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MODULE 2.

CREATING A GUIDED NATURE EXPERIENCE.

OBJECTIVES (2.1)

- **On completion of this module you will:**
  - Be able to carry out a pre-briefing before embarking on a guided experience.
  - Be aware of determining any medical considerations of your guests.
  - Be able to determine if your guests have any special interests/needs before departing on the guided experience.
  - Have the ability to involve all of your guests as individuals in the guided experience.
  - Take into consideration the environmental factors when it comes to the comfort of your guests.
  - Have enhanced communication skills for guiding in the natural environment.
  - Approach animals taking into consideration all the guests and animal factors which will affect the approach.
  - Be able to orientate yourself during the day and at night making use of a number of methods to do so.
  - Be able to interpret all aspects of the natural environment to enhance the experience of your guests.
  - Have a basic understanding of first aid.
  - Have basic knowledge of rifle handling.

THE COMPONENTS OF ACTIVITY BRIEFING STRATEGY (2.1.1).

Safety Briefing:

- It is very important that safety briefings be given to **all** first-time guests on any particular activity. It is best that the open vehicle briefing be given the **first** time they get onto such a vehicle, whether at the lodge or airstrip/airport. In order to prevent repetition and inconvenience to other guests, new guests should be briefed away from the car and everyone else; ideally in the comfort of the lodge at high-tea time where they can relax and have undivided attention without distractions. Contrary to popular belief and practice, activity briefings are not about telling guests where they are going and what they are about to do! In the modern world with the potential for litigation (lawsuits) at any time, it is imperative that the focus of the briefing be **safety!!**
- In order to be successful (for guests to get the message), these briefings must adhere to the following guidelines:
- Make sure you have everyone`s undivided attention – eye contact.
- Keep the message short and to the point – don`t babble.
- Talk clearly in easy- to- understand English.
- Talk loudly so that everyone can hear you.
- The briefing must have structure, most important point first.
- Points must be delivered in the same order every time so that the guide learns the format.
- Complete the briefing within 5 minutes.
- At the end ask if guests have any **questions or special interests**.

The Activity Briefing – 5-points Strategy (Game Drive Brief 2.1.2).

1) **Please do not stand up under any circumstances, because:**
   - Animals can see **but not recognize you** when seated.
   - When standing, they recognize you as an enemy may attack or flee.
   - When the vehicle is moving and hit a bump, you may fall.
2) **Watch out for overhanging branches:**
   - They hit the roof bars and snap back with force to hit you.
   - Many have thorns and can cause severe, eye, facial and body injury.
   - They can pull equipment from the vehicle.
   - Do not try to grab any overhanging branches or grasses. * Guide to lift left hand (tracker right hand) indicating danger.
3) **Please not smoke on the vehicle at any time, because:**
   - It is a potential fire hazard.
   - It is a disturbance to other people on the vehicle.
   - Can potentially affect animal behavior.
4) **Please do not eat or drink (except water) on the vehicle, because:**
   - Food attracts animals and alters their natural behavior.
   - Sweet beverages, alcohol and food attract stinging insects.
   - It is a potential litter hazard and soils the vehicle.

5) **Please Keep Noise to a Minimum, because:**
   - Noisy vehicles see no animals and animals reacts differently to different sounds.
   - Noise travels – it`s a disturbance to other safari-goers**'.**
   - There will be no cell-phone use; put on flight mode – photos/videos only.
   - No headphones or music on drives – need to listen to your guide.

A comfort stop will be undertaken during the drive where you can get off the vehicle for leg-stretch, tea/coffee, food/drinks, cigarettes and a toilet break.

- **Other Important Points:**
  - There is a policy of (1 or 2) vehicles per sighting, because:
  - This creates the least stress and pressure on the animals.
  - It offers exclusivity and best possible experience to the guests.
  - The roads are bumpy, secure valuable items in seats pockets so that they don`t fall.
  - Cover optical equipment for dust.
  - Please do not litter.
  - Please do not call the animals in any way.
  - Guests are sitting higher, tell guide if seeing things of interest.
- **Night Drive Brief.**

The aim of night drives is to see nocturnal animals that naturally moving around after dark, offering guests the opportunity to see species that are seldom encountered.

- The light will be moved fairly rapidly from side to side to cover as much ground as possible. If you start to feel dizzy, please do not follow the movement or focus on the light.
- Animals will be located by the reflection of their eyes (Tapetum Lucidum), so it is necessary for them to be looking at the light – luck is required.
- The spotlight will not be focused on the animal face or its eyes.
- Colored filters may be used to soften the light to minimize impact.
- Diurnal animals will not be spotlighted at night as the light causes temporary blindness which could make them vulnerable to attack.
- Cheetah and Wild Dogs are not to be viewed at night, because they are diurnal in habits and easily blinded by the light. They are also trying to hide from other predators at night.
- Predator's hunting will not be spotlighted because; it`s unethical to disturb the hunt with lights and vehicle noises. Spotlighting the predator allows the prey to escape and spotlighting the prey will blind it and make it an easy meal.
- Should a kill be made, then the spotlight will be switched on again.
- Guests are not permitted to use the spotlight as they don`t know how to look for game, what to look for and how to shine on animals.
- Flush photography is allowed but discretion must be used.
- Toilet stops and getting off the vehicle for any reason other than an emergency is not allowed.

THE FIRST AND LAST DAY PRINCIPLE (2.1.3).

- The day the guests arrive is a very important day! This is the day that they will experience for the first time, what they have traveled all this way and paid all their money for. Remember: **First impressions, are lasting Impressions!!**
- The welcome at the airport/airstrip and the camp, as well as the briefing, room orientation, food, amenities and the game experience **Must Surpass Expectations!**
- The guide must however, be careful not to start the trip on too much of a high note with regards to the game experience. The "**climax"** in terms of the **Wow-Factor** must come toward the end of the trip in order for them to go home on a high. As such, the professional guide must resist the urge to see all the bid game as soon as possible.
- This concept and the experiences of the guest just before leaving, and the final memories they will take with them, - make the **Last Day** the most important of the guest`s stay!! As much time as possible must be spent with them over the last day to make them feel that they were really important to the guide and that

they are going to be missed. It is very easy to fall into the trap of losing interest in these guests because they are leaving, and prematurely start thinking about the new guests to arrive.

- This makes a very bad impression and the guests that are leaving feel that the guide has only taken interest in them for a tip. On the last day, the standard of attention needs to be better than when they arrived to avoid this sentiment!
- Lastly, it is important that every Professional Guide develops their own **Brand** (set yourself apart). There is no point in trying to be like the other guides in the area, guests are looking for that something extra, the talent to stand out and make a difference. Find your niche, a strong-point and develop your brand around this strength in order to find a place (niche) that has little competition.

➢ **<u>Through the Guests Eyes.</u>**

- In order to deliver a first-class wildlife experience, it is important for any guide to see things the way guests do. This is particularly important for guides at the top lodges and camps because the guests they will be taking on safari are generally less forgiving of shortcomings, because they are paying for **The Best** and amateur things shouldn`t happen.
- **A Professional Guide should get the following right:**
- Get to know your guests by name**.**
- Drive slowly and always make guests safety and comfort the first priority.
- When talking on the vehicle, turn your head to face the guests – "**DO NOT TALK FORWARD!!"**
- When talking or stopping to watch something – **ALWAYS** turn the engine off.
- Always point out overhanging branches – even if it is 100 times per drive.
- Always check that there is nothing on the floor when going through water.
- Always warn guests about dust on their cameras and binoculars.
- Make sure the vehicle and all its equipment are in working order.
- Make sure requests and complaints are followed through.
- Never use blasphemous words (like religious words).
- Avoid all discussions on general politics and religion.
- Never look guests up and down – it is condescending/makes them feel inferior.
- Do not put the loudest guest who always wants to be the Centre of attention up in the front with you – they will attempt to dominate your time and conversation and in so-doing will annoy other guests.
- Spend time with the guests that are the quietest and that are pushed aside by other guests.
- Never badmouth other guests when they are not there – just because some of your guests are doing it, it doesn`t mean you should join.
- Be a Guide to **Observe**, not to be **observed!!**
- Find out what they have come to see and do; manage their expectations and make sure you then "**CREATE THE MAGIC".**
- The guests want a hands-on approach from their guide, otherwise they would stay home and watch Discovery Channel! **Get Your Hands Dirty!!**
- As a professional guide you will **learn** only by **Observation** through **Participation!**
- Avoid guiding by the clock – guests have come a long way to escape the time pressures of their normal environment and have paid a lot of money to have a guide that will be flexible. **Remember: "Take your eyes off your watch and watch with your eyes!!"**

➢ **<u>Also Remember the following:</u>**

- Nature Guiding is 80% about people skills and 20% about wildlife.
- Wildlife comes first, guests come second.

- Refer to guests by name – they want to feel special.
- The guest is **NOT** your friend; do not cross line.
- A good guide knows when to keep quiet – avoid verbal diarrhea!
- Pre-empt guests' questions.
- If you identify, be prepared to elaborate.
- Guests like to participate, involve them wherever possible.
- Do not solicit tips or donations.
- Never lie to guests.
- In the bush, complacency kills (Do not take chances!).
- And perhaps most importantly for the overall guest experience:
- Under-promise and over-deliver.
- End with a climax – Wow moment!!

➢ **Learning to think like a Guest.**

For a guide to effectively understand the way a guest thinks, it is imperative that they put themselves in the particular guest's shoes. To do this, the guide will need to take careful note of the following fundamentals that shape and dictate the way a guest thinks and behaves.

- **What is their nationality? –** Every nation has its own psyche (human soul, mind or spirit) and this will influence outlooks.
- **What is their background?** – Even nationalities have regional, tribal, racial and educational differences that influence outlooks.
- **What type of personality are they?** – Are they serious, fun-loving, introverted, extroverted, excitable, nervous, enquiring, uncompromising, fussy, etc.
- **What is their social status?** – Class, fame career, etc., will influence how the world perceives them and how they are molded.
- **How old are they? –** As people mature their viewpoints, behavior, needs and expectations change.
- **Are they travelling alone or as part of a Family or Tour group?** – This will greatly influence their decision making and the flexibility they believe they have.
- **Is this their first Safari Experience?** – Preconceived ideas, previous experiences, the very first sighting of anything, comparisons will greatly influence outlooks.
- **Is this their first safari camp on the trip?** – Are they jaded and tired; this will make it more difficult to keep them interested and happy.
- **How long is their itinerary?** – Are they going to other camps or is this the only place they can see all they want to see – affects the pressure they place on the guide.
- **Where have they been on previous trips?** – What they have seen and what are they comparing the location, camp, wildlife viewing and guide; will affect their experience and feedback.
- **How much has the trip cost them?** – The costlier the trip the more difficult they are likely to be if they are not getting what they paid for or what was advertised. It is important to remember that Africa is Not a cheap destination by international standards, primarily because of the costs of air travel getting to and from continent. City hotels can be good value because of the competition (number of options), the number of beds on offer and the fact that most places charge only for room and breakfast, and everything is optional. Travel costs for a vacation are greatly increased by opting to visit wildlife areas because game/safari lodges generally quote an all-inclusive package and the limited number of available beds coupled to higher operating costs than urban establishments drives the prices up.

➢ **Nationality Traits.**

It is certainly true that if one were to generalize (which is not always wise) then most nationalities can be shown to have defined traits. A guide is someone who must professionally manage and tolerate without prejudice all the guests

at the lodge and a basic knowledge of these traits will go a long way in helping to manage, plan and pre-empt. It must be remembered that each nationality may have a number of defined groupings.

Some more common stereotypes and traits are as follows:

- **USA –** Brush, loud, excitable, expressive, easy-to-please, easily wowed, demand good service, casual, friendly, take safari seriously, appreciate all fauna and flora.
- **UK –** Friendly, laid-back, pompous, condescending, reserved, complain after they leave.
- **ITALIAN –** Fussy, dress smartly, like sparkling water and good food, loud, excitable, social, don`t take safari seriously, get the t-shirt and leave, interested in big game only, poor English.
- **FRENCH –** Fussy with regards to food and wine – think French is best, condescending, poor English, like mineral water, pompous, dress smartly, interested in local culture as much as or more than the wildlife, generally prefer big game, obnoxious.
- **GERMAN –** Punctual, generally lack humor, serious, clinical, things must work like clockwork, don`t tolerate sloppiness or negligence, smart, arrogant, organized, very good English.
- **South Africans –** Think they know everything about the bush and wildlife, do the guide`s job, obnoxious, laid-back, arrogant, loud, casual, question rules, fun-loving.

THE BENEFITS OF SPREADING INFORMATION DURING AN EXCURSION (2.1.4)

- **Spread the information evenly –** with the central theme of your excursion in mind, plan the presentation in such a way that information is given frequently. Do not present everything you know in the first hour of the excursion, because thereafter you will find you have little to tell or show and your excursion will fizzle out into long periods of nothing and quietness. Fill the gaps between the main points with secondary stops; interesting little observations, e.g., an ant`s nest, an interesting wild flower or the spoor of an animal, etc. By keeping up a constant flow of information, spaced at regular intervals, you will keep your guests busy and interested all the time.

➢ **<u>Balancing Guests Interests and Needs</u>**

- **Interests are defined as:**
  - Topics that the guests are interested in learning more about, such as, animal behavior, specific species, birds, botany, invertebrates, amphibians, astronomy, music, politics, cultural, history etc.
- **Needs are defined as:**
  - Physical limitations such as wheelchairs, bad heart, knees, hips, back, exposure to sun etc. Special occasions such as birthdays, honeymoon, anniversary, dietary needs, duration of activities, photographic positioning, alternative activities etc.
- **One of the most difficult things for a guide to manage is the very different <u>interests</u> of all guests allocated to them. This can become a real juggling act, but an attempt <u>must</u> be made to keep everybody happy. You are single person and the easiest way to achieve this is:**
  - Compromise is imperative.
  - Be passionate, excited and entertaining – it rubs off and makes everybody enjoy the experience.
  - Communicate intentions and plans clearly to everybody and in good time (not at the last minute).
  - Do not let anybody take preference.
  - This is one time where democracy does not work and is irrelevant; make sure the needs of **everyone** are addressed, not the majority.
  - Do not be bias to any person, couple, party or toward certain nationalities, races and culture etc.
  - Birds and mammals are easy to cater for, but insects, plants, reptiles, etc., are more difficult – all must receive equal attention.

- Cater for needs that are easy on drives and then use walks; even around the lodge after drives or at comfort stops.
- When dealing with minority birds' interests, keep stops short, messages interesting and factual and only identify and elaborate on the most visible and photographically presentable species.
- If guests are interested in astronomy, then do talks at sundowner stops or preferably before dinner; after dinner is not desirable as most guests are usually tired and want to go to bed.

- **It is also similarly important to ensure that all <u>needs</u> are adhered to:**
  - If you have a guest with a bad back or wheelchair then they must be allocated to the front seat at all times and you must communicate this to all guests. It is essential that the vehicle is positioned to give this guest prime view as they are already impacted on by the tracker, aerial and guide.
  - Link-ups off drives for whatever reason must be discussed with the relevant guests and managers.
  - If you are planning longer excursions or surprise bush meals, then guests with special needs must be informed to ensure that they are happy with arrangements and have medications, etc.
  - Assist with planning of special occasions for those celebrating birthdays, anniversaries and honeymoons etc.
  - It is the guides responsibility to ensure that the drinks and meals for comfort stops are as per guest requirements – no pointing fingers at any other staff or department, --- **YOU ARE THE HOST!!**

➢ **<u>The Activity Experience.</u>**

- Balance is the most important thing, - in everything; maintain the balance! Driving speed, information (level and amount), sighting frequency, stopping time and frequency. Also maintain this balance from drive to drive. The rules and regulations are also to stay the same; don`t deviate from these and be strict one day and easy going the next. Balance is particularly important when it comes to information delivery. Do so in a consistent manner in the informative and good-natured way with a sense of humor. It is also important to answer direct questions in a balanced, unbiased way – present the facts; positive and negative! **Note**: "Don`t exhaust your knowledge and play your trump cards early on!" And remember, the guide is not paid to express personal opinions **# present facts!!**
- To set yourself apart from the average guide that gives the usual fauna and flora facts on activities, describe and elaborate on your environment as part of the identify and elaborate principle. It doesn`t help to do it as they are leaving. To accomplish this, a detailed knowledge of the geological history of your area of operation is required. The professional guide must know the basics of soils, plants, weather and climate, weathering and erosion, plant succession as well as environmental principles and management practices. Also get to know get to know the actual history of the area (proclamation dates etc.)!
- It is important to find out as early as possible why the guests have chosen to come to the chosen country and lodge. The guide must attempt to understand what the guests are expecting and whether this is a "lifetime trip" or one of many, in order to satisfactorily meet the expectations.

➢ **<u>Maintaining Focus.</u>**

Essentially, this principle deals with ensuring that whatever is grabbing the guest's attention (in terms of stimuli out on activities) becomes the focus of identification and elaboration by the guide.
To achieve this, the guide must:

- Look at and pay attention to their guests at all times during the guided activity.
- Follow guest's stares or head movements.

- Take note of where a guest is pointing binoculars or camera.
- Listen for and react to bush sounds while driving and talking.
- Point out the obvious such as bright flowers, dung piles and colorful birds etc.
- Pay attention to animals in sightings to identify and elaborate on obvious and conspicuous behaviors, movements, activities and interactions etc.

➢ **Dealing with Weather.**

Weather is a topic that is always on everyone`s lips and as a result it is the focus of discussions on a daily basis – especially as an ice-breaker. Guests will ask daily, what the weather will be like in order to dress and plan accordingly. It must be remembered that guests are on holiday and the brochures always paint a sunny, perfect weather picture because when people go away for a break or vacation, they want to have fun and good weather plays a big role in the success of such a trip. Many activities are not possible in bad weather, so guests will naturally be hoping for good conditions. Many guests expect that Africa is always sunny and warm, so they are often shocked and totally unprepared mentally and in terms of clothing, to find conditions that are not quite what the brochure advertised.

Most visitors don`t expect the cold winter mornings and nights and they were not informed about the wind-chill factor. Weather can have a marked impact on game viewing and guests` state of mind; and by association therefore it can affect the overall enjoyment of the safari experience. Although it is impossible to control the weather, it is possible to positively influence the effect of the weather on guests` psyche.

- To achieve this, it is important to use positive psychology as follows:
  - Never talk about the heat or the cold. This just reinforces to guests that it is an uncomfortable temperature. The more you think about something, the more all-consuming it becomes (e.g., The more you think you are tired, the more you want to sleep or the more you think about the temperature being hot, the hotter it feels and the more miserable you become), and you begin to suffer or have an impacted experience.
  - If guest talk about temperatures, then just acknowledge what they have said (this is different to agreeing with them) and then change the subject or say; “it is only hot or cold as you think it is!”
  - If they ask if they can still go out in cold, windy, rainy weather then focus on the positives of such weather and assure them that they are always likely to see more out on game drive than sitting in camp.
  - Never tell guests that they are unlucky to be experiencing particular weather. This may be true but they don`t need to hear it – **remain positive!!**
  - Always explain the positives about weather and its effect on the safari experience when asked about travel in different seasons.
  - Drive slower in cold conditions, thereby reducing the wind-chill.
  - Park in the (if possible) at sightings in hot conditions.
  - Make sure guests are prepared in terms of clothing, sunscreen, hats and have blankets.
  - Advice guests to wear layers that can be added or removed. It is far better to be prepared and to take extra clothing than to be cold or hot and miserable.
  - Advise guests that we are in the extreme Southern Hemisphere and that the sun can be severe all year because of the hole in the ozone.

➢ **When can a drive be cancelled or terminated due to weather?**

This is only the case when guests’ safety is jeopardized no matter where you drive, such as:

- When there is excessive lightning. If you are out on a drive when storm with bad lightning hits, then try to get back to camp as soon as possible, avoiding roads on high ground (ridges) and open areas and **Don`t** park under tall trees.
- When there is hail. If caught out on a drive then **Don`t** drive quickly to get to camp; this puts guests at greater risk to being hit. Park as soon as possible behind or under cover until it passes.
- When there is excessive wind that causes severe dust storms, flying debris or large trees to fall down.

Note: Heavy rain, strong wind, rivers in flood and extreme temperatures are not reason to cancel drives.

REFRESHMENT/COMFORT STOP STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS (2.1.5).

These stops are to be taken on **every drive** regardless of whether the guide thinks a stop is necessary or not. The timing of the stop is at the guides discretion (choosing) based upon sightings, suitable places to stop and the guest`s needs. Stops are best made about **half-way** through the drive.

Comfort or refreshment stops are recommended on excursions of more the 2.5 hours for the following critical reasons:

- To prevent **Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT),** especially in older people. Guides must remember that the back seats of their vehicles are more cramped and uncomfortable; especially for tall people – two -three hours sitting like this, is a long time.
- To allow a toilet stop; bouncing with a full bladder is not fun! Upon stopping, a bush/termitaria or tree must be selected as the designated toilet and must be checked for safety before guests use it.
- To have refreshments – alleviates sugar lows and dehydration. All food items must be unpacked for guests to see. It is important that the guide knows what each item is and explains this to guests.

- **Criteria used to Determine a Suitable Comfort stop location are:**
  - Choose a site that is relatively open where the surroundings can be clearly seen, minimizing the chance of surprises. Safety is of paramount concern when people are going to get out of the vehicle.
  - The site must be scenic (have something valuable to see while stopped). This can be a beautiful water body or view or simply a nice seen with game.
  - The site must not be within 1km of an active sighting. An active sighting is one that is still be visited by vehicles. This is to prevent disturbance to the sighting and also minimize conflict if the animals happen to move in your direction.
  - Must be private – radio the location to avoid other vehicles coming past (creating dust and disturbance) or using the same spot.

- **General Protocols to be Followed when Stopping are:**
  - Radio in the chosen site.
  - Position the vehicle with the toilet and table set-up areas in mind.
  - Keep everybody on the vehicle while you check – general safety of the area; walk the area and clap etc. The safety of the toilet area, stand where guests will stand and it is important to check and designate **Only One** toile stop.
- **Allow Everybody off the car and advise as follows:**
  - Clearly designate the toilet site and explain that **No Other** toilet spot is to be used.
  - Explain toilet protocols – disposal bags, toilet paper etc., and that strictly **No Littering**.
  - Do not walk more than 10m (35ft) from the car at any time.
  - Do not approach closer than 3m (10ft) to any water-body.
  - Let guide know immediately if any animals are spotted nearby.

- **Once the briefing is complete, set up the table and refreshments in a position that will offer guests the best view of the surrounding;**
  - Make a point of cleaning your hands with a sanitizer in view of guests. If you sweat profusely, then wipe face and arms too.

- Explain fully what food items are on offer.
- Pour all drinks before, serving ladies first.
- Pack everything away neatly – the way you would expect to find them.
- If a dangerous game species approaches the comfort stop, then calmly tell everyone to stand close to the car and **NOT** panic and run. Generally, there is no need to get in the car and most animals will simply give the vehicle a wide space.

DEALING WITH DANGEROUS GAME (2.1.6)

What are Dangerous Game?

- **All** animals are potentially dangerous in one way or another and must always be treated with **respect!** From a game drive perspective however, the most **temperamental** species that are prone to aggression at close quarters and must be approached with caution are: Elephant, Black & White rhino, African buffalo, Lion. Leopard and Hippo.
- In order to understand how and why animals can be dangerous when on a game drive, it is important to first discuss and understand how they perceive people and vehicles. It is vitally important that this principle be conveyed to guests so that they realize the potential danger.

How do Mammal Eyes Work?

- The eye is connected to the brain by the **Optic Nerve** that transports information from the sensitive cells (receptors) in the back of the eye (retina) to the part of the brain that interprets vision.
- There are (2) types of receptor cells in the retina, namely:

- **Cone Cells** – are color sensitive and perform poorly in low light (at night). Work well in good light and also detect color. Found in diurnal animals with color on their bodies, e.g., Primates and Birds. Usually, no tapetum.
- **Rod Cells –** are light sensitive and perform excellently in low light (at night). Identify shape and movement; work well in poor light and do not detect color. Found in nocturnal animals and those without color on body, e.g., most herbivores and carnivores. Tapetum generally present.
  - A reflective layer at the back of the retina called **Tapetum Lucidum** also occurs in many animals and helps to reflect light, like a mirror, back through the receptor cells to give the brain another chance of seeing the image. It is most common in species that need to survive at night and is why many animals have eyes that shine at night.

➢ **<u>Why Do the Animals not see People on the Vehicle?</u>**

- Contrary to popular belief or perception, it has nothing to do with eyesight (or any other sense) but is a result of interpretation of the sight by the brain. Of the species mentioned above, all but the two cats have relatively poor eye sight. But even the lion and the leopard with their superb vision (even during the day) cannot distinguish seated passengers from the vehicle.

  As already stated, this is not because of the fact that they cannot **see** the passengers but rather because they don`t **recognize** them as passengers. They simply do not **reason** as humans do – they only recognize people as animals that stand upright on 2 legs.

- They learn that the vehicles are not a danger and that they are not edible and associate a vehicle with its shape, noise and scent. When they hear a vehicle approaching, they simply go into auto-pilot mode and almost switch-off. This is because they don`t perceive the vehicle to be a threat. That is why they do not react to human voices or smells when the vehicle is present – their brain has already made the decision that everything **OK** because it's only a vehicle.

  The only thing that will alter this scenario is when their senses detect something extra-ordinary such as:

- Strong-smelling food could attract them to the car, (e.g., a chunk of bloody meat).
- Distress calls or a crying baby would attract predators.
- Standing, climbing off or dangling feet and arms off the side of the car would make movement visible (such movement will catch their eye).

➢ **How Close can Dangerous Species be approached?**

There`s no definite answer to this question because there is no **standard.** Approach distances will depend on the following:

- The species of animal being approached.
- The specific mood of the animal.
- The **scenario –** how many are present, what is the social composition and what are they doing.
- The manner at which they are being approached – **with or without respect!!**

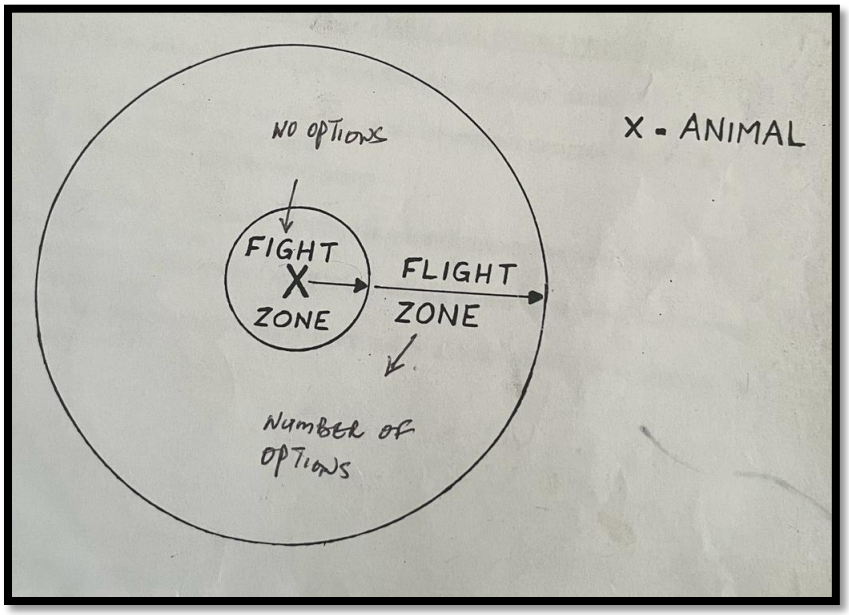
  NB// Great sightings are not those where the vehicle is on top of the animal, but rather those where the animal`s behavior has not been altered in any way by the approach or presence of the vehicle!!!

➢ **How Do you know when you are too close?**

- When the animal reacts negatively! This does not just mean that the animal gets angry or attacks. It may simply just move off or, if resting, it may get up and move to a position in which if feels safer. The animal`s 'private space' has been threatened and its behavior has been altered; this is an unacceptable situation and must be avoided at all costs.

How the flight/fight zone principle operates.

- The space around any animal, including humans is defined by the **flight/fight principle.** See diagram below:



- **Flight Zone –** This is the space around or distance from the animal at which it does not feel immediately threatened because the distance is great enough for it to retreat in any direction (number of options) – it does not feel cornered!
- **Fight Zone –** This is the immediate space around or distance from the animal at which it feels that its safety is threatened and that the danger is so close that retreat is no longer possible (no options). It feels cornered and will probably try to fight its way out in an attempt to survive. This distance is dependent on the 4 criteria mentioned above!

  This principle is the reason why it is so dangerous to stand up or get off a vehicle when in close proximity to dangerous animals. Man is traditionally the persecutor of all animals and is therefore their biggest enemy. I f you were on foot then these animals would sense your approach and would give you ample warning of their presence in order for you to go away – they don`t want a confrontation with man because they are scared of humans. When somebody therefore stands up or gets off a vehicle in a sighting with lions where the vehicle is parked at about 10m, the lion is suddenly confronted with its biggest enemy in its fight zone with no warning of approach – **OF COURSE, ITS GOING TO CHARGE!!**

Signs that an Animal is getting angry.

One often hears that animals become aggressive "for no reason" or that they "attack without warning". What is actually happening is that the observers (people involved) are unaware that they are causing a problem and they don't recognize the early/subtle warning signs that, if acted upon, could have diffused the situation. All animals give signs that they are being pressured and becoming angry enough to attack and they can let us know this in two basic ways, namely:

- **Mock signs or Charges –** these are displays or advertisements designed to scare the enemy off without getting into a fight.

  Reasons: It saves energy and prevents injury.
- **Serious signs or Charges –** these are displays or advertisements that are designed to inflict damage on the enemy.

  Reasons: The mock display have not worked and the animal feels threatened enough to want to defend its life.

➢ **<u>Warning Signs of the Dangerous Species are dealt with separately:</u>**

- **Elephant:**
  - **Mock** – The first sign that an elephant is getting annoyed is that the tail starts to become erect. Ears open and head lifts so that it looks down it's at you (called "**standing tall"** display). This often accompanied by shaking the head (not ears), breaking trees, puffing dust and trumpeting (making a lot of noise) as well as charging and stopping.
  - **Serious** – The ears are usually flat against the head (but not always) and the head is held level or down with the trunk usually pulled in to the body.
- **Black rhino:**
  - **Mock –** The tail is held erect at an angle. The head is held up and ears cocked forward. Often puffs and snorts and bashes bushes. Dance from side-to-side. Mock charges with stiff-legged stop-and-start gait. More prone to mock displays than white rhino but both species most so-called mock charges are actually misdirected flight.
  - **Serious –** Tail is still held out but the head is down ready to horn the enemy. Usually silent but sometimes squeals. Ears often pulled back.

- **White rhino:**
  - **Mock –** The tail is held tight circle above the back. The head is held up and the ears cocked forward. Often puffs and snorts and bashes bushes. Dances from side-to-side. Mock charges with stiff-legged stop-and-start gait,
  - **Serious –** Tail is still curled but the head is down ready to horn the enemy. Usually silent but sometimes squeals. Ears often back. Doesn`t mock display as much as the black rhino.
- **Hippopotamus:**
  - **Mock –** Yawning, running at the enemy with mouth open creating a wave, diving in and out of the water (called "**porpoising**") and standing side on to the enemy (called "**lateral display**") staring it down. Making noise (grunts). This species does not generally mock charge.
  - **Serious –** Running to the enemy with mouth open and shaking head, biting air.
- **Lion:**
  - **Mock –** Tail flicking rapidly, ears turned forward, mouth pulled back (all revealing a lot of black that contrasts with the light body (opposite colors are called **aposematic coloration** or warning colors). Growling and staring with pupils of the eyes becoming very small. Mock charges with a lot of noise in a straight line with legs straight and fur erect, kicking dust.
  - **Serious –** Usually falls silent and then charges in an arc or zig-zag motion through bushes. Body is in a crouched position.

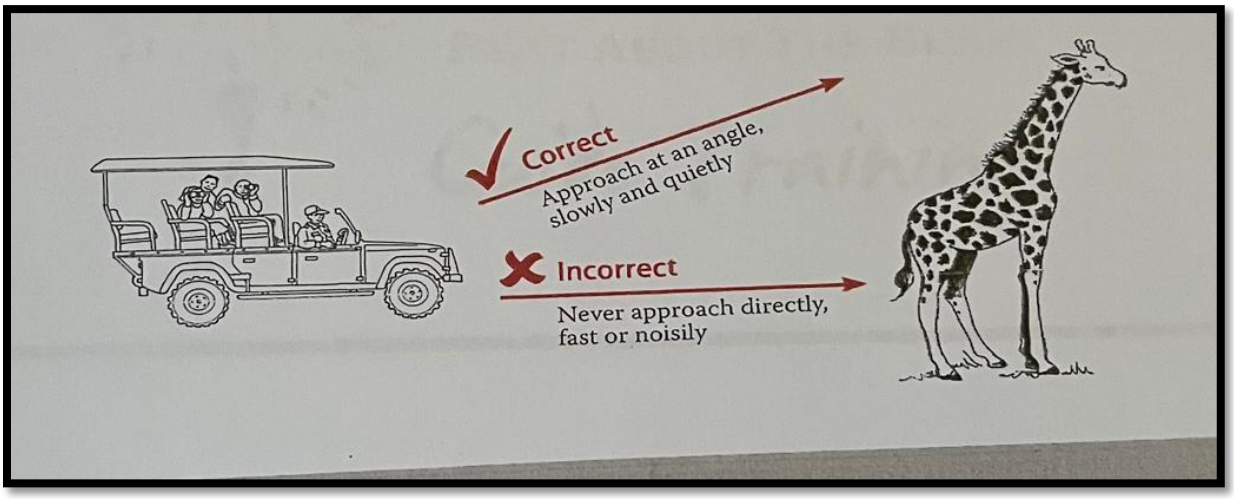
- **Leopard:**
  - **Mock –** Tail twitching, growling, baring of teeth and snarling. Does not take kindly to be stared at in these situations. Mock charges with a lot of noise in a straight line with legs straight and fur erect. Doesn`t mock as much as lion.
  - **Serious –** Usually falls silent and then charges in an arc or zig-zag motion at high speed through bushes. Body is in a crouched position.
- **Buffalo:**
  - **Mock –** Tail erect or curled flat into the back, bush bashing with horns, pawing the ground with the front hooves and snorting.
  - **Serious -** Staring down the nose with head erect while advancing slowly and deliberately. Starts to run with the head up for a few meters and then suddenly drops the head and charges at high speed ready to horn and toss enemy. This species does not generally mock charge.

➢ **<u>How to Approach Animals when in a Vehicle.</u>**

- The approach of game must always be done **ethically** (with respect) so as not to disturb their natural behavior and activities. It is also vitally that guests do not feel you are unduly stressing or harassing the animals, especially when they are in the road or when being approached or followed off-road.
- When approaching big game give your guests a re-brief – seat down, keep quiet.
- Approach slowly and quietly – do not crash over branches and trees if avoidable.
- Approach on an angle – a direct approach is confrontational and will cause the animal the animal to move or change its position.
- Stop outside the animals` flight zone and stay within the comfort zone.
- Plan your approach and stop where your guests can get the best possible view without having to reposition – minimize engine noise.
- Don`t park where the animal is intent on going – switch the engine off!
- Only one vehicle moving at a time in a stationary sighting.
- If an animal is constantly moving away then this is a clear sign that it is distressed and pressured – let it go!
- Do not drive across or stop in a position that will alter the movements of the animal.

- Usually try to put the animal on the side where guests have cameras.
- Position where the light will give the best range of shots, as well as best chance of facial shots.
- If the animal moves out of sight or behind the car (when not too close) reposition to keep in view and to stop necks craning (stretch your neck).

➢ **Vehicle Positioning – See diagram below:**



WILDERNESS WALKS (2.1.7)

Basic Bush Skills and Walking Protocols.

- **Orientation –** Responsibilities of a guide are to know his areas of operation in great depth and detail. He/she should have taken cognizance of all landmarks, cardinal points and the general layout of the area. Guide must know:

- The **lie** of the land (features or characteristics of the area).
- The direction in which the rivers flow.
- The high grounds.
- Prevailing winds.
- The weather patterns
- Any known hazards, e.g., dangerous animal patterns, tendencies and habits

- **Awareness:**

- The single most important skill employed in understanding the environment is that of **"observation".** In order to develop the skill, we must understand the **process of seeing**.
- Like all skills, development of good observation can be learned and with practice can be developed to a surprising degree. Good seeing techniques are valuable tools in the bush. We all admired the keen eyesight of the African tracker in the bush who sees details which may seem to be invisible. Awareness, make us more aware of the potential which we all possess, in order to improve our powers of observation.
- Together with our knowledge of behavior, ecological principles, weather, vegetation, and so on, keen observation techniques will assist us in making logical deductions and improve our ability to interpret what we see to those with whom we communicate.

The Process of Seeing:

- There are three processes the result in the process of seeing; i.e., a **process of sensing**, **a process of selecting and a process of perceiving.** The raw material of seeing is **color**, **shape** and **content** of a given field which may be sensed at a given moment. Sensing is followed by selecting or singling out a part of the visual field from the rest. Perceiving (putting things together) entails the recognition of the image that has been sensed and selected as a physical object. Perceiving becomes rapid and accurate only when the mind can draw on its own experiences of similar objects successfully and interpret them in a similar way. The eye and nervous system do the sensing, the mind does the selecting and perceiving.

Staring:

- When one looks fixedly at an object, a very limited amount of information is being interpreted by the brain and staring results in a state of boredom. Is therefore essential that the eye moves over an object in order to gather more information about the object being considered.

Interpretation:

- The ability to interpret what the guide has seen and observed is vital in painting a full picture of the environment for the guests. To interpret is to explain the meaning of the signs in the bush, animals and the environment, and the way in which they are interacting. The way in which the guide explains nature to the guests is as important as a language interpreter is to the foreigner who does not understand a language in a foreign country. If someone in the city is able read the road signs, he will find his way. The same applies to the bush, the guide who is sensitive to all available tracks, signs and behavior, never mind how subtle will find his way and be able to interpret. Guide must know what to look for, where and when to look.
- The field guide needs to constantly develop his powers of observation, awareness and the ability to interpret through collective memories. By becoming more and more familiar with all the parts in the puzzle it eventually is easier for the guide to produce results. If a guide misinterprets a dangerous animal sign it may mean the difference between serious/mock charges - in the unpredictable world of the bush, there is no room for error! Remember not to stare, let your eyes wonder seeing the sign/clue/spoor in its environment and by doing this the guide will not become transfixed with one sign and miss what could be a potential dander close-by.

Basic Principles of Tracking:

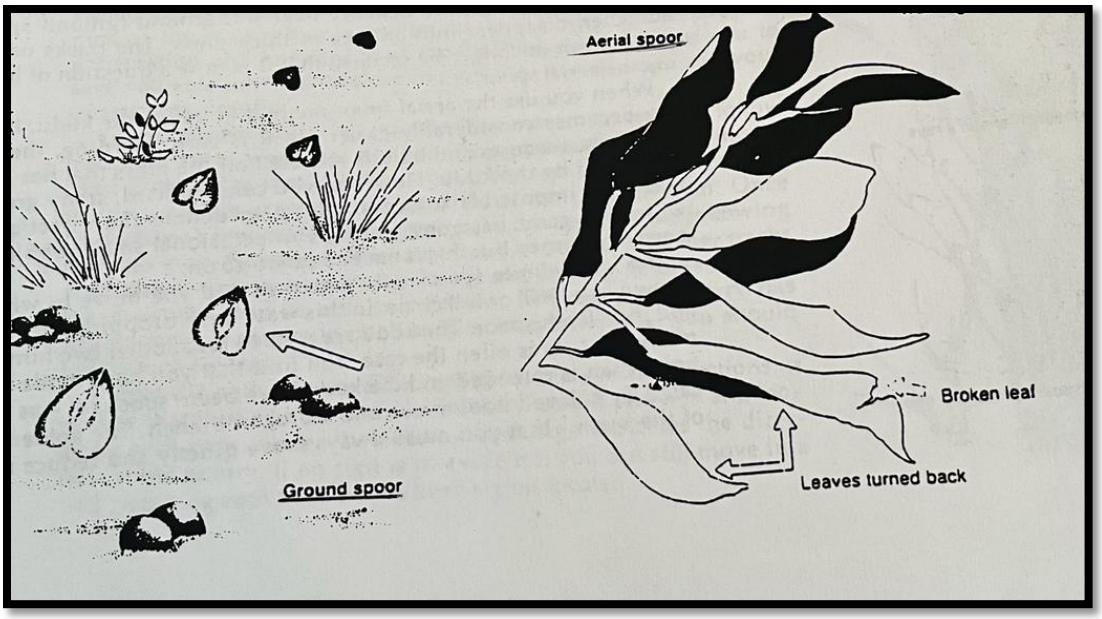
Tracking is not something learnt effectively in a classroom, it must be practiced in the field constantly. There is no substitute for experience! Understand the following:

- **Animal signs –** spoor, faeces, burrows, nests, territorial marking spots etc.
- **Animal sounds –** Mammals, birds, communication, alarm calls, nocturnal sounds.
- **Animal behavior (Ethology) –** grouping behavior, solitary, pairs, herds, prides e.tc.
- **Animal communication –** body language, vibrations, pheromones, different sounds/meaning e.tc.
- **Reproduction –** courtship, mating, breeding, nesting, parental care.
- **Territories and home ranges –** know the difference between a territory and a home range, and how they function.

Spoor:

- There are two ways in which tracks can be followed, by looking signs of ground spoor and of aerial spoor. **Ground spoor –** describes those tracks on the ground that you recognize as belonging to the animals you

are seeking. The drawings of spoor that accompany most of the illustrations of the animals will help to identify these tracks. **Aerial spoor –** is in evidence when vegetation is clearly bent in one direction, leaves of trees or bushes have been turned over, early morning dew has been showered from the leaves, plants have been damaged or spider webs broken, and so on.
See diagram below:



- **<u>Preparation for Walks.</u>**
  - **The Guests:**
- Inform all the guests on what is needed for the walk.
- Neutral clothing and hat.
- Good walking shoes.
- Sunscreen.
- Portable cameras, videos and binoculars.
- Indemnity.
  - **The Walking Guide and Equipment:**
- Appearance – neat and tidy in comfortable bush ware.
- Leather belt – with good quality stabbing knife or Leatherman and ammunition pouch.
- Portable pair of good binoculars
  - **Rifle and ammunition:**
- Rifle is clean and free from obstructions.
- Check firing loading and ejecting mechanisms.
- Check sights for accuracy.
- Check ammunition and recycle every round before loading.
- Load magazine in a safe area and safety pin on safe.
  - **Daypack:**
- First aid kit (check if fully stocked).
- Refreshments (small waters).
- Sunscreen.
- Field guides e.g., birds, flowers.
- Radio (fully charged).
  - **Professional Guide and Tracker:**

- Discuss strategy, emergencies, age and fitness of guests, therefore the type of walk.

➢ **Rules for Walking # Safety is Paramount & Survival is a Must!!**

- All of the following rules must be adhered to in the interest o safety for the guests and guides:
- Safety is paramount – all guides must put this above anything else.
- Golden rule – maximum only 8 guests per walk.
- All walks must be conducted by two people (a guide & tracker or 2 guides). The guide carrying a rifle stays in front of the guests.
- All guides must always be properly equipped with well serviced weapons and medical aid kit (check expiry dates of medicines, bullets heads and barrels clear of obstructions etc.).
- All walks must be conducted with armed guides. The minimum rifle caliber being .375 or .458 rifle with the maximum bullets in the magazine and 10 extra in the pouch.
- All walks must be oriented around walking in the safest areas – avoiding potentially dangerous places e.g., thick bush well used hippo and buffalo trails, along densely wooded areas or little visibility e.tc.
- All guests must be given a proper introduction and brief on immediate safety drills.
- Only children of 15 years and above may be allowed to participate in walks outside the security of the immediate camp area.

Walk Brief.

Before departing on your walk, a thorough briefing must be given to guests. Remember the adage (saying) – if you want people to do something, **you have to tell them!!**

- The briefing must consist of the following:

1) Do not run under any circumstances, because:
- You will be chased and pulled down or trampled.
- Running provokes attack (cat and mouse game).
2) Walk in single file at arm's length, because:
- Guide must be the only target from the front.
- Guide will check path for holes, snakes, etc.
- Guide needs a wide angle in case he needs to shoot.
3) Follow the guide instructions implicitly:
- A vertical hand means "**stop immediately and keep quiet**".
- Indicate **up, down, forward and backward** hand signals.
4) Do not smoke cigarettes, eat or drink (except water) on the walk, because:
- Smoking is a fire hazard and alters the behavior of animals.
- Sweet drinks and alcohol attract stinging insects.
- Food attracts animals and is a litter hazard.
5) Keep noise to an absolute minimum, because:
- The guide needs to listen for danger.
- Noise disturbs the animals.
- If possible, please switch off the electronic sounds and flashes of cameras. Phones on flight mode and no headphones.

➢ **Other Important Points Includes:**

- The idea of a walk is to concentrate on smaller things not seen from vehicles – not to track or see big game.
- Notify the guide of any animal sightings immediately.
- To get guides attention, click fingers or whistle – don`t shout!

- During discussions, everyone can get together in a circle.
- Rest breaks will be undertaken periodically.
- The walk will not be a route march. It will be undertaken at a leisurely pace and will only cover a short distance.
- If anyone wants to stop for anything, let the guide know – DO NOT get separated from the group as this is dangerous.

➢ **<u>Approaching and Viewing Dangerous Game on foot.</u>**

- As the apex terrestrial predator, humans are traditionally the persecutor of all animals and are therefore their biggest enemy. When on foot, animals with their superior senses easily detect the approach of humans and generally give ample warning of their presence in order to avoid a meeting – they don`t want a confrontation with people because they are scared and it usually ends badly for them!
- If you encroached into their flight zone (see flight/fight principle) then they would simply move away to open the gap again. Given the status of humans, it is to become complacent and reckless but don`t be fooled by perceptions – the average human has very little chance against an attacking member of the dangerous species. **Note: There is a fine line between bravery and stupidity, hence the reason that there are not many old, fool-hardy or trail guides!!**
- As such, in order to give guests a memorable and exhilarating (not threatening) dangerous game encounter on foot, a professional guide must strictly adhere to the following:

- Assess whether it is safe to stop and view or approach the animal based on:

- Terrain and available cover.
- Wind direction and sun position.
- Disposition of animal/s and general situation.
- Ask all guests if they are happy to approach and confirm how close you intend to go and if they are happy with that.
- Re-brief before approach - reconfirm hand signals.
- Walk up-wind – constantly monitor wind direction.
- Walk silently and use available cover.
- Anticipate animal movements in relation to wind direction and cover.
- Plan escape/ retreat route.
- Keep rifle at ready position; not over the shoulder or against the tree, etc.
- Use points of elevation (e.g., termite mounds where they occur – offers potential viewing and intimidation platform.

NB// It is important to remember that the idea of viewing all game on foot is that we should observe and leave without the animal ever having become aware of our presence so that we do not alter its natural behavioral patterns.

Types of Walks.

There are three different types of walks that can be offered to all guests. These are:

1) Short informative walks after brunch.
2) Long brisk walks – these walks should be at least 2.5 hours long. Many guests enjoy a brisk walk to get a little exercise. Guides must bear in mind that when offering long brisk walks, they should not be stopping every few minutes to pass information – walk in silence for longish periods and allow guests to get used to the silences and sounds of the wilderness.
3) Combined game drive/walks – these walks can be short & informative, or long brisk walks. Drive to a good walking area and choose your route from there.

- Find out what kind of walk guests want, short informative walk or a long brisk walk. Remember that the pace of your walk should go according to the slowest person in the group.

NB// The Purpose of Walking is not for Big Game, but smaller things that cannot be viewed on vehicles!!

RIFLE HANDLING AND SAFETY.

- **Rifle Handling Safety Rules # "Safety is Paramount":**
  - Always point a rifle in a safe direction.
  - Always keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shot.
  - Treat all rifles as if they are loaded (which they are 98% of the time).
  - Only point a rifle at something you want to kill or destroy.
  - Whenever you return or collect the rifle from the safe, check that it does not have a bullet in the chamber.
  - Ensure that the rifle is well oiled and clean at all times. After each use, the rifle should be cleaned and once a week a detailed clean up.
  - Always ensure you are cleaning and handling in a safe area!
  - Whenever you take your rifle for a walk or drive, ensure you have at least four rounds in the magazine, and extra rounds in a safe, accessible and dry place.
  - When handing a rifle to somebody always check there are no rounds in the chamber and rifle over with breach open, informing the person the rifle is safe.
  - Do not let the rifle out of your sight unless it is locked in a safe.
  - Always ensure you have a proper backstop when practicing, never shoot at water or flat surface; you never know where the bullet will go after deflected (ricochet).
  - Always carry a rifle in your hand, never over your shoulder, across the back of your neck, on the shoulder or by the butt pointing backwards at the guests.
  - Target practice – once a month; Posture practice – daily and dry practice – weekly.
  - A guest should never be allowed to handle your weapon, only somebody who is trained and qualified may handle it and only once it has been given in a safe state.
  - Never allow guests to walk ahead of the person carrying the rifle.
  - The rifle should have a round chambered only when dangerous situations are encountered or developed.
  - The use of the safety catch is not recommended.
  - **AD – Accidental Discharge will result in an instant dismissal!!!**

- **Firearms Safety while Travelling:** Whenever your gun is being carried in a car, boat, on a horse back, motorcycle or in any other vehicle, these rules of safe gun handling must be followed:
  1. Be sure the gun is not loaded.
  2. Place it in a protective case.
  3. Position the firearm securely so it will not move about during travel.
  4. To transport a gun on a public transportation vehicle such as a bus, train or plane; check first with the carrier`s agent concerning the regulations.

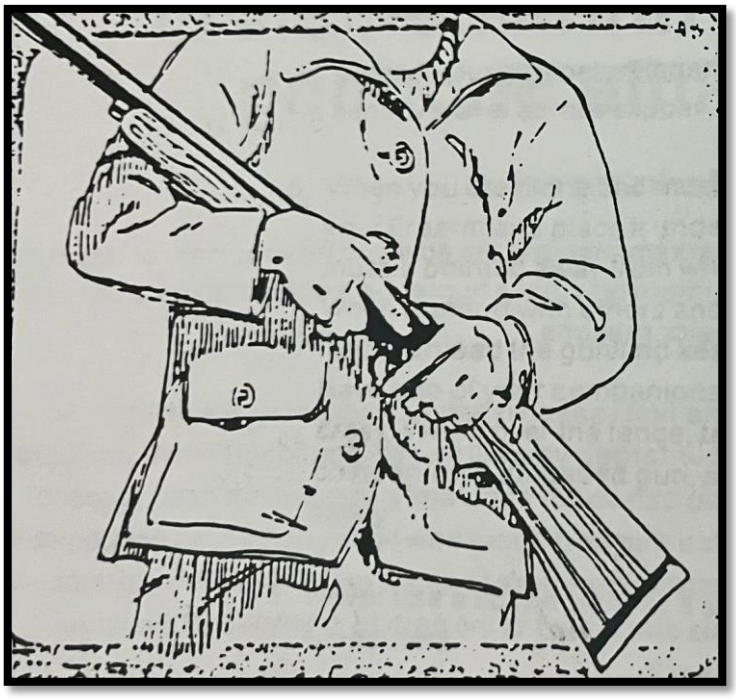
- **Firearms Safety in the Field:** There are several ways to carry a gun safely and at the same time have your gun ready for quick use in the field. Whichever carrying method you use, these basic rules apply:
  1. Keep the muzzle pointed away from yourself and others
  2. Keep your finger outside the trigger guard.

Methods on how to Carry your Rifle:

1. **Two-Hand or Ready Carry –** the two-hand or ready carry, is the safest carry method for guides and hunters. This carry gives you good control of the muzzle and allows you to raise your gun quickly for a shot. See diagram below:



2. **Cradle Carry –** the cradle carry is another safe carry. However, because the muzzle points to one side, this method should not be used when walking beside anyone. See diagram below:



3. **Trail Carry –** the trail carry is safe when several people are walking abreast. It is also safe for the leader when people are walking single file but others in the line should not carry their guns this way. See diagram below:



- **Fundamentals of Rifle Shooting:**

- **Marksmanship –** marksmanship is the ability to hit your mark or target. It is important that a hunter/guide be a good marksman for two major reasons:

1. The first reason is safety. If you have the ability to hit your target, you will be self-confident. When you know you can shoot accurately, you will not need to spend time thinking about how to shoot, but can concentrate instead on where to aim. You will have time to think, - is this shot safe? Is the path to and beyond the target clear?
2. The second reason is to make a clean kill. An accurate shot will kill quickly, cleanly and humanely. A good hunter practices marksmanship skills until his shots are consistently accurate and studies animal anatomy to know where vital organs are located. Shooting excellence depends on several fundamental techniques which must be learned and practiced. They are **aiming, trigger squeeze, breath control, follow through and shooting position.**

- **Aiming –** the **Master eye** is the eye you use for sighting purposes. The master eye is the stronger of your two eyes. This eye will judge speed and range, and focus more accurately than your other eye. Even though you are right, you may have a left master eye. To determine which your master eye is, point your finger at an object with both eyes open. Then alternately close one eye and then the other. Your finger will remain lined-up with the object when your master eye is open.

- **Trigger Control:** Trigger control is essential for an accurate shot. When the sights are aligned on your target squeeze the trigger slowly and steadily; do not yank. Anything other than a smooth squeeze will cause the sight picture to waver and will send the shot off the target. Do not tense before the rifle fires. You should be relaxed, allowing each shot to happen as a surprise.
- **Breath Control:** Breath control is necessary to shoot accurately. As you breathe in and out, it is normal for your chest to rise and fall, and your arm to waver. So will your gun barrel unless you control your breathing at the moment you fire. When you are in shooting position, with your chest hard against the stock, take a

deep breath, exhale a portion of it and hold your breath while you aim and squeeze the trigger. This should allow you to hold the barrel and sights in perfect alignment on the target and the final instant when the gun fires. When you hold your breath for too long, you may lose control and your shot will off the mark. If you run out of breath before firing, relax, take a deep breath and do it again.

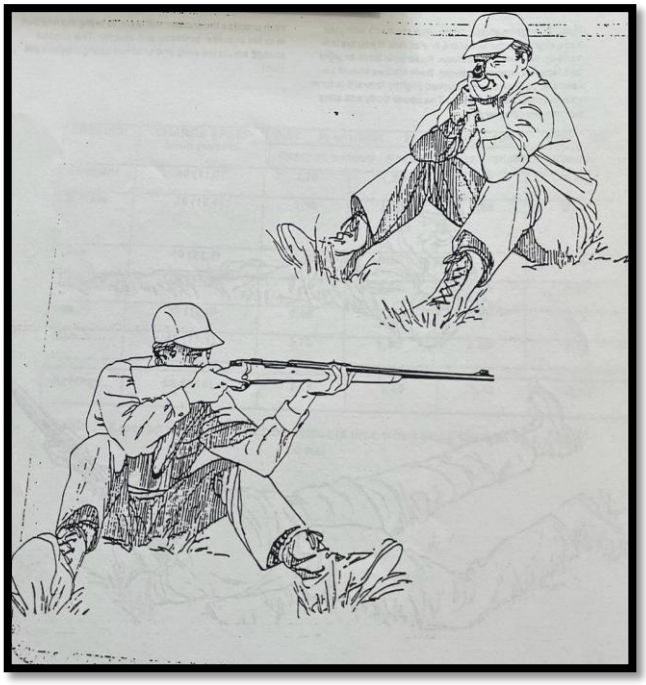
- **Follow Through:** Follow through, which simply means continuing be still until after the bullet has been fired; is important for accurate shooting. If the rifle is moved a split second too soon, your aim will be off target. Follow through to ensure the rifle isn't moved until the bullet on way to the target.

- **Shooting Positions:**

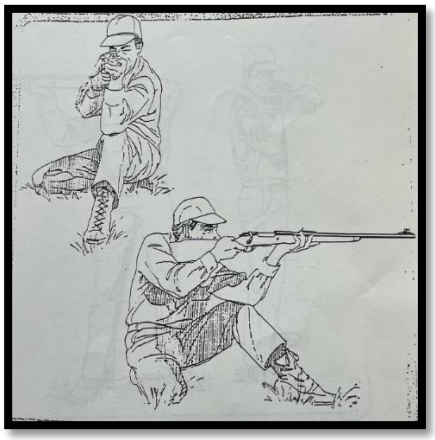
  - **Prone Position –** the prone position is the steadiest shooting position and the one from which the fundamentals of rifle shooting are best learned. It is a good position for firing accurate long distance shots. But it is usually not suitable when hunting in tall grass or dense brush which can obscure the line of sight to the target; as well it won't be suitable for walking guides with guests in times of an emergency attack. If you are right-handed, lie on your stomach with your body slightly to the left of the line of aim. If you are left-handed, reverse this position. Both elbows should be bent and your shoulders curved slightly forward to form a solid upper body position. The upper body and arms support the rifle weight. See diagram below:



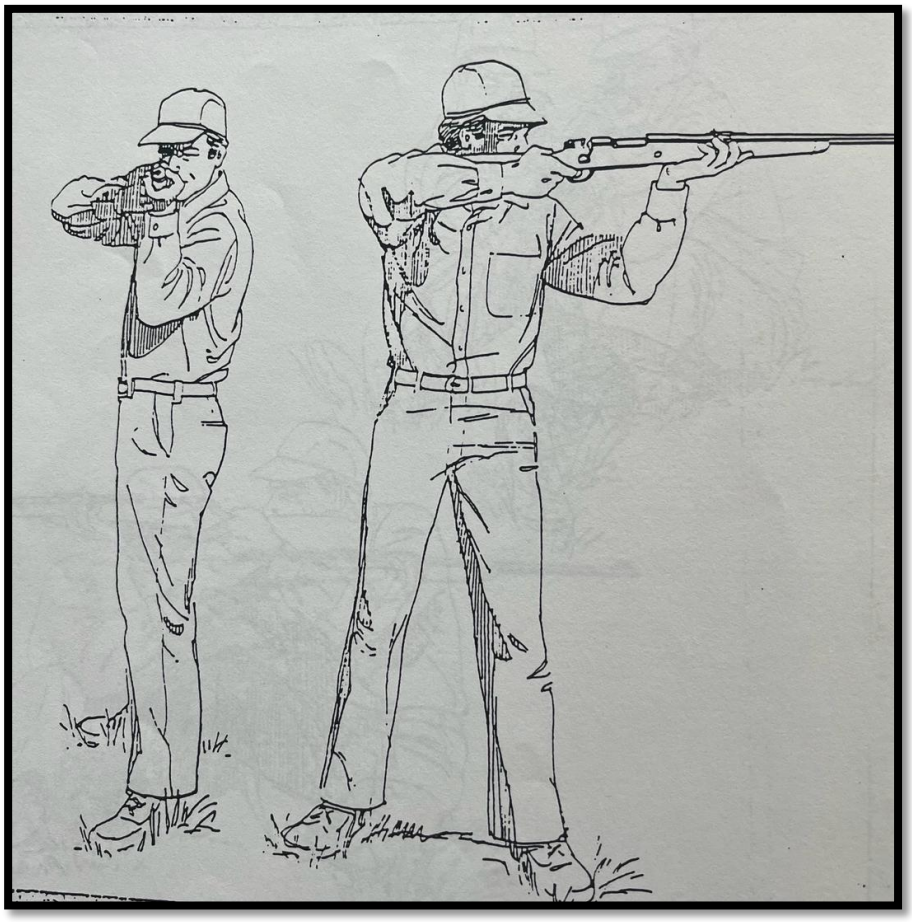
- **Sitting Position –** the sitting position is the next steadiest shooting position. Both short and long range shots can be fired accurately from this position. Sit solidly on the ground. The legs may be crossed or open and the body should be positioned about 30 degrees to the right of the line of aim. Place the left elbow near, but not on the body part of the left knee. As in the prone position, tuck the elbow as far under the rifle as possible. Place the right elbow on or near the right knee. You have now formed two triangles which make up a firm support for the rifle. Reverse the process if you are a left-handed shooter. Hold the rifle firmly but do not grip it tightly. Bracing your body against something stable such as a tree or rock will help steady your aim for a more accurate shot. See diagram below:



- **Kneeling Position -** because the shooting arm is free, this position leaves the shooting arm and elbow unsupported and is not as steady as both the prone and sitting positions. But with practice, the shooter can maintain control and shoot accurately. Turn so you are approximately at a 45 degrees angle to the target. Lower your body so the right knee touches the ground and place your left foot forward to steady yourself. Sit comfortably on the heel or the side of the right foot. Place the left elbow near but not on the bony part of the left knee, but as far under the rifle as you can. If you are a left-handed shooter, kneel on the left knee with the right foot forward and the right elbow on the bent knee. See diagram below:



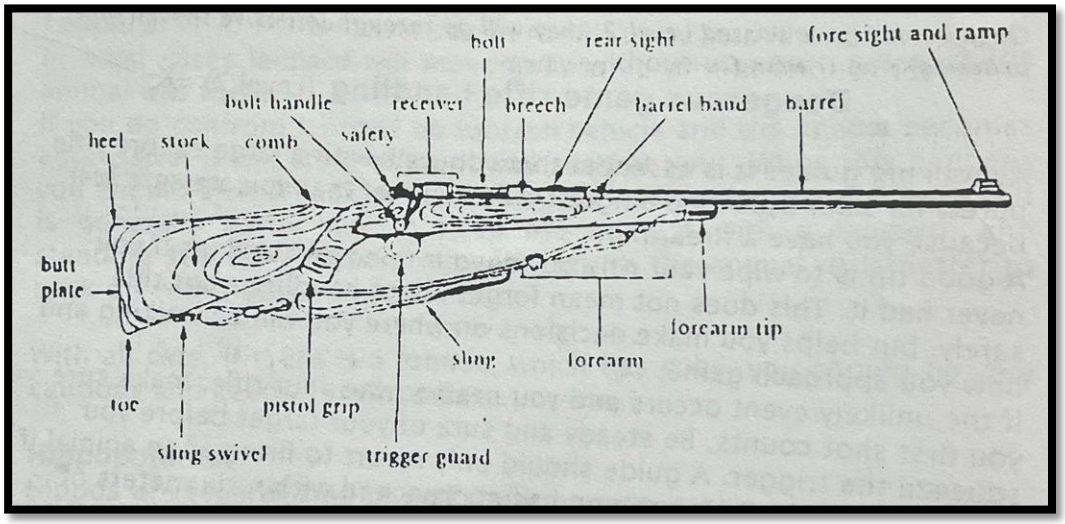
- **Standing Position –** the standing position is the most unstable shooting position. It is also the most difficult position from which to fire an accurate shot. It requires excellent control; the shooter must be skilled in all of the rifle shooting skills fundamentals, - sighting, breath control, trigger squeeze and follow through. Turn your body approximately 90 degrees to the right of the target. Place your feet, shoulder width apart and support the rifle with your left arm. Hold the left arm against your body for extra support. Hold the rifle firm against your shoulder with right hand. Do not grip the rifle tightly. Reverse the procedure if you are a left-handed shooter. If there is too much waver, do not shoot. Resting or supporting the rifle on a stable object such as a tree or large rock, or using a carrying strap as a sling will help steady your shot. See diagram below:

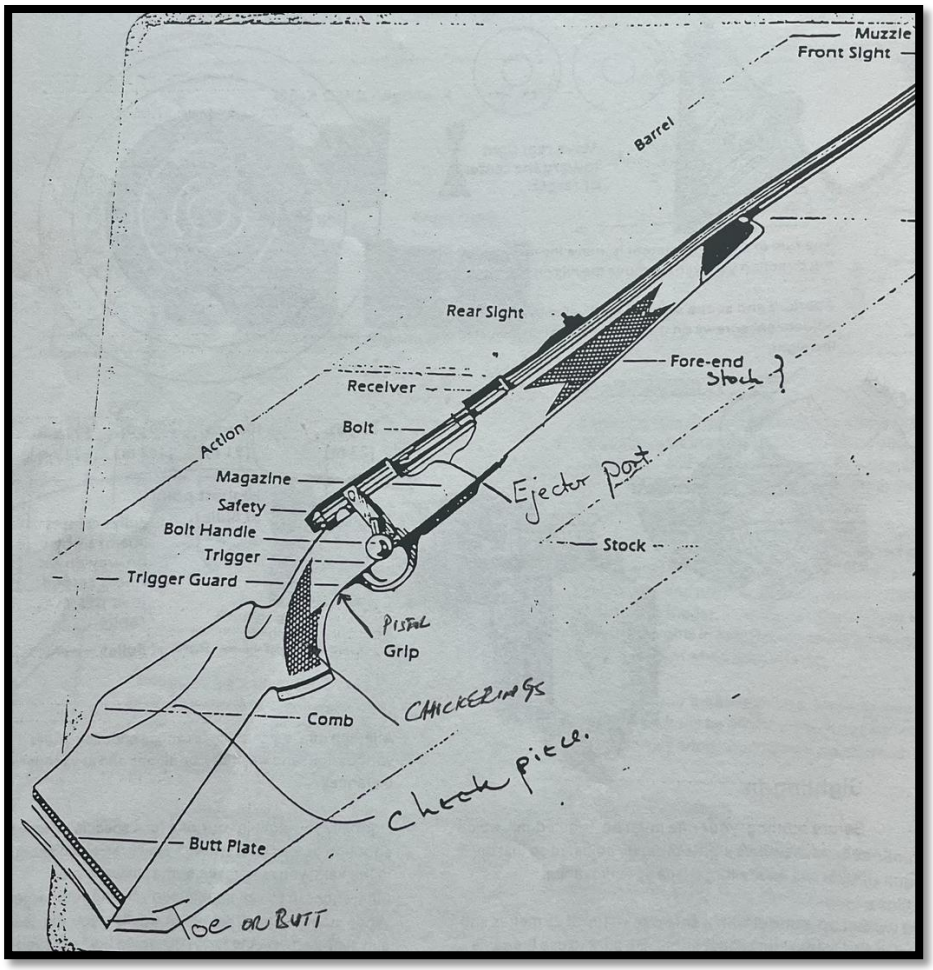


FIRE ARMS CHARACTERISTICS.

- **The Basic Operations of a bolt action of rifle:** Before you can use a firearm safely, you must know the names of its parts and how they work. The mechanisms of most firearms are basically the same and so are their names. Every gun has three major sections; **the stork, action and barrel.** The stork assembly is the handle of the firearm. It is usually made of wood or synthetic material. The action assembly is the heart of the firearm. It contains the moving parts which load the gun, fire the ammunition and extracting the empty shell case. The barrel assembly is the metal tube through which the bullet or shot travels when the gun is fired.
- **Rifled Weapons –** these are weapons with the inside of the barrel being cut/scored with a number of spiral grooves that run parallel to each other from the breech to the muzzle. The higher area between the grooves is called lands. After discharge, the bullet is forced down the barrel and the lands twist

the bullet causing it to spin. The spin of the bullet caused by the lands aids in accuracy and distance of the bullet path. See diagram below:

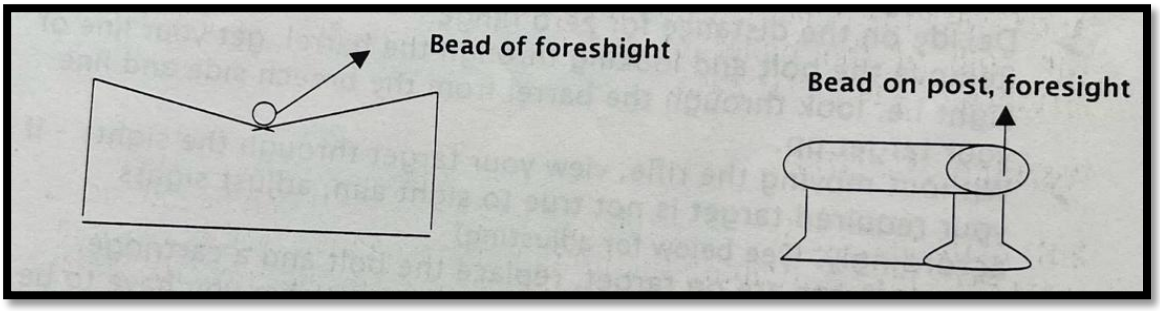




- **Working of a rifle:**
  - **Bolt action –** this action is tubular with a knobbed handle extending from the side, containing the firing pin mechanism inside. When in operation, it is pulled up and back and then pushed forward. When pushed forward, the bolt the bolt strips off a round the round from the magazine and chambers it. The handle is pushed down which locks the bolt in place ready for firing. On the action

down, the firing pin is cocked and once the trigger is pulled, the firing pin is released which strikes the primer and discharges the bullet. On the forward stroke that chambered the round, the back of the cartridge is forced into the bolt face and held by the extractor claw. When the handle is pulled up and pulled back, the extractor claw pulls back the cartridge, which is ejected when the bolt reaches its reverse stop. The procedure is repeated to chamber the next round.

- **Recoil** – large caliber rifles can have heavy recoil. The recoil pad on end of the butt protects your shoulder, but if the rifle is not held properly, you will hurt yourself. Do not be afraid of the recoil; shoulder your rifle firmly before firing.
- **Magazines** – all bolt-action dangerous game rifles have a fixed box magazine. The number of rounds that the magazine will hold depends on the make and model of rifle, e.g. Bruno .375 holds 5 rounds, while Winchester .458 holds 4 (that is without a round in the chamber).
- **Sights** – A sight is a device used to aim the firearm. There are three basic types of sights: **open, aperture and scope.** For dangerous game, open sights work well. There are different sight type's e.g. V-shaped rear sight with a bead foresight, or U-shaped rear sight with blade shaped foresight. This is a personal preference, but V-shaped rear with bead shaped foresight make for much faster aiming. Diagram of foresight below:



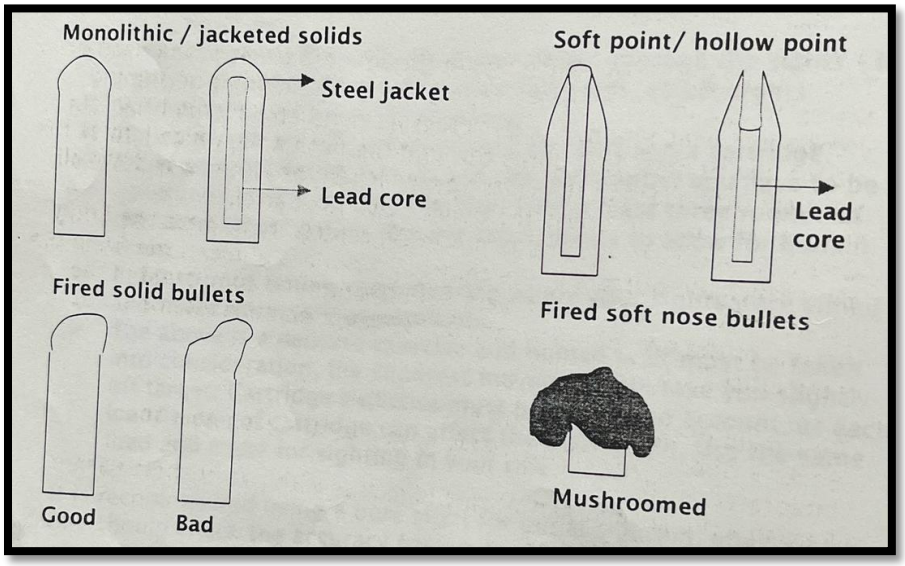
- **Trigger Types** – **Single pressure trigger** – fires as you squeeze. **Double action trigger –** trigger moves some way while squeezing before the trigger is activated. This type is recommended for dangerous game rifles. **Hair trigger –** a trigger that is set to go off as you squeeze. Good for hunting, but bad for dangerous game rifles.

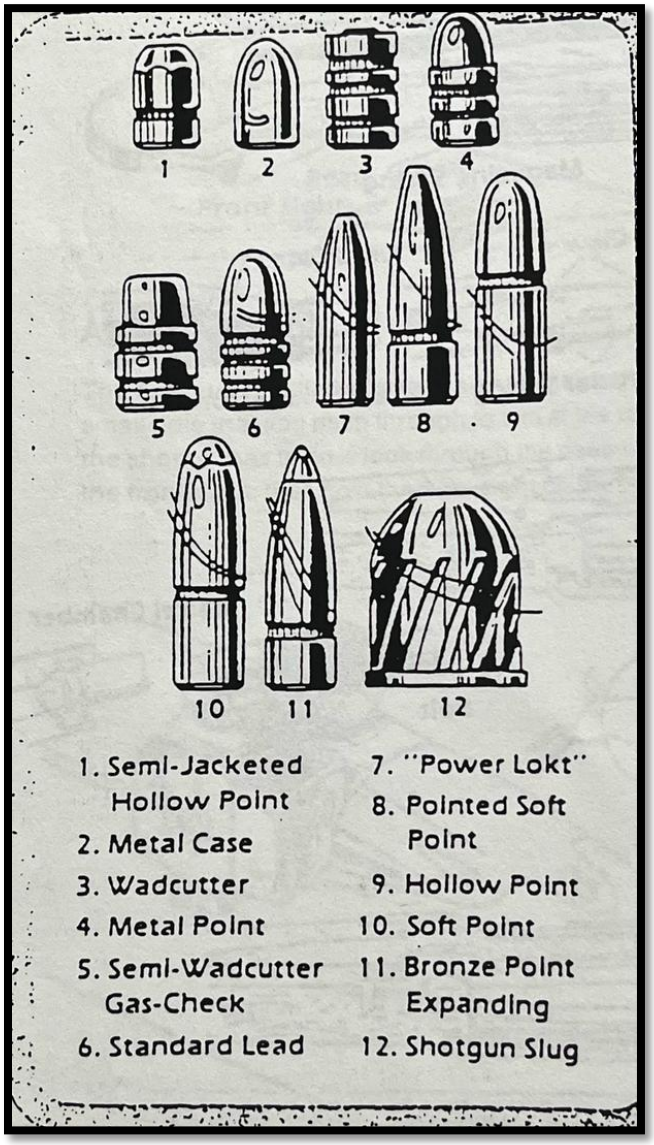
- **Calibre -** the diameter of the bullet and the bore/inner barrel. There are two different caliber measurements – fractions of an inch and millimeters. The European system is most logical as it gives the caliber and case length in millimeters e.g. 7 x 57 is a cartridge of 7mm and case length of 57mm. An **R** means if a case is rimmed or not. Americans are confusing! The caliber is in inches but they have various numbers after which could mean the grains of powder, the date of introduction or the velocity of parent case.

Different Types of Bullets Contractions:

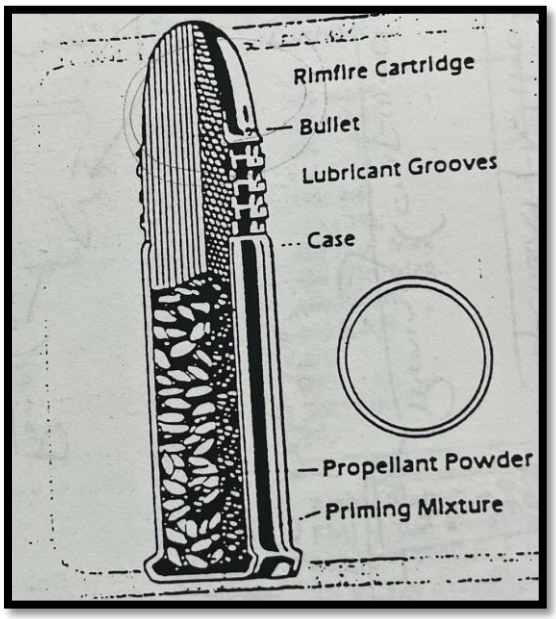
- Ammunition – the ammunition used in rifles, shotguns and handguns varies in size, appearance and parts.
- The Bullet – is the projection that is shot from a rifle or shotgun. The bullet is made of lead and may have a jacket or a harder metal such as copper. Shot is the projectile fired from shotgun. The shot may be a single piece of lead or a number of lead pallets combined in one charge.
- Game or hunting bullets usually have a soft or hollow point. These bullets are designed to expand or flatten upon impact, thus expanding all their energy upon entry. Target bullets often have

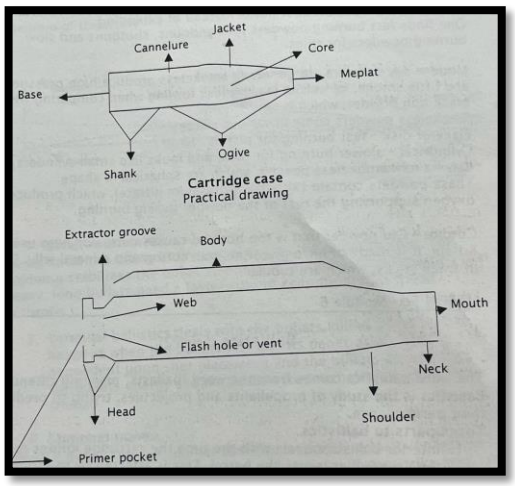
solid points which make a small hole because they do not expand. Bullets and shot come in a variety of different sizes and weights. See diagram below:





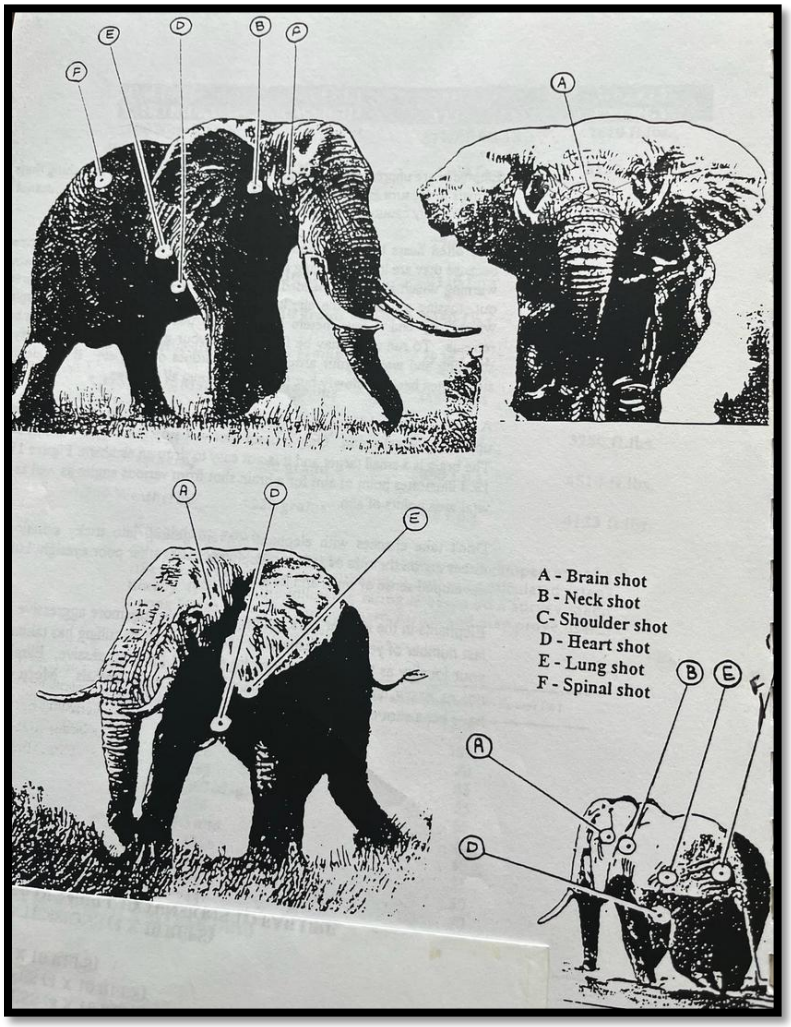
- **Bullet parts: See diagram below:**



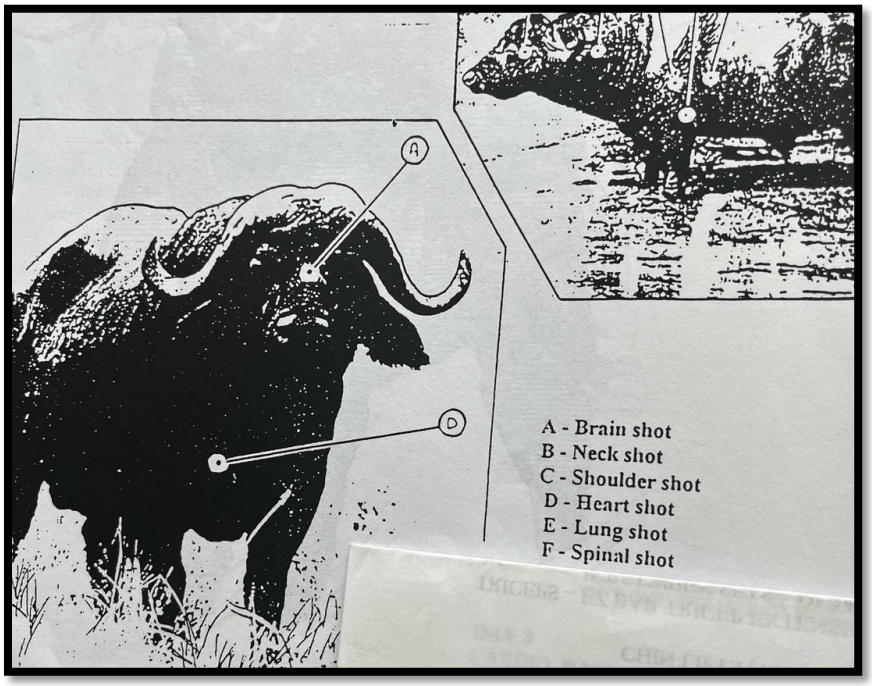


- **Shot Placement for Elephant, Buffalo, Lion and Rhino.** See diagrams below:

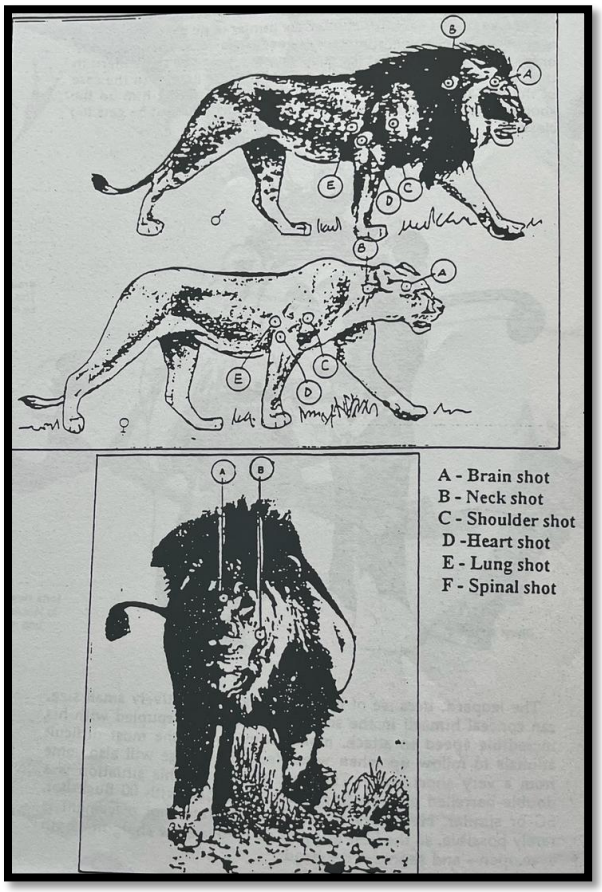
- Elephant:



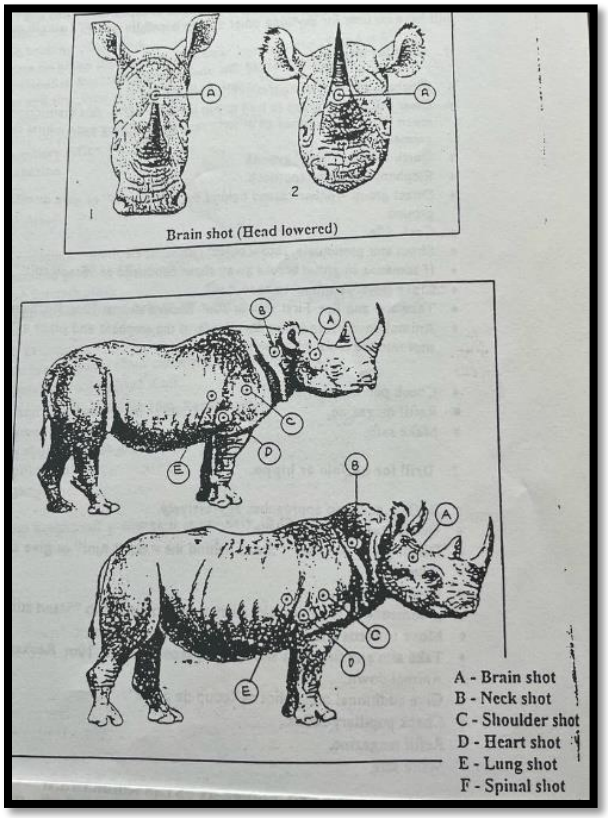
- Buffalo:



- Lion:



- Rhino:



First Aid (2.1.8)

- **Definition**: First aid is the emergency care given to a person who is injured or becomes ill in an environment where there is no professional medical help or where it takes a fairly long time before the medical help arrives. The first aid given to the patient may:
    1. Save life.
    2. Stabilize the person so that when medical help arrives the patient can be transported quickly and safely.
    3. Improve the recovery rate and chances of the patient to recover.
    4. Prevent more complications to their injury and condition.
- **Protocols to follow:** We will learn a strict set of protocols that must be followed step by step. These protocols, if followed correctly will treat the person`s life threatening injuries first and then move on to the not so life threatening injuries. When an accident occurs, you must not panic. Should you panic, you will lose control of the situation and will forget your protocols. Secondly, your patient will be aware of the fact that are panicking and start to panic too. Should the patient start to panic, he/her heart will speed up and this will lead to more complications**. NB// YOU MUST FOLLOW YOUR PROTOCOLS!!**
- When an accident happens, take the following steps:
    1. **Safety** – ensure the area is safe for non-injured guests and for yourself, e.g. if a person has been attacked by a large animal, make sure the animal has gone before you approach the patient.

2. **Communication** – inform the camp that you have a problem, e.g. one of my guests has fallen off the vehicle and broke a leg. Give your location and keep your message short and precise.
3. **Gloves on** – to protect yourself against blood and the possibility of contracting H.I.V etc.
4. **Drink** – for yourself to prevent dehydration and to calm yourself down.

NB// DO NOT PANIC – you know the area, animal behavior, the environment and you know your guest as well. Only approach your patient once you have followed and completed the above protocols.

- **Patient Management**: In every situation, follow the following steps; step by step. The following approach has been tried and field-tested with Emergency Medical Services worldwide. It is called "**Primary Survey**" - It prescribes an approach to an emergency incident of any type and any scale.
    1. **A –** Airway
    2. **B –** Breathing
    3. **C –** Circulation
- **A – Airway management –** ask the person "are you alright", and touch them on the shoulder, if he/she responds they are fully conscious and breathing. Should there be no response, then there is a possibility that the tongue has rolled back into the throat and blocked it. This happens frequently due to shock and poor muscle tone. Should this happen then the person will have difficulty in breathing and your first management is airway. Open using the head tilt, chin lift method, maintain and protect. Scoop the tongue out from the back of the throat using your forefinger of your other hand, hold the tongue between your thumb and forefinger. Do not attempt this procedure if person is semi-conscious as they may bite your finger off. If you have an oral airway apparatus, this can be used just be sure that it is the right size.
- **B –** For Breathing management - Look, listen and feel for breathing at the mouth and nose for a minimum of 10 seconds. Once you have cleared the airway and the patient is still not breathing, then you would have to follow the steps of CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation). CPR is the technique used to revive the heart and lungs. **Cardio –** heart. **Pulmonary –** lungs.
- **Circulation –** Feel for a pulse in the neck for a minimum of 10 seconds. Serious bleeding – use direct pressure.
- **Cardio – Pulmonary Resuscitation:**

    - **Definition –** a procedure which restores heartbeat and breathing for a person who has stopped breathing and keeps the flow of oxygenated blood through the body and to the brain. It causes:
        1. Heart attack
        2. Severe allergic reaction
        3. Drowning
        4. Major accident
    - **Procedure:**
    - Follow the primary protocols – Safety, Communications, Gloves on and Drink. Then ask patient, "are you alright?"
    - **A - Airway** – Look, listen & feel. if no response; clear and maintain airway – jaw thrust.
    - **B- Breathing –** Rescue breathing. Look at the rise and fall of the patient`s chest and listen for any signs of breathing from patient`s mouth.
    - **C – Circulation –** Check your patient`s neck pulse for 10 seconds; if no pulse, begin heart (cardiac) massage. Position of hands and patient for opening the airway and mouth-to-

mouth respiration. If there is no sign of any breathing, give person mouth-to-mouth. Follow steps below:

- 2 x breaths using the safe-T breathe while maintaining the airway with the jaw thrust. Remember to close (pinch) the nostrils together. With 2 fingers follow from the base of rib cage up to the sternum, measure two finger spaces above sternum then place palm flat and then place the other hand on top of palm. Then lock arms and using shoulder pressure, give 15 compressions and two breathes; then check pulse for 10 seconds and if there`s no pulse, - continue into cycle of 4 – 15 compressions and two breathes. See diagram below:



- **Complication in CPR –** Broken ribs. Patient vomiting and the vomit blocking the airway. Should this happen, turn the patient onto his side by Log-Roll, facing away from you. When vomiting has stopped, clear the airway and roll him back onto his back; maintain the airway and start giving breathes through the safe-T-breathe.
- **Neck Management –** Do not move the person`s neck, keep the neck in the position you find it and support it in that position. It is very important to support the neck at all times, if there are other injuries that you have to attend, show one of your guests how to support neck and tell them not to move it.

- **When to stop CPR?**
  1. When the patient starts to breathe on his/her own and a pulse be felt.
  2. When a medical person arrives on the scene and takes over from you.
  3. When you are too exhausted to carry on anymore.
- **Management after Resuscitation:**
  1. Maintain the airway.
  2. Check breathing and circulation every few minutes.
  3. Place person in recovery position; only if person has no neck injury.
  4. Wit for medical help, or management to arrive. Try to get someone to communicate to camp/ambulance while you are administering CPR.
- **Choking:** The universal sign for choking is when a person holds their hand to their throat and they cannot breathe. If you are dealing with a partial or complete airway obstruction from a foreign body you must encourage the patient to cough and only then if they cannot cough the object out intervene and perform abdominal thrusts (Heimlich maneuver).
- **Disembowelment:** Should the person`s stomach be ripped open by buffalo and their insides are hanging out, wash the exposed bowels with clean water to remove any sand. Then wrap the bowel from drying up. Tell the person not move or cough as more bowels may protrude.

- **Stab Wounds:** If the knife or object is still in place, do not remove the penetrating object, this will prevent the wound from bleeding. Make a ring bandage (kgare) and stabilize the penetrating object so that it does not move around. Apply a roller bandage to secure it in place, elevate the limb in a triangular bandage or if e leg, support it against the other leg and elevate slightly.
- **Severe Burns**: - Should the person still be on fire and running around, Stop person, **Drop** the person to the ground, and **Roll** the person to put out the fire. Gently pour a bucket of water, same temperature as tap water over the person to cool the burns down. Check the A,B,C`s and then manage the burn wounds:
    1. Cut all loose clothing off the person. Do not pull any burnt clothing off.
    2. Remove rings and watches and any jewelry if you can. Do not apply any oil, butter, fat, egg white or any other substance. This will cause severe infection at a later stage.
    3. Wrap the person in glad wrap or a clean sheet.
    4. Elevate the arms and legs and rest their head on a pillow.
- **Bones and Fractures:**

    Signs:
    - Pain
    - Swelling
    - Loss of function
    - Shortening of the injured limb.
- **Management:**
    - Remove watches and jewelry on the injured arm.
    - Elevate the injured arm so that it is supported against the chest and then support with a triangular bandage and apply packing around the arm.
- **Heat Exhaustion & Dehydration:** This is commonly caused by lack of water and salts in the body. This may be caused by over exertion in hot environments; people not used to hot environments and in elderly people it may follow an illness. This condition can worsen in the presence of a stomach illness resulting in vomiting and diarrhea.

    Symptoms:
    - Exhaustion and restlessness.
    - Headache, dizziness and nausea.
    - Muscular cramps in abdomen and lower legs.
    - Pale complexion, cold and clammy skin.
    - Fast breathing, temperature drops and person may faint/pass out on sudden movement.
- **Management:**
    - Take person to cooler environment.
    - If conscious, let them drink sips of water.
    - Loosen tight fitting clothes and wipe face, neck and shoulders with damp cloth.
    - If patient is fully conscious, allow them to drink a re-hydrate with water or mix re-hydrate sachet with water for the patient to drink.
    - If patient is semiconscious, or unconscious put them in recovery position and monitor A, B, C`s.
    - This is a common problem with guests coming to Africa. They are not used to the heat and often don`t enough water. People who are taking Malaria prophylactics are more prone to dehydration. Make sure your guests drink sufficient water.
- **Person who collapses.**
    1. Safety.
    2. Communication.

3. Gloves.
4. Ask your patient, if they are alright.
5. Airway management and breathing.
6. Put them into the recovery position, cool their face with wet cloth and make some shade for them. Then follow treatment for heat exhaustion.

- **Snake Bites:**
    1. Identify the snake (if possible, but don`t waste time), it is not necessary to kill the snake; even if you are not sure what snake it was.
    2. Tell the patient to lie down.
    3. Calm them down and tell them that they won`t die. If the person starts to panic their heart will speed up and the poison will move faster around their body. So keep calming them down; assuring them that they will be fine.
    4. Snake bites are almost always on the leg or arms. While the person is lying down, take a crepe bandage and bandage down from top of limb, just above the bite and back again. This known as a distal bandage and it should be firm but not too tight. The reason you are doing is because you need to restrict the venom from flowing to the rest of the body.
    5. Should the person be bitten on the leg, once you have bandaged it, support the bitten leg to the other leg in the same way you would for a broken leg.
    6. **Keep the person calm!!**
- **Venom in the eyes: -** Do not rub the eye!! Wash the eye with water for about 20 minutes, if you don`t have water use any bland liquid, i.e. tea, beer or urine etc. A sterile pad can be used for both eyes and the person should recover within 24 to 48 hrs. The same management must be applied to a person with any other chemical in their eyes.
- **Scorpion Stings**: - Apply ice on to the sting sight. If you have Aspivenin, use it immediately and monitor the situation.
- **Bee Stings**: - Do not pull sting out, use a knife and scrap sting off, keeping knife vertical or use Aspivenin. Always monitor the airway and breathing in case the person is allergic to bee sting.
- **Transporting Injured People**:
    1. Use spinal board or a table.
    2. Log roll the person onto the spinal board.
    3. Secure person onto the spinal board with spider harness and secure neck.
    4. Move person into the shade and always support neck.
    5. Should the person start to vomit while lying on their back, you must log roll on their side or else they will swallow own vomit and it will block their airway, and they will not be able to breathe properly.