

With a lateral approach, you establish horizontal alignment with the bullseye earlier. In a vertical or diagonal approach, two points are converging simultaneously: vertical and horizontal alignment of the aperture over the aiming black. It's true that a vertical approach will establish vertical alignment early, but the vertical approach then has the gun moving downward or upward to achieve horizontal alignment and a sight picture. In my opinion, the standing position is not completed until a level is achieved. With a lateral approach, the position is settled and leveled before the sight enters the aiming black. In effect, you are in control earlier.

This standing position I've been teaching you is engineered to reduce vertical displacement or movement in the rifle. You're down and settled. Through the twist and by the way you've tracked and set the left elbow, all movement in this position is naturally left and right, not up and down.

Considering the mechanics of this position, there may also be an advantage in moving from a position of slightly more tension rather than from one that's slightly more relaxed. This could be thought of in an exaggerated sense: if you were to approach the target from five target frames over, and if your starting point was from five frames to your left, the position would be more stressed (you'd be twisted more) before you began the approach. If you were to approach from five frames over to the right, the position would be more relaxed (you'd be twisted less). Therefore, the left-to-right approach represents an uncoiling of the body, which, to me, is more natural.

The main reason I think you should train yourself to a lateral approach is because you'll have to shoot in the wind so often. Wind doesn't usually blow you up and down; it moves you left and right. A lateral approach moves as the wind moves—and as your body now moves. The path of a vertical or diagonal approach is affected by the wind. You're fighting two things then: the wind and the approach.

I don't always use a flat left-to-right approach. I have a little different approach for calm and for wind. The calm-condition approach is more from 8 to 2; the wind-condition approach is from true 9-o'clock. This has to do with the natural plane of my rifle swing; this plane follows two slightly different inclinations depending on the amount of back bend I use. I'll talk more about this later.

USING THE APPROACH.

When I bring the gun down from 12-o'clock, it normally moves straight to the point where I begin my approach, but sometimes that's a little hard to regulate. In following this process, I'm also trying to keep rifle movement to a minimum. I may have come down from 12-o'clock, but the gun may



The key to successfully shooting on an approach basis is being able to release a shot the instant you see a 10. Take the shot as the sights are moving toward target-center or just as they get centered—never shoot on the way out. You've also got to realize that, poor conditions or good, your goal is always to shoot a 10 with the least effort possible. If that means altering your normal approach, do it.

have wobbled out to the 9-ring at 3-o'clock; I'll bring the gun in from there and fire the shot. I am approaching and shooting.

There are also times when I approach and don't get the sight centered. If the rifle wobbles off toward 4-o'clock, for instance, if I see that it's a 10 and I'm able to hold the gun there, then I will shoot—every time.

As long as I'm within my timeframe, I will try to get a sight picture. Let's say there's a little wind blowing and I've approached from 9 to 3, but didn't shoot. The wind made the sight wobble halfway off the bullseye to the 3-o'clock side. I'm looking at a half-moon sight picture that would give me an edge-9 or an 8, so I will work it back in from there, from 3 to 9, and fire the shot. I'm still going to shoot what appears to be an acceptable shot, which is a 10, but, as mentioned, it may not be within my normal call radius. If my other shots (those taken from my normal left to right approach) have