

YOUR FIRST INDOOR TOURNAMENT

BEFORE

You will need to know:

- where the shoot is being held and how to get there
- which session you are in, and when the session starts

You should have been sent (or given, if someone else entered you) a Target List, telling you which position you will be in on the shooting line.

What to take with you

- Your bow, arrows, and all the accessories and bits of equipment you usually use to shoot – Make sure you do a thorough check, and put all the gear together in one place so you can be sure you take everything with you when you leave.
- Your ArcheryGB Membership Card. When you arrive you will probably be asked to show it, as it guarantees Insurance Cover.
- A packed lunch if the time of the session means you need to take one, and / or any refreshments you will need to get you through your session. Some indoor venues do have proper cafes on site, or sometimes the club sells refreshments – check the entry form to see what will be available.
- Camera? If you, or someone going with you, wants to take photographs at the shoot, check the notes on the target list in case it isn't allowed. If it is allowed, the person taking photographs is usually asked to sign to say the photos will not be published (unless special guidelines are followed) .

What to wear

As usual, wear things which will not interfere with your shooting – so a normal close-fitting top is what you need. Some sports halls can be quite cold, so it's a good idea to have a fleecy jacket or some other top you can slip in and out of to keep you warm while you're not shooting. Wear soft-soled shoes that will not make marks on the hall floor.

If you've looked at pictures of archery tournaments, you'll have seen that the archers often wear white or plain green clothing. You've probably also seen that some archers are wearing a club uniform, probably with white trousers or skirt. If the shoot you're going to is an important one that has 'Record Status' – that means everything about the venue, setup and organisation is to the top standards, and if anyone at the shoot beats a national record for their class then their score will be recognised as a new national record – then you must wear the kind of clothes described above. Your first shoot probably won't be a Record Status shoot, so you can wear whatever you like, but you'll still find quite a lot of the entrants will be wearing whites or club colours, and if you have white or green clothes (or club colours) you may like to wear them on the day.

AT THE VENUE

Start Time

This is either listed as 'Assembly' or 'Sighters'

Assembly is when the Organiser welcomes everybody and introduces the Judges
Sighters are the practice shots you are allowed before the start of the shoot proper, and usually start about five minutes after Assembly. Sighters are also like a rehearsal because they are shot in exactly the same way as the first set of arrows, but do not actually count. The real shoot starts immediately after sighters, without a break.

Make sure you allow enough time for the journey so you get there at least half an hour before the start, so you can 'Sign-In' and find a place to get a seat, and get your

equipment set up without rushing. Many people will get there over an hour before the start.

Signing-In, also known as 'Registration', is normally done at a table near the entrance, there may be a queue of other entrants in front of you. The Organisers want to know who has arrived, in case they have to re-arrange the shooting layout to take account of any gaps where people haven't turned up. You will be asked to confirm your name and details such as the Club you belong to, the kind of bow you will be shooting, and which Sessions you have entered; and you will probably be asked to show your ArcheryGB Membership Card as the Insurers require every Archer to be a Member.

Try to get yourself calm and collected before the start, go to the toilet if you need to, have a drink and something light to eat if you feel you need it.

Check you've put your bow together properly (if it's a take-down bow, are the limbs the right way up), is the string on right? Is the sight fixed on, and has it been set to the position you use in practice in the school hall?

Hall Layout

There should be a lot more space behind the shooting line than you're used to, and there should be seats set out for you, and space for you to put your equipment.

There should also be an extra line called the Equipment Line marked across the hall in front of the seating area, and all equipment not actually being carried in their hands by archers should be kept behind this line. There may also be another line, the Wait Line between the Equipment Line and the Shooting line. The idea is to keep a clear area behind the archers standing on the shooting line, and anyone waiting their turn mustn't cross the line until their position on the shooting line is free.

The Targets will have numbers on them, and the shooting positions will also be numbered on the shooting line. When it's your turn to shoot, you should stand over the line exactly as you do at the club, but this time you also need to stand over your target number marker.

Preliminaries

Before the tournament starts the Organiser will call everyone to Assembly, and will give out information about how the shoot will be run, and about any special arrangements, and will introduce the officials for the shoot. The judge will then make a few announcements to do with the kind of 'round' you will be shooting (to remind everyone who's forgotten) and to explain how scores are to be taken (in an indoor shoot this usually means that the people shooting on the left hand target face on the target boss will take the scores of the people on the right hand target face, who will take the scores of the people on the left-hand target face).

The Judge will then tell you how soon the shoot will start, and the archers then go back to their equipment, do any last minute checks (like is your sight set to correct position?), and when the whistle blows the first detail will go to the line and start to shoot.

All archery tournaments consist of a 'Round', or Rounds. A round is a set number of shots at targets places at set distances. Indoor rounds are usually at one distance only, and are quite short compared to some outdoor rounds, so quite often it's possible to shoot a 'double' round – the same round twice. If you are shooting a double round, you'll go through the routine described below twice, usually including an Assembly, but when you come to shoot the second round you will not be allowed to shoot more sighters, you'll have to wait while anyone doing a first round shoots theirs.

SHOOTING

Once started, the shoot will probably continue right to the end without a break, which will take about two and a half hours. There's usually time between your 'ends' to nip out to the loo if you need to, but you will have to time it so you don't miss your turn shooting!

Your 'Detail'

There will probably be two target faces on every straw (or foam-rubber) target boss, You will probably be one of a group of four archers shooting at the target boss, and you will be sharing one of the target faces with at least one other person (usually only one at an indoor shoot, but occasionally three people do shoot at the same face). The word 'detail' refers to where your name is on the target list, whether your name is first or second in the list for the target face you will be shooting at. It really just means who shoots first when the shoot starts; but you need to know whether you are first or second detail because the shooting order swaps around each time the two of you shoot, So, if you are the first detail, at the beginning you will be the first one to go onto the shooting line and shoot your arrows; then the second detail person will go onto the line and shoot. After you've scored your points at the target and come back again, the 'details' swap around, so this time the second detail will shoot first, followed by the first. The next time round the first detail shoots first.

Shooting Procedure

Shooting is controlled by the judge using a whistle.

One blast of the whistle means shooting can start, and the archers whose turn it is (that's one or other 'detail') walk with their bows and take up their positions on the line. The archers on the line shoot an 'end' of three arrows only, and return from the line to the wait area. As soon as the first archer has left the line, the second archer will go to their position on the shooting line and shoot three arrows, and return to the wait area. In an indoor shoot that's all the arrows you shoot before going to the targets to score and retrieve your arrows.

When you are going to line to take up your position, and when you are starting to walk back, it's considered polite to be aware of what the people on either side of you are doing, and to be careful not disturb them in mid-shot by your movement, so wait to make your move until they are between shots. This works both ways, because hopefully they will also be considerate to you when you are shooting.

When everyone has finished shooting their three arrows, and all have left the line, the judge will blow two whistle blasts, and all the archers go forward to the targets to take their scores.

When you reach the targets look for your arrows in the target and try to see where they all are so you can call out their score values when asked. At this point do not touch your arrows. When everyone has had a few moments to see their arrows, the scorer will ask for each archer's score in turn. When it's your turn to call your scores, call out the three arrow scores, starting with the highest. As you call, point to each arrownock so everyone can see where your arrows are, but make sure you don't actually touch the arrow. The rules say that if you do touch an arrow you will not be allowed to call it as a 'line-cutter', that's to say that if your arrow is nearly all in one score 'zone' but touching or cutting the dividing line around the next higher scoring zone, the arrow usually scores the value of the higher zone (the one nearer the centre), but if you touch the arrow it can only score the lower value.

Nearly all indoor archery rounds are scored using a 'ten-zone' system. There are five colour rings on the target, and each is divided into two equal-width score zones. This makes ten zones in all, so the two zones in the yellow centre area (which is always called 'gold') scores either ten or nine points. You may have noticed there is an even smaller circle inside the inner half of the gold zone – this 'inner-ten-ring' area is the area where archers shooting compound bows must get their arrows in order to score ten points, the rest of us only have to get our arrows in the inner half of the yellow circle. The score zones run from the tiny cross in the very centre (called the 'pinhole' because old-time hand-drawn target faces had a hole in centre where the compass point was pushed in) out to the black line round the white zone, and score ten, nine for the gold; eight, seven for the red; six, five for the blue; four, three for the black; and two one for the white.

Call out your scores as a batch of three values. Give a value to every arrow, even the ones that miss. So you might call 'ten, ten, ten' or 'four, miss, miss'. If you realise you've made a mistake, tell the scorer as soon as possible. So long as all the arrows are still in the target it is possible to call the Judge over to make corrections on the score sheets.

When all the arrows have been scored, the person taking the scores should tell you when it's OK to pull the arrows out (you have to resist the temptation to pull them out too soon, because sometimes people notice a mistake a few seconds after the scores have been taken, and if the arrows have already been pulled it's too late to make any corrections). Take a fair share of the arrow pulling - unless you find the target bosses are very hard and you're finding it very difficult to pull the arrows out, if so let someone more experienced do it. Don't forget to make sure there's no-one standing close behind you who could get spiked as the arrows come out of the boss.

You are allowed six practice 'sighter' arrows before your arrows start to count, so you will shoot once as the first on the line and once as the second on the line during sighters (but of course you may be second onto the shooting line for your first 'end' of three arrows). You should use these shots to make final adjustments to your sight; from then on you should check your sight quite often to make sure it's still screwed up tight and isn't moving.

'Bouncers'

If one (or more) of your arrows bounces out of the target, shoot the remaining arrows, then step back from the line, look for the judge, and hold your bow up in the air (and try to get the judge's attention). The judge will come over and supervise you making another shot.

Waiting your turn

It's often quite crowded in the seating and waiting area, so make sure you don't step backwards onto someone else's gear, or trip over anyone or their equipment. Also, try to keep your voice down to a reasonable level, as noise hubbub can be quite distracting at the shooting line.

And finally – this applies to parents and companions too – don't give any advice or information by talking or signalling to anyone (friend, club-mate, your child) on the line shooting. It's quite tempting to tell them where the last arrow went if they look as if they didn't see, but there is a specific rule which says they must not be given any information, and if the Judge thinks an archer is getting help, it will be the archer who gets penalised.

CONTINUING TO THE END – and after

The shoot will probably consist of sixty shots, so that's twenty two trips to the shooting line including sighters. As you go on, you may find you're making friends with your target companions. Enjoy yourself, keep cool, and don't get wound up if you shoot an occasional bad end.

Once you've started scoring your arrows (after the sighters), every four trips to the targets to score means you've shot another dozen arrows. The person writing the scores down will add up the sub-totals for each dozen, which are...

Hits - the number of times you hit the scoring area of the target

Score - the points you won for this dozen arrows

Golds - the number of times you hit the centre of the target (in indoor archery this means the 'ten' zone, the inner half of the yellow circle).

The Score of the dozen is added to the accumulated total for all the previous dozens to make the **Running Total**, which goes into the column at the far right side of the score sheet.

After you've shot five dozen scoring arrows you will be at the end of the Round. The person writing the scores down now has the unenviable job of totalling all the Hits, Golds and Score. If you've been keeping your score on your own score pad, you'll be able to add up your totals too, to check that you agree with the scorer. You will be asked to sign the score sheet to say you agree that the score is correct – make sure you don't rush off without signing, otherwise you won't win any prizes or get listed in the final results. In fact don't rush off in a hurry anyway, take the opportunity to say thanks to the scorer for doing the work, and say goodbye to your target companions (or say thanks for a good day if you all got on well together).

Now (unless you're going to shoot a second round), you can put away your equipment ready to go home. But if you are shooting in the last session of the day the end of the shoot will be followed by the prize-giving as soon as the results have been worked out by the Organisers and put in order. Sometimes this is fairly fast, say fifteen minutes at an indoor shoot, but sometimes it can take as much as forty minutes. Let's hope you're lucky and go to a tournament with a rapid results system! And of course the prize giving itself will take half an hour or so.

About a week after the tournament you should receive a full results list, showing everybody's score, and you will be able to see how you compared with the others. Sometimes these days the results will be put on a website belonging to the organising club later on in the evening of the tournament, but in most cases it does take a few days.

Note

The instructions above apply to nearly all indoor rounds, but there are a few where you shoot five arrows instead of three per 'end'. In those cases there will only be one end of sighters, and also the shooting order does not swap each time.

The scoring system is also different for these rounds, usually five-four-three-two-one for five zone special targets, but the same basic principles apply.