

BE SAFE!

Archery Accidents are very rare because Archers use properly laid-out Archery Ranges, and obey the Safety Rules. But ALWAYS REMEMBER that A BOW IS A WEAPON, NOT A TOY! Even a small Practice Bow can SERIOUSLY HURT or KILL.

WHEN YOU DRAW BACK A BOW, even without an arrow in it, you store up a lot of ENERGY, which can do serious DAMAGE if it gets out of control, so you must ONLY draw a bow WHERE IT'S SAFE to do so!

THE FIRST RULE OF SHOOTING:

"NEVER DRAW A BOW UNLESS YOU ARE STANDING ON THE SHOOTING LINE OF THE ARCHERY RANGE"

and the Second:

"BEFORE YOU DRAW YOUR BOW, CHECK IT IS CORRECTLY STRUNG, AND THAT THE SIGHT IS SET CORRECTLY FOR THE DISTANCE YOU ARE GOING TO SHOOT"

So if you are a beginner, make sure you see your Instructor carrying out these checks!

The Safety Rules say that, before starting to shoot, Archers MUST

- 1) MAKE SURE THAT WARNING FLAGS HAVE BEEN PUT OUT TO SHOW THE RANGE IS IN USE
- 2) MAKE SURE THAT AN EXPERIENCED ADULT ARCHER ("The Field Captain") IS IN CHARGE (to Signal when to Start and Stop Shooting and keep control generally)

More RULES :

"DO NOT SHOOT UNTIL THE FIELD CAPTAIN GIVES THE SIGNAL TO START"

"WHEN YOU SHOOT STAND OVER THE SHOOTING LINE. NOT IN FRONT, NOT BEHIND"

"NEVER GO IN FRONT OF THE SHOOTING LINE UNTIL THE FIELD CAPTAIN SIGNALS THAT EVERYBODY HAS FINISHED SHOOTING AND IT IS SAFE TO GO FORWARD"

"IF THE FIELD CAPTAIN GIVES THE EMERGENCY SIGNAL TO STOP SHOOTING (several blasts on the whistle and/or a shout of "Fast! Stop Shooting!"), YOU MUST STOP IMMEDIATELY!" If there's arrow in your bow, Don't Shoot it, LOWER YOUR BOW, "let it down" (the opposite of drawing it), and REMOVE THE ARROW FROM THE BOW

"KEEP YOUR EQUIPMENT OUT OF THE WAY OF OTHERS, BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL WITH YOUR ARROWS"

Make sure you don't poke or jab your neighbours on the shooting line

"NEVER DRAW YOUR BOW OR SHOOT AN ARROW IF ANYONE IS INSIDE THE RANGE DANGER AREA"

The "Danger Area" is anywhere in front of the shooting line up to a distance of 50 yards beyond the targets, or 20 yards to the sides of the targets. If you are the first person to spot that someone has wandered into the Danger Area, shout "Fast! Stop Shooting!"

If you disobey the next rule, you'll be kicked off the field before your arrow hits the ground!

"NEVER SHOOT AN ARROW STRAIGHT UP, OR AT A STEEP ANGLE, OR IN SUCH A WAY THAT COULD RESULT IN IT LANDING DANGEROUSLY"

The Dangers DON'T cease as soon as you stop shooting! If you leave your Safety Awareness back at the Shooting Line you'll discover you can easily get hurt at the targets collecting your arrows!

"WALK, DON'T RUN, UP TO THE TARGETS, AND KEEP LOOKING AT THE GROUND FOR ARROWS FALLEN SHORT"

"ONLY ONE ARCHER AT A TIME IS TO PULL THE ARROWS OUT OF THE TARGET. EVERYONE ELSE MUST KEEP WELL BACK, AT LEAST TWO YARDS BEHIND THE ARROW-PULLER"

Both these rules are designed to stop the Archers getting hurt, and also to save the arrows from being damaged. The point (literally!) is that arrows are sharp at both ends, and getting jabbed by either end can seriously damage your health, and appearance!

BE REASONABLE!

On the whole, Archers are a friendly bunch who are only too happy to give help and advice to beginners. All the same, when you become a club member, and even more so when you start to go to Tournaments, you should know how to behave!

You may think that archers in the past were just a lawless mob of thugs who lounged around the greenwood wondering when the next rich merchant would ride into their trap – WRONG! Archers were always highly trained and extremely disciplined as a result of growing up – from the age of seven – with the bow. You can't afford not to be disciplined if the main part of the job involves standing in the open in very light armour while heavily armoured knights, outnumbering you several times and riding cart horses, try their best to gallop all over you. Apart from anything else, if you don't keep your position and give everyone around you their space, you could easily get shot by the archer behind. So, archers have never put up with unruly, careless, or inconsiderate behaviour while shooting.

Archers give each other - and expect to be given - enough SPACE to shoot comfortably, and enough PEACE to concentrate properly. They also expect everyone to be aware of their immediate neighbours and to be CAREFUL and CONSIDERATE enough not to upset them or to damage their equipment. Finally, because they prefer companionship to rivalry, they are always READY TO HELP each other and expect any chores to be SHARED.

These are the basic rules of good behaviour for Archers:

While waiting your turn to Shoot:

- DON'T Cause any disturbance or make a lot of noise
- TAKE CARE not to trip over equipment
- DON'T HANDLE anybody's equipment unless they allow you to
- DON'T keep trying to peer at other archers scores

On the Shooting Line:

- DON'T STEP onto the line when it could put anyone off their shot
- DON'T DISTURB other archers by moving suddenly, or talking (or cursing!) to yourself
- KEEP your equipment out of the way of others
- ONLY TALK with your neighbours if they want to
- LEAVE the line as soon as you have finished shooting without disturbing anyone, but....
- STAY on the line with your neighbour if he/she would be the only person left shooting

At the Targets:

- WAIT until scores have been taken before going behind the targets to collect overshots
- CALL OUT your arrow scores clearly in groups of three with a pause between
- POINT to each arrow nock as you call out the score (but don't touch the arrow!)
- TAKE YOUR TURN and do your fair share of Scoring and Arrow-Pulling TAKE CARE not to bend or damage any arrows as you pull them out

At the End of the Shoot:

- THANK the Scorers for their work, and thank the Field Captain by giving three cheers
- DON'T RUSH to pack away your gear before you have agreed and signed for your score
- DO YOUR SHARE of putting away the field equipment unless the Organiser needs no help

Two Final Points (that a lot of people get wrong):

IF YOU DAMAGE someone else's equipment by being careless or clumsy you are expected to pay for the damage there and then. But of course this doesn't apply to accidental damage caused by one arrow hitting another in the target!

IF YOU TOUCH an Arrow in the Target, or the Target Face itself, before the scores have been taken, Arrows that are touching two zones ("line cutters") are scored as being in the lower score zone.

You do NOT lose the whole score of the arrow, but you do lose the chance to have the extra points.