

# Triggering Mechanics

[11-time national champion tells how]

David Tubb

*ORIGIN: This is an edited excerpt from The Rifle Shooter.*

*There is no more important fundamental than trigger control for the competitive shooter.*



***The rifle is normally moving in offhand. Trigger control, therefore, is ultimately responsible for positioning the bullet on the target on an offhand shot. Everything else can be correct – hold, sight picture – but a bad trigger pull can ruin the shot. The technical fundamental is to move the trigger without moving the rifle. This ability is easy enough to develop through dry-? ring.***

## Setting Up

Exercising proper trigger control starts with correct trigger adjustment. The triggers on all my rifles have their overtravel stops removed entirely. I want free movement in the trigger after I break a shot, and the reason is that allows me to be aggressive with my trigger pull. If the finger comes to a stop at or shortly after the point in trigger travel that the shot broke, that stop can move the rifle when the bullet is still inside the barrel.

I believe that the Anschütz two-stage trigger is the finest available and I've used one on my competition rifles for years. This is the same trigger found on Anschütz smallbore competition rifles. Incorporating an Anschütz into a Winchester or Remington platform requires a good deal of modification, but it's the native trigger in the TUBB 2000.

A properly set up Anschütz trigger has enough spring tension in the trigger's arc of movement that it will effectively stop the finger from needless movement after the shot breaks. For any shot fired prone, sitting, or in calm conditions offhand, the spring tension in the trigger itself will stop the rearward movement of the finger in virtually the same spot an overtravel stop might.

## Mechanics

I don't want to give the impression that I yank the trigger back to make every shot, although I will say that I often do something close to that when firing offhand in high wind. I always move the trigger smoothly but there is a variance in the speed or acceleration of the trigger movement when I won't see a quality sight picture for very long. I don't pull the trigger any harder or more forcibly,

just more quickly. An accelerated start on the trigger results in more overrun compared to what I experience in a calm condition shot. Just like a vehicle, the faster it goes the longer it takes to stop. A longer arc of trigger movement means this doesn't matter.

I touch the trigger face using only the tip of my finger. There is less movement required from the tendons and muscles to produce movement nearer the finger tip and overall greater sensitivity in this area of the finger. If we divided the surface of the first joint of the index finger into thirds, I would have only the forwardmost third touching the trigger face. I also am shooting nearer the side of my finger pad rather than on its center. That is the natural spot found by most people when touching the fingertip and the thumb together, such as when picking up a pencil. I am also shooting with approximately 8 ounces in each of my trigger's two stages. I would suggest moving the trigger contact point in a little if trigger weight is higher (over one pound in the second stage, or over two pounds total weight) to approximately halfway down the finger pad and also more centered in the pad.

I adjust the trigger location and face angle (options with Anschütz) to optimize my point of contact with

**The Anschütz two-stage trigger is a “shortcut” to learning proper trigger control. It’s adjustable in ways no other trigger found on a centerfire rifle can approach. It’s the trigger we chose for the TUBB 2000 for this reason. Learn more about this trigger and how to adjust it on DavidTubb.com.**

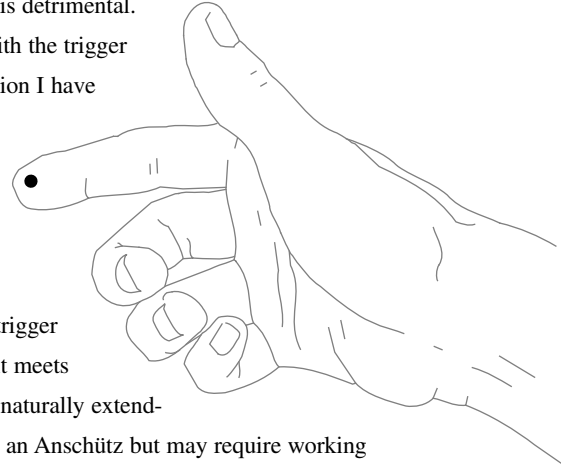


**I developed this new trigger post for the T2K and have it for sale now. Everyone who has tried it has loved it. It makes finger placement automatic.**

the trigger. The idea is to direct the pressure against the trigger face in such a way as not to induce any movement other than straight back; sideways movement is detrimental.

Due to the orientation of my finger contact point with the trigger face, and also to the relatively high right hand position I have on the pistol grip, my finger is not arcing in a straight line against the trigger face (such that the finger and trigger face are perpendicular), but that causes no problems. Trigger face adjustment compensates for it.

It is important that the trigger sits far enough forward that it meets the finger when the finger is naturally extended. This is easily adjusted on an Anschütz but may require working around on others, such as when inletting the stock on a bolt action or by moving the pistol grip rearward on an AR15-type rifle. Curling in the index finger to meet the trigger face means not only that the finger is cramped and less efficient in its capacity for controlled movement, but also tends to arc such that there is sideways pressure applied against the trigger, which can move the rifle.



### **Hand Position**

Another element in precise control of trigger finger movement is found in the thumb. The thumb and index finger work as a team, and this teamwork is in use countless times in a day (pick up a coin to see it). Technically, it’s called “sympathetic movement,” which means that when one moves the other is ingrained to move also. When we shoot we don’t want the thumb introducing movement because the movement it introduces insulates the feel of the trigger finger movement and may also introduce unwanted side pressure against the rifle. Reducing sympathetic movement comes from extending the index finger as described, and also from increasing hand gripping tension. Sympathetic movement is more prevalent when the hand is relaxed.

Another means of reducing sympathetic movement influence is elevating and extending the thumb. All the pistol grip areas I have designed have allowed natural attainment of this hand-hold orientation. When the thumb is wrapped around low on the pistol grip, sympathetic movement is increased.

Don’t allow any part of the trigger finger to touch the rifle other than the contact of the finger tip to the trigger face. If the trigger finger is pressing inward or rubbing on the rifle, that can move the rifle or create pressures that may cause shot displacement. Unwanted rifle movement can also be introduced by the reaction of the hand when the trigger finger is moved. Gripping tension influences this and higher tension reduces the tendency. Again, the idea and goal is to isolate control of movement to only the finger tip.

Trigger control is what it says: controlling the moment of firing. It is as much a mental process as it is a shooting technique, but mechanics come first. Set up right and learning trigger control becomes much easier.

**For more information about David Tubb and his Superior Shooting Systems Inc., click [HERE](#).**