

PINHOE TARGET SHOOTING CLUB



Welcome to our club!

This pack contains all the information you need to progress your journey from your introduction evenings to full membership.

If you decide to apply for membership, your folder will gradually fill with all sorts of useful information about your chosen shooting discipline and the club in general. This will include training opportunities. So hang on to it and watch it grow with you!

What is our club?

Today's Pinhoe Target Shooting Club results from a merger of several other local shooting clubs in 2018. Our history goes back over 60 years. We are a registered charity and therefore survive on membership fees, donations and grant funding. We have recently (August 2021) completed a massive building project, which has resulted in one of the finest shooting centres in the South of England. We have a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a committee who between them decide on important matters relating to the wellbeing of the club. Like all small bore* shooting clubs, we are governed by The National Small bore Rifle Association (NSRA) and are insured through this body.

We shoot for fun and in competitions which range from local to national level and we have an excellent record in both. We currently have a Paralympian member who represented GB at the 2021 Olympics. We particularly extend a welcome to those in our community who have disabilities.

('Small bore' refers to the size of ammunition we shoot.)*



What firearms to we use?

We shoot **Prone Rifles** lying down at 25 yds or 50 yds



We shoot **Sport Rifles** from a standing position at 20 yds



We shoot **Air Rifles** from a standing position at 20 yds



We shoot **Air pistols** from a standing position at 10m or 20 yds



We shoot **Bench rest** from a sitting position at 25 yds



Types of targets



Types of ammunition



or



Pinhoe Target Shooting Club Safety Rules

Indoor target shooting has an excellent safety record. This is because all members of shooting clubs follow strict rules to keep themselves and other members safe. Set out below are the rules that apply across all the shooting disciplines at our club. *Extra rules may apply in individual shooting sections which you will learn about when you visit them.*

-  Treat every firearm as if it were loaded. Check, check, and check again especially when receiving a firearm from someone else or from an armoury
-  Never point a firearm, loaded or unloaded, at any person
-  Always keep firearms pointing down the range
-  When carrying a rifle, the barrel should pointing upwards
-  A safety flag must be inserted in firearms when firing is not taking place
-  Firearms should be unloaded before leaving the range
-  Only load a firearm at the firing point immediately before firing
-  Keep your finger off the trigger until you are aiming at the target
-  If you have a problem, inform the range officer by raising your hand before trying to correct the problem or before leaving the firing point
-  Never rely on a firearm's safety catch to protect you from unsafe handling
-  Never leave a firearm unattended
-  Obey instantly a range officer's instructions given on the range
-  Never remove firearms or ammunition from the club if you are not authorised to do so and are not in possession of a Firearms Certificate
-  At home, store firearms and ammunition (including pellets) in accordance with the law and beyond the reach of children
-  Never carry an uncovered firearm in public. This is a criminal offence

In time, these rules will become part of you. Until this happens, do not be offended if another club member corrects your behaviour. Remember, every shooter is a safety officer!

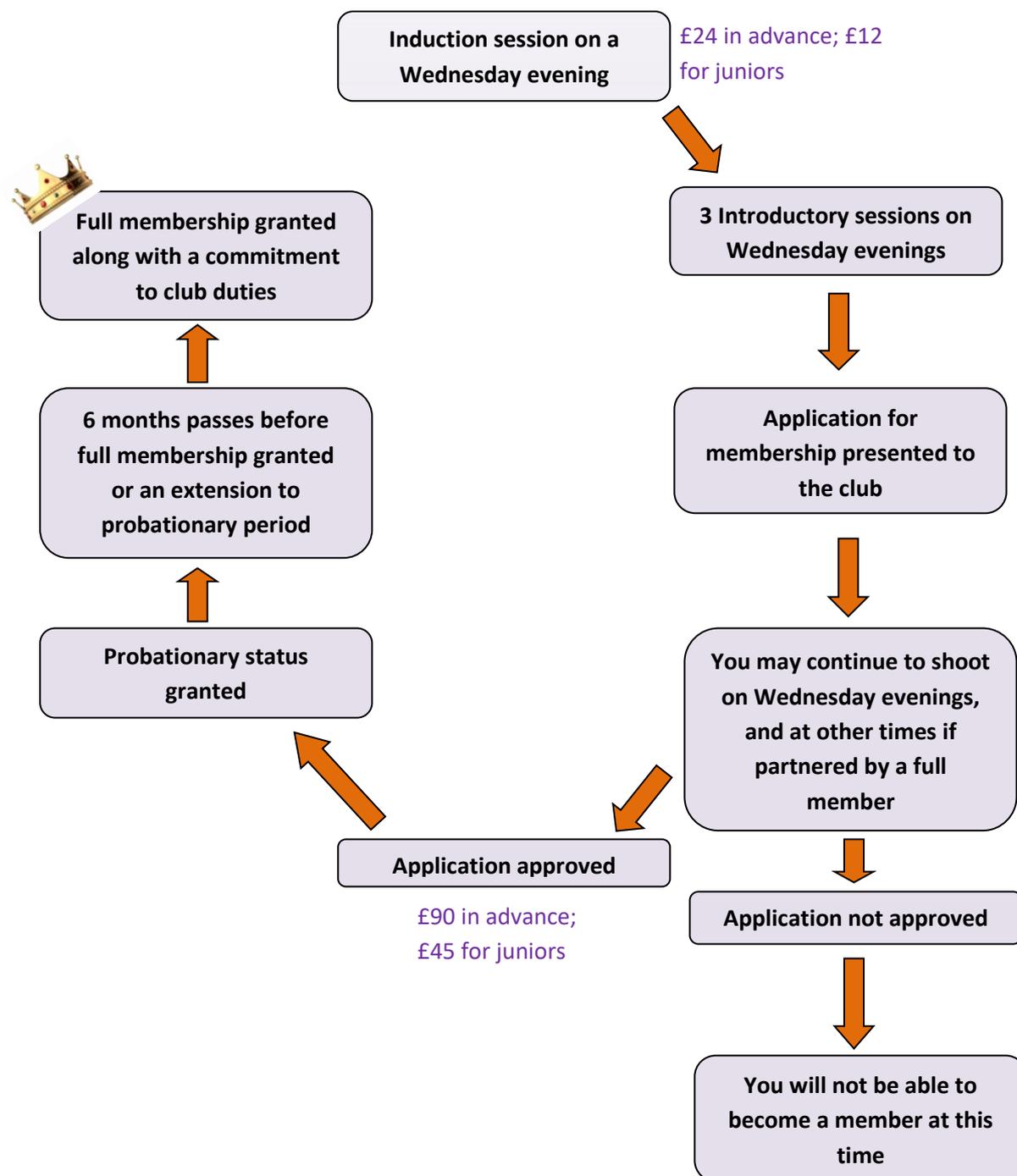
Personal protection

Ear defenders (ear plugs or muffs) should be worn when shooting on a range. Exposure to the high frequency sounds of firing can permanently damage hearing.

Eye protection may be required in some shooting disciplines. Ask for advice in your section.

Exposure to lead in ammunition is hazardous. Always wash your hands after shooting.

Progress from induction to full membership



Junior membership

Junior membership follows the same path shown in the diagram above. Junior members can start shooting air rifles and/or air pistols from their 10th birthday. If they wish, they can shoot 'live' firing rifles from the age of 12.

If you are a junior member, you must be accompanied by one of your parents. This rule remains in place until your 18th birthday when senior membership begins. When you are 18, you will assume all the responsibilities and privileges of full membership, including club duties, voting on club matters and holding positions of responsibility within the club. As a junior member, you may take part in club and other competitions. Age is no barrier to excellence in our sport!



When can I shoot?

It is likely that you attended your **Induction Evening** on a Wednesday. During your induction, you will have met lots of club members and seen what our facilities have to offer. You will have observed at least three of our five different types of shooting disciplines in action. During your three **Introduction** sessions, you will have tried out some of these disciplines for yourself. **Wednesday** evenings are set aside for this because they are staffed by experienced shooters, range officers, and a number of coaches who are there to assist you. When you have completed your Introduction sessions, you can then make an application to become a full member of our club. It may take a while for your application to be processed and the relevant background checks to be made. In the mean time you will be welcome to attend the club on **Wednesday** evenings or other times if you are accompanied by a full member.

Once your application has been approved, and you become a **probationary member** you can come to the club through two routes:

- booking on line through our 'Members only' password protected partition of our web site. You must be accompanied by another full member.
- attending a regular club evening for your chosen discipline/s

Equipment

PTSC is able to lend you all the equipment you need to enjoy your early shooting experience. You are only expected to pay for your ammunition which will be held in an armoury under the club's Firearm Certificate.

This arrangement can last for as long as you like. However, you may find



that progress with your shooting skills is quicker if you eventually purchase equipment which you can adjust to suit your personal requirements.

We advise you not to purchase equipment, such as firearms and scopes, until you are convinced that you will continue with the sport well beyond your probationary period.



Borrowed equipment may be shared with other members so it is a good idea to buy inexpensive items early on, such as ear defenders, blinders, and gloves (where needed). You could try the following target shooting suppliers: <https://www.intershoot.co.uk/> <https://bedstargetsupplies.co.uk/> and <https://www.nsrashop.co.uk/>

If you are blessed with perfect vision the list above is all you need.

However, if you have a refractive error and normally wear spectacles, you may eventually need to consider shooting glasses. Normal glasses used for reading are not ideal for target shooting. If you do need

shooting spectacles, then your progress may be limited until you acquire some. We have an optician in our club so you could ask him for advice!





Which discipline shall I shoot?

This is purely a matter of personal choice. Many club members shoot more than one discipline. If you can only attend one shooting session a week, then it may be sensible to limit your choice until you have become proficient in one discipline. That way you gain confidence in seeing your improvement. If however, you just want to come along and have fun in all disciplines, there is absolutely no reason you shouldn't. You will quickly learn if you have a preference. For example, younger members may find that a prone rifle is too heavy for the time being, or that a back problem makes it easier to do bench rest shooting. Try it and see!



Bench rest shooting may be your sport of choice if mobility is an issue or if super accuracy is your thing.



Prone shooting is also a super accuracy sport. Half a millimetre can make all the difference, but you have to get up once you are down there!



Air pistol and air rifle shooting are fast growing sports across the world. Competition air guns do not need a firearms licence in the UK, and are therefore more manageable sports for some people.



The **sport rifle** discipline can use live firing or air rifles. It is a precision discipline which is carried out in a standing position. Watch out for that wobble!

What if I have a disability?

Having a disability is usually no barrier to the enjoyment of shooting. Things are just done differently. It surprises some to learn that people with a severe visual impairment can, and do compete in shooting competitions. If you watched the 2021 Paralympics shooting competitions, you would have witnessed some extraordinary performances, including one from a competitor in our club. Our club welcomes members with disabilities, and we look forward to learning how best to accommodate the different challenges this brings us. We may not have all the answers, but we can listen and learn from the experiences of others in this field, and in particular, from potential new members.

The Disabled Shooting Project puts it this way:

“Target shooting is the most accessible, inclusive and integrated of all mainstream sports - this is the Disabled Shooting Project's key message.” (<https://www.disabledshooting.org.uk/>)



Outdoor shooting

Outdoor shooting over much longer distances with Small Bore rifles, is a competition sport enjoyed by lots of our members. It requires a different and challenging set of skills, particularly if it is windy!

At the moment our own outdoor range (50m) is a muddy strip due to the building process, but work is starting soon to restore it to its former glory. When this is finished, we will look forward to still, sunny days shooting in the fresh air. We will also continue to use other local outdoor club ranges for some competition shooting.





What happens in the first months after becoming a Probationary Member?

You will need to do a little preparation before your first visit as a Probationary Member.

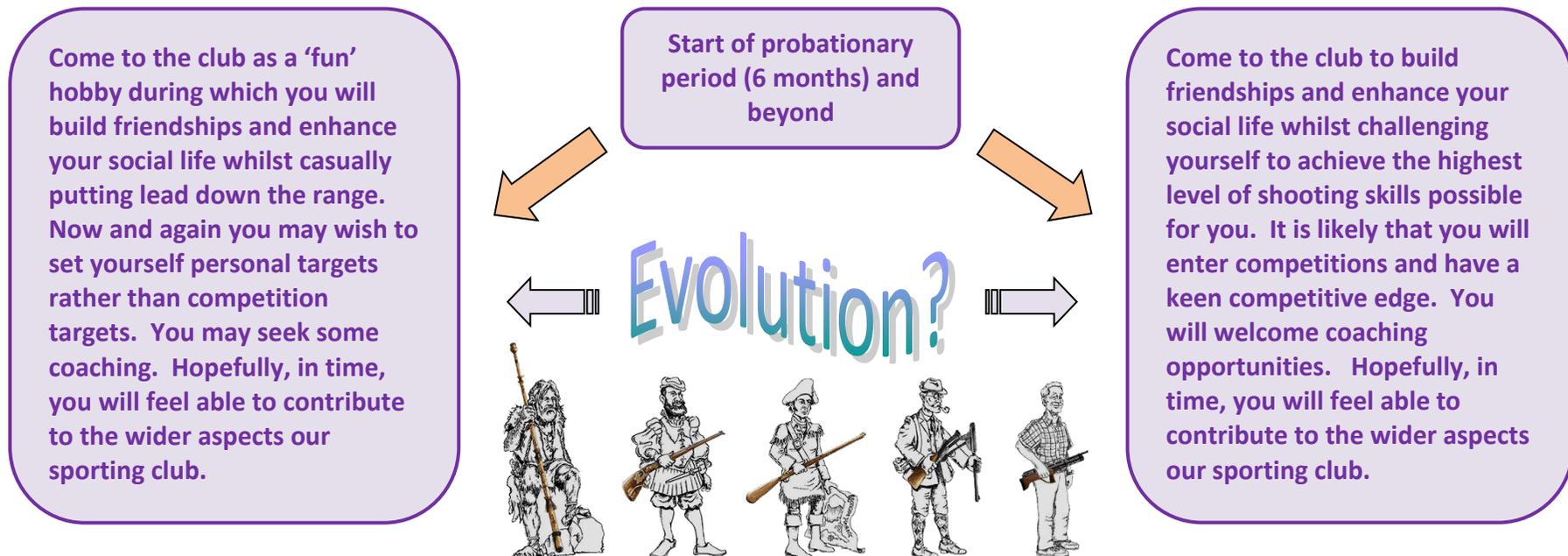
- 📢 Choose which shooting section you wish to start with and when you will be coming
- 📢 Give our Membership Secretary this information a few of days ahead of your arrival

The Membership Secretary will then alert somebody in your section of your arrival details. This will mean that you will have a point of contact straight away. It may be somebody you have met already during your introductory sessions. Whatever the case, make yourself known to him/her when you arrive. If necessary, do this via the Duty Officer who will be manning a desk in one of the range buildings.

You may be reminded of some of the safety rules before or during your shooting. This is to be expected and designed to keep everybody safe.

You will then be given the kit you need to start your shooting. Make sure you understand what you are being given. **Keep asking questions.** Make sure you feel comfortable with what you are doing before and during your shoot.

From this point on, it is up to you how you wish to proceed. Basically, you will have two options which could *evolve over time*.



How can I help myself during my probationary period?

Your **Probationary Period** is the best time for you to get to know us and *visa versa*. For us, that is a legal requirement. If we don't get to know you well, we will be less able to approve your full membership. For you, the more members you know, the more help you can call on when you need it. So, don't be shy. Put yourself about a bit!

The more shooting sessions you attend, the sooner you will feel comfortable within the section/s you have chosen to frequent: once a week would be a good target. If you have the time, more is always better.

Whatever your motivation for joining our club, you will want to acquire the basic proficiencies as quickly as possible. You will achieve this in your chosen section/s. However, there is a degree of overlap between all types of shooting disciplines. What follows is a basic introduction into some of these commonalities. It may help you to read through this a few times as you progress through your Probationary Period. Practice does not always make perfect, but it certainly helps. So practice!

Don't be afraid to ask for help. There will be members within your discipline who will be willing and able to answer your questions and offer advice on improving your technique.

Breathing

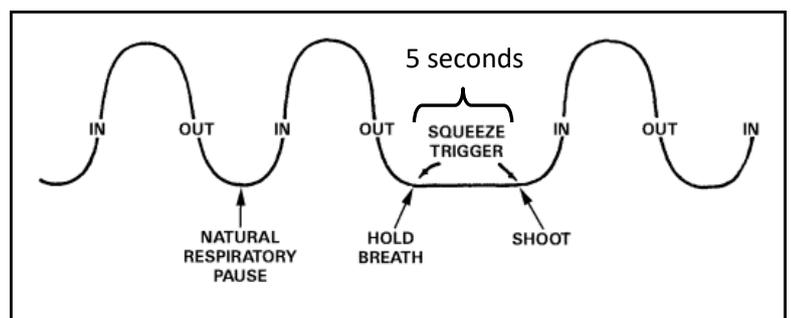
Breathing is not a requirement to be a member of our shooting club, but it does help! Correct breathing technique has a big influence over the accuracy of a shot. When we breathe it moves our abdomen, chest and shoulders. Inhaling increases the amount of air in your lungs, and chest muscles raise the rib cage. Exhaling does the opposite. This causes a firearm to move significantly when at the point of aim.

We have to control our breathing to hold a pistol or rifle steady on the target. The deeper and slower our breathing the more oxygen gets to our eyes and brain. Slow and deep breathing also has a calming effect which improves concentration. Short breaths that raise the shoulders are not helpful. Try practising deep breathing with minimal shoulder movement. You may find it helpful to follow this breathing routine.

- bring your rifle or pistol to the aiming position
- take two deep, slow breaths
- on your second exhalation, remove about two thirds of the air from your lungs
- hold your breath for no more than 5 seconds
- during this 5 seconds release your shot
- hold your breath for a couple of seconds after you have released your shot whilst keeping the point of aim

A common mistake is to hold our breath for too long. After about 8 seconds, oxygen deprivation causes our eyes to send false information to our brain. The target is no longer where your eyes are telling you it is!

Practice this way of breathing during your first few weeks and it will become an automatic response when you are ready to shoot.





Trigger control

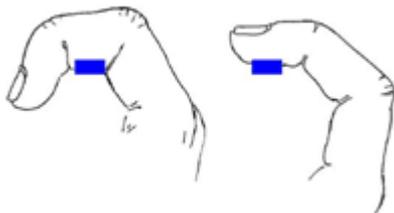


Whatever pistol or rifle you use in our club they will all have one of these. It's a trigger, or more correctly a trigger mechanism. In a live firing firearm, the function of a trigger is to release a firing pin which strikes a cartridge causing the rifle or pistol to fire. In an air rifle or pistol, the trigger opens a compressed air chamber to release pressurised air to force a pellet out of the barrel. There are two types of triggers found in target firearms; one stage and two stage. You should ask an instructor which type of trigger is in the firearm you are using.

Simply put

- a single stage trigger requires one finger movement to release the shot
- a two stage trigger has a first lighter movement, and a second heavier movement to release the shot

Target triggers require only a very small amount of pressure to release. *Light pressure* prevents any unwanted additional force from moving the aim of the rifle whilst squeezing the trigger.



Incorrect contact
leads to inaccuracy
and lack of control

Correct contact
for accuracy and
control

Sensitivity of feel is required for light-weight triggers so the pad of the index finger should be used.

Because we all have different finger lengths, triggers can be adjusted backwards and forwards. Ask an instructor for help you with this.

When your breathing is settled and you are ready to shoot, gently squeeze (not pull) the trigger. Recoil from target firearms is minimal.

Trigger release will become a semi-automatic response to your position, sight picture and breathing.

When you have released a shot, hold your point of aim for 2 seconds. This will prevent you moving too early from your position. It will also allow you to see where you were aiming before you released your shot. This is called the follow through.

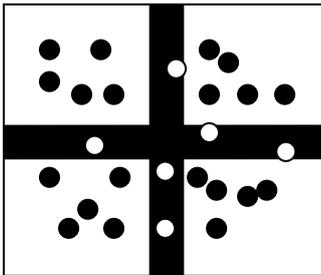
You should practice your trigger control frequently in your first few visits during your probationary period. However, *do not practice this with air pistols/air rifles when there is no pellet loaded.* It could damage the firearm.

What would be a good practice routine during my probationary period?

This will vary according to which shooting discipline you are practicing but similar principles apply to all firearms. You can use most of this routine if you find yourself managing a period without one-to-one support from an instructor. Here we are assuming one shooting session a week.

Take your notes on **Breathing and Trigger control** into a range with you as reference.

Session 1 **Breathing and trigger control** (bring a thick marker pen with you)



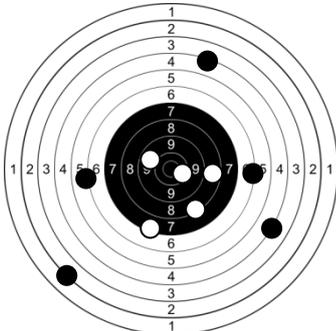
Draw a cross with a thick marker pen on the back of an unused target as shown below. Make the cross with lines 10 cm long and 2 cm wide. It does not need to be accurate. Now draw another diagram exactly the same on another card. **Following range safety rules**, attach one of your targets to the target board at the end of the range. Using your notes on **breathing**, aim 5 shots at each quadrant. Accuracy does not particularly matter with this exercise. Now aim 3 shots at the vertical line and 3 at the horizontal line as shown.

That's 26 shots in total. **Following range safety rules** collect your card.

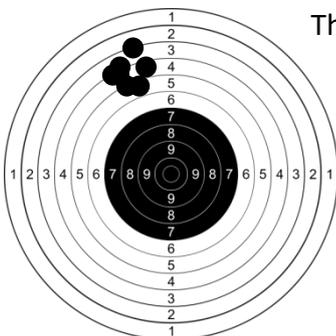
Read your notes on Trigger control. Now repeat the exercise using both **breathing** and **trigger** control. **Following range safety rules** collect your card. Date these cards and keep them in your file.

Session 2 **Shooting groups**

At this stage in your shooting, try not to fixate on hitting the middle of a target. What you should be trying to achieve is tight groups.



This target has 10 bullet/pellet holes in it. The group is scattered over the target. *Adjusting your body position or your sights will not make the group much smaller.*



This target also has 10 bullet/pellet holes in it. The group is tight. Tight groups are what you should be looking to achieve at this early stage. *It does not matter that they are not in the centre of your target.* Later, small adjustments to your sights or position will soon move your future groups across the card to be centred in the high scoring zone.

Ask an instructor or an experienced shooter in your discipline to help you achieve a *stable* body position that is comfortable for you. Once you feel stable you should be able to return to this position every time you shoot.

Now is the time to shoot lots of practice cards focusing your attention on **breathing**, **trigger control** and a **stable body** position. Attempt to achieve 5 groups in this session on whatever targets your discipline uses. Use 5 shots for each group. Now take a break; your body and brain have been working hard! Date and keep your cards in your folder

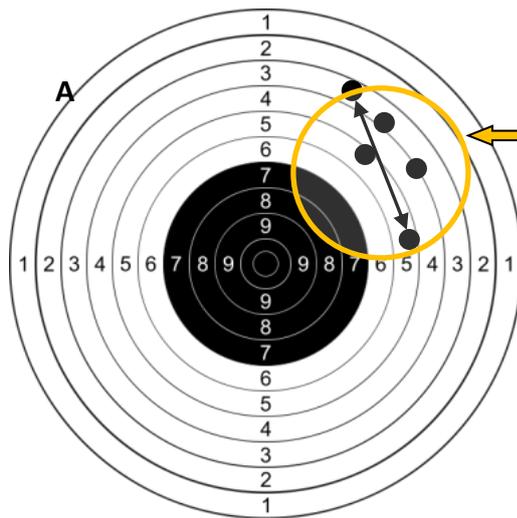


Session 3 Tightening your groups (bring some loose change with you)

You will have ups and downs in your progress towards shooting tight groups.

Expect this and try not be impatient with yourself! Gradually, over a few weeks your groups will become tighter.

Begin by shooting a few groups on a target appropriate for your discipline remembering what you have learned about **breathing** and **trigger control**. Now measure the distance between the two widest spaced holes in your best card. Put a £2 coin over the group as in the diagram (not drawn to scale). If the coin completely covers your group you have made great progress!



A £2 coin has a diameter of 2.84 mm

If some of your shots fall outside the diameter of the £2, keep practicing until they all fall inside. This could take a while. Date and keep your cards in your folder.

Session 4 Consistency of groups (bring some loose change with you).

Your next aim is to achieve consistency in the size of your groups. Once you can put 3 groups in a row inside the diameter of a £2 coin, substitute it for a 10p piece. This is a little more demanding but only by about 4 mm. Stick with this until you shoot 3 consecutive groups inside the diameter of the 10p coin.

Session 4 and beyond

Keep going with the above exercise substituting the 10p coin with a 20p coin. If eventually you achieve this welcome to the 50% club! This is what about 50% of club shooters can achieve. Of course there is always the 5p coin????!! If you get to the 20P stage by the end of your Probationary period, you will have made fantastic progress. As your groups get tighter other factors will come into play which will affect grouping. This is when you will need instruction and coaching. Don't be shy, ask for it and it will be yours.

Always keep your practice cards. You can use them to track your progress.

By this stage you may well have asked for adjustments to bring your groups to the middle. That's fine, but just don't be tempted to do this too soon. **Grouping is more important than hitting the centre when you are in your early stages of shooting.**

Just for comparison here is the actual size of a 5p piece.





What ammunition should I use?

Unless you have a Firearms Certificate, any live firing ammunition you purchase must come from the club supplies. It will need to be stored in our armoury. Provided you are over the age of 18, you can legally purchase air pellets and securely store them at home.

Ammunition is an ongoing cost for club shooters but does not need to be expensive. Air pellets, for example give you far more 'bangs for your bucks' than live firing ammunition. Live firing ammunition is priced according to its precision; the higher the precision, the more it costs.

Will higher precision ammunition make me shoot better?

Lower precision ammunition can give you good groups when you are fairly new to the sport. Later on, when ultra-precision and accuracy are vital in high level competition, you may wish to splash out on more expensive ammunition. What then is the difference between cheap



and expensive ammunition? It's simple – consistency. The cheaper the ammunition, the more likely that now and again there may be a 'flyer' in the batch. That is, a round that does not behave itself and results in inaccuracy. When we are learning the basics, this does not really matter, and the occasional flyer has to be offset against lower costs.

As a general rule the ammunition a shooter uses needs to be just a little bit better than the shooter. This gives the shooter some headroom to grow into. You will learn by experience which ammunition is right for you, but for the moment, ask somebody in your section as to which type will suit your current proficiency.



..... and finally, a polite word on range etiquette

Etiquette on a range is not about safety. It is about providing the right conditions in which shooters can concentrate and shoot at their best.

You will soon find out that the way you feel (the inner position) is very important to the way you shoot. Therefore, we do all we can to make others around us feel relaxed. Anything that puts up heart rate will lower shooting scores. Here are few tips that will make other shooters love you forever!

- Never behave in a way that could alarm other shooters (e.g. careless pointing of your firearm)
- Help other shooters set up a range – even if it is not your turn to shoot. Mats, scopes targets etc. all have to be moved into and out of a range
- Avoid making loud noises (apart from loud bangs) on the range
- Avoid unnecessary movement which can be seen in the peripheral vision of other shooters
- Stay in position when you have finished shooting until shooters on either side have finished
- Clear up your ammo cases after you finish shooting (why not others as well?)
- Be positive about other shooter's results and they may be kind to you when you miss a few
- Ask for help when you feel the need.

