

"SMOKE SIGNALS "
Blackpowder Muzzle loading

By; Andre (Graywolf) Reed

A Pilgrims Journey part 3

Understanding your Firearm

Triggers:

Trigger pull is one of the most neglected points of shooting well by many shooters.

This simple concept is the primary culprit after poor position in messing up accuracy, far much more so than breath control. One of the problems on trigger pull is the fact that there is no definitive right trigger pill. It really depends on what you're shooting at and what kind of gun you are using. The best way to get the feel for the correct trigger pull is to practice. "Dry firing" (practicing at home with an EMPTY gun) is crucial to success on the range or in the field. If you're at the office, take a ball point pen and try to squeeze it off, feel the point when it engages.

Shotgun triggers are meant to be "slapped" or pulled quickly, as the timing of the shot is the most important factor. As you have a substantial "kill zone" with a shotgun's pattern, absolute pinpoint accuracy is not as important as timing and leading the target correctly. I have seen more than one rifle shooter gently squeeze the trigger back, and by the time the gun went off the clay was almost in the trees.

Rifle triggers on the other hand are meant to have a slow gentle squeeze. You really don't want to know when the rifle goes off. Anticipating the shot is a major culprit when it comes to pressure at the same rate to the trigger, with the sights correctly aligned, until the rifle fires. This keeps the rifle pointed steadily at your target and helps to avoid flinching. There are two types of triggers on muzzle loaders today (single stage and double set).

Single stage ideally have no movement before releasing at their set weight, and when they fire they move only far enough rearward to release the sear. Such a trigger is a great asset to achieving a

surprise break. Most triggers on high-end flintlocks supplied today are single stage keeping with traditional flintlocks of the past. On some flintlocks and most percussion firearms today the trigger mechanism is a wonderful little device called a “set trigger.’ There are single set and double set triggers. The former is pushed forward to “set,” and then pulled rearward to fire. The latter is simpler and more common. This consists of two triggers within the trigger guard of firearm. The trigger in the front is the firing trigger while the one in the back is the set trigger. Normally (un-set) the front trigger would have a trigger pull of about 4 pounds, and simply pulling the front trigger will fire the firearm. However when one first pulls the rear set trigger back until it clicks, you have typically reduced the front trigger pull to less than half a pound. You must still pull the front trigger to fire the firearm, but after being set it is very light and clean.

In conclusion understanding proper trigger pull is crucial to good marksmanship. Effectively using the right kind of trigger, properly adjusted, can improve your accuracy for the rest of your life.