

# **Instructor of Introductory Archery Sessions for Beginners**

## Beginner’s session instructor course is a starting point for archers who want become motivating instructors for beginners in recurve. Using the resources provided on the course you will be able to deliver a beginner’s session in Hood.

## **The course includes:**

1. Setting up a range
2. How to select appropriate equipment
3. How to shoot arrows
4. How to ensure safety on the range
5. Preparing and delivering archery sessions
6. Federations & other stuff

# = pounds

“ = inches

## **Setting up a range**

## **Tuulimäki indoor range**: Things to be prepared at the beginning of the shift and during it, so that the beginner and trial shift goes smoothly in the hall.

* Prepare the bow stands behind the 10 m line at approx. 3 m behind this line.
* The butts of the shooting range to the left of the door should all have a 60 cm target ready.

## Open the doors of the bow cabinets and put the arrows, arm guards and finger tabs ready near the bow stands.

## Help the instructor in charge to take the equipment for the beginners and put it to the side in a small bow stand.

* Help customers choose their bow and arrows and a shooting position and move people to 2 shifts if necessary. Ask shooters to move to 18 meters as soon as their arrows are regular inside the red.
* When the customers start shooting, be CAREFUL, go as a shooting instructor for the first few rounds, so no injuries are suffered.
* Answer possible questions, if you don't know the answer, ask a senior instructor.

## **How to select appropriate equipment**

### **Arrows**

Arrows have different lengths and spines. Take into account the hight of the archer and the pounds of the bow he/she is using. The length of the arrow is measured by putting the nock under archer’s throat and arms forward along the arrow. If the tips of the archer’s hands don’t reach the tip, the arrow is long enough. This way the arrow does not fall from the arrow shelf and cause problems.

Spine number is visible in the shaft. The smaller the spine, the stiffer the shaft.

## 600-900 for tall adults with a bow over 25# (pounds)

## 1100-1300 for bows under 25#

## 1500-1800 for smaller adults, teenagers or children

### **Bows**

Bows also have different sizes and stiffness. The information is on a label on the bow platform. This mark (”) is an inch mark and indicates the length of the bow, # indicates pounds, i.e. stiffness.

62”-64” is a suitable length for children up to 150 cm.

64”-66” is for shooters taller than 150 cm.

68”-70” is for tall shooters. The organisation does not have longer bows.

12#-15# is a good beginner bow for children.

15#-20# is a good beginner bow for adults.

Above 20# is for beginners who have already shot a few times.

The **WA bow types** are traditional bow, barebow, long bow, recurve and compound bow.



### **Targets**

**Range**

* 40 cm (18 m: from 17-years-old to adults, other than the pulley/compound)
* 60 cm (11–15-year-olds, 25 m all)
* vertical spots & Vegas spots (for all over 17 years of age, except instinct, traditional and longbow)
* 60 cm spot (compound 25 m)

**Outdoor**

* 120cm (all ages, distances 20m-90m)
* 80cm (compound bow over 11 years of age)
* 80 cm spot (compound bow 17-year-olds and adults)

## **How to Shoot Arrows**

Guide participants to shoot using the barebow. Be polite, encouraging and introduce the main points about technology and safety. There are so many new things at the beginning that the first-timer forgets most of them anyway. The most important thing is to teach the new archer basic technical information and get them to shoot as safely as possible. During the shooting, there is an opportunity to advise on the technique either together as a whole group or separately, one shooter at a time.

1. “Welcome everyone! My name is...” Tell everyone your name, indicate and name the other instructors in the hall.
2. Teach the new shooter terms; what are the butts (tausta in Finnish), target (taulu), shooting line (ammuntaviiva), and so on. Explain the shooting distances.
3. Teach the names of the parts of the bow and arrows, show the protective equipment, i.e. finger tab and arm guard.
4. Shoot as a model one arrow only.
5. Shooting is started in the correct position, feet shoulder width apart on both sides of the shooting line. Archers stands straight.
6. The arrow is placed on the bow's plastic arrow shelf with the cock feather facing away from the bow, the arrow’s nock in the nocking position. The nock should click as it moves onto the string. The bow is on top of the shooter's left leg (for right-handed archers) and stays straight even when shooting.
7. The archer puts the left hand on bow’s grip, three fingers of the right hand are under the arrow on the bow string.
8. The thumb of the string hand is placed on top of the little finger.
9. The body is straight with the head turned to look at the target.
10. The left arm is straight when the bow is raised, the right elbow is leveled with the arrow, approximately at the level of the shooter's eyes.
11. Pulling the string back with right hand one needs to push the bow with left arm, then anchor.
12. Anchoring means bringing the knuckle of the arrow hand under the cheekbone.
13. Watch that everyone can dry-anchor (i.e. without arrow): the thumb is on the little finger, the knuckle is under the cheekbone and the elbow is at the same level as the arrow.
14. Repeat points 4–11.
15. Shoot the 2nd arrow.
16. Ask what is done after anchoring. Aiming, of course! Aiming is done with the tip of the arrow, with both eyes open. Suggest that the tip is aimed at the bottom edge of the target first. This is a aiming point that moves according to where the arrows go.
17. The shot is done by relaxing the fingers - not opening but relaxing, so that the arrow goes as straight as possible. If you open your fingers, the finger muscles are stiff, and the string must go around them. Relaxed fingers are pushed away by the string and thus the string can go straight ahead with the arrow. The hand follows back towards the ear.
18. After the shot, you stay in the shooting position for a while to admire your performance and to wait for feedback from muscles.

**Taking arrows from the targets / butts:**

1. The shooter must be careful not to walk directly towards the arrows, but from one side.
2. Take the arrow out of the target with both hands without touching the feathers/vanes and be careful not to hit the person next to you with the nock.
3. One arrow at a time.
4. Arrows that have missed the target are picked up first.
5. Any arrows placed above the target should be taken out with the shooter’s back against the wall.

**The most common things that first-timers need guidance with during shooting:**

* The cock feather of the arrow is facing out from the bow.
* The shooting position is not on the line or behind it, but straddling it: "one foot on each side of the line" or "the line runs between the legs".
* Anchoring with the thumb, not the knuckle: "keep the thumb on the little finger and put the knuckle on the cheek”.
* Anchoring somewhere else than the cheek: "anchoring should be under the cheekbone".
* Shoulders in the ears: "lower the left shoulder".
* Bow arm hooked: "keep your bow arm straight".
* Hand on the side of the grip: "thumb pad for the handle or lifeline to the center of the grip".
* The archer is leaning away from the bow (usually in this case also with the bow shoulder up and the hip towards the target): "”Archer’s position is called the T-position, where the body is the vertical line of the letter T and the shoulders, and the bow hand are the horizontal line".
* The string hits the bow arm: "in the starting position or when lifting the bow, move the elbow to the side (not to the floor)".
* If the arrow constantly goes past the board to the right or left, check the dominant eye (the fastest way is to ask them to close the left eye when shooting).

## **How to ensure safety on the range**

* You may put the arrow on the string ONLY on the shooting line, not anywhere else.
* The tip of the arrow points down range towards the butts/targets throughout the shooting and nocking process.
* You can shoot when everyone has come to the safe side of the shooting line.
* Everyone goes together to recover their arrows.
* The bow can be tensioned/drawn without an arrow, but then it cannot be shot – no dry firing! The bow must not be tensioned, even without an arrow, when someone is still fetching arrows.
* When getting arrows, the bow is placed in the bow holder.

## **Preparing and delivering an archery session**

1. **Principles of Instructing**
* Speak in short sentences - "Attach the nock to the nocking point/position".
* Call a spade a spade. "Place your feet (in a split stance) on both sides of the shooting line".
* In your opening speech, only speak for a maximum of 10 minutes and get the first timers to shoot as soon as possible. A lot of new things are introduced to them the first time. If you notice everyone has the same shooting technical deficiencies, you can teach them to moving on after, say, 5 shooting rounds. New things are better remembered when part of the shooting performance is already automated.
* Remember to tell the shooter what they SHOULD do, not what they shouldn't do. "Don't raise your shoulders" vs. "Keep your shoulders down."
* Be positive: "This is not done, this is wrong." vs. "It is better done this way so that you hit better the targe and don't hurt your shoulder."
* Give the first-timer one instruction at a time, check with a couple of arrows, that the lesson was understood, then move on to the next shooter. It's good that the first-time archer has time to practice new things on their own, the instructor doesn't have to be next to them all the time.
* Maintain focus on work – be present, not on the phone! Try to minimize outside interference (mobile phone, other people), be prepared to react to the requirements of your own group. Each instructor and coach will have their own personality and skills. Their job is to help create a change within the individual shooter’s technique and their mindset.
1. **Roles**

In the work shift excel the roles are marked as:

**1 The instructor on the administrative shift** takes the customers' payments at the beginning of the initial shift and helps the archers during the shift.

**2 The instructor** takes responsibility for the first-timers group, which is usually a maximum of 6 people.

**X The assistant instructor** helps with both first-timers and beginners. The assistant instructor's job is to help the main instructor get through the trial and beginner shift in style. The assistant instructor prepares the equipment while the main instructor accepts payments (if 1 and 2 is the same person). While the main instructor gives a technical talk to the first-timers, the assistant instructor usually helps the shooters and members of the beginner shift with the selection of equipment and answers questions.

1. **General things in Tuulimäki and Ruskeasuo**

Remember to greet people while on shift. Welcome is a good word!

If possible, try to keep either your work shirt or hoodie on so customers can see that you are an instructor. In an emergency, the representative shirt will also work. Try to be proactive, friendly and present (not on your cell phone) when you are at work.

When it rains, we shoot and guide in the rain. Check the weather report, take an umbrella or a raincoat, waterproof shoes are also a plus. On summer in Ruskeasuo the temperatures on the shooting line in the sun are high! Water and a hat are a must! There is a portable WC in the range but no running water.

## **General about archery**

There are two federations: World Archery (WA) who’s member Finnish Archary Association – Suomen Jousiampujain Liitto (SJAL) is and International Field Archery Association (IFAA) who’s member Finnish Field Archery Association (FFAA) is. Furthermore, there is Finnish Bowhunting Association - Suomen Jousimetsästäjäin Liitto.

[www.sjal.fi](http://www.sjal.fi) & [www.FFAA.fi](http://www.FFAA.fi) & [www.jousimetsastus.fi](http://www.jousimetsastus.fi)

All associations have their own competition types and target faces.

World Archery & SJAL competitions include 18m and 25m competitions on inside ranges in winter, 20–70m & 900-round & FITA outside on archery fields on summer and field & 3D in the forest.

**You learn to be an instructor by doing. Don’t mind the occasional mistakes - just learn from them and keep on going! Every coach creates their own path, always learning, adapting and challenging themselves. We hope you enjoy the learning process in Hood!**

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