

## **The difference between a “Trap” gun and a “Field” gun.**

Trap shooting is a specialized sport where you are shooting a rising target, and under normal situations, many targets in a single day. As such, “Trap” guns have evolved to “fit” this sport. More details in a moment.

A “Field” gun is a general term for guns used in the field for hunting, most generally birds. When thought of that way the distinction becomes easier to see. Generally a field gun is light, to make carrying it in sometimes-rough terrain easier. It may also be shorter to make it easier to wield in brushy environments. Further, a field gun is designed to be carried and then quickly shouldered when shot. The “sight plane” on a field gun results in what is called a “flat shooting” gun, that is to say, it shoots exactly where it is aimed. This works well when the quarry may be flying in any direction. Finally, field guns are rarely shot more than a few dozen times in most outings.

A trap gun is different first in that it is generally a pound or more heavier than a similar field gun. It’s simple physics, a heavier gun helps absorb recoil. This helps to make it more comfortable to shoot when in most competitions it is common to shoot hundreds of shells in a single meet.

A trap gun usually also has a longer barrel; in break open guns a 32” for over under and 34” in single barrels is the norm. With pumps and semi autos a 28” barrel is the minimum with 30” more common. A longer barrel helps with the sight plane and can also smooth out the swing to the target. Many times Trap guns have either a “Monte Carlo” or “Parallel” stock design that works well with the way trap is shot. Unlike hunting, you pre-mount the gun before calling for your target.

Trap guns generally have a rib that slopes to the front. This changes the point of impact and changes a flat shooting gun to one that shoots higher than where aimed. When pursuing rising targets it builds in the “Lead” needed to shoot them.

There are manufacturers that make both field and trap models of the same gun. Remington makes the 870 in “Express”, this would be what you would find at a WalMart or similar store. These are the field grade guns. There were older Wingmaster’s that were also generally field guns. They also make the 870 in a number of trap models, TB, TC, Classic Trap and others over the years. The semi auto Remington’s 1100 and 11-87 also come in both field and trap configurations. Browning makes its Citori’s in field grades, Sporting and Trap configurations. And of course there are dedicated Trap Guns such as the Browning BT-99 single shot.

An “Express” would sell for around \$300, an older used TB or TC in the \$500 to \$750 range and a new 870 Classic Trap for around \$850. What do you get for the additional money? The major differences are as outlined above with trap versions being made from higher quality materials designed for the higher volume of shooting. It is not uncommon for a long time trap shooter to have fired well over 100,000 rounds through a gun with little in the way of maintenance. A field gun would never approach that longevity. They also have the design modifications mentioned and may even include advanced options such as an adjustable comb and or butt plate.