



Archery

Good Practice Guide

Version 2
2021

Archery

The archery activity covered in this GPG includes activity where a participant is using a bow to shoot arrows at a stationary target and is being directly supervised by a designated leader, guide, instructor or supervisor.

This GPG does not cover combat type games such as soft archery, where competitors are shooting projectiles at each other or the use of archery equipment for hunting.

The environmental scope includes both permanent ranges and impromptu or temporary ranges.

This GPG covers situations where participants are being directly supervised by a designated leader, guide or instructor and does not cover the hire or rental of equipment for unsupervised use.

This guidance is specific to **archery** activities and is designed to be used in conjunction with the [General Guidance for Organised Outdoor Activities](#) and the **Archery Planning Template**.

Potential value of activity

ARCHERY CAN PROVIDE:

- The opportunity to try new activities and have new experiences
- Development of hand-eye coordination and discipline or control of breathing
- A sense of achievement and success
- Opportunity to demonstrate self-responsibility
- Opportunity for a real-world experience rather than a virtual world or gaming experience
- An inclusive activity for a wide range of physical abilities and easily adaptable for students with physical disabilities
- An opportunity for enhancing and enriching the school curriculum.

“You have to relax when you're shooting an arrow. You can't be tense. And that just helps, in your day-to-day life.”

Stephen Amell

Planning Considerations

See the [General Guidance for Organised Outdoor Activities](#)

Participants

How to ensure the activities match the participants' abilities and needs.

In addition to the generic participant considerations (see [General Guidance for Organized Outdoor Activities](#)) organisers of archery activities should consider:

- Choosing suitable equipment for the age, size and physical strength of participants
- Assessing participants' ability and confidence before doing the activity by asking questions about their knowledge and prior experience
- Sequencing and adapting activities to match the participants' skill level. Examples of this would be;
 - Using a variety of targets i.e., balloons, a range of larger and smaller targets,
 - Varying the range length to suit age and ability i.e., targets being moveable or moving the shooting line or station further away from the targets
- Participants' ability to understand and follow instructions.



Supervision

The level and style of supervision would typically be required for this activity.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING WHEN DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE SUPERVISION STRUCTURE FOR ARCHERY ACTIVITIES:

- There is no one 'ratio' of leaders or supervisors to participants for any given activity. Supervision needs vary according to age and ability of the participants, the activity, the location and environmental conditions, and the skill and experience of the leaders and supervisors.
- On ranges consider using two different supervision levels; the person with overall responsibility (sometimes called the range safety officer) and assistant supervisors who assist participants with loading and shooting.
- When there is more than one supervisor, clearly defined roles and responsibilities should be delegated. This is particularly important when using assistant leaders, accompanying teachers (who are not the activity leader), student leaders or parent helpers.
- The supervision structure will vary with number of shooting stations used.
- Supervision needs will change if participants have any special needs, behavioral or health needs.
- Although supervision would normally be the ability for direct physical intervention to prevent an unsafe act or practice, control can also be by the use of a verbal command such as a "freeze" call.
- Clearly defined shooting zones and safe zones for non-participants, physically marked with a rope or a painted line. The use of a range flag to indicate to non-users that the range is in use. In an open range type environment, the use of a physical barrier such as a rope barrier or fence is recommended.
- Supervision of participants who are waiting for their turn; strategies can include pairing activities so only half a group is involved in archery at one time, limiting the group size, length of the shooting rotation and having clearly defined areas for participants who are waiting potentially with seats to encourage them to not run around.
- Bows and arrows should be stored in a secure and safe storage area, preferably lockable, when not in use. This includes at lunchtimes or other student 'free-time'.
- The use of visual reminders or checklists as an aide-memoire are helpful for supervisors to refer to.
- Keeping animals off the range area.

Restricting the shooting zone

Restricting the shooting zone is an important supervision strategy to prevent the unsafe shooting of arrows by limiting the movement possible when loading and firing. Some strategies include:

- Designated shooting stations such as benches or stands or a shooting line that participants stand on or behind
- Partitions to separate each shooting station
- Placing arrows in a designated place between shooting i.e., an arrow stand or quiver.

Retrieval of arrows or targets

- Retrieval of arrows must only happen when it's safe to do so and all shooting has ceased
- Targets should be approached from the side rather than directly face on
- Consider what happens to the arrows if they miss the targets. It can be helpful to have a physical barrier (i.e., hillside, net or haybales) behind the target to catch stray arrows
- Bows should be either placed on the ground or on a shooting bench and no one is allowed up to the shooting station while retrieval of arrows or targets is happening.



Photo supplied by Kev Webb

Example of a basic session outline and progression:

- Introduction of the activity.
- Safety and group management briefing, which includes identifying boundaries, safe zones, shooting zones, and safety commands/ signals.
- Gear brief and demonstration, including safe use and care of equipment.
- Warm up or practice round where a participant's first attempt is highly supervised.

Participants become more independent as their skill and confidence increases.

Assessing an activity provider's competence

IN THE SITUATION WHERE AN EXTERNAL OPERATOR IS BEING CONTRACTED TO PROVIDE THE ACTIVITY, IT IS APPROPRIATE TO ASK FOR EVIDENCE OF:

- **The external operator's safety management system for the activities** e.g., standard operating procedures (SOPs), risk assessment, staff training records, and gear and equipment maintenance records.

Setting up a range

Setting up a range involves specific skills and knowledge beyond that required to run an archery session. For help in setting up an archery range contact Archery NZ or your local archery club.



Photo supplied by Kev Webb

Leader competence

The experience and knowledge required by those running the activity, both for normal operation and for managing emergencies. What competence other assistant leaders need should also be considered (e.g., where parents or other adults are helping the person running the activity).

Skills and knowledge

The simplest way to evaluate competence is to look at the qualifications they hold. Asking questions of potential leaders and having them provide examples of training or experience as part of their answer allows you to assess their experience and knowledge. It is also appropriate to ask for references to confirm the information they provide.

SPECIFIC LEADER COMPETENCIES RELEVANT TO THE ACTIVITIES AND ENVIRONMENTS COVERED IN THIS GPG INCLUDE:

- Appreciation of the seriousness of, and understanding the risks involved in archery activities.
- Knowledge of the equipment and how it is used.
- Previous experience with shooting and handling archery equipment.
- Confident and able to be assertive with participants.
- Effective management of the group, including non-participants or participants waiting.
- Knowledge of how to get assistance in an emergency situation.

IF USING ASSISTANT LEADERS, THE MINIMUM COMPETENCIES FOR THESE WOULD BE:

- Ability to assist the Leader in the management of the group.

Relevant Qualifications

The following qualifications may be relevant for the activity (including but not limited to):

- A current First Aid certificate
- Archery NZ Foundation Coach course
- NZ Field Archery Association Community Coach

“Competent leaders are one of the mainstays of ensuring safety”

Resources and equipment

Consider what equipment and resources are required to run the activity safely. The participants may be required to bring this, or it may be provided to them.

Participant

What each participant would need to bring to the activity.

- Clothing and footwear appropriate for the activity, location and time of year i.e. sunhat, sunscreen, warm hat and jacket, closed toed shoes
- Any personal medication that could be needed during the activity i.e. EpiPen, asthma inhaler.

Group

Equipment that will be provided to the participants for the activity. All equipment should be in good condition and suitable for the intended use.

Arm guards

- Help prevent forearm injuries, although correct technique will help prevent this. Consider having some available for participants who find the string hitting their arm.

Bows

- Recurve and compound bows are more commonly used. The use of crossbows is not the norm.
- Bows need to be the appropriate size and draw weight (poundage) for the intended participant.

Beginner Recurve Bows

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| ○ Child (Age 8 to 10) | 10 - 12 pounds |
| ○ Child (Age 11 to 13) | 10 - 14 pounds |
| ○ Youth (Age 14 to 17) | 12 - 16 pounds |
| ○ Young Adults (Age 18 to 20) | 16 - 22 pounds |
| ○ Adult Women | 16 - 26 pounds |
| ○ Adult Men | 22 - 28 pounds |

Beginner Compound Bows

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| ○ Child (Age 8 to 12) | 10 - 16 pounds |
| ○ Child (Age 12 to 14) | 14 - 22 pounds |
| ○ Youth (15 to 18) | 24 - 28 pounds |
| ○ Young Adults | 26 - 36 pounds |
| ○ Adult Women | 30 - 40 pounds |
| ○ Adult Men | 40 - 50 pounds |

Refer www.learn-archery.com/proper-draw-weight.html for more detailed information regarding determining draw weights.

- Things to check on a bow include;
 - Cams
 - Condition of string; not dry, fibres holding together and not fraying
 - Guide on string- ensure it is at 90 degrees to the arrow rest.
 - Arrow rest
 - Finger holds
 - No splinters or cracks on bow limbs

Arrows

- Must be suitable for type of bow i.e., the length of the arrow is crucial
- Target arrows with a blunted point
- Straight with no splinters or damaged fletchings (plastic or feather attachments that are secured to the back of the arrow shaft)
- It is worth noting that both ends of the arrow can cause injuries.

Targets

- Targets that absorb the arrows – commonly used materials are foam and hay or straw.
- Consideration should be given to what materials targets that will be left outside are made from. Weatherproof targets are available to purchase.

Leader

Equipment that should be carried by the leader or that the leader should have easy access to.

- A first aid kit
- Communications device to get assistance with minimal delay
- Protective case or bag to transport bows and arrows to and from the range.

Further support

Places to gain more information from, e.g. specialist websites, industry bodies or clubs.

Archery NZ and other national archery bodies have information on equipment, how to get started etc. on their websites:

www.archerynz.co.nz

www.archerygb.org

www.archery.org.au

www.learnarchery.com



Archery Planning Template

Overarching Risk Management Guidance