

Shotguns to Consider

Semi Auto or Over Under (O/U)

Semi shotguns tend to have lower recoil than O/U shotguns. This is because the shotgun uses energy from the recoil to cycle the shotgun and load the second round. An O/U does not have and recoil absorbing mechanical movement, hence somewhat higher recoil. O/U are easier to clean, but Semi shotguns are still not difficult. Lots of YouTube videos are out there to help you out. Semi auto shotguns eject empty hulls wherever they want, sometimes into the shooter next to you. This just means you have to pick up your empty hulls. An O/H can eject into the shooters hand when done shooting, meaning no picking up empties. O/U shotguns can have two different chokes, one in each barrel, giving the shooter more choices, but this really doesn't come into play until much more advanced shooting. O/U shotguns tend to have more weight and therefore may swing a bit more smoothly for some shooters. However there are Pros who shoot Semis and Pros who shoot O/Us. It mostly comes down to personal preference.



Over / Under



Semi Auto

Sporting Gun or Field Gun

Sometimes people want to know the difference between a Sporting (or Sporting Clays) gun and a field gun. Many manufacturers make the same model in either configuration. Nearly all Budget and Moderately priced guns are field guns. The main differences are based on the use of the gun. Sporting guns are made specifically for breaking clays. Field guns are made for hunting. Either gun can be and are used for both purposes. The main differences are:

1. Field guns are lighter because they are held in the field for long times and not a lot of shots are typically fired. Sporting guns are held for short periods and shoot a lot more shells in a day. A heavier sporting gun has less recoil and tends to swing more smoothly for planned shots. Smaller shooters sometimes find this extra weight to be an issue.
2. Field guns typically engage their safeties automatically, meaning you must disengage the safety every time you reload the firearm. Some people find this annoying when shooting on a clays course. Watching a clay go by because your safety was on is a missed target.
3. Sporting guns stocks are configured differently for pre-planned shots. Field guns stocks are set up to mount quickly. Many sporting guns have adjustable stocks to fit specifically to the shooter. Field guns normally do not have this option.

Field guns are completely acceptable for shooting clays. Many shooters use these in competition. If your shooter has a field gun now, there is no reason to rush out and buy a new gun.

Entry Level Guns

These firearms break clays, just like the expensive firearms and will be good for a beginner to get through a season or maybe two. They won't stand up to high volume shooting and typically have more recoil and less options to fit the gun to the shooter. Resale value will be less than Moderate Priced or High Quality Guns. Typically lighter and have more recoil than higher end shotguns.

Listed in rough order of preference (IMHO)

Tristar – Both O/H and Semi Available in all gauges. \$600-\$750 and up

CZ Drake – lower end of CZ O/U line. Available in all gauges. About \$650

Pointer – Both Semi and O/U shotgun. About \$500-\$600 depending on model

Yildiz – Academy Branded Turkish Made Shotguns both O/U and Semi - ~\$450

Moderate Priced

These guns could last a new shooter through 4 years of HS shooting. Some shooters can achieve very high levels of proficiency with these firearms. Although as shooters get more serious, most will move toward a Higher Quality Firearm. Not listed in any particular order.

Benelli Montefeltro - Great quality Semi Auto available in 12 and 20 gauge Rt or Left handed Especially light recoil and low weight – recommended for very small shooters~\$1500

Beretta A300 – A very good quality semi-auto 12 gauge shotgun. ~\$850

CZ Redhead Premier – Good quality O/U \$1100

Remington 1100 or 11-87 – Very reliable shotgun 12 or 20 gauge \$1000

Higher Quality Shotguns (mid tier)

These guns will last through high volume shooting. These are the most popular guns for High School Competitive shooters. Not listed in any particular order.

Beretta A400 Sporting - Purpose built for sporting competition, 12 and 20 gauge. Low recoil, but a little heavy for very small shooters. Can come with recoil reducer (kick-off) and comes with shims to adjust fit. Very popular first competition gun ~\$1850

Beretta 686 Sporting – High quality O/U comes in 12 and 20 gauge. Very reliable and moderate recoil. Options for adjustable stocks. \$2000

Browning CXS – High quality O/U stock is set straight (no cast) so it may not fit all shooters. ~\$2000

Browning 725 – High Quality O/U stock is “cast” for right or left hand shooter, so lefties should buy the left handed version. Often considered the best Mid-Tier shotgun for the money. Very reliable. ~ \$3000

Mark Showah 480-734-0974