

**"The right to own a gun must not be infringed."**

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>The Second Amendment grants:</b> “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.”</li> <li>○ The idea of having a militia of armed citizens was seen as a necessity due to the threat of a British invasion after the US gained their independence from GB.</li> <li>○ In the US, gun ownership has always been a cultural aspect deeply entrenched in society, not just in the Constitution. The right to defend your family and your property has always been considered an extremely important part of American liberties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Alistair Cooke:</b> “One prejudice the New England settlers brought to America was a fear of standing armies. Kings could seize control of an army overnight and enslave the people. So this nation, when it was created, absolutely rejected the idea of a standing army. [...] Of course the militia is long gone. We do have, you may have heard, a standing army, navy, air force, marine corps, and they take care of all the shooting that may be necessary for the security of the state.” from Alistair Cooke, <i>Letter from America</i>, May 9, 1999.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Many people need guns for other reasons, hunting is also an important element of rural life.</li> <li>○ Unlike European countries with their feudal heritage, the US has always granted hunting and fishing rights to all people, not just the nobility.</li> <li>○ Farmers need guns in order to protect their livestock and crops from various pests, e.g. rabbits, foxes, stray dogs.</li> <li>○ People who live in remote areas need guns to protect themselves from the wildlife, e.g. polar bears in Alaska.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ That may be true, but hunting weapons aren't the real problem. There are enough states that allow semi-automatic rifles like the AR-15 and/or high-capacity magazines. These weapons are useless for hunting but have become riot killers' favourites for one reason only – they are made and designed to kill people. Weapons of this type are weapons of war.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Guns don't kill people – people kill people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ That may be true, but the sheer profusion of guns makes it much easier for people to kill other people. (One argument against guns is always: “How many people would a riot killer be able to stab with a knife?”) The more guns there are in a society the more likely it is they will be used. In the US death by gunshot is a leading cause of death among some social groups. This is particularly true for young African American men aged from 12-19.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Guns have to be kept in secure places. There will always be irresponsible people, and laws cannot change this fact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Even legally owned weapons can lead to tragic deaths, they can be stolen and end up in the hands of criminals. Guns in families all too often end up being accidentally and lethally used by children.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Most states have already limited gun ownership in some ways (e.g. background checks, ban of certain types of weapons etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is still fairly easy to obtain a firearm, even for mentally unstable persons. Most riot killers in the past found it easy to acquire firearms (Columbine, Sandy Hook...)</li> <li>○ Gun laws still have enough loopholes (e.g. gun shows, legal conversion kits or bump</li> </ul>

	stocks, although the latter have recently been banned)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bans on guns won't keep criminals from committing crimes. Criminals will always find access to weapons, legal or illegal. Banning guns might give criminals new business models (gun trafficking etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ While it is certainly true that banning guns will not turn the US into a gun-free country, having fewer guns around will definitely mean fewer gun-related deaths.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Americans have the right to protect themselves, their families, and their property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gun ownership might lead to tragic deaths like the one of the German exchange student Doren Dede, who was shot because he had broken into someone's garage.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Armed citizens will be able to stop a crime in its tracks before it becomes worse (e.g. stop a riot killer).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The potential benefits of a crime stopped have to be weighed against the risks involved: misinterpretations, involving innocent bystanders, risk of injury etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As they emphasize individualism, they rely less on the government or the police to protect them (self-reliance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It's up to the judiciary to bring these people to justice, not to individuals.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shooting is a major sport enjoyed by many law-abiding citizens (also e.g. in biathlon).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shooting as a sport desensitizes people to the potentially lethal nature of firearms.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If citizens are denied the right to have guns, they will be helpless against armed criminals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Actually, other countries with strict gun laws have a much lower rate of citizens being killed or wounded in crime-related incidents.</li> <li>○ The prospect of meeting an armed citizen might actually make a criminal use their gun first!</li> </ul>