

The Sitting Position

[11-time national champion tells how]

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ORIGIN: This is an edited excerpt from The Rifle Shooter.

In NRA High Power Rifle competition, the shooter must fire from three positions, standing, sitting, and prone. All shots fired from the sitting position are done as part of a rapid fire stage. The shooter must begin standing, assume his sitting position when the targets appear, and then fire 10 rounds with one reload in 60 seconds. The target is 200 yards distant and has a 7-inch 10-ring.



My sitting position is a combination of crossed-leg and crossed-ankle. Extending one leg while keeping the other tucked up provides a very stable platform for me to get low and forward, while still allowing simple and consistent positioning results coming into it from standing. Notice that the muzzle is angled upward.

One of the main differences in my position and others you might see is that I cant the rifle. I let it lean outward, in the direction opposite what I use for the other shooting positions. This gets my head in a natural position and keeps my neck relaxed. Many people experience a group shift in sitting toward 2-o'clock. This is due to pressure placed against the stock in attempting to maintain an upright rifle and head. The head is moving toward a more natural position. As a result of the head displacement, the rear aperture starts slipping away toward 8-o'clock. Shots start landing higher and farther right on the target.

The amount of cant is whatever is necessary to align the eye with the rear aperture

when the head is in a comfortable position on the stock, although it can't be fully relaxed. Since sitting is a rapid fire event, the conventional bolt action rifle shooter must operate the action. He, therefore, won't be able to lay the full weight of the head on the stock, so there is always going to be some amount of neck tension due to the need to lift the head on and off the stock to operate the bolt. On a TUBB 2000 it's possible to operate the bolt with the face held against the cheekpiece, as it is with a semi-automatic. That allows us to apply more face pressure against the stock which may mean being more comfortable with additional cant, and possibly have a more effective position overall.

The only curve canting throws is an event zero change. This is the primary concern for those who shy away from incorporating this technique, but there's nothing to worry about. Most shooters will already have a different zero for sitting, so it doesn't matter if it's a different wind and elevation zero. This is nothing more than a reference -- dial it in and go on.

An effective, aggressive sitting position requires a good deal of sling tension and holding force. The contact points and body angles are not as good as they are for prone, and the shooter also carries more of the burden of rifle weight.

In my position, the back of my left arm, just above the elbow, goes on the left leg, not the knee. It contacts the shin area. The point of my left elbow isn't touching my leg. My right elbow nestles in the crook of my right knee, on the inside area of this crease.

I describe my leg orientation as "semi-crossed-ankle"; it could also be called "semi-crossed-leg." My

The cant I use is obvious in this photo. Canting prevents the head from shifting, and the groups along with it. Notice also my rapid fire timer. I wouldn't shoot a string of sitting without it! I developed this to mount right on an accessory rail and it effectively gives the shooter more time to fire his string. No guesswork!



left leg is extended quite fully but my right leg is pulled up at a much sharper angle. My right foot braces underneath my left leg just below the left knee, directly under the point where my left arm contacts the left leg. There's actually very little difference in my position compared to the more common crossed-leg (both legs pulled up sharply) and

crossed-ankle (both legs extended). It is half of one and half of the other. I would prefer to shoot a crossed-ankle but have never been able to effect the transition from sitting on the mat to standing then returning back to the mat to shoot the string and still maintain alignment. That is very important to score.

The symptom I see from the crossed leg position is rocking, or instability. If the shooter tries to extend forward aggressively, the weight of his upper body and rifle is over-extending the stability allowed by the narrower contact patch with the ground. Position alignment in crossed-leg is also not as good. Having one leg extended builds a more stable platform. It's also usually necessary to face somewhat more toward the right of the target to center the rifle on the target. That tends to turn the shoulder pocket outward, creating a more oblique angle between stock and shoulder, and the result can be slippage of the buttplate out toward the arm, away from the shoulder pocket.

There have been and will continue to be many outstanding scores fired from all these sitting positions, and there are also many individual takes on each. There's always room to personalize a sitting position. My position came about after assessing strengths and weaknesses of the two main position groups, and keeping with my goal of always trying to make shooting easier. Try it.

For more information about David Tubb and his Superior Shooting Systems Inc., [click HERE.](#)