



THE ANNIE'S GUIDE TO SPORTING CLAYS TERMINOLOGY

Lost Pairs, and Teal Shots and Battues Oh My! When learning a new sport, it's easy to get overwhelmed, especially when there is an entirely new lexicon to absorb. Below are some terms and phrases (it is by no means exhaustive) that will hopefully help you navigate the world of sporting clays.

GENERAL TERMS

- **Sporting Clays** – Type of shotgun shooting sport that involves shooting clay targets (or pigeons) of various speeds, sizes, and trajectories. The targets (sort of) imitate the flight path or game birds or rabbits. You will hear sporting clays often described as ‘golf with a shotgun’. There are indeed many similarities, you shoot a ‘round’ on a ‘course’ with 3-4 other people and rotate through stations either on foot or in a cart. Like golf, it can be expensive, difficult to master, and very easy to get hooked.
- **NSCA** – National Sporting Clays Association – America’s official governing and sanctioning body for sporting clays. You will need to join if you enter a registered competition.
- **ISCA** – Illinois Sporting Clays Association – The Illinois official governing and sanctioning body for sporting clays.
- **FOID Card** – Firearm Owners Identification Card – you will need one of these to purchase a firearm or ammunition as a resident of Illinois.

TERMS YOU WILL HEAR ON THE COURSE

- **Round** – A round of sporting clays is similar to a round of golf. You and your squad mates will start at the assigned first station and shoot each station in order. Typically, the shooter order rotates through. There can be anywhere from 8-15 stations in a round. Typically rounds are a total of 50 or 100 targets, but this varies.
- **Sporting Clays Course** – Like a golf course, shooting stations are laid around fields or the natural features of the land. Every course is different. Many are thoughtfully designed to enhance the natural beauty of the existing terrain. Try visiting as many as possible, you will certainly develop favorites.
- **Shooting Stand** – Position where the shooter sets up to fire her shots. Like a tee box in golf, also referred to as a ‘cage’ or a ‘box’. It’s typically a platform and supports made of metal, PVC pipe or wood where you set up to shoot. Only one shooter is allowed in the stand (unless it’s a lesson). At Northbrook Sports Club, all shooting stands are outfitted with metal cigar holders. Lucky us.



- **Squad** – These are your shooting partners, usually a group of 2-5 people that you rotate with from station to station, like a foursome in golf. Choose your squad wisely.
- **Trap** -Machine that launches the clay into the air. Traps can be configured to throw at a wide array of speeds, angles and trajectories. “Trap” is also another clay target sport, but it’s not as cool as sporting clays.
- **Trapper** – Person at the shooting stand who operates the trap. They are typically volunteers, be nice to them. It’s okay to check in with them before you call pull to check that they are ready.
- **Shell** – Also called a ‘shotshell’, it’s the type of ammunition we use in sporting clays. A shell is a type of rimmed, cylindrical (straight walled) cartridge used specifically in shotguns. The plastic shells are filled with tiny bb’s, gun powder and a wad. See The Annie’s Guide to Reading a Box of Shotgun Shells to learn more.

MENU AND SCORING TERMS

As you progress along in sporting clays shooting, it will be important to know how to read a shot menu, trap (throw targets for others) and be able to keep score. Familiarize yourself with the terms below and you will sound like an expert in no time. Volunteering to trap at local charity events or shoots is an excellent learning opportunity. It will give you practice working the controls, watching target presentations, and keeping score.

- **Shot Menu** – Found attached to a shooting stand, the menu will identify the number or pairs, whether the targets are thrown as singles, true, report or following and the size and characteristics of the clays. Despite the word ‘Menu’ you don’t get to choose.
- **View Pair** – The first shooter at each station requests a view pair so she can plan her shots. Also called a ‘show pair’. These are targets thrown from the traps that you don’t shoot, the squad will all watch and plan accordingly. NSCA rules state that only the first shooter can mount an unloaded gun and track the targets being viewed. View pairs are not limited to one, ask the trapper politely if you would like to see it again or check with the squad to see if anyone requires another ‘View’.
- **Report Pair** – On the shooters call, one bird is launched. When the shooter fires, a second target is launched. Thus, it is launched ‘on the report’ or firing of the first shot.
- **Following Pair** – On the shooters call, one bird is launched. After a predetermined amount of time, the trapper will launch a second target.
- **True Pair** – Two targets are thrown at the exact same time. Also known as a ‘Sim pair’, simultaneous pair.
- **Single** –One clay bird is thrown each time a shooter calls for a target.
- **Dead Pair** – Both clay targets are hit.
- **Lost Pair** – Both clay targets are missed.
- **Dead Loss** – First bird is hit, the second is missed.
- **Loss Dead** – First bird is missed, the second is hit.
- **No Bird** – A clay that comes out of the trap broken or defective.



TARGET PRESENTATIONS

There is a wide array of target presentations, it's what makes this sport unique, challenging and exasperating. You will hear these terms a lot as you progress as a shooter. You will work with instructors and mentors and develop different techniques (also called Target Tactics) to master the four main presentations, Crossing, Quartering, Incoming and Outgoing (trap).

- **Crossing** – Targets that fly at or about a 90-degree angle to a shooting stand, they can cross left or right. When they whiz by, shooters like to call them ‘screaming crossers’.
- **Quartering** – Targets that cross in front of the shooting stand at or about a 45-degree angle. They can come from the left or right and quarter away or toward the shooting stand.
- **Trap** – Outgoing target thrown from a trap close to the shooting stand. Also called a ‘going away’ shot.
- **Incoming** – Target coming toward the shooting stand thrown from a trap in the distance.

You should get familiar with the above four. Below are some variations of the above and specialty presentations.

- **Chandelle** – It’s French for ‘candle’, in sporting clays this target arcs like a rainbow and is thrown on its edge. Oftentimes, the shooter can see the dome (top) or belly (underside) clearly.
- **Teal** – Target thrown virtually straight up in the air. Also called a ‘springing teal’. Named after a teal duck that flies fast and elevates quickly. The ducks are easier to hit than these targets.
- **Rabbue** – A rabbit target (the one with the tougher rim around the edge designed to roll on the ground) that is thrown instead in the air.
- **Driven** – Very high target thrown toward the shooting stand that passes overhead. Make extra sure you have eye protection when shooting this type of presentation as broken clay fragments can easily fall in or near the shooting stand.

TARGET TYPES

Clay Targets are round, disc shaped and vary in size from 60mm (a bit bigger than a golf ball) to 108mm (a bit smaller than the rim of a martini glass). Modern clay targets are made primarily of ground limestone and petroleum pitch (polymer) and will biodegrade. The most common colors are orange and black, but you will also see some fabulous hot pink, lime green and white. The variations in targets and presentations are part of what makes sporting clays fun and challenging. *You never know what you’re gonna get.*

- **Standard** – These are the most common and measure 108mm in diameter. Also called a ‘Pheasant’ target.



- **Mini** – As the name suggests, these are the smallest size targets used in sporting clays, measuring 60mm in diameter. They fly fast early in the launch but slow down quickly due to reduced weight.
- **Midi** – These are 90mm in diameter, somewhere between the Mini and Standard. These Midi targets are often used by devious target setters to create an optical illusion, as they can appear to be further away than they really are and deceive the shooter into giving them more lead than necessary.
- **70mm** – He still needs a name. Introduced in 2017, this is the newest size of sporting clay target. Like the Mini, it is often launched quickly off the trap but slows down sooner than it's larger buddies the Midi and the Standard.
- **Rabbit** – Designed to roll on its edge along the ground to simulate a bolting rabbit. This target has a special tougher rim to withstand the shock of being tossed outward onto hard ground, which makes them especially tough to break. Rabbits have the same diameter (108mm) as the standard target. They are not always thrown on the ground, Rabbit targets can be launched in the air.
- **Battue** – Although they have the same diameter as the standard target 108mm, they are a wafer thin flat target and can be presented as loopers, crossing or quartering targets. The battue is faster through the air because of the design.

LEVITY TERMS

- **Correctile Dysfunction** – a serious medical condition found in male sporting clay shooters who have frequent and sudden urges to offer unsolicited advice to women. Left untreated, this disease can significantly reduce the enjoyment of women shooters. Levity aside, well intentioned men will try and help you and it will likely throw you off your game. When unsolicited advice is offered, kindly point out that you are an Annie Shooter, and you have professionals and certified instructors who are helping you develop your game.
- **Mansplaining** – Same definition as in the regular world, it's a pejorative term used to describe when a man speaks to a woman in a condescending or patronizing way. You will likely encounter a high degree of 'mansplaining' in your sporting clays career. Most likely to encounter this phenomenon when a male squad mate doesn't appreciate your choke tube selection. Just ignore it.
- **Chip Bagger** – A sporting clays shooter who is convinced he 'chipped' a target and wants credit for a dead bird, even though the entire squad saw that he missed by about 2 feet. Annie Shooters aren't chip baggers. The target broke or it didn't. Dust doesn't count.