

Importance of Back Tension

Whether you shoot with fingers or a release, proper back tension is a key part of proper shooting form. So, how do you create good back tension? How do you get it to happen and why is it necessary for shooting good archery shots? Back tension, once begun, never stops or decreases until the shot has been released.

Reaching optimum draw length or optimum draw position is a prerequisite of proper back tension and must also be the focus of each preceding part of the form sequence. If you don't set up properly for back tension execution, you won't achieve it consistently.

Once you reach your anchor point, don't stop maintaining back tension. Keep pulling with your back/shoulder muscles. You must continue back tension throughout the shot sequence.

In the optimum draw position both shoulders are set level with each other, the bow hand and bow arm muscles are relaxed. The draw hand wrist is straight and relaxed, as are the forearm and biceps muscles. The draw-side elbow is held level or slightly higher than shoulders in preparation for final back tension execution. A touch is established between the draw hand and some part of your face, jaw or neck. This touch is secondary to the establishment of shoulder position and should not be overemphasized or become the primary focus of your shot sequence.

The great advantage of back tension is that it uses short muscles. Using short muscles is more consistent than using longer, larger ones. Using rhomboid muscles allows you to relax your less consistent arm muscles, which increases accuracy and endurance. Using your body more efficiently than the competition is how you become more successful in archery.