

# Station 8

By Ed Scherer



*Ed Scherer was a popular columnist on instruction for Skeet Shooting Review during the 1980s and 1990s. He passed away in 1995. The following is a print from August 1991.*

**L**ooking over the barrel instead of in the opening is the recommended place to look when approaching this “zipper.” It appears fast and before you’re aware, it’s past your barrel. Here’s a solution.

As a beginner, it’s best to shoot several shots from behind the station on the high and low house targets. Yes, I’d like you to back five yards away from Station 8, putting you further from the high and low house opening. Moving five yards back on the high house will make the target resemble high 7. You have no fear hitting high 7. Stand five yards back of high house Station 8 and it will be as easy to hit as high 7. Just cover the target as you shoot and there will be a black puff of smoke where the target once was.

Shoot two or three from this same

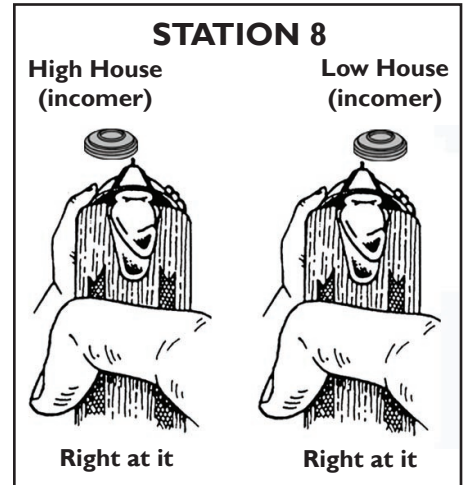
spot hitting them every time, and then move up a yard at a time to repeat the process. Soon you will be on the station with perfect hits. Now that wasn’t so bad, was it?

When five yards behind Station, point muzzle at the right top of the target opening. Look a foot over the barrel with eyes gazing at the face of the house. As target appears, start smoothly and as you blot it out, pull the trigger. Remember to push through it and this will take some effort.

**B**etter yet, put a snap cap in your gun and dry fire at the high house. In this way you’ll know exactly where you were as trigger is pulled. (Auto-loading, gas operated guns do not require snap caps.) Freeze cheek on stock as the dry fire exercise is performed. Lifting cheek just as shot is fired will give you excessive lead. One thing you’ll notice in the dry firing exercise is that a real push is needed with your left arm to cover the target. The left-handed shooter will be pulling through the target and it will take a bit less effort.

## Foot Position

What about foot position when all this is taking place? The right-hander faces away from the skeet field toward the northeast (most skeet fields face northeast to avoid sun problems). Another way to describe the foot position is to run a line over the tips of your toes and this line runs directly from



the high house to the low house. You left-handers need to have the navel facing the high house opening. Notice how much easier it is to push or pull through the target when feet are positioned properly.

Once the dry firing exercise is completed from five yards behind the high Station 8, insert a shell and notice the quality of the hit. Blot it out and “smoke” it, freezing head on the comb. Have a

friend watch that cheek is frozen as shot is fired.

Some people just cannot freeze head on comb and that’s a tip off that the gun recoils excessively. Do you understand now why I prefer a 28 gauge, or an air-cushion stock? Recoil can devastate your skeet shooting so be forewarned. One

of these days when I start my shooting lessons, I’ll insist every student use a Remington 1100, 28 gauge autoloader, with recoil pad installed.

**Freeze cheek on stock as the dry fire exercise is performed. Lifting cheek just as shot is fired will give you excessive lead.**

**T**ime to move up but only a yard at a time. Make sure you have a pocket full of shells. Each time the shooter moves up a yard, the hold point moves up and to the right. The left-handed shooter never moves up, just to the right.

Soon you will find looking over the barrel actually works better than looking into the high house opening. If you happen to be a one-eyed (really?) shooter, the hold point will be slightly lower.

Here's the key to a hold point for the two-eyed, right-handed shooter that's a foot to the right and a foot above the opening. Your left eye will actually pick up the target even though your gaze is on the face of the house. Get your left thumb down so it doesn't obstruct your view.

As your skill level increases, the hold point may go even higher and to the right. On most skeet houses, it's possible to draw a diagonal line from the top right corner of the opening to the top right corner of the roof.

Point the muzzle half way up this line. The left-hander moves only to the right, not up. Two feet to the right is sufficient.

A bonus on looking over the barrel will pay off with the sun right smack in your eye at 6:00pm on some skeet fields. Then, the only time the target is seen is when it can be seen against the sky. If you're used to looking over the barrel, looking just a little higher to see the bird against the sky won't be too difficult. If you were looking into the opening and suddenly have to shift the gaze up into the sky your work is cut out for you. Occasionally I'll deliberately simulate a sun-in-the-eye shot by moving my muzzle above the roof line and picking target up as it hits the sky.

### From the Low House

Shooting the low house requires a

foot position quite different from the high house. Instead of facing northeast, you're suddenly facing your navel looking right into the low house opening. Left-handers use the same foot position on the low house we right handers used on the high house. (You're facing east.)

Back up five yards and with muzzle pointed at the bottom left-hand corner of the opening, call for a target. If you'd like, the dry firing on this target can be repeated. Once a shell is inserted, note a good hit is accomplished only when the target is blotted out. This teacher

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never mentions negative thoughts as it reinforces the error but let me say this—when head is firmly placed on the comb as trigger is pulled and you see the target when that trigger is pulled, all is for naught. You've just missed the target. Now let's turn that thought around and put it in a more positive vein.

When trigger is pulled, make certain target is completely covered with the gun muzzle. I actually shoot it blind. Yes, it's scary at first, but it works.

**K**eept walking toward the station and firing, moving muzzle hold point up to the left as you progress. When you are on the station, smoking every target, the muzzle hold point for both left and right-handed shooters should be at the left of the opening but even more than a foot above the top of the opening. Two feet to the left of the opening is just RIGHT. Notice, as you become more confident, how much time there is to shoot this target. No need to rush the shot. Establish a nice smooth swing and forget the snap shooting.

Occasionally one of my right-handed students will continue missing by overleading low 8. That's a tip off that the left eye could be the culprit. In this case, a closed left eye could be the remedy.

Looking over the barrel is still the

correct procedure, instead of into the opening. Through experience this writer has found eyes gazing over the barrel on both the high and low houses make it easier to pick up the target, with plenty of time left to smack it right in the middle.

Here is an interesting thought. To break the first 100x100 in your life, or the first 25x25, you will need to hit low 8 twice. The best advice I can give you in this situation is to loosen the arm holding the forearm, call for the target and smack it exactly the same way you just smoked the target before the last one. Simple, eh?