

Summary of Bullseye Fundamentals

Contents

	Safety Rules	2
I	Stance	3
II	Grip	3
III	Sight Alignment	4
IV	Breath Control	4
V	Trigger Control	5
VI	Follow Through	5
	Dry Fire	6
	Classification	6
	Targets	6
	League Commands	7
	Pistol Group Analysis	8
	Never Ever Give Up	9

This Summary of Bullseye Fundamentals is presented by the Coaching Staff of the New Jersey Junior Pistol Leagues.

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The latest copy of this manual can be found at:

<http://www.njpistol.com/Summary.pdf>

The 3 Fundamental Gun Safety Rules

1. ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.

This is the primary rule of gun safety. A safe direction means that the gun is pointed so that even if it were to go off it would not cause injury or damage. The key to this rule is to control where the muzzle or front end of the barrel is pointed at all times. Common sense dictates the safest direction, depending on different circumstances.

2. ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.

When holding a gun, rest your finger on the trigger guard or along the side of the gun. Until you are actually ready to fire, do not touch the trigger.

3. ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

Whenever you pick up a gun, immediately engage the safety device if possible, and, if the gun has a magazine, remove it before opening the action and looking into the chamber(s) which should be clear of ammunition. If you do not know how to open the action or inspect the chamber(s), leave the gun alone and get help from someone who does.

Bullseye Internet Sites

<http://www.njpistol.com/>

Bullseye pistol competition information for the NJ area and many surrounding states.

This is THE place to find and sign up for matches, check scores and other good information.

<http://www.bullseyepistol.com/>

Otherwise known as “The Encyclopedia of Bullseye Pistol.

The Internet's oldest and most popular information resource on Conventional Pistol (Bullseye) shooting.

<http://www.targetshooting.ca/>

A great Canadian Website. Click on their Training Information link.

Note: The last page, “Pistol Group Analysis” was borrowed from this site.

<http://www.nrahq.org/compete/RuleBooks/Pistol/pst-index.pdf>

Official NRA Rules and Regulations to govern the conduct of all Conventional Pistol Matches

<http://www.anjrpc.org/>

The Association of New Jersey Rifle and Pistol Clubs, Inc. is the official NRA State Association in New Jersey.

Note: The major source for this summary came from “The Encyclopedia of Bullseye Pistol” and from the “U.S. Army Marksmanship Training Manual”. Other sources may have variations of the fundamentals and of steps within the stages. You are strongly encouraged to study beyond this Summary.

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Conventional Pistol shooting, or as it's commonly called "**Bullseye**", and I prefer to call it "**Classic Pistol**", lends itself to typically **six stages** of preparation for taking a single shot. A beginner should follow these steps and practice them separately with the goal of combining them into one integrated shot process, i.e. "Shot Plan".

I - sTANCE





	how	why	comment
1	Stand at about 45° from the target. Feet shoulder width apart and slightly angled out.	Most stable position, especially in the wind.	This is the initial starting position. Works for most shooters.
2	Knees should not be stiffly locked. Back and neck should be straight, shoulders relaxed, head upright.	For comfort, to reduce muscle tension.	Knees should not be bent either.
3	Anchor your non-shooting arm.	If necessary, for better balance.	Hand in pocket or thumb hooked on belt loop.
4	Shooting arm extended fully with wrist locked (stiff).	Helps to cycle gun properly and to absorb recoil.	The stiffness should not be with a lot of tension, experiment what works. The arm moves as a unit, don't break wrist.
5	Find your (NPA) Natural Point of Aim: While aiming at the target, close your eyes for a few seconds and let your arm wonder to its wanted aiming point. Then adjust your stance accordingly.	To find the easiest physical position for your body to hold the gun. Helps with proper sight alignment and a quick repeatable recovery for the next shot.	Use your feet to change angle of body, not by moving your wrist, hand, arm or by twisting your torso. NPA may need to be rechecked during a shooting match.

II - GrrrrriP

	how	why	comment
1	Using your non-shooting hand, seat the pistol high and firmly into the web of the shooting hand.	To keep the pistol from shifting and slipping during the shot process and to help recover from recoil.	The web is the V of the palm formed between the thumb and your trigger finger.
2	The 3 lower fingers should apply pressure on the front strap straight to the rear. Primary pressure is applied with your middle finger.	It's the most stable position for controlling the gun through the shot process.	Pretend your hand is a vise with the V of the palm as the stationary jaw of the vise and the three lower fingers pressing on the front strap of the pistol as the moving jaw.
3	The fingertips, the thumb and the trigger finger should not exert pressure on the pistol grip.	Pressure from any one of these could throw off your shots.	It doesn't mean that they can't be resting on the grip.
4	Keep a constant firm grip during the entire shot process.	Any change in the grip pressure will also throw off your shots.	Relax grip between slow-fire shots if necessary.



III - SIGHT ALIGNMENT

	how	why	comment
1	 <p>Red dot: Center dot on bullseye Switch focus to the dot. Ok if target not in focus.</p> <p>With a red dot (optics) you line up 2 things: the dot and the target.</p>	<p>The eye can only focus on one object at a time. The target is stationary. So focus on that which moves, the dot.</p> <p>Using red dots works well because the eye naturally centers on concentric circles.</p>	<p>For beginners, starting first with a red dot, may be helpful in learning to shoot pistols. There is less to concentrate on during sight alignment.</p>
2	 <p>Open sights: Center hold Focus on the front sight. Ok if target and rear sight not in focus.</p> <p>With open sights (iron sights), you need to line up 3 things: front sight, rear sight and the target.</p>	<p>The eye can only focus on one object at a time. The target is stationary. So focus on that which can move, the front sight.</p>	<p>Center hold may work better for those that find the bull distracting as in six and sub-six holds.</p> <p>But you have to concentrate on the front sight more against the dark background of the bull, and center hold may not work well in some lighting conditions.</p>
3	 <p>Open sights: Six o'clock hold Focus on the front sight. Ok if target and rear sight not in focus.</p>	<p>The eye can only focus on one object at a time. The target is stationary. So focus on that which can move, the front sight.</p> <p>This seems to work best for many people. The eye naturally aligns the disk over the center post.</p>	<p>Ron Steinbrecher says: Six o'clock hold is a very precise point and trying to hold it before squeezing the trigger causes hesitation and can lead to poor trigger manipulation by novice shooters.</p> <p>Mike Westock likes the same amount of white space under the bull as there is in the light bars of the sights.</p>
4	 <p>Open sights: Sub-six hold Focus on the front sight. Ok if target and rear sight not in focus.</p>	<p>The eye can only focus on one object at a time. The target is stationary. So focus on that which can move, the front sight.</p> <p>The six o'clock hold can be distracting to some. It may make it harder to focus on the sights. Having some white space between the sights and the bottom of the bullseye may work better for some.</p>	<p>Brian Zins, seven times National Champion, recommends the sub-six hold.</p> <p>For novice shooters, Ron Steinbrecher recommends either center hold or sub-six hold.</p>

IV - BREATH CONTROL

	how	why	comment
1	Take two deep breaths.	Gives you sufficient oxygen to avoid eye and muscle fatigue.	Inhale slowly by nose, exhale quickly by mouth.
2	Take a third normal breath, bring your gun on target, then exhale half the air. Hold your breath. Fire.	Leaves your lungs in a "neutral", comfortable state. Holding your breath minimizes body movement.	Your chest must not move, you must remain motionless during fire.

V - TRIGGER CONTROL

	how	why	comment
1	Place your finger on the center of the trigger. Use the hard part of the first pad just to the left of the first joint.	This is the initial starting position for beginners.	From this initial position, you can settle on the placement that works best for you by experimenting in adjusting your finger up or down or in and out on the trigger.
2	Keep the trigger finger clear of the frame and the grip.	To maintain flexibility of your trigger finger and to avoid pushing on the grip.	
3	The trigger finger must be able to flex at the middle knuckle without moving the pistol or varying the pressure of any of the other fingers.	To pull the trigger without disturbing the sight picture.	Take up any slack prior to initial pressure.
4	Pull the trigger: <i>Trigger finger pressure must be straight back, constant, smooth, and progressive (do not stop)</i>	The great shooters say it is the correct way to shoot accurately.	Begin trigger pull during your perfect sight alignment and your minimum arc of movement.
5	Work toward subconsciously activating the trigger, such that the shot process becomes automatic once the sight picture is acquired.	This will help in avoiding flinching and anticipating recoil.	You want it to be a "surprise" break or shot. This will avoid any muscular reflexes from disturbing your sight alignment.
6	In slow fire, release the shot during the steadiest part of your hold, which is approximately 6-10 sec. after you start the aiming process.	Have patience. You have time.	Allow the sights to settle. If they don't settle, put the gun down and start the shot process over.
7	In sustained fire, practice returning to your sight picture after recovery of recoil.	Helps you gain time to line up your sights.	Maintain your grip during sustained fire. Continue holding the gun between strings.

VI - FOLLOW THROUGH

	how	why	comment
1	After the shot fires: Maintain grip and trigger pressure. Keep your eye on the dot or front sight, not the target.	To avoid any reflexes that may disturb sight alignment during your trigger pull.	Knowing that you'll be setting up for the next shot will help you to concentrate on your actual shot. So it will also help with calling the shot.

DRY FIRE

	how	why	comment
1	Dry fire at the range before live fire.	To physically and mentally prepare for live fire.	Dry fire at your target. Use all the fundamentals.
2	Red dot dry fire at blank wall. Open sights dry fire at blank wall.	To practice smooth trigger pull without the distraction of a bullseye. To find the correct trigger finger placement.	You can sit while dry firing at a wall or even not looking at the wall but it is better training if you take up a stance.
3	Red dot dry fire at a bullseye or a dot on a wall. Open sights dry fire at a bullseye or first a horizontal line then a vertical line then combine the two to dry fire at a cross.	To practice and adjust if necessary all other bullseye fundamentals: Stance, Grip, Breath Control, Sight Alignment, Trigger Control, Follow Through. Dry-firing will also help eliminate or reduce bad reflexes like tensing the arm to counteract recoil, straining muscles in expectation of the shot and blinking from the noise of the shot.	

Classification Names and their Scoring Averages			
Class Name	Average	900 Match Score	2700 Match Score
High Master	97.00% and above	873-900	2619-2700
Master	95.00%-96.99%	855-872	2565-2618
Expert	90.00%-94.99%	810-844	2430-2564
Sharpshooter	85.00%-89.99%	765-809	2295-2429
Marksman	< 85.00%	<765	< 2295

Official NRA Pistol Bullseye Targets				
Target	Paper size	Bull size	Description	Range
50 Yards				
B6	21" x 24"	8" Black	50 Yard, Slow Fire Pistol	outdoor
B6 (C)	10½" x 10½"	8" Black	Repair Center for B-6	outdoor
25 Yards				
B8	21" x 24"	5½" Black	25 Yard, Timed and Rapid Fire Pistol	indoor/outdoor
B8 (C)	10½" x 10½"	5½" Black	Repair Center for B-8	indoor/outdoor
B16	10½" x 12"	5-5/16" Black	25 Yard, Slow Fire Pistol	indoor
50 Foot				
B2	10½" x 12"	3-1/16" Black	50 Foot, Slow Fire Pistol	indoor
B3	10½" x 12"	3-1/16" Black	50 Foot, Timed and Rapid Fire Pistol	indoor

Bullseye commands for shooting the NRA Short Course match.

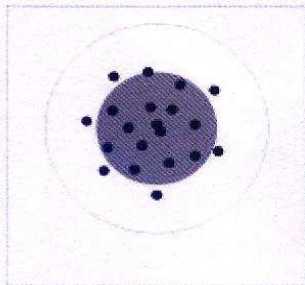
Range Officer	Shooter
"The Range is clear, you may handle your guns"	Load Magazines with 5 rounds each. Do Not Load Gun.
"Shooters to the line for the Slow Fire Stage of the NRA Short Course, firing ten shots in ten minutes. For your Ten Shots Slow Fire, Ten Shots in Ten Minutes, Load."	Get in Position. Grip Pistol. Take some deep breaths.
"Is the Line Ready? ---" (--- = 3 sec delay)	If not ready, Say loudly, " Not Ready. "
"The Line is Ready ---."	Lock arm, pointing gun towards floor.
"Ready on the Right ---"	Breathe...Relax, get ready...
"Ready on the Left ---"	Raise arm, finger on trigger, aim and settle on Target Edge.
"Ready on the Firing Line ---"	Release half of your breath, Hold. Aim on Target Edge.
Targets Turn to Face you. 10 min later targets turn away from you.	Aim, Commence Firing. If you have a misfire or gun jam, clear it yourself and continue!
"Slides back, magazines out, guns on the bench, safety flags in chambers, make the line safe"	Unload gun, remove magazine, open cylinder, place gun on bench with safety flag inserted. Reload magazines and/or speed loaders. Make the line Safe! Step Back.
"Is the line safe on the right? Is the line safe on the left?"	If anyone is touching their gun yell, " Not Safe! "
"The line is safe go forward score and repair with Timed Fire targets."	Do not handle guns for any reason, when people are downrange. Pass your scorecard to the Right, and score target to your Left. Bring staple gun and repair center.
When all back from posting targets and range light is turned off. "The Range is Clear, you may handle your guns."	Do not handle guns until the Range Officer says: The range is clear, you may handle your guns. Always keep guns pointed downrange!
"This will be the Timed Fire Stage of the NRA Short Course, firing 2 strings of 5 rounds each, with 20 seconds per string. For your first string of Timed Fire with 5 rounds, Load."	Get in Position. Grip Pistol. Take some deep breaths. DO NOT put the magazine in the gun until you hear the word "LOAD!"
"Is the Line Ready? ---" (--- = 3 sec delay)	If not ready, Say loudly, " Not Ready. "
"The Line is Ready ---."	Lock arm, pointing gun towards floor.
"Ready on the Right ---"	Breathe...Relax, get ready...
"Ready on the Left ---"	Raise arm, finger on trigger, aim and settle on Target Edge.
"Ready on the Firing Line ---"	Release half of your breath, Hold. Aim on Target Edge.
Targets Turn to Face you for 20 sec.	Aim, Commence Firing 5 rounds. Don't breathe during the string (if possible!)
Targets Turn away. "Are there any alibis?"	Shooter shall raise hand and wait for Range Officer. DO NOT even touch your gun or attempt to clear it! RO shall inspect, ask you to clear gun and determine if a re-fire is allowed.
"For your second string of Timed Fire with 5 rounds, Load."	The rest of the commands are the same as the First String.
<i>If there were any alibis in either First or Second String, the refire string is conducted now:</i> "The following commands are for the refire shooter(s) on port(s) [nn]. Refire shooters with 5 rounds, Load."	Regardless of how many shots were fired before the alibi happened, refire shooters fire 5 rounds! Commands are the same as the First String. Other shooters stand easy – Don't talk while any competitor is firing!
"Slides back, magazines out, guns on the bench, safety flags in chambers, make the line safe."	Unload gun, remove magazine, open cylinder, place gun on bench with safety flag inserted. Reload magazines and/or speed loaders. Make the line Safe! Step Back.
"Is the line safe on the right? Is the line safe on the left? The line is safe go forward score and repair with timed fire targets."	Do not handle guns for any reason, when people are downrange.
When all back from posting targets and range light is turned off. "The Range is clear, you may handle your guns."	Do not handle guns until the Range Officer says: The range is clear, you may handle your guns. Always keep guns pointed downrange!
"This will be the Rapid Fire Stage of the NRA Short Course, firing 2 strings of 5 rounds each, with 10 seconds per string. For your first string of Rapid Fire with 5 rounds, Load."	The rest of the commands are the same as for Timed Fire.

Pistol Group Analysis

Group analysis allows you to determine what you are doing wrong in your shooting. Don't look at this as a negative exercise: this is an opportunity to diagnose a problem. With a sound diagnosis, you can determine a course of action to remedy it.

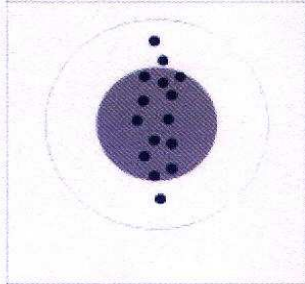
The following groups assume a right handed, right eye dominant shooter. For left-handed shooters, reverse the groups.

Pay attention to your groups, not individual shots.



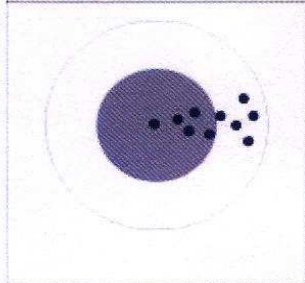
No Group - Scattered

- Possible Causes
1. All problems are evident, nothing specific stands out.
 2. Start with natural point of aim, then grip and trigger squeeze.



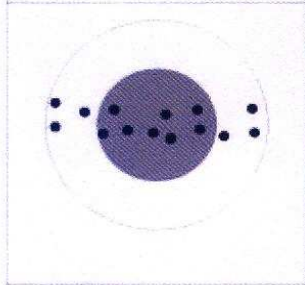
Vertical Centre Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Weak shoulder muscles.
 2. Swaying forward and backward causing vertical patterns.
 3. Breathing while aiming and firing.



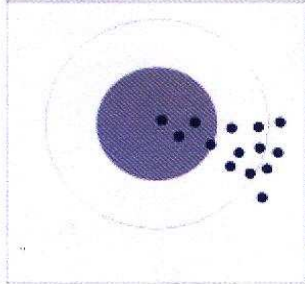
Right Horizontal

- Possible Causes
1. Applying extra pressure with thumb.
 2. Poor sight alignment: front sight alignment is off to the right.



Horizontal Centre Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Poor stance, resulting in bad natural point of aim.
 2. Poor handgrip, resulting in bad natural point of aim.
 3. Poor stance, resulting in body sway to the right and left.

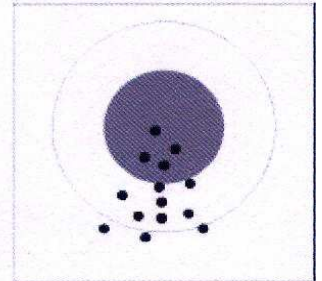


Low Right Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Snatching the trigger, pulling it and the gun to the right.
 2. Slacking the wrist while the pistol fires.

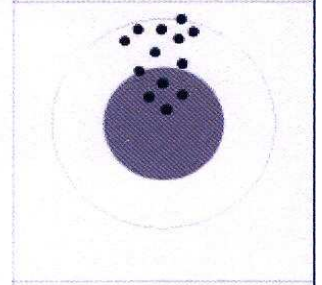
Low Centre Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Poor concentration.
 2. Poor follow through, lowering gun before the shot is away.
 3. Poor sight alignment: front sight is centred, but too low.



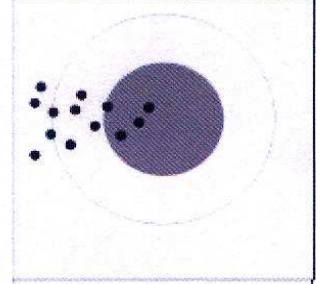
High Centre Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Heeling: applies pressure with the heel of the hand while the pistol fires.
 2. Breaking wrist up, pulling pistol up.
 3. Poor sight alignment: front sight is too high.



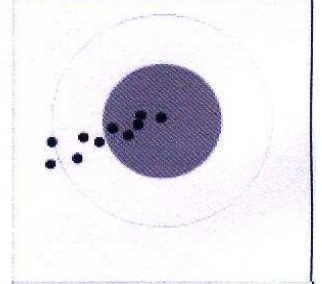
Left Horizontal Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Increasing grip pressure while shot breaks, bending wrist to left.
 2. Relaxing elbow while the shot breaks.



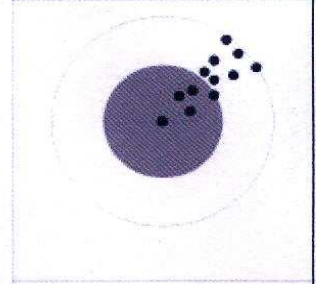
Low Horizontal Left

- Possible Causes
1. Pushing the trigger, moving it and the gun to the left.
 2. Poor sight alignment: front sight alignment is off to the left.
 3. Applying extra pressure with fingertips and/or pinkie.



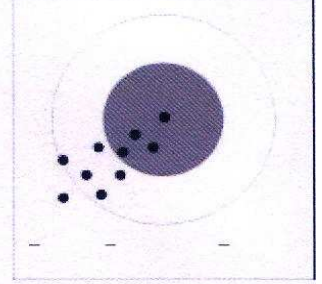
High Right Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Slacking the wrist while the pistol fires.
 2. Heeling: applies pressure with the heel of the hand while the pistol fires.
 3. Anticipating recoil.



Low Left Placement

- Possible Causes
1. Jerking: applies excessive pressure to trigger, pushing it down and to the left.
 2. Canting the pistol to the left and dropping the barrel.



Target and groupings are not to scale; use as examples for demonstration / educational purposes.
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Never ever give up!



