

Is it too easy to get a
gun in america?
essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Constitution protects the right “ to keep and bear arms.” But some say the availability of guns contributes to gun violence in the U. S. YES

Every day, eight American children and teenagers die from gun violence.

More than 29, 000 people are killed by guns in the U. S. each year. One major reason for these deaths is easy access to guns.

There are an astounding 200 million privately owned firearms in our nation today, including 65 million handguns. The victims of gun violence are of all ages and from all races. The most recent government figures reveal that 2, 825 children and teens died in America from gunshots in 2004. Since the assassinations of Senator Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, more than a million Americans have been killed by guns in the U. S. That’s more than the total number of U. S. combat deaths in all the wars in American history.

Shooting deaths occur on our streets, in our homes, and even in our schools. The massacre at Virginia Tech in April was the latest in a long list of schools where mass shootings have occurred. In each case, the shooters had easy access to firearms.

By contrast, other industrialized democracies such as Britain and Japan place far more restrictions on gun ownership. As a consequence, they all have dramatically lower rates of deaths from gun violence.

The Second Amendment was not intended to be a license for mass murder. Just as the government regulates the use of motor vehicles and the purchase of alcohol, it can and must enact strong laws to shrink the number of guns in

our communities and reduce the violence they breed. —Marian Wright Edelman

President, Children's Defense Fund

Is It Too Easy to Get a Gun in America?

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When people ask if firearms are too accessible in America, they might as well ask if religion and speech are too free. Almost all Americans agree that the second question is absurd, but so is the first one. The right to keep and bear arms is guaranteed in the Second Amendment, and access to firearms for law-abiding citizens is critical to keep that right intact. That right doesn't come without regulation. There are thousands of laws regulating the purchase, possession, and use of guns.

Businesses selling firearms must be federally licensed. People buying them have to meet certain requirements and pass background checks. Many jurisdictions impose waiting periods between the time someone walks into a store to buy a gun and when it can actually be taken home. All of these laws are designed to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals.

Do the laws work? Not always, but the data show that the areas of our country with the most draconian restrictions on firearms have the highest levels of crime. Criminals, by definition, break the law. Excessive firearm laws only restrict the rights of law-abiding citizens. Nowhere in our country are firearms too accessible, and, in many areas, firearms are not accessible

enough. In our nation's capital, gun-control laws are so restrictive that, in effect, only the criminals have access to guns.

We are fortunate to live in a country whose Founders valued this critical right enough to protect it. They were able to bear arms and defeat tyranny. In the end, that's what this right is about.

—U. S. Senator Larry Craig

Republican of Idaho