

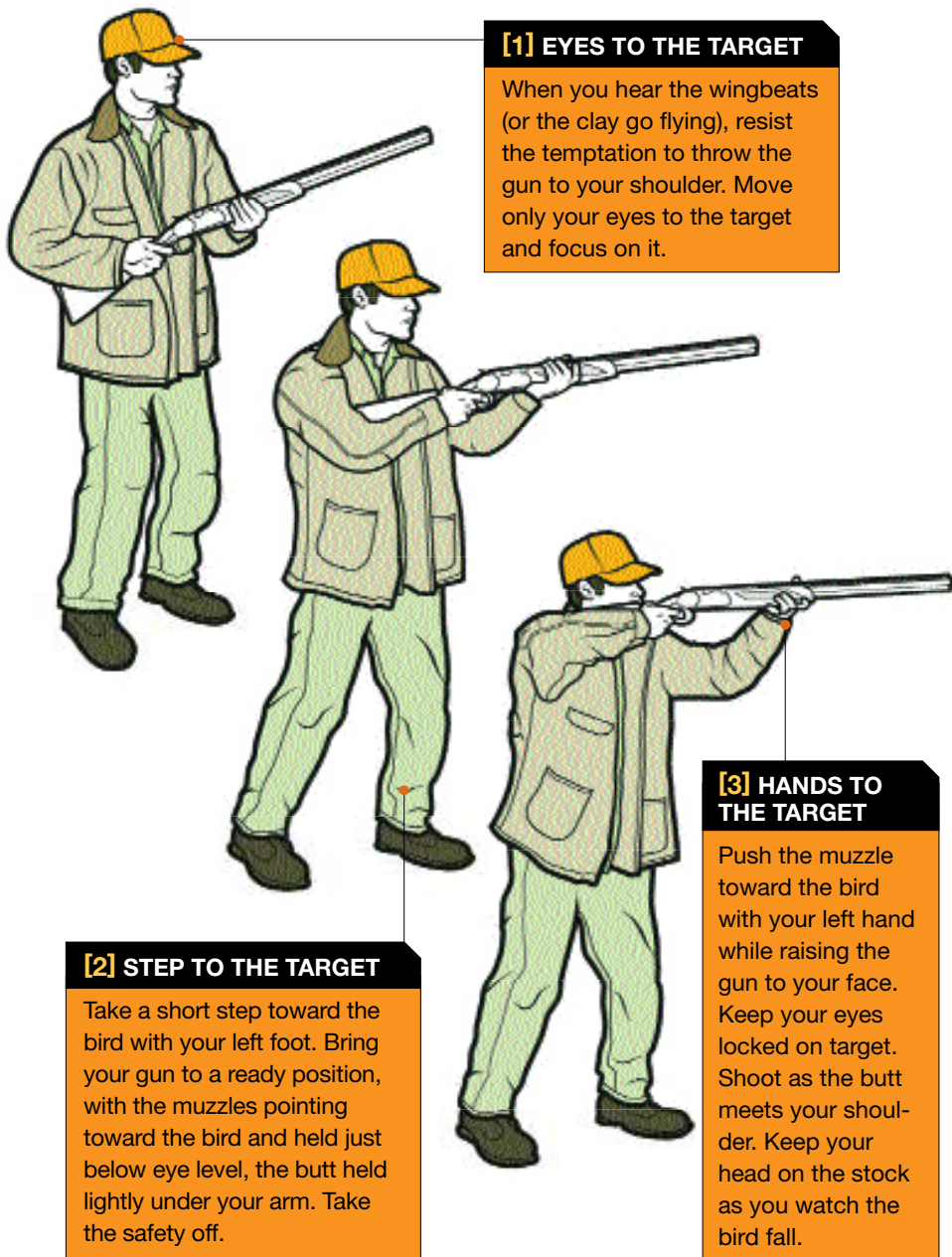
# The Surprise Shot

How not to miss an unexpected flush



**A GAMEBIRD FLUSHING UNDERFOOT** can wreck your composure. There's no reason to miss when a sudden flush startles us, but we all do sometimes. The key to not blowing it in these situations is to control your panic reflex, and break the shot down into quick but distinct steps: Look, step, mount-and-shoot, and follow through.

Practice with your hunting gun, a friend, and a trap set to throw clays fairly low. Hold your gun in a field carry position, with the safety on. Encourage your friend to take you by surprise with the pull.



## [1] EYES TO THE TARGET

When you hear the wingbeats (or the clay go flying), resist the temptation to throw the gun to your shoulder. Move only your eyes to the target and focus on it.

## [2] STEP TO THE TARGET

Take a short step toward the bird with your left foot. Bring your gun to a ready position, with the muzzles pointing toward the bird and held just below eye level, the butt held lightly under your arm. Take the safety off.

## [3] HANDS TO THE TARGET

Push the muzzle toward the bird with your left hand while raising the gun to your face. Keep your eyes locked on target. Shoot as the butt meets your shoulder. Keep your head on the stock as you watch the bird fall.