Beginner's Course: How To

A structured beginner's course is a great way to introduce newcomers to our sport. This is where they will learn the basics of archery. The course covers necessary safety elements as well as the technique of how to shoot. The host club usually provides the equipment and coaching. At the end of the course is a discussion on how to take archery further.

Timing

Depending on the resources of your club, we recommend a 4 or 6 week beginner course. Usually these have 2 hour sessions for 4 consecutive weeks.

Distance

Many clubs have experimented with different distances, and 10m is a good starting distance that allows newcomers of all strength and size to have early success.

Structure

You want to get your newcomers to have early success and early reward! But we also want them to approach the sport in a safe and responsible manner. Remember that archery is a sport with a lot of jargon and a lot of specifics. Try not to overwhelm your newcomers with everything all at once.

Think about breaking your weeks into the following:

Week 1 – Safety and Orientation

Week 2 – Technique

Week 3 – Introduction to Scoring

Week 4 – Technique, Scoring and archery games! e.g. Balloon popping

Details of each lesson

For a full detailed outline of each lesson (especially the first week) try reading the Foundation Coaches manual on Archery NZ.

Equipment

We recommend starting everyone on light-poundage recurve bows – less than 18lbs for children and up to 22lbs for adults.

In regards to sights: a simple piece of foam and a clothes pin is a good way to introduce archers to the concept of sighting using a pin-sight.

The technique for recurve and compound is very similar for beginners. However, once you reach week 4 you may want to introduce your archers to compound bows and show them release aids. While compound bows are more expensive to purchase, they do offer benefits to archers who might struggle with distance. You may want to think about a Genesis-style compound bow for your collection.