

THE FIRST SHOT

CMP ONLINE MAGAZINE



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[Archives](#)
[Competitions](#)
[Forum](#)
[Sales](#)
[Feedback](#)

FEB-08



We want your feedback! Please let us know what you think about TFS. Do you have an interesting story or article that you would like to share? If so, please let us know!

Reader Comments:

CMP Shooters' News is one of my favorite email news publications. Information packed, talented authors, timely subjects, and all around well done. What a great service you are providing to the shooting community. Just wanted to say thanks and Merry Christmas. Newt E.

I enjoy and look forward to TFS and the excellent articles that are published on a regular basis. Please keep this publication coming and keep the CMP active. Don M.

One of the members at Snipers Hide pointed out the newsletter and the High Power Tips articles

Keep it Steady-The Elements of a Good Prone Position Part 1-Building the Position

By SPC Matthew Sigrist

Imagine the following scenario: You are at the last stage of fire in the National Trophy Individual Match, firing at the 600 yard line in the prone position and every point matters. What should you reflect on as you prepare to shoot this final string? As your eyes cloud from sweat, you realize that all you have to rely on is your experience and knowledge of the fundamentals.

During the National Trophy Individual Match, you will fire 60 percent of your shots from the prone position. This article will address the fundamentals of a good prone position and help you learn the techniques required to be successful in both the slow and rapid-fire stages of National Match competition.

This article will be divided into two parts. In part one, we will discuss the elements of a good prone position. In part two, we will cover the techniques you will in the rapid-fire and slow-fire stages.

The Fundamentals

The fundamentals are the building blocks of a position. Much like the framework of a house, a correct application of the fundamentals ensures a solid and stable structure. Since each person's position will depend on their particular body build and shape, there is no "perfect position" that applies to everyone. Experience, practice and knowledge of the correct fundamentals will dictate the best position for you.

by the USAMU team.
 Darn you! I was up until 1:00 AM last night reading all of the articles. Great newsletter and really great USAMU articles.
 Thanks,
 Michael E.

Great article written on physical conditioning in the latest TFS. I was one of likely many who had asked about the type of conditioning recommended for serious shooters. Sgt. Craig did a great job on describing the routines. Now it's my turn to put it to work.

Thanks to you, Sgt. Craig and other contributors who share best practices of shooting excellence.
 Sincerely,
 Keith H.

I use these articles in our high power clinics and have found them very helpful for both new shooters and reinforcement of the basics for the more experienced.
 Thanks, Gary M.

Thanks for the great articles on the Carbine, Springfield, Garand matches. All the articles are interesting, but the Carbine, Springfield & Garand are my favorites.
 Jim H.

The September-07 on line shooting tips by SSG Tobie Tomlinson, USAMU Service Rifle Team Member, is a great article. I have reproduced 15 copies of it to hand out and discuss to our "newbie" first year air rifle shooters on our high school JROTC Air Rifle Team. Come to think about it believe I'll hand out a copy to my advance shooters as well. His explanations are simple to understand but rich in detail. Coupled with the sight pictures this article will go a long way towards helping all our JROTC shooters obtain better sight patterns. Keep up the great work. AND.....keep the articles like this coming.
 Malcolm V.
 CW2 (R), US Army

It seemed good to read the article on Infantry Trophy Match. As a shooter on the Marine Corp Team way back in 1967 I participated in the Match. We were the second team for the Marines but placed second overall. One of our shooters forgot to put the windage on his rifle. I enjoyed shooting the M-1 and M-14 at Camp Perry and always wanted to go back but never seemed to find the time. The top over all shooter at that time was my team mate Lt. Bowen. I remember some of the team members carrying him from the 600 yd line back to the rest of

There are six, key elements of any position. The purpose for these six points is to achieve a solid platform that allows for consistent sight alignment using the least amount of muscle tension.

1. **Placement of the firing hand (the hand that pulls the trigger).** The firing hand needs to be placed high on the pistol grip. This high hand position will give you better control of the rifle. Combined with a firm grip there will be a reduced amount of hand movement when pulling the trigger. Wrap your thumb over the three fingers on the pistol grip (excluding the trigger finger). This will help isolate the movement of the trigger finger.
2. **Placement of the non-firing hand (the hand supporting the rifle).** The non-firing hand should grip the handguard or stock in the flat portion of the hand between the thumb and forefinger. The fingers should curl naturally around the stock, but they should not grip it tightly. The position of the hand on the stock will depend on the physical size of the shooter. Generally speaking, taller shooters with longer arms will grip the rifle further out, near the sling swivel, while shorter shooters will need to pull their hand rearward. This is sometimes referred to as "short-stocking" the rifle.
3. **Stock weld.** Stock weld is the contact that the face makes with the stock. It is important because it directly effects your sight alignment. Consistent head placement will help you achieve consistent sight alignment. The human head weighs an average of 8 to 10 pounds. The full weight of the head must rest on the stock. In doing this you achieve two things, a relaxed neck and reduced recoil because of the pressure of the head.
4. **Placement of the rifle (the contact that is made in the firing shoulder).** The rifle butt placement needs to be consistent. If this changes between shots, it effects your sight alignment and the effect of recoil. In the prone position the rifle will sit lower in the shoulder compared to other shooting positions. This allows for a more forward head and a lower position as a whole.
5. **Position of the sling.** The sling should be high on the arm, above the bicep. This way the sling will have less leverage on the arm so it doesn't cut off the circulation.



us. It was a great time in my life and will never forget it. Thanks again for the article.
Mike A.

Thanks for the great series of articles from the USAMU – they are very readable, and usable!
Tom, AZ

Great articles. Great to identify those who are participating as well as those who are working behind the scenes to make the whole of the National Matches run so well.
David D.
Boxford, MA

This is a special note just for my friends at the CMP, I want to thank you all for your hard work and attention to details, it's a great program!
"You help our shooting dreams come true!"
Best Regards,
Tony M.

Demonstration of the placement of the firing elbow (left) and non-firing elbows (right).

6. **Placement of both the firing, and non-firing elbows.** A guideline for non-firing elbow placement is that there should be 1 ½" to 2" gap between your non-firing arm and the rifle's magazine. *(NOTE: this references the AR-15 service rifle)* Your arm should be almost straight up and down; this will transfer the weight directly down the arm and not to the side (see picture above). Think of the firing arm as only a kind of kickstand, it doesn't support weight it only holds the firing hand in position.

Variations of the Prone Position

There are two main variations of the prone position; open/spread legged, and bent-legged. The two types will be discussed below.

Open/Spread Leg Position



Demonstration of the Open/Spread Leg Position.

The first position is the open/spread legged position. This is when the shooter spreads their legs shoulder width or more apart. This allows for a more forward pressure on the sling and elbows. This position requires a tighter sling and solid elbow placement. The rifle should sit tight in the shoulder. With this position, your body will be farther behind the rifle compared to the bent leg position, allowing for minimum disturbance from recoil.

Bent Leg Position



Demonstration of the Bent Leg Position.

The bent leg position is when the shooter bends the firing side leg up towards the firing hand making the knee at a rough 90 degree angle to

the body. The non-firing leg will remain straight and inline with the body. This will take pressure off the lungs and heart minimizing the pulse from the chest as well as easing the pressure on the lungs which will allow for easy breathing and control.

Summary You now know the fundamentals of a good prone position, as well as the two types most commonly used. Extensive dry-firing will reveal which is the best position for you. If possible, have a friend take pictures of you in position. This will enable you to better diagnose and correct your errors. Remember, a position must be both fundamentally sound and comfortable. Practice frequently to learn your new position and to develop the conditioning required to endure long days on the range.

The USAMU Service Rifle Team is also answering your questions pertaining to Service Rifle Shooting including topics such as Equipment and Ammunition, Shooting Positions and Shooting Techniques and Tactics. Go to http://www.odcmp.com/usamu/shooting_tips.htm to view the latest questions and answers. If you have a question you would like to ask, email USAMU@odcmp.com.

[NEXT ARTICLE](#)

[Back to the Top](#)

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