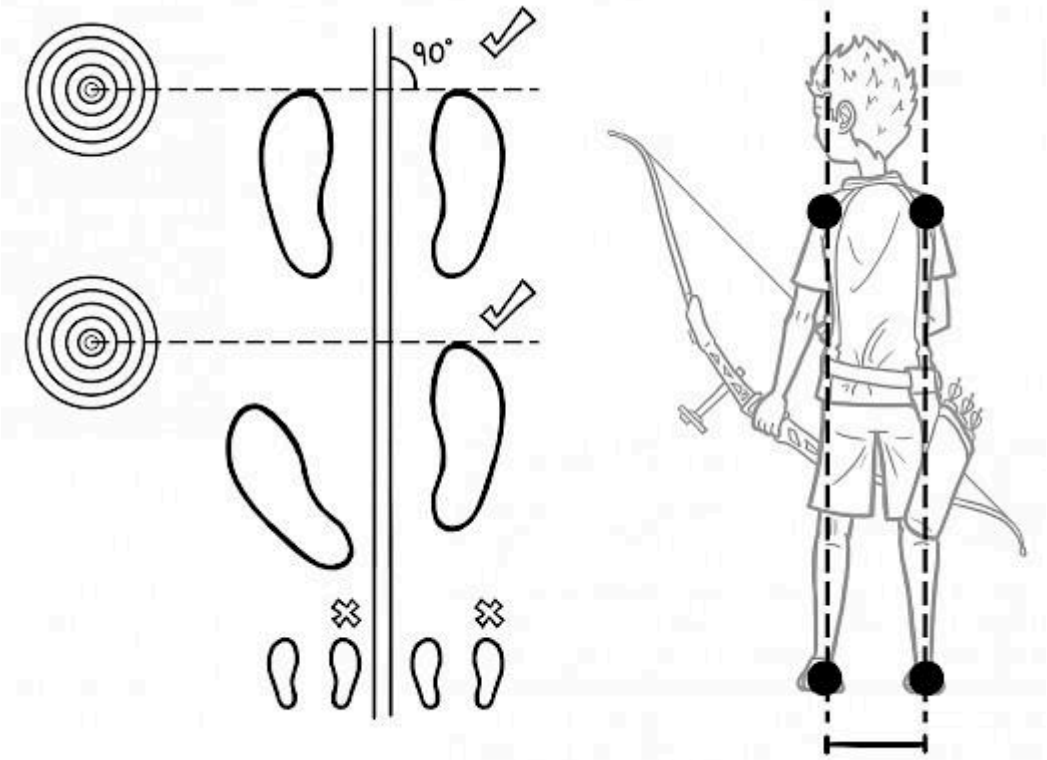
This is a basic guide to shooting archery for beginners and experienced archers alike.

Archery Stance

1) front foot toes touching the firing line or straddle the firing line
2)feet need to be shoulder width apart
3)bow arm shoulder needs to be pointed toward the target
4)back foot needs to be about 2 to 3 inches ahead of front foot
5) both feet need to be flat on the ground with your weight evenly distributed between them
6) do not lock your knees

This open stance gives you the most stability at full draw. It helps to maintain proper shoulder and bow arm alignment. You can also stand with your feet in line, however this stance is not as stable.



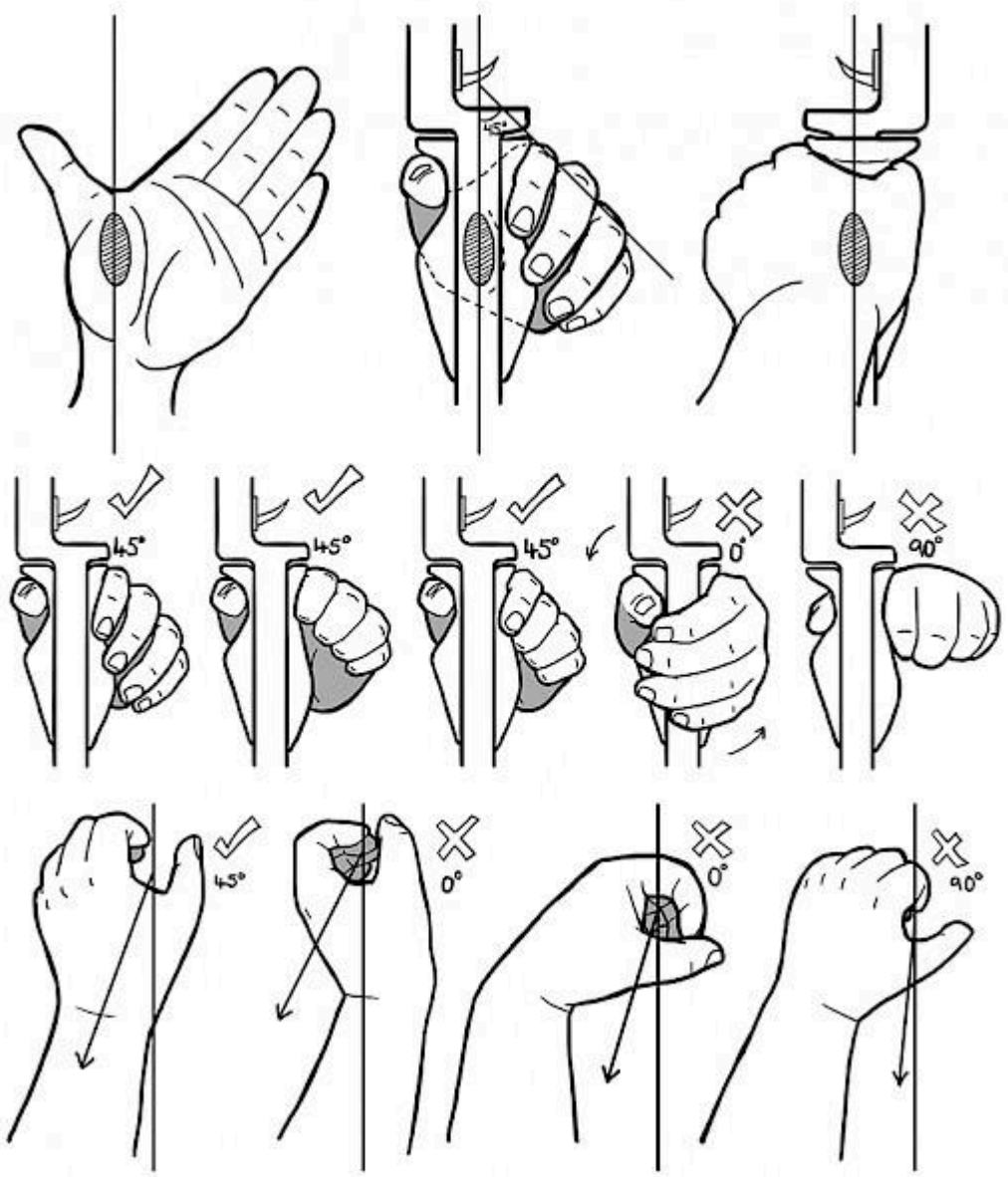
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Measuring Draw Length

There are several ways to measure draw length, one way is to measure the wing span and divide that by 2.1.
I prefer to have the archer get into the shooting stance then place their bow hand in a fist flat against a wall or door frame or some flat vertical surface then measure from where their hand is flat to the rear corner of their dominant eye socket. This measurement is a starting point to set up their draw length on a compound bow. For recurve archers it gives us the measurement to fit the recurve to them so it will not be over or under drawn.

Bow Grip

How the bow is gripped has a direct effect on arrow accuracy and placement. Your bow hand needs to be open and relaxed with your knuckles at a 45 degrees angle from the bow. When you start to draw the bow it will stay in your hand. A wrist or finger sling is a must. This will prevent the bow from falling out of your hand when you release. By having an open and relaxed bow hand it will prevent you from inadvertently putting a twisting torque into the bow. The grip of the bow should only contact the cheeky area between the thumb and forefinger and nowhere else.



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Arrows

The spine of the arrow must match the poundage of the bow being used. They are usually cut to a specific length for each individual archer.

Before shooting any arrow, you must always inspect it for any damage. Start with the nock, make sure it is not cracked or loose in or on the arrow shaft. Then inspect the arrow shaft where the nock fits for any cracks, if you find a crack the arrow is garbage. Working your way to the tip, look for cracks,dents or bends.

With carbon fibre arrows you hold the arrow by the nock and insert then flex and twist the shaft. Any cracks or cracking sounds the arrow is garbage and needs to be disposed of.

Aluminium arrows can be straightened if the bend is not too severe. If there is a crease or dent the arrow is garbage and needs to be disposed of.

Inspect the fletchings for damage, including missing or loose fletchings. Fletchings can be replaced, if needed.

Inspect the arrow tip to ensure it is not loose.

Nocking an arrow

There really isn't much to nocking an arrow but there are steps that need to be followed.

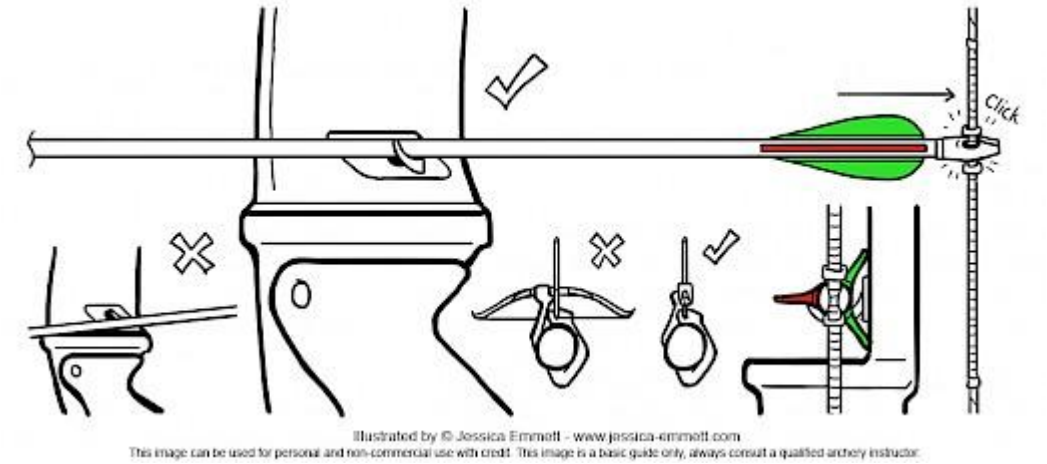
1) place the arrow on the rest with the cock fletch facing away from the riser

2) push the nock onto the string between the nocking points, it will click into place. If it doesn't click onto the string it indicates there is a problem. First try another arrow, if it clicks on the string that indicates the other arrow needs to have the nock replaced. If both arrows don't clip on indicates there could be a problem with the serving, do not use the bow until it is inspected by a bow tech.

> **Also (and this should go without saying), your bow should never be held horizontally when shooting. That's silly AND dangerous.**

The position of the nocking points on your string, and the bracing height (the distance between string and the deepest part of the grip) are important factors in ensuring that your bow is properly set up. You can use a bow square to check these things. Ask a coach or another experienced archer for help with this.

If you sometimes pull the arrow past the arrow rest (and it falls off) when you draw your bow, it's possible that your arrows are too short or the draw length isn't set properly on a compound bow. This can be dangerous.Talk to a bow technician.



Drawing the Bow

There are two common drawing hand positions in archery. You should always use the correct finger position for the bow type you're shooting.

When using an Olympic recurve with a sight (or a longbow), the 'Mediterranean draw' (top left) is used. The forefinger is placed above the arrow, and the next two fingers underneath.

For barebow styles of archery, a 'three fingers under' grip (top right) is used; this has the benefit of bringing the arrow closer

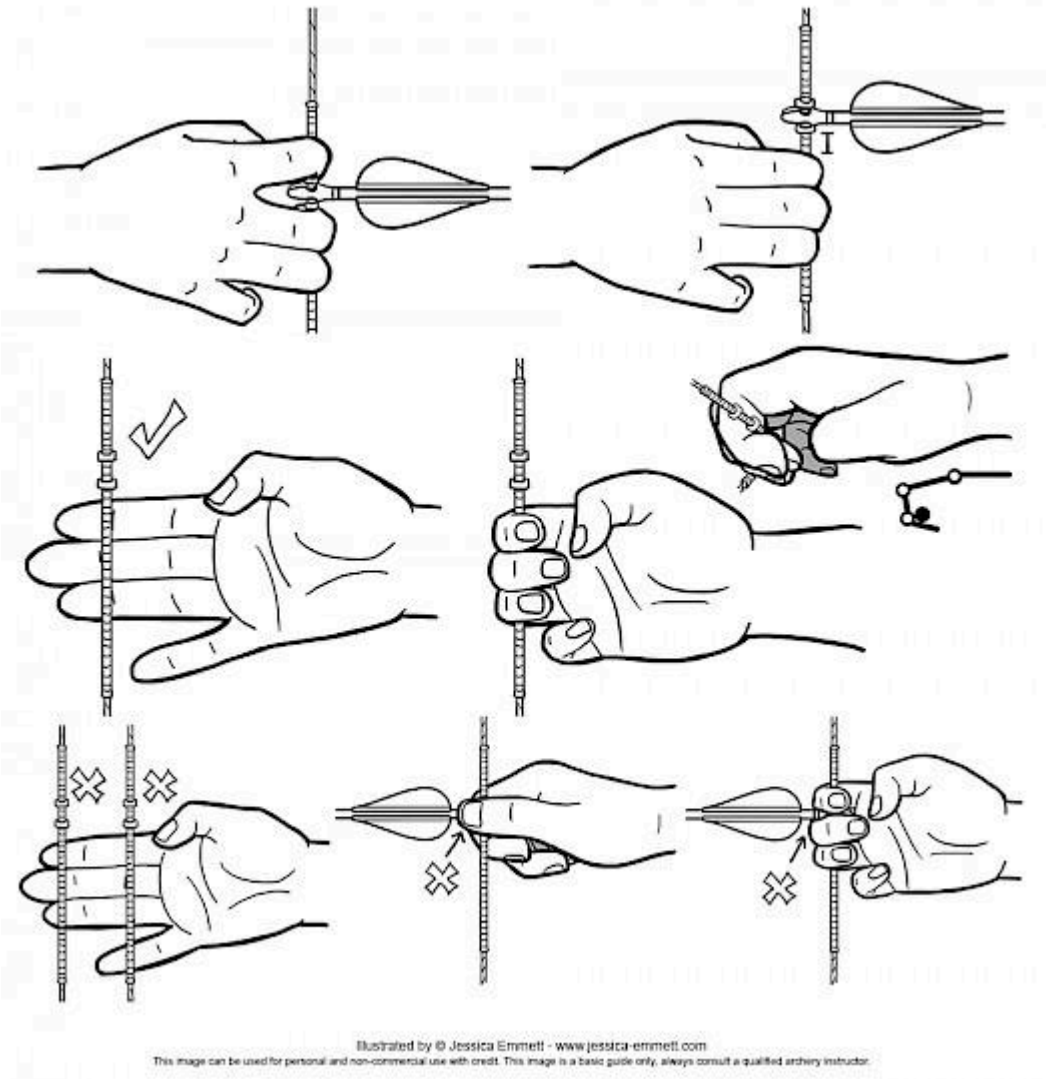
to the aiming eye, especially when the hand is drawn back to the corner of the mouth.

A 'deep hook' is essential for a good release. The string should lie in the crease of your top finger joints. The back of your hand should be kept straight.

Pulling the arrow and not the string is a novice mistake that can be dangerous, as there's a good chance of an accidental release if the arrow slips from the fingers.

In the Mediterranean draw, make sure you keep your forefinger and middle finger apart so as not to touch the arrow; if your arrow sometimes seems to 'fall off' the rest, this is the usual cause. Many finger tabs contain a 'spacer' to help prevent this.

Note that this illustration shows an archer without a finger tab. This is just to help you see how the fingers are positioned. Use of a tab or other finger protection is strongly recommended.



Compound bow shooters usually use a release aid. There are 2 main types of release aids, trigger and thumb. There is a wide variety of release aids on the market, so try them to see what suits you.

Sighting in Sight picture

You might have heard other archers talking about their 'sight picture' and wondered what it was. Let's solve that mystery.

A Sight Picture is simply what you see with your eye(s) when you have drawn and aimed your bow. It's a way to gain consistency by using cues from the visible part of your bow or with a sight peep and scope with a compound bow. Either way the basics are the same, with compound bows they need to be set up by a bow tech.

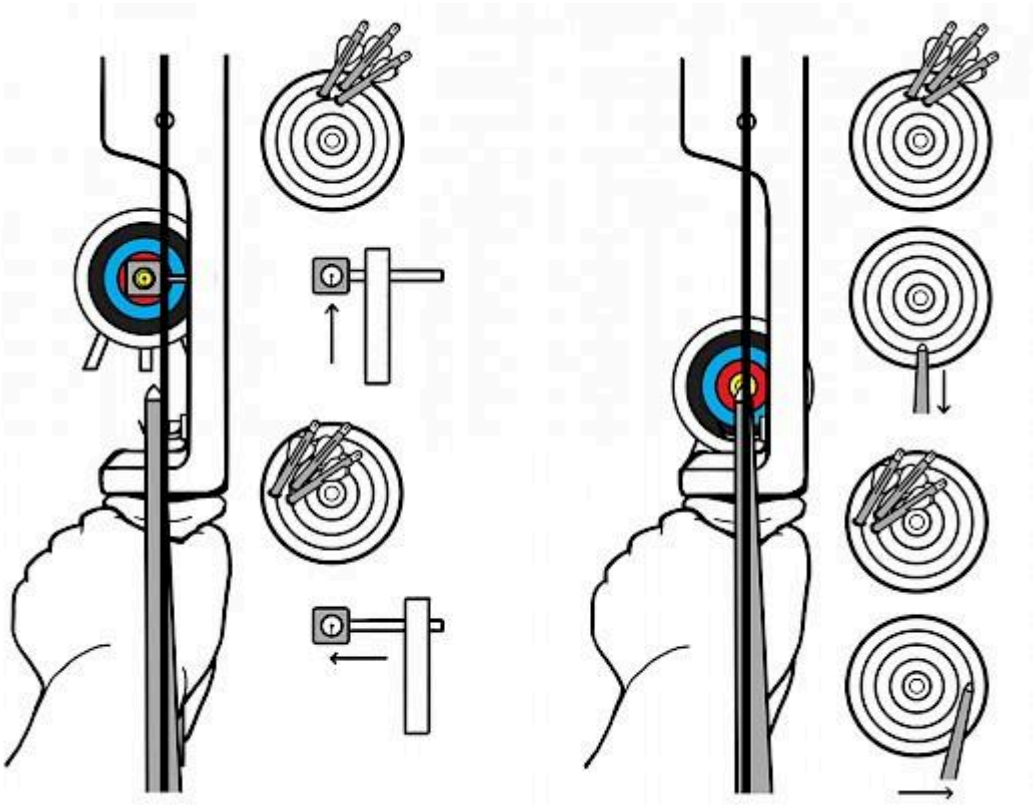
First, your string should run exactly down the middle of your bow's limbs, and through any limb bolts (if your bow has them). If the string is off-centre, then you may need to adjust your posture to achieve this alignment.

Second, the fuzzy image of the string in front of your eye should always be in the same position relative to the sight ring/block. For most archers the string will align with the inside edge of the sight ring/block.

Barebow archers don't use a sight, of course. For barebow, the fuzzy image of the string should always be in the same horizontal position relative to the **arrow**.

A bow sight is adjusted as follows: move the sight in the direction the arrows went. So if the arrows went too far left, move the sight pin **left**. Too high? Move the sight **up**. This is referred to as chasing the arrow.

With a barebow, adjust your aiming point instead. If the arrows go three rings too high, aim three rings lower. Two rings too far left? Aim two rings to the right.



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Range Etiquette

Shooting Archery for all ages and abilities. Range rules and etiquette are there to ensure it is a safe environment for everyone. Ranges always have a way of indicating when it is safe to retrieve your arrows and when the range is hot, which means people are shooting. There are several ways this can be indicated.

Some use voice commands, if you're doing this you must use a powerful voice ensuring you are heard. The voice commands are as follows:

1) Range is safe
2) Range is hot
3) Let down, this means do not shoot, let you arrow down and lower your bow right away.

A flag system can be used, usually green and red. Green for safe and Red for hot. Most ranges that use this method combine it with voice commands.

Lights can also be used. There are many different ways of using lights so check with the range.

Whistle is a popular method of controlling the range. They are particularly useful on large ranges and when there are a lot of shooters.

The whistles are as follows:

1 Whistle means the range is open and you can approach the firing line. Do not nock an arrow!

2 Whistles means the range is hot commence firing.

3 Whistles means the range is safe to retrieve arrows.

5 Whistles means to let down and lower your bow immediately.

The designated Range Safety Office is the person who is in control of the range and their instructions must be followed, they have the final say. Each range you go to may have different ways of appointing the safety office so check before you approach the firing line.
Shooting lanes can be marked or unmarked. You must stand in line with the target you are shooting at. There can be more than 1 archer shooting at the same target. Cross lane shooting is when you are standing 2 or more lanes from the target you are shooting at. This is very dangerous and you can be told to leave the range immediately.
The only exception is when there are designated targets to be shot at from a designated spot. This is extremely popular in a 3D shoot.

So always follow the rules and be a good sports person. If you're new to archery don't be intimidated, we all started from the same place.
I have been shooting archery for 50 years, competed, certified instructor, NCCP coach, and am a certified bow technician.

Bill Mart
Life Is Better With A Bow