

# Shoot Like You Mean It

A true-to-life practice session that will have you ready this fall

» There's a huge difference between shooting an accurate arrow from the target line and shooting one at an animal over broken terrain clustered with brush, trees, and boulders. On the line, you are standing comfortably and can take your time. In the field, you may be up in a tree or down on your knees, with only a second to make the shot. Here's a better way to practice.

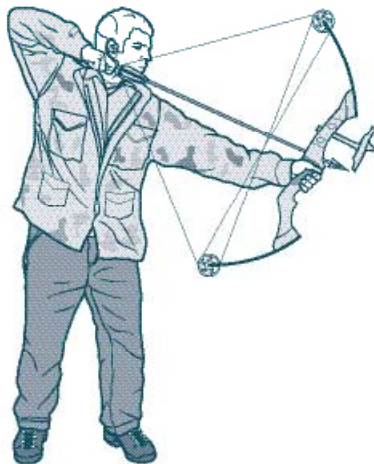


## [A] PRACTICE

Develop your form. Maintain a consistent anchor point. Apply steady forward pressure with your bow arm.

## [B] FROM A TREE STAND

Keep your anchor point and head position the same. Maintain your form while bending at the waist. Concentrate on not dropping your bow arm or raising your head.



## [C] ON A STALK

On most stalks you'll be on your knees, behind cover. Spread your knees for a solid platform, and lean forward slightly for a balanced, athletic stance. If you must shoot from behind brush, lean and cant the bow while maintaining form.

**[Step 1]** Spend a few days just getting comfortable with the bow. Once you get it tuned and sighted in, use only broadheads. No matter what you might have heard, shooting field points is never the same.

**[Step 2]** Start shooting on the range from awkward positions. If you do most of

your bowhunting from a tree stand, practice from one or from a raised platform, like a backyard deck. Don't always face the target perfectly. Twist your body to replicate field conditions. When I hunt elk, I often shoot from my knees, so I practice that way.

**[Step 3]** Take six bull's-eye and life-

size 3-D targets and move them off the flat, open range and into areas that more closely mimic hunting conditions. Set up so that you'll have to shoot through narrow gaps in the brush, between tree trunks, and over or under limbs. Again, shoot from an elevated stand, from your knees, or while standing. Follow the same

sequence you use on your hunt: Sneak into position, nock an arrow, hook up the release aid, pick a spot, draw, aim, and release. Do everything as quickly as possible.

In bowhunting, only the first arrow matters, so you only get one shot at each. Put an arrow into the kill zone on all six, and you'll be ready this fall.