

Trigger Control

Trigger control refers to how we activate the firearm; such that, the pistol fires without disturbing the sight alignment and the sight picture. Essentially, when you increase the pressure on the trigger, the sights stay aligned and your point of aim doesn't change.

Developing good trigger control is critical to your success as a shooter. If a problem exists here, improvements can produce great leaps forward in your ability and shrink your group size. ***So, if you are struggling with your shooting, your trigger control is one of the best places to start working on!***

Here's some information that you should keep in mind when you shoot:

- The trigger should be moved straight back, towards your rear sight. Some people describe the action as "Draw the front sight straight back through the rear notch." The pressure that you exert must be 100% straight to the rear. You cannot place sideways pressure (to the right or left, called "pulling" or "pushing") on the trigger, as this action will move your pistol out of your aiming area. Pressure straight rearward will keep the pistol on your point of aim.
- The trigger must be activated slowly. By quickly activating the trigger, you may "snatch" or "jerk" the trigger, which does two very bad things: disturbs your sight alignment and moves you off your point of aim. Take your time, accept the minimum arc of movement and ***S_L_O_W_L_Y*** squeeze your trigger. No rushed movements. No thoughts of "It's in the black now: PULL!" Slow it down.
- The trigger must be activated smoothly and progressively. When you decide to fire the shot and activate the trigger, the action should be very fluid from start to finish. That is to say, when you start, increase pressure on the trigger at a steady rate. Draw it back in one motion, not start and stop, start and stop. There is an old Jedi saying that applies here: "Do or do not. Trying there is not." Either activate the triggering process or don't activate the triggering process. Anything in between will either cause problems or indicate that a problem exists (i.e. lack of concentration or looking at the target.)
- When you draw on the trigger, only your trigger finger moves. The hand is made to squeeze the fingers in unison. You have to work beyond your hand's physical design. Isolate the movement such that you only move the trigger finger at the second finger joint. The remainder of the trigger finger must stay motionless and not come in contact with the pistol grip or frame. In addition, the other fingers must maintain the same pressure as before. It's tricky, but with practice, you will do it well.
- Take up the trigger slack and a tiny portion of the trigger pressure during the raise to the target. Be aware of the weight and be careful not to discharge the pistol during this raise. ***Note: If you are new to shooting or have concerns with control, do not apply pressure to the trigger until you have settled on to the target.***
- The trigger should be activated when you have achieved your minimum arc of movement, usually in less than 10 seconds after the raise.
- Work towards unconsciously activating the trigger, such that the shot becomes a surprise break. Your sub-conscious mind will become trained to recognise when to take the shot and will activate the trigger finger. As such, your conscious mind will be surprised, subsequently avoiding numerous trigger problems like flinching or anticipating recoil. This is difficult to master, but it will come with time and lots of practice.

As I mentioned earlier, trigger control is a critical skill to develop. It takes time and hard work, but the rewards are huge. (Note: Dryfiring is one of the best exercises to hone this skill.)