

Clarification of Benchrest Rules

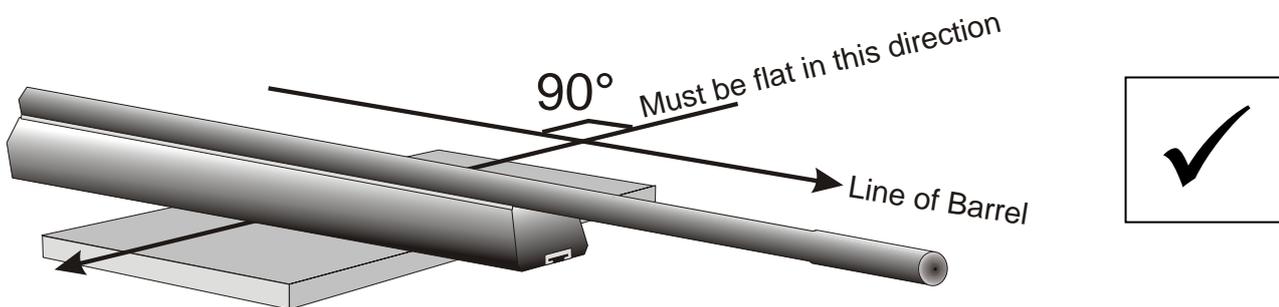
The Rest

Basically the rest used in NSRA Benchrest Shooting should be a flat platform that supports the weight of the rifle but **provides no further control**. This may be an adjustable type shooting rest or a simple block of wood or other material. The important part is the portion of the rest that is in contact with the rifle. This part of the rest must be flat. In the NSRA Rules it states:

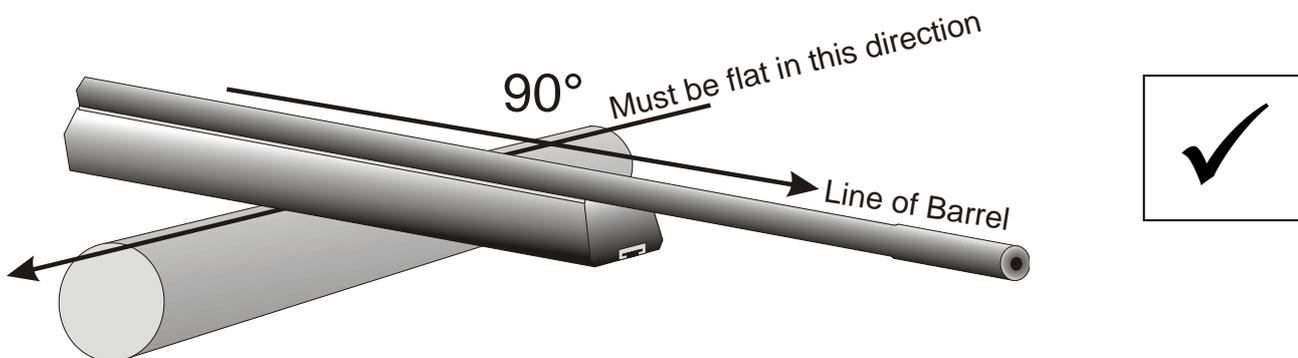
8.16.5.2 The area of the rest that supports the fore-end of the rifle:

8.16.5.2.1 Must be flat in the horizontal plane at right angles to the rifle barrel where it contacts the rifle stock;

This means that the area that is in contact with the stock has nothing that would control the rifle sideways. This allows the use of a flat plate as in the diagram below.



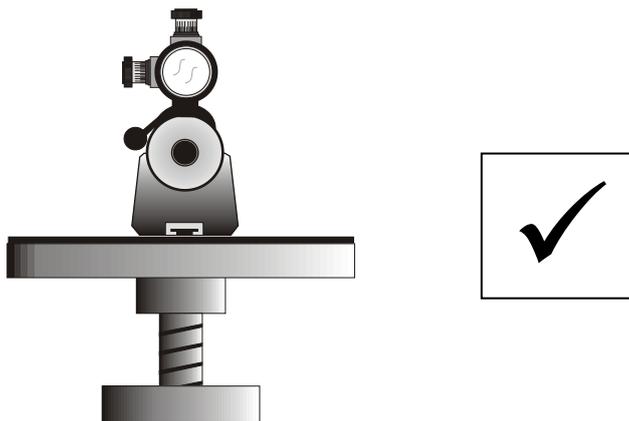
You can also use a rounded surface (like a cylindrical one in the diagram below) so long as it is straight in the direction perpendicular to the stock of the rifle as shown.



Many commercial rests have vertical extensions (either fixed or adjustable) that are made to control sideways movement. To maintain a flat platform these may not be used when shooting. To this end In the NSRA Rules it states:

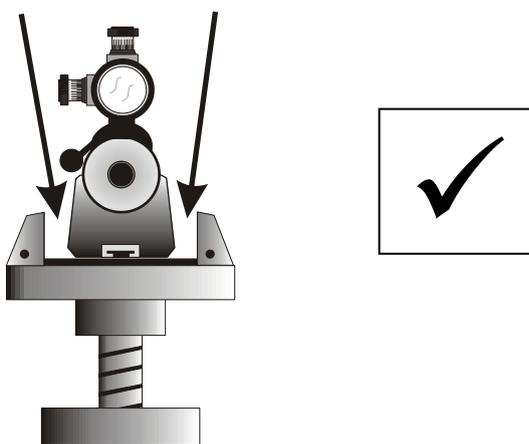
8.16.5.3 The rest may have vertical extensions at its sides projecting upwards to prevent the rifle falling off the rest between shots and when re-loading, but the fore-end must be visibly clear of these extensions when the shooter is in the firing position.

This means that the extensions must be removed or a clearly visible gap is maintained on either side of the stock whilst shooting to ensure the forend of the gun receives no further support other than the flat platform indicated earlier.



To ensure that there is a sufficient gap that is visible to a range officer whilst shooting is taking place the gap should be maintained at greater than 15mm on both sides of the rifle stock.

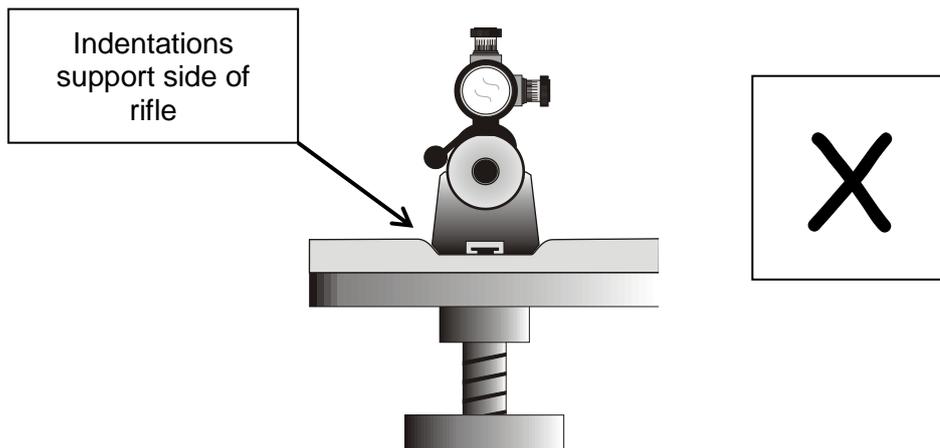
Gap must be greater than 15mm on both sides



In addition to this the rules further define elements that ensure that the rifle is not controlled. In the rules the rest:

- 8.16.5.2.2 must be made of a non-pliable material, such as metal or wood;
- 8.16.5.2.3 may have a thin, soft covering, such as cloth, carpet or leather, but the covering must be sufficiently thin that no support is given to either side of the fore-end.

This ensures the surface of the rest isn't modified by the weight of the rifle and gain sideways support.

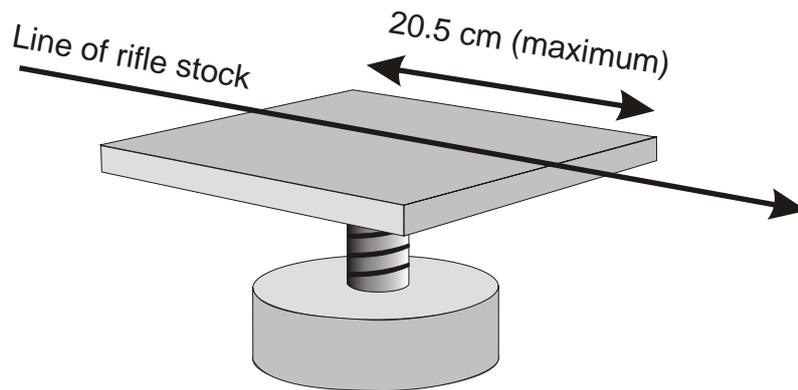


Other factors must be taken into account when ensuring the rest only supports the rifle. Back to the rule that states:

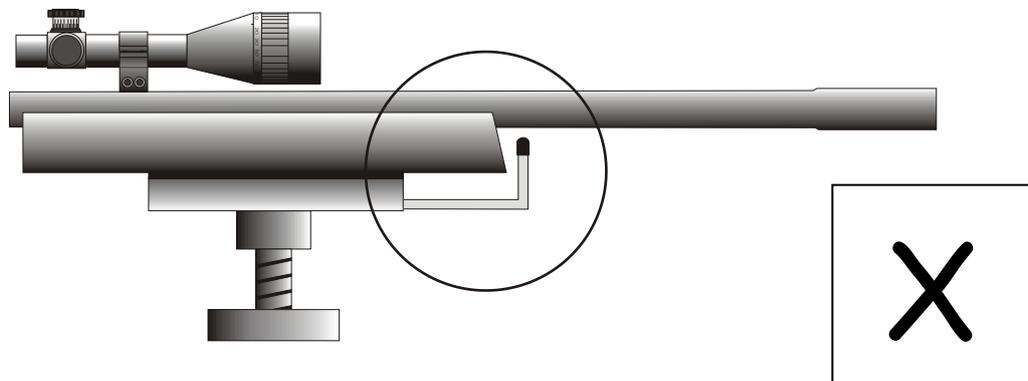
8.16.5.1 The rest may be of any type of material, may be adjustable for height and may only support the fore-end of the rifle. It may not be fixed to the bench or the fore-end, but must be free to move in relation to both. It must not control the rifle in any way.

The contact area of the stock and the rest would be affected by this rule. If a very long contact area was used, say the full length of the forend, it would give undue control to the whole rifle

The base of the rest itself may be of any size but the contact area with the rifle must be less than 20.5cm long



Some commercial rests are fitted with a forend stop. This limits the forward movement of the stock on the rest and provides a reference point to return the stock to its original position after firing. As such this can also be considered adding further control to the rifle and is prohibited.



Any forend stop must be removed from the rest or turned so that it can play no part in shooting.