

## Basic Distance Estimating

### Rough Estimate Method:

This is where shooting 3-D all summer can really pay off. Based on the size of the animal, you can usually guess the distance to approaching game to plus or minus five yards. If this is the only method you have time to use before the shot opportunity presents itself, keep the maximum shot distance to two-thirds of your normal effective range.

### Incremental Distance Method:

Since most of us practice at fixed incremental distances, this is by far the most common range estimation method used when bowhunting. As you stalk an animal, try and pick out 20, 30 and 40 yards by looking out along the ground. Once the animal you are stalking crosses at one of these "known" distances, be ready to take the shot. It is best to practice this method before using it in an action-packed stalking situation! Practice this method all year long when doing common things like walking the dog or going to the mailbox.

### Halfway Mark Method:

This involves looking at the animal or likely shooting spot and picking a spot halfway between your position and judging the distance to that spot. Once you feel you know that distance, double it and make the shot. Why does this method work? It is easier to judge distance to a closer spot, and you are not concentrating on the animal. This gives the added advantage of allowing your nerves to settle before taking the shot. The only disadvantage is you must take the time to visually leave the animal to judge the distance, and then get back on target before the shot opportunity disappears. For example, imagine you are stalking a bighorn sheep bedded below a rock ledge. You can get no closer, as you have run out of cover. Pick out a spot on the ground that looks about halfway between you and the bedded sheep. If that spot looks to be about 16 yards away, double that distance and prepare for a 32-yard shot when he rises out of his bed.

Sometimes you have enough time to use all three methods and average the results. This yields the most accurate yardage estimation.

Whether hunting from a ground blind, a treestand or stalking animals on foot, the need to be able to accurately judge yardage is imperative to bowhunting success.