

MAXIMIZING

Your hunting accuracy.



With John Dudley.

Walk back tuning with Broadheads

It was a hot afternoon this November day and I was sitting in a locust tree filled with thorns and growing vines.

There were limited choices on stand locations in this part of the country so I was forced with taking what I could, to get up off the ground. I had a limited view out into a thick tangled mess of nature but what I could see showed signs of a record class deer. I remembered thinking that nothing worth having comes for free. I looked at my watch and checked the time. I realized that it was now my 160th hour that I had put into hunting this section of the US. To this point I had not even had a glimpse of an animal I would be proud to harvest. As this hour slowly started to tick by I caught movement from the corner of my eye. With a slow movement of my Nikons up to my eye I got my first look at what I had been waiting for. My record buck had made his presence, and my opportunity may soon come. The only problem was the shot would need to be true and I would have to be selective on my tight, limited shooting lanes.

We all want to have our bows ready for the situations like this. Most of us who have spent countless time in the field doing this sport we love know that sometimes shot opportunities can be limited. Everyone has the story about the time they only had the smallest hole to shoot through, whether it is obstacles of brush, grass, or the blind you are sitting in. If your broadheads fly true, then shots like this will have a positive result. I am here today to tell you of a better way to tune your bow so that your broadheads will fly like a laser beam through the air. You can be confident that when limited shooting times arise that you can place that arrow exactly where it is intended to go. This kind of tuning that I am talking about is a method that I have used for many years with my most accurate target bows. It is a process called walk back tuning.

Many people prefer seeing their bows shoot a perfect hole through a piece of paper, or "paper tuning" as most will call it. Is it really possible that something as small as a piece of paper can dictate if we are content with how our bow is performing? Well sad enough, yes.

Proper center shot adjustment on the arrow rest is critical!



Exaples of where to move the arrow rest.

I know that in the past I have been known to put far too much into getting a perfect bullet hole through paper. Over the years I have found out that it doesn't pay off to invest too much into the

paper tune. I think for an archery pro shop it is a simple way to show the customer receiving their new bow that the bow is tuned to be ready to shoot. I think for this purpose paper tuning is fine and definitely a good starting point for anyone. However, I would recommend that you don't put all your eggs in this basket and take a look at what matters most to serious archers and that is where the arrows land, because this is especially important once you are shooting a broadhead and not a field point.

Now I want to be clear and let you know that I'm not saying paper tuning is totally taboo now. Paper tuning is a good starting point even for this new method and I have found that if I have an absolutely perfect arrow spine that the two methods sometimes work one in the same. I have had times where I started with a bullet hole and went through the method only to find that the paper test was all I needed. However, more times than not, extra adjustments from the walk back method have helped the overall grouping ability of the set up. My results have proven that for me it is worth the extra time and the results are my broadhead flight is flawless.

Start by setting your nock at 90 degrees to the arrow rest and your center shot at the position that you know is close to where the factory recommends. I have found 2cm from the inside of the riser to the center of the shaft to be a good starting point for several different bows including my Hoyt. Once you have done this, start by sighting your bow in at 3 yards. Yes, I said 3 yards! Make a very small spot to aim at maybe about the size of a pencil eraser. A helpful hint is that you may want to try using your 50 yard pin first at this distance, you will find out why in the next paragraph. Make several shots and only move your sight until you are hitting the dead center of this small mark. It is only 3 yards so I am sure you can hit the perfect middle after only a few adjustments. Now, without moving your sight you will move back to 50 yards and shoot a group of arrows. For most people, sighting in at 3 yards should allow them to hit the mark between 50-55 yards. This varies depending on speed of arrow or should I say the ballistics of the arrow. For me personally I can hit the spot at about 56 yards the exact same as 3 yards without moving my sight. Next, Shoot a multiple arrow group...



Concentrate on making good shots and after shooting your arrows go to the target and evaluate your results. Your arrows will be in one of three places when reviewing the horizontal impacting (left-right). The arrows will either all be to the left, right or center of the spot you were aiming at. These results are a way of showing you if you are adjusted to the true center shot of your bow. Using the same pin at both distances will factor out many variables that sometimes complicate the tuning of arrows. But again, evaluate if your arrows are hitting to the right, left or center. Once you have determined this you will need to know what adjustments to make. If your arrows are impacting to the left of spot you will need to move your arrows rest to the right. If you are impacting to the right of the spot you will have to move your arrow rest to the left. How much you move the rest will be determined by how far you missed the spot by. It doesn't take much adjustment to move the arrow a long way at that distance. If you are missing left or right what you will find is that with an improper center shot setting your misses will be further and further from the center the longer the distance that you shoot. For example if you hit dead center at the close distance, but then miss by 6 inches at fifty then you can bet your miss at 25 yards would be 3 inches and if you were shooting at 100 your miss would be nearly 12". It may not seem like it is that important but a 3" miss could prove to be much more if you are shooting a broadhead and you are shooting at a higher speed or in the wind. Broadheads magnify all errors in form and bow set up and this method will help you get in the middle at all distances. If you are hitting in the center of the dot then no further adjustments need to be made.

After, you have moved your arrow rest in the opposite direction of where the arrows were hitting at the long distance you will need to move back to 3 yards and sight your bow in again, moving nothing other than the sight itself. It is critically important that after every adjustment to your arrow rest you move back to the close distance and move only your sight to make up for your movement to the arrow rest. Once you have sighted in again at 3 yards then you will need to repeat the method and go back to the longer distance and shoot another group. Again, one of three things will happen. You have either moved your arrow rest too far, not enough or just right. By now I'm sure you understand how this method works. The bottom line is you will need to get your bow impacting the same L-R horizontal line at 3 yards as you have the longer distance without moving your sight. This process is a sure way to make sure your arrow rest is tuned so that your broadheads will hit the same L-R spot at the short distances as it does at the longer ones.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when using the walk back method. What is critically important is to be conducting this method on perfectly flat ground and be shooting on a day without any wind. Also you will need to make sure you are not canting or leaning your bow in any direction while doing this method, make sure it is level and if you have a level on your sight USE IT!. This will help eliminate different variables that could alter the correct tune of your bow. I know that paper tuning at times is easy and seems logical, but my best shooting bows were not always bows that shot perfect bullet holes through paper. They were, however, bows that had been set up using the walk back method. I hope this works out for you the way it has for me!



Above ~ Tuned correctly, your 20-30-40-50 yards/meter shots should all be down the center.

To take you back to where I had left off in my story... The buck stood in thick cover for nearly an hour doing nothing but looking past my little thorn tree and into the field behind me, waiting for a doe to come to the field. Finally as sunset approached, the buck made his way within 15 yards of my stand. A wall of thorns and branches is all that stood between us. I spotted a small opening about the size of a shoe box and placed my pin in the clearing and waited until the buck's vitals appeared in the only spot I figured I could thread an arrow. I watched as my arrow flew like a laser beam through the small hole in the brush and disappeared into the vitals of this gorgeous buck. Again I checked my watch and it was now 161 hours that I had invested in the woods waiting for this opportunity to present itself. After the final measurement, 161 inches of bone set atop this buck's head and thanks to good arrow flight I was now on my way to the taxidermist. Some have said this was fate, some say it was luck. My thought on being lucky is that you still need to be prepared when the opportunity presents itself.

Below ~ Author John Dudley with his 161st hour Whitetail Buck.

