

A cheat sheet for Todd Bender's DVD, *Insight Into Championship Skeet*

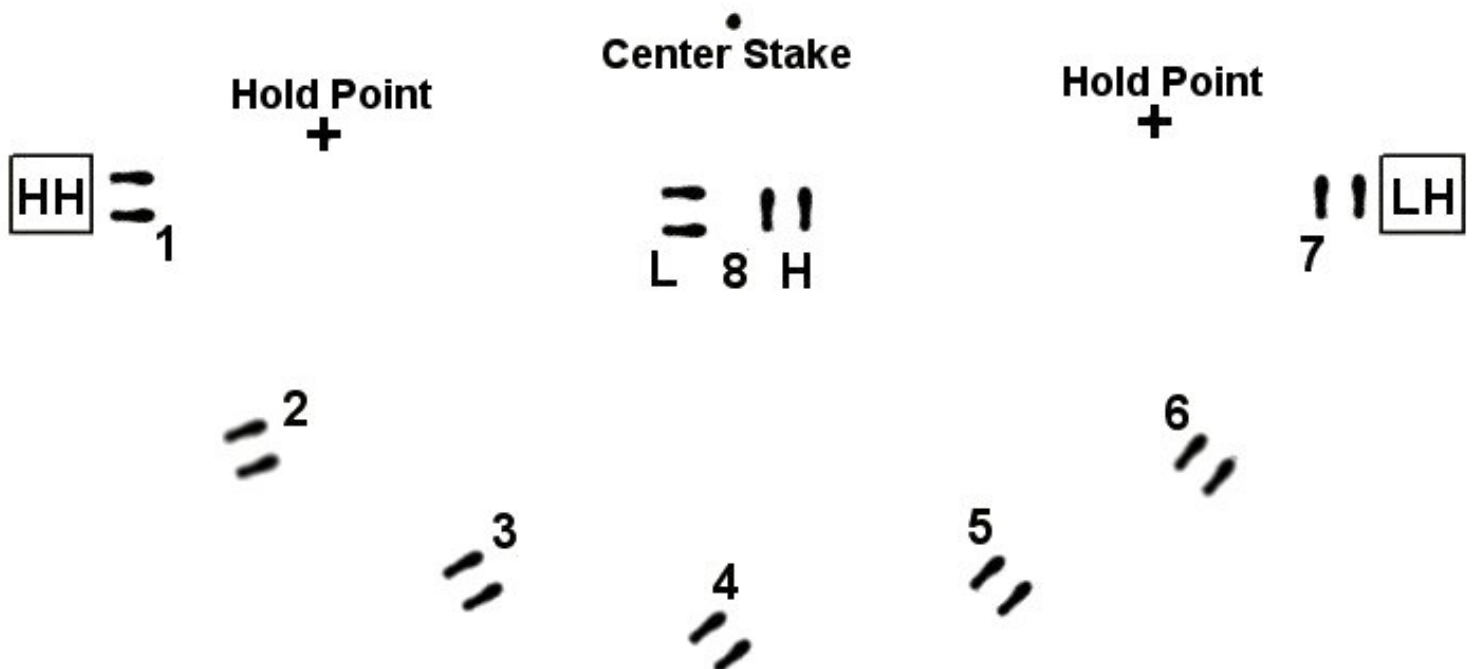
Bender's fundamentals:

1. Head on the gun: Place your cheek firmly on the stock and look straight down the barrel, so that you see the middle bead directly under the front bead, forming a figure 8. Keep your cheek there from beginning to end of the shooting sequence.

2. Eye on the target: From the first flash of the target as it emerges from the house and comes into your peripheral vision, keep your eyes on it -- **and never bring them back to the gun.** Even with your eyes fixed on the target, your range of vision is adequate to see the barrel in relation to the target and so long as you've not moved your head off its original position on the stock the gun will shoot where you intend.

3. Proper lead: The correct distance to shoot ahead of the target at each station. And there's little or no room for doubt that the **sustained lead**, in which you start ahead and stay ahead of the target, will prove most consistently effective. Beyond the obvious, that you have to shoot somewhere ahead of the target, Bender is often either vague on the amount of lead needed for a particular target or ignores it altogether. He considers lead to be overly emphasized by most shooters, reasoning that the shot pattern will usually handle it for you.

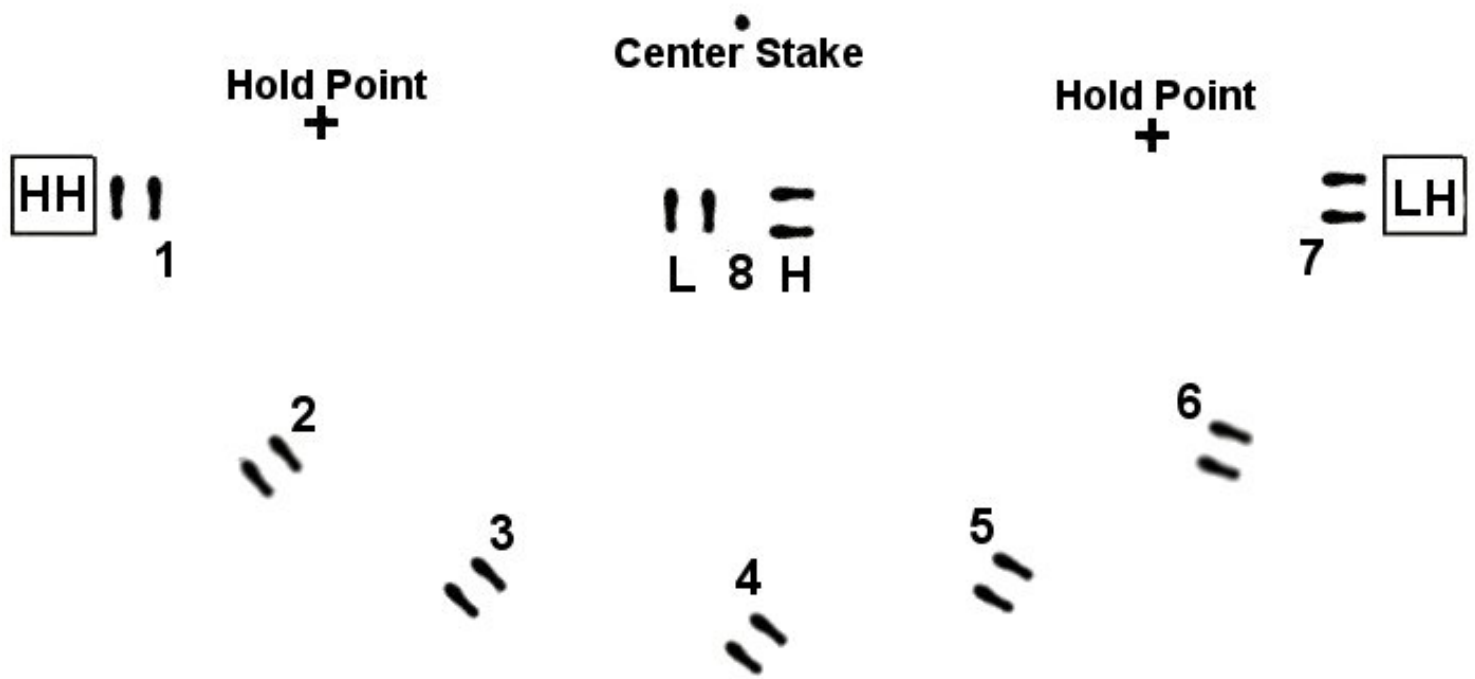
4. Swing with your lower body: Using Bender's stance and foot positions, swing with the target using your slightly flexed legs, knees and ankles, which will force the upper body to remain on a level track. Swinging with the shoulders or upper body will cause an erratic up and down movement of the gun.



Bender's foot positions for right-handed shooters

Important: Note feet are parallel, rather than angled.

Crosses denote 1/3 distance from houses to Center Stake.



Bender's foot positions for left-handed shooters

Important: Note feet are parallel, rather than angled.

Crosses denote 1/3 distance from houses to Center Stake.

Bender's stance: As shown in the drawings above, except for High and Low 7 and High 8, this is always "belly button facing the Low House" for right-handed shooters and facing the High House for lefties. Your feet should be about shoulder-width apart -- parallel, not angled -- and your weight should be on the slightly crouched left leg, or the right leg for left-handed shooters. Yet while it'll work for most, it's not chiseled in stone. But you should at least give it a sporting try for a number of rounds exactly as Bender coaches it, then if you feel the need for a slight adjustment so be it.

What the terms mean: This is a general explanation of the elements that must be in play for successfully shooting the stations. How each should be applied at each specific station is detailed in the "Shooting the Stations" table below.

Hold Point: Where to point the mounted gun before calling for the target, relative to the active house and/or the Center Stake. This is usually Bender's "Magic 1/3" of the distance out from a house toward the Center Stake, but varies on several stations. Vertical hold is nearly always level with the bottom of the window.

Look Point: Where to *shift* your eyes before calling for the target, **leaving your head solidly at its original placement on the gun.** Here, you're waiting to see the first flash of the target in your peripheral vision and the instant you see it you begin moving the gun with, but ahead of the target to establish the sustained lead and take the shot.

Lead: A close approximation of how far ahead of the target the gun should be when you take the shot. And don't move your head off the gun until you've followed through and seen the target either break or be a clear miss. As Bender puts it: "**Stay in the gun.**" **Follow-through -- keeping the gun moving after the shot -- is all-important here.** Stopping the gun at or immediately after pulling the trigger will virtually assure a miss.

Break Point: The optimum place to break the target relative to the Center Stake.

Shooting the Stations

Points to remember at every station: 1. Establish correct foot position: Feet parallel, weight shifted to the left leg, right leg for lefties; 2. Mount the gun and establish your Hold Point (usually level with the bottom of the window); 3. *Shift* eyes to the Look Point, rather than turning your head; 4. Start moving the gun the instant you see the first flash of the target; 5. Swing with the lower body, not your shoulders; 6. Remind yourself, *head on the gun, eyes on the target*; 7. Keep your head on the gun before, during, while following through and after the shot -- but your eyes on the target.

Tgts	Hold Point	Look Point	Lead	Break Point
H-1	Aligned on the target flight path or slightly below it.	Slightly, maybe four or five inches, above the barrel. Common mistakes are holding barrel too high and looking too high or directly down barrel.	None. Let the target come to just above the barrel and shoot. Ideally, there should be no vertical movement necessary, but lateral adjustments will be needed if the target flies off-center from the barrel.	About 2/3 of the way to the Center Stake.
L-1	About 10 feet out and level with bottom of the window.	Just out from Low House window.	Bender never gives an actual distance but it looks like about 1-1/2 feet.	Shortly past the Center Stake.
Dbls	Same as the High House.	Same as the High House	High House shot's the same, after which drop the gun slightly and pick up the Low House target -- ahead of it.	Same as for singles.
H-2	Gun parallel to the house, then moved out three feet. Level with bottom of window. A common mistake here is holding the barrel too high.	Slightly off the side of the barrel so your peripheral vision has a good view back to the window and can pick up the first flash of the target.	Just get in front of the target and shoot, probably about 1-1/2 to two feet.	Before the Center Stake.
L-2	Same as Low 1 -- about 10 feet out and level with the bottom of the window.	Just out from Low House window.	About 1-1/2 to two feet. Common mistake: Riding the target too far in.	Past the Center Stake.
Dbls	Same as for High 2.	Same as for High 2.	Same as for High and Low 2 singles.	Same as for High and Low 2. Common mistake: Rushing the target, throwing off your timing for the second shot.

Tgts	Hold Point	Look Point	Lead	Break Point
H-3	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the bottom of the window.	Halfway back from Hold Point to the window.	Three to 3-1/2 feet.	No later than the Center Stake and preferably 10-15 feet before.
L-3	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the bottom of the window. Common mistakes on both: Holding too close to the window, thereby letting the target beat you, and holding the gun too high, blocking the target.	Halfway back from Hold Point to the window.	Three to 3-1/2 feet.	At or maybe 10 feet past the Center Stake.
H-4	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the bottom of the window.	Halfway back from Hold Point to the window.	Three to 3-1/2 feet.	Over the Center Stake or 10-15 feet before.
L-4	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the bottom of the window. Common mistakes on both: Holding too close to the window, thereby letting the target beat you, and holding the gun too high, blocking the target.	Because of the likelihood of background clutter confusing your peripheral vision, look closer to the window, about three or four feet out from it rather than halfway between gun and window.	Three to 3-1/2 feet.	Over the Center Stake or 10-15 feet before.
H-5	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the bottom of the window.	Halfway back from Hold Point to the window.	Three to 3-1/2 feet.	Over the Center Stake, or 10-15 feet past it.
L-5	1/3 distance from the house to the Center Stake, about 20 feet, and level with the top of the window -- but no higher. Move hold out or in for faster or slower targets.	Because of the likelihood of background clutter confusing your peripheral vision, look closer to the window, about three or four feet out from it rather than halfway between gun and window.	Two to 2-1/2 feet.	Over the Center Stake, or 10-15 feet before it. Common mistake: Rushing to shoot this fast target too soon.

Tgts	Hold Point	Look Point	Lead	Break Point
H-6	About 10 feet out and level with the bottom of the window.	Slightly off the side of the barrel so your peripheral vision has a good view back to the window and can pick up the first flash of the target.	Bender's not specific on this but it looks to be about 1-1/2 feet.	Looks to be about 10-15 feet past the Center Stake.
L-6	Gun parallel to the house, then moved out three feet. Level with the bottom but no higher than the top of the window. A common mistake here is holding the barrel too high and blocking the target.	About halfway between gun and window.	Numerically, about a foot to 1-1/2 feet, but best to just get ahead of the target and shoot.	Looks to be about 10-15 feet before the Center Stake.
Dbls	The Low House target is shot first here, so use that Hold Point.	The Low House target is shot first here, so use that Look Point.	Same as singles.	Basically the same as singles, but after the Low House target is taken the eyes shift across the top of the barrel and pick up the High House target with a sustained lead. Pay particular attention, especially right-handed shooters, to a smooth swing both ways using the usual lower body movement.
H-7	About 10 feet out and level with the bottom of the window.	All he says about it is, "back toward the house."	He mentions no exact amount of lead.	Past the Center Stake.
L-7	Aligned with the target flight path right over the Center Stake, but about a foot or foot and a half below it as a hedge against a low-flying target that would be blocked from sight if the gun were higher.	Just above the barrel.	None.	Before or over the Center Stake.
Dbls	The Low House target is shot first here, so use that Hold Point.	The Low House target is shot first here, so use that Look Point.	Basically the same as singles, but after the Low House target is taken the eyes shift to the center of the field and pick up the High House target with a sustained lead.	Same as singles.

Tgts	Hold Point	Look Point	Lead	Break Point
H-8	Level with the bottom of the window and about four feet out from the window. Level with the top of the window is acceptable but absolutely no higher than that.	Directly at the window.	None. Swing quickly and smoothly with the target the moment it's seen, cover it up and shoot.	Well before the Center Stake.
L-8	Level with the bottom of the window and about four feet out from the window.	Directly at the window.	None. Swing quickly and smoothly with the target the moment it's seen, cover it up and shoot.	Well before the Center Stake.

Skeet is a regimented, repetitious game and applying the proper techniques **consistently** while shooting each station, whether in practice or competition, is paramount -- in fact, it's the gold key to success at the game.

In Trap, the targets emerge from the house at different angles and at Sporting Clays they're apt to come from anywhere. But with Skeet the targets take the same predictable flight path, at the same height and at the same angle and speed from the High and Low Houses every time.

The targets' behavior may differ slightly from range to range but they'll mostly fly the same on any particular field. You'll just have to note any differences from field to field and adjust accordingly.

Since the mechanics of Skeet are all consistently repetitious, so should your approach be to dealing with them.

And repeated, careful study of Bender's video should provide you with the proper approach.