

Dry Firing

Dry fire training is an extremely effective method of developing proper positioning, weld, breathing, and trigger control. By practicing without the expense and noisy distraction of live ammunition and recoil, all of a shooter's attention can be focused on the fundamentals of the shot process. Additionally, dry fire practice allows for convenient training at any time, in almost any place. Hotel rooms, basements, and back porches suddenly become perfectly adequate training areas once dry firing is the method of choice.

Protect Your Firearm

Since a rimfire cartridge is struck on the rim where it's braced against the breech, dry firing introduces the possibility of the firing pin extending all the way forward and tapping against the hardened steel breech. Done enough times, this harsh impact has the potential to lead to excessive and premature wear or breakage of the firing pin.

To protect against damage, rimfires should always be dry fired with a spring-loaded dry fire dummy cartridge, or snap cap. While a spent casing can provide similar protection, it's also less easily recognized as a non-live round and the possibility of accidentally using a live round rises exponentially; for that reason a snap cap is preferred.

Training Area

While a traditional backstop or target can be foregone for dry firing, it's still important to set up a realistic target or aiming point and to keep from scaring neighbors and passersby. When setting up your dry fire area, make sure you're not prominently displayed to the public in a window or in the back yard. Seeing someone aiming a rifle inside a house can understandably perturb even the calmest soul.

For targets, use a very scaled-down version of your typical target scaled to the space you have available. The key is to maximize training effectiveness by maintaining a similar sight picture during dry fire as during the real deal. Computer programs providing customizable scaled targets are available free on the web. Alternatively, it's easy to make a decent dry fire target at home by simply drawing out a target on an index card with a Sharpie.

Skill Development

Dry firing benefits come from implementing an excellent shot process. The beauty of dry firing is the complete lack of importance placed on downrange shot performance. As such, it's not crucial to get every piece of the shot process perfect for each shot. Instead just make sure to focus on your training goal for the session which can be a particular part of the shot process. Dry firing allows you to work toward perfection in that area. Choose breathing control for one session, and squeezing the trigger exactly rearward for another. Once dry firing becomes part of a routine, consistent improvements in specific areas become as rewarding as a bulls eye on the range.

