

Getting Started In Archery

General Advice

First of all, if you are a total and complete beginner, **DO NOT BUY ANYTHING**. This may come as quite a strange piece of advice coming from an archery shop, but it is better to have a few lessons with a club before you decide to take the plunge. This will not only save you money if you decide the sport is not for you, but, will also give you a good grounding in the basics of the technique and the equipment that you require. A list of national and international bodies are on the reverse of this sheet where you can get information on your local clubs of whatever type of archery you wish to shoot.

Target Archery

Modern competitive archery is governed by the International Archery Federation, abbreviated FITA (Fédération Internationale de Tir à l'Arc). Olympic rules are derived from FITA rules. FITA is the IOC (International Olympic Committee) recognized governing body for all of archery. Currently 142 nations are represented by FITA archery governing bodies.

Target archery is the most popular form of archery, in which members shoot at non-moving circular targets at varying distances. All types of bow - longbow, barebow, recurve and compound - can be used. In Great Britain, Imperial rounds, measured in yards, are still used for a lot of tournaments and these have slightly different rules to FITA (metric) rounds, which are used internationally. Archers are divided into seniors and juniors, with juniors being those under the age of 18.

Numerous outdoor and Indoor tournaments throughout the year are an important part of the sport for those of a more competitive nature. Nevertheless club and recreational archery is just as important for people who find they have little time for any serious commitment, though still enjoy 'shooting arrows' with friends, family or colleagues in the familiar surroundings of their club.

Archery is also one of the few sports that is enjoyed with few compromises by people with most types of disability. Special guidance and instruction is available, even for the visually impaired. It is not uncommon to see disabled archers sometimes in wheelchairs, shooting alongside their able bodied friends on the same tournament shooting line.

Field Archery

Field archery is an all year round outdoor sport. It brings people into the countryside where as well as carrying out the sport, field archers also grow to appreciate their surroundings and conserve the countryside.

In field archery the targets vary widely in size and represent anything in size from a field mouse to an elephant and are placed in open or wooded countryside and at distances unknown to the archer. The ground is rarely flat and the archer may be shooting up or down slopes, across lakes or through gaps in woodland to reach the targets. The varying target sizes, distance and the lay of the ground test the archer in many ways both physically and mentally.

A field archery course normally consists of between 28 and 40 targets, with the most common course layout being 36 targets. In field archery all of the targets which are either flat picture faces mounted on a foam or straw "boss" or are 3D foam models, each are different and the archer moves around the course, following a previously planned route. Scores are awarded for accuracy on each target.

Hunting with a bow or crossbow in the UK is ILLEGAL

Governing Bodies

Federation for International Archery www.archery.org

FITA serves to promote and regulate archery world-wide through its more than 140 Member Associations (National Federations or Associations) and in conformity with the Olympic principles. It aims at framing and interpreting the FITA Rules and arranging for the organization of World Championships and other international competitions. FITA promotes archery through the media and the sponsors.

Archery has been part of the Olympic movement since 1900 and has been permanently present in the Olympic Games since 1972. FITA has held World Championships since 1931 and has progressively turned to 8 disciplines since 1991.

Grand National Archery Society www.gnas.org

The Grand National Archery Society is the governing body for the sport of archery in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Society serves nine Regional Societies. Archery has over a hundred member nations throughout the world which are represented by the Fédération Internationale de Tir à l'Arc (F.I.T.A) which is the international governing body for the sport.

The distinction of a sport can be traced back to its lineage. Archery is a most ancient sport, a sport of both Kings and Queens and is today the only sport providing the official royal bodyguard to the monarch. The skilful use of the medieval longbow at Crecy (1346) and at Agincourt (1415) laid down its mark in the annals of history and today we retain that history and balance it alongside a modern Olympic sport.

National Field Archery Society www.nfas.net

The NFAS exists to foster and promote Field Archery as a sport. All our courses are unmarked (i.e. unknown distances), usually situated in woodland, and our targets are predominantly 3D or paper animal faces.

There are ten shooting styles within the society: Primitive, Longbow, American Flatbow, Hunting Tackle, Bowhunter, Barebow, Freestyle, Crossbow, Compound Limited and Compound Unlimited. Each style is split into six classes: Gents, Ladies, Junior Boys, Junior Girls, U12 Boys, U12 Girls.

English Field Archery Society www.efafieldarcher.com

The English Field Archery Association, affiliated to the I.F.A.A. the governing body dedicated to the sport of Field Archery. Archery a family sport for all using the traditional English Longbow to the ultra high speed compound bows. From the captivating aroma of Port Orford Cedar Arrows to the blistering speeds of High Tech Carbon based arrows. Members are sent a quarterly magazine called the "Field Archer" which lists upcoming competitions, results and a few helpful hints.

British Longbow Society www.askarts.co.uk/longbow

Formed in 1951, when the longbow was fast disappearing from the shooting line, the Society celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 2001. The Society currently has approaching 2000 members in Great Britain and Worldwide.

The British Long-Bow Society perpetuates the use of the traditional recreational Longbow for two-way Target and Clout shooting, by arranging Bow Meetings for its members throughout the British Isles. It endorses a Craft Guild of Traditional Bowyers and Fletchers who are able to make equipment to the Society's criteria. It assists a number of clubs and organisations who use the recreational Longbow, and many who organise their own traditional Bow Meetings to the Society's Rules of Shooting. The Hon. Membership Secretary maintains a list of "Longbow friendly" clubs which can only be kept updated if members supply details of such clubs.

Local Clubs

Contact the governing body for details of your local clubs.