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I have recently bought a new Miroku Shotgun, which I use for Sporting Clays and American Skeet. I think it is a little long in the stock dimensions for me so I am told that I need to cut some wood off the length of the stock. It has a beautiful piece of walnut and it seems a shame to butcher it. It measures 375mm from the trigger to the middle of the pad. Is this too long?

Alan Simpson, Grafton NSW

375mm is a fairly typical stock length (or “length of pull” as it is technically referred to) for most mass produced shotguns. It is a fluke if it is perfect for you personally “straight out of the box”.

The correct length depends on many things such as your height, arm length, your personal technique and the actual event you will be using the gun for. For example in Trap Shooting where the gun is pre mounted before calling for the target to be released a stock generally is longer because the gun can be maneuvered into the most comfortable position on the shooters shoulder. For field shooting where there is no time generally to place the gun deliberately in the shoulder a shorter stock will be more practical. Personally for Trap I shoot 378 mm and I am 186cm tall and have what is considered a fairly erect style. This means I do not lean over the gun by bending forward from the waist. Shooters that get over their gun by bending forward can shoot greater stock lengths as the stretch their body’s forward. In Sporting Clays I would never recommend this technique so your length of 375mm may largely depend on the build of your body. I recommend going down to your local range and asking if you can mount some other guns until you find one that feels comfortable then quickly note its length. Don’t worry too much about cutting the wood of your stock if you have to. A beautiful looking shotgun is worthless unless you can hit something with it.

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