



Breathing

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During the process of rough alignment in precision shooting, the pistol is raised slightly above the aiming area as the shooter inhales. When the correct front sight / rear sight picture is obtained the pistol is lowered to align with the aiming area as the shooter exhales. Breathing through the process of rough alignment is therefore achieved in two stages:

1. inhale as the pistol is raised and
2. exhale as the pistol is lowered

Final adjustment to the correct sight picture alignment in the aiming area is made while breathing with small abdominal in and out breaths.

The breathing routine is key to achieving stability of the pistol and of the shooter's body during the aiming process. It's also a key factor in the shooter's ability to perform with equal efficiency throughout the exercise.

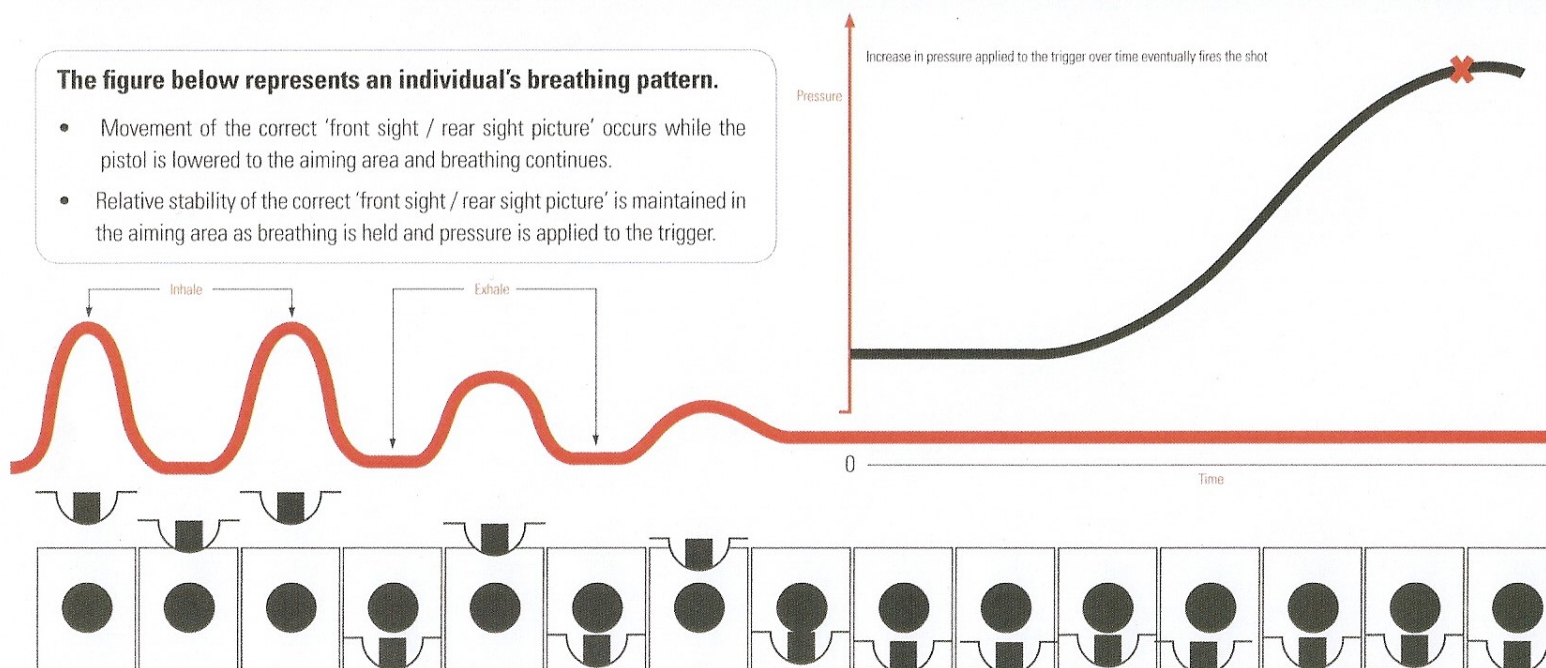
The correct breathing routine provides sufficient oxygen and does not hamper the normal function of the heart.

Rhythmic movements of the chest, stomach and shoulders due to breathing brings about movement in the arm holding the pistol. While inhaling the sight picture is raised and while exhaling the sight picture is lowered to its original position.

Abdominal breathing produces less arm movement than chest breathing.

The figure below represents an individual's breathing pattern.

- Movement of the correct 'front sight / rear sight picture' occurs while the pistol is lowered to the aiming area and breathing continues.
- Relative stability of the correct 'front sight / rear sight picture' is maintained in the aiming area as breathing is held and pressure is applied to the trigger.



Elements of the Breathing Process

- Abdominal breathing i.e. with the stomach or diaphragm produces less movement in the arm holding the pistol than breathing with the chest. Therefore in precision shooting abdominal breathing is more effective during rough alignment than breathing with the chest.
- It is necessary to hold the breath for a short period e.g. 7-8 seconds just prior to exhaling while aligning the pistol more accurately to the aiming area and pressure is applied on the trigger.
- Exhaling does not require muscular effort, however inhaling produces undesirable involuntary tension in a number of muscle groups and is therefore less suitable.
- Breathing patterns and breathing times vary from person to person therefore each individual will develop a routine to suit him/herself.
- 10-12 seconds is sufficient to finalise pistol alignment and activate the trigger.
- During Rapid Fire shooting the arm is raised from the READY position to and not above the aiming area. Holding the breath half way through inhaling is advantageous for immobilizing the body in that time necessary for firing the shot.
- Various breathing routines are not physically demanding, but require familiarity and consistency, which is achieved through practice.



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