

Thompson/Center

12 Gauge Muzzleloader

Owner's Manual Supplement

▲ DANGER

The material in this booklet must be read and understood before attempting to use your Thompson/Center firearm. If pertinent safety information is not read, and the **-▲WARNING -** statements are not understood and adhered to, death or injury could result.

**READ THIS MANUAL IN ITS ENTIRETY BEFORE
USING YOUR FIREARM.**



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IMPORTANT NOTE:

Separate Owner's Manuals for any other models of muzzleloaders which Thompson/Center offers are available free from the factory upon request.

Call or write with your specific needs.



DANGER

This booklet contains information that is essential to the safe use and maintenance of Thompson/Center's modern-style in-line muzzleloaders with removable breech plug. **You must read this material in its entirety and fully understand its significance before you can safely use your muzzleloader.** If a Thompson/Center muzzleloading firearm is loaned or sold (by an individual or a dealer), this booklet must accompany the firearm. Replacement booklets are available at no charge from our factory.

If, after reading this booklet, you still have questions concerning the safe use of your Thompson/Center firearm, write or call our Customer Service Department at:

Thompson/Center Arms Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 5002
Rochester, New Hampshire 03866
Telephone: 1-603-332-2333

• **And Remember** •
The Fundamental
National Rifle Association
Rules for Safe Gun Handling Are:

- 1 - Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.**
- 2 - Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.**
- 3 - Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.**

- WARNING -



Discharging firearms in poorly ventilated areas, cleaning firearms or handling ammunition may result in exposure to lead and other substances known to cause birth defects, reproductive harm and other serious physical injury. Have adequate ventilation at all times. Wash hands thoroughly after exposure.

Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading Supplement

This supplemental booklet contains specific information regarding the charging and priming of the 12 Gauge Encore Muzzleloading Shotgun.

The primary Owners Manual for the Encore 209x50 must be read and fully understood before attempting to use either the muzzleloading rifle or muzzleloading shotgun variation of this firearm.

Thompson/Center's Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading shotgun is equipped with a screw-in "turkey" choke tube. The constriction of this choke tube will prevent you from pushing most shotgun wads or shotcups through the tube. It will therefore be necessary to remove the choke tube prior to charging your Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading shotgun.

Installation of T/C Choke Tubes

→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

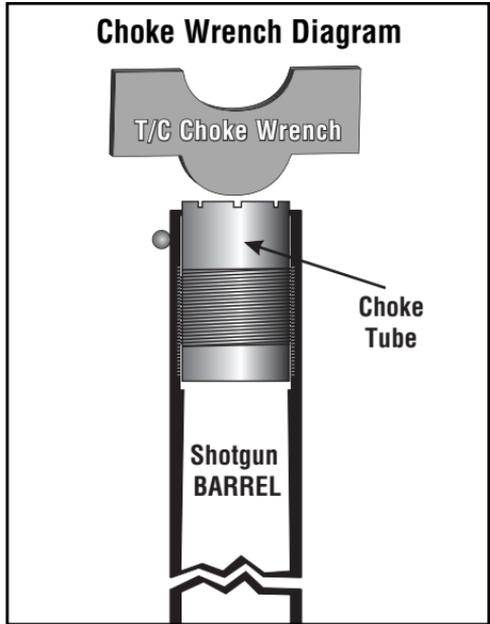
Never attempt to install a choke tube or remove a choke tube from a primed firearm. Always ensure that the firearm is UNPRIMED. Failure to heed this warning could result in an accidental discharge causing injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

1. Never fire your Thompson Center shotgun, which has been designed to accept internal choke tubes, **WITHOUT A CHOKE TUBE INSTALLED**. This will result in damage to the threads in the barrel, and could render your shotgun inoperable with regards to using the internal screw-in choke tubes.

2. The threads of your T/C choke tubes should be kept clean and lightly lubed at all times - with a good anti-seize lubricant like T/C's "Super Lube". When installing the choke tube into the barrel, make sure the muzzle is pointed away from you in a safe direction, and never "force" the choke tube into the barrel. If the tube does not screw-in easily, the threads in the barrel or tube could be clogged, or you could be cross threading the parts. The choke tube should screw-in easily by hand. Use an appropriate wrench and tighten it until snug. **DO NOT OVER-TIGHTEN** it as it could damage the tube.

3. (See diagram at right) Wrench Shown engaging slots in choke tube. To insert, turn clockwise. To remove, turn counter clockwise.

4. Thompson/Center's screw-in choke tubes are appropriately marked; **IMP CYL**, **MOD**, **FULL** and **TURKEY**. Only the **IMP CYL**, or **MOD** can be used with steel shot without damage to the choke tube. **FULL** or **TURKEY** tubes SHOULD NOT BE USED WITH STEEL SHOT. T/C tubes are intended for use with Thompson/Center shotguns ONLY, and should not be used in other brands of guns.



→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

Never attempt to use any other choke tube in a Thompson/Center shotgun. Mismatching choke tubes in any shotgun could result in damage to the shotgun, or serious injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

5. Use of T/C's **TURKEY** choke tube with muzzleloading shotguns; the **TURKEY** choke tube will have to be removed from the barrel before attempting to "charge" or load your muzzleloading shotgun. The extra tight construction of this tube will prevent you from inserting most shotgun wads or shot cups through the tube itself, necessitating removal of the tube from the barrel prior to loading. Once your muzzleloading shotgun has been loaded, screw the **TURKEY** tube back in the barrel.



→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

Never attempt to install a choke tube on a “primed” muzzleloading shotgun. When charging the muzzleloading shotgun with powder and shot, make sure the muzzle is pointed away from yourself and others, and in a safe direction. Do not smoke or be near a source of heat or flame when loading your shotgun; the spark from a lighted cigarette, cigar or pipe can ignite Black Powder, Pyrodex®, percussion caps or primers, causing an explosion which could result in injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

T/C Encore Shotgun Loading Diagram

→ **WARNING** ←

IMPROPERLY CHARGING YOUR T/C MUZZLELOADING SHOTGUN CAN BE DANGEROUS. STUDY THIS PHOTO CAREFULLY BEFORE PROCEEDING.

Stay mentally alert. This task requires your complete attention.

Eyes, ears & arms protected.

Barrel held securely with muzzle upwards - directed away from your body.

Remove Choke Tube

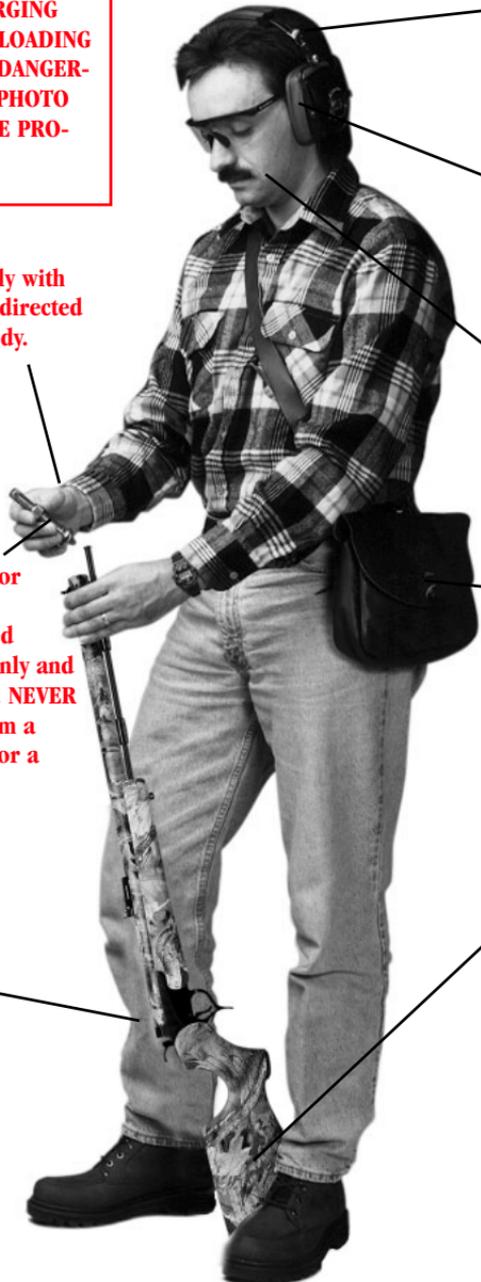
Do Not Smoke while loading any muzzleloader.

**Use Black Powder or Pyrodex ONLY!
Use a T/C graduated powder measure only and do not overcharge. NEVER charge directly from a powder flask, can or a powder horn.**

Keep components & reserve powder well away from the firearm.

Gun is unprimed and the hammer is in the "At Rest" position.

Butt resting firmly on the ground & supported by the side of the shooter's foot to prevent slipping.



Loading And Use of a T/C Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloader

Charging Your T/C 12 Gauge Muzzleloading Shotgun

When charging your T/C Muzzleloading shotgun, the procedure will vary depending on the particular choke tube installed in the barrel. Although the Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading shotgun comes equipped with a **TURKEY** choke tube, other accessory T/C 12 Gauge choke tubes are available and will fit the Encore 12 Gauge barrel.

Using 12 Gauge Natural Wads

T/C's Natural Wads are prelubed woven wool wads; lubed with T/C's Natural Lube 1000 Plus Bore Butter. They are 1/8" thick, and can be used with chokes designated IMP CYL, MOD, or FULL. They have a memory, and as such, will expand to their original diameter after being pushed through the choke tube. They will perform triple duty; acting as a (1) cushion wad (2) over the powder wad and (3) over the shot wad. 12 Gauge Natural Wads will not fit through the T/C **TURKEY** choke tube because of the tight constriction of this tube. When using T/C's 12 Gauge Natural Wads, or any wads or shot cups, it will be necessary to remove the **TURKEY** choke tube prior to loading, and reinstall it after the gun has been charged.

→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

Never attempt to install or remove a choke tube from a PRIMED firearm. Always ensure that the firearm is UNPRIMED. Failure to heed this warning could result in an accidental discharge causing injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

The photo on page 5 shows a shooter in the process of loading a muzzleloading shotgun. Study this photo carefully and read all of the captions before you proceed to charge your shotgun.

Before charging, insert the ramrod into the barrel and tap it up and down several times. You will hear the metal cap of the ramrod "clink" as it makes contact with the steel surface of the breech plug. Note exactly how far the ramrod extends beyond the muzzle when the barrel is **UNCHARGED**. Commit this exercise to memory and practice it every time that you handle a muzzleloading firearm. Before you attempt to load (or charge it), store it away, hand it to another person, or leave it unattended, always check to ensure that the firearm is uncharged (unloaded).

The next precharging exercise is to wipe the bore free of all oil or lube. Be meticulous with your cleaning, for the presence of any amount of oil in the barrel or chamber can dampen the powder charge and cause the gun to misfire or hangfire. Point the muzzle in

a safe direction and snap several 209 primers in the breech plug before charging. This will ensure ignition by clearing away any oil that may be accumulated in the ignition channel. With the hammer of your 12 Gauge Encore Muzzleloading shotgun in the "at rest" position and the gun is **unprimed** - it is now ready to charge.

The Steps in Charging are as Follows:

Step 1. If you are using an **IMP CYL, MOD, or FULL** choke tube in your shotgun, pour a premeasured charge of FFG Black Powder, or RS Pyrodex into the barrel.

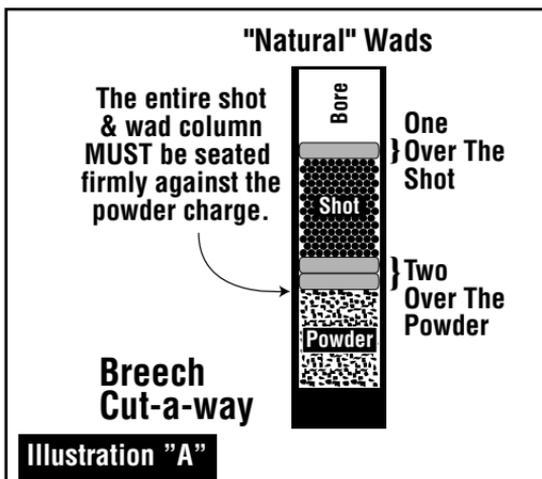
If you are using a **TURKEY** choke tube, remove the choke tube prior to pouring your premeasured charge.

Step 2. Seat (2) of T/C's 12 Gauge Natural Wads firmly against the powder charge.

Step 3. Pour a premeasured shot charge into the barrel.

Step 4. Seat (1) of T/C's 12 Gauge Natural Wads firmly against the shot charge. (see illustration "A")

Step 5. If you are using a **TURKEY** choke tube, reinstall it now.



Once again, the photo on page 5 shows a shooter in the process of loading a muzzle-loading shotgun. Study this photo carefully and read all of the captions before you proceed to charge your shotgun.

When charging your T/C Muzzleloading shotgun, adjust your powder measure to the desired charge and fill it with FFG Black Powder or RS Pyrodex. To achieve accuracy and uniform patterns, consistency in the powder charge is required. Fill your powder measure exactly the same each time. Using T/C's powder measure No.7040 is recommended because it will measure both the powder and shot in increments specified in our data section.

Photo B

Use two T/C Natural Wads (placed together as one) over the powder charge. Start the wads into the muzzle with your fingers as pictured. Push the wads down flush with the muzzle.

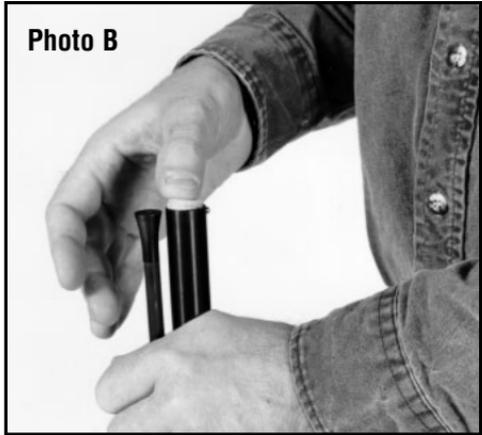


Photo C Caption

Hold the ramrod (as pictured) and push the wads down (about 4" into the barrel).



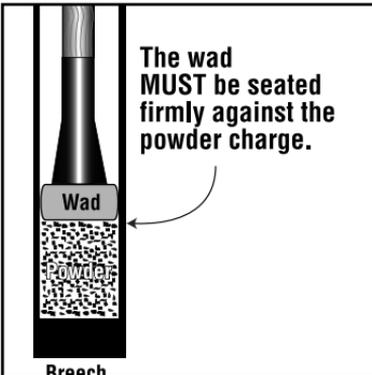
Photo C

Photo D Caption

Using short strokes, push the wads down slowly, allowing time for the trapped air to bleed off.



Photo D



Pour the premeasured charge down the barrel and strike the side of the barrel several sharp raps with the heel of your hand to settle the powder in the chamber area. Start the over the powder Natural Wads into the muzzle as shown in photo "B" When using T/C's Natural Wads, put them together and insert them "as one". Once they are started, they will move easily down the barrel. Holding the ramrod about 4" up from the bottom, push the wads down the barrel as shown in photo "C". Then using short strokes of the ramrod, slowly push the wads the remainder of the way down the barrel until they contact and bear firmly against the powder charge. Bear in mind that air is trapped underneath the wads as you load it so you must push slowly. . .allowing time for the trapped air to bleed off or escape. See Photo "D"

Use your graduated powder measure to measure your shot charge (see information contained in the loading data) . Measure your shot as carefully as your powder. Pour your shot charge down the barrel and start your Natural Wad into the muzzle with your fingers. Seat this "over the shot" wad with the same care you seated your "over the powder" wads. Allow time for trapped air to bleed off, and seat the wad firmly against the shot charge. See Photo "E"

Photo "E"

Load the over the shot wad slowly to force trapped air out of the barrel.

Once the shotgun is charged (wads and shot column firmly seated against the powder charge as shown in photo "E"), it is necessary to carefully mark your ramrod at the muzzle. A reference mark on the ramrod will ensure that all future charges are seated properly. See Photo "F". **Remove the ramrod, and if you are using a TURKEY choke tube, reinstall the choke tube making sure that the muzzle is pointed away from yourself and in a safe direction.**



Photo E

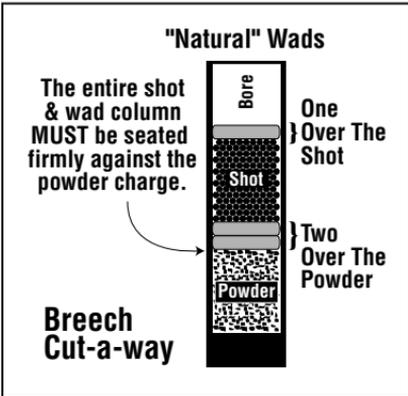


Photo "F"

Mark your ramrod at the muzzle. Use a marking pencil to mark the ramrod. This will allow you to ensure that each charge is seated to the same depth. Erase and remark each time you adjust the charge, or change shot charges. When you arrive at the desired charge, cut a clean notch in the ramrod so you will have a permanent reference mark. This reference mark will serve as an indicator only with the powder charge and shot charge used when it was marked. When the powder charge and/or shot charge change, the reference mark will also change.



Using Plastic Shotcup/Wads

Some shooters will want to use the more modern combination plastic wad/shotcups that are now on the market. These shotcups generally provide better long range patterns when used in conjunction with tightly constricted **TURKEY** choke tubes. T/C recommends a good one-piece plastic shotcup designed specifically for shotguns - like the one from Ballistic Products, Inc.; available from Fox Ridge Outfitters, Inc. (ph #1-800-243-4570).

Use of this type wad will necessitate removal of your **TURKEY** choke tube prior to charging.

The steps in charging your T/C 12 Gauge Muzzleloading shotgun with a plastic wad/shotcup combination are as follows:

Step 1. Remove the **TURKEY** choke tube.

Step 2. Pour a premeasured charge of FFG Black Powder or RS Pyrodex into the barrel.

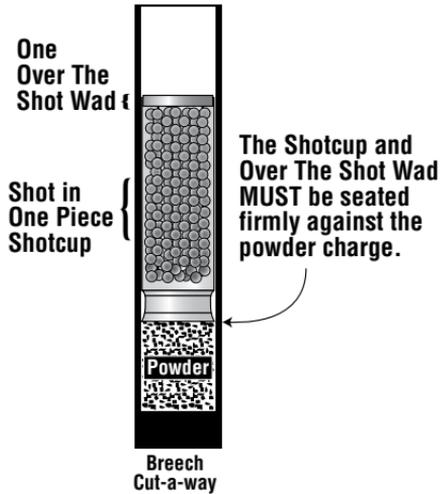
Step 3. Seat your plastic wad/shotcup firmly against the powder charge.

Step 4. Pour a premeasured shot charge into the barrel.



Illustration "G"

Shotcup Diagram



Step 5. Seat (1) T/C Natural Wad (or similar wad) firmly over the shot. See Illustration "G".

→ **WARNING** ←

Never fire a muzzleloading shotgun unless you are sure that the entire wad and shot column is properly seated firmly against the powder charge, and that the ramrod has been removed from the bore, and that the choke tube is in place. Shooters should bear in mind that the muzzleloading charge is not crimped into position, as is the fixed cartridge. If wads do not fit tightly, then jarring or movement of the firearm can cause wads to move forward. If the shotgun is fired with the wad and shot column (or part of it) off the powder charge, or the ramrod is still in the bore, the wadding, or ramrod may act as a bore obstruction. This can cause a ruptured or burst barrel resulting in possible injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

Mark the ramrod as directed and always use the ramrod to check that the charge is properly seated before priming and firing the shotgun. If, due to fouling, a charge of shot becomes lodged part way down the barrel, the shotgun must be disassembled and the charge removed. See section in main product manual for the Encore 209x50 entitled "Pulling a Charge".

Priming Your Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading Shotgun

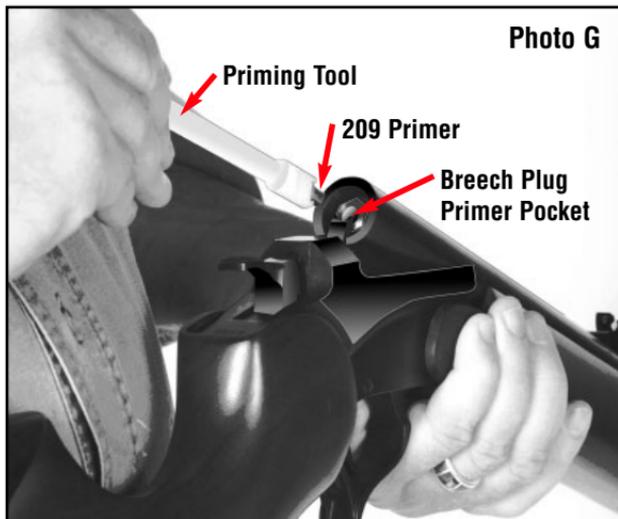
If you have followed the preceding instructions, your muzzleloading shotgun will now be charged with FFG Black Powder or RS Pyrodex, and the wads and shot charge will be firmly seated against the powder charge as illustrated on page 9 or 11. Your ramrod will be marked to the exact seating depth ensuring that the following charges are seated in the same careful manner. The hammer of your Encore will be in the “at rest” position.

→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

Do not prime the firearm until you are actually ready to fire and you have double checked to ensure that the ramrod has been removed from the barrel. Thompson/Center does not recommend priming the shotgun until the instant before actual firing. Carrying a charged primed firearm and relying upon the safety mechanism can be dangerous. Accidental discharge is a constant hazard which, if it occurs, can cause injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property. The only safe way to guard against an accidental discharge is to carry the shotgun unprimed with the hammer in the “at rest” position, and the muzzle pointed down range away from yourself, bystanders or property.

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO FIRE THE ENCORE 12 Gauge MUZZLELOADING SHOTGUN, PRIME THE SHOTGUN AS SHOWN IN PHOTO “G”.

With the hammer in the “at rest” position, and the barrel tipped open, hold the Encore with the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and insert the 209 primer into the primer pocket in the breech plug. Close the barrel by tipping up the barrel firmly. The firearm is now ready to fire. **Raise the Encore, cock the hammer and fire the shot.**



→ **▲ WARNING** ←

When firing, hold the shotgun tightly against your shoulder allowing your body weight to absorb and buffer the force of recoil. Held improperly, a firearm can “kick” causing facial injury and/or bruising.

Should you decide not to fire the Encore 12 Gauge Muzzleloading shotgun after the hammer has been cocked, then you must take the following steps:

Step 1. Keeping the Encore shotgun pointed in a safe direction, lower the firearm from the firing stance.

Step 2. Firmly hold your thumb on the hammer so that it cannot drop freely. Pull the trigger rearward only long enough to disengage the hammer.

Step 3. Remove your finger from the trigger, while continuing to hold the hammer. Carefully lower the hammer forward, allowing the automatic hammer block to engage in the “at rest” position.

Step 4. Open the barrel by pulling rearward on the trigger guard spur and tipping the barrel downward.

Step 5. Remove the 209 primer from the breech plug.

→ **▲ WARNING** ←

If the firearm is no longer going to be used, uncharge it by firing into a suitable backstop or pull the charge before returning to your vehicle, camp or home as explained in the primary Encore 209x50 product manual in the section on “pulling the charge”. An accidental discharge can cause injury and/or death to the shooter or bystanders and damage to property.

Lead Shot Loads Only For T/C Muzzleloading Shotguns

12 GAUGE TRAINING & CLAY TARGET LOAD

Containing approx. **1 ½ oz. of shot**, this load approximates a 20 gauge field load and is most effective when used with #8 or #9 lead shot.

POWDER	WADS	LEAD SHOT
<p>80 Grains FFG Black Powder</p>	<p>An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.</p>	<p>This load uses approx. 1 ½ oz. of shot. When your powder measure is set to dispense 80 grs. of black powder - it will hold approximately 1 ½ oz. of lead shot</p>

12 GAUGE HUNTING & CLAY TARGET LOAD

Containing approx. **1 ½ oz. of shot**, this is an excellent upland hunting or clay target load. Most effective when used with #7½, #8 or #9 lead shot.

POWDER	WADS	LEAD SHOT
<p>90 Grains FFG Black Powder</p>	<p>An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.</p>	<p>This load uses approx. 1 ½ oz. of shot. When your powder measure is set to dispense 90 grs. of black powder - it will hold approximately 1 ½ oz. of lead shot</p>

12 GAUGE SMALL GAME LOAD

Containing approx. **1 3/8 oz. of shot**, this is a good all around load for the muzzleloader hunter. It has respectable working velocity and the heavier shot charge (more pellets) improves pattern density--allowing use of some of the larger shot sizes.

Most effective when used with #6, #7 1/2, #8 or #9 lead shot.

POWDER	WADS	LEAD SHOT
100 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	This load uses approx. 1 3/8 oz. of shot. When your powder measure is set to dispense 100 grs. of black powder - it will hold approximately 1 3/8 oz. of lead shot

12 GAUGE HEAVY HUNTING LOAD

Containing approx. **1 1/2 oz. of shot**. The heavy weight of the shot charge (more pellets) improves pattern density--allowing a wide selection

of shot sizes to be used. Most effective when used with #4, #6, #7 1/2, #8 or #9 lead shot.

POWDER	WADS	LEAD SHOT
110 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	This load uses approx. 1 1/2 oz. of shot. When your powder measure is set to dispense 110 grs. of black powder - it will hold approximately 1 1/2 oz. of lead shot

12 GAUGE HEAVY HUNTING LOAD

Containing approx. **1 5/8 oz. of shot**. The shooter should not exceed this load. The heavy weight of the shot charge (more pellets) improves pattern density--allowing a wide selection of shot sizes to be used. Most effective when used with #4, #6, #7 1/2, #8 or #9 lead shot.

- MAXIMUM -

POWDER	WADS	LEAD SHOT
120 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	This load uses approx. 1 5/8 oz. of shot. When your powder measure is set to dispense 120 grs. of black powder - it will hold approximately 1 5/8 oz. of lead shot

Steel Shot Loads Only For T/C Muzzleloading Shotguns Not Recommended For Guns With a Full Choke Tube

→ **⚠ WARNING** ←

FOR STEEL SHOT ONLY! Do not use when shooting lead shot. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY AND/OR DEATH TO THE SHOOTER OR BYSTANDERS AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY.

12 GAUGE LIGHT TARGET LOAD FOR STEEL SHOT

Modified, Improved Cylinder or cylinder bore choke only!

Full choke not recommended for steel shot loads.

POWDER	WADS	STEEL SHOT ONLY
<p>80 Grains FFG Black Powder</p>	<p>An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.</p>	<p>Use T/C powder measure set to measure 80 grs. of FFG powder. This will deliver the correct amount of shot by volume.</p>

12 GAUGE LIGHT HUNTING LOAD FOR STEEL SHOT

Modified, Improved Cylinder or cylinder bore choke only!

Full choke not recommended for steel shot loads.

POWDER	WADS	STEEL SHOT ONLY
<p>90 Grains FFG Black Powder</p>	<p>An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.</p>	<p>Use T/C powder measure set to measure 90 grs. of FFG powder. This will deliver the correct amount of shot by volume.</p>

12 GAUGE HEAVY HUNTING LOAD FOR STEEL SHOT

Modified, Improved Cylinder or cylinder bore choke only!

Full choke not recommended for steel shot loads.

POWDER	WADS	STEEL SHOT ONLY
100 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	Use T/C powder measure set to measure 100 grs. of FFG powder. This will deliver the correct amount of shot by volume.

12 GAUGE HEAVY HUNTING LOAD FOR STEEL SHOT

Modified, Improved Cylinder or cylinder bore choke only!

Full choke not recommended for steel shot loads.

POWDER	WADS	STEEL SHOT ONLY
110 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	Use T/C powder measure set to measure 110 grs. of FFG powder. This will deliver the correct amount of shot by volume.

12 GAUGE HEAVY HUNTING LOAD FOR STEEL SHOT

Modified, Improved Cylinder or cylinder bore choke only!

Full choke not recommended for steel shot loads.

- MAXIMUM -

POWDER	WADS	STEEL SHOT ONLY
120 Grains FFG Black Powder	An Acceptable Shotcup/Wad Combo Or Two 12 Gauge Natural Wads Over The Powder And One Over The Shot.	Use T/C powder measure set to measure 120 grs. of FFG powder. This will deliver the correct amount of shot by volume.



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**Black Powder and Pyrodex Are
The Only Suitable Propellants
For T/C Muzzleloading Firearms**

12 Gauge Muzzleloader Owner's Manual Supplement

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