



'Toy' archery session guide sheet

This guide has been produced for anyone who wants to run an archery session with toy bows & arrows. This includes archery sets with rubber suckers at the end of the arrows. Toys will usually have a label on stating 'this is a toy'. If it doesn't or you're not sure, ask the county archery assessors otherwise you might be breaking the rules by not having a permit.

Why do we need a guide sheet if you're only using toys?

Recently, Scouting changed its guidance for archery meaning that we can no longer go any closer to the targets than 10m, no matter how powerful the bows are. This creates a problem for our younger sections, as the bows that are suitable for their height and strength can't work properly at that distance. An answer to this is to use toys, which are not covered by the same rules and can be shot from closer.

As part of a progressive introduction to archery, we want them to get used to the safety rules and discipline necessary in a session with real weapons. This includes the participants and anyone helping at your sessions. Bad archery practice with toys might carry through to real equipment because they've seen it done that way before.

So what would we like you to teach?

Range discipline

Draw a line on the floor, called the 'shooting line'. When anyone has a bow in their hands, nobody should be allowed to go forward of this line. Participants shouldn't touch the bows and arrows until they are told that they are allowed to.

You could introduce the archery commands "shoot" (which means that it's OK to start shooting arrows) and "collect" (which means that everyone has shot all of their arrows and it's OK for people to go forward of the shooting line to get their arrows back).

You could introduce the archery command "stop" which means you must not shoot any more arrows and should put the bow and arrow down. Anyone is allowed to shout 'stop' if they see something that they think is dangerous.



Range setup

Ensure that there is an adequate distance between the shooting line and targets to guard against 'bounce back' – an arrow hitting the target, not sticking and coming back towards the participant and instructor.

Make sure that the range cannot be accessed from behind the targets or from the sides. Real outdoor ranges require at least 10m to either side.

Don't give anyone access to the sides of the range in front of the shooting line (e.g. to take photos).

Do a risk assessment for the activity. Include some of the points that we've mentioned here as control measures. Don't be afraid to run it as an activity, and start teaching them #skillsforlife by starting it off right.

Your county archery assessors are happy to provide help and advice, including information on how to obtain your own AAP (adventurous activity permit) for archery. Initially contact Stephen Ramsay ACC (Activities) at stephen.ramsay@durhamscouts.org.uk.