

# How To Dispose Of Old Or Worn Out Firearms

*Even if you buy a good quality gun and take proper care of it, a gun is still a tool.*

As such, it will eventually wear out or be damaged to a point where you can no longer use it without putting a lot of money into repairs. Once a gun reaches this point, and you have decided not to repair it, you can do one of two things – Keep it or get rid of it. If you choose to keep an old, or worn out firearm, it may be possible to turn the parts into something else once the weapon has been deactivated.

Regardless of what you choose to do with the gun, you should always do the following:

1. Unload and visually inspect the firearm to ensure that no bullets are in the gun.
2. Record the serial number of the firearm and take pictures of it for your records.
3. Check with your local and state law enforcement agencies to see if they have any programs or restrictions.
4. Give the gun a good cleaning. An old firearm that is clean will usually sell or trade better than a dirty crapped up one. If you decide to repurpose the gun, it will also be much easier if you start off with clean metal.

## Legal Issues You Should Address

If you are turning firearms in to the police, start off by reviewing the guidelines about what kinds of guns are legal or not yet banned in your state. For example, if you have semi-automatic rifle in a state where they are banned, you may need to wait until there is an amnesty program.

In a similar fashion, if you wish to surrender a machine gun that is no longer functional, you will need to review federal guidelines and amnesty programs for these weapons. It will also be in your best interest to discuss these matters with a lawyer if you are determined to get rid of the weapon.

Before you turn a weapon in, make sure that you know the history of the gun. The police or sheriff departments will run the serial number on the weapon to see if it is stolen. If the firearm turns out to be stolen or you can't legally own it, thus surrendering it could cause you to wind up in prison. If you still want to get rid of the firearm, talk to your lawyer to see what can be done.

Regardless of the weapon type or its status, it may still be possible to legally turn in a firearm as long as it is fully deactivated. A deactivated firearm is made permanently inoperable, and is therefore no longer considered a firearm.

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Technically speaking, since the gun no longer fits the definition of a firearm, according to the BATF, it is no longer subject to firearms related laws. For complete information and definition of Deactivated Guns, refer to 27 CFR Section 478.11.

As with any other law, contact a lawyer and make sure that you are aware of all changes in legislation that can lead to you being accused of a crime.

Aside from avoiding problems related to the gun type, it is also important to consider your gun ownership status. In this case, if you aren't supposed to own a gun, turning one in without an amnesty can get you arrested and convicted of a felony.

By the same token, if you plan to sell or give the gun to someone else, it is important to make sure they can legally own a gun. Make sure you review all current laws in your state and get legal advice before assuming that your planned transaction is legal as well as the method by which you plan to proceed.

## **Where to Get Rid of Unwanted Guns**

### **Surrender the Gun**

To Your local Police or Sheriff's Department During an Amnesty Program. If you have firearms and ammunition that you no longer want to keep, turning them in to your state or local law enforcement is the easiest option.

Before you just walk into the police or sheriff's office call them on the non-emergency phone line and describe the situation. Depending on the policy of the station, they may ask you to walk it in, send officers to pick up the weapon, or schedule an appointment to bring it in.

Most amnesty programs melt down the firearms and keep very accurate tracking records. This is done so you can check to confirm that the guns you turned were actually destroyed.

### **Turn it in at a Gun Buy Back.**

Depending on where you live, there may be enough money and interest in buying back guns via a community program. Usually, there are no questions asked at these events, which makes getting rid of an old, useless gun quick and painless. You will also get some cash for each gun you turn in, or other incentives that may be of interest to you.

## **Donate it to Training Programs.**

There are many groups that use firearms to train with and have small budgets to buy training weapons and ammunition. If you feel that the firearms maybe misused, have it deactivated first. Deactivated firearms can be used as training or demonstration aids, however they cannot be used for any kind of live shooting.

Donate it to a gun Smithing school – When a gun is no longer useable, there is a chance that a gunsmith can still restore it. Student gunsmiths will not only be able to meet this challenge, they will learn a lot in the process. In addition, if the weapon happens to be rare, or of interest to a local gunsmith, you may want to give it to him or her to repair for their own use.

## **Private Sale.**

In most states, it is still legal to sell a firearm to someone else via private sale, or through a gun auction. As long as the buyer can legally own a gun, you can try this method.

## **Sell to a Gun Shop.**

Even though you may think the gun is not worth fixing, a gun shop may still be interested in using it for parts. They may also have contacts with various manufacturers or other people that may be interested in the gun. Just be sure to get all of your paperwork in order so that you have proof of how you disposed of the gun.

Once the gun is accepted by the gun shop, it is up to them to follow any applicable laws. If the gun winds up in the wrong hands at some point in the future, at least you can prove that you sold the gun legally and were not part of what happened after that point.

## Donate or Sell the Weapon to a Museum.

Before you part with an older gun, make sure you do a careful research on the serial number. You never know who may have owned the gun, or what role it played in a historical incident. If you find something of historical interest that fits into a relevant museum collection, they may be willing to buy the gun from you.

*Video first seen on [Gunscom](https://www.guns.com)*

Even if the gun is not operational, it is the historical value of the piece that matters. In this case, the museum may be willing to pay more than other market venues, and then simply write the cost off their taxes.

## Deactivating a Gun and Repurposing It

Before you deactivate a gun, look it over carefully to see if there are any parts that can be sold. For example the grips, sights, or other parts may still be salvageable and of interest to someone else. Take these parts to a gun store, or try to sell them through some other means.

When it comes to the receiver, do not forget that someone with an FFL license must handle the receiver transaction and transport.

If you are not able to get rid of the gun or do something with the parts, then you may decide it is best to make sure weapon can no longer be repaired or fired. From there, you can choose to do any number of other things with it. In order to deactivate most guns, you will need to do the following:

- Weld the action closed. Once the action is heated and fused in this manner, it loses its tempering. It can no

longer be safely fired even if someone tries to open up the action and make it operable. The gun will more than likely explode when fired.

- Weld the barrel to the action.
- Hammer a tight fitting steel rod down the barrel, and then weld it into place at the muzzle end. This will effectively destroy any rifling and make the barrel completely useless.
- If you have a Class 3 weapon, the laws are very specific about additional steps you will need to take. For these weapons, you will need to use a gas ax to make them inoperable.

Once the gun is deactivated, you can do whatever you want with it. For example, if the gun has some kind of sentimental value, you can turn it into a paperweight. Alternatively, you can mount it on a plaque, a lamp, or even a wall hanging.

Depending on the gun type and the size of the parts, you may also be able to turn them into jewelry or key chains. For example, if you deactivated a revolver, you may want to take the trigger or something else to fashion into something wearable.

Some people also incorporate deactivated gun parts into sculptures representing completely different subjects. Since many of the parts of the gun are made from good quality metal, you can fashion large, outdoor sculptures as well as smaller ones designed to stay inside.

You may also want to donate the gun to an art club or some other venue that will use them for this purpose.

If you happen to be skilled in metallurgy, and have a forge on hand, you can also shape the metal parts into something else. In this case, you might want to make a knife or something else that would have survival value. Do not forget that you will still have to harden the steel in order to get as much use as

possible out of whatever you decide to make.

## What About Having a Gun Melted Down?

If you want to be totally sure that your firearms are destroyed forever, take them to a foundry. The firearms will be cut up and melted down as you watch as long as you make arrangements to this effect.

Unless you are watching, there is a chance the weapon will simply be cut up, stored in a barrel, and melted down when there is enough scrap to make it worth while to the foundry to start a smelting run.

Disposing of old or worn guns can be complicated because of legal guidelines. Once you clear these hurdles, you may still be unable to find a buyer, or even someone that will accept the gun as a donation. Under these circumstances, there isn't much you can do other than repurpose it or sell off the parts.



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*This article has been written by **Fred Tyrell** for Survivopedia.*