

What is classification?

Classification is used to categorize shooters into different groups, based off of their ability. Classification is different between event types (Singles, Doubles, and Handicap). Classification for singles and doubles are similar, where the shooter is assigned a letter based on their ability. With the best shooters being in A class(es) and the worst shooters being in D class. Often the number of classes offered differs from tournament to tournament in order to keep a level playing field. Larger shoots often have more classes for singles and doubles when compared to smaller shoots. It is up to club management to decide what the best number of classes is for an event, based off of the number of expected shooters. For example a tournament with an expected turn out of 15 shooters may use a three class setup, with A, B, and C class being offered to shooters. Whereas a tournament with an expected turnout of 500 shooters may use six classes AAA-D. The shooter is placed into a class based off of their percentage of targets hit in that event type. For example a shooter with a 95% average in singles would be placed in class A in a three class setup.

Different national organizations (ATA/PITA) have different recommendations for classification spread. Take for example the ATA recommendation:

Three Classes	Four Classes	Five Classes	Six Classes
95% and above	95% and above	97% and above	98% and above
91% to 94.9%	92% to 94.9%	94% to 95.9%	96.25% to 97.9%
Below 91%	89% to 91.9%	91% to 93.9%	94.75% to 96.24%
	Below 88.9%	88% to 90.9%	93% to 95.74%
		Below 87.9%	90% to 92.9%
			Below 90%

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Here the ATA provides the club several classification options. It is up to the club to select which option is best for their shooters.Â

Classification averages are not all that is taken into consideration. A shooter's known ability also can play a factor in classification. A shooter's known ability can include

- Official scores where abnormally low scores are disregarded
- Non-registered scores such as shootoffs, practice scores, and non-registered events such as leagues
- Any other knowledge of the shooter's ability

For example we could have a shooter with a 94% average at a shoot with six classes. We know that the shooter's gun broke at the last tournament leading to several misfires. If we disregard their abnormally low score, we can calculate that their average is actually 97%. Putting the shooter in AA instead of B.

New shooters without known ability will default to class B.

For handicap events, a shooter will shoot assigned a yardage ranging from 19 yards to 27 yards. This yardage travels with the shooter from club to club. Depending on a shooter's score the shooter may receive a "yardage punch" in which they are moved further back from the traphouse. A shooter may not deviate from their assigned yardage or they will be subject to disqualification from the event. If a shooter is classified at the wrong yardage they will also be disqualified.

New shooters are assigned a yardage based off of their age and gender. Female shooters and any shooter under the age of 15 will be assigned to the 19 yard line. Any male shooter above the age of 15 will be assigned to the 20 yard line.

Penalty classifications may be set by shoot management as well. This is typically done at larger tournaments such as state and zone shoots. In which case if a shooter has not shot a certain number of targets they are penalized. With shooters with an average lower than that of what constitute class B, being placed into B class. Shooters with an average that would place them in class B or higher are moved to the next class. For example a shooter with an average of 91% in a five class event, would be bumped from B class into A class.

For handicap classification, shooters who are below a specified yardage will be moved to that yardage. For example a shooter who is at the 20 yard line will be moved to the 23 yard line. Shooters who are beyond the specified yardage <insert detail here>.

However, for handicap events a shooter may claim "Targets Only". This means that the shooter will be able to remain at their assigned yardage, but cannot win trophies, play options, or win added money.

Clubs may also choose to offer categories for their tournament. A category is an age based sub-assignment for a shooter. This allows for a shooter the option to declare the category to qualify for trophies in their age range as well as class, and champion (if applicable). Clubs can offer as many or as few categories as they wish. The ATA officially recognizes the following categories

- Lady 1 (females under 55)

- Lady 2 (females above 55)
- Sub-Junior (anyone below 15)
- Junior (anyone between 15-18)
- Junior Gold (anyone between 18-23)
- Sub Veteran (anyone between 55-65)
- Veteran (anyone between 65-70)
- Senior veteran (anyone over 70)

Larger shoots will often offer all of these categories. Smaller tournaments may choose to modify it to reduce the number of categories for example

- Lady (any female)
- Vet (anyone 65 or older)
- Junior (anyone below 18)

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