

Pima County 4-H Shooting Sports

AIR RIFLE RULES

This is a synopsis of air rifle rules. The 4-H Shooting Sports Program uses a combination of current NRA rules, USA Shooting rules, and National Standard Three-Position Air Rifle Rules with some modifications to meet the objectives of the program or to increase the success rates of young people participating in the program. In 4-H events, 4-H rules and regulations supersede all others where differences exist. All coaches are encouraged to purchase those rules and to become thoroughly familiar with them. This document is intended to help shooters and coaches become familiar with the rules used in air gun shooting events. Events sponsored by other organizations may involve other rules and requirements. Where applicable, the rule numbers correspond to rule numbers in the NRA rule books.

3. Equipment and Ammunition

3.2 Sporter air rifle (3-position) - Any factory available .177 caliber air rifle that is conventional in appearance, powered by compressed air or CO₂, and meeting the following restrictions may be used.

a. Caliber - Only 4.5 mm or .177 caliber air rifles may be used.

b. Trigger - Trigger pull must be a minimum 1½ pounds or 645 grams.

c. Stock - The stock must be of conventional design and symmetrically shaped for use by either left or right-handed shooters. It may be adjustable for length. The cheek piece may be adjustable for height, but no stock changes may be made during the competition. The stock may be rough, checkered or scored to provide a non-slip surface; and it may be painted or refinished; but other modifications are prohibited.

d. Internal modifications - Functioning internal parts may be smoothed or improved, but only factory manufactured parts designed for that specific model and functioning as they were originally intended to function may be used.

e. Other prohibited modifications - Thumb holes, thumb rests, palm rests, heel rests, hooked butt plate, grip material and barrel extension tubes are prohibited. No attached bipod or rifle rest is allowed while shooting.

f. Sling swivel/hand stop - A sling swivel or hand stop that is attached to a rail in the fore-end may be used (except in the standing position). The depth of the sling swivel or hand stop with the sling swivel folded flat may not exceed 25 mm (approximately 1 inch).

g. Sights - Only sights manufactured for and sold with Sporter air rifles are permitted. A blinder may be attached to the rifle or the rear sight. Corrective lenses may be worn by the shooter, but may not be incorporated into the sights. Telescopic sights are permitted only in those matches so designated in the match bulletin.

h. Weight - Weights may be added either internally to the fore-end or stock or externally as concentric barrel weights, so long as the total weight of the rifle does not exceed 7 ½ pounds (3.375kg).

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i. Approved rifles -Sporter air rifles officially approved in these competitions include the Daisy Models 753, 853, and 953 (pneumatic), and Crosman Model 2000 (CO₂). Any rifle that complies with the spirit and intent of these rules restricting Sporter Air Rifle competition to low cost, entry-level rifles without specialized modifications may also be used.

3.7 Sights

a. Metallic sights - Metallic sights are defined as any sighting system made of metal or equivalent materials that provide a means of aligning two separate, visible sights or reference points mounted on the rifle. Corrective sights and alterations as defined in NRA Air Rifle Rules 3.7 a-c may be used.

b. Prohibited sights - Any sighting device that activates the firing mechanism is prohibited.

c. Sights air rifle - The 3-position air rifle events is restricted to metallic sights only.

d. Scopes – May be used in the silhouette event. A lower power adjustable scope that will focus at 10 yards (minimum distance) is adequate.

3.8 Spotting scopes - The use of a telescope or binoculars to spot shots is permitted. It may be positioned forward of the shooter's forward shoulder. Shooter only spots shots.

3.9 Shooting kits - The use of a shooting stand is encouraged in 4-H position rifle shooting. The stand aids in safety and reduces fatigue by permitting rest between shots. The shooting stand, kit or table may be placed down range of the shooter's forward shoulder during the standing stage of 3-position shooting, but it may not be of a size, shape, construction or placement to interfere with other shooters.

3.10 Ground cloth or shooting mat - A ground cloth or mat of compressible material with a maximum thickness of 5 cm (2 inches) can be used for prone, sitting and kneeling provided its placement does not interfere with other shooters and it does not provide artificial support to the shooter.

3.11 Three position and standing Sporter Air Rifle Event - For details of the clothing requirements see the current National Standard Three-Position Air Rifle Rules available from National Three-Position Air Rifle Council, Camp Perry, P.O. Box 576, Port Clinton, OH 43452 (E-mail: compt@odcmp.com; telephone: 1-888-267-0796; facsimile: 419-635-2573. Cost is approximately \$2.00 per rule book.

3.11.2 Shooters standing clothing restrictions

a. Clothing - Shooting jackets and pants are not permitted, but up to two loose fitting shirts or sweatshirts may be worn. A pin or button may be attached to the sling arm shoulder to hold the sling in place. One pair of ordinary sport or casual trousers or jeans may be worn as long as they do not provide artificial support. Normal, low-cut street or light athletic shoes are permitted, but they may not extend above the ankle. Boots, including all commercial shooting boots are prohibited. A shooting glove may be worn. No pads or elastic bandages are allowed.

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b. Clothing appropriate for prevailing weather - Clothing appropriate for the prevailing weather may be worn at any time as long it does not provide artificial support for the shooter.

3.11.3 Silhouette and standing event clothing restrictions - Clothing suitable for the prevailing weather conditions may be worn. A shotgun vest or shooting shirt may be worn at the shooter's discretion.

3.13 Sling - A shooting sling may be used in the prone, sitting and kneeling positions provided: 1) it is no more than 25.4 mm (1 inch) in width and composed of a simple web, leather or synthetic strap without padding or lining. The sling may be adjustable for length and provide for tightening it over the upper part of the extended arm. It may be connected to the fore-end of the rifle stock, but no part of the sling may touch the rifle except at the swivel or hand stop.

3.14.1 Kneeling roll - One cylindrical kneeling roll may be placed under the instep in the kneeling position. Maximum dimensions for the kneeling roll are 25 cm (10 inches) in length and 18 cm (7.2 inches) in diameter. It must be made of soft and flexible material and may not be bound or otherwise supported to shape the roll. Use of a kneeling roll is optional to the shooter.

3.14.2 Sound producing devices - Radios or other sound producing devices and communication systems may be used only during the preparation period. They are prohibited during the match.

3.17 Ammunition

a. Only .177 caliber lead pellets may be used in 3-position Sporter air rifle events.

4. Targets

4.1 Air rifle silhouette targets - Air gun silhouette targets are 1/10 scale chickens, pigs, turkeys and rams made from 1/8 inch cold rolled steel heliarc welded to bases of the same material. Feet for air gun silhouettes should be 3/4" square or 3/4" wide by 1" long for chickens and turkeys, 3/4" wide by 1" long for pigs, and 3/4" wide by 2" long for rams.

a. Target stands - Target stands should be made by welding a similar size base to the head of a 30d nail. Inside range target stands should be made of wood.

b. Target height - Targets must be at least 2" above the ground but may be set higher.

4.2.1 Bullseye events (paper target)

a. Sporter air rifle - AR-5/5 (5 bull) targets will be used.

4.3S Target spacing silhouette - Targets should be placed a minimum of one target width apart, but not more than 3 ½ target widths tail to head.

5. Shooting Positions

5.1 The Ground - This defines the surface of the firing point or any coverings that do not provide an artificial means of support.

5.2 Artificial support - Any support not specifically authorized, including modifications of the ground to provide support for the elbows, arms or legs.

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5.3 Rifle butt position - In all positions the butt of the rifle must be supported on the front of the shoulder, outside the jacket or shirt and not touching the ground.

5.5 Physically handicapped shooters - Shooters with physical handicaps that make it impossible to shoot from the specified positions may petition the 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator for permission to use modified equipment or positions. Thorough explanation and photographic evidence of the position and reasons for using it are required.

5.5.1 Temporary disabilities and substitute positions - Any person with a temporary physical disability preventing them from shooting in a given position, upon presentation of evidence and permission of the 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator or match coordinator, may be permitted to substitute the next more difficult position, for example, standing for kneeling. **Subjunior** shooters in the air rifle event may fire from a seated position with their elbows rested on the surface of the firing point.

5.6 Prone - Body extended on the ground with the head facing the target and the rifle supported by the shoulder and both hands. The forearm supporting the rifle must form a minimum angle of 30 degrees to the ground. No part of the arm below the elbow may rest on the ground or any artificial support.

5.8 Sitting - The weight of the body is supported on the buttocks and the feet or ankles with no other part of the body touching the ground. The rifle is supported by one shoulder and both hands only. The elbows may rest on the legs at any point above the ankles.

5.10 Kneeling - Body is supported on one knee and one foot with the buttocks clear of the ground but resting on one foot. The elbow of the forward arm may rest on the upright knee or leg. The elbow of the shooting arm is free from all support. A kneeling roll may be placed under the instep of the supporting foot provided that the foot is placed toe-down at an angle not more than 45 degrees from the vertical. If the kneeling roll is not used, the foot may be placed in any position, including having the lower leg and foot flat on the ground.

5.12 Standing - Erect on both feet with no other portion of the body touching the ground or any supporting surface. Use of the sling is not permitted and the rifle must be supported by both hands and the shoulder only. The elbow or upper arm of the forward hand may be placed against the body or supported on the hip.

5.12S Silhouette position

a. Seniors - Any standing position that does not provide artificial support may be used, but one hand must be forward of the pistol grip. The cheek must be in contact with the stock or the chin must rest on the comb.

b. Juniors - Any sitting position that does not provide artificial support may be used, but one hand must be forward of the pistol grip. The cheek must be in contact with the stock or the chin must rest on the comb.

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c. Subjuniors - Any prone position that does not provide artificial support may be used, but one hand must be forward of the pistol grip. The cheek must be in contact with the stock or the chin must rest on the comb.

6. Range Standards

6.1 Firing line - The firing line is immediately in front of the firing points. All measurements of range are taken from the firing line to the face of the target.

6.2 Firing points - The part of the range provided for the shooter immediately behind the firing line. Each firing point should be a minimum of 4 feet wide and have a number that corresponds to the target numbers down range.

6.2S Firing points, silhouette - The minimum width of firing points on a silhouette range is 4 feet.

6.4 Shooting distance - The shooting distance is measured from the firing line to the target face. The shooter may place his or her forward foot or elbow up to the firing line.

a. Ten meter – The shooting distance in Sporter air rifle is 10 meters. A 33 foot distance may be substituted for the 10 meter distance if desired and posted.

b. Air rifle silhouette - The shooting distances for air rifle silhouette targets will be listed in yards. (See 7.1d1 - **Courses of Fire**).

6.6 Target and firing point identification - Targets and firing points will be marked with numbers to indicate their position. In silhouette, numbers will be used to identify individual banks of targets. Target numbers should be large enough to be read with the unaided eye under normal conditions.

7. Courses of Fire

7.1 Courses of fire

a. Three position air rifle – will be 10 meters with 5 shots in each position.

1) **Subjuniors** - will include prone, sitting and standing stages.

2) **Juniors** - will include prone, sitting and kneeling stages.

3) **Seniors** - will include prone, kneeling and standing stages.

b. Silhouette - A standard course of fire will consist of a total of 20 shots, including 5 chickens at 20 yards; 5 pigs at 30 yards; 5 turkeys at 36 yards; and 5 rams at 45 yards.

1) See rule **5.12S silhouette position** for the appropriate shooting positions.

7.2 Dry firing in air rifle - Dry firing is permitted only during the sighting period. Neither dry firing nor sighting shots are permitted after the first record shot has been fired (unless a disabled rifle requires re-sighting or other exigency is deemed sufficient to require them in the opinion of the range officer), and dry fires will be counted as misses.

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8. Time Limits

8.1 Running Time - In nearly all 4-H events, time is computed as a running total. Times for individual shots are not observed, but a total time is allotted for firing an entire record string, bank of targets, stage or match. The shooter is responsible for pacing their shooting to meet the time limitations.

a. Precedence of posted limits - Posted time limits supersede standard NRA time limits for each event.

8.2 Time allowances

a. Sporter air rifle - Shooters are allowed one and one-half (1½) minutes per record shot in prone, sitting and kneeling positions and two (2) minutes per shot in standing. This time period includes sighting shots. If the match is fired in stages where shooters must go down range to change targets, time left in one stage will **not** carry over to the following stages.

b. Silhouette time allowances

1) Ready time - Fifteen (15) seconds will be allowed between the command "**Ready**" (**Listo**) and "**Fire**" (**Fuego**).

2) Firing time

a. Seniors - Two and one-half (2½) minutes will be allowed for each bank of five (5) targets.

b. Juniors – Three (3) minutes and forty-five (45) seconds will be allowed for each bank of five (5) targets.

c. Subjuniors – Five (5) minutes will be allowed for each bank of five (5) targets.

3) Alibis

a. Seniors - Thirty (30) seconds will be allowed for each unfired round in which an alibi is allowed.

b. Juniors – Forty-five (45) seconds will be allowed for each unfired round in which an alibi is allowed.

c. Subjuniors – One (1) minute will be allowed for each unfired round in which an alibi is allowed.

4) Shoot-offs

Seniors - Thirty (30) seconds will be allowed for each round fired in a shoot-off.

Juniors – Forty-five (45) seconds will be allowed for each round fired in a shoot-off.

Subjuniors – One (1) minute will be allowed for each round fired in a shoot-off.

8.4 Shooter Responsibility - Shooters are responsible for knowing the posted time limits for each event and for pacing their shooting to the time limits. Range officers may be asked about the passage of time or time remaining, but they are not charged with doing so.

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9. Competition Regulations

9.1 Changing rifles - No competitor may change his/her rifle or stock during a competition unless the rifle has become disabled and has been so designated by the referee or chief range officer.

9.2 Silhouette sighting shots - Sighting shots are not permitted as part of the course of fire in silhouette shooting, although practice matches or practice targets may be provided as long as all competitors have an opportunity to enter the event or see the targets. Practice may not interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the match.

9.3 Sighting shots, air rifle – (Time Permitting) Unlimited sighting shots may be fired only before the beginning of each match or stage. Once the first record shot has been fired, no additional sighting shots may be fired.

9.5 Misfire, air rifle - A misfire occurs when the pellet fails to exit the barrel of the firearm. The range officials must be notified immediately in the event of a misfire. When satisfied that a misfire has occurred, the range officer will permit the shooter to continue firing, allowing additional time as required for the misfire.

9.7 Disabled rifle - A rifle that cannot be safely and accurately aimed or fired, including one on which the sights were damaged or lost or one that has suffered mechanical problems that cause it not to function properly may be declared disabled. The shooter will be permitted to repair or replace the rifle and complete the firing during the time that was left when the rifle became disabled. (Silhouette rule 9.5)

9.12S Spotting in silhouette - Each competitor may have a spotter who advises on impact points and suggests changes in hold point or other such information that will aid the shooter. Competitors may be asked to spot for other competitors in this event.

10. Range Control and Commands

Standard range safety and operation commands are essential in 4-H Shooting Sports events. NRA commands as listed in section 10 of the rule manuals, 4-H basic or expanded range commands as outlined in the appendices of the 4-H Shooting Sports Guide or their equivalent are acceptable. Range control and safety are the **PRIMARY** concern of range staff.

10.1 Discipline - The safety of competitors, range staff and spectators depends upon continuous attention to all safe firearms handling principles by all persons on or about the range. Self discipline is the foundation of safety; and if it be lacking, it is the responsibility of range personnel to enforce range discipline. It is the duty and responsibility of all persons on the range to assist in this process.

10.1.1 Actions open - All firearms will remain empty with the actions open and their cocking mechanisms uncocked until such time as the competitors are on the firing line and the range officer has authorized their handling. No rifle shall be picked up or handled until authorized by appropriate command. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** will careless handling be permitted.

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10.1.2 Rifles unloaded - No rifle will be loaded until shooters are in position with the rifles pointed down range and the command "**Commence firing**" or "**Ready**" (**Listo**) has been given.

10.1.3 Rifles loaded - Any firearm with its action closed will be considered loaded and must be pointed down range (in a safe direction) at all times. Even when the rifle has a magazine, pellets must be loaded singly.

10.1.5 Not ready - Competitors who are not ready to fire at the time the range officer asks "**Is the line ready?**" must notify the range officer by stating "**Not ready on __**" and including their firing point or target number.

10.3.1 Preparation period, air rifle - Competitors will be allowed three (3) minutes to take their places at their firing points and prepare to fire after the firing points have been cleared by the preceding competitors and the range officer has called their relay to the line. Dry firing may be permitted during this time period.

10.3.1S Preparation period, silhouette - The competitor will be allowed fifteen (15) seconds between the command "**Ready**" (**Listo**) and "**Fire**" (**Fuego**). During this time the competitor may load, set sights or otherwise prepare to fire.

10.3.2 Interrupted fire, silhouette - If an interruption in fire occurs during a bank of targets, the competitors will be allowed an additional "**Ready**" period before completing the course of fire.

10.4 Policing the range - Competitors are responsible for policing their firing points at the end of each stage or match under the supervision of the range staff.

10.7S Firing line procedures and commands (silhouette)

a. Range commands and procedures.

- Upon being called to the line, competitors will place their rifles and 5 rounds of ammunition on the firing point surface and may not touch them again until.
- The command "**Ready**" or "**Listo.**" At that time they may handle their rifles, set sights, dry fire and/or load.
- A thirty (15) second time period will elapse between the Ready command and the "**Fire**" or "**Fuego**" command. Shooters may commence firing immediately upon that command.
- At the end of that period the Range Officer will command "**Cease fire**" or "**Alto.**"

b. Hits and misses, range alibi - Silhouettes will be fired upon in sequence from left to right. Hits made out of sequence count as misses. If a silhouette is down before a shot, the shooter will fire on the remaining ones in order, then return to the leftmost target remaining and fire any unfired rounds as required. Shooters who still have shots remaining and no targets remain in their bank, a range alibi will be declared. The bank will be reset and the competitor will be allowed a ready period and 30 seconds for each remaining shot. Ricochet

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hits that knock down the proper target in sequence count as hits. Targets must be knocked over or from the stand to count as hits. Targets that are tipped onto their nose or tail or that are spun on the stand are counted as misses. No refires or alibis are allowed except for rifle malfunction or faulty cartridges.

c. Malfunction - Shooters experiencing an allowable malfunction may use another rifle or cartridge and will be given 30 seconds for each unfired round. This firing may be done immediately or at a later time at the discretion of the range officer and in consideration of the length of the delay involved.

d. Changing rifles - Different rifles may be used in a tournament, but the same rifle must be used throughout a match unless rifle failure occurs and is certified by the Range Officer. Only one alibi will be allowed per match.

e. Coaching - Each shooter may have one coach on the firing line. The coach may spot, advise the shooter on where shots are going, keep time and otherwise advise the shooter. The coach may not touch the shooter or the shooter's equipment once the shooter assumes a position on the firing line.

10.7 Firing line commands for air rifle.

a. Relay (#), Match (name), or shooters to the firing line - The shooters move to the firing line with their equipment and take their positions at the appropriate firing point.

b. Go forward and hang your targets - Shooters will move forward to the target frames and hang their targets.

c. Your (3) three minute preparation period starts now - After shooters have returned to the firing line, this is announced. Shooters may handle their equipment, dry fire and prepare for live firing during this three minute period. The range officer verifies that the shooters are on the proper firing points with targets properly hung.

d. Your preparation period has ended - At the end of the three minute preparation period, the range officer announces its ending before moving on to the following commands.

e. Is the line ready? - Any competitor who is not ready to fire must reply by stating "**Not ready on (firing point number),**" and the range officer will state "**The line is not ready.**"

f. The line is ready, you have (#) minutes, commence firing - Once the problems have been fixed and the line is ready, the range officer will declare the line ready, issue the commence firing command and state the amount of time for the stage or match being fired. Competitor may load and fire after the command "**Commence firing**" had been issued.

g. Cease firing, make the line safe - At the completion of the time period or upon completion of firing by all competitors, the range officer will stop all firing with the "**Cease firing**" command. Each shooter will immediately stop firing, open the action and place the rifle on the shooting mat with the action open and visible. If a pellet remains in the barrel, the shooter

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will inform the range officer by stating "**Pellet still in the barrel.**" The range officer will then command "**Unload, clear through the barrel**" and permit the shooter to fire into the backstop to clear the pellet.

h. Is the line safe? - After all unfired pellets have been cleared and the rifles are grounded, the range officer will ask "**Is the line safe?**" If all rifles are grounded, cleared and have their actions open, the range officer will declare the line safe. If not, he/she will state "**The line is not safe**" and see to any problem that makes the line remain hot. Once it has been resolved, the line will be declared safe.

i. The line is safe, go forward and replace your targets - No one may touch or handle a rifle while there is anyone down range.

j. Unsafe condition - Anyone who observes an unsafe condition or the potential for injury to any living thing down range should command "**Cease fire.**"

k. As you were - This command means to disregard the immediately preceding command.

l. Carry on - This command means to continue with whatever was taking place prior to an interruption.

10.7.1 Firing sequence - Only one shot is fired at each record bull unless otherwise specified in the shoot program. It is the shooter's responsibility to keep track of his/her shots and to fire no more than one shot at each record bull.

10.12 Target mounting - Shooters may be required to mount their own targets properly. Fired targets will be collected immediately by range officials.

10.13 Procedure in case of a loose or fallen target - If a target falls or is blown loose so that the shooter can no longer fire at it, the shooter (or coach) will immediately notify the range officer. The range officer at his/her discretion may cease firing to re-hang the target, wait until the end of the stage or relay before permitting the shooter to re-hang the target and complete the firing, or re-squad the shooter. All shots fired prior to the problem count, and the shooter will be permitted one minute for each shot that remains to be fired.

15. Tie Breaking

15.1 Competitors having the same numerical total score over the entire course will be ranked in order:

- a.** By the greater number of X's over the entire course on targets with X rings or center shots on targets without X rings.
- b.** By the highest ranking score in the standing position, then kneeling, sitting and prone.
- c.** By the greater number of X's or center shots in the standing position.
- d.** By the highest ranking score on the last numbered bullseye, in standing.

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e. By the greater number of X's or center shots on the last numbered bullseye, in standing.

15.2S Silhouette tie-breakers - Ties will be broken by shoot-offs immediately following the match unless otherwise specified in the match program.

a. Shooters will fire on individual turkeys, continuing until the tie is broken by the combination of a hit and a miss on the designated targets.

b. Shoot management may designate other methods of breaking ties.

c. The shooter will be given a 15 second "ready" period and 30 seconds firing time for each shot.

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