

Coaching Column

Structuring a training program for shooters

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With any sport, there are always issues on how you break up the time you are prepared to allocate each week to training. The allocation of time each week will vary widely depending on the age of the shooter and the time to competition. If we work on the premise that it takes time to develop a good shooter, then the way this time is spread around the different requirements can have significant influence on the development of the shooter.

With young and inexperienced shooters we want to work on the 'play the game' theory. This suggests that the most important thing for young shooters to do is spend time shooting. There will be drills and dry firing skill work that can be done, but essentially the time spent is used to develop the skill of shooting.

On the other hand, experienced shooters will only be refining the skill of shooting. This is the time to consider other aspects of

training where we tend to look at the whole shooter rather than simply looking at the shooting skills. During this time the shooter's physical and mental skills are determined and training is aimed at enhancing these in line with the shooting skills.

In determining what structure your typical training week will involve, we first need to start with the amount of time it is practical for you to allocate to training. It is of little value to say you will do 12 hrs of training if it is physically impossible for you to achieve this with work, school or family commitments. You need to be realistic. Once you have determined how much time you have available to spend training, we must then determine what you need to make yourself a better all-round shooter. The time spent in each area of development must be in proportion to each other, the requirements of the shooter and the ability to complete the tasks in the environment they have at their disposal.

It is easy for a coach to state what you need to do but if that amount of time is not practical, or the activities prescribed are not aimed at developing the whole shooter then the end result may be quite different to what is really required.

Here are some general guidelines.

Shooters experience level	Time spent on developing the Technical skills of shooting	Time spent on Physical conditioning activities	Time spent on Mental skill training and preparation	Competition experience
0–12 months	Approx. 40–60%	25–45%	5%	5–10%
1–2 years	Approx. 50%	20–35%	15%	5–10%
2–5 years	Approx. 50%	20–30%	15–20%	10–15%
More than 5 years	Approx. 45%	20–30%	15–20%	10–15%

The allocation of time can vary depending on the individual's abilities. It is also very difficult to completely separate each of the skills. When competing, you are also developing the skills in both the technical and mental areas. Each skill will cross over to the other areas and when determining what each shooter needs. These considerations must be made to achieve the correct balance.

As an example, John has 1hr available 5 days per week and 3 hrs on Saturday giving a total 8 hrs each week for training (a week without competition). If John has 3 years shooting experience, his time would be broken up as follows:

John	Time spent on developing the Technical skills of shooting	Time spent on Physical conditioning activities	Time spent on Mental skill training and preparation
Time as a %	50%	35%	15%
Approximate Time in minutes	4 hrs (240 min)	2.8 hrs (170 min)	1.2 hrs (70 min)

This time then needs to be allocated to the activities for each of the sections. Session times could be allocated in the morning, afternoon or evening. It's your choice.

2.8 hrs of physical conditioning could be spent on 3–4 sessions of fitness work each week. This work may involved some flexibility exercises, some postural control strengthening exercises and some basic fitness work such as walking, running, swimming etc.

The following exercises were developed for the Pistol Australia Junior camp in Sydney in Dec 2004. The fitness program was broken down into two areas. The strength and stability exercises are required to be done twice each week as are the flexibility exercises. 🌟

STRENGTH EXERCISES



Lift 1 arm to the side – shoulder and trunk stays still.
2 x 12 each



Seated and push weight overhead keeping the trunk straight and strong.
2 x 12 each



Lie on your back with your elbows tucked into side, then lower weights to each side, keeping elbow bent 90 degrees.
2 x 12 each



Stand to wall and keeping elbows straight lean forwards and back by shrugging your shoulder blades together and apart. 2 x 15



Lying on side with your elbow on your side. lift one hand to upwards to shoulder level and back to the floor
2 x 12 each



On your back with your hand out to the side at 90 degrees and forearm vertical, lower the hand until your shoulder blade moves away from its resting position on the floor, and then bring it back the arm back to the top
2 x 12 each

FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES



Pray
Lean forward chest to floor, arms straight
2 x 30 sec



Spinal twist
Seated and twist trunk to one side holding opposite knee
45 sec each way



Hamstrings general
Gently pull one bent knee to chest and hold
45 sec each



Hip external rotators
Let both knees fall together and relax
2 min relaxed



Achilles
Gently push forward over knee keeping heel on the floor
2 x 20s each



Quads
Kneeling on one knee and suck tummy in and tuck bottom under
30 sec each



Calf over step
Let your ankle drop off the edge of the step and keep knee straight
90 sec each



Pecs on wall
Hold arm on the wall and twist your trunk away from the wall
30 sec each