

How to Practice

While going out and shooting a round of trap, skeet or sporting clays is fun – and there is nothing wrong with strictly shooting for fun – if you want to get better at clays games you need to practice.

Practice is a deliberate plan of shooting.

Practice starts with a plan:

1. Go out and shoot a round for evaluation.
2. Record the score - record which presentations were the most problematic for you, i.e., looping crossers as 30 yards.
3. Record what impressions you were aware of during shooting, i.e., “I felt that I occluded the bird on (describe the presentation).” Add anything you think is significant about the days shooting:
 - a. Weather – sunny, overcast, windy, etc.
 - b. General feeling – “...had a big lunch before shooting, boy was that a mistake...”
4. State your long term and short-term goals”
 - a. Long Term: “For 2022/3; Shoot in the top 1/3 of the matches.”
 - b. Short-term: Master (describe the presentation) – “I’ll shoot them until I can shoot 25 straight without a miss.”
5. From your Long Term & Short-Term goals, as well as from evaluations – form a practice plan. “For today’s practice I am going to shoot 100 (describe the presentation) birds.”
6. Go out and shoot your practice plan. **Don’t deviate from your plan.**
7. **Evaluate the day’s practice session to formulate the next practice session.**

Remember tournaments are an evaluation of how well you’ve practice

Process before outcome!

Know why you missed,
not where...!!

**Master the process and the outcome will take care of
itself**

Practice should be a process of building skills...not just pulling the trigger.



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PRE-SHOT ROUTINE

Determine

1. **Break Point** – where you are going to kill the bird
Where you see the bird clearly and best – **look for detail on the target**
2. **Hold Point** – where you are going to hold your gun before calling “pull”
Hold point is a position that affords the best placement to accomplish the task of killing the bird.
3. **Visual Pick-up Point** – where your eyes go just prior to calling “pull”
 - Where your eyes are going to go to see the bird that starts the execution of the gun mount and thus successfully killing the bird.
 - Eye focus is faster inward, so look past flight path at an object beyond the trap and flight path for visual pick-up point.
 - Look between the gun hold position and the trap, not at the trap.
 - **Start with soft focus - bird in periphery - then gradually shift to a hard focus on a detail of the bird and pull the trigger.**

Stance:

1. Feet – shoulder width apart – toward break point
2. Shoulders – square over feet
3. Knees – slightly bent
4. Body weight – just slightly more on leading foot (**Nose over Toes & Belt Buckle Back** gets you there) - **Bend at the waist not the ankles!**
5. Head – up - eye level with the rib
6. Eyes - Both open
7. Quiet eyes
8. Call for the bird.
9. Shoot your plan

POST-SHOT ROUTINE

- Dead Pair
 - Celebrate the moment
 - See each bird explode during a post-shot visualization
 - Go back to pre-shot routine for next target(s)
- Target lost – (leave emotion out)
 - Stop at the end of the pair and look at the break points
 - Analyze what happened




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How to Practice

- Ask four questions:
 - Did I see detail on the target?
 - Did I control the bird?
 - Was the gun mount and gun movement well executed? (when other than pre-mounted)
 - Did I shoot my plan?
- Execute the pre-shot routine for the next target(s)



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