

# GUIDE TO HOSTING A **LEARN TO SHOOT EVENT**



*“Together we are changing the world for the better through shooting sports.”*

–Larry Potterfield Midway USA Foundation





## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

[PheasantsForever.org/Hunting/Hunting-Heritage](https://PheasantsForever.org/Hunting/Hunting-Heritage)

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## INTRODUCTION

Our Education & Outreach series of guides to hosting events are designed to provide an outline of information, tips and support for planning and delivering high quality events that engage youth, families and interested adults in outdoor activities. Guides include information that will provide a safe environment for participants that encourages participation, inspires learning, develops skills and fosters an affinity for PF/QF and our mission. Research shows that it takes multiple outdoor experiences and continuing support to cultivate a new hunter, shooting sports enthusiast or land steward. Using the entire series of guides can help chapters engage participants in multiple outdoor activities throughout each year. Used in that way, participants will be provided the skill-building opportunities and continuing support necessary to cultivate hunting conservationists and land stewards.

This Guide to Hosting a Learn to Shoot Event is designed to help chapters and partners introduce the thrill of shooting sports to first time or novice shooters. It's important to remember that these events are not competitions, they are learn to shoot events that are specifically designed to provide knowledge, skills and an introduction to shooting sports through education, interaction with experienced shooters and hands-on, skill-building activities.

Sharing our love for shooting sports can be an incredibly rewarding experience for both the mentor and the participant. It is a role we, as sportsmen and women, must take seriously. It is our responsibility to make certain that new shooting enthusiasts are not only given knowledge and skills, but the history and moral compass to engage in ethical hunting and land stewardship.

Learn to Shoot events can be as simple or as complex as you want to make them. Simple events set up in the back forty or at a local gun range can be relaxing and fun. Don't feel they need to be huge events with 100 attendees to be successful. Small 2 hour shoots with 10 attendees shooting air rifles and .22 rifles can be a blast for everyone involved. Take advantage of those local resources and volunteers you have to build a Learn to Shoot event that fits your needs.

*Let's get started and share our passion for shooting sports!*

### CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

*You are about to participate in one of the most rewarding activities Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever can offer a volunteer – an opportunity to share the outdoor traditions you cherish and mentor the next generation of hunting conservationists and land stewards.*

# A CONSERVATION MESSAGE

## Our Mission & Model

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever are dedicated to the conservation of quail, pheasants and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs.

Established in 1982, we are a grassroots, volunteer, membership-based organization and our members are a diverse group of hunters and non-hunters alike. Our business model sets us apart from other organizations in that our chapters are empowered to determine how they spend locally raised dollars on mission related activities. We are proud to boast Charity Navigator's top rating and we have a history of putting more than 90 cents out of every single dollar raised back to our mission – placing us among the nation's most efficient non-profit organizations.

## What We Do

The wildlife habitat work that Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever have accomplished has garnered us the reputation of “The Habitat Organization,” a tagline we are extremely proud of. Annually having a positive impact on hundreds of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat, putting high quality habitat on the landscape is still at the core of our mission today. Our advocacy efforts at local, state and national levels have an incredible impact on conservation policy. Finally, our chapters and volunteers share our outdoor traditions and conservation message with nearly 100,000 youth, families and interested adults each year to make sure that we are cultivating the next generation of hunting conservationists and land stewards.

## Why It Is Important

In the 1900s many species of wildlife were near extinction. It was hunters who stepped forward to help pay for and support conservation programs to restore many wildlife species. By buying hunting licenses and taxing themselves on equipment such as firearms, ammunition and clothing, hunters contribute the majority of funding for wildlife conservation in North America.

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation states that wildlife and fish belong to all citizens and should be managed in a way that will sustain healthy populations forever. This would not be possible without individuals and organizations like Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever that help raise millions of dollars for wildlife conservation and enhance millions of acres of wildlife habitat.

Clean water, clean air, healthy soil and a healthy environment benefit everyone. When you enjoy a hunting experience, listen to songbirds or watch a monarch butterfly, thank a hunter who has helped make sure there is quality wildlife habitat for those species and others. Better yet, join us in our efforts and do your part.

## How You Can Help

An engaged, informed and passionate base of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever members is the most powerful tool we have when it comes to putting more habitat on the ground, birds in the sky and raising the next generation of citizens who care. You are encouraged to do your part by becoming a member of Pheasants Forever or Quail Forever. We want you to join us and the future of wildlife conservation. Our hunting heritage depends on you!





# PLANNING YOUR EVENT

**Form a Learn to Shoot Planning Committee** Find a small dedicated group that is diverse in skills and committed to hosting a high quality event to serve as the Learn to Shoot Planning Committee. Involving resource professionals from state conservation agencies in the planning is a good idea. They will make sure the event complies with state regulations and can bring added resources as a helpful partner. Designating a capable and willing *Shooting Sports Coordinator* from that group is important. Events run more efficiently if one person takes charge and is responsible for organization, progress and the overall quality of the event. Planning the learn to shoot event should start six months in advance and is the most important part of a successful event. Three questions that need to be answered early in the planning process are:

1. Who should you invite to the event?
2. Where should you host the event?
3. When should you host the event?

## Learn to Shoot Event Goals & Learning Objectives

1. Everyone should know who we (PF/QF) are.
2. Everyone should feel they are in a **safe** and **fun** environment.
3. Everyone should understand and demonstrate the 4 rules of gun safety:
  - 1) Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
  - 2) Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
  - 3) Be certain of your target and what is beyond it.
  - 4) Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot.
4. Everyone should be able to shoot effectively.
5. Events should be for novice to beginner attendees, not just kids.

## Inviting Participants

Remember that the number of **GREAT** mentors you have should determine the number of participants allowed into the program. When selecting who should participate in a learn to shoot event, your chapter should consider the following:

- Determine what demographic (youth, adults, families, etc.) that your chapter wants to work with. Please be as inclusive as possible.
- Learn to shoot participants can complete a Hunter/ Firearm Safety Course prior to the event but it is not necessary to participate.
- Recruit participants that fit your demographic and have a desire to learn how to shoot but limited opportunity. Good places to recruit participants are local hunter safety classes, universities, places of worship, Boys & Girls Clubs, Scouting Groups, etc.

## Site Selection

The base camp for the learn to shoot event should provide all of the following: (existing ranges/clubs should be first choice because they provide partners that benefit to new folks at their facility)

- Enough shelter to gather and provide “classroom” space for instruction. Participants must have shelter from all types of weather. It’s tough to learn when you are uncomfortable due to weather conditions.
- Clean restroom facilities. It is best to have separate restrooms for males and females.
- Adequate parking for the size of event you are hosting.
- Shade or E-Z up canopies to provide shelter from sun, rain or wind at training stations.
- Adequate food preparation/serving facilities for the planned event. Be sure to have water to drink.







- Someone on site must have a way to communicate with emergency personnel in the case of an emergency.
- Adequate space for outdoor training areas. Make sure to take into consideration safe zones of fire and safe shot fall distances for shooting areas.

### Select the Event Date

Consider summer evenings when families are looking for something to do together. Choose in between seasons when shooting teams, coaches and athletes are available, prior to learn to hunt events, etc.

When selecting the date for your event, take into consideration the seasonal weather patterns, special seasons for events, volunteer availability, youth seasons and school calendars if it is a youth-focused event.

Consider holding your event on National Hunting & Fishing day, which is annually observed on the

fourth Saturday of September. Doing so may add more significance to the event and take advantage of additional local media coverage.

### Develop a Safety & Emergency Action Plan

Part of the planning process should include developing a basic safety and emergency action plan that addresses all of the following:

- Safety check of ALL firearms that are used at the event regardless of ownership.
- Where will firearms be stored during each phase of the event?
- How and by whom will they be transported during the event?
- How will ammunition be stored and dispersed?
- When and where will personal protection equipment be worn? Remember, all volunteers and attendees on or near the firing range must wear Personal Protection Equipment which includes safety glasses and hearing protection.
- What is the emergency or 911 address for the event location? Who will notify emergency dispatch of when and where the event will take place?
- What are the procedures for responding to accidents? Know the location, contact information and hours of operation for closest medical facility and veterinarian (if needed).
- What will happen in the event of severe weather? Where should people go?

### Develop the Stations

PF/QF sponsored learn to shoot events must provide instruction prior to participants engaging in a shooting experience. The Stations for learn to shoot events should be designed in a way that introduces participants to the knowledge and skills required to become a safe, confident and ethical marksman and hopefully a future hunter. Chapters that want to provide the highest quality event should consider a multi-day program that includes several high quality training days. Minimum training standards should include the following stations.

#### • Introduction to PF/QF Mission & Role of the Hunter Conservationist

During the opening remarks at your event, it is important to share with all participants the PF/QF mission, why what we do is important, the role of

# PLAN YOUR EVENT



the hunter in wildlife conservation and why it is important for participants to get involved in conservation. This is a great time to let them know when the chapter's next fundraising banquet is and how they can get more involved.

## • Firearms Safety

It's important to have this training session led by someone who is experienced at instructing new shooters. A certified instructor will get novice shooters on target more quickly and build their confidence prior to shooting. Partner with a local scholastic shooting team, state agency or shooting sports facility to find a qualified instructor.

**The first topic covered at this station should be the "Four Rules of Firearms Safety."**

1. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
2. Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
3. Be certain of your target and what is beyond it.
4. Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot.

• **Air guns** are a wonderful way to introduce new shooters to the shooting sports. Air guns provide a fun, enjoyable shooting experience because they are quiet and easy to shoot. At this station, you will learn about how air guns work. It's a fantastic way to set up a fun range using what some people consider trash as targets. Tin cans, pop bottles, and charcoal briquettes, even homemade paper targets work perfect for all levels of shooting experience.

*"I had no idea shooting trap could be so fun. Now I shoot every week if I can and my parents shoot with me. Our family spends more time together than we have in the past."*

– NW Iowa Youth

• **Rifle Marksmanship** stresses fun, accessibility and practical marksmanship skills. It is a great game for shooters who want a target event that does not require expensive match-conditioned rifles or gear. It is ideal for hunters who recognize that practicing rimfire rifle shooting throughout the year will make them more skilled marksmen when they pursue game. And most important, it's perfect for the shooter who enjoys going out to the range to have a relaxed competition with friends.

• **Shotgun Shooting** is the first step to learning wingshooting skills and other popular outdoors activities like sporting clays, trap shooting and skeet. Shotgun shooting can be fun for all ages and all skill sets. Provided with the right equipment that fits the shooter and the right training, it can be a lifelong journey with friends and family who like to shoot together.







- **Gun Cleaning & Care** is important to assure that guns operate correctly. Taking the time to clean a gun is as important as shooting the gun and storing the gun securely. Each learn to shoot event should cover the basic gun breakdown and cleaning process and how to protect your gun for a lifetime of use. Don't assume that gun owners know this already.

- **Additional Activities & Ideas**

It is important to keep participants and their families engaged and actively developing skills. Offering a variety of activities throughout the event will provide learning opportunities while participants wait for their turn to shoot. It will also keep families and spectators entertained throughout the day.

Additional activities include:

- o Reloading Shotgun Shells
- o A Wrist Rocket/Slingshot Range
- o Wingshooting 101
  - Trap
  - Skeet
  - Sporting Clays
  - 5 Stand
- o Muzzle Loading/Black Powder Rifles
- o Archery
- o Wild Game Cooking
- o Wildlife ID
- o How to Find Public Land Hunting Areas
- o Additional Shooting Practice
- o Knife Sharpening
- o Field First-Aid (local first responders can provide instruction)

**Select and Train Volunteers**

Considering the number of mentors, guides, additional instructors, and cooks that it takes to conduct a learn to shoot event, you should plan on a minimum number of volunteers that is two times the number of participants at each station. Volunteer positions that need to be filled include:

- **Shooting Spots Coordinator** - the Coordinator's role will be to keep the event running efficiently and safely, troubleshooting challenges that come up and overall management of the event.

- **Mentors** - every learn to shoot event should be conducted with mentors at a 1:1 ratio with shooting line participants. The definition of a mentor is a wise advisor, teacher or coach and their role is to spend the entire event with their respective participant. Ultimately, mentors will share individual experiences and knowledge regarding our outdoor heritage. Finding both male and female mentors is important. Involving female mentors will increase the quality of the event and encourage more of their involvement in other aspects of the chapter. At a youth event, parents/guardians should not mentor their own children. Make certain to choose your mentors carefully as they are critical to the success of the event.

- **Shooting/Firearm Instructors** - have the final say of whether the attendee needs more shooting and/or firearm safety instruction prior to going on to the next station. It is important to the success of the event to partner with



# SELECT AND TRAIN VOLUNTEERS

a certified instructor to provide this portion of the training. A good wing shot does NOT necessarily make a good shooting instructor.

- **Firearm Safety Instructors** - should be certified safety instructors or better yet, state agency staff that are trained and certified in firearm safety instruction.
- **Support Volunteers** - include cooks, registration workers, logistics volunteers, clay bird/trap thrower operators, range set-up staff, Range Safety Officers and other knowledgeable instructors for specific stations.

In most cases, the majority of volunteers associated with a learn to shoot event will not be certified instructors. In an effort to provide quality instruction and a safe environment, volunteers should attend a volunteer training where the following topics are covered:

- Discuss the goal of the learn to shoot event
  - Define the role of each volunteer position
  - Outline the event for training sessions and shoots
  - Review PF/QF Youth Protection Guidelines – Sharing these guidelines with all volunteers will help minimize risk to youth, volunteers and chapters when conducting events.
  - E.D.O.C. Style of Instruction – All people, adults included, learn best in one of three primary ways: hearing, seeing or doing. Following these simple guidelines will help instructors reach more participants.
  - T.A.B.K. = Four Rules of Firearm Safety – This simple acronym will help instructors and students remember the four rules of firearms safety.
  - Fill out the Volunteer Insurance Form and return it in to the National Office prior to the event. This form is for your protection and should be a priority to complete **BEFORE THE EVENT.**
- Finally, review the emergency plan for severe weather or accidents.

## Conservation Leadership Opportunity

Every chapter is in need of volunteers that have energy and fresh ideas. Consider recruiting a young, enthusiastic volunteer from a local shooting team, hunter safety course, event participant or local FFA chapter to serve as an Apprentice Youth Chair. Provide that young volunteer (or several young volunteers) an opportunity to develop their leadership skills by helping plan chapter outreach events and banquet activities for youth, serve as a peer mentor or assist instructors at events. Recruiting and retaining the next generation of conservation leaders and volunteers is our responsibility. Their enthusiasm and skills will help build a stronger chapter.

*Our chapter was struggling with attendance to our meetings and overall lack of drive. We immediately put on a Learn to Shoot event and it easy and it was a tremendous success. We gained four people that have now become chapter members. We also used the Adopt-A-Team Program to sponsor our FFA Trap Team. It was a huge success raising \$4,500 towards their endowment fund. Since then we have had other organizations wanting to work with us with the Adopt-A-Team Program in the future. Our attendance at our meetings has tripled and everyone is excited. Our banquet this year was the biggest in our history and we raised more money than ever! “*

– Cory Minnis,

President of Shortgrass Chapter,  
Chillcothe, MO

# PROMOTE THE EVENT



Learn to Shoot events can attract positive publicity and promote the work your chapter is doing. If done correctly, you may find that you have more volunteers, members and donors than ever before. Your chapter should take advantage of a great story in the following ways:

- **Work with the media**

- o Contact local media outlets (newspapers, television and radio) at least three weeks in advance of the event. Provide them a summary of the event, date, location, your contact info and the best time to attend the event for photo and interview opportunities. Contact them several days prior to the event and remind them that you have a story for them.
- o Make certain to have a person designated to work with the media when they arrive. That person should be dressed to represent PF or QF in a positive manner, should know our mission and be familiar with the entire agenda and the goals for the learn to shoot event.

- o Be prepared to recommend participants for interviews who can speak well about the event.
- o Provide a post event press release to media outlets that were not able to attend the event.

- **Invite dignitaries**

- o Ask important members of the community, chapter sponsors, elected officials or other dignitaries to attend your event to help increase media attention.

- **Promote the event at fundraising banquets**

- o Use photographs and video footage collected at the event to make an impressive display for your next banquet or other community events.
- o Invite event participants to attend the banquet and recognize them there. If youth, encourage them to wear their event hat and vest to the banquet.



## AVAILABLE FROM PF/QF

### Merchandise

Purchasing merchandise such as orange hats and shooting glasses from our PF/QF store recycles your chapter dollars back into our wildlife conservation mission. Yes, you may be able to purchase participant gifts at a discounted rate from other sources, but those dollars no longer support our mission. In addition, participants wearing the PF/QF logo feel an instant sense of “belonging” to our organization. That can create an affinity for our brand and our mission. Participants in branded apparel, like vests and hats, make for great media and promotional photos/videos. We encourage you to purchase the following recommended PF/QF merchandise for your learn-to-shoot event participants and/or instructors.

### Membership

It is important to encourage event participants, family members and event guests to become members of PF/QF. Every membership equals more acres of wildlife habitat and public land, sharing our hunting heritage with more first-time hunters and more citizens that care about land stewardship. We are proud to boast Charity Navigator’s top rating and we have a history of putting more than 90 cents out of every dollar raised straight back to our mission of upland wildlife habitat conservation – placing PF/QF among the nation’s most efficient non-profit organizations. Your chapter should consider providing every learn to shoot participant a membership. Through our publications, we will continue to share our mission and wildlife conservation message with those new members. There are three levels of memberships to fit all ages of attendees. Youth ages up to 18 “Ringnecks” cost chapters \$10. Student memberships are for ages 16-22 year old are for young adults who are in school cost \$20 and finally adult memberships cost \$35.





# DAY OF THE EVENT

**Game on** – it's time to share our heritage and deliver a high quality, high energy event! Here are a few tips that make everyone feel welcome, safe, comfortable and ready for a fun-filled day of learning how to shoot.

- Meet with instructors and volunteers just prior to the start of the event. Make certain everyone is familiar with the event agenda and understands their role.
- Have a registration desk with friendly volunteers that accomplish the following:
  - o Welcome participants and their families.
  - o Provide name badges to participants (make certain all volunteers have name badges as well). This is an often overlooked practice but so important. A person's name is the most important word in the English language to that person. Being able to call a person by their name when providing instruction, asking questions, providing praise or making corrections has a positive impact.
  - o Have participants and parents/guardians (if youth event) sign event waivers.
  - o Collect appropriate information for memberships and future banquet invites.
  - o Provide a Volunteer Recruitment Form to adults and interested youth. Let them know that your chapter can always use help.
  - o Provide facility maps so participants and parents/guardians know what is planned and where to go.
  - o This is also a good time to perform a safety check on firearms brought by participants.
- Make certain instructors and mentors are dressed appropriately. It is a good idea to have instructors and mentors in similar hats and/or shirts so they are easily identified.
- It is a good idea to provide opening remarks with all participants and parents/guardians present. Opening remarks should include:
  - o Going over the day's activities and logistics for the event
  - o Expectations for participants, family members and volunteers.
  - o Summarizing the Safety & Emergency Action Plan
  - o Conservation Message



- Providing snacks, drinks or even a light meal makes sure everyone involved in the event is comfortable. Being hungry, thirsty, cold, wet or hot is not conducive to learning or having fun. Make certain to provide the basics for comfort.
- At the end of the day, ask willing participants to share a story from the day.
- Ask participants to complete the following:
  - o Provide participants a post-event evaluation and the time to complete it. You will receive more constructive feedback if you make time in the agenda for getting it done. A Participant Evaluation can be found in the appendix.
- Invite the participants and their families to the next PF/QF Fundraising Banquet to become members and learn more about our organization.
- Provide "Certificate of Participation" to participants.

# SHOOTING FUNDAMENTALS

## Marksmanship

**1. Position** – assume a position with good balance, support and natural point of alignment (most shooting at Young Guns events should be from a benchrest position), use shooting bags, bag risers and/or raise/lower bench seat height.

### 2. Aiming

a. Sight alignment – proper position of the shooting eye, the rear sight and the front sight in relation to each other.

b. Sight picture – relationship between the gun's properly aligned sights and the target. Traditional sight picture is a "six o'clock" hold. Visual focus should be primarily on the front sight.

**3. Hold Control** – hold the gun as still as possible on the target during the period the shot is fired

**4. Breath Control** – minimize gun movement due to breathing. Typically expelling about ½ of lung capacity and holding the breath until the shot is fired, after which the shooter should breath normally.

**5. Trigger Control** – apply slow, gradual, even pressure on the trigger in order to produce a "surprise break" where the shooter cannot predict when the gun will fire. Placing the finger on the trigger blade between the first knuckle joint and the tip of the finger is a good starting point in helping trigger control.

**6. Follow Through** – maintain all fundamentals through the shot and maintain focus on the front sight until after the shot breaks.

## Standard Rifle Range Commands

**1. Shooters to the line** – shooters waiting come from spectator area to line

**2. Range is hot**

**3. Load and make ready** – instructors should assist students in getting into position and loading their rifles (1 round only to start)

**4. Is the line ready?** – verify all shooters are in position and ready

**5. Fire when ready**

**6. Cease fire** – all shooters must stop shooting, ANYONE may announce a cease fire

**7. Unload and show clear** – firearms are unloaded, magazines removed, actions open and instructor visually inspects chamber. Firearms must be benched and no longer handled.

**8. Range is safe** – shooters/instructors may go downrange to check targets

## Recommended Range Setup for Events

Proper range setup for your event is critical to ensure safety of the event and success of the youth participants. Below are recommendations for setting up your ranges.

### SLINGSHOT – ALL AGES

#### 1. Range areas

Any open space with at least 100 yards of space downrange is suitable.

#### 2. Spectator areas

A safe spectator area should be designated about 10 yards behind the shooting line.

#### 3. Target presentations and shooter positions

Shooters should be positioned just behind a designated shooting line. Targets should be fun and interactive



and placed from 10 to 30 feet from the shooting line. Hanging paint cans, pie pans or similar targets that make noise, fall over or otherwise react are preferable. Avoid targets that present a ricochet hazard.

## AIR RIFLE –ALL AGES

### 1. Range areas

Any open space with at least 100 yards of space down range. Suitable backstops can also be constructed from carpet, loosely draped canvas, or a berm or hillside.

### 2. Spectator areas

A safe spectator area should be designated about 10 yards behind the shooting line.

### 3. Target presentations and shooter positions

Shooters should be positioned just behind a designated shooting line on a shooting bench with good support for the rifle (rests/sandbags). Targets should be either paper or interactive targets placed from 5 to 10 yards from the shooting line. Commercially available reactive targets work well as do balloons and steel targets made for air gun use. Avoid targets that present a ricochet hazard.

## RIMFIRE RIFLE – AGES 8 AND OLDER

### 1. Range areas

For rimfire ranges it is preferable to use an existing rifle range with established backstops and side berms. If a range is not available, be sure there is an adequate backstop directly behind the target stands because .22 ammunition can travel over 1 mile.

### 2. Spectator areas

A safe spectator area should be designated about 10 yards behind the shooting line.

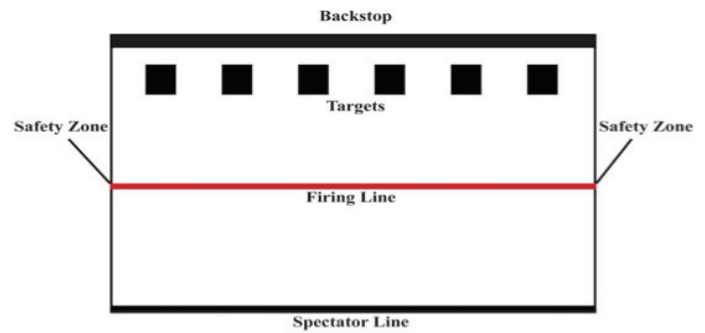
### 3. Target presentations and shooter positions

Shooters should be positioned just behind a designated shooting line on a shooting bench with good support for the rifle (rests/sandbags). Targets should be either paper or interactive targets placed from 10 to 25 yards from the shooting line. Commercially available reactive targets work well as do balloons and steel targets made for rim fire rifle use. Avoid targets that present a ricochet hazard.

## Shooting Fundamentals

### SHOTGUN FUNDAMENTALS

**1. Break Point** – determine where shooter plans to break target, which is typically when the target looks most crisp and clear. Show the shooter



Sample Air Gun Range Setup

a target to determine this and have them point their finger at the target while doing so.

**2. Stance/Foot Position** – set natural point of alignment (NPA) to break point so gun moves there naturally. Shooter should be in a stance similar to a boxer with more weight distributed on the front foot.

**3. Hold Point** – where the gun starts out before calling for the target about half the way between the break point and where the shooter first sees the target. Instructors should use visual aids where possible.

**4. Gun mount** – gun should be mounted so the recoil pad is fully contacting the shoulder and the face is placed on the comb of the gun. Shooter's hand, arm and shoulder muscles should be relaxed.

**5. Focal Point** – Move the eyes away from the gun and towards the area the target will appear. Relax the eyes.

**6. Trigger thought** – encourage the shooter to “see the rings and ridges” of the target

**7. Call for the target** – shooter should loudly and clearly call “PULL”

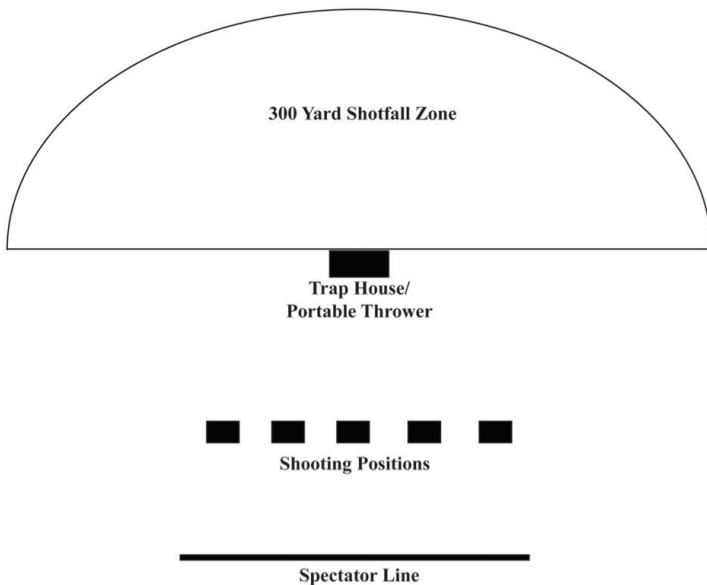
**8. Eyes to the target and target focus** – shooter should focus hard on the target so it becomes crisp and clear, the gun is only in the secondary vision and should feel like an “extension” of the shooter's

**9. Move the gun to the target** – on incoming floating targets or trap targets shooter should feel like they are pointing just underneath the target. For incoming/crossing targets (skeet targets), shooters should feel like they are pointing at the front-bottom edge of the target.

**10. Trigger pull** – the shotgun trigger should be “slapped” or “firmly pulled” the instant the shooter feels like the gun is in the proper position on the target

**11. Follow through** – shooter's eyes should stay visually engaged with the target or target pieces before, during and after the shot.





Sample Trap Range Setup

## SHOTGUN – AGES 11 AND OLDER

### 1. Range areas

Range areas can be standard trap, skeet or sporting clays fields or can be set up in wide open space with portable trap machines. All shotgun areas should have a 300-yard safety zone perimeter.

### 2. Spectator areas

Spectator areas should be well defined. For trap and skeet fields this area should be well behind the 27-yard line (trap) or station 4 (skeet). For portable ranges, the area should be marked with caution tape and/or painted lines.

### 3. Target presentations and shooter positions

Targets should be basic targets at close range. For a trap field, the trap machine should be locked to throw straight-away targets from post 3, with the shooters between post 3 on the 16-yard line and the trap house. For skeet fields, select low house targets from stations 1 or 7 or high house targets from station 7. For portable machines, the preferred target is a high, floating direct incomer that lands about 20 yards in front of the shooting position. Otherwise a straight, outgoing target should be used. When moving off a standard shooting position (such as on a trap/skeet station), a designated shooting position (such as a portable shooting cage or hula hoop) must be used.

## Eye Dominance

Most people have a dominant eye, just as they have a dominant hand or foot. When a person looks at an object with both eyes, the dominant eye aligns directly with the object unless an obstruction interferes with a clear line of sight. Under normal conditions, when a finger is pointed at an object, or two or more objects are aligned visually, the dominant eye determines the alignment. Just as some people are truly ambidextrous, a very small number of people have indeterminate eye dominance. The majority, however, have a dominant eye. In most cases eye dominance and hand dominance are on the same side, but many people are cross-dominant. That is, their handedness and eyedness are on opposite sides.

Humans have binocular vision – they get slightly different images from each eye and blend them in the brain to yield one image and a sense of depth or distance. With both eyes open, you have a wider field of vision with more peripheral vision and better motion detection. In short, you simply see better when both eyes are used. Experience shows that shooting skills are learned more easily and often better developed when a shooter learns from the dominant eye side. Where eyedness and handedness are on the same side, new shooters easily use the dominant side. Cross-dominant shooters have a greater challenge, but they do better when they learn to shoot with the dominant eye.

Some shooters, particularly those with successful experience in shooting with the non-dominant eye, are reluctant to switch. The switching process usually involves a brief period of reduced success and frustration, followed by improved skill levels beyond their original level. Some experienced shooters have learned to shoot one-eyed, closing the dominant eye or obstructing it with a shield, blinder, spot of tape or a small object on the lens of the shooting glasses. Others have learned to override their dominant eye through practiced concentration or to compensate in some other fashion. Fewer than 1 percent of all shooters must shoot one-eyed because of dominance switching. In most cases, the shooter learns to use both eyes and shoot from the dominant-eye side. Learning one-eyed or with the dominant eye obstructed or closed increases stress and fatigue, and reduces concentration and quickness. Results indicate reduced performance levels, increased frustration for the shooter and slower learning.

## How to Determine Eye Dominance

Following are a couple basic methods for determining eye dominance are described. Those that provide a check for “cheating” are more effective in an instructional setting. Regardless of the method selected, the exercise should be repeated several times. Instructors should remain alert for eye-dominance related problems with shooting performance.

### • Hand-eye Method

Shooters should get into their coach-pupil pairs, standing several arm-lengths apart and facing each other squarely. The “pupil” should place one thumb over the other, then cross the fingers of the top hand over those of the bottom one. This leaves a small, triangular opening. Raise the hands, keeping both eyes open, and center the “coach’s” nose in the triangular opening. At this point the coach should note which eye is visible in the opening. Then the

“pupil” should bring his or her hands slowly back to the face, keeping the “coach’s” nose in the opening. The hands should come to the dominant eye. Coaches must watch closely for wavering between the eyes, an indication of “cheating” or forcing the hands to a predetermined eye. The exercise should be repeated several times to confirm original results with both partners checking their eye dominance.

### • Finger-point Method

With a pointing method, a distant object or a partner is used. The finger is pointed naturally at the object with both eyes open and the face square to the object. The eyes are covered or closed alternately. When the dominant eye is closed, or covered the finger appears to jump away from the original location. Learning to shoot well is a challenge. You need every advantage to meet that challenge effectively. Learning from the dominant-eye side is a major advantage.



## POST EVENT

What you do after the event is sometimes just as important as what went into planning and hosting it. The entire planning committee should meet to accomplish the following:

- Complete and submit the *PF/QF Online Event Report Form* – This information is used to provide liability insurance for chapters and volunteers, report accomplishments, secure grants and donations and share YOUR stories at the national level.
- Send out “thank you” cards. A simple thank you can have an incredible impact on someone’s future involvement and/or support for chapter events.

- Complete and send post event press releases to local media that were unable to attend the event.
- Review evaluations and discuss improvements for the next event while the past event is still fresh in your minds.

If you have questions, contact Colby Kerber  
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or call Pheasants Forever at 651-773-2000.





*“Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever are non-profit conservation organizations dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs.”*

*“Wildlife and its habitat cannot speak, so we must and we will.”*

**-Theodore Roosevelt**



## **CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!**

You are about to participate in one of the most rewarding activities Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever can offer a volunteer – an opportunity to share the outdoor traditions we cherish, and mentor the next generation of hunting conservationists and land stewards.