

NUTS AND BOLTS

Optimizing your image

Here are some tips you can use to obtain an optimal image:

- For a large patient, use a lower scanning **frequency** (and for a small patient, use a higher scanning frequency).
- Adjust the sector **width** and **depth** so that you display only the structures you are interested in for each clip you record. Always expect to adjust these when you alter the window (e.g., changing from parasternal to apical views, or from apical to suprasternal).
- Try not to over **gain** your images, especially if you are scanning in a well-lit environment. You can use **TGC** to enhance the display of deeper structures. If you are using a machine that doesn't do this automatically just ramp down the top two or three sliders to reduce the echoes from nearest the probe.
- Move the **focus** to line up with any structure you are especially interested in. You can use a high-resolution **zoom** to help improve the image, too.
- **Freeze**, then **trackball**, can help if you want to slowly scroll through your images to give yourself more time to work out what's happening.
- Adjust Doppler velocity **scales** and **sweep speed** to display two or three waveforms with the waveform taking up at least two-thirds of the available y-axis display.
- Archive good quality clips using the ECG to trigger them, and **cycle select** to make sure you save the best example.

