

Some Common Problems and Frustrations of New and Young Shooters

New archers need encouragement and a sense of humor. Some new archers understand what they should do, but aren't having much success in doing it yet. Remember, We want the archer to want to come back and learn the joys as well as the frustrations of the sport we love. Here are a few of the common problems, and some suggestions.

1. *Improperly matched equipment.* Have a pro help set up your equipment.
2. *Over-Bowed.* A new archer should be able to hold the string on their bow at draw for at least five seconds without creeping.
3. *Hitting the arm with the string.* New archers often flinch from the anticipated pain. Or to avoid hitting the are, a new archer may throw the string hand away from the face on release, draw the string far from the body, tense the bow hand, or shorten the draw leaving the drawing hand somewhere out in space. Each of these actually increases the likelihood of an arm hit. Make sure you use a good arm guard. Use an open stance.
4. *Arrow falling Off the Rest.* The tense shooter whose arrow falls off the rest right before he is ready to release the shot may be the most frustrated of all. Show him or her how the nock stays on the string without squeezing it and have him set his fingers on the string spread slightly away from the nock. Explain that archers draw the string, not the arrow. Again, relaxing the back of the hand, with the string contacting at or just beyond the first joint away from the fingertips is ideal. Drawing by curling the fingers to draw the last inch will pull the arrow off the rest, too.
5. *Poor Release & Follow-Through.* It is common for inexperienced archers to turn into a spectator for his own shots, throwing his bow arm violently out of the way to watch the arrow. Students also sometimes throw their hand off the string to the side or forward (towards the target) - you can see those arrows droop in a graceful arc, landing in front of the target. Explain that the release happens when you are aimed at the target and keeping the elbow coming back as the fingers relax off the string (or say that "the string pulls the fingers open"). Explain that the shot is not over when the string leaves the fingers. They should keep position until the arrow hits. Try putting your finger lightly on the student' drawing elbow, guiding it gently back while observing whether he relaxes the back of the hand.