



# The South East Falconry Group

## Falconry - How to get started

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“How to start off in falconry? Put simply there’s a right way and a wrong way, well, there are lots of wrong ways!”

The aim of all Clubs, responsible falconers and authors of falconry manuals is to ensure that anyone wishing to take up this most noble and ancient of hunting sports does so in a way that avoids as many of the possible wrongs ways as possible. This remains a core objective of the South East Falconry Group.

The following principles are my definition of the right way.

### **Research the subject thoroughly *before* you start**

- You need to appreciate the time, space and commitment falconry demands
- You will need to understand the every day language, terms and practices used
- You will need to understand the birds used, their requirements and match them to your own circumstances & experience

### **Identify and enlist support *before* you start**

- You can get by on your own but you'll make mistakes and these mistakes may be fatal as far as your hawk/falcon is concerned. So unless you have no means of communication there's no excuse for not making contact with another falconer or a club
- Falconry is a hunting sport so make sure you get out and gain some first-hand experience seeing birds handled, slipped and retrieved in the hunting field
- Seek an apprenticeship with a local falconer or attend one of the many residential falconry courses

### **Preparation is essential**

- Select the type of hawk you intend to purchase making sure you have suitable land on which to train and hunt your bird
- Obtain the appropriate falconry equipment and hawk furniture
- Prepare your mews
- Identify a reputable breeder using recommendations where possible
- Check your state of preparedness with your mentor / club
- Order you hawk

### **Final thoughts**

- Always put the welfare of your bird above every other consideration
- Don't be afraid to seek help. Even the most experience falconer doesn't know everything
- There are no excuses. Modern treaties on falconry abound (E, Ford, J. Perry-Jones), practical courses are offered by most falconry centres (Hawk Conservancy, Eagle Heights, Scottish Falconry Academy)
- Falconry is nothing if not pluralistic. If you seek advice, seek opinions from as many people as you can and form your own opinion from the majority