

## **Shooting Etiquette for Trap, Skeet, and Sporting Clays**

### **GENERAL**

All shooters must behave in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. This includes no horseplay, no foul or offensive language, no aggressive behavior, and no throwing of equipment, hats or shells. This also means that shooters should be gracious sportsmen, bragging after good rounds is not necessary, be courteous to your fellow shooters. Do not make a scene or disturb other shooters when you are having a bad day. We all go through slumps and highs, be courteous of all shooters.

Ensure that all of the safety rules are followed and make sure that those around you are being safe. If you see a safety infraction politely point it out to the individual. Yelling, derogatory or demeaning language and tones will not help the issue and is not proper etiquette.

Ask, before touching someone else's gun. Shotgun shooters are proud of their firearms and like to show and share, but ask first. Shooters are generally not happy if they just see someone else handling their gun without permission. It is unsafe to grab a gun if you are unfamiliar with it. The safest thing to do is to ask the owner to show you the firearm and how it works, including all of the safety mechanisms. When in doubt just go by the golden rule, "do unto others as you will have others do unto you."

### **TRAP**

Be certain of what field you will be shooting on. Be prepared and on the correct bank, ready to go, before your squad's turn. It is inconsiderate to be late, making your squad wait for you. You should ensure that you have all of your equipment with you when you arrive at the bank. This includes the more obvious objects such as your ammunition, gun, and shooting vest or pouch. Additionally you should have extra parts, gun oil or lube, a multi-use tool, and water. By doing so, in the event that you have gun malfunctions, you will be able to quickly remedy the problem and keep your squad from waiting or having to shoot without you.

When your squad is up, you should immediately take the field. You should also be attentive between rounds. Only take enough time to get a drink of water, your next box of shells, check your equipment, take a relaxing breath, and head back out to the field. If you take too much time between rounds you will hinder the flow of the shoot causing delays that could build creating a larger delay at the end of the day.

Once you take the field, the lead off shooter should ensure that the squad is ready to shoot. Do not assume and say, "Everyone ready, puller ready, let's see one." Take the time to look down the line and get confirmation from your squad mates that they are ready. Look back at the puller to check and make sure that they are properly situated. Then you can call for a show bird. After the show bird, load your gun and call for your first target.

When preparing to shoot, you should take your shells out of a pouch or a vest. It is distracting to the shooters around you, and hinders the flow of the shoot, if you have to bend over and get a shell out of a box from the ground for every shot. Avoid any unnecessary movement, such as excessive moving of your feet on the station, no mounting of your gun before it is your turn, no leaving of your station. With the exception of doubles, trap is a single shot game, only load one shell at a time.

It is acceptable and encouraged, for shooters to place a shell in the chamber, ensuring that they leave the action open after their previous shot, or when they first get to a new station. This helps the rhythm of the round and the flow of the squad. It will prevent your squad mates from having to wait on you while you load your shell. When it is your turn, all you should have left to do is to close your action raise the gun to your face and call for your target.

When you close your action, make sure that you do not disrupt the shooter in front of you. If you have a semi automatic close your action either when they are shooting or after they have completed their shot, so as to not disturb their shot.

Shooters should not be talking while on the station. Talking will distract other shooters and with voice automated calls you may inadvertently throw targets, disrupting the current shooters rhythm. When you call for the target, do it in a clear, strong voice. This is important to insure that you get a good pull, especially if the field is not equipped with voice calls. Do not shout so loud that you can cause the field next to you to release targets.

When you have finished shooting your station, remain there until all squad members have completed the station, then you may rotate to the next station. When moving from station five to station one it is proper to rotate clockwise off the station, always keeping your firearm from pointing at your fellow shooters. Always rotate behind the line and other shooters.

When you have completed your round, check your score with the puller, make sure it is correct before the squad leader signs the sheet and before you leave the field. If you are the squad leader it is polite to ask your squad mates if their scores are correct before you sign the sheet and proceed to the next field.

### **SKEET**

Be certain of what field you will be shooting on. Be prepared and ready to go before your turn is up. It is inconsiderate to be late, making your squad wait for you. If all of your squad members are present and the squad ahead of you finishes early you may have the opportunity to start your round ahead of schedule. You should ensure that you have all of your equipment with you when you arrive at the bank. This includes the more obvious objects such as your ammunition, gun, and shooting vest or pouch. Additionally you should have extra parts, gun oil or lube, a multi-use tool, and water. By doing so, in the event that you have gun malfunctions, you will be able to quickly remedy the problem and keep your squad from waiting or having to shoot without you.

When your squad is up, you should immediately take the field. You should also be attentive between rounds. You should only take enough time to get a drink of water, your next box of shells, check your equipment, take a relaxing breath, and head back out to the field. If you take too much time between rounds you will hinder the flow of the shoot causing delays for later squads and results postings.

Once you take the field, the lead off shooter should ensure that all of his squad mates are present and ready to look at the targets. Do not assume and have the puller throw the show birds, take the time to confirm that your squad mates are ready to see the targets and the score keeper is ready, then you can call for the show birds. After the show birds are thrown you may load your gun and call for your first target.

When preparing to shoot, you should take your shells out of a pouch or a vest. It is proper etiquette not to bend over and pull shells out of a box from the ground, this slows the flow of the squad.

Do not load your gun until you are on the station ready to shoot. When you have completed shooting at a station make sure to completely remove the empty shells from your gun, and that your action is open BEFORE you leave the station. You may not unload your gun as you are leaving the station or once you leave the station. When you are not shooting make sure that your action is open, your gun is unloaded and that you are keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

Shooters should not be talking while on the station and you should keep other chatter to a whispered minimum. Talking will distract other shooters and disruptive noise will not be tolerated. When you call for the target do it in a clear, strong voice, this is really important to insure that you get a good pull.

When you have finished shooting your station, remain behind that station there until all squad members have completed it, then you may rotate to the next station. When you move to the next station it is customary to line up in shooting order. This will help transitioning on and off the station quicker.

When you have completed your round, check your score with the puller, make sure it is correct before the squad leader signs the sheet and before you leave the field. If you are the squad leader it is polite to ask your squad mates if there scores are correct before you sign the sheet and proceed to the next round.

## **SPORTING CLAYS**

Be certain of what station you start on. Be prepared and on your station, ready to go, before the match starts. Do not just be at the course when the flight starts, be at your station. If you start on the back side of the course make sure to give yourself plenty of time to get there and take a breath before the start of the match. When it is time for the match to start don't wait around, start. It is inconsiderate to be late, making your squad wait for you. You should also ensure that you have all of your equipment with you when you arrive at the bank. This includes the more obvious objects such as your ammunition, gun, and shooting vest or pouch.

Additionally, you should have extra parts, gun oil or lube, a multi-use tool, and water. By doing so, in the event that you have gun malfunctions you will be able to quickly remedy the problem and keep your squad from waiting or having to shoot without you.

When your squad is up, you should immediately take the station. You should also be attentive between stations. You should only take enough time to get a drink of water, more shells, check your equipment, take a relaxing breath, and head to the next station. If you take too much time between stations you will hinder the flow of the shoot causing backups and delays for squads following you and results postings. As your squad progresses from station to station make sure you are not dallying behind, as soon as all members are present at a new station you may start it.

Once you take the station, the lead off shooter should ensure that all of his squad mates are present and ready to look at the targets. Do not assume and have the puller throw the show birds, take the time to make sure you have confirmation from your squad mates that they are ready to see the targets and the score keeper is ready, then you can call for the show birds. After the show birds are thrown you may load your gun and call for your first target.

When preparing to shoot, you should have all of your necessary equipment such as shells and chokes in the station with you. Once you have acquired the station you can not leave it until your turn is completed.

Do not load your gun until you are in the station ready to shoot. When you have completed shooting at a station make sure to completely remove the empty shells from your gun, and that your action is open BEFORE you leave the station. You may not unload your gun as you are leaving the station or once you leave the station. When you are not shooting make sure that your action is open, your gun is unloaded and that you are keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. The best way to ensure this is to put it in the gun rack.

It is permissible for athletes to coach each other when on the station, but ensure that doing this does not hinder the flow of the shoot. When you call for the target do it in a clear, strong voice, this is really important to insure that you get a good pull.

When you have finished shooting your station, remain at that station until all squad members have completed it, then you may rotate as a squad to the next station. Before leaving the station ensure that all score cards are scored for the correct station and are correct. Make sure to properly rotate the score cards to represent the correct lead off shooter for the new station and hand the score cards to the scorekeeper in this order. It is your responsibility to rotate score sheets for shooting order.

If you have a disagreement with the scorekeeper regarding score it must be addressed at the time “loss” is called. Once you leave the station it is too late to make any changes.