



THE FIVE PILLARS OF SHEARING



The Five Pillars of Shearing are the core underlying principles that you can use to develop an efficient shearing style. These core principles were developed by shearing coaches from around Australia.

To become a competent shearer individuals need to focus on the Pillars.

1. GEAR AND CUT

- » Keep handpiece well lubricated and maintained
- » Regularly check plant and equipment
- » Set height of downtube

Sharpening NOT Grinding:

- » There is no in between; tools are either sharp or blunt!
- » Don't use dull emery papers
- » Change emery papers regularly
- » Clean disks thoroughly
- » Tighten nuts on discs
- » Find the radius and set the height of the pendulum

Combs:

- » Comb selection and maintenance
- » Keep wet and dry paper on stand at all times
- » Regularly set the throw and lead correctly



2. POSITION

- » Transition between section
- » Feet Position
 - Direction
 - Feet in relation to sheep
- » Timing of footwork
- » Knee pressure / position
- » Position from drag
- » Sheep position
 - Balance
 - Comfort
 - Height
 - Angle
- » Position of shearer/sheep to downtube
- » Sheep dispatch



Shearer Position (body)

- » Position of shearer to sheep
 - In line (shoulders, hips, knees, feet & head)
 - Weight transfer
 - Height
 - Weight distribution
- » Eye use
- » Handpiece return
- » Never stop thinking



Downtube position

- » Too close
- » Too wide
- » Angles (sheep)
- » Height of cog



TAKE HOME MESSAGE FROM SHANNON WARNEST

“A well maintained handpiece with sharp combs and cutters will increase tallies and make the job easier. It's estimated that over 70% of professional shearers do not get a true cut. **Make sure you are not one of the 70%!**”

3. FREE HAND

Use your freehand to:

- » Apply pressure points
- » Manipulate skin
- » Free wool
- » Position sheep
- » Achieve grips and angles of freehand
- » Placement
- » Timing
- » Roll wool, don't pull



4. GRIP

Grip Points

- » Forward
- » Back
- » Too Tight
- » Loose (release the back of the handpiece)



Thumb Position

- » High
- » Low
- » Forward
- » Back



Tips:

- » Point index finger for blows that run away from your body
- » Point thumb for blows that run across your body

5. ENTRY

- » Look for bare surfaces
- » Leading tooth on skin
- » Start blow slightly back from wool line
- » Full comb
- » Flat comb
- » Single tooth entry (where necessary)
- » Angle
- » Look for entry point
- » Finish off the blows
- » Under the tail right side in crutch (alternative for learners)



TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- Once these core principles are clearly understood; the next step is to develop a sequence of steps that will lead to a more proficient method of shearing.
- The Pillars are a diagnostic tool to overcome any problem you may be having with your shearing.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

Comfortable Sheep - Comfortable Shearer - Keep Your Spine in Line

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