

Train Like a Champion: 10-Week Olympic Airgun Program for Junior Shooters

Program Structure

Age Group: 13–18 years

Session Duration: 2.5 hours per week

Group Size: Adaptable (ideal: 6–10 athletes)

Coach-to-Athlete Ratio: 1:6 preferred

Session Flow: Warm-up → Technical Focus → Practice Drills → Reflection

Weekly Breakdown

Week 1 – Foundations & Safety First

Introduction, Safe Self, Safe Handling, and Shooting Basics

Warm-up (15 min): Stretching, light cardio, focus game

30 minutes match

Topics Covered:

Range safety rules & equipment orientation

Stance, grip, posture

Sight alignment vs. sight picture

Drills:

Getting in & out of the position exercise

Dry fire exercises (stance/grip check)

Wall drills with follow-through

Mental Skill: Breath awareness intro

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Q&A, confidence circle

Week 2 – Precision Starts Here

Sight Picture & Natural Point of Aim (NPA)

Warm-up (10 min): Balance board + focus game

Topics Covered:

Eye dominance and aiming stability
Establishing and testing NPA

Drills:

Approaching the target drill (piece of tape attached to the target)

Switching between dominant / non dominant side

Dry fire to wall target for NPA consistency

Live fire: 5-shot groups on large black dot

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: Focus routine: 3 breaths + visual cue

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Journaling shot feel

Week 3 – The Trigger & The Mind

Smooth Trigger Control & Emotional Awareness

Warm-up (10 min): Slow-motion “trigger squeeze” races

Topics Covered:

Trigger pressure and isolation
Avoiding anticipation/flinching

Drills:

Guessing the score by shooter’s reaction and follow through

Vocalising dry fire

“Surprise break” drill

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: Emotional labeling (name the feeling)

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Coach feedback + personal challenge

Week 4 – The Power of Process

Developing the Shot Routine

Warm-up (15 min): Visualisation walk-throughs

Topics Covered:

Components of a repeatable shot routine

Mental cues for each phase (load → settle → fire → follow-through)

Drills:

Shot process cut-out activity
Write & test personal shot routine
3-shot series with full routine

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: Cue word selection (e.g., “still,” “smooth”)

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Routine peer-sharing

Week 5 – Rhythm & Responsibility

Time Management & Match Rhythm

Warm-up (10 min): Time-boxed games

Topics Covered:

Introduction to 10m match timing rules
Rhythm vs. rushing vs. waiting

Drills:

Shot ladder (5 shots in 5,4,3,2 minutes)
30-shot practice with shot clock
“Pace your 10” challenge
Teams of two

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: Self-checks between shots

Wrap-Up: Shot timer feedback + pacing chart

Week 6 – Shoot with Purpose

Goal-Oriented Practice & Journal Use

Warm-up (15 min): Confidence map (identify strengths)

Topics Covered:

SMART goals for shooting practice
Pre- and post-shot reflection tools

Drills:

21 points game
Partner journal: call each shot
Target zones for intention-based scoring

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: Growth mindset mini-lesson

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Goal-sharing and shot quality discussion

Week 7 – Simulating Pressure

Performing Under Stress

Warm-up (15 min): Heart-rate elevation drill + group cheer

Topics Covered:

Understanding physiological stress
“Red, Yellow, Green” awareness zones

Drills:

20 shot weaknesses & strengths drill
Pressure drills: challenge ladder, time squeeze
Group “finals shot” relay

30 minutes free practice

Mental Skill: 5-second recovery breath technique

Wrap-Up: Cool down, How did you feel? What worked?

Week 8 – Pre-Match Prep

Match Rituals & Strategy

Warm-up (15 min): Mock gear check + self-talk stations

Topics Covered:

Planning for match day: nutrition, gear, mindset
Visualising competition success

Drills:

1 perfect shot drill
Simulated 20-shot match under conditions
“Distraction drills” (intentional noise, movement)

Mental Skill: Match-day mental checklist

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Create your personal match card

Week 9 – Finals Format & Focus

International Finals Simulation

Warm-up (10 min): “10-ring drop” focus drill

Topics Covered:

ISSF finals rules and expectations
Managing elimination rounds

Drills:

Finals format: top 4 start (by handicap) → elimination style
Peer judging & scoring practice

Mental Skill: Reset routine between rounds

Wrap-Up: Cool down, Group debrief + learning review

Week 10 – Champion Mindset: Mock Match Day

Showcase & Celebration

Warm-up (15 min): Positive memory recall

Event:

Full 60-shot match with sighters
Finals for top 4
Parents/spectators welcome (optional)

Mental Skill: Performance journaling + future visioning

Wrap-Up:

Individual feedback from coaches
Award ceremony (certificates, personal notes)
Group reflection circle: “I used to... now I...”

Built-In Mental Training Theme and their Benefits

- Breathing & Centering
- Pre-Shot Routines
- Focus Anchors
- Managing Pressure
- Growth Mindset
- Emotional Regulation
- Journaling & Reflection

Breathing & Centering

The Benefit - Learning to slow and control breathing improves self-awareness and emotional regulation. In school, during exams, or in social situations, this technique helps reduce anxiety, steady nerves, and stay present.

“When I feel overwhelmed, I take three slow breaths to reset.”

Pre-Shot Routines

The Benefit - Developing a routine before each shot teaches the power of **intentional preparation**. Whether it's preparing for a presentation, starting homework, or calming before a big game, routines build confidence and reduce uncertainty.

“I always review my steps before I begin something important.”

Focus Anchors

The Benefit - Focus anchors—like keywords or visual triggers—help young people maintain attention amid distractions. This is invaluable in classrooms, sports, music, or conversations where focus fades.

“When I catch my mind wandering, I use my focus word to come back.”

Managing Pressure

The Benefit - Handling match pressure teaches strategies to perform under stress. These skills transfer to test-taking, job interviews, and conflict resolution—any situation where nerves threaten performance.

“I learned how to stay calm when everything feels intense.”

Growth Mindset

The Benefit - The belief that effort and persistence lead to improvement encourages resilience. Instead of fearing failure, young shooters learn to view challenges as opportunities—essential for lifelong learning and adaptability.

“I’m not good at this... yet.”

Emotional Regulation

The Benefit - Recognising, naming, and processing emotions fosters self-control and empathy. This supports better decision-making, healthier relationships, and mental wellbeing.

“I know when I’m frustrated, and I have ways to manage it.”

Journaling & Reflection

The Benefit - Regular reflection improves self-awareness, goal setting, and emotional processing. Journaling encourages introspection, tracks progress, and helps young people find their voice.

“Writing about my day helps me understand myself better.”