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## This sport gives you a foundation to hone skills

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*Staff writer*

George Lehr, a member of the National Skeet Hall of Fame, said the sport should come with a Surgeon General's warning.

"I've warned people, 'You're going to get hooked,'" Lehr said.

Most folks who pulverize flying clay discs with a shotgun do become hooked. It's true for all the shotgun sports, be it skeet, trap or sporting clays.

"It's a hobby that's not a lot of money and you can do it close to home," said Jim Waterman, a certified sporting clays instructor and manager of Rochester-Brooks Gun Club in Rush, the area's largest with 14 automated skeet fields, four trap fields, two sporting clays courses, a new heated 5-stand building and 830 members.

There are 30 gun clubs within a 30-mile radius of Rochester, the highest-concentration in the world, Lehr said. Some have annual dues of as little as \$25.

All serious wing hunters should join a club and practice.

"You'll have more fun and the couple times you shoot at pheasants a year, you're going to hit them," Lehr said. "You just don't get that many shots afield to become a skilled shooter."

Clubs offer all manner of leagues, and it's a great social sport. Skeet builds a solid foundation with its variety of shots.

**The game:** Shooters aim at 4-inch disc-shaped targets from eight positions located around a semi-circle. Mechanical machines throw the targets at high speeds from two houses. Targets from the left "high" house travel on a near horizontal trajectory and from the right "low" house on a rising trajectory. A round consists of 25 shots.

**Firepower:** Skeet can be shot with 12-, 16-, 20- and 28-gauge shotguns along with .410-bore whose thin shells launch one-half ounces of lead, or half the size of a 12-gauge. Using a .410 is the ultimate challenge in skeet. A small No. 8 or 9 shot is used to create a dense pattern over a short distance.

**Test drive:** The Remington 1100 12-gauge is one of the world's most popular guns for skeet. Lehr also owns a Kolar over/under with interchangeable tubes to shoot 20, 28 and .410. Clubs offer loaner guns so beginners can see what they like before purchasing.

Young children and women should begin with 20-gauge automatics without any kick.

Go to [www.lehrsports.com](http://www.lehrsports.com) for more information.

## Additional Facts

Where to go

Rochester-Brooks Gun Club, 926 Honeoye Falls No. 6 Road, Rush, hosts the state skeet champions through Monday, and the U.S. Open, Thursday through Sunday featuring 325 of the world's best shooters. Events are free and run all day. Vendors on site. Call (585) 533-9913 or go to [www.rochesterbrooks.org](http://www.rochesterbrooks.org).

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