and /or jams and effectively “resets” the firearm.

TAP means to smack the bottom of the magazine firmly enough to lock it into place or dislodge any bind in the magazine.

RACK is a cycling of the slide to eject any hammered /or dead casings or to re-chamber a new cartridge following a malfunction.

FIGHT means being prepared to commence or resume fire as required by accessing the situation. (These maneuvers must be able to be executed subconsciously and effectively at any time.)

This drill is also known as **Tap-Rack-Bang** or **Tap-Rack-Ready**, or **Tap-Rack-Assess** with either being appropriate depending on the situation. The Bang vs. Ready part isn't a component of the analysis here (as it may be policy dictated and therefore moot for debate), but rather how to most effectively train the first two parts

The biggest issue that I see in the training environment seems to be failure to tap the magazine resulting in sequences of bang-click-rack-click-rack-rack-click-rack-rack-click, all of this with an instructor yelling at them to seat the magazine.

I have no hard data to support this however I was taught by my father that 70% to 80% of the time when you pull the trigger on a semi auto and get a bang and then a click it is due to the fact that the magazine was not seated in the handgun correctly to begin with.

The way that I have trained this drill on the range for many years was to load inert (dummy) rounds into loaded magazines sporadically with live rounds; this causes the shooter to perform the IAD spontaneously during drills as the inert rounds come up. This method works well to force spontaneous IAD's, but I have found that it fails the less proficient/disciplined shooter in that it is possible to get away without the Tap. This causes the shooter to begin reinforcing a bad skill set, which shows up during a real malfunction as a Rack-Click-Rack-Click-Rack-Click.

The way that I now teach this is by having the shooter fully load the magazine with live rounds. Then insert the magazine into the semi auto rack the slide putting a round in the chamber (Condition1) then I tell the student to point the weapon down range press the magazine release and allow the magazine to protrude slightly so that it is not seated in the semi auto, I then tell the shooter to hold the magazine in place with the pinky or little finger. Then I instruct them to bring the weapon to low ready or retention position on the command fight or threat to fire 3 rounds this will cause a bang then a click ...If the shooter does not TAP, Rack, Fight they will not get a second bang.

I have also been taught to do the drill using masking tape it seems to keep the (unseated) Glock & SIG magazines in place. You simply wind the tape around the magazine a couple of times. Then make sure you do not fully seat the magazine. When tapped, they seem to seat deeply enough to give the desired result.

Last but not least when I teach magazine changes of any type I tell my students to seat the magazine by tapping it and to rack the slide whether it was a speed, tactical or emergency reload. This accomplishes two things one it insures that the gun is always loaded with a round in the chamber (Yes I know that if you had a round in the chamber you just lost one round) It also reinforces TAP, RACK, FIGHT.

I also teach my students that when conducting dry fire practice this is also a perfect time to practice the IAD. It not only reinforces TAP, RACK, FIGHT it allows you to practice trigger control. By resetting the handgun so that you can get another trigger pull.

Please also note that the TAP, RACK FIGHT is conducted in the **Manipulation Position**- This is the basketball sized area directly in front of and slightly below your chest. This is the area that you will manipulate the gun in. This includes but is not limited to Jams, and or malfunctions, speed or emergency reloads, or tactical reloads, or chamber checks. This is NOT a position to hold the firearm in while waiting to shoot or for situation assessment.

In my opinion as an Instructor I feel that this should be added to any shooters training program if they are carrying the firearm for self defense.

Stay Safe & Shoot Straight!

Always remember : "Conflict is inevitable; Combat is an option".

“ Always start out in Condition Yellow”

“Smooth is fast....Speed is fine but accuracy is final”