

# Should More Gun Control Laws Be Enacted?

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The United States has 120.5 guns per 100 people, or about 393,347,000 guns, which is the highest total and per capita number in the world. 22% of Americans own one or more guns (35% of men and 12% of women). America's pervasive gun culture stems in part from its colonial history, revolutionary roots, frontier expansion, and the Second Amendment, which states: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Proponents of more gun control laws state that the Second Amendment was intended for militias; that gun violence would be reduced; that gun restrictions have always existed; and that a majority of Americans, including gun owners, support new gun restrictions.

Opponents say that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to own guns; that guns are needed for self-defense from threats ranging from local criminals to foreign invaders; and that gun ownership deters crime rather than causes more crime. [Read more background...](#)

## Pro & Con Arguments

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### Pro 1

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#### The Second Amendment is not an unlimited right to own guns.

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In the June 26, 2008 *District of Columbia et al. v. Heller* US Supreme Court majority opinion, Justice Antonin Scalia, LLB, wrote, "Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited... nothing in our opinion should be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms." [3] On June 9, 2016 the US Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled 7-4 that "[t]he right of the general public to carry a concealed firearm in public is not, and never has been, protected by the Second Amendment," thus upholding a law requiring a permitting process and "good cause" for concealed carry licenses in California. [145][146] A 2018 study found that 91% of the 1,153 court cases with claims stating a government action or law violates the Second Amendment between the 2008 *DC v. Heller* decision and Feb. 1, 2016 failed. [157]

## Pro 2

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### More gun control laws would reduce gun deaths.

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There were 572,537 total gun deaths between 1999 and 2016: 336,579 suicides (58.8% of total gun deaths); 213,175 homicides (37.2%); and 11,428 unintentional deaths (2.0%). [162] Guns were the leading cause of death by homicide (67.7% of all homicides) and by suicide (51.8% of all suicides). [162] A study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that firearms were the second leading cause of deaths for children, responsible for 15% of child deaths compared to 20% in motor vehicle crashes. [30] A study published in the American Journal of Public Health found that "legal purchase of a handgun appears to be associated with a long-lasting increased risk of violent death" [6] According to a Mar. 10, 2016 Lancet study, implementing federal universal background checks could reduce firearm deaths by a projected 56.9%; background checks for ammunition purchases could reduce deaths by a projected 80.7%; and gun identification requirements could reduce deaths by a projected 82.5%. [148] Gun licensing laws were associated with a 14% decrease in firearm homicides, while increases in firearm homicides were seen in places with right-to-carry and stand-your ground-laws.[158][160]

## Pro 3

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### High-capacity magazines should be banned because they too often turn murder into mass murder.

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A Mother Jones investigation found that high-capacity magazines were used in at least 50% of the 62 mass shootings between 1982 and 2012. [7] When high-capacity magazines were used in mass shootings, the death rate rose 63% and the injury rate rose 156%. [8] David H. Chipman, Senior Vice President of Public Safety for ShotSpotter and former Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) agent, stated that a high-capacity magazine "turns a killer into a killing machine." [7] Some gang members use high-capacity magazines, such as 30 rounds or even 90 rounds, to compensate for lack of accuracy and maximize the chance to harm. [9] According to a Feb. 2019 NPR poll, 65% of Americans believed banning high-capacity magazines would reduce gun violence. [165]

## Pro 4

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### More gun control laws are needed to protect women from domestic abusers and stalkers.

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Five women are murdered with guns every day in the United States. [10] A woman's risk of being murdered increases 500% if a gun is present during a domestic dispute. [11] During the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, 5,364 US soldiers were killed in action between Oct. 7, 2001 and Jan. 28, 2015; between 2001 and 2012 6,410 women were killed with a gun by an intimate partner in the United States. [10][12] A 2003 study of 23 populous high-income countries found that 86% of women killed by firearms were in the United States and American women are 11.4 times more likely to be the victims of gun homicides [13] 57% of mass shootings involved domestic violence. [11][14] For example, the 2011 mass shooting at a Seal Beach, CA hair salon reportedly began because of the shooter's custody battle with his ex-wife who was a hair stylist at the salon. [11][8] 31 states do not ban convicted misdemeanor stalkers from owning guns and 41 states do not force convicted domestic abusers from relinquishing guns they already own. [10][14] 76% of women murdered and 85% of women who survived a murder attempt by an intimate partner were stalked in the year before the murder or murder attempt. [15]

## Pro 5

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### Guns are rarely used in self-defense.

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Of the 29,618,300 violent crimes committed between 2007 and 2011, 0.79% of victims (235,700) protected themselves with a threat of use or use of a firearm, the least-employed protective behavior. [16] In 2010 there were 230 "justifiable homicides" in which a private citizen used a firearm to kill a felon, compared to 8,275 criminal gun homicides (or, 36 criminal homicides for every "justifiable homicide"). [17] Of the 84,495,500 property crimes committed between 2007 and 2011, 0.12% of victims (103,000) protected themselves with a threat of use or use of a firearm. [16]

## Pro 6

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### Legally owned guns are frequently stolen and used by criminals.

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A June 2013 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report states that "[a]lmost all guns used in criminal acts enter circulation via initial legal transaction." [18] Between 2005 and 2010, 1.4 million guns were stolen from US homes during property crimes (including burglary and car theft), a yearly average of 232,400. [19] Ian Ayres, JD, PhD, and John J. Donohue, JD, PhD, Professors of Law at Yale Law School and Stanford Law School respectively, state, "with guns being a product that can be easily carried away and quickly sold at a relatively high fraction of the initial cost, the presence of more guns can actually serve as a stimulus to burglary and theft. Even if the gun owner had a permit to carry a concealed weapon and would never use it in furtherance of a crime, is it likely that the same can be said for the burglar who steals the gun?" [20]

## Pro 7

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### Gun control laws would reduce the societal costs associated with gun violence.

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The more than 100,000 people shot in the United States each year generate emergency room and hospital charges of nearly \$3 billion. [163] A study in the American Journal of Public Health estimated that hospitalizations for firearm-related injuries cost Medicaid and Medicare \$2.7 billion over nine years. [21] A study in the American Journal of Public Health estimated that hospitalizations for firearm-related injuries cost Medicaid and Medicare \$2.7 billion over nine years. [22] 84% of those injured by firearms are uninsured, leaving taxpayers responsible for most of those bills through programs like Medicaid. [23][24][25][26] According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the costs of gun violence can include legal services, medical costs, perpetrator control, policing, incarceration, foster care, private security, lost earnings and time, life insurance, productivity, tourism, and psychological costs (pain and suffering), among others. [25] Homicide rates doubling has been associated with a 12.5% decline in property values. [25]

## Pro 8

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### A majority of adults, including gun owners, support common sense gun control such as background checks, bans on assault weapons, and bans on high-capacity magazines.

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According to a Feb. 20, 2018 Quinnipiac Poll, 97% of American voters and 97% of gun owners support universal background checks. 67% support a nationwide ban on assault weapons, and 83% support mandatory waiting periods for gun purchases. [155] As much as 40% of all gun sales are undocumented private party gun sales that do not require a background check (aka the "gun show loophole"). [28] 53% of all adults surveyed approve of high-capacity magazine bans. [27] 89% of adults with a gun in the home approve of laws to prevent the purchase of guns by the mentally ill, and 82% approve of banning gun sales to people on no-fly lists. [27] 77% of Americans support requiring a license to purchase a gun. [165] Don Macalady, member of Hunters against Gun Violence, stated, "As a hunter and someone who has owned guns since I was a young boy, I believe that commonsense gun legislation makes us all safer. Background checks prevent criminals and other dangerous people from getting guns." [29]

## Pro 9

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### More gun control leads to fewer suicides.

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Between 1999 and 2013 there were 270,237 firearm suicides in the United States, accounting for about 52% of all suicides during those years. [4] When US gun ownership goes down, overall suicide rates drop; meanwhile, each 10 percentage-point increase in gun ownership is linked to a 26.9% increase in the youth suicide rate. [31][164] Firearm-related suicides accounted for 61% of the gun deaths in the United States between 2000 and 2010. [18] Researchers found that a "general barrier to firearm access created through state regulation can have a significant deterrent effect on male suicide rates in the United States. Permit requirements and bans on sales to minors were the most effective of the regulations analyzed." [32] In Indiana and Connecticut, after "red flag" laws to remove guns from people who may pose a threat were enacted, gun suicides decreased by 7.5% and 13.7% respectively, while suicides by other means did not decrease during the same time. [158][159] A person who wants to kill him/herself is unlikely to commit suicide with poison or a knife when a gun is unavailable. [33]

## Pro 10

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### Enacting gun control laws such as mandatory safety features would reduce the number of accidental gun deaths.

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Approximately 50% of unintentional fatal shootings were self-inflicted; and most unintentional firearm deaths were caused by friends or family members. [18][4] According to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence and the National Physicians Alliance, states with the highest concentration of guns have nine times the amount of accidental gun deaths and "89% of unintentional shooting deaths of children occur in the home—and most of these deaths occur when children are playing with a loaded gun in their parents' absence." [34] The US General Accountability Office (GAO) estimated that 31% of total accidental shooting deaths could have been prevented by installing safety devices on guns: 100% of deaths per year in which a child under 6 years old shoots and kills him/herself or another child could be prevented by automatic child-proof safety locks; and 23% of accidental shooting deaths by adolescents and adults per year could be prevented by loading indicators showing when a bullet was in the chamber ready to be fired. [35] Marjorie Sanfilippo, PhD, Professor of Psychology at Eckerd College who has researched children's behavior around guns, stated, "We put gates around swimming pools to keep children from drowning. We put safety caps on medications to keep children from poisoning themselves... [B]ecause children are naturally curious and impulsive, and because we have shown time and again that we cannot 'gun-proof' them with education, we have a responsibility to keep guns out of the hands of children." [36]

## Pro 11

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### The presence of a gun makes a conflict more likely to become violent.

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The FBI found that in 2013 arguments (such as romantic triangles, brawls fueled by alcohol or drugs, and arguments over money) resulted in 1,962 gun deaths (59.9% of the total). [37] A June 1985 study published in the American Journal of Public Health found that "the weapons used [in altercations]... were those closest at hand." [38] An editorial published in the June 1985 American Journal of Public Health noted, "gun-inflicted deaths [often] ensue from impromptu arguments and fights; in the US, two-thirds of the 7,900 deaths in 1981 involving arguments and brawls were caused by guns." [39] A 1993 study published in The New England Journal of Medicine found that "[r]ather than confer protection, guns kept in the home are associated with an increase in the risk of homicide by a family member or intimate acquaintance." [40]

## Pro 12

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### Armed civilians are unlikely to stop crimes and are more likely to make dangerous situations, including mass shootings, more deadly.

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None of the 62 mass shootings between 1982 and 2012 was stopped by an armed civilian. [41] Gun rights activists regularly state that a 2002 mass shooting at the Appalachian School of Law in Virginia was stopped by armed students, but those students were current and former law enforcement officers and the killer was out of bullets when subdued. [41] Other mass shootings often held up as examples of armed citizens being able to stop mass shootings involved law enforcement or military personnel and/or the shooter had stopped shooting before being subdued, such as a 1997 high school shooting in Pearl, MS; a 1998 middle school dance shooting in Edinboro, PA; a 2007 church shooting in Colorado Springs, CO; and a 2008 bar shooting in Winnemucca, NV. [42] Jeffrey Voccola, Assistant Professor of Writing at Kutztown University, notes, "The average gun owner, no matter how responsible, is not trained in law enforcement or on how to handle life-threatening situations, so in most cases, if a threat occurs, increasing the number of guns only creates a more volatile and dangerous situation." [43]

## Pro 13

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### Countries with restrictive gun control laws have lower gun homicide and suicide rates than the United States.

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Both Switzerland and Finland require gun owners to acquire licenses and pass background checks that include mental and criminal records, among other restrictions and requirements. [44] In 2007 Switzerland ranked number 3 in international gun ownership rates with 45.7 guns per 100 people (about 3,400,000 guns total). [45] In 2009 Switzerland had 24 gun homicides (0.31 deaths per 100,000 people) and 253 gun suicides (3.29 deaths per 100,000 people). [44] Finland ranked fourth in international gun ownership rates with 45.3 guns per 100 people (about 2,400,000 guns total). [45] In 2007 Finland had 23 (0.43 deaths per 100,000 people) gun homicides and 172 gun suicides (4.19 deaths per 100,000 people). [44] The United States, categorized as having "permissive" firearm regulation by GunPolicy.org, ranked first in international gun ownership rates with 88.8 guns per 100 people (about 270,000,000 guns total). [44][45] In 2007 the United States had 12,632 gun homicides (4.19 deaths per 100,000 people) and 17,352 gun suicides (5.76 deaths per 100,000 people). [44][4] Harvard professor David Hemenway, PhD, wrote "We analyzed the relationship between homicide and gun availability using data from 26 developed countries from the early 1990s. We found that across developed countries, where guns are more available, there are more homicides." [46] According to a Mar. 2016 study, gun homicide rates in the United States were 25.3 times higher and gun suicides were 8 times higher in 2010 than in other populous, high-income countries. Additionally, 90% of women, 91% of 0- to 14-year olds, 92% of 15- to 24-year-olds, and 82% of all people killed by firearms were from the United States. [147]

## Pro 14

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### The Second Amendment was intended to protect the right of militias to own guns, not the right of individuals.

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Former Justice John Paul Stevens, JD, in his dissenting opinion for *District of Columbia et al. v. Heller*, wrote, "the Framers' single-minded focus in crafting the constitutional guarantee 'to keep and bear arms' was on military use of firearms, which they viewed in the context of service in state militias," hence the inclusion of the phrase "well regulated militia." [3] Michael Waldman, JD, President of the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law, stated there is nothing about an individual right to bear arms in the notes about the Second Amendment when it was being drafted, discussed, or ratified; the US Supreme Court declined to rule in favor of the individual right four times between 1876 and 1939; and all law articles on the Second Amendment from 1888 to 1959 stated that an individual right was not guaranteed. [47]

## Pro 15

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### Civilians, including hunters, should not own military-grade firearms or firearm accessories.

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President Ronald Reagan and others did not think the AR-15 military rifle (also called M16s by the Air Force) should be owned by civilians and, when the AR-15 was included in the assault weapons ban of 1994 (which expired on Sep. 13, 2004), the NRA supported the legislation. [48] The Second Amendment was written at a time when the most common arms were long rifles that had to be reloaded after every shot. Civilians today have access to folding, detaching, or telescoping stocks that make the guns more easily concealed and carried; silencers to muffle gunshot sounds; flash suppressors to fire in low-light conditions without being blinded by the flash and to conceal the shooter's location; or grenade launcher attachments. [49] Jonathan Lowy, Director of Legal Action Project at the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, stated, "These are weapons that will shred your venison before you eat it, or go through the walls of your apartment when you're trying to defend yourself... [they are] made for mass killing, but not useful for law-abiding citizens." [50]

## Con 1

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### The Second Amendment of the US Constitution protects individual gun ownership.

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The Second Amendment of the US Constitution reads, "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Gun ownership is an American tradition older than the country itself and is protected by the Second Amendment; more gun control laws would infringe upon the right to bear arms. Justice Antonin Scalia, LLB, in the June 26, 2008 District of Columbia et al. v. Heller US Supreme Court majority opinion syllabus stated, "The Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home." [3] The McDonald v. City of Chicago (2010) ruling also stated that the Second Amendment is an individual right. [51] Lawrence Hunter, Chairman of Revolution PAC, stated, "The Founders understood that the right to own and bear arms is as fundamental and as essential to maintaining liberty as are the rights of free speech, a free press, freedom of religion and the other protections against government encroachments on liberty delineated in the Bill of Rights." [52]



## Con 2

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### Gun control laws do not deter crime; gun ownership deters crime.

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A study in Applied Economics Letters found that "assault weapons bans did not significantly affect murder rates at the state level" and "states with restrictions on the carrying of concealed weapons had higher gun-related murders." [103] While gun ownership doubled in the twentieth century, the murder rate decreased. [53] John R. Lott, Jr., PhD, author of More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun Control Laws, stated, "States with the largest increases in gun ownership also have the largest drops in violent crimes... The effect on 'shall-issue' [concealed gun] laws on these crimes [where two or more people were killed] has been dramatic. When states passed these laws, the number of multiple-victim shootings declined by 84 percent. Deaths from these shootings plummeted on average by 90 percent and injuries by 82 percent." [54] More than two-thirds of gun owners cite protection as a major reason for owning a gun. [55] Journalist John Stossel explained, "Criminals don't obey the law... Without the fear of retaliation from victims who might be packing heat, criminals in possession of these [illegal] weapons now have a much easier job... As the saying goes, 'If guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns.'" [56]

## Con 3

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### Gun control laws infringe upon the right to self-defense and deny people a sense of safety.

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According to the National Rifle Association (NRA), guns are used for self-defense 2.5 million times a year. [57] The police cannot protect everyone all of the time. 61% of men and 56% of women surveyed by Pew Research said that stricter gun laws would "make it more difficult for people to protect their homes and families." [58] Nelson Lund, JD, PhD, Professor at George Mason University School of Law, stated, "The right to self-defense and to the means of defending oneself is a basic natural right that grows out of the right to life" and "many [gun control laws] interfere with the ability of law-abiding citizens to defend themselves against violent criminals." [59] Constitutions in 37 US states protect the right to bear arms for self-defense, most with explicit language such as Alabama's: "every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state." [60][61] Wayne LaPierre, Executive Vice President of the NRA, stated, "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." [62] A May 9, 2013 48% of convicted felons surveyed admitted that they avoided committing crimes when they knew the victim was armed with a gun. [63] Pew Foundation report found that 79% of male gun owners and 80% of female gun owners said owning a gun made them feel safer and 64% of people living in a home in which someone else owns a gun felt safer. [58] Even Senator Dianne Feinstein, a gun control advocate, carried a concealed gun when her life was threatened and her home attacked by the New World Liberation Front in the 1970s. [64]

## Con 4

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### Gun control laws, especially those that try to ban “assault weapons,” infringe upon the right to own guns for hunting and sport.

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In 2011, there were 13.7 million hunters 16 years old or older in the United States, and they spent \$7.7 billion on guns, sights, ammunition, and other hunting equipment. [65][66] High-powered semiautomatic rifles and shotguns are used to hunt and in target shooting tournaments each year. [67] According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, "So-called 'Assault weapons' are more often than not less powerful than other hunting rifles. The term 'assault weapon' was conjured up by anti-gun legislators to scare voters into thinking these firearms are something out of a horror movie... [T]he Colt AR-15 and Springfield M1A, both labeled 'assault weapons,' are the rifles most used for marksmanship competitions in the United States. And their cartridges are standard hunting calibers, useful for game up to and including deer." [68] According to a Feb. 2013 Pew Research report, 32% of gun owners owned guns for hunting and 7% owned guns for target or sport shooting. [58]

## Con 5

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### Gun control laws will not prevent criminals from obtaining guns or breaking laws.

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Of 62 mass shootings in the United States between 1982 and 2012, 49 of the shooters used legally obtained guns. Collectively, 143 guns were possessed by the killers with about 75% obtained legally. [69] John R. Lott, Jr., PhD, gun rights activist, stated, "The problem with such [gun control] laws is that they take away guns from law-abiding citizens, while would-be criminals ignore them." [70] According to a Bureau of Justice Statistics May 2013 report, 37.4% of state prison inmates who "used, carried, or possessed a firearm when they committed the crime for which they were serving a prison sentence" obtained the gun from a family member or friend. [16] Despite Chicago's ban on gun shops, shooting ranges, assault weapons, and high capacity magazines, in 2014 Chicago had 2,089 shooting victims including at least 390 murders. [71][72][73] Approximately 50,000 guns were recovered by police in Chicago between 2001 and Mar. 2012. The guns came from all 50 states, and more than half came from outside of Illinois. [74]

## Con 6

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### Gun control laws give too much power to the government and may result in government tyranny and the government taking away all guns from citizens.

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57% of people surveyed by Pew Research in Feb. 2013 said that gun control laws would "give too much power to the government over the people." [58] The NRA's Wayne LaPierre stated, "if you look at why our Founding Fathers put it [the Second Amendment] there, they had lived under the tyranny of King George and they wanted to make sure that these free people in this new country would never be subjugated again and have to live under tyranny." [75] Alex Jones, radio host, in a Jan 7, 2013 interview with Piers Morgan, stated, "The Second Amendment isn't there for duck hunting, it's there to protect us from tyrannical government and street thugs... 1776 will commence again if you try to take our firearms!" [76]

## Con 7

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### Gun control laws such as background checks and micro-stamping are an invasion of privacy.

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Background checks would require government databases that keep personal individual information on gun owners, including name, addresses, mental health history, criminal records, and more. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) worried that Senator Harry Reid's 2013 proposed background check legislation (the bill failed 54-46) would have allowed the government to keep databases of gun purchases indefinitely, creating a "worry that you're going to see searches of the databases and an expansion for purposes that were not intended when the information was collected." [77][78] Micro-stamping similarly requires a database of gun owners and the codes their personal guns would stamp on cartridge cases. [79] Senators Rand Paul (R-KY), Mike Lee (R-UT), and Ted Cruz (R-TX) wrote that they would oppose any legislation that infringes "on the American people's constitutional right to bear arms, or on their ability to exercise this right without being subjected to government surveillance." [80]

## Con 8

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### More gun control is unnecessary because relatively few people are killed by guns.

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According to the CDC's "Leading Causes of Death Reports," between 1999 and 2013, Americans were 21.5 times more likely to die of heart disease (9,691,733 deaths); 18.7 times more likely to die of malignant tumors (8,458,868 deaths); and 2.4 times more likely to die of diabetes or 2.3 times more likely to die of Alzheimer's (1,080,298 and 1,053,207 respectively) than to die from a firearm (whether by accident, homicide, or suicide). [4] The flu and related pneumonia (875,143 deaths); traffic accidents (594,280 deaths); and poisoning whether via accident, homicide, or suicide (475,907 deaths) all killed more people between 1999 and 2013 than firearms. [4] Firearms were the 12th leading cause of deaths for all deaths between 1999 and 2013, responsible for 1.3% of deaths with 464,033 deaths. [4] Internationally, the claim that the United States has a major problem with firearm homicide is exaggerated. The United States is ranked 28 in international homicide rates with 2.97 gun murders per 100,000 people in 2012. [89]

## Con 9

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### Gun control laws and lower gun ownership rates do not prevent suicides.

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Lithuania has one of the world's lowest gun ownership rates (0.7 guns per 100 people) but its suicide rate (by any method) was 45.06 per 100,000 people in 1999, the highest suicide rate among 71 countries with available information. [44] Japan has a low gun ownership rate at 0.6 guns per 100 people and a high suicide rate of 18.41 suicides per 100,000 people in 1997 (ranking it 11 out of 71 countries). [44] [45] South Korea has a low gun ownership rate (1.1 guns per 100 people) but has a high rate of suicide and the highest rate of gun suicides (12.63 per 100,000 people in 1997). [44][45] By contrast the United States has the 26th highest suicide rate (12.3 suicides per 100,000 people in 2011) and the highest gun ownership rate (88.8 guns per 100 people). [44][45] Jim Barrett, author for TheTruthAboutGuns.com, stated, "the theory that the restriction or elimination of guns would have a positive effect on the overall suicide rate in the U.S. does not hold up under scrutiny." [81]

## Con 10

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### More gun control is not needed; education about guns and gun safety is needed to prevent accidental gun deaths.

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95% of all US gun owners believe that children should learn about gun safety. [154] Guns don't kill people; people kill people. And people need more gun education and mental illness screening to prevent massacres. The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute, Inc (SAAMI), stated, "Whether in the field, at the range or in the home, a responsible and knowledgeable gun owner is rarely involved in a firearms accident of any kind." [82] Heidi Cifelli, Former Program Manager of the NRA's Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program, stated, "Gun education is the best way to save young lives." [83] The NRA states that the Eddie Eagle program is not meant to "teach whether guns are good or bad, but rather to promote the protection and safety of children... Like swimming pools, electrical outlets, matchbooks, and household poison, they're [guns] treated simply as a fact of everyday life." [84] According to Kyle Wintersteen, Managing Editor of Guns and Ammo, studies show that "children taught about firearms and their legitimate uses by family members have much lower rates of delinquency than children in households without guns" and "children introduced to guns associate them with freedom, security, and recreation—not violence." [85]

## Con 11

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### Gun control laws would prevent citizens from protecting themselves from foreign invaders.

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The Libertarian Party stated, "A responsible, well-armed and trained citizenry is the best protection against domestic crime and the threat of foreign invasion." [86] Counsel for the NRA stated, "It is evident that the framers of the Constitution did not intend to limit the right to keep and bear arms to a formal military body or organized militia, but intended to provide for an 'unorganized' armed citizenry prepared to assist in the common defense against a foreign invader or a domestic tyrant." [87] Marco Rubio (R-FL), US Senator, speaking about gun control laws during his 2016 presidential campaign, stated, "If God forbid, ISIS visits our life, our neighborhood, our school, any part of us, the last thing standing, the last line of defense could very well be our ability to protect ourselves." [149]

## Con 12

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### Strict gun control laws do not work in Mexico, and will not work in the United States.

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Mexico has some of the strictest gun control laws in the world and yet, in 2012, Mexico had 11,309 gun murders (9.97 gun homicides per 100,000 people) compared to the United States that had 9,146 gun homicides (2.97 per 100,000 people). [88][89]. The country has only one legal gun store (the Directorate of Arms and Munitions Sales), compared to at least 63,709 legal gun stores and pawn shops in the United States as of Feb. 10, 2014. [90][91] Mexico's gun store is on a secure military base and customers must present a valid ID, go through a metal detector, and turn over cellphones and cameras to guards. To actually buy a gun, customers have to show proof of honest income, provide references, pass a criminal background check, prove any military duties were completed with honor, and be fingerprinted and photographed. If allowed to purchase a gun, the customer may buy only one gun (choosing from only .38 caliber pistols or lower) and one box of bullets. [90][92][93] Between 2006 and 2010, Mexico's one gun shop sold 6,490 guns, [92] yet as of 2012, Mexicans own about 15,000,000 guns, or about 13.5 guns per 100 people. [44]

## Con 13

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### Gun control laws are racist.

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Current gun control laws are frequently aimed at inner city, poor, black communities who are perceived as more dangerous than white gun owners. [94][95] Charles Gallagher, MA, PhD, the Chair of Sociology at LaSalle University, stated that some gun control laws are still founded on racial fears: "Whites walking down Main Street with an AK-47 are defenders of American values; a black man doing the same thing is Public Enemy No. 1." [96] In the late 1960s, gun control laws were enacted in reaction to the militant, gun-carrying Black Panthers. [97] Adam Winkler, MA, JD, UCLA Constitutional Law Professor, stated "The KKK began as a gun-control organization. Before the Civil War, blacks were never allowed to own guns" so, after the Civil War, there was "constant pressure among white racists to keep guns out of the hands of African Americans because they would rise up and revolt." [97] In Virginia, in response to Nat Turner's Rebellion (also called the Southampton Rebellion, in which slaves killed 55 to 65 people in the most fatal slave uprising in the United States) in 1831, a law was passed that prohibited free black people "to keep or carry any firelock of any kind, any military weapon, or any powder or lead and all laws allowing free black people to possess firearms were repealed. [98].

## Con 14

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The Second Amendment was intended to protect gun ownership of all able-bodied men so that they could participate in the militia to keep the peace and defend the country if needed.

According to the United States Code, a "militia" is composed of all "able-bodied males at least 17 years of age... under 45 years of age who are, or who have made a declaration of intention to become citizens of the United States and of female citizens of the United States who are members of the National Guard." [99] Therefore, the militia mentioned in the Second Amendment would have been composed of almost all adult men and, in turn, that most adult men should not have their right to own firearms infringed. [100] A 1792 federal law required that every man eligible for militia service own a gun and ammunition suitable for military service, report for frequent inspection of their guns, and register their gun ownership on public records. [101] Daniel J. Schultz, lawyer, stated, "the Framers [of the Constitution and Bill of Rights] understood that 'well-regulated' militias, that is, armed citizens, ready to form militias that would be well trained, self-regulated and disciplined would pose no threat to their fellow citizens, but would, indeed, help to 'insure domestic Tranquility' and 'provide for the common defence.'" [100]

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Gun control efforts have proved ineffective.

According to David Lampo, Publications Director of the Cato Institute, "there is no correlation between waiting periods and murder or robbery rates." [102] Banning high-capacity magazines will not necessarily deter crime because even small gun magazines can be changed in seconds. The "gun show loophole" is virtually nonexistent because commercial dealers, who sell the majority of guns at shows and elsewhere, are bound by strict federal laws. [102] According to a Mar. 10, 2016 Lancet study, most state-level gun control laws do not reduce firearm death rates, and, of 25 state laws, nine were associated with higher gun death rates. [148]

### Did You Know?

1. A Pew Foundation report found that 79% of male gun owners and 80% of female gun owners said owning a gun made them feel safer, and 64% of people living in a home in which someone else owns a gun felt safer.

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2. The US General Accountability Office (GAO) estimated that 100% of deaths per year in which a child under 6 years old shoots and kills him/herself or another child could be prevented by automatic child-proof safety locks.

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3. The Centers for Disease Control listed firearms as the #12 cause of all deaths between 1999 and 2015, representing 1.3% of total deaths. They were also the #1 method of death by homicide (67.3% of all homicides) and by suicide (51.9% of all suicides).

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4. Mexico has some of the strictest gun control laws in the world and yet, in 2012, Mexico had 11,309 gun murders (9.97 gun homicides per 100,000 people) compared to the United States that had 9,146 gun homicides (2.97 per 100,000 people). [88] [89]

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5. Carrying a concealed handgun in public has been permitted in all 50 states since 2013, when Illinois became the last state to enact concealed carry legislation.