

## GETTING STARTED

### Terminology

**Bow Hand:**

The hand that the archer uses to hold the bow while shooting  
Right (left) handed archers hold the bow with their left (right) hands.

**Draw Hand/Arm:**

The hand/arm the archer uses to draw or pull the string back on a bow.  
Right (left) handed archers draw with their right (left) hands/arms.

**Rest:**

The small device situated on the **riser** (center part of the bow) above the **grip** (handle) over which the arrow can glide smoothly as it is being fired. The type of rest which you will find on the training bows is called a **flipper rest** for obvious reasons.

**Point:**

The tip or head of the arrow.

**Arrow Shaft:**

The body of the arrow.

**Fletching:**

These are the vanes on the arrow. The vanes help the arrow fly straight.

**Cock Vane:**

The arrows you will shoot have three vanes, one of which has a color different from the other two. This is called the cock vane. It is used to properly position the arrow relative to the bow.

**Nock:**

This is the slotted back end of the arrow that clips onto the bow string.

**Nocking Point:**

This is a small metal bead found on the center of the string. It is used to properly position the arrow on the string.

## THE PROCESS

### Basic Safety/Approaching the line:

**Do not nock (load) or fire an arrow if anyone is downrange or if you step off the line.**

**Never Dry Fire a Bow! It can damage the bow.**

### At the Line:

Straddle the black line with one foot on each side of the line.

Stand erect; keep your body and the bow between the red lines at all times.

If you are shooting left handed, your right side should be facing the target. If right handed, the left side faces the target.

*Warning: The bow must remain vertical between the red lines while at the line.*

*This is for safety reasons.*

*At times, there will be other people shooting to your immediate left or right.*

*Holding the bow horizontally at the line increases the risk of your bow interfering with the other person's bow.*

*Such accidents can be quite costly and dangerous.*

*If an accident occurs because you did not keep you bow upright between the lines, you are liable for any damages or injuries that may occur.*

**Do not nock or fire an arrow if anyone is downrange or if you step off the line.**

### Raising the Bow:

Always hold your bow in an upright vertical position either in front of your body or pointed down range. Never swing the bow behind your body.

### Nocking the Arrow:

Hold your bow in an upright position in front of your body with your **bow hand**.

With your **draw hand**, grasp an arrow by the **shaft** close to the **fletching**, much as you would grasp a tooth brush.

**Do not shoot any arrow that appears damaged.**

Keep the arrow between you and the bow and place the arrow on the **flipper rest** with the **cock vane** facing you.

Clip the arrow's **nock** onto the string below the metal **nocking point**. You should hear a slight click as the **nock** snaps into place.

Tip: The nocks are movable and can be twisted to allow proper orientation of the cock vane.

Note: The reason we face the cock vane towards us is simple mechanics: it allows the other two vanes to slide cleanly past the bow's **riser** and over the **flipper rest**.

Note: If you happen to get an arrow without a uniquely colored cock vane, be sure to position the arrow on the rest so only a single vane is pointing towards you.

Note: Other rests are designed so that the cock vane should point up or down.

### **Drawing Back:**

Continuing to hold the now loaded bow, place the tips of the first three fingers of your **draw hand** on the string directly under the nocked arrow.

Keep the bow vertical or slightly cocked to the right (left) for right (left) handed shooters.

Extend your bow arm toward the target, keeping a slight bend to the elbow and the arrow pointed downrange towards the target. Keeping your elbow bent will prevent the string from hitting your arm after it is released.

Do not grip the bow tightly. Let the bow sit lightly in the palm of your hand.

Keeping the elbow of your draw arm level with the ground, pull the string smoothly back until the string comes to its natural stopping point. Your draw hand should be touching your right (left) cheek or corner of the mouth.

Tip: Your bow hand fingers should be relaxed. Gripping the bow tightly throws off the aim and can cause the strings to pop off the pulleys (cams).

Tip: Try to let your back muscles do most of the work drawing back the string, not your arms.

Tip: Drawing the string back and touching the same place on your face each and every time helps ensure consistency and accuracy.

### **Taking Aim:**

While at full draw, look down the arrow toward the target. Line up the **point** with a spot on the target. You will soon learn this may not be the bull's eye! However, use the same spot for each shot until you see your arrows are hitting roughly the same area on the target. Then adjust your aiming point.

### **Releasing the Arrow:**

When you are ready to release the arrow, open the fingers of your draw hand.

Tip: Take your time when aiming and between shots.

Tip: There are a variety of release techniques. All call for a smooth, even motion. You can pull your draw hand back slightly in the process or just open the hand.

You want to avoid strumming i.e., opening one finger at a time, slapping the string i.e., letting the extended fingers push against the string, opening with super fast speed, pulling your hand to the side instead of straight back, twisting your hand. The list goes on.

The main thing when starting out and as you progress is to work on proper form, being smooth and consistent in your actions.

A bit of experimentation is needed.

### **Letting Down or Aborting a Shot:**

Keep the bow in a vertical upright position and between the red lines. Slowly release the tension on the draw string until the string comes to its neutral position. Then you may either re-draw or else remove the arrow from the bow.

Tip: If it doesn't look right, feel right, or sound right, let down, check it out, and set up anew.

### **Lowering the Bow:**

After releasing the arrow or letting down, bring the bow down flat in front of your body keeping the bow between the red lines at all times.

### **Leaving Dropped Arrows Lie:**

If you drop an arrow while on the line or your arrow lands short, **do not pick it up** until CLEAR has been called.

*Moving even slightly into the range to pick up an arrow while others are shooting puts you in the potential path of any errant arrows. At best it can distract the other shooters and disrupt their shots.*

### **Waiting for Other people to Finish Shooting:**

Once you have taken all your shots- usually no more than 5, step back off the line. Hang your bow on one of the pegs above the counter or place your bow atop the counter.

### **Calling CLEAR:**

If you are the **last** person on the line to shoot and **everyone else has stepped clearly off the line**, announce in a loud voice "**CLEAR**".

"CLEAR" is the signal to others that it is safe to approach the targets.

*Warning: It is a mistake is for someone to call clear just because they are done shooting while other people are still shooting. This can lead to someone walking out in front of someone else that is still shooting. Please be mindful.*

*If you catch yourself or someone else making this mistake, please speak up and let others know it is "NOT CLEAR".*

### **Approaching the Target:**

After clear has been called and you have double checked that no one else is shooting, you may walk to your target.

### **Retrieving your arrows:**

Stand on either side of the target and not directly behind the arrows.

Place the hand closest to the target on the target near the arrow you wish to pull.

Look behind you to ensure no one is standing in the way.

Grasp the arrow and pull straight back.

Place the arrow in your other hand and repeat until you have retrieved all your arrows.

It is ok for another person to stand opposite you and also retrieve arrows from the same target.

Please be sure to pick up any of your arrows that may have fallen to the floor.

*Warning: Most archery range mishaps involve someone being poked by the back of an arrow because they were standing directly in front of the target while the arrow was being pulled.*

### **Waiting for Others to Retrieve Their Arrows or Mount Fresh Targets:**

After you have pulled your arrows, walk back to the line; deposit your arrows in the quiver.

You may grab your bow. However, please refrain from touching the arrows until everyone is back behind the line.

### **Resuming Shooting:**

Once the range is clear, you are free to approach the line, and resume shooting.

### **When In Doubt:**

ASK!

## **HITTING THE BULL'S EYE**

### **Improving your Aim**

#### **Don't worry whether you hit the bull's eye!**

First master hitting the target the same place every time. Do this by always aiming at the same spot on the target in the same way and releasing the arrow the same way each and every shot. If you do this right- it takes practice, you should start to see your arrows group onto the paper. Less important than hitting the bull's eye, is achieving this consistent behavior. Once you see where your group is landing, you then adjust your aiming point to pull the group closer to the bull's eye.

### **Moving the Targets Farther Back**

You may move the portable targets farther back as long as you can consistently hit the target paper- say 10 arrows in a row. If you are missing the paper, bring the target closer.

*Warning: The same safety rules apply for when to move a target as they do for retrieving arrows.*

**Mounting a Fresh Target:**

If your target looks like the faded remnants of a lost dog poster after a tornado, it's probably time to put up a fresh target face.

The time to mount a fresh target face is when it is safe to retrieve arrows i.e., after CLEAR has been called.

Fresh target faces are located under the counter behind the line. Please deposit the old target face in one of the garbage bins.