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My interest in the shooting sports has increased since watching Suzie Balogh winning a Gold Medal at the recent Athens Olympics. My partner is a very keen shooter and I was wondering which discipline of shooting would be the easiest for me to participate in if I wanted to compete for Australia at the next Olympics.

Cheryl Norris, Canterbury, Vic

Cheryl to be very honest I doubt any new competitor to the sport could make the next Olympics in any of the shooting disciplines. Everybody needs to set goals, but I would suggest the 2012 Olympics to be a more realistic option. Even with unlimited resources to train daily the fact that you have no competition experience would be your biggest disadvantage. Certainly in Australia the Women's Shotgun team has proved to be very strong with all of our girls finishing in the top seven in Athens. The results were not as good in Rifle and Pistol, but this does not reflect in any way the ability of our competitors, but more so how good the other countries are. Indeed Rifle and Pistol tend to be far more technical than the Shotgun events. Shotgun shooters have a good deal of natural hand to eye co-ordination and if you are generally competent with any ball or racquet sports then the clay target events where a shotgun is used may indeed be worth considering. I would advise no matter what event you chose to get a good coach to teach you the basic fundamentals before you pick up any bad habits. Most clubs will have a club coach to at least offer you the right advice on basic gun fit, which should be your starting point. The opportunities for women in our sport at the moment are endless as Suzie has proved. Look forward to more success at the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.

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