



More About Shotguns—Chokes

Identify various shotgun chokes and types of chokes including fixed or interchangeable tubes.

Time

60–90 minutes

Materials

- Shotguns with a variety of choke types (preferable to use the same shotgun which they used in Lesson 3).
- Ammunition of the proper gauge for each individual shooter with shot size limited to 7.5 or 8
- Trap machine or portable thrower with clay targets
- Pattern testing Station or six t-posts and three, 4 foot square, backer boards adhered to posts with wire
- Pattern testing paper targets or white butcher paper or poster board
- Heavy marker to draw a 30 inch circle using a 30 inch disc to trace pattern test circle on to white paper
- Tape, clips or staple guns to adhere paper targets to backer boards
- Shooting vest or shell pouches, ear, and eye protection
- Portable gun rack or permanent gun racks typically found at shotgun ranges

Space Required

A formal or informal trap range with adequate distances for safe shotgunning (shot-fall zone) for moving targets and for placing a series of three pattern testing boards at distances from 20-40 yards.

The range is used for youth to shoot at a pattern board and moving targets to test different chokes.

If an informal range is used portable safety cone markers should be used to delineate safety zones.



Lesson Objectives

- Youth will identify various shotgun chokes and types of chokes including fixed or interchangeable tubes.
- New shotgunners will be able to explain the differences a choke makes on a shotgun's pattern.
- Shooters will demonstrate an understanding of choosing chokes when shooting trap from beyond the standard 16 yard line.



Background

Having already learned and practiced the safety rules (Shotgun Lesson 1 & 2) expectations for conducting live fire at any range calls for all safety rules to be strictly adhered to. Shotgunners will be introduced to chokes and experiment with a variety of chokes at varying distances. This introductory pattern testing lesson will be followed by a series of targets thrown for each shooter using chokes different from those previously used during earlier practice sessions (Shotgun Lesson 3).



Activity 1 Instructions: (20 minutes)

1. Demonstrate how to identify chokes in a shotgun with fixed or interchangeable choke tubes.
 - a. New shooters will visually inspect a variety of shotguns and identify markings on both fixed choke guns and those shotguns with removable chokes.
 - b. Repeat this process with all shooters in the session.
2. Each group of new shooters will work through an exercise where an interchangeable choke tube is removed and exchanged with one of different constriction.
 - a. Each shooter will remove a choke tube from a shotgun fitted with a removable choke and replace back into the shotgun.
 - b. Repeat this process with all shooters in the session.



Reflect and Apply Questions:

1. Why is it important to determine the choke of a shotgun?
2. What might happen if a removable choke tube is left out of the shotgun and this shotgun is fired?



Before the Meeting

Three Pattern testing boards need to be set up; one each at 20 yards, 30 yards and 40 yards.

Have six to ten paper pattern testing targets pre-cut for each shooter in the session.

Trap or portable thrower set up prior to start of session for moving targets.

Ensure the range is prepped allowing each shooter the opportunity to take shots using a different choke.

Along with range prep bring the required safety equipment: ear and eye protection for shooters.

Set up portable gun rack if a permanent rack is not available.

Establish a defined safe zone with safety cones.



Activity 2 Instructions: (60 minutes)

1. Pattern test shotguns with a predetermined choke using a pattern testing target at three different distances (20 yards, 30 yards and 40 yards).
 - a. With a high mounted shotgun, the range officer working with the shooter will chamber a single shell for the shooter and ask the shooter to close the action while maintaining muzzle control, keeping a finger off the trigger until ready to fire and when given the go ahead shoot a single round at the 20 yard target. Repeat this at both the 30 and 40 yard pattern testing targets (30 inch circles).
 - b. After placing open action shotgun on the rack, the shooter and leader walk to the pattern testing boards and count the number of pellets inside each of the 30 inch test circles to compare pattern density.
 - c. Repeat step 1a & step 1b with each shooter in the session.
 - d. Each member of session will change the choke in their shotgun and take a single shot from their station at the 30 yard target to compare with count from their first shot.
2. Each youth shooter will work through a series of targets thrown on a constant flight path using a choke constriction different from one used in Shotgun Lesson 3.

Reflect and Apply Questions:

1. Why might a shooter increase their scores on the trap range if a different choke is selected?
2. When shooting trap beyond the standard 16 yard line what choke would you select?

Other Related Resources:

Wyoming Shotgunning 4-H Leaders Booklet, WY State Development Training Team, Roy Kern

References

Georgia 4-H S.A.F.E. website – <http://www.georgia4h.org/safe/disciplines/shotgun>
National Rifle Association Basic Shotgun Shooting Course, NRA Washington DC
Wyoming Game and Fish Department Hunter Education Student Manual
4-H Shotgun Lesson 4: More about Shotguns



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identify various shotgun chokes and types of chokes including fixed or interchangeable tubes.

Activity 1 Reflect and Apply Questions

1. Why is it important to select the proper choke for different distances?

It is important to understand and select the proper choke in a shotgun to aid a shooter to identify the effective range of the shotgun which will directly influence the percentage of targets broken when shooting at varying distances.

2. What might happen if an interchangeable choke tube is left out and the shotgun is fired?

If a shotgun is fired without re-inserting and fully seating the removable choke tubes permanent damage will be done to the threads inside of the barrel making the choke system inoperable.



Activity 2 Reflect and Apply Questions

1. Why might a shooter increase their scores on the trap range if a different choke is selected?

After a new shooter gains proficiency shooting trap from the 16 yard line, handicap trap is introduced which places the shooter at further distances from the trap house. 4-H shooters at the state shoot may shoot from 20-27 yards as part of the state competition. After testing various chokes the shooter can see that an open choke at close range may be more effective and as distance is increased the lack of pattern density may allow targets to be hit but not broken due to the openness of the pattern. Conversely, if a choke is too tight when a new shooter is learning to shoot moving clay targets a tight pattern is less forgiving and may limit early success.

2. When shooting trap beyond the standard 16 yard line what choke would you select?

After learning about chokes and pattern testing their shotgun a new shooter will be able to decide what constriction suits them the best. Starting with an open choke such as improved cylinder or modified choke from the 16 yard line and subsequently changing to a full choke for handicap trap. A shooter may even eventually turn to an extra full choke when the shooter challenges themselves as far back as the 27 yard line.

REFLECT AND APPLY
ANSWER SHEET