

Technique: Head Position



The classic technique of shooting standing usually involves some basic physiological givens: That muscle tension is bad, that balance is steadier with an erect head position, and that a stable position is built on stacking bones upon bones, from the feet up to the head.

The two shooters above have very different positions, but both are very successful using their own style. Texas resident William Zander, on the left, is a Canadian national champion and regularly places in the top slots in U.S. shoots. He uses an unconventional head position, wherein he rests the weight of his head on the rifle, transferring the weight of the gun and his head to his rib cage and hips. Also, Zander says this head position stretches the muscles in his upper back and neck slightly, which he believes solidifies his position. Zander even uses lower rings on his gun than other shooters to force his head down and make the position more compact. He says this is why he is able to shoot in windy conditions better than many other competitors.

The Mexican shooter on the right uses a more traditional, erect head position. Current standing-position theory says that an erect head causes fewer inner-ear imbalances. When the inner ear is disturbed, it tends to make the shooter wobble around the center of gravity. Good standing shooters are able to reduce their wobble to a point that their hold stays inside the desired target area. The erect head allows the shooter to look out of the center of his eye without straining. To build this position, he sets his head location first, then brings the gun up to his eye. The higher rings facilitate this.

Which position is better for you? More than likely, you'll do better with a high, relaxed head position. For shooters who don't have thousands of hours in practice like Zander, it's the more stable option.