

Again this is what I was taught and this is what I do. It is a way, not THE way, that's all. But I have had pretty good results with it. Also this is for a trigger with at least a little roll. My preference that's all.

First let's look at trigger finger placement.

Where should the trigger make contact on the finger? The trigger should be centered in the first crease of the trigger finger. Remember this is an article on Bulls-eye shooting. If this were an article on free pistol or air pistol it would be different. So, International shooters please don't unleash the hounds on me.

Why you ask? We have always been taught to place the pad on the trigger if you have a trigger that weighs in between 2 and 4 lbs. That is enough weight to move the fleshy part of the pad of your finger. Try it! Get something that weighs at least 2 lbs that has a tip or point on it the size of a pen or a trigger would be ideal. Put your hand on a table or desk, palm up and slowly lower the weight onto the pad of the finger. It moves. A lot. Now lower the weight onto the first crease of the finger, right on the joint. Sure it moves a whole lot less than the fatty, fleshy part of the pad of the finger. Now having conducted this little experiment think about the pulling the trigger with the pad of the finger. The first part of movement you feel is flash and fat moving out of the way. This is not part of the movement involved in trigger control.

Ever been shooting well and in slow fire you start to get "chicken finger?" The trigger starts moving and then it stops and feels like it weighs 30 lbs, or did it move at all? Maybe what you felt was the flesh moving out of the way because you are shooting well and don't want to screw up the match, so you are really in tune with what you are feeling in the trigger.

Now think if the trigger were placed at the crease or first joint of the trigger finger. When the trigger moves, what you are feeling is really the trigger moving.

Let's go even deeper.

Take a pen or pencil and start tapping the fleshy part of the web between your trigger finger and the thumb. Keeping the same intensity move the tapping up the large knuckle on your trigger finger. Can you feel the difference? The flesh acts as a shock absorber to the tapping where the tendon in the joint is more of a conductor. I know what you're thinking. Why do I want to feel that? Because it is that important to be able to feel every little movement of your trigger so you know that you are squeezing the trigger and not jerking the trigger.



A CLINIC ON THE FUNDAMENTALS

by BRIAN ZINS

Let me start by stating that some of what you're about to read may sound contradictory to a lot of articles that have been written and lessons that have been taught in the past. Some of this may say the same thing in the end, just a different route to get there. By no way am I suggesting they are incorrect. I am merely giving my approach to learning bulls-eye and what I do as a shooter.

Trigger Control

Started out this segment as "Fundamentals" but, honestly if you know me there is only one that really, really counts when the shot breaks. Don't get me wrong stance and grip and aiming are important. Keep in mind that you can have a perfect grip and hold perfect sight alignment all day long. It only counts when the gun goes bang and only one action causes the gun to go bang. Pulling the trigger. You can hold the gun upside down, squeeze the trigger with your pinky, and align the sights to the target in a mirror and shoot tens as long as you don't jerk the trigger.

Please DO NOT try that at home.

Types of trigger squeeze

I remember when I was in Boot Camp and they taught us about trigger control before we went to the rifle range. I now look back realize they were, well not wrong, but mistaken. Just in case I run into one of my old Drill Instructors and by some strange twist of fate he read this article. We were taught two different types of trigger control: Interrupted and Uninterrupted. I still believe that there are two types: Uninterrupted and Wrong.

If trigger control is ever interrupted in slow fire the shot needs to be aborted and the shot started over. If trigger control is interrupted in a sustained fire stage then we revert to our "key word" that triggers us to kick-start our shot process. Shot process and "key word" if not already covered will be covered later.

The relationship between sight alignment and trigger control:

Often when the fundamentals are explained these two are explained as two different acts. Well truth be told, it's really kind of hard to accomplish one without the other. They have a symbiotic relationship. In order to truly settle the movement in the dot or sights you need a smooth steady trigger squeeze. Trigger control is merely a reaction to what the eye sees. What? One can hold perfect sight alignment / sight picture for a long time. Now apply pressure to the trigger, what happens? Something moves right? So if this happens in a slow fire shot what typically happens? We stop squeezing until everything settles down again and we start the trigger. It moves. We stop the trigger. It settles. We start the trigger. It moves and so on and so on and so on. So from this we can see how the finger already acts to what the eye sees. We do not have to train the eye to accomplish this it already does it. We need to make it work for us and get the finger to react at a more opportune time. BEFORE we have obtained perfect sight alignment / sight picture. Yes I just said to start squeezing the trigger before you have obtained a perfect sight alignment / sight picture. Your sight alignment should be pretty close to perfect since we have mastered a perfect grip and the sights are aligned, not just to each other but also to the our eye, as soon as we raise the gun. Or we will master that soon. So before the sights or dot have settled into the center of the target we should start our trigger squeeze taking advantage of the pressure that is being applied to the trigger to help stabilize the sight. Continue to squeeze the trigger uninterrupted using that

pressure to help move toward and stay center and allow the shot to break.

Said nothing about a surprise break. Not a big believer in the surprise break. Just being honest. I know when my gun is going to shoot. I know what it feels like right up until it shoots. I really know my trigger. I have done lots of dry firing without looking at the sights just to know what it feels like.

It has been called steering the sights with the trigger, but I don't like the connotation that carries. More of a sight alignment/sight picture through trigger control concept.

Proper Grip

Not saying that this is the only grip to use. This is merely an option; it may work for you it may not, depending on your hand size and structure. It works for me and it has worked for many shooters that Andy and I have taught it to. It is not UNSAFE for those who have questioned it, trust me the gun will move less with this grip. If you do use a grip that aligns the sights and gun up your arm to your shoulder you are putting yourself at a huge disadvantage.

Here we go.

A proper grip is a grip that will NATURALLY align the guns sights to the eye of the shooter without having to tilt your head or move your wrists around in order to that. Also a proper grip, and most importantly, is a grip that allows the gun to return to the same position that is one in that allowed the sights to be aligned without having to search for the sights after each and every shot.

To many times I have seen, and I am sure most of you have also, may do it yourself. Someone shoots and you can see the front of the gun waving around as they try to get sight alignment back. This is not a problem with recoil management, grip strength or position. This is a grip issue.

If you line the gun up you arm and too your shoulder in order to align the sights one of 2 things must happen. Your head leaves a natural position in order to see the sights since they are lined up with your shoulder or you have turn your wrists until the sight are aligned to your eye and then the gun is no longer aligned up your arm. This was called "grip alignment."

Yes back in the day they taught "grip alignment." Well grip alignment as they described it is BS, just like Natural Point of Aim with a pistol is BS. But that's a different conversation. Two handed shooters don't

even shoot with the gun aligned up their strong arm to their shoulder. Unless you have some deformity and your head is growing out of your shooting side shoulder why would you want the gun aligned up your arm to your shoulder?

This is for 1911 slab style grip or a .22 with slabs. If you're using orthopedic grips you can't do it with them.

My grip is simple, it's not hard to get into and once you get it, it will feel better and recoil will be better managed and the sights will always come back to alignment. If you rotate the meaty portion of your hand below the little finger behind the back-strap of the gun, every time you shoot, it will want to move off of it. It is just a squishy, fatty portion of your hand that cannot control the gun or offer any resistance to recoil whatsoever. The fatty portion of the hand there cannot be moved, it is just fat. Try to move it. The movement caused by making fist does not count because the rest of the hand causes that movement. The place the gun tends to move to is the valley formed between that meaty portion below the little finger and the meaty part of the thumb. So I ask why not start with the gun in the place it wants to be.

Even with a picture this hard to describe and even when done in person we still tend to have to work individually with shooters to show them how to do it.

The best and easiest way to get the proper grip, at least a good starting position as you may need to tweak it around a bit until it feels good, is with a holster.

Put your 1911 in a holster on the side of your body not in front or behind, but on the side of your hip. Put your hands in the surrender position, like the action shooters form. Keep your eyes and head straight. Allow your shooting hand to come down naturally to the gun, don't move it around just let it come down and grab the gun. The fatty part of the little finger should all be on the right panel of the grip. Now keeping the gun in your hand with the grip assume your one handed shooting position. The sights should be pretty close to being aligned. If they are not you will need to tweak the grip a bit. Like I said this is best if in person and someone who uses the grip can actually show you.

So if you ever run into me at a match or wherever please ask and I will show you or talk to someone who has attended a clinic or uses the same grip and ask them.

