

Precision Air Pistol

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• Set-up

- Arrange your firing point so that it is comfortable for you and conducive to making the best shot within the range parameters.
- Your position within your firing point should be fairly centered with your target when standing 10 or so feet behind it. This does not have to be perfect, but should be close. Some ranges may be set up differently, so be prepared. (If you are shooting at a new range for the first time, Google it to see if you can observe how it is set up. This will help alleviate the unknown.)
- Arrange your gear and scoring monitor (when using electronic scoring) on your firing point that best suits your process. At most ranges set any bags and your gun case behind your firing point on the floor. Some ranges will have a designated area for your cases and bags. Get in the habit of keeping it neat and tidy. (Range Officers' appreciate athletes that keep their firing point organized and easily accessible.) Practice keeping your gear and firing point orderly even during practice!
- Before setting up your firing point, you should have already stretched. Stretching is critical as it helps to prevent injury, and it also helps to increase the flow of blood and most importantly oxygen in your muscles. This increased flow of oxygen will greatly improve your ability to place accurate shots down range.
- If Dry Firing is allowed in a designated area, make sure you take advantage of this! Dry Firing is a means of preparation that forces you to focus on process and not score. It is also a great warm-up for your muscles. When Dry Firing, make sure you "Mentally Rehearse" your shot process every time!
- Finally, take a few minutes to meditate and relax. Try going through some additional "Mental Rehearsals" without physically doing anything. Compose your body mentally for the match/practice. Relax your body and focus on dropping your resting heart rate.

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- **Finding your Natural Point of Aim (NPA)**

- Finding your natural point of aim is perhaps the most important part of preparing to shoot and should not be taken lightly.
- First let's get your head and feet in the right position.
 - Standing perpendicular to the target turn your head toward the target as far as you can comfortably. Now turn it just a little further and lock it in place.
 - You may or may not be aligned with the target. Keeping your feet square with your shoulders move your feet till your head is aligned with the target. Your feet and shoulders should be square and aligned.
 - The idea is to stand as perpendicular to the target as possible without causing undue stress on the neck. For some athletes this may result in a somewhat open shooting position. (Somewhere between 10-20 degrees).
- The next step is to find your rough point of AIM by standing in your position and raising your shooting arm toward the target while looking away from the target. Now, turn your head toward the target and if your hand is not lined up with the target your NPA is off, adjust your feet, usually moving your back foot will do.
- Fine tuning your NPA. Place your pistol in hand and make sure you check your grip just as if you were going to shoot. Mimic the shooting process several times until you feel comfortable (dry fire). Now bring your pistol up with your head in the shooting position. Once you have your ideal sight alignment, hold that point; close your eyes and hold for about 8 seconds, now open your eyes. If your NPA is off, adjust and repeat the steps above until you have perfect NPA. (note your non-shooting eye should have some sort of blinder)
- Once you have found your NPA you may use "**Removable**" dots, painters tape, Post-it notes etc. To mark your feet. Remember this only marks a general location and the fine tuning of you NPA must be completed every time you move your feet during your match or training! Be prepared that some ranges or officials may not allow you to place anything on the floor.

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(Note: The ISSF & USAS rules do not prohibit you from doing this; it only states that they must be easily removable).

• **Your Shooting Process**

- Once you have completed everything above and you are currently standing in your NPA:
 - Check your grip.
 - Be sure to place your hand all the way up into the saddle of the grip. Maintaining the same fit each and every time.
 - Holding the gun with your non-shooting hand, slide your shooting hand into position.
 - With your grip, you should have an equal amount of pressure on the front and the back of the grip with little or preferably no side-to-side pressure.
 - Your grip should be a firm hand shake, not too loose and not too tight.
 - Once you have established your grip, do not move or adjust your fingers or hand. Once the grip is set, it should remain constant throughout the shooting process.
 - You will need to re-check your grip every time you set your pistol down or move your hand in the grip.
 - If you abort a shot, make sure to re-check your grip before continuing.
- Load your Pistol.
 - **NOTE:** NEVER set a loaded pistol down without it being in your hand! You should always have control of your pistol at all times. If you set your pistol down, it must be unloaded and the bolt must be open...NO EXCEPTIONS! If you have an issue with a loaded pistol, raise your non-shooting hand for a coach or range officer to assist you. Maintain control of the pistol pointing it down range until help arrives.
 - Get in the habit of inserting your CBI (Clear Barrel Indicator) in your pistol if you sit down or leave your firing point during training or a match. **Safety First!**
- Now relax and take a few deep breaths.

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- Focus on relaxing and calming your body down. Remember calm and relaxed muscles are happy muscles.
- Muscles that are full of oxygen are satisfied and will tend to quiver less than oxygen deprived muscles.
- Close your eyes and “Mentally Rehearse” what you are about to do; travel through the complete shooting process in your mind.
 - Visually see the pellet traveling through the center (10.9) of the target.
- Some may prefer to just relax and not think about shooting, focusing on controlling their breathing instead. Either method is fine.
- Now open your eyes and turn your head toward the target.
 - You should be looking at the target with both eyes open and your shooting eye should be aligned as straight as possible with your sights and the target. Your non-shooting eye should be obscured by some type of blinder or tape, but remain open as well.
 - Before you begin to lift your pistol make sure your head is in a stationary (locked) position, facing the target. As you lift your pistol, your head should not move, instead your eyes will pick-up your sights during your lifting process. Your head should remain in this position until the shot process is completed. Noticed, I said shot process and not trigger pulled. Your shot process is not completed until you have returned your arm and pistol to a resting position on your shooting bench.
- Rising your shooting arm into position
 - This needs to be a straight, steady and controlled movement, both during the incline and decline of your arm.
 - Don't forget to continue to breath during this process, you will only stop your breath briefly when you gently squeeze the trigger.
 - At the moment you start to lift your pistol off the bench, your trigger finger should already be placed on the trigger and should remain there until the shot process is completed.

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- Once you pull the trigger to release the shot, leave your trigger finger in the fully-pulled position until you have reached the relaxed position on the bench.
- Finding your sight picture.
 - As you raise your arm, you should align your eye with your sights.
 - Raising your pistol and sights just above the target (do not raise it too far above the target, as this will increase wasted energy and potentially increase your exhaustion throughout the match).
 - Make sure to keep your head in a locked position from the time you begin your lift through the completion of the shot process.
 - Start to control the pistol into the proper sight alignment for your shot.
 - Remember to focus on the front sight, not stare at it. As you are focused on the front sight, your target should be aligned and in your peripheral vision.
 - The rear sight and the target should appear somewhat out of focus. The front sight should be crystal clear.
 - Once at the top of your lift, you will start to move the pistol down to a sub-six hold.
 - As you are moving down toward your ideal sight alignment, you are evenly depressing the trigger to stage one. Once you are at sub-six you should be holding at stage one of the trigger.
 - With sight picture at sub six and trigger at stage one, you are ready to take the shot.
 - While holding at stage one, your finger should be centered on the trigger and held perpendicular to the axis of the gun.
 - **NOTE:** with some shooting athletes, the trigger pull may be more continuous vs stopping at stage one. If you have questions, refer to your coach.
- Taking the shot.
 - With a steady hold at sub six, you can now slowly and evenly depress the trigger straight back to stage two, releasing the pellet toward the target. (THE SHOT IS NOT COMPLETE).

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- This hold position should not last more than 4 to 10 seconds. Longer holds are subject to more movement and result in bad shot placement.
- Follow-Through
 - After releasing the pellet down range, hold your sight picture with your trigger compressed. (don't let off the trigger)
 - You should be able to “call your shot” based on where your sights are aligned after releasing the pellet.
 - Once you have held your sight picture for 4 to 6 seconds, and confirmed where the shot landed (this does not mean to verify it on your electronic scoring target!) realign your sight picture to the perfect shot hold. Now you can slowly control your arm back down. (Trigger finger needs to remain in the fully-pulled position.)
 - Once you have reached the relaxed position on your shooting stand, you may release your trigger finger.
- The shot is now complete!
 - Ask yourself; was it a good shot based on your process?
 - Do not focus on score; focus on process!
 - Great process leads to great scores, not the other way around.
 - What did I do Right?
 - You may now repeat the above process until you are finished training or your match is complete.
 - This entire process should be rehearsed mentally multiple times every single day!
 - “Practice does not make perfect ... perfect practice leads to a better process, which in turn leads to higher scores!” Coach Brent
- **Some tips to Remember**
 - Never sit your gun down with the bolt closed.
 - Never leave your gun without making sure a CBI is inserted in the barrel.
 - Your shoes must be below your ankle, shooting shoes or flat-bottom shoes are recommended. It is a good idea to have a set of shoes just for shooting and only wear them on the range. This will prevent the bottom from getting

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dirty and keeps your feet from sliding. It is important to keep the bottoms of your shoes clean.

- Before a match, make sure you have pellets and your air cylinders are full and not out of date! (Cylinders are valid for 10 years from the date of issue.)
- If you are wearing a long sleeve shirt or jacket, the sleeve must not come in contact with your pistol during the shooting process.
- Always plan on arriving to a match 45 minutes prior to the schedule start time. Most of the time, the scheduled start time is when the first match shot is scheduled, it normally does not include prep and sighters.
- ALWAYS keep your pistol pointed in a safe direction.
- Staying well hydrated is very important! Before a match, you should really focus on hydrating your body three days to a week before the match. Drink lots of water. Stay off of caffeine and drinks high in sugar.
- Maintaining a healthy diet will greatly improve your ability to shoot. Giving your body what it needs will help provide your body the requirements you demand to place great shots.
- Aerobic exercise and stretching are very important as well. Participating in activities that will help reduce your resting heart rate can assist in a steadier hold. Stretching helps with blood flow and keeps your muscles healthy.
- CBI (Clear Barrel Indicators) must be inserted in your pistol whenever you leave your firing point.