

# ARCHERY TERMINOLOGY

*New to archery? Here are some of the basic words that you should become familiar with so that you can enjoy your new sport and help your learning curve! Remember, the most experienced archer was a beginner at some point so don't get discouraged. Always ask questions, learn from anyone and most importantly, have fun! The three main ideas to remember when first learning to fling arrows, 1) is it comfortable for you, 2) is your style repeatable for every shot, 3) is your arrow hitting where you are aiming? If you can answer yes to these questions...then you are on your way to becoming a great archer!*

**Anchor Point** – A constant point on the archer's face to which the loosing hand and string is drawn. This allows the archer to draw the same length every time and gives the arrow the same 'backsight' reference.

**Arrow** – A shaft of wood, aluminum or fiberglass with a broadhead or sharp point at the front with feathers or vanes at the back, shot from a bow as a weapon in hunting or at a target for sport.

**Arrow rest** – A rest or shelf on which the arrow sits during the draw. It is located just above the bow handle. Rests are usually sprung, and their position may be critical to the way the bow shoots.

**Barebow** – A type of Shooting which does not allow the use of shooting aids on the bow such as sights, pressure buttons, long rods, stabilizers etc.

**Bow arm / Hand** – The arm and hand which supports the bow when shooting.

**Bow sight** – A device fitted to the bow to assist aiming. Usually adjustable.

**Bow string** – A cord or string stretched between the nocks at the ends of the limbs when the bow is braced and on which the arrow is placed for shooting.

**Brace** – To string the bow.

**Bracer (arm guard)** – A shield or guard worn on the inside of the bow arm above the wrist to hold sleeves and cuffs in place and to prevent the bowstring from 'slapping' the inside of the forearm.

**Bracing height** – A specified distance between the string and a particular point on the bow riser when the bow is correctly braced.

**Broadhead** – Razor-sharp edged stainless-steel blades attached typically to an aluminum ferrule that screws into an arrow shaft. Many types of designs from 1, 2, 3 & 4 blades. Used for hunting.

**Cock feather/Vane** – The feather or vane at right angles to the arrow nock, (except on compound bows). It is usually a different color from the others on the same arrow for easy identification and is always fitted to the bowstring with the cock feather closest to the archer.

**Composite bow** – A bow having limbs made from two or more materials bonded together.

**Compound bow** – A bow having enhanced efficiency through the use of eccentric wheels (cams), over which the cables attached to either end of the string are drawn. It appears to have three strings and is smaller than a recurve bow.

**Creeping** – Allowing the arrow to move forward from full draw before loosing (shooting). This will almost always lead to inconsistent draw length causing poor groupings. A Clicker/kisser button may help an experienced archer but will normally cause a beginner more problems than it solves.

**Dominant eye** – The preferred eye for aiming when the archer has both eyes open.

**Draw** – The act of flexing the bow's limbs by pulling the bow string back.

**Draw weight** – The measured force, normally measured in pounds, required to extend the bow and string to a specified draw length. On most bows this is specified at 28 inches draw but the actual draw weight will vary according to the individual archer's draw length, about two pounds extra for each additional inch drawn.

**Dry Fire** – NEVER DO THIS! Pulling back a bow string, without an arrow attached, and then letting loose the tension. THIS IS VERY DANGEROUS TO YOU AND COULD EASILY BREAK YOUR BOW!

**Field tips (Field points)** – Extremely durable, typically made of steel with a concave shape to make them easier to pull out of targets but also helps with accurate arrow flight. Not to be used for hunting.

**Fletch** – The act of fixing a feather or vane to an arrow shaft.

**Fletching** – A collective word describing the feathers or vanes on arrows.

**Handle** – The part of the bow which is held in the hand. (Sometimes used interchangeably with 'riser')

**Holding** – Keeping the bow on aim at full draw.

**Loaded bow** – A bow with an arrow nocked on the string. BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE HOLDING A WEAPON.

**Longbow** – Traditional English bow, stacked belly, flat back, 'D' section. Traditionally made of yew, now usually hickory / lemon wood or hickory / hornbeam / purple heart laminates etc.

**Loose** – The movement of the arrow hand in shooting the bow.

**Nock (1)** – The slot in the end of an arrow which locates it on a bow string.

**Nock (2)** – The grooves at the end of bow limbs into which the string is fitted.

**Nock (3)** – The act locating the arrow nock on the bow string.

**Nocking point** -The point on the bow string where the nock of the arrow is located each time.

**Overdraw** – To draw the pile of the arrow beyond the arrow rest. This means that the arrow is too short for the archer's draw length. IT IS VERY DANGEROUS AND CAN CAUSE SEVERE INJURY TO YOU AS WELL AS DAMAGE TO YOUR EQUIPMENT.

**Pinching** – Gripping the nock of the arrow between the fingers of the shaft hand.

**Point of aim** – An aiming point other than the center of the target.

**Prep line** – (Preparation line) The balanced pre-draw position of the archer, sometimes related specifically to the relative positions of the bow hand, shaft arm and arrow

**Quiver** – A piece of equipment that holds an archer's arrows when not in use. Can be attached directly to a bow, worn over the shoulder or mounted to one's hip. Can hold from 3 to 12 arrows.

**Recurve Bow** – Common name given to the Olympic target style bows. May be ‘one-piece’ or a ‘three-piece’ take down construction.

**Riser** – The center section of a modern takedown bow onto which the upper and lower limbs are fastened.

**Serving** – The thread which is wound around the bow string to prevent fraying.

**Shaft** – The shaft only portion of an entire arrow.

**Shooting line** – The line to stand astride of when an archer is practicing target shooting.

**Sling** – Used to restrain the bow movement when shooting with an open hand. (Also called a ‘Bow-sling’ or ‘Martingale’)

**Spine** – A measure of the bend stiffness of an arrow. The goal is to have an arrow properly spined so that it flies perfectly straight and hits into the target straight (no angle from one side or the other).

**Stabilizers** – Weights used to add mass to the bow but away from its center of rotation to slow down bow movement while the arrow is passing through the bow. Damping or shock absorbing devices are frequently incorporated in stabilizers.

**Takedown Bow** – Common name used to describe a modern recurve bow which is made of three parts; a riser and two limbs, which may be ‘taken down’ for storage and transport

**Torque** – A turning force applied to the bow by the action of shooting during and after release

**Trajectory** – The curved flight path of the arrow caused by changing speed and gravity.

**Underbowed** – The use of a bow with a draw weight too light for the archer.

**Underdraw** – To draw less than full draw.