



NSW Police Force  
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# FIREARMS REGISTRY

## Firearm Magazines

*In NSW, firearms are classified according to calibre, method of firing and magazine capacity. Magazine capacity can determine what category a firearm will fall into, which in turn determines what type of licence is required to authorise possession and use.*

*This FACT sheet provides information on fixed and detachable firearm magazines and the restrictions applicable to each.*

### **What is a firearm magazine?**

A firearm magazine is an ammunition storage and feeding device within or attached to a repeating firearm and is defined as a firearm part under section 4 of the *Firearms Act 1996*. A magazine may be internal or external, with the external magazine being detachable.

The magazine functions by moving the cartridges stored in the magazine into a position where they may be loaded into the chamber by the action of the firearm.

Magazines come in many shapes and sizes and are an essential part of any repeating firearm and are therefore subject to regulation and legislative control restricting the number of cartridges they may hold.

### **What magazines are restricted?**

Certain detachable magazines are defined as prohibited weapons by clause 4(4) to Schedule 1 of the *Weapons Prohibition Act 1998*.

To be authorised to possess any of these detachable firearm magazines, a person must first obtain a prohibited weapon permit.

Schedule 1 Clause (4)(4) A detachable firearm magazine of any of the following kinds:

- (a) a rimfire rifle magazine with a capacity of more than 15 rounds,
- (b) a centre-fire self-loading rifle magazine with a capacity of more than 5 rounds,
- (c) a centre-fire rifle magazine (other than a self-loading rifle magazine) with a capacity of more than 10 rounds,
- (d) a shotgun magazine with a capacity of more than 5 rounds,
- (e) a tubular magazine extension that is capable of extending the capacity of any firearm,
- (f) a pistol magazine with a capacity of more than 10 rounds,
- (g) any magazine designed to be attached to any machine gun, sub-machine gun or other firearm that is capable of propelling projectiles in rapid succession following one pressure of the trigger.

### **What restrictions are there on magazine capacity if the magazine is not detachable?**

The categories of licences and the firearms which apply to each licence class are found in section 8 of the *Firearms Act 1996*.

### **Summary of firearm types and magazines**

#### Rimfire Rifles other than Self Loading

Non detachable magazine = 1 - unlimited = category A  
Detachable magazine 1 - 15 = category A  
Detachable magazine = over 15 rounds prohibited  
weapon permit required

#### Rimfire Rifles Self Loading

Non detachable magazine 1 - 10 = category C  
Detachable magazine 1 - 10 rounds category C  
Non detachable magazine 10 - unlimited = category D  
Detachable 10 - 15 = category D  
Detachable magazine = over 15 rounds prohibited  
weapon permit required

#### Centre Fire Rifle other than Self Loading

Non detachable magazine = 1 - unlimited = category B  
Detachable magazine 1 - 10 = category B  
Detachable magazine over 10 = prohibited weapon  
permit required

#### Centre Fire Rifle Self Loading

Non detachable magazine 1 - unlimited = category D  
Detachable magazine 1 - 5 = category D  
Detachable magazine over 5 = prohibited weapon  
permit required

#### Shotgun other than Self Loading or Pump Action

Non detachable magazine 1 - unlimited = category A  
Detachable magazine 1 - 5 = category A  
Detachable magazine over 5 = prohibited weapon  
permit required

#### Shotgun Self Loading or Pump Action

Non detachable magazine 1 - 5 = category C  
Non detachable magazine over 5 = category D  
Detachable magazine 1 - 5 = category C  
Detachable magazine over 5 = prohibited weapon  
permit required

#### Pistols

Non detachable magazine 1 - 10 = category H  
Detachable magazine 1 - 10 rounds = category H  
Detachable magazine over 10 rounds = prohibited  
weapon permit required.

### Tubular Magazine Extension

Capable of extending the capacity of any firearm = prohibited weapon permit required.

Magazines designed to fit a machine gun, sub-machine gun or other rapid fire automatic or semi-automatic firearm = prohibited weapon permit required.

### What about a detachable magazine which also fits a firearm described in clause 4(4)(g)?

If the magazine was specifically designed for a firearm as described in clause 4(4)(g) of Schedule 1 to the *Weapons Prohibition Act 1998*, then that item is classified as a prohibited weapon and would require a prohibited weapon permit to authorise possession and use.

However, if the magazine was specifically designed for a category A, B, C or D type firearm, and incidentally also fits a firearm described in clause 4(4)(g) of the *Weapons Prohibition Regulation 2009*, then that item would not be considered to be a prohibited weapon and would not require a permit to authorise possession and use provided it was only ever attached to the firearm for which it was designed.

### Is there an exemption from obtaining a prohibited weapon permit for detachable firearm magazines in certain circumstances?

Yes. A person who holds a category D licence issued for the genuine reason of Vertebrate Pest Animal Control is exempt from the requirement to obtain a prohibited weapon permit for a detachable firearm magazine of the following kinds:

- (a) a rimfire rifle magazine with a capacity of more than 15 rounds,
- (b) a centre-fire self-loading rifle magazine with a capacity of more than 5 rounds,
- (c) a centre-fire rifle magazine (other than a self-loading rifle magazine) with a capacity of more than 10 rounds,
- (d) a shotgun magazine with a capacity of more than 5 rounds.

### References

Sections 4 & 8 of the *Firearms Act 1996*,

Clause 4(4) of Schedule 1 to the *Weapons Prohibition Act 1998*,

Clause 5 of Schedule 1 to the *Weapons Prohibition Regulation 2009*,

## Firearms Registry

### Address

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Murwillumbah NSW 2484

### Telephone

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### Interstate

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firearmsenq@police.nsw.gov.au

### Website

www.police.nsw.gov.au/firearms

### Where can I find more information?

The information provided in the FACT Sheet is for general guidance only. Applicants and licensees should familiarise themselves with the *Firearms Act 1996*, the *Firearms Regulation 2006*, the *Weapons Act 1998* and the *Weapons Prohibition Regulation 2009* which are available on the NSW Legislation website - [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au).



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