

# Washington



Total prohibition (-3, open carry prohibited at state capitol & public demonstrations) Total freedom

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- \*Standard firearms & ammo: no permit required for possession or sale by individuals – see p. 2
- \*Semi-auto guns & high capacity magazines: “assault rifles” restricted to those 21 & older
- \*Machine guns & suppressors: personal ownership of machine guns & bump stocks prohibited; suppressor ownership lawful per federal law compliance;
- \*Firearm law uniformity: preemption statute, firearm laws uniform throughout state
- \*Right of Self-Defense: no NRA castle doctrine, *stand your ground* in public not codified
- \*Open carry: lawful in most public areas – see “all Persons” below
- \*Licensed concealed carry: licenses issued on a “shall issue” basis to residents and nonresidents
- \*Constitutional or “no permit required” concealed carry: no
- \*Out-of-state permit recognition: conditional recognition of permits from other states (see p. 65)
- \*Weapons allowed for *licensed carry*: limited to handguns only
- \*Vehicle carry by non-permittees: handguns must be unloaded and secured in commercial gun cases; long guns must be unloaded
- \*Vehicle gun possession at colleges: prohibitions enforced through WA’s administrative code
- \*Vehicle gun possession at K-12 schools: Washington permittee w/loaded handgun lawful while picking up or dropping off a student
- \*Duty to notify LEO of permit status: upon demand of police officer
- \*RV carry while “boondocking”: parking lot owners may restrict gun carry by visitors – see p.8
- \*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
- \*Airports: carry allowed in non-sterile terminal areas & parking lots unless posted – see p. 9
- \*Highway Rest Areas: carry allowed in buildings and on grounds – see p. 7

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Washington's vast tracts of wilderness create a setting where gun ownership is quite common. But despite a history of relaxed gun laws, the state's shifting political winds are ushering in restrictions that will become more intrusive as time goes on. Visitors would be well-advised to enjoy this beautiful state while they still can.

**Recognized permittees:** A license is required to carry a loaded handgun concealed on one's person or in any personal vehicle or public transportation. Residents are issued permits through their local police or sheriff. Nonresidents may apply in person to any local law enforcement agency. Licenses are valid for 5 years. Washington recognizes permits from states that recognize Washington, require fingerprint-based background checks of their licensees and do not issue permits to persons under 21. A recognized permittee must be a nonresident and is limited to handgun carry only. He must also keep the weapon locked up and concealed from view if it is left in his vehicle. Carry is prohibited in courtrooms, police stations, bars, K-12 schools, day care centers, mental health facilities, horse racetracks, outdoor music festivals and many colleges.

**Persons without recognized permits:** Loaded handguns may not be carried anywhere in a vehicle. They must be unloaded and secured in gun cases specifically designed for handguns. Loaded magazines may be carried in the vehicle as long as they are not inserted into any handgun.

While on foot, a non-permittee may carry a loaded, concealed handgun while hunting, fishing, camping, and target shooting. Open carry of a loaded handgun in most public areas is also O.K. But along with the prohibited areas listed for permittees, non-permittee carry may be restricted by cities in stadiums and convention centers. These prohibitions must be posted at reasonable intervals around each area's perimeter. And those who open carry may not do so with any intent to intimidate another or causes alarm for the safety of others.

**All Persons:** Unloaded rifles and shotguns may be kept in gun racks or cases within a vehicle. Long guns are considered “loaded” only if the weapons' chambers are loaded or loaded magazines are attached to the guns. One may have loaded magazines nearby and still be lawful. Long guns in vehicles must be unloaded regardless of one's permit status. And all firearms, including pistols, carried in snowmobiles must be unloaded.

Open carry of any firearm on your person or in a vehicle is prohibited at demonstrations and the state capitol. This ban applies to anyone, including permittees. But *concealed* carry with a permit is O.K. in these areas.