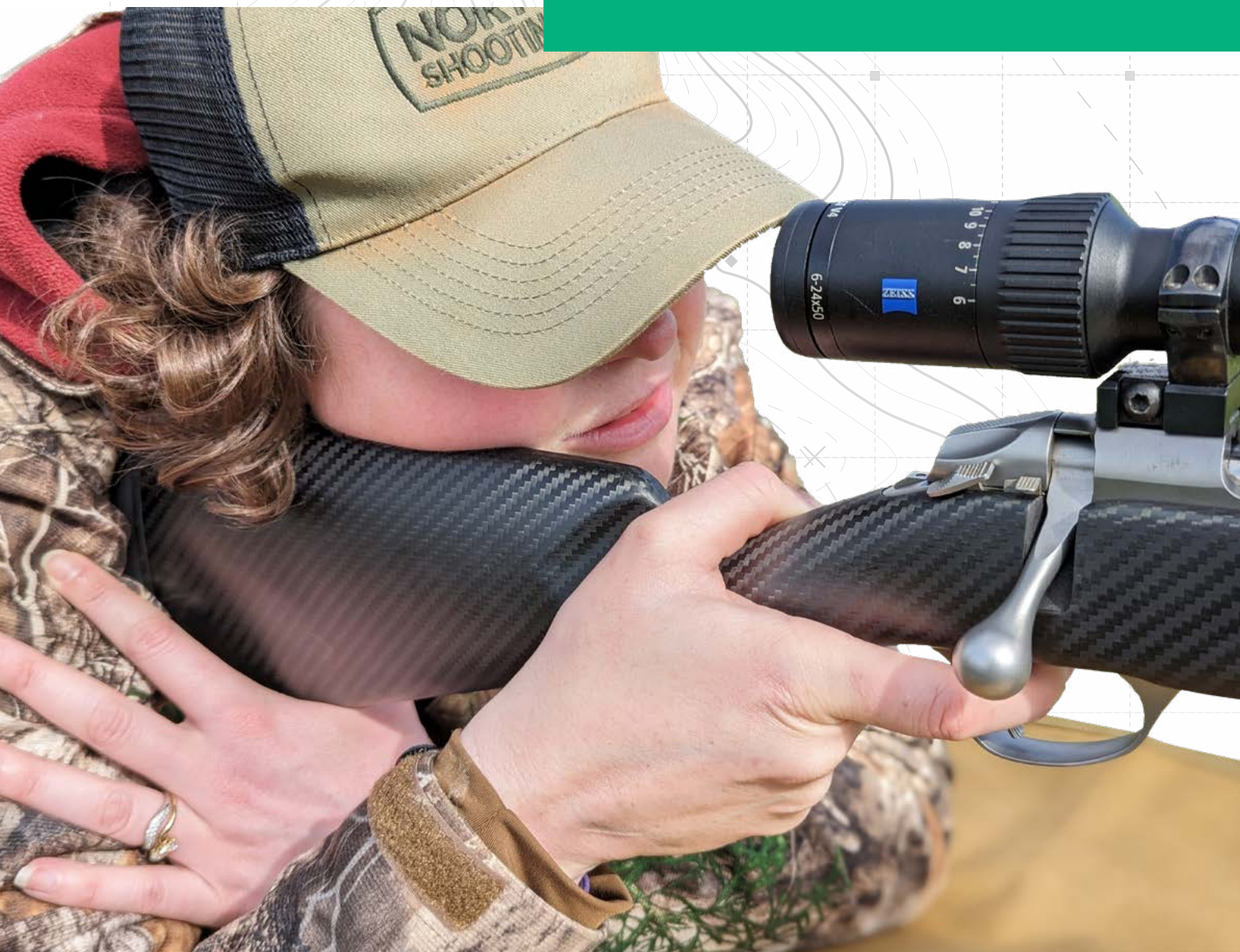


ENGLAND &
WALES **BEST
PRACTICE
GUIDES**

Firing positions.

Firearms





Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to describe the basic shooting positions which will enable a steady aim.

This guide links to others in the Firearms series.

Basics

Wherever possible make use of shooting aids to improve your stability and accuracy. Bipods and/or shooting sticks should be carried and used wherever possible, but other rests may need to be used to assist in taking a shot such as rucksacks, trees, logs etc.

Shooting with no rest should be avoided wherever possible.

Practise adopting and firing from different positions

before shooting at live deer. This can be done on a range or by using an empty rifle that has been proven to be clear, and aiming at a target, adjusting until the steadiest possible position is found.

In any firing position make sure that nothing touches the barrel or moderator when shooting as this can affect the point of aim.

When shooting from any rest, avoid applying too much pressure to the rifle or rest. This can interfere with barrel harmonics and alter the point of impact when shooting.





Firing positions

Prone

Try to keep your body in as straight a line behind the rifle as possible, this will assist with recoil control, and keep as much of your body in contact with the ground as possible. It may be more comfortable and stable to bring the right knee up, rather than keep the leg straight.

If regular shots from this position are expected to be taken, the use of a bipod should be considered best practice.

Where a bipod is not available or suitable, put a soft rest under the front hand or under the rifle fore-end. Shoot off of elbows

only where there is no alternative.

Pull the rifle firmly into the shoulder with the firing hand. The most steady position is to then bend the non firing arm across the chest so that the hand supports the other elbow or the toe of the stock, thus forming a stable 'triangle' of support.

Using a rear support such as a small bag rest will provide a very stable shot.

When shooting from the prone position, be very aware about potential obstructions to the rifle muzzle such as vegetation.



Standing

When shooting from the standing position, the use of shooting sticks is considered best practice. There are many designs of stick on the market, whichever is used will require practice in deploying and shooting from them.

Quad sticks provide rest for the front and rear of the rifle, offering a very stable shot whereas tripods tend to offer more manoeuvrability whilst aiming.

Face slightly to the right of the target keeping the body as upright as possible with a relaxed stance.

Most sticks have the ability to provide left or right aiming adjustments without the need to move your position.

When using quad or twin sticks, aiming elevation can be altered by moving slightly forward or back on the sticks. Other sticks such as tripods will have some ability to alter the height and elevation.

Make sure you are familiar with your sticks, how they work and how to set them up for your height before considering shooting at deer.

Where no sticks are available, try to find the most stable position possible by utilising whatever features you can. Leaning against trees or on fenceposts can help but will likely not be as stable as using sticks.

Standing shots with no rest should be avoided at all costs.

High seats and vehicles

In a high seat, use the rails to support the forend of the rifle and always try to rest your firing hand elbow on a side rail as this will make the rifle far steadier when aiming.

A soft pad can easily be made from material such as water-pipe insulation and taped over to cushion the rifle, making it steadier and protecting the forend of the rifle.

If you intend to shoot from a high seat, practise firing from that type of platform and understand the effect of taking a shot from an elevated position (see Rifles and Ammunition and Shot Placement guides).

When shooting from a vehicle, choose the position that offers the steadiest shot for the individual circumstance.

At all times, rifles should be carried completely empty and with the bolt removed when in a vehicle, and only be loaded when the rifle is aiming at the target.

In cars, trucks and UTV's, rifles can be rested on the wingmirror or from the bonnet or roof using a bipod or other rest.

For quad bikes, shooting rails can be fitted, or the rifle rested on the seat or handlebars to steady the shot.

When shooting deer from any vehicle, it must be stationary with the engine switched off.

Sitting or kneeling

With the use of modern shooting sticks, sitting and kneeling shots are less common due to the stability offered in the standing position.

If taking sitting shots, sticks or a long bipod should be used where possible.

When taking the shot, either cross your legs or dig your heels into the ground with legs apart and face slightly to the right of the target.

Rest both elbows on the inside of your knees and rest the forend on sticks, bipod or other rest. When using sticks, resting the firing hand elbow on the leg of the sticks will also help stability.

Where possible, sit with your back against a solid object such as a tree trunk to provide a more stable shooting platform.

For kneeling shots, kneel down sitting on the heel of your dominant side foot, with your knee on the ground.

Rest the non-shooting elbow on the knee, whilst keeping your other elbow under the rifle or locked against the body.

Use sticks or an extended bipod to steady your front hand/rifle where possible.

