

COACHING INSTRUCTIONS

Archery Shooting Sequence

STEP	WHEN	ACTION	COACHING NOTES
Stance	Once each archer has their bow and spectators are behind the wait line.	Archers straddle the firing line, feet hip width apart. Remind left-handed archers to check they're facing their quiver and it's not behind them!	Belly button centered. Weight should be equally over both feet, standing tall and straight. Shoulders are stacked over hips. Side of the archer's body is towards the target, not facing it.
RANGE IS NOW OPEN	Only when all of this is true: - archers are comfortably situated on the firing line - coaches are behind the firing line - spectators are behind the wait line - the range is clear	Archers can start shooting. This is the earliest point at which archers should touch the arrows.	All of the steps between here and retrieving arrows can either be called by the range captain one at a time, to remind archers or keep over-enthusiastic ones in check, or completed by archers at their own pace.
Bow Hand	As archers are preparing to shoot.	The bow hand should be centered comfortably on the handle. This is a loose grip with no squeezing or twisting.	If an archer is struggling with the bow twisting, get them to hold with an open hand, just resting the bow between their thumb and index finger with their fingers outstretched. This can also be helpful if you notice they are holding the bow out in front of them and trying to draw back from there; with no grip, they'll only be able to hold it up with tension on the string.

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<p>Load</p>	<p>Once stance looks comfortable and the bow is gripped gently.</p>	<p>Archers take an arrow from the ground quiver and nock it on the string just below the brass nocking point. Ensure the nock is firmly clicked in.</p> <p>Odd fletching toward the archer.</p> <p>Arrow is set on the rest.</p> <p>A dropped arrow is a shot arrow.</p>	<p>Nock should be clipped on the string just below the brass nocking point, with the odd coloured fletching towards the archer's bow arm. This alignment means the fletching doesn't get crushed against the bow as the arrow is loosed.</p> <p>Archers might want to hold the arrow in place on the rest as they nock it, but remind them to remove that finger before they shoot – even soft, fluffy fletching can give you a nasty slice at hundreds of metres per second.</p> <p>No archer should attempt to retrieve an arrow that's been dropped until the range is closed and archers have been instructed to retrieve their arrows. The exception is where an arrow has been dropped <i>behind</i> the firing line and a coach feels they can retrieve it safely. What we don't want is people bending over, leaning, reaching and potentially falling over into the open range or into another archer.</p>
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String Hand	After arrows are nocked but before the draw	<p>No more than 3 fingers on the string (pointer above the arrow, middle and ring fingers below).</p> <p>Not gripping the arrow, placed around it.</p> <p>No thumb or little finger – it looks like a Scout sign.</p> <p>String should be held with just the tips of the fingers.</p> <p>Arrow and bow are still pointed downwards and towards the target at this point.</p>	<p>If the arrow is coming off the rest because the archer is pinching it, have them move all their fingers to below the arrow, or try taking their ring finger off. They could also use a finger tab with a spacer block in it, but that doesn't actually train them out of pinching.</p>
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<p>Draw</p>	<p>Arrow is nocked, bow hand is still relaxed, string hand is situated and the arrow isn't wandering from too tight a grip.</p>	<p>In one movement, push the bow away as you pull the string to your chin.</p> <p>This is a push/pull movement starting with both arms bent at the elbows, not a pull back from a locked arm.</p> <p>Never lock the bow arm. Instead rotate the elbow out or it's a world of pain when you get clipped by the string.</p> <p>Check that shoulders are stacked over hips and archers are looking with their heads only, not their bodies.</p> <p>Think of drawing the shoulder blades together like you're trying to pinch a pencil between them to activate the right muscles.</p>	<p>Someone with a locked bow arm is probably also hunching that shoulder up and forward; getting them to relax the shoulder down and back will force the bow arm to rotate outwards.</p> <p>There's also a good chance a locked bow arm is clenching the grip pretty tightly; just asking them to open their grip hand will force the arm to rotate outward a bit.</p> <p>If an archer is holding the bow out in front of them, then trying to draw straight back from there with just their string arm, get them to open their bow hand and just rest the grip between their thumb and index finger. Without their fingers to grip the bow, they will only be able to hold onto it with tension on the string. Make sure they are starting the draw with the arrow pointed at the ground and their bow hand open; this helps them to complete the draw dynamically.</p>
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Anchor	Bow has been drawn and archer has stopped movement.	<p>String should touch centre of chin, lips and possibly nose (depends how big a nose it is!).</p> <p>String hand will be touching the side of the face.</p> <p>String is in front of the sighting eye and lined up with the body of the bow.</p> <p>String arm is pulling back in line with the arrow – watch out for ‘chicken wing’ elbows aimed at the sky.</p> <p>One of the most common issues is shoulders hunched up around ears; generic advice is ‘shoulders away from ears and pulled back’. Archers can practice this while they are waiting to shoot!</p>	<p>Called ‘anchor’ because this should be a holding position where everything settles in place. An anchor should feel the same every time.</p> <p>The string is drawn to the side of the chest, not the centre. If the string is in the middle of the body, the archer has rotated their chest toward the target and needs to keep shoulders aligned with their hips, perpendicular to the firing line.</p> <p>Touching the side of the face with the string hand gives a firm marker of where they draw to every time. It’s really hard to keep track of where your body is in space without any touch feedback – ask a dancer about how much training that takes!</p>
Aim		Don’t worry about it. Seriously.	<p>People will be really excited about aiming but that can only come after they have solid form and can put arrows in the same place every time. It doesn’t matter where that place is, just that it’s consistent.</p> <p>Once they are placing arrows consistently, they can start to aim. Try out one change at a time and see what happens. Ask archers to observe where the tip of the arrow points compared to where it actually hits, and adjust from there.</p>

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Release	Once firm anchor is set.	<p>Take a gentle breath and hold it.</p> <p>As you exhale, move your fingertips just enough to release the string.</p>	<p>A great static release is undetectable except for the arrow whooshing away and the string vibrating.</p> <p>Imagine leaning forwards into your bow arm without actually moving a muscle.</p> <p>Asking youth to be really stealthy and 'sneak' the release in can help reinforce how subtle the movement is. Be cautious they don't hear this as permission to disobey the range captain though!</p>
Follow through	After arrow has been loosed.	Nothing moves except fingertips, the string and the arrow.	<p>Like a statue.</p> <p>Ask archers to hold position for one deep breath after firing to help develop good follow through. Humans have a tendency to anticipate the next movement and start it before we've even loosed the arrow, which messes up the shot!</p>
Relax	Once arrow has hit the target.	<p>Relax, you've done it 😊</p> <p>Get ready to do it again. If you have shot all your arrows, move back from the firing line and replace your bow in the stand while you wait for the command to retrieve your arrows.</p>	<p>Take a moment, a deep cleansing breath before picking up the next arrow. To be consistent each arrow must be shot like it's the first and only one.</p>