

# Trap Class



## Maspenock Rod & Gun Beginners Guide to Trap Shooting

Fundamentals to shooting trap.

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# Basic Gun Safety and Trap Etiquette

## Gun Safety

As a firearms owner/use you are responsible for your actions.

1. Always keep your gun pointed in a safe direction.
2. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
3. Keep your shotgun unloaded with the action open until you are on a firing position and the trap house is clear.
4. Keep your gun pointed downrange at all times.
5. Never move from a station with a loaded gun.
6. Wear eye and ear protection while on the trap field.
7. No shot size larger than #7 ½ is allowed. No magnum loads are allowed.
8. Load only one shell for singles. Load only two shells for doubles.
9. All duds and misfired shells must be removed from club grounds by the owner. Do not leave them on the ground or put them in the trash.
10. Always check the barrel with a ram-rod after any abnormal discharge.
11. Pick up only your empties and only after your squad's shooting is completed.
12. If an emergency cease fire is called, all firearms must be immediately unloaded and placed in a gun rack. Do not handle firearms during an emergency cease fire.
13. Never use alcohol or drugs while or before shooting. No one may operate a firearm if they have consumed any alcohol.

## Trap Etiquette

The thing that's hardest to learn, and most intimidating for new shooters is the etiquette of trap shooting. You know, all those unwritten rules about how you're supposed to act, what you're supposed to say.

Here are a couple of etiquette tips to make you a good trap neighbor.

- When your turn is coming up, be aware of the shooter to your left. Avoid making noises with your gun action when that person is about to shoot. I load my shell just after they fire their shot, so there is no interference with the other shooter's concentration.
- If you're using a semi-automatic gun, invest in a shell catcher, so your shells don't fly over at the person to your right. A shell catcher is a couple dollar piece of plastic that traps the empty shell in the action. They're getting ready for their shot as you complete yours, and they will appreciate not getting hit in the face with your empty shell.
- If you're using a pump gun, be gentle with the pump action when ejecting your empty shell. You should be able to control the ejection, so your empty doesn't hit the person next to you.
- Whenever you're not at a shooting position, you want your gun to be visibly clear and unloaded. With a break open like an over / under, keep your action opened so others can see the gun is not able to fire. If you have a pump, keep the slide to the rear, so the action is visibly open. If you have a semi-auto, lock the action open, so the chamber is visible. With any gun, keep your muzzle pointed at the ground or up into the air. Your club may have a preference, so be sure to check.
- When you step up to the shooting line to start a round, be sure you have a full box of shells and a couple of spares, along with eye and ear protection.
- When you move from position five to position one (they're called posts) be very aware of your gun muzzle, so it doesn't ever point at the other shooters or scorekeeper. Most clubs will want you to circle around, away from the trap, and then walk behind the other shooters back to post one.
- Never load your gun until it's your turn to shoot. You'll see the rhythm at your club, and if everyone is safe and proper, then shooters will only load their gun as the previous shooter finishes. If using over and under shotguns, some shooters will drop a shell into place, but wait to close the action until the person to their left has fired.

# Equipment

The beautiful thing about basic singles trap is that you can use most any shotgun. You will want a 12 or 20 gauge so there's enough shot downrange to break a target moving away from you, but other than that, you only need a gun that's capable of firing one shot at a time.

## Basic Equipment:

1. Full Box of Ammo (1 round of trap will use 25 shells)
2. Eye Protection
3. Ear Protection
4. A shotgun

## Shotgun Parts



## Shotgun Types:

### **Pump-Action**

For many, the pump-action is the quintessential shotgun, and for good reason too. Pump actions have gained a legendary reputation for durability and reliability. They're able to cycle everything from the lightest target loads all the way to the heaviest shoulder-breaking magnum shells that the chamber can accommodate. An added bonus is that this durability and versatility is pretty cheap, with many options available for less than \$300.



### **Semi-Auto**

One step up from pump actions in the world of clay target shooting is the semi-auto. While the layout and overall form is usually similar to a pump-action, the semi-auto removes the need to manually cycle the action to extract a spent shell and load a new one. This allows the shooter to focus more on the target instead of operating the gun. An added bonus is a reduction of recoil due to the moving parts distributing energy over a longer period of time instead of all at once.

The downside to autoloaders is that they're typically a little more expensive than pumps, and the ejected shells can be a nuisance to other shooters as well as a pain to pick up afterwards.



### **Over/Under Shotguns**

Over/Under double-barrels are the premier type of target shotguns today. They are the gun of choice among the world's top competitors and thousands upon thousands of others. Nothing swings as smoothly as an O/U shotgun, and that's crucial when the difference between victory and defeat is one target out of 500.



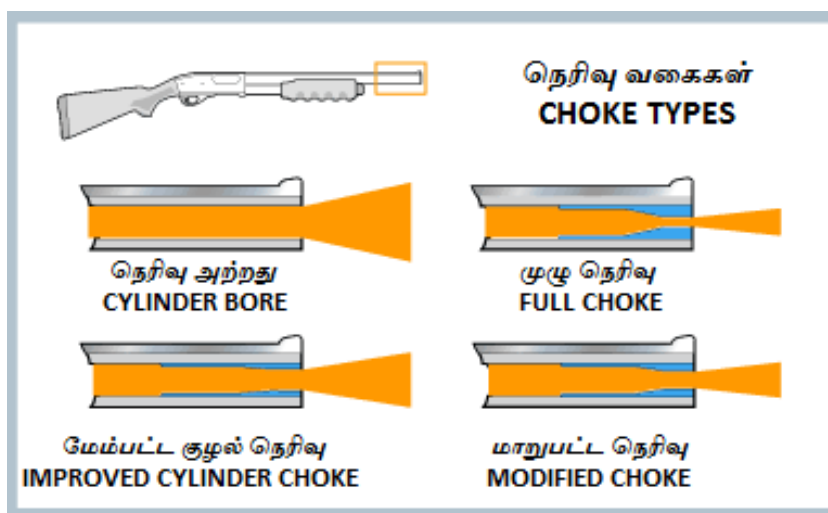
Unfortunately, O/U shotguns vary considerably in quality and features offered, and budget guns won't begin to approach the glory of the high-end guns with five-figure price tags. Still, even the entry-level O/U shotgun has some appealing advantages like the ability to use two different chokes for target pairs at varied distances.



### Choke Tube:

The **choke** in a shotgun is designed to shape how the shot spreads after you pull the trigger. That way you can gain more accuracy with your shots as well as better range. The choke is placed in the bore of the shotgun barrel, which is at the muzzle end. There are two ways a choke gets installed into a shotgun. The screw-in chokes, which are easily replaceable and there are also fixed chokes that integrated into the shotgun barrel so that it is a part of the bore without being replaceable.

So what choke to use for shooting trap you might be asking yourself? If you search online you will get answers all over the board from Full, Improved Modified to Modified. To be honest, the only way you will know what works best for you is to pattern your own shotgun with the different types of chokes until you are happy with the results. The images below show some of the choke tube types along with their patterns.

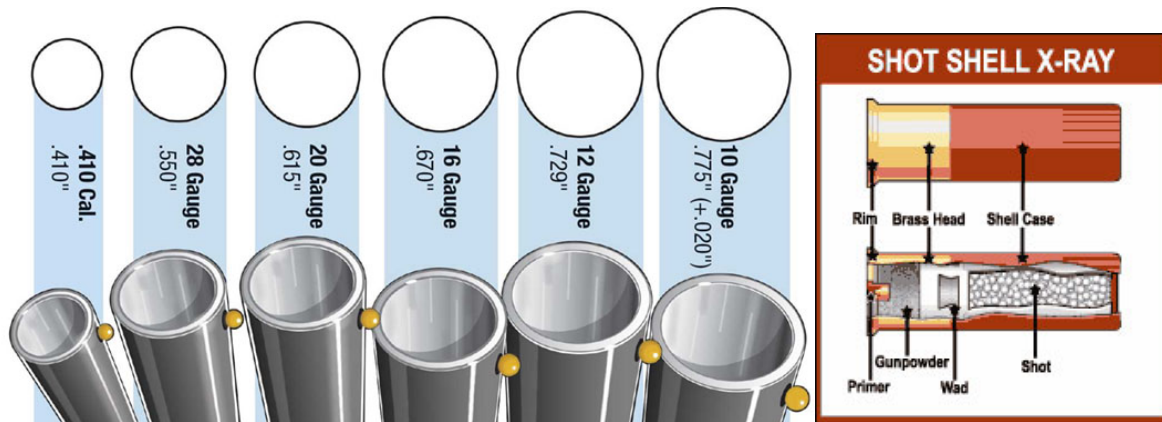


Choke tube installed

**Ammo:**

Trapshooting is typically shot with a 12-gauge shotgun. Smaller gauge firearms (e.g. 16, 20, 28 gauge) can be used. The following image is a break down on the parts of a shotgun shell.

Common shotgun gauges are 10-gauge, 12 gauge, 16 gauge, 20 gauge, and 28 gauge. The smaller the gauge number, the larger the shotgun bore. Gauge is determined by the number of lead balls of size equal to the approximate diameter of the bore that it takes to weigh one pound.



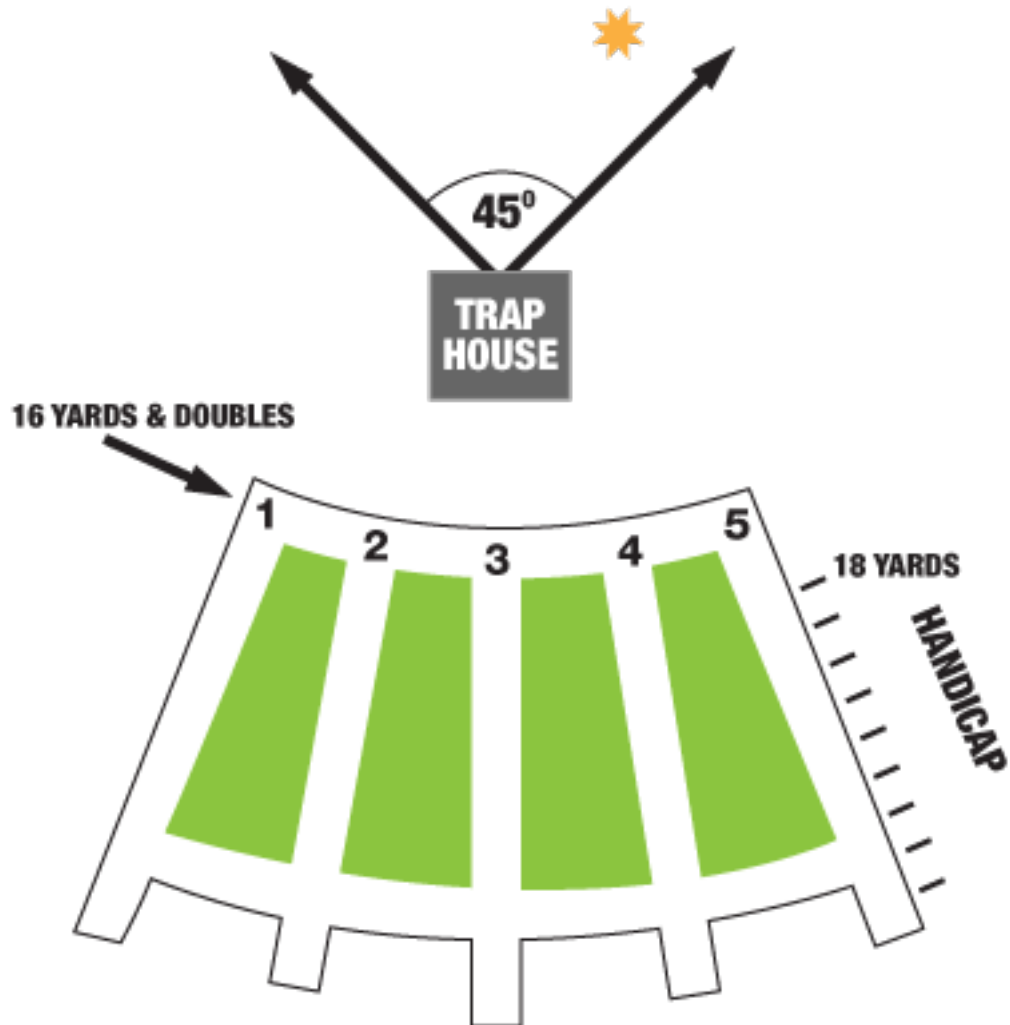


# Shooting Trap

## Terminology:

1. **SINGLES** - Singles trap is considered to be the easiest of the three disciplines. In singles, the shooter stands 16 yards away from the center of the “trap house” and shoots at random targets that fly at various angles in front of him/ her. Shooters are grouped into squads, usually made up of up to five people. There are five positions that each shooter shoots from, for a total of five shots, or one round. This gives participants a different view of the target flying through the air. Each position is a constant 16 yards from the trap house; each one is spaced three feet apart forming a small arc.
2. **DOUBLES** - Doubles trap was added to tournament play in 1911. It is a modified version of Singles, but it is more difficult because shooters must break two targets fired from the trap house simultaneously. One clay pigeon flies to the left while the other flies to the right. The target path remains constant, but the challenge is if the shooter can hit both targets before they hit the ground. Each target is scored individually, not as a pair.
3. **HANDICAP** - Handicap trap is considered the most prestigious event in trapshooting. As in other sports, handicapping strives to make the competition equal. This is accomplished by having the more skilled competitors stand further away from the trap house. Based on a shooter’s past performances, a shooter is assigned a handicap distance from which he/she must shoot. A competitor with a high handicap will shoot no closer than the 18-yard line, while the most skilled shooter is placed at the 27-yard line.
4. **WOBBLE** - Wobble trap is a variation of singles trap. The main difference is that the machine oscillates left and right as well as up and down, making the targets flight path more random. The shooter gets two shots at each target. Wobble trap is commonly used by shooters who do not have access to a Bunker trap to practice.

Trap Field:



## Gun Mount:



A proper gun mount is essential for trapshooting. The gun mount will set the shooter up for success or failure even before calling for a target. It will also help prevent the recoil and the gun from abusing the shooter. Remember the gun has 4 points of contact with the shooter; shoulder pocket, cheek, trigger hand, and support hand.

### 1. Shoulder Placement

- The butt of the gun needs to find its place in the pocket of the shoulder, just below the clavicle, very close to the neck of the shooter. Many new shooters make the mistake of holding the gun on the shoulder joint, or placing the stock so the entire butt plate of the gun touches the full body of the shooter. Each shooter's body is unique and many times just the lower corner of the butt plate may touch the shooter. The stock should be high enough for the cheek to be lowered down onto the stock naturally.

### 2. Cheek Placement

- With the gun close to the shooter's body, the head should just nod down to place the cheek onto the comb of the gun stock. The cheek bone will settle above the comb and the cheek should be flat against the side of the gun stock. The head should not tilt to the side as this will introduce a twist to the gun.

### 3. Eye Placement

- With the gun in the shooters shoulder and the cheek firmly on the gun stock the shooter needs to get their eye in alignment. If the eye is not looking directly down the rib in alignment with the bead at the end of the muzzle, the shooter can make some adjustments to their head position. Moving the head forward or backwards on the comb will make minor adjustments to get the eye in alignment.

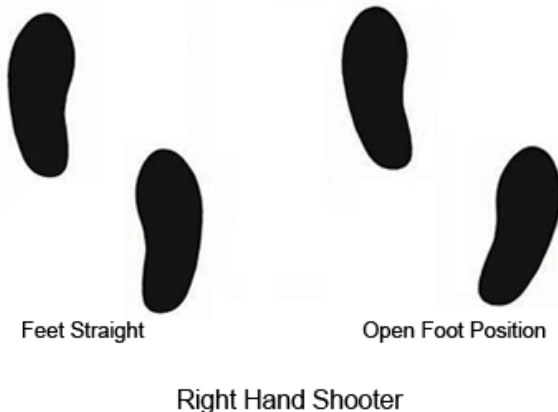
### 4. Grip

- The grip of the shotgun is controlled by the trigger hand. The hand on the forearm should remain loose and comfortable. The forward hand is only used for support and assistance in guiding the gun during the swing. The gun should be gently pulled into the shoulder and kept against the cheek.

**\*Beginners often raise their heads off their guns to see the clays break or in anticipation of the recoil. If you raise your head, you'll miss the shot. Keep your head down on that gun at all times.\***

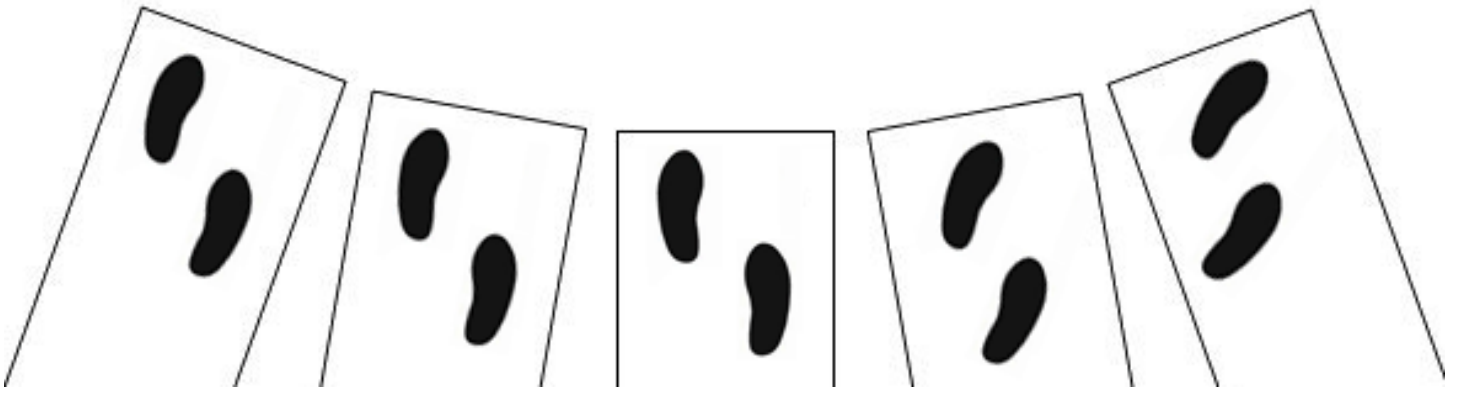
#### Foot Position

The shooter should take a stance that again, is comfortable and allows for quick movement without over tension of the muscles. The forward knee should be slightly bent with the rear leg straight. The upper body will lean slightly forward from the waist up and not be overly aggressive. The feet should be about shoulder width apart and may be slightly open (do not need to be straight forward). No foot should be more angled than the other as we will obtain a balanced stance. We will want to keep the feet on the ground for the 5 shots at the station. No foot cool or lifting of the heels.



Lastly, we can look at alignment. This again is very subjective to shooters preference. For the right-handed shooter, square your shoulders to the front of the concrete shooting pad for station 1-3. Once we get to station 4 and 5 the shooter should angle a bit outside to assist with the point of aim. This slight angle allows for the shooters body to more naturally track the fast-right hand targets at these stations.

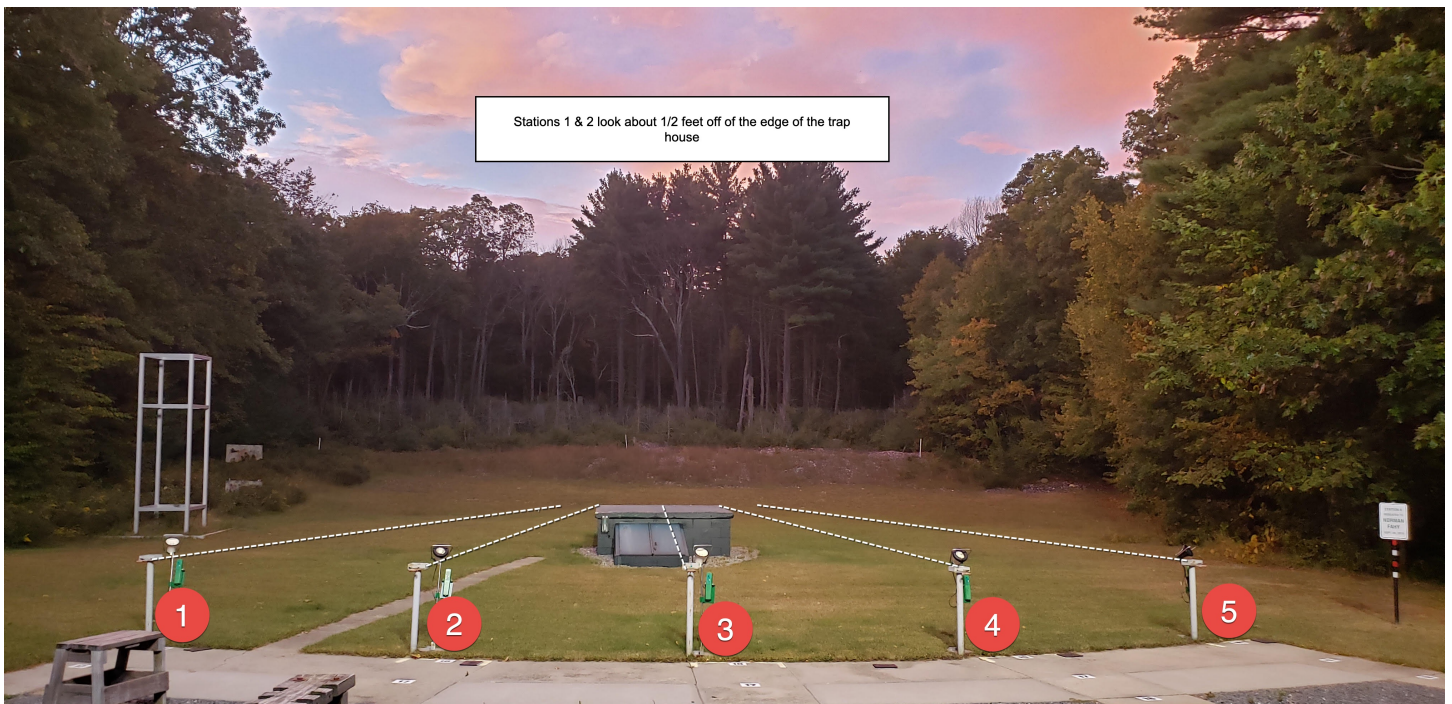




The left-handed shooter will open their stance for stations 1 & 2 while keeping their shoulders square for stations 3 – 5.

### Starting position for gun

For beginners starting off it helps if you have your gun up and pointed at the back of the trap house as shown in the picture below. At each station the position of your aim changes, as you become more and more attuned with shooting you will find your comfort zone and these may change.



## Calling and tracking the clay

1. Once you're ready, you have your foot position in a stance that is comfortable to yourself, your gun has one round in the chamber the next thing is to call for the clay. This is simple, just make a noise loud enough for the microphone in front of you to hear and the machine will toss a clay for you. Any noise will do some people will yell "PULL" others will make just a loud "YUP" it doesn't matter. What does matter is that after you have shot you remain quite so as NOT to send a clay flying by talking loudly.
2. When shooting at any moving target you'll always have to point your shotgun "in front of" or "above or below" it, depending on the direction the target is going. This is the only way in which the shot will reach the target by compensating for the delay caused by the shooter's reflexes and the time it takes the shot to reach the target.
3. If you point your shotgun directly on the clay, you'll end up shooting behind it, where the clay was, but isn't when the shot reaches the point you chose. You'll miss the clay or just wing it with the outer pellets of your shot pattern.
4. Shooters mostly use two techniques to see the lead. Some prefer one over the other, and vice versa. My advice is to try both and see which one gets you most clays:
  - a. Firing by tracking the trajectory of the target, stopping the shotgun to take your shot: In this case you point the shotgun at where the clay will leave the trap. When the clay is launched, track its trajectory by following it with your body and the rib of your gun until you've gone past the clay. At just the right distance, stop moving your gun and take the shot.
  - b. Firing with the shotgun moving: As above, you track the trajectory of the clay by following it with your body and the rib on your gun. In this case though you don't stop moving the gun but rather move it faster in a fluid motion. The gun overtakes the clay in a natural way and, without stopping moving the gun as it passes your target, you take a shot without jerking the gun.





# Closing Remarks:

**Congrats** you now have the knowledge needed to get out there and start enjoying the sport of trap shooting. Take all that you have learned from this booklet and the instructors and keep practicing. We encourage you to come back and join in the fun, don't have a gun? just as with class the club has guns that can be borrowed. Remember don't be afraid to ask questions, everyone is here to help.

Maspenock Rod and Gun shoots twice a week, open to all club members and the public.

Our hours are:

- **Wednesdays from 6pm – 9pm**
- **Sundays from 9am – 12pm.**
- (subject to change please check our calendar on the website to ensure no cancelations or special events)

Have a specific question? please reach out to us at [Contact@maspenock.org](mailto:Contact@maspenock.org) and someone will get back to you.



MASPENOCK ROD & GUN CLUB

RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being of full legal age and capable of consent, hereby release, Maspenock Rod & Gun Club, Inc., from all liability, loss, damages, cost, and/or causes of action including but not limited to all claims for bodily and personal injuries, death and property damage ("claims") arising out of my participation at Maspenock Rod & Gun Club

**This Release is given on behalf of me, my heirs, successors. executors. administrators and assigns. Furthermore, I acknowledge that:**

1. Prior to the actual handling or use of any firearm, I have received instruction on the use of the firearm to be used. This firearm is owned by Maspenock Rod & Gun Club and is not for sale.
2. I agree to hold harmless Maspenock Rod & Gun Club, Inc. from any and all such claims related to my participation in or attendance at any such activity and/or the use of any such firearms or equipment.
3. I understand that there are inherent and other risks involved in the use of firearms and related items and freely and voluntarily assume and accept those risks.
4. I hereby release Maspenock Rod & Gun Club, its officers, directors, members and their agents and employees from any and all liability for bodily and personal injury, death or property damage to myself or to any other person or property, caused by me and resulting from my use of firearms provided by Maspenock Rod & Gun Club, including but not limited to, any claim based on negligence, breach, contract or legal theory. I accept and assume for myself, my heirs and assigns, the full responsibility for any and all such damage, injury or death that may result.
5. This Agreement is governed by the applicable laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. If any part of this agreement is determined to be unenforceable, art other parts shall be given full force and effect.

I have read and understand this RELEASE AGREEMENT. I sign it willingly, freely and voluntarily.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE

Date

I have a current Commonwealth of Massachusetts/License to Carry Firearms(LTC) YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_