

# Kentucky



Total prohibition (+0, highest per capita gun ownership – need we say more)

Total freedom

0 ----- 10 ----- 20 ----- 30 ----- 40 ----- 50 ----- 60 ----- 70 ----- 80 ----- 90 ----- 100

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- \***Standard firearms & ammo:** no permit required for possession or sale – see p.3
- \***Semi-auto guns & high capacity magazines:** no permit required for possession or sale
- \***Machine guns & suppressors:** ownership lawful per federal law compliance
- \***Firearm law uniformity:** preemption law, gun laws uniform; localities may be sued for violations
- \***Right of Self-Defense:** NRA-model castle doctrine, *stand your ground* in public areas
- \***Open carry:** unrestricted in most public areas and generally accepted
- \***Licensed concealed carry:** licenses issued by state police to residents on a "shall issue" basis
- \***Constitutional or “no permit required” concealed carry:** no
- \***Out-of-state permit recognition:** automatic recognition for all non-residents with carry permits
- \***Weapons allowed for licensed carry:** include any lawful deadly weapon
- \***Vehicle carry by non-permittees:** loaded firearms may be carried in plain view or stowed in any factory-installed vehicle compartment (glove compartment, console box, etc.)
- \***Vehicle gun possession at colleges:** lawful for any gun owner
- \***Vehicle gun possession at K-12 schools:** Kentucky permittee w/loaded handgun lawful
- \***Duty to notify LEO of permit status:** upon demand of police officer
- \***State Parks:** concealed handgun carry by recognized licensees permitted
- \***Restaurants serving alcohol:** permittees may carry while eating in dining areas – see p.3
- \***Hotels:** subject to hotel policy enforcement – see p.7

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Kentucky's rolling hills and tree-covered mountains provide the perfect setting for a movie about the early pioneers of the Ohio valley. Firearms carry in those days was essential for survival. And Kentucky still maintains a healthy respect for this heritage in its firearm laws.

**Recognized permittees:** Kentucky requires a license to carry a firearm, or any other deadly weapon, concealed on or about one's person. The State Police issue permits through the sheriff of the applicant's home county for five-year terms. Kentucky does not grant permits to nonresidents but will recognize any permit issued by another state as long as the permittee is not a resident of Kentucky. A recognized permittee may carry concealed in most public areas. Prohibited places include childcare centers, schools, bars, legislative meetings, law enforcement offices, courthouses and most universally restricted areas (p.7). Colleges, hospitals, local governments, and private businesses may also ban carry in their buildings by posting signs. But prohibitions in these areas are not criminal offenses.

**Persons without recognized permits:** Loaded firearms may be carried in a vehicle if the weapons are in plain view. A loaded handgun can be in a visible belt holster or on the dashboard or passenger seat of one's car. Loaded long guns may be secured in gun racks or commercial gun cases anywhere in the vehicle except concealed about the person.

Kentucky also allows weapons to be hidden from view in any factory-installed vehicle compartment, whether locked or unlocked. Console boxes, seat pockets, glove compartments or trunks are among the acceptable areas for unlicensed concealment.

Any landowner, sole proprietor or lessee may carry concealed without a permit on property they own or rent. Also, anyone with the permission of the property owner may carry.

A traveler may openly carry a loaded handgun while on foot in most public areas. Such carry is best limited to visible belt holsters secured on one's hip. Kentucky's strong preemption law now provides stiff penalties for any locality that attempts to regulate this activity.

**All Persons:** A property owner may not prohibit employees and customers from carrying firearms in their vehicles while the vehicles are parked on that owner's property. Civil penalties exist for property owners that act contrary to this mandate. Also, game wardens may not harass any sportsmen who carry firearms for self-defense while hunting or fishing.