

# 3Rs Explosives Safety Guide

## Military Families

Among the benefits of being a military family is the opportunity to share in the military experience. However, family members need not share the dangers potentially posed by military munitions used in training or combat.

Because the U.S. military conducts live-fire training and testing to maintain combat readiness, military munitions may remain unexploded on operational ranges. Unfortunately, service members occasionally bring munitions home from training or deployments as souvenirs or war trophies.

Because military families often live on or near military installations, they are more likely to encounter munitions than the general public. Although installations post signs and restrict access to areas where explosive hazards exist, family members in search of adventure sometimes enter these areas. Fortunately, munitions are rarely present in garrison areas, except when dangerous munitions are kept as souvenirs. Protecting military families, Soldiers and the public from explosive hazards associated with military munitions is everyone's responsibility.

The U.S. Army established the 3Rs of Explosives Safety Education Program in 2000 after a fatal incident at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. A group of teenagers entered an operational range and took some munitions home, even though signs warned of the explosive hazards and prohibited entry. During handling, a munition detonated, killing one teen and critically injuring another. Unfortunately, the teens did not recognize the hazard the munitions posed, and their lives were changed forever.

Soldiers and their families need to be aware of the risks posed by living on or near operational ranges or by having souvenir munitions in their houses and take necessary precautions. You can help protect yourself, your family, friends and community by following the **3Rs of Explosives Safety: Recognize, Retreat, Report.**



### Don't Forget

- Ammo is dangerous and may not be easy to recognize!
- Avoid areas the military used for training!
- Never get near, touch, move, or disturb ammo!

### Follow the 3Rs

**R**ecognize

When you see ammo and that it is dangerous

**R**etreat

Do not touch it, but carefully leave the area

**R**eport

Call 911 to tell the police what you saw



For additional information,  
see the kids page at

the U.S. Army's Explosives Safety Education website  
<https://3Rs.mil>

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# Recognize

**Recognizing that munitions are dangerous is the most important step in reducing injuries or deaths.**

Children are naturally curious and interested in exploring areas or handling equipment, including munitions, used by Soldiers. To keep them safe, we must help them understand the dangers of handling or disturbing munitions.



Munitions are designed to kill people or destroy equipment. They may be old or new, and easy or hard to identify. If you encounter or suspect you have encountered a munition, do not touch, move or disturb it. If a munition explodes, anyone nearby could be killed or severely injured. Even cannon balls from the Civil War present an explosive hazard.

Munitions will most likely be encountered in areas the military used or still uses for live-fire training or where combat once occurred. Help keep your family safe by staying away from ranges and out of restricted areas marked with warning signs.

Unfortunately, munitions often prove to be deadly souvenirs. Taking a munition for a keepsake presents an immediate and real danger to you, your family, friends and your community. Don't be tempted! Should you or someone you know have a souvenir munition, even if it has been kept for years, call the military or local police to report it.

# Retreat

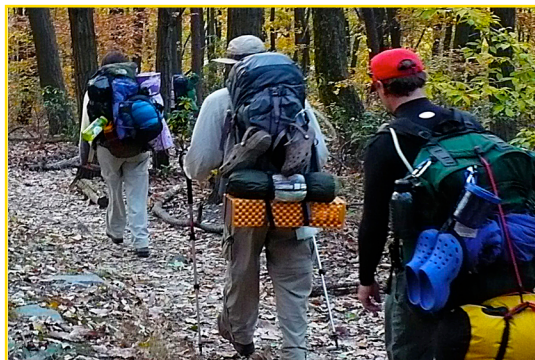
**Military munitions should only be handled by trained and authorized personnel.**

If you encounter or suspect you may have encountered a munition, do not touch, move or disturb it. Carefully leave the area (retreat) by retracing your steps.

If your family or friends encounter or suspect they have encountered a munition, instruct them:

- Not to touch, move or disturb it, but immediately and carefully leave the area.
- If on land, retrace their steps out of the area by the same path which they entered. Once safely away, mark the path, if possible, so that trained personnel can more easily find it.
- If in the water, swim away in the direction from which they came. If possible, determine the munition's position by using landmarks.

Soldiers who unexpectedly encounter or suspect they may have encountered a munition on or outside of a range or while deployed should not touch, move, or disturb it. Instead, they should immediately leave the area, retracing their steps out of the area by the same path by which they entered, and note the location.



# Report

**Report as much information as you can about what you saw and where you saw it, but do not approach.**



If you, your children, or friends encounter or suspect you have encountered a munition, immediately report it to the police, or through your chain-of-command.

On land and while in water or near shore:

- Call the military police or 911
- Provide:
  - A landmark near the munition
  - A description of the munition, including:
    - » Its size and shape
    - » Any visible markings — do not approach or handle the munition to see markings

Although a detailed report will help the police and Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel find, evaluate and address the situation, never approach a munition to get a better description. Your safety is more important.

