

YOUNG GUNS

Lily Myers visits the Coniston Hall Estate where she learns to shoot and discovers what a great sport it is for girls!

Photography: Harveybrownphotography.co.uk

I grew up with the opinion that shooting was easy. As a youngster I would go beating at weekends and in school holidays on the local shoots and some of the guns made it look effortless.

During a recent visit to the local clay shoot, I soon discovered it wasn't that easy – I didn't hit one! I needed lessons.

So off I went to the [Coniston Hotel](#) in the beautiful grounds of the Coniston Hall Estate. On arrival I spied the fabulous display of Musto outdoor clothing – the Coniston stocks all the essentials for the serious shot. I then met Peter Manley, the Coniston's shooting instructor. As safety is key, Peter talked me through the rules and ensured I had adequate ear and eye protection.

Peter explained it is essential to have the correct stance to increase my chances of being a good shot. Holding the gun correctly was my next challenge – when I had been shooting previously I always bruised my shoulder from the recoil.

Peter explained that a combination of a good stance and holding the gun correctly,

and the recoil would not be a problem.

As I watched the line of the first clay cross in front, Peter talked me through picking it up in my line of sight, following it, getting just ahead of it, pulling the trigger and (with a bit of luck) hitting it.

It all sounded so easy. I set myself up, correct stance, holding the gun correctly and shouted 'pull'. I followed Peter's instructions and to my complete amazement I hit my first clay!

By the end of my lesson, I managed to consistently hit pairs of clays. I thoroughly enjoyed my shooting experience at Coniston and have already booked my second lesson. The Coniston offers one-to-one shooting lessons, group experiences and have a range of facilities to suit beginners and the more experienced. ■

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