

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES & GENERAL RULES FOR WSC OUTDOOR RIFLE & PISTOL RANGES

### 5.0.0 **INTRODUCTION:** Westford Sportsmen Club outdoor range SOPs and Safety Rules.

The following SOPs and Range Rules were established to ensure the SAFETY of all WSC members, their guests, and the surrounding community. Exceptional vigilance must be employed when using the ranges to insure that all rules are followed for everyone's SAFETY and to prevent damage to our ranges.

WSC only grants permission to use outdoor ranges to those shooters who agree to strictly obey all club rules, as well as all gun laws. The general SOPs and rules in this document apply to all WSC outdoor rifle and pistol ranges, and may be superseded by range- or event-specific rules.

- 5.1.0 **Range Use:** All privileges require a current membership, or being the invited guest of a member displaying an Orange Range Card. All members using the ranges must display their Orange Range Card and their guests are required to wear guest cards. Orange Range Cards are obtained by attending one of the monthly safety briefings. Guest cards are stored in cabinets at each range, and must be returned to same cabinet from which they were taken.
- 5.1.1 **Commercial use:** The use of any range for personal instruction for profit is strictly forbidden unless approved by the E-Board.
- 5.1.2 **Range Hours:** Shooting is allowed only between the hours of A) Sundays, 1:00PM to Sunset and, B) Monday – Saturday, 8:00AM to Sunset. Sunset is determined by the time posted at ranges, the club web site, or as defined by the time tables in MA Fish & Wildlife Hunting abstracts.
- 5.1.3 **Monthly Safety Briefing:** The club holds a monthly outdoor range safety briefing that includes a classroom discussion, and practical range session to qualify members for their Orange Card. We also encourage members looking to refresh their safety knowledge to attend. This session is generally held the Sunday following the monthly general membership meeting from 11:30 to 12:30 at the club house, and from 12:30 to 2:00 + at the ranges; check the website calendar to confirm the date. Members are welcome to use the ranges during this time; the safety briefing shall take precedence, however, and all members are expected to comply with the briefing's requirements. Please notify the Outdoor Range Chair if you would like to attend or have any questions.
- 5.1.4 **Range Logs:** All members shall sign the range log before and after shooting, and include the following information: Name, guests' full names, time, date, and badge numbers. Rifle and pistol range sessions must be separately logged in the respective log books.

- 5.1.5 **Range Closures:** The CRO, Outdoor Range Chair, or other E-Board members reserve the right to close any range if they feel there is a safety hazard (as in winter conditions) or to perform maintenance work. This has priority over all informal shooting. Any scheduled work will be posted on the website calendar.
- 5.1.6 **Winter Conditions:** If the ground becomes frozen, range closures may be required to prevent unsafe shooting conditions such as fired rounds ricocheting.
- 5.1.7 **Laws:** In the event of a conflict between these WSC rules and a law, the law shall take precedence. All laws must be obeyed.
- 5.1.8 **Scheduled Events:** Any scheduled event on the ranges will be posted on the web site calendar. All members are reminded to check the calendar before proceeding to the ranges. The E-Board reserves the right to schedule, change, or cancel any event. Any member planning an event must notify **both** the Outdoor Range Chair and CRO. They must also obtain approval of the E-Board.
- 5.1.9 **Modification of Rules:** These rules and SOPs may be modified by the Outdoor Range Chair, CRO, or Event RSO as needed for such purposes as for training classes, competitions, or special events which are under the direction of an NRA Safety Officer or Certified Instructor.
  
- 5.2.0 **Disciplinary Actions and Violation of Rules:** Ignorance of the rules is no excuse. As stated in 5.1.0, it is the responsibility of everyone using the ranges to read, understand and comply with all rules and laws. This includes staying current with any and all changes.
- 5.2.1 Users who refuse or neglect to follow all rules, or conduct themselves in an unsafe or unsportsmanlike manner, may have their range privileges suspended or revoked by the CRO or Outdoor Range Chair pending review by the E-Board.
- 5.2.2 Any RSO or E-Board member may have any person removed from the premises if his/her behavior is considered unsafe or unsportsmanlike.
- 5.2.3 **Reporting Range Damage & Safety Issues:** All members are urged to report safety violations, issues not amicably resolved, or any property damage to the Outdoor Range Chair and CRO ASAP. Please include all info and pictures related to incidents. Any member witnessing unsafe behavior or damage to the ranges are obligated to fill out and submit an Incident Report to the Outdoor Range Chair and CRO. These are available on the WSC website and in all range cabinets.
- 5.2.4 All shooting must be done in a safe and responsible manner. Any willful destruction of target holders, stands, or other WSC property, will result in disciplinary actions by the E-Board which could include suspension of range privileges, and/or expulsion from the WSC.

**5.3.0 General Firearm Safety SOPs: Safety shall govern the range.** Nothing comes before **SAFETY**.

**A: ALWAYS:** keep your firearm pointed in a safe direction. A safe direction is any direction that would not cause an injury to a person (including yourself) or damage to property in the event of an accidental or negligent discharge. (Always treat all firearms as being loaded.)

**B: ALWAYS:** keep your finger off the trigger, outside of the trigger guard and alongside the gun frame until you are on target and ready to shoot.

**C: ALWAYS:** keep your firearm unloaded or holstered and in a safe condition until you are ready to shoot. This means that firearms may only be loaded and unloaded at the firing line.

**D: ALWAYS:** be alert - Safety is Every Shooter's Responsibility. All shooters have the responsibility to remain aware of not just their own firearm handling, but other range users' as well. All shooters have the right to calmly and politely question other users' failure to maintain safe practices. All shooters have the obligation to immediately address any issues raised by any other users, just as if the comments were made by a Range Safety Officer. **SAFETY IS EVERY SHOOTER'S RESPONSIBILITY.**

**5.3.1 EYE & EAR Protection:** Is MANDATORY for anyone on or near the ranges when the ranges are active (HOT). You could be 25' from a range and still need protection. This includes proper attire (clothing and footwear).

**5.3.2 Be sure:** you have read and understand all manufacturers' instructions on how to safely load and use your firearm.

A: Be sure your gun and ammunition are compatible.

B: Be sure of your target and what is beyond.

C: Be aware that circumstances may require additional rules in a particular situation.

**5.3.3** Prior to making the range HOT or handling any firearm, ensure that no one is down range.

**5.3.4** All shooting must be conducted as aimed fire. (No shooting from the hip or un-aimed firing.) Rapid fire should be done responsibly. Always keep your muzzle pointed below the shoot line.

**5.3.5** Never move or change stations with a loaded, unholstered, firearm. Always make your firearm safe before moving.

**5.3.6** Never discharge a firearm that one is **NOT** knowledgeable with or capable of operating. (Example: A child may handle a 22LR safely, but should not be shooting a 9MM or .45ACP if they cannot control the muzzle).

**5.3.7** All firearms may only be loaded or unloaded at the firing line on a HOT Range. Muzzle loaders may only be capped on the firing line on a HOT Range.

- 5.3.8 In the event of a misfire or hang fire, the shooter **MUST** wait for at least 30+ seconds (**KEEPING THE MUZZLE CONTINUOUSLY POINTED DOWN RANGE**) before attempting to open the action or eject the round. (Now this misfired round is called a DUD). See section 5.3.9.
- 5.3.9 All duds (misfired shells) must be removed from club property by the owner, or placed in one of the oil filled dud containers. **Do not** leave them on the ground or dispose of them in the trash.
- 5.3.10 **Casing & Uncasing firearms:** All firearms entering and leaving the range must be in a case or range bag if not properly holstered.
- A: When removing the gun from a case/bag, the case should be placed on the front shooting bench in a fashion that the muzzle of the firearm is pointed down range. Now when you uncasing the firearm, if in the event of a negligent discharge, the muzzle is pointed down range in a safe direction, parallel with or down toward the ground. To prevent a bullet from leaving the range, never point the muzzle of a firearm in the air or above the shoot line.
- 5.3.11 **Firearms made safe:** All firearms that are not cased, properly holstered or in your hand pointing down range on a HOT range being used, must have an Empty Chamber Indicator (ECI) inserted in the breech.
- A: An ECI should also be inserted when uncasing, re-casing, or moving about with a firearm.
- 5.3.12 **Medical Emergency:** In the event of an emergency, stop shooting and make range cold and safe. Take charge, assess the situation, and call for help if you feel the situation warrants.

#### **5.4.0 Targets, Target Stands and Target Holders.**

- 5.4.1 **Targets:** All targets, paper or otherwise, **MUST** be positioned to ensure that all bullets are positively impacting the berm between the base (24" above the range floor) and the (shoot line.) If your bullets are not hitting this area, stop shooting and readjust your target or shooting position. You should check and verify your trajectory before you begin shooting.
- A: Do not shoot at any objects (hard targets) that may cause a **RICOCHET** such as but not limited to propane tanks, bowling pins, frying pans, or glass.
- B: Do not shoot at anything (breaking plastic, clay pigeons) that will cause a mess on the ranges that you are not willing to clean up afterwards. You are responsible to remove everything from the range when done shooting.
- C: If a shooter cannot keep all the shots on the target, the distance to the target must be reduced. Anyone that is continually missing the target must not be allowed to shoot without instruction.
- D: When you are done shooting, please remove all debris and support frames from the ranges.

E: **Shotguns:** Only rifle slugs are allowed to be used with WSC supplied target frames. No birdshot or buckshot of any kind is allowed because it destroys the target backers and frames. If you want to use buck shot or smaller bird shot on the ranges or to pattern your gun, you must supply your own target backers which must be removed from club property after use. (There is also a pattern board at the trap house on the left side of field #1 for patterning your shotgun.)

- 5.4.2 **Target Stands:** The WSC supplied target stands shall only be used for their intended purpose which is to hold paper or cardboard targets. Targets should not extend beyond the boundaries of the backer board, no larger than 24"x24". Using these stands to hold or support anything other than paper or cardboard is prohibited. This means no shooting at anything hanging below the bottom of the backer board. **This is to ensure bullets stay on berm.**
- 5.4.3 **Target Holders:** Target holders are in-ground slots at fixed distances on the range fields into which one inserts target stands. They must never be used to support anything other than these stands. **This means not setting up items on them to shoot at for plinking.** This will be considered willful destruction of club property and penalties will be imposed.
- 5.4.4 **Self-Purchased Targets:** "Spinners" or knock down type for **.22 rim fire only** are allowed on the ranges but must be properly supported and elevated off the range floor. This would mean 4 – 6 feet off the ground, depending on your trajectory. **You must supply** a means of supporting these items, support frame, preferably made of soft pine. Follow all manufacturer's instructions when using these types of targets, and be sure to elevate all targets high enough to ensure proper bullet impact on the berm. Do not shoot at any targets or objects on the ground.
- 5.4.5 **Reactive Steel Targets:** Steel targets intended for large caliber (center fire) cartridges, and the PERSON using them, must be approved by the Outdoor Range Chair prior to use on any range. This approval may be revoked at any time by the CRO or Outdoor Range Chair if the target condition has deteriorated. When setting up this type of target, take care not to set up over the target holders so that the bullet splatter does not damage the holders. Always use proper ammo - never use armor piercing or steel core bullets. Always follow all manufacturer's instructions when using these types of targets.

A: Large caliber reactive steel targets must be shot at the following minimum distances.

Rifle calibers – at least 100 yards. Handgun calibers – at least 10 yards.

Follow all manufacturing instructions using the proper caliber, bullet type and bullet speed for which the target is rated. If target has deteriorated, do not use it.

- 5.4.6 **Plinking:** Plinking is allowed using plastic bottles, tin cans, balloons, or anything of the like. If you use any of these items, they must be placed at the berm or elevated off the range floor with a support frame supplied by you. (Please follow 5.4.1 A through D)

**5.5.0 RANGES:** The following rules apply to all ranges unless specified otherwise.

- A: **Firing Line:** The normal firing line is at the benches. If all shooters are in agreement, the firing line can be moved forward of the benches. Shooting in front of the benches is allowed (shooting from the field of the range) as long as this practice does not cause an unsafe condition or inconvenience to other shooters. If you are using the range in this fashion and other members want to use the range, they must agree to shoot from the same newly established firing line: all shooters must be at the same line. If this is an inconvenience for the other members and they would rather not do so, then the member shooting from the field must complete their shooting within 30 minutes and return to the normal shooting bench position. **Keep in mind when in the field there are no places to set your gun down. Pay close attention to gun handling and keep the muzzle of the gun pointed in a safe direction at all times.**
- B: Target stands are to be placed only at one of the designated target holders on the range. They are not to be randomly placed by other means of support. This is to ensure that the bullets are impacting the berm safely. Extreme care should be taken when using the 25yd. position on the Rifle Range so that all bullets are comfortably hitting the 50-yd. berm.
- C: Extreme care should be observed when setting up targets (check and verify your trajectory) to ensure that all bullets are hitting the middle of the berm.
- D: When sighting in a new gun, always start at a closer distance. If it is a rifle on the rifle range, start at 25yd and work out. It does not take much to send a bullet over the berm at 100yds.

**5.6.0 Pistol Range:** With the bay facing EASTWARD, is a multi-position shooting facility with target holder positions from 10' – 75' feet with one berm / backstop at 85 feet. Targets must be placed at one of the permanent target holders. All bullet impacts must be strictly observed.

**5.6.1 Uses Not Permitted:** The following is not permitted on this range.

- A: Shotgun ammo other than rifle slugs. (Refer to 5.4.1 E)

**5.7.0 Rifle Range:** With the bay facing SOUTHWARD, facility with target is a multi-position shooting holders at 25, 50, and 100 yards. There are two berms / back stops, one at 50 yd. & one at 100 yd. Targets must be placed at one of the permanent target holders. All bullet impacts must be strictly observed.

**5.7.1 Uses Not Permitted:** The following is not permitted on this range.

- A: Shotgun ammo other than rifle slugs. (Refer to 5.4.1 E)

**5.8.0 Range Etiquette, the following applies to all ranges:** When you have finished shooting police the area and remove any trash you generated. The range area must be swept of all casings. All brass should be placed in the brass bucket under benches. All Aluminum, Steel, and shotgun casings are trash and should be placed in the trash barrel, not in the "brass bucket." Do not leave shotgun shells on the range. They are trash and must go in the barrel. Please remove all targets from backers and discard them, and return all target stands to that range's storage area. When you leave the range it should be cleaner than when you arrived. Please help clean up after the forgetful member who left a mess.

- A: Never touch someone else's equipment without permission.
- B: Never leave your equipment where someone has to walk around it.
- C: Never step over someone's equipment, always walk around it.
- D: Never let ejected cases hit your neighbor.
- E: Always practice safe firearm handling.
- F: Always introduce yourself to the person next to you. They may become your next shooting buddy.
- G: Always lend a helping hand to someone in need.
- H: If the range is busy, leave room on benches for others when laying out your stuff.
- I: If in doubt, Ask - be polite and courteous.
- J: If trash barrels are full, please empty them in the trash dumpster.
- K: If you are asking for a cold range, let anyone shooting finish their string, do not interrupt them.

This would work the same for you. If someone is requesting a cold range, you would finish shooting your string, make you gun safe, step behind line and acknowledge that you are safe and ready to go cold.

**5.9.0 Range Commands:** These are common commands that apply to all WSC outdoor ranges and should be a verbal and visual communication between every person on the firing line.

- A: **“The Range is Hot”:** On a HOT range, Orange Flag is put in ‘up’ position. Announcement is made that the “Range is HOT, EYES & EARS.” (Refer to 5.3.1) Shooting and handling of firearms is now allowed. No one is allowed to be ahead of the firing line. Firearms should only be loaded when the shooter is in position and ready to shoot. Any gun not in hand being used must be in MADE SAFE condition if not cased or properly holstered.
- B: **“The Range is Cold”:** On a COLD range, only when all firearms are MADE SAFE, the Orange Flag is put in the ‘down’ position and an announcement is made that the range is COLD. **No handling of firearms for any reason.** Only when all shooters have determined that all firearms have been made safe and the range is COLD is anyone allowed down range. If you are not down range you must stay behind the yellow line away from your firearm. You may bring your ammo and mags with you and load your mags at the rear bench during a cold range. All guns if not cased or properly holstered must be in Made Safe condition, 5.8.0 C
- C: **“Made / Make Safe”:** On a cold range; ALL firearms are pointed down range, ALL magazines are removed from the firearm, ALL chambers, slides, bolts, or actions of any types ARE OPEN with an empty chamber indicator (ECI) inserted into the breech/barrel of the firearm, with the obvious chamber side facing up when placed on bench. Every firearm that is uncased, unholstered or not in use even on a hot range must be in this condition.
- D: **“Cease Fire”:** Anyone who observes an unsafe condition shall call a “Cease Fire”. When a cease fire is called, anyone shooting or with a gun in hand must immediately freeze, keeping the gun pointed in a safe direction with their finger off the trigger until further instructions. The person who called the cease fire should follow up with additional commands: to unload and make safe or continue to shoot. This will be dictated by the condition that exists. The “Cease Fire” command is a serious situation, and should not be taken lightly.



**5.10.0 Administrative Rules:**

- 5.10.1 WSC members are allowed a maximum of two guests at one time. Guests may only visit the ranges twice after which they should apply to join the WSC. Immediate family members are not restricted in the number of visits but are still considered guests and must be under direct supervision by the member. They are not subject to any privileges of the club.
- 5.10.2 Only one guest is allowed to be shooting at one time and under the direct visual supervision of the member. The member may not shoot while supervising a guest and should be in arms reach should an unsafe condition occur.
- 5.10.3 Loud or abusive language is not permitted.
- 5.10.4 Identification: Any member that is asked to show proof of membership, shall do so to any member who requests it.
- 5.10.5 Berms: No one is allowed to climb on any of the range berms.
- 5.10.6 No one is allowed to dig into berms or remove any lead from berms without proper authorization from the E-Board.
- 5.10.7 Alcoholic beverages & Drugs: The WSC has ZERO tolerance for the use of intoxicants before or during shooting on these ranges. Prescription drugs that display an impediment awareness WARNING label should also be avoided.
- 5.10.8 Proper Range Etiquette: Every member and his/her guest are expected to use proper range etiquette and to be courteous and respectful of other members and their guests.
- 5.10.9 Members are personally responsible for making themselves aware of any changes to the rules.
- 5.10.10 Minors: Currently MGL does not have a minimum age requirement as long as children are supervised by a properly licensed individual. Shooters under the age of 18 must have proper consent from a parent or guardian. The WSC will continue to follow age restriction guidelines as set forth by MGL as it applies to under age use of ranges.
- 5.10.11 **Emergencies:** The Outdoor Range Chair & CRO must be notified of any emergency that occurs at a range. If a medical emergency or shooting accident occurs, please state that you need an ambulance. Do not state that "there has been a shooting", lest you cause a SWAT team to be dispatched to the scene of the accident. Local Police & Fire numbers are posted at ranges, and is direct to Westford PD or Fire when calling from a cell phone. If in doubt call – 911.

**5.11.0 Strictly Prohibited: The following are not allowed under any circumstance:**

- A: Full Auto / Bump Fire: The use of any gun in full auto mode, or any device or attachment, electrically or mechanically operated that simulates full auto is strictly forbidden on any WSC Range. Rapid fire should be done responsibly.
- B: 50 BMG ballistics or larger.
- C: The use of or shooting at explosives, tannerite, powder containers, fireworks or the like.
- D: The use of armor piercing, tracer, or incendiary rounds.
- E: Using any glass or other fragmenting materials as targets.
- F: Smoking on an active range. This is considered a public area, please be considerate to others.
- G: No pets or animals of any kind are allowed on or near an active range.
- H: No shooting at any thrown object.
- I: Horseplay & Non – Shooting related activities are prohibited on an active range.
- J: Shooting or harassing wildlife on ranges.

**5.12.0 Police Use of Ranges for Training: Anyone requesting to use ranges must notify the Outdoor Range Chair and CRO a minimum of ONE week with time and date prior to any training. This will be posted on the web site calendar for the convenience of all members.**

- A: All WSC Range rules and SOPs will apply to police using ranges.
- B: Any training processes that exceed the designed safety limitations of the ranges are not allowed.
- C: Ammunition and firearm restrictions apply to police. Exemptions may be given by the CRO.
- D: A Police safety officer must be present at all police training events.
- E: All non- member WSC police personnel may only use ranges at a formal police training session.

### 5.13.0 Glossary:

**DUD load:** A dud (also a misfire or failure to fire) occurs when the trigger is pulled but the primer or powder in the cartridge malfunctions, causing the firearm not to discharge. Dud rounds can still be dangerous and should be disposed of properly.

**Empty Chamber Indicator (ECI):** These devices have been adopted by all NRA, most sanctioned matches and large shooting clubs like ours. They are known by various names: ECI – Empty Chamber Indicator, OBI – Open Bolt Indicator, CBI – Clear Bore Indicator and CF – Chamber Flag. They are a great aid in indicating the firearm status to yourself, other shooters and RSOs. They are available in different forms and shapes, made from different materials and can be as simple as 12" piece of fluorescent weed-wacker line like the ones provided at the club ranges. Properly inserted, they make it impossible to have a bullet in the chamber.



**Hang Fire:** A hang fire (also delayed discharge) is an unexpected delay between the triggering of a firearm and the ignition of the propellant. Whenever a firearm fails to fire but has not clearly malfunctioned, a hang fire should be suspected. When this occurs, the correct procedure is to keep the firearm pointed downrange or in a safe direction for sixty seconds, then remove and safely discard the round (which is now a dud as explained above if the primer was struck, otherwise the gun itself may have malfunctioned). The reason for this is that a round functioning outside of the firearm, or in the firearm with the action open, could cause a serious fragmentation hazard.

**Incident Report:** Members are required to immediately notify the Outdoor Range Chair and Club Safety Officer (CRO) of any injury that occurs on the range (if it requires medical attention, call 911 immediately), unsafe gun handling, behavioral issues, or physical damage to a WSC range or property. Incident report forms are available on the WSC website to fill-in. An Incident Report should be written and submitted within 24 hours stating details of the incident, witnesses to the event, and actions taken.

**Range Safety Officer Designations:** Chief Range Officer (CRO) WSC, Chief Range Safety Officer (CRSO) NRA, Range Safety Officer (RSO) NRA

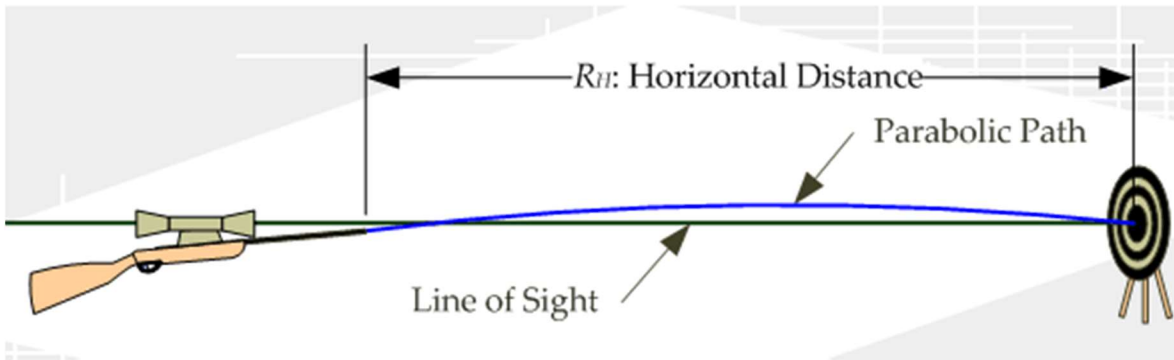
**Reactive Targets:** Targets that do something when you hit them, such as fall over, spin, make noise.

**Shoot Line:** The highest point on the berm that can be safely shot at. Shooting above the shoot line will cause a bullet to leave the range. Never shoot or point the muzzle above this line.

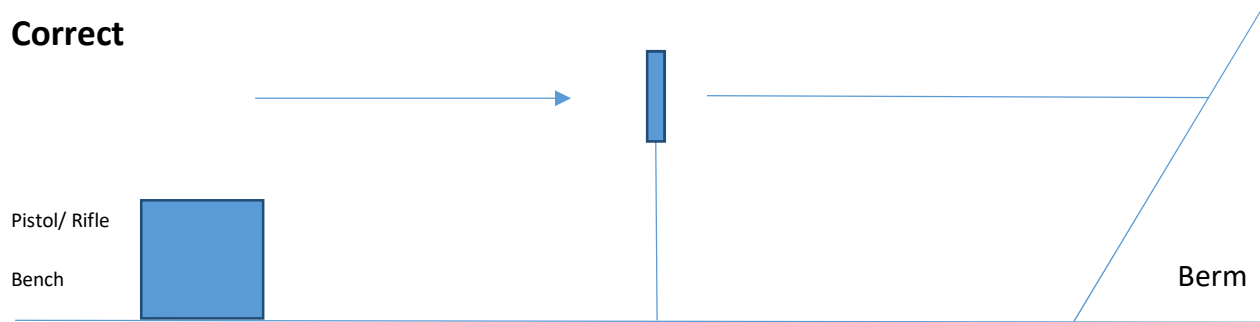
**Target Stands:** Supplied by WSC, made of 7' strapping and 36" x 24" backer board onto which paper or cardboard targets are attached.

**Target stand holders:** These are the channels on the range at various distances that hold the target stands.

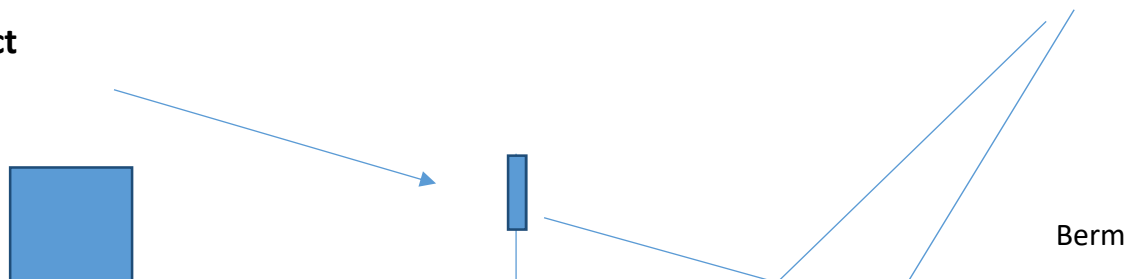
**Trajectory:** The arc described by a projectile (or a load of shot) after it exits the muzzle of a firearm. Falling objects accelerate downwards at a rate of 32 feet per second squared. The faster a projectile travels, the greater the distance it can cover in a given time before dropping too far. Hence, the higher the velocity of a bullet, the flatter the trajectory it will achieve.



**Correct**



**Incorrect**



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**Pistol Range Target Heights:** for shooting from a standing position, minimum height 50" (the bottom of a full-height target backer) and maximum height: 74" (the top of a full-height target backer). There are targets made up that are 12" shorter at the pistol range for seated position **only**. For shooting from a seated position, minimum height 38" (the bottom of a short target backer) and maximum height: 62" (the top of a short target backer).

**Rifle Range Target Heights:** for shooting at a standing or seated position, minimum height 50" (the bottom of a full-height target backer) and maximum height: 74" (the top of a full-height target backer).

The target height is not as critical at the rifle range when the targets are placed right at the berm. The only critical target placement is at the 25yard line due to the berm being back at 50 yards. Please use extreme care in setting up this position.

### **Shooting Suggestions:**

Remove hearing protection when down range so as to hear what is going on at the line, or if anyone drives in and sets up behind you.

Always wash your hands after shooting or cleaning your guns (especially before eating).

Decrease the distance to the target if you are having trouble keeping all shots on the target.

In closing: Thank you for keeping the ranges a clean and safe environment. Please make it a point to read, understand and observe all range rules to ensure you, your guests and all members will have a safe enjoyable time at the ranges.