



Archery: Safety Activity Checkpoints Council Approval: Required



Activity Permitted For: B J C S A

Note: 3-D archery permitted only for J C S A

About Archery

One of the oldest weapons and hunting methods, archery is still used for its traditional purposes, but is more common today in the United States as a recreational and competitive activity. There are a variety of styles and sizes of bows and arrows, but they're all used for one purpose: to hit a target. Girls will develop skills based on proper procedures and form, handling equipment, getting the right stance, sighting, and observing safety practices.

Archery is not permitted for Daisies, however they may participate in using slingshots as a progression to learning the rules and range commands for archery. Slingshots for Daisies should be simple, fun, and easy to use.

Brownies can participate in some archery activities if the equipment is designed for children of that grade level and body size. Participants must be old enough to understand safety procedures and handle equipment so as not to endanger themselves and others. Ensure that bows and arrows are appropriate to the age, size, strength, and ability of the girls. Juniors, and older may participate in a 3-D archery course where girls move to the targets, which might vary, to enhance their accuracy and skill level.

Learn More:

- Archery tournaments and events: [National Field Archery Association](#)
- Archery clubs/events: [Team USA Archery](#)
- Videos on archery basics: [YouTube](#)

Include Girls with Disabilities

Talk to girls with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. See [Disabled Sports USA](#) and [Team USA](#) for more about equipment, adaptations, and finding a program near you.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. One adult needs to be a certified USA Archery instructor or have equivalent certification or documented experience according to your council's guidelines. Ensure that there is a ratio of one instructor for every ten girls. Archery on a 3-D course is well supervised and appropriate to age, skill level, and location of shooting.

Note: The instructor-to-participant ratio is not the same as the adult-to-girl ratio found in "Introduction to *Safety Activity Checkpoints 2018*." Both ratios must be complied with when girls are participating in target sports. For example, if there are 15 Girl Scout Cadettes on the shooting line, there must be two instructors plus two adult Girl Scout volunteers (who are not instructors).

Assess participants' maturity level. Participants must be old enough to understand safety procedures and handle equipment so as not to endanger themselves and others. Ensure that bows and arrows are appropriate to the age, size, strength, and ability of the girls.

A beginner uses arrows that extend one to two inches in front of the bow when the bow is at full draw.

Select a safe site. Check with council staff to see if an approved vendor list is offered. If the council does not have an approved vendor list, look for organized indoor and outdoor archery ranges. Call the facility to determine the following safety information is in order:

- Equipment is stored in box/closet/cabinet and locked when not in use.
- Clear safety signals and range commands to control the activity are posted and taught to all participants in advance of stepping on to the range.
- Backstops or a specific safety zone are set behind the targets.
- Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers are known to the entire facility population.
- Shooting line is clearly defined.

At an outdoor range, check that:

- Targets are not placed in front of houses, roads, trails, or tents.
- Areas with pedestrian traffic are avoided.
- Areas are clear of brush. A hillside backstop is recommended.
- The shooting area and the spectator area behind the shooting area are clearly marked.
- In the shooting area, there is a safe distance at least 50 yards behind the targets and 20 yards on each side of the range.

- The range is not used after nightfall.

At an indoor range, make sure:

- Targets are well-lit.
- Doors or entries to the range are locked or blocked from the inside.
- Fire exits are not blocked.
- Ensure equipment is properly sized for the girls.
- Compound bows are offered in both right- and left-handed models, are the proper size, and have the correct draw weight for the girls.
- Only target tip arrows are used, never broadhead/hunting tips.

Always keep the bow pointed in a safe direction. This is the primary rule of target sport safety. A safe direction means that the bow is pointed so that even if it were to go off it would not cause injury or damage. The key to this rule is to control where the front end of the bow is pointed at all times.

Ensure that equipment to be used is in good condition. Make sure that the equipment is clean, in good working order, and nothing is broken or loose. Targets and backstops for targets need to be in good repair.

Dress appropriately for the activity. Make sure girls and adults avoid wearing dangling earrings, bracelets, and necklaces that may become entangled in equipment. Also, have girls tie back long hair.

Ensure the instructor reviews the rules and operating procedures with girls beforehand. The instructor covers safety procedures, including:

- No “dry” firing, as it can damage equipment
- Always keeping the bow pointed in a safe direction

Safety and Required Gear

- Wrist, finger, and arm protection, such as finger tabs and arm guards (right- and left-handed models)
- Bows and arrows
- Targets
- Quivers

These checkpoints should be reviewed with the vendor, facility, or your council as appropriate.