

USA ARCHERY ADAPTIVE ARCHERY INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Supplement to the USA Archery Level 1
Archery Instructor Certification Program

Second Edition



A Program of

Sponsored By



As instructors, you have the exciting opportunity to introduce new athletes to the sport of archery. Expanding your student population to include adaptive archers not only provides you with more opportunities to teach the sport you love, but it also helps grow the sport's reach to a whole new group of athletes who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to participate.

The Adaptive Archery Instruction Manual serves as a supplement to the existing USA Archery Level 1 Archery Instructor Certification Program, and will help instructors learn that with a little preparation, creativity and flexibility, anyone can become a successful archer.

Instructors who utilize the Adaptive Archery Instruction Manual are well prepared to integrate adaptive archers into their current archery programs. Using slight modifications to equipment and teaching techniques will provide a safe and effective environment for archers of all ability levels.

We appreciate your interest in taking the first step towards inclusion and your willingness to teach the sport of archery to all. It is our hope that the tools included in this manual will help you create a safe and fun environment that inspires adaptive archers to cultivate a lifelong passion for the sport.

Sincerely,

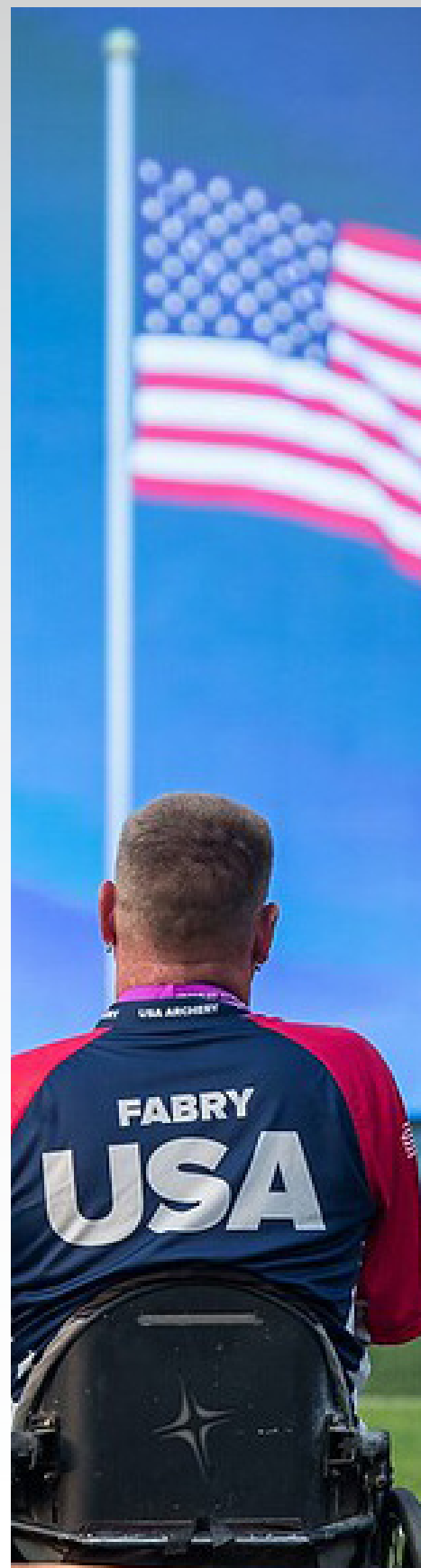


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FUNDING RECOGNITION

This program was funded by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The opinions, finding and conclusions stated herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

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MANUAL OBJECTIVES

Using this manual, instructors will learn and demonstrate competency in the following areas:

- General Disability Etiquette and Awareness
- Adapting Range Set Up for Archers with Disabilities
- Adaptive Equipment
- Adapting the Shot Process
- Competition Inclusion Models

Welcome to the Adaptive Archery Instruction Manual – A Supplement to the Level 1 Archery Instructor Certification Program!

This manual was created through a partnership between Disabled Sports USA and USA Archery to help archery instructors incorporate archers of all abilities into existing archery programs. This partnership is a part of Disabled Sports USA's Adapt2Achieve program, which aims to strengthen and develop community-based sports programs through adaptive sports training and education initiatives.

ABOUT DISABLED SPORTS USA

Founded in 1967, Disabled Sports USA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to develop independence, confidence and fitness through participation in sports. What began as a program to serve Vietnam veterans has since grown into one of the nation's largest multi-sport, multi-disability organizations, annually serving more than 60,000 wounded warriors, youth and adults with disabilities. A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, Disabled Sports USA offers programs in more than 50 summer and winter sports through its nationwide network of more than 120 community-based chapters. For more information, visit www.disabledsportsusa.org.

ABOUT ADAPT2ACHIEVE

A program of Disabled Sports USA, Adapt2Achieve provides adaptive sports training to coaches, instructors and volunteers allowing for more individuals with disabilities to get active. Training includes in-person conferences, sport-specific clinics, online learning and manuals designed to improve the safety and quality of adaptive sports in communities across the nation. Adapt2Achieve works with various national organizations to help them develop their own sports inclusion best practices.

Since 2009, more than 300 organizations have participated in Adapt2Achieve multi-day conferences held across the U.S. To learn more, visit www.adapt2achieve.org.

ABOUT USA ARCHERY

USA Archery is the National Governing Body for the Olympic sport of archery, and is the organization recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee for the purpose of selecting and training men's and women's teams to represent the U.S. in the Olympic, Paralympic, and Pan American Games. USA Archery also selects teams for World Championships, World Cups and other international competitions annually.

The mission of USA Archery is to provide the necessary resources to foster strong athlete participation, competition and training in the sport of archery. Membership in USA Archery is open to everyone involved in all disciplines of archery including target, field and 3-D. USA Archery sanctions more than 200 events annually and conducts indoor, outdoor and collegiate National Championships as well as the United States Archery Team Qualifier Series. USA Archery also provides youth and adult athlete development programs and clubs throughout the United States, and certifies archery instructors, coaches and judges.

For more information visit www.usarchery.org.



Photo Credit: World Archery



INSTRUCTOR PREREQUISITES

Prior to instructing adaptive athletes, archery instructors should complete the Level 1 Archery Instructor Certification course. The 8 hour certification course and written exam will cover in detail:

- Range Set Up and Safety
- Equipment
- Steps of Shooting
- Coaching Techniques
- Creating a Program and Lesson Plan
- Equipment Inspection and Repair

This manual is intended to supplement and expand upon the instruction techniques taught in that course, not to stand alone as the sole source of information for instructors.

INCLUSION

While this manual will focus on adaptive archers, the goal should not be to create a separate class for these archers, but instead to provide an inclusive classroom setting where archers with disabilities participate alongside non-disabled archers. Adaptive students should be integrated as much as possible into already established class routines, and any adaptation or special considerations should flow seamlessly.

Providing inclusive programs can break the stigma associated with disabilities and remove the barriers to conversations and interactions among groups of people who might be separated. This environment can be an enriching experience for all students of archery.

USA ARCHERY MOBILE COACH

The USA Archery Mobile Coach website provides USA Archery instructors and coaches access to premium video content featured in USA Archery instructor and coach certification courses and the Adaptive Archery Instruction Manual, as well as the USA Archery coach locator, certification course schedule, event schedule and USA Archery shop. The content of your video library will correspond to your current instructor or coach certification level. Please visit <http://mobilecoach.usarchery.org> to register.

ADAPTIVE ARCHERY VIDEO SERIES

The Adaptive Archery Video Series is featured within this manual to further assist instructors on how to teach adaptive archery. This video series may be found at <http://mobilecoach.usarchery.org> under “Resources”. Each video that is included within this manual is also represented by a QR code.

To scan the QR code on an android device (8.0+):

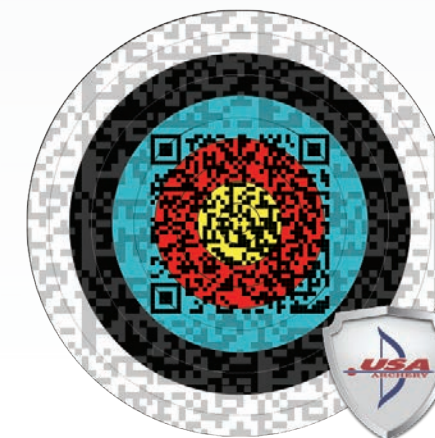
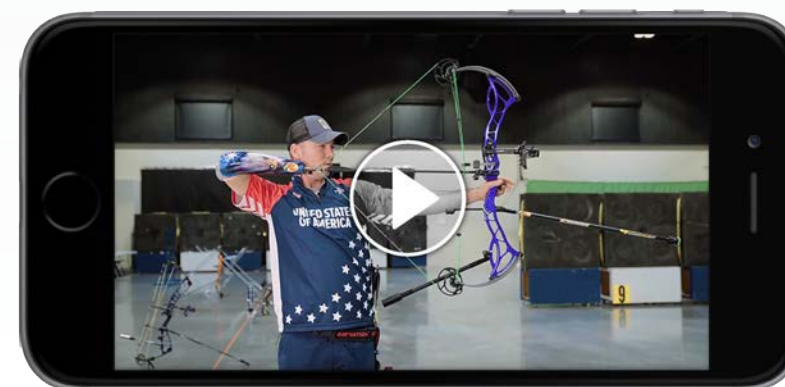
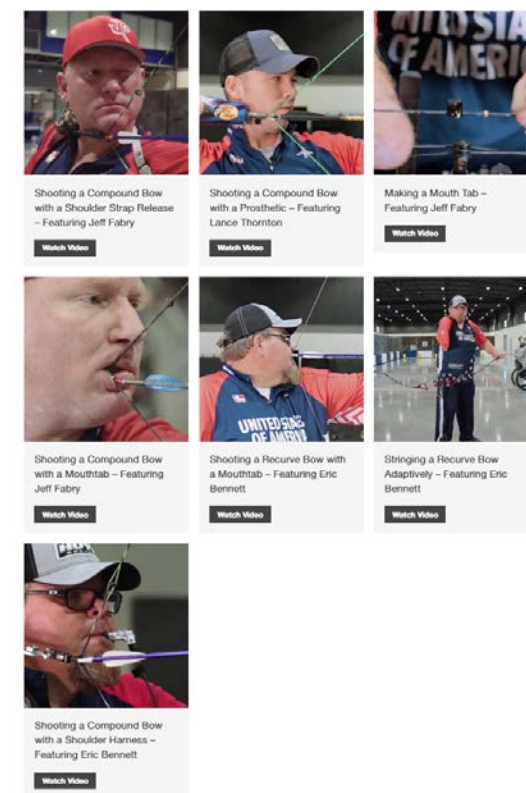
Download Google Assistant or any QR code reader app. Launch your camera. Point it at the QR code Press and hold the home button. Tap to trigger the QR code’s action.

To scan a QR code on an Apple device (iOS 11+):

Open the Camera app on the iPhone or iPad. Align the camera with the QR code. Tap the notification to trigger the QR code’s action.

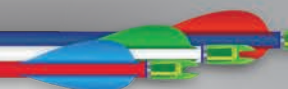


Adaptive Archery Video Series





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FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY

Prior to including archers with disabilities in your program, take a walk through your entire venue to evaluate the accessibility. A sample list to guide your assessment is provided in this section. In a perfect world, a venue would have all of the things listed, but try to focus on the items most required by the individuals in your program. Prior to beginning the program, it may also be helpful to have the archer or a family member visit the facility to point out any personal accessibility issues you may not have taken into account.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires public spaces, including archery facilities, to meet certain standards for accessibility. If you encounter an issue at the facility, work together with the manager to plan appropriate modifications.

Prior to each lesson, do a brief check of the facility to ensure the pathways are clear of obstructions, and any required modifications are ready to go. Remember that in spite of the best planning, issues may arise, so be flexible and keep lines of communication between the manager and your archer open.



BUILDING/VENUE ACCESS

- Are there enough clearly-marked, accessible parking spaces reasonably close to the main entrance of the building or outside range area?
- Are any stairs required to access the building or outside range area?
- If elevators are required to access the range, are they in working order?
- If the range is inside, is there a push button to automatically open doors, or is staff available to assist those in need?
- Are inside hallways wide enough for wheelchair users to navigate without issue?
- Are all pathways clear of clutter and easily navigable for athletes with visual impairments or mobility assistance devices?

SHOOTING LINE ACCESS

- If the range is outside, is there a hill, thick grass, gravel, or other natural impediment that might be difficult to navigate?
- Is the width of the range set up able to accommodate an archer who uses a wheelchair or requires volunteer assistance?
- Are stools or other seating options available for athletes who may need to use them during the shooting process or who cannot stand for the full lesson?

FACILITIES ACCESS

- Are restrooms available near the shooting range, and do they have accessible areas?
- Are water stations available near the shooting range and at a height that is accessible to all?

EQUIPMENT ACCESS

- Is the bow rack and equipment set at an appropriate height, and accessible to all?
- Will someone be available to help with equipment adjustments?
- Will equipment storage be available for ongoing lessons? If so, is it appropriately sized for adaptive equipment and accessible to all?
- Is safety equipment and protocol appropriate for all archers, or do you need to consider changes to protocol keeping in mind potential visual or hearing impairments?





RANGE SET UP & ADAPTATIONS

Range set up will remain much the same when including adaptive archers, with a few minor adjustments for both indoor and outdoor set up.

During competition, the official shooting lane width is expanded to 1.25 meters to accommodate archers using wheelchairs. For recreational programs, you do not need to make this adjustment, but it will be important to ensure that there is enough space for all archers and any potential volunteer assistance.

In addition to the standard equipment set up, it will also be a good idea to have stools or other seating options available for potential use during the shot process as well as for archers who may need to rest between shooting rounds.

When choosing a shooting lane for any adaptive archers consider how they can best be included within the group, while still allowing appropriate access to equipment, restrooms, etc.



ADAPTING WHISTLE COMMANDS AND SAFETY COMMANDS

It will be important to consider all archers when teaching safety commands, and ensure that both visual and auditory cues are involved. For most adaptive archers, the standard whistle commands will work fine, although some archers may need assistance during the retrieval process or in returning their bows to the rack.

Adaptations for athletes with hearing impairments could include a flag system, or the light system that is often used as back up at a tournament with a green light to shoot, yellow light when time's up or red light when no shooting is allowed.

Some electronic timing systems have buzzer settings which can be useful for athletes with visual impairments. Another option for visually impaired archers would be to have a coach or volunteer stand behind them that can tap them on the shoulder or provide other cues when necessary.



More adaptive sporting equipment is available today than ever before. Instructors who are familiar with a wide variety of adaptive archery equipment will be better prepared to assist archers with disabilities in improving their skills. As you'll see in the next few pages, many of these adaptations are cost-effective, and can be created by you or the archer utilizing existing pieces of equipment or items that can be easily purchased at a local hardware store.

Safety should be the priority for any modification, followed by fit, function and comfort. Remember that manufacturers' warranties may be voided if modifications are made to the equipment, or if the equipment is used in a manner that was not its intended purpose.

As with all archers, it is important to adapt the equipment to the archer and not the other way around. The goal should always be to use the minimum adaptation, to promote independence and allow the archer to feel as involved in the process as possible. With this in mind, you can begin an adaptive program with a small amount of adaptive equipment, and grow your selection as it becomes appropriate for the archers you are serving.

Disabled Sports USA maintains a comprehensive adaptive equipment resource on the web. Stay up-to-date on the latest developments in adaptive equipment for archery and other sports here:

www.disabledsportsusa.org/archery-equipment



Stringing a Recurve Bow Adaptively



Visit www.archery360.com to find an archery retailer near you.



SELECTING THE CORRECT BOW

As with any archer, the first and most important step in the shooting process is selecting the correct bow. Starting with a bow that is low weight and low poundage, take into account the archer’s goals such as whether they are looking to participate in recreational or competitive target archery versus hunting. All of this will play into the proper bow selection, in addition to any disability-related factors.



Recurve Bow - Because recurve bows are generally lighter weight, they can work well for archers who may not have the strength to hold up and steadily aim a bow with a heavier draw weight. That being said, recurve bows can require more strength to pull back on the bowstring, so make sure to assess the individual archer to see how any muscle tone issues may play into the shot process.



Compound Bow - A compound bowstring can be easier to pull back, so this type of bow may work better for athletes who use a bow stand and will not hold up their own bow. Compound bows are also shorter so they may work better for seated archers.

RELEASE AIDS

Releasing the bowstring can be difficult for some archers who have limited use of their arm or hands. Some release aids are mechanical with a trigger or rotating hinge, while others are more simple and made from common household materials.

FINGER TABS/GLOVES

Archers who are using a recurve bow and have full use of their hand, but need assistance with gripping can consider using finger tabs or gloves. These will also help protect the hand from the bowstring.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops



CALIPER RELEASE AID WITH WRIST STRAP

Caliper Release Aids are commonly used by archers who are looking to bow hunt, and are easy to use for introductory level shooters. For archers with limited use of their hands or those with limited fine motor skills, the aid can be set to release by touching against a cheek or another body part. These release aids are not used on recurve bows in target archery competition, but can be used on recurve bows recreationally.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops



OTHER STRAP-ON RELEASE AID

In addition to the Caliper Release Aid, which typically comes with a strap, there are other release aids that can have a strap attached. All are set off using one finger or a chin.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops. Depending on the aid, you can purchase it with strap attached or attach your own strap.



Shooting a Compound Bow with a Shoulder Strap Release



THUMB RELEASE AID

Used by more competitive shooters, because they require more skill to use and can be more difficult to get onto the bowstring, thumb release aids have a trigger extension to help release the string.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops

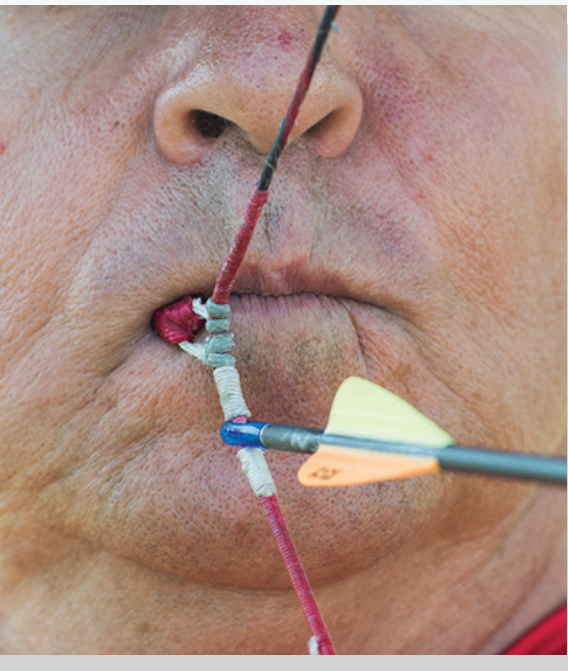


BACK TENSION RELEASE AID

These aids have a hinge style, and don't require a specific action to set them off, so they can be used by archers with limited to no hand usage. Once the release is on the bowstring, just pulling it will set it off, allowing archers to engage with their chin or a mouth movement. They can be more difficult to utilize, so they're recommended for higher-level archers.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops



MOUTH TAB

Archers who have lost the use of one hand or arm can elect to use a bowstring-mounted mouth tab. The archer will hold the bow in their non-affected hand, put the tab on the bowstring, holding it between two molars so they can draw, hold and release the bowstring.

Where Can I Get It?

Mouth Tabs are custom made by the archer (see video) and materials, such as nylon or leather, vary slightly depending on the archer's preference for feel and wear.



Making a Mouth Tab

SHOULDER MOUNTED RELEASE AID

In contrast to a wrist strap, some archers who are using one hand may need a shoulder mounted release aid. The bow is fitted to the harness, and it is set off by touching to the archer's face.



Where Can I Get It?

The shoulder harness is custom made for the archer, either through a third-party vendor or by the archer themselves, and then the release aid is mounted to the harness.

QUAD GLOVES

For archers without the use of their hands, quad gloves can be strapped around the wrist and allows them to hold onto items like a bow.

Where Can I Get It?

Purchased through Medical Supply Store or at an archer's Orthotics & Prosthetics office.



Shooting a Compound Bow with a Shoulder Harness



SHOOTING LINE ACCESSORIES

There are a variety of shooting line accessories which will assist the archer in their shot process. These items can be used by both seated and standing archers to assist with stability, provide help with aim, or even hold the bow if needed.

SEATING

Archers who cannot stand should sit for stability while they hold the bowstring at full draw.



Wheelchair – Archers can use their own wheelchairs. During competition, they will need to have their feet on the footrest, but recreationally the goal should be to find a position that is comfortable for the archer throughout the entire shot process.



Stool – Archers who don't use a wheelchair, but cannot stand for the shot process can sit on a stool or other chair. For competition these cannot have backrests.



Brace – If stability is the major concern, archers can use a brace, which is more for leaning on, so that they are standing partially upright throughout the shot process. If this becomes difficult to maintain consistency, consider changing to a fully seated position.



FOOT PLATES/WEDGES

For archers who can stand, but may have different leg lengths, a footplate can be used to help stabilize their stance. The footplate can be any wedge-like item, such as a doorstop. For competition, it can only be slightly larger than the size of the foot, but for recreation purposes, any wedge will work.

BOW STANDS

A bow stand is a piece of equipment designed to hold the bow so that the archer only pulls back the string to shoot. The horizontal and vertical bow stands are designed to provide archers with significant motor dysfunction, spasticity or partial paralysis the opportunity to engage in archery.

Bow stands can be freestanding or attached to the archer's wheelchair, and have the potential to add a secondary adaptation that also holds the string for archers if needed.

The primary focus of instruction when utilizing the bow stand is helping the archer to develop maximum independence, so encouraging the archer to release the arrow is part of the coaching process.

Where Can I Get It?

Commercially Available

QUIVER STANDS/ATTACHMENTS

Quiver stands should be placed in an area so that once the archer is ready to shoot they don't have to move far or at all to get their arrows. For archers with more limited mobility, a quiver stand that attaches to their wheelchair or body might be appropriate.

Where Can I Get It?

Archery Pro Shops

SPOTTING SCOPES

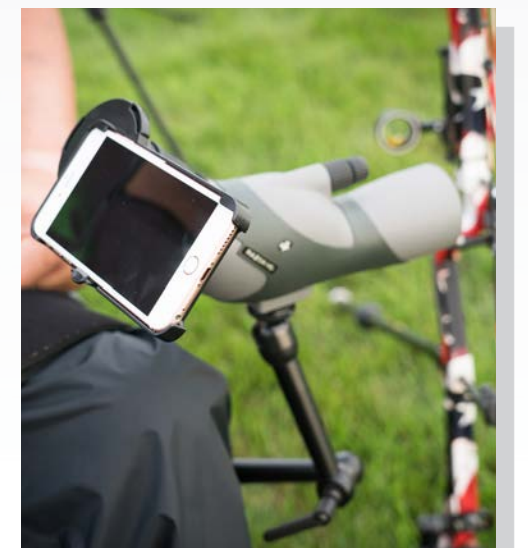
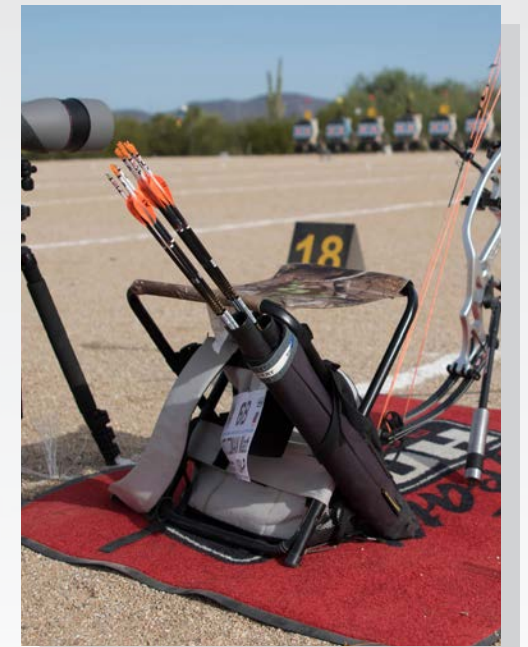
For archers who are aiming at targets farther away, a spotting scope can help to aim properly. These can be adapted to be attached to a wheelchair if the archer needs. These scopes can also help archers with low vision who might not be able to see long distances.

Where Can I Get It?

Scopes can be purchased at most archery stores, but will need to have a magic arm or homemade modifications to attach them to a chair.



Photo Credit: _____



While it may not be possible to have every piece of equipment listed in Chapter 2 when first starting an inclusive archery program, consider the type of program you're looking to build. If you are incorporating a single archer with a disability into your program, you can focus on only the pieces that archer might need. On the other hand, if you are looking to expand your program offerings to make them truly inclusive, it is important to have a wide selection of pieces that could be utilized by archers with various adaptive needs. When an archer with a disability approaches you for the first time, it is important to be realistic about the services you can safely and effectively provide, and available equipment will be a large factor into those capabilities.

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR A BEGINNER ADAPTIVE ARCHERY PROGRAM

In addition to the standard equipment listed in the USA Archery Level 1 Instructor Certification manual, and a number of lightweight bows, it is recommended to have at minimum the following items for a beginning adaptive archery course. As your student population grows, you can add more items from Chapter 2 of this manual, based on the needs of the adaptive archers in your program.



Caliper Release Aids with Wrist Strap - to assist archers to release the bowstring



Quad Gloves - to assist archers to grip the bow



Strap, such as a Gait Belt - for use in helping participants transfer and stay stable in a chair



Chairs/Stools - for archers who may not be able to stand for the full class period

FITTING ARCHERS WITH BOWS

As with any archer, it is important to consider hand dominance, height and eye dominance when selecting the proper bow. Consider how disability might play into these traits.

Hand Dominance - While it will still be important to ask the archer whether they are right- or left-handed, the archer's disability may play more of a role in hand dominance and bow choice. During the intake process, learn how the archer's disability affects their body. Many disabilities, including upper limb amputation, traumatic brain injury, and stroke will present more on one side of the body versus another. Use these responses to decide whether a left-handed or right-handed bow is appropriate and which hand, or other body part, will be used to pull back on the string.

Height - Keep in mind that an archer's disability, or need to sit during their shot process, may affect their height so it will be important to have several smaller bows on hand, even during an adult class.

Eye Dominance - In the same way that hand dominance can be affected by disability, eye dominance may also be affected. During the intake process, speak with the archer and their family about any potential visual impairments such as low vision, potential blind spots, range of vision impairments, etc. and work with them to come up with a shooting stance that will allow them the best possible sight lines.





Coaches should strive to have each archer do their best to follow the eleven steps of shooting described in the USA Archery Level 1 Certification materials. However, some archers may need to make adjustments to their form to help with continuity, or may need assistance from a volunteer at various stages of the shot process. In adaptive archery, the coach will have to be creative in helping the archer find the best possible way to execute the shot process as safely, consistently, and efficiently as possible. Each archer will have a different shot process depending on the adaptations needed. This chapter will lay out some of the adaptations used in each step, but being flexible and creative in your coaching techniques will ensure the best outcomes for the archers in your program.

Key Points - Stance

Seated Archers:

- If an archer is using a wheelchair or stool, position the seat so that it is straddling the line with two wheels or legs in front of the line and two wheels or chair legs behind the line.
- Support the archer's feet so they are steady and balanced. In competition, the seated archer must have their feet on the footrest of their wheelchair, and no back support is allowed.
- Adjust the angle of the chair to find something that helps the archer's aim. It may take some experimenting to find the appropriate angle, but the goal should be something that's comfortable with good balance and doesn't hurt when the archer pulls the bow back.
- If the seated archer is still having stability issues, it may be necessary to devise a waist or chest strap. This will enable them to aim steady and repeat their shot execution.

Standing Archers:

- Focus on balance and stability during the shot process.
- Many times lower-limb prosthetics, stroke, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy or other disabilities will cause archers to be less aware of their own balance, so you will need to work with the athlete to find a stance that is appropriate.

STEP 2: NOCK



Key Points - Nock

- Some adaptive archers will have limited use of their hands thus needing volunteer assistance during this process.
- During competition, the athlete's classification will specify whether assistance is allowed or not. For more information on competition and the classification process, see Chapter 8.
- Making sure that arrows and quivers are appropriately placed will help with this part of the process to ensure the archer can grip one arrow and turn it so it can be attached to the bowstring.
- Seated archers may need a special chair-mounted quiver, while standing archers may require a hip or back quiver. Some archers may prefer having a small table or stand for their arrows.

STEP 3: HOOK & GRIP

Key Points - Hook:

- Sit down with the archer and discuss which options might work best for their situation, such as a mouth tab, finger tab or other release aid.
- If the archer is shooting compound and needs to use a release aid, it is recommended to start with a Caliper Release Aid, held on with a strap or glove if needed, as they are simple to use for the novice archer.
- Once the archer has mastered this technique, you can work with them on a more complex release system.
- Other options for activating the release aid include having the archer use their chin or mouth.
- In this case, the archer may need to put the bow in their lap and use their bow hand to assist with hooking, or have a volunteer assist with hooking the bowstring.
- Regardless of the type of release aid used, it is important for the archer to practice activating the release aid using a stretch band or string loop before attempting to use the release aid on an actual bow.

Key Points - Grip:

- Establishing a proper grip on the bow handle is essential before drawing the bowstring, but may be difficult for some archers.
- If the archer has an upper limb amputation, they may need to make minor adjustments to their prosthetic such as adjusting the angle of the hand grip.
- Other options include building up the grip so the bow fits into the hand more consistently, strapping the bow to the archers hand, using quad gloves, or using a bow stand or volunteer to help grip the bow.



Shooting a Compound Bow with a Prosthetic



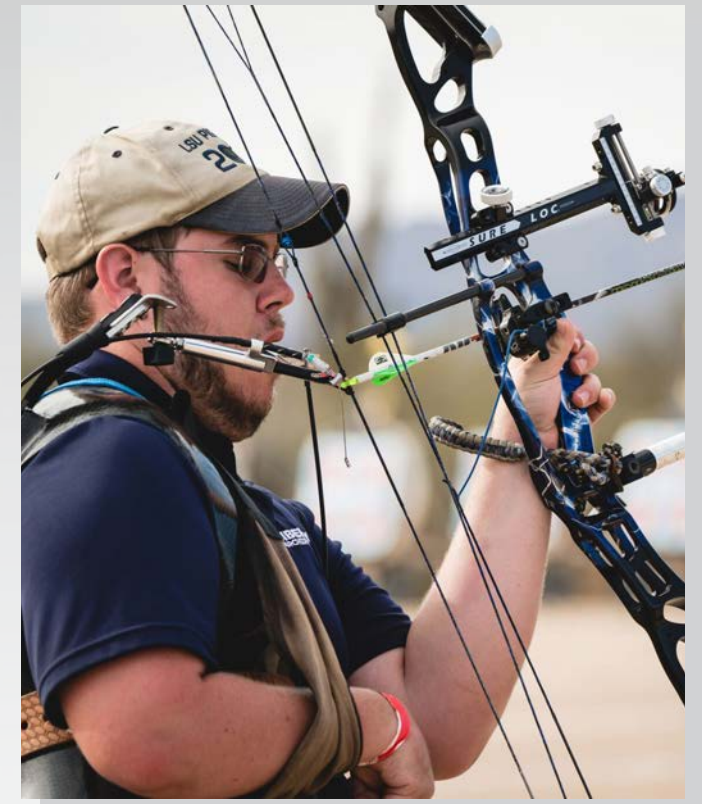


Key Points - Posture/Alignment

- Keeping in mind that the archer may not be physically able to attain perfect posture and alignment due to their skeletal or muscular differences, the goal of this step should be figuring out what the archer can do to get as close to proper alignment as possible efficiently and repeatedly without causing injury.
- Depending on the archer, one shoulder may be higher than the other, or they may have to twist differently.
- Pay close attention to the head position and movement during this step. It is important to maintain the head position and body posture as much as possible through the shot process.

Key Points - Raise Bow

- When possible, the archer should extend their bow arm, align their shoulder and use their shoulders to resist the force of the drawn bow.
- This may not always be physically possible, so some archers may need to use a bow stand to hold the bow while they pull back on the bowstring, or may need assistance from a coach or volunteer.
- Archers using a mouth tab or shoulder harness with a release aid will most likely have to raise the bow with the bow arm bent.





Key Points - Draw

- It is very important to help the athlete draw the bow back in a manner that is both safe for the archer and safe for the range.
- Drawing the bow incorrectly can cause injury to the shoulder muscles, rotator cuff, or bicep tendon. Therefore, it is extremely important that the archer's draw weight be appropriate for their strength and skill level.
- It is also important for the safety of others that archers do not "sky draw" when they draw the bow back. Sky Draw occurs when the archer draws the bowstring back in a manner that is pointed at an angle that could allow the arrow, if accidentally released, to fly beyond a safety zone or safety arrangements (i.e. overshoot the target area). Correct draw weight and instructing will prevent this from occurring.
- For archers that draw the string with their drawing arm, the two most important technical concepts for preventing injury while drawing are that the drawing forearm is level to the ground and that the archer keeps the elbow as close to in line with the arrow while drawing the string back as possible.
- Archers who use a mouth tab or release aid attached to a shoulder harness, will need to increase the tension in their bow arm tricep during the draw in order to resist the increasing forces of the draw weight.
- These archers typically raise the bow with a bent arm and then push the bow arm out to draw the bow.



Key Points - Anchor

- When it comes to the anchor position, it will be important to find an anchor that does not move and is easily repeatable from shot to shot.
- Depending on the archer's adaptations, a traditional anchor point may not be an option.
- When possible, the top priority is always to have the holding arm in line with the arrow to promote transfer of holding into the back muscles.
- The hand or holding device will then touch the neck, jaw or cheek at a place that allows the bowstring or peep sight to locate in front of the aiming eye.
- When the anchor point is not possible then the peep sight must be situated in front of the aiming eye in a way that allows the archer to consistency in repeating that process.

STEP 8: TRANSFER TO HOLD



Key Points - Transfer to Hold

- Think of this step as repositioning the body slightly to brace the draw weight of the bow.
- Coaches can help simulate this feeling using a stretch band with the archer in the anchor position and then have the archer slightly reposition their bone alignment until they feel braced.
- This transfer movement to brace the draw weight may be very small but will serve as a mental step as well.



STEP 9: Aim

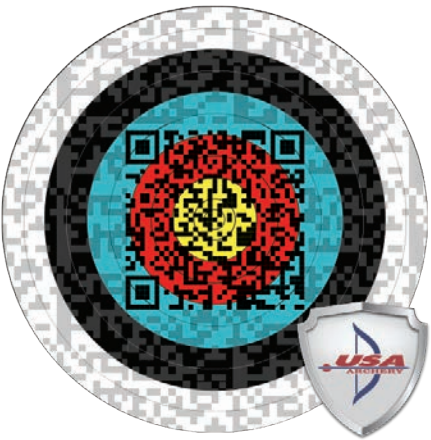


Key Points - Aim

- Start at close range, no more than 10 meters, for the archer's first shot.
- The coach or instructor can use their best judgment to help with initial aim.
- When it is appropriate, slowly walk the archer back to further distances, still ensuring the archer is close enough to be successful.

Key Points - Release/Follow Through

- If the archer is utilizing a release aid, it may take time to refine the adaptive device or technique.
- This may range from adjusting the shape of the release aid to changing the materials of a mouth tab.
- Consistency will improve with practice and feedback from the coach and archer.



Shooting a Recurve Bow with a Mouth Tab



Shooting a Compound Bow with a Mouth Tab

- If coach or volunteer assistance is required, pay close attention to what will happen after the string is released to ensure the safety of the assistant and the archer during the follow through.
- Consider utilizing a stretch band or string loop to practice release techniques as this will allow the archer to have increased repetition without causing physical fatigue.

FORM CORRECTION

Many archery instructors will use physical contact in the course of helping students learn to hold, draw and release the bowstring. Remember when working with archers with disabilities that you may be working with vulnerable populations. For your self-protection and the protection of the archers you are working with, you should ensure that volunteers and staff members fully understand appropriate boundaries regarding physical contact with participants.

In addition, some archers such as those with Post Traumatic Stress or those with autism or sensory processing disorders might be less tolerant of physical contact. This can be noted in the Archer Profile Form so as to avoid any issues during the course. For these archers you may need to model the appropriate form or use a pen or other object to touch the archer if they approve.



Key Points - Feedback

This step is of particular importance in adaptive archery. Be sure to provide feedback to the archer, but also request feedback from them, keeping an open mind to any feedback they provide. Take the time to understand how their disability may be affecting their shot process, and be flexible and creative about teaching adaptations.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK ARE:

How can I help?

Did anything hurt during the shot process?

Do you think you can repeat that exact process again?

What might make the process easier for you?

First impressions count for all newcomers, and particularly for adaptive archers it is important to create a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. Proper preparation will go a long way towards ensuring individuals with disabilities have a successful first experience, thus encouraging engagement in the sport for a lifetime.

BEFORE CLASS

REGISTRATION

While proper registration procedures are important for all archers, they are particularly important when working with adaptive archers to ensure you have the appropriate medical information, adequate equipment and volunteer support for the first class.

The goal should not be to collect an entire medical history, but should instead focus on the aspects of the archer’s disability that may affect their experience. You should determine whether it is appropriate to include a family member/caregiver in the discussion. Through this assessment process, you will gather information to inform your decision about adaptations. In addition to the standard intake questions, sample disability-specific questions might include some of the questions below.

Do you utilize any medical or mobility assistance devices?

This question will likely form the basis of your decision to start the archer in a seated or standing position, as well as letting you know whether they might need more space in their shooting lane.

Do you have any balance issues?

If an archer answer yes to this question, you may want to have a stool, foot plate or other balance assistance item ready to help steady them during the shot process.

Do you have difficulty walking long distances or standing for long periods of time?

This can help you determine which shooting lane the archer should be in, as well as where any equipment might need to be placed.

Do you have trouble lifting items 10 pounds?

This will help determine what type of bow to start with.



Photo Credit: Disabled Sports USA



Do you have any form of visual impairment? If so, please describe any adaptations used?

Based on this response, consider whether safety protocol is appropriate for archers with visual impairments? Do you have a volunteer who can help guide the archer around the range area, or assist with picking out equipment if necessary?

Do you have any form of hearing impairment? If so, please describe any communication device used?

Consider the safety protocols you have in place and whether you will need to make any adjustments, or whether you will need to adjust where you stand when giving instructions based on the response to this question.

Do you have any chronic pain?

Archers with chronic pain may have more difficulty with proper form and maintaining consistency in their shot process. Adding this question will help you begin thinking of ways to adjust the shot process to make the archer more comfortable.

Do you have problems regulating body temperature?

Many archers with disabilities may have issues regulating temperature. If you use an outdoor range, consider adding this question, and paying special attention to hydration levels, shaded areas, etc. to ensure archers don't overheat too easily.

Have you had a seizure within the last year?

Some disabilities will come with a larger risk of seizures. If the archer answers yes to this question, consider adding another volunteer to assist in case of a seizure, and pay special attention to any unnecessary items that might be near the archer and could cause injury.



FOR VETERAN PARTICIPANTS

When working with the Veteran or military population, you may also want to ask about invisible injuries such as Traumatic Brain Injury or Post Traumatic Stress (PTS). Be aware that not all students want to talk about these injuries, particularly in as much detail as you might need. Some parts of your assessment may need to be based on observation and in the process of getting to know your student. Sample registration questions might include:

Do you have a Brain Injury? If so, what are some ways it affects your daily life?

This will help you to adjust your coaching techniques, such as providing instruction in smaller segments or providing more repetition for those archers whose memory is affected by their injury.

Do you have Post Traumatic Stress? If so, describe any situations that amplify your stress?

This will help you determine whether you need to create a smaller class size, or let the archer know that the range is in a busy gym with frequent loud noises that might exacerbate PTS.

The answers to these questions will help you put together an Adaptive Archer Profile (Appendix B) for your student. If anything provided during registration is unclear, do not hesitate to follow up with the archer directly, or a family member/caregiver if appropriate, as they will be the best resources for providing information on how their disability presents on a regular basis.

If you need further information and coaching tips for working with archers with Brain Injury or Post Traumatic Stress, visit **Disabled Sports USA** at www.disabledsportsusa.org/training-manuals or **PsychArmor** at www.psycharmor.org/course-library.



Photo Credit: Reed Hoffman

STAFFING APPROPRIATELY

Adaptive archers may or may not require the support of volunteers for assistance with the shot process, arrow retrieval, etc. The number of support staff required will be determined by the archer’s needs, keeping in mind that the goal will be to challenge the archer at an appropriate level and strive for maximize independence

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

In addition to providing adaptive equipment and an accessible venue, it is important that your communication also promotes an inclusive environment. The first step to his process is using people-first language. This means using language that puts the archer first and their disability second, such as archer with an amputation, not amputee archer. It is also good to refrain from using language that has emotional wording, or wording that implies the archer is impaired by their disability, such as victim, confined to a wheelchair, etc.

Language choices are important, because they can help an archer see their own potential by focusing on their own athletic abilities versus their disability. Language choices also help provide a more inclusive environment and set an example for other archers, instructors and volunteers to follow.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

Don’t be worried about using common phrases such as ‘I’ll see you later’ to an archer with a visual impairment or ‘I’ve got to run’ to an archer with a mobility impairment.

Don’t assume that a physical disability is accompanied by cognitive or hearing deficits. Speak with the archer in a normal tone of voice with normal pacing, unless asked to clarify yourself.

Don’t be afraid to ask an archer with speech difficulties to repeat themselves if you have trouble understanding. Give them your undivided attention and remain encouraging. Try to refrain from correcting their speech or finishing their sentences. Instead, allow extra time for thought or keep questions to items that require short responses.



For archers with visual impairments:

Introduce yourself when first speaking, so they know who is speaking. Speak in a normal, conversational tone.

Let them know when you need to end a conversation, or if you need to leave them alone for a period of time to attend to another matter. Make sure you let them know who will be assisting them next or when you expect to return.

For archers with hearing impairments:

Always face the archer when speaking. Make sure your mouth is visible, keeping hands, drinks or food away from your face, and speak slowly and clearly without shouting or exaggerating your speech.

Always speak to the archer directly, not to any interpreter or family member that accompanies them.

TEACHING THE FIRST SHOT

Using the information learned during the intake process, you should have an idea of how the archer will shoot. For instance: With which hand will they hold the bow? How will they pull the bowstring, and will they sit or stand?

In most cases, you will be teaching the first-shot process from Coaching Position One, which is discussed in detail in the Level 1 Archery Certification Course. From this position, you will be able to assist the archer with nocking the arrow, adjusting their grip, or drawing, holding or releasing the bowstring. During this process, try to place yourself at eye level with the archer, which may mean bending down, kneeling or sitting beside an archer who uses a wheelchair.



Photo Credit: Joe Kusumoto

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT RECRUITMENT & POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The first question you might have to ask - Where can I find archers with disabilities? Who might I turn to if I have questions about adaptive equipment or sport? These are some of the first questions you may have, and where partnerships will play an important role in your adaptive program. Partners can help marketing to potential archers, provide guidance on how to set up an adaptive program, provide equipment or facilities, or be a source of volunteers. Potential partnership ideas include:

All Archers

- YMCAs
- National Parks & Recreation Associations
- Recreation & Community Centers
- State Disability Services Departments
- Adaptive Sports Organizations (Chapters of Disabled Sports USA, US Paralympic Sport Clubs, Special Olympics Programs)
- Medical Services (Hospitals, Rehabilitation Centers, Therapy Clinics, Orthotics & Prosthetic Offices)

Youth-Specific

- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Youth Sports Leagues
- Schools
- Summer Camps
- USA Archery Junior Olympic Archery Development Clubs

Veteran-Specific

- Veteran's Affairs (VA) Medical Centers
- American Legion
- Chapters of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)



Photo Credit: Reed Hoffman

CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCREASING PARTICIPATION

Time and Length: Make sure the timing of the sessions is appropriate for the participant base you want to reach. This means scheduling youth programs around school hours, or working with a local rehabilitation hospital or military hospital to pick a time that doesn't conflict with current physical therapy appointments. Length of lessons is also important, as many archers with disabilities may tire more quickly than their non-adaptive peers, particularly those with newly acquired disabilities. Just like with other youth programs, ages and attention spans should be considered when designing curriculum for adaptive youth.

Cost: Is there a way to provide free or need-based subsidized programming? Can you work with the range to provide free or discounted equipment rentals to participants? Make sure to consider all costs involved in the program, such as instructor fees and equipment rentals.

Pre-Class Communication: Once an archer is registered for the program, let them know when they should expect to hear from you next, and what information will be provided. In each outreach continue to provide enough information to answer any questions the archer might have, but try not to overwhelm them with information. Especially when working with archers with cognitive deficits and Brain Injuries, more frequent communication with smaller bits of information might be required. When initially registering an archer, you can ask what method of communication they prefer. Whether it is via email, phone or text, try your best to follow up with their preferred communication method. With any athlete, refrain from providing too much information via phone without following up with an email as the information might not be retained.

It is also a good idea to build redundancies into communication plans, as archers with disabilities may have doctor's appointments or other health issues that prevent the archery program from being in the forefront of their mind. If multiple emails go unanswered, consider following up with a text or call to ensure the athlete still plans to participate. While this may require more effort at the outset, it will prevent the common pitfall of no-shows that sometimes plague adaptive programs that aren't diligent with their pre-program communication.

Lack of Knowledge or Fear of Trying Something New: As with any potential archer, a lack of knowledge about the sport or fear of trying something that they deem too difficult may be a major hindrance in participation. The adaptive archer may be even less aware of how they would be able to participate. As an instructor, your role will include that of salesperson both prior to participation when pitching the sport as a fun and safe activity, but also on the range by making the archer comfortable and creating a positive and successful first experience that will encourage continued participation.

One way to help participants overcome their initial fear is to host a demo day, which allows archers to try the sport prior to signing up for a full session of lessons. Another idea is to include family or friends in the lesson experience, as they can help ensure initial participation, provide a calming presence on the range, and encourage continued participation after they've completed their lesson series.

CREATING THE ADAPTIVE ACTION PLAN

Using all of the information collected during the intake process, as well as the archer's goals you can create the adaptive action plan (see Appendix C). This plan will help chart the archer's development path for development in areas of social skills, physical coordination, and enhanced self-image. Work with the archer to set clear expectations for growth and appropriate goals based on their initial skill-set.



Photo Credit: Reed Hoffman



For archers who want to test their skills, competition can be a great motivator. Events can be organized by invitation only, or welcome those of all skill levels. It is not necessary to host an adaptive-only competition. Instead many competitions will integrate adaptive archers with the rest of the field, having adaptive archers shoot on the shooting line next to able bodied archers, but competing in the Paralympic division they are classified to compete in.

TOURNAMENTS

USA Archery offers a wide variety of competitions including indoor, outdoor, and field events. Archers can compete in these types of tournaments at a club, local, state, and national level. Archers who compete at national level events, called USAT Qualifier Series Events may be eligible to gain national ranking points and have an opportunity to qualify for the Para U.S. Archery Team. Visit the USA Archery website at www.usarchery.org to find sanctioned state and national events. Adaptive-specific camps and competitions may be found on the Disabled Sports USA website at www.disabledsportsusa.org.

TOURNAMENT RULES

When preparing for competition the archer and the coach should refer to the rules specified for the competition. USA Archery sanctioned events follow World Archery rules, located at www.worldarchery.org/rulebook. Other organizations and local club events may use other rules. Therefore, it is always important to review the rules or contact the organizer before each event.



ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

When checking the accessibility of a competition, a similar facility walk through as described in Chapter 1 is appropriate. In addition, you may need to consider accessible transportation and lodging.

RANGE CONSIDERATIONS

- Is there a shelter or indoor alternative for inclement weather/sunshade?
- Are there appropriate pathways, or is the grass short enough for wheelchairs or those who have difficulty traversing soft ground surfaces?
- Is there adequate spacing for archers with oversized wheelchairs?
- Are lane assignments appropriate for archers in wheelchairs/who have difficulty walking long distances?
- Are there an appropriate number of volunteers to assist with equipment needs?
- Is the timing system accessible for all archers (i.e. is there an audio and visual system)?
- Are restrooms easily accessible?

TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Will you be providing transportation? If so, will the archer be able to transfer into the vehicle?
- If you are traveling long distances, consider more frequent breaks to take into account any potential medical needs.

ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS

Will you need any special rooming accommodations (i.e. roll in shower, shower chair, refrigerator for medicine)?

CLASSIFICATION

USA Archery follows World Archery event rules and conforms to the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and US Olympic Committee (USOC) guidelines. These guidelines require USA Archery competitors to be classified by a certified national or international classifier who is trained with a medical background and in aspects of archery skills. The classification is accompanied by a physician’s details of the individual’s physical disabilities or limitations. The classification system provides a structure for para competition. Adaptive athletes competing in para archery have an impairment that affects their ability to participate in the sport. The classification system creates the most level playing field possible for competition by determining who is eligible to compete in para archery and the different competition classes.

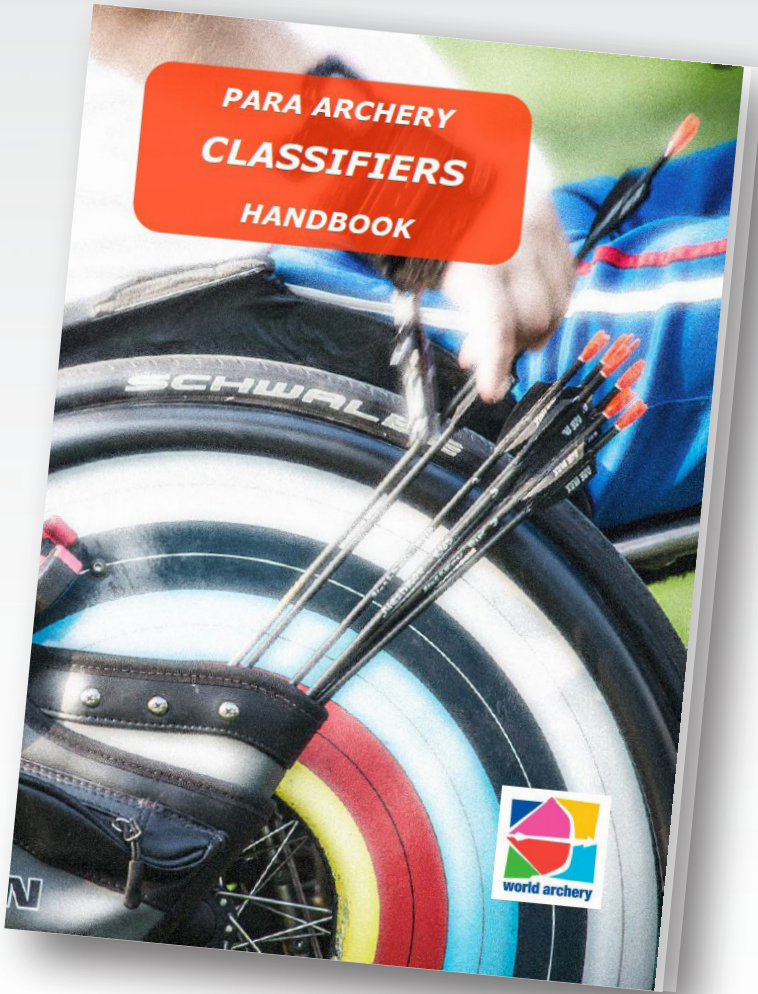
Athletes that are not eligible to compete in para classes but do have an impairment may also be given permission to use an assistive device. These athletes with classification for an assistive device are able to compete in able-bodied events.

Classification for para athletes takes place at both a national and an international level. After an archer has been medically classified, he or she will be put into a shooting category.

There are four shooting categories in World Archery divided into men and women as follows:

W1 Class – The W1 shooting category can be assigned to an individual who shoots from a wheelchair and has both upper and lower body limitations. A recurve bow or a compound bow without a peep sight or magnifying sight lens may be used. Most individuals compete with a compound bow limited to a 45-pound maximum draw weight.

Open Recurve – The Open Recurve category can be assigned to an individual with either upper or lower body limitations that shoots a recurve bow. The recurve bow can be shot from a standing, supported, or wheelchair position, depending on the classification. Standard World Archery recurve equipment rules apply.



Available for download at www.worldarchery.org



Open Compound – The Open Compound category can be assigned to an individual with either upper or lower body limitations that shoots a compound bow. The compound bow can be shot from a standing, supported, or wheelchair position, depending on the classification. Standard World Archery compound equipment rules apply.

Visually Impaired – The Visually Impaired category can be assigned to an individual that has impairment in their vision. VI athletes must wear blindfolds or blackout glasses while competing. Athletes may use tactile sights and are permitted an assistant sitting or standing one meter behind the shooting line to relay information about the position of the arrows in the target, safety and help with scoring.

CLASSIFIERS

Classifiers are technical officials who are trained and accredited to recognize and analyze impairments in para archers. World Archery provides consistent training for international classifiers. The classification handbook outlines all of the rules and regulations regarding classification. While it is primarily designed for para archery classifiers, it may also prove helpful to coaches, support personnel and para athletes.



Adaptive Archer: An archer that requires specialized equipment or instruction techniques.

Adaptive Action Plan: A lesson plan specifically designed for adaptive archers, providing information on any required facility, equipment or coaching modifications.

Amputation: The surgical removal of a portion or all of a limb due to disease or trauma. Amputation degrees are often referenced by their proximity to the limb’s joint (i.e. above knee amputation, below elbow amputation), and may affect balance, mobility, weight bearing ability or flexibility among others.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: A group of neurodevelopmental disorders including Asperger Syndrome and Pervasive Developmental Disorder. Characteristics range from mild to severe, and can impact behavior, social skills and communication.

Cerebral Palsy: A condition typically caused by damage to the brain before or at birth marked by impaired muscle coordination, reflex, posture and balance.

Classification: A system for dividing eligible athletes into sport classes for Paralympic competition with the aim that each class consist of athletes who have impairments that cause approximately the same amount of activity limitation.

Cognitive Disability: A broad term encompassing various congenital or inherited intellectual deficits that may manifest in difficulty to plan, comprehend, reason or apply social skills in daily life.

Compound Bow: A compound bow is a hand-drawn, hand-held bow that uses cables and cams to ease the draw and reduce the bow’s holding weight (called let-off).

Down Syndrome: A genetic chromosome 21 disorder causing developmental and intellectual delays.

Dwarfism: A genetic or medical condition where a person reaches an adult height of 4’10” or less.

Finger Tab: A flat piece of smooth material that protects the fingers of the archer’s draw hand and aids in smoothly releasing the bowstring.

Foot Plate: A board, block or wedge placed under the foot.

Hearing Impairment: A partial or total inability to hear, which can be categorized as mild, moderate, severe or profound and vary from difficulty recognizing specific speech patterns to complete hearing loss (deafness).

Learning Disability: A type of cognitive disability resulting in a difficulty to acquire knowledge and skills to the level expected of those of the same age.

Mechanical Release Aid: A device used with compound bows that help to fire arrows more precisely, by using a trigger to release the bow string rather than the archer’s fingers.

Mouth Tab: A device that enables a shooter to steady the bow with his hand and pull the string back with his mouth.

Multiple Sclerosis: A progressive disease, often diagnosed in adulthood, where scar tissue forms over the protective covering of the nerves causing a range of symptoms including fatigue, muscle weakness and pain.

Paralympic Games: The Paralympic Games are an international sporting event that serves as the pinnacle of the career of Paralympic athletes. The Paralympics takes place every two years, alternating between Summer and Winter Games.

Quad Glove: A mitten with straps used to secure the archer’s bow hand to the bow grip.

Recurve Bow: A hand-drawn, hand-held bow with curve-tipped limbs that bend away from the archer when the bow is in shooting position. The draw weight increases as the bowstring is pulled to full draw.

Shoulder-Mounted Release Aid: A mechanical release aid that can be mounted to the shoulder, neck or back of the archer, enabling them to activate the release with their mouth or chin.

Sky Draw: The act of pulling back the bowstring at an angle that would allow the arrow to fly beyond a safety zone or safety arrangement.

Spasticity: A state of increased tone of a muscle, and an increase in the deep tendon reflexes, which may cause muscles to feel tight and rigid and cause reflexes to appear more exaggerated and jerky.

Spina Bifida: A condition in which the spinal cord doesn't form properly leaving part of the spinal cord exposed through a gap in the backbone, often causing paralysis of the lower limbs.

Spinal Cord Injury: Damage to the spinal cord that causes change in function such as loss of muscle function, sensation or autonomic function in parts of the body served by the spinal cord. This damage can be temporary or permanent, and complete (no sensation below the site of injury) or incomplete (allowing some sensation and movement below the site of injury).

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): An injury caused when the brain moves inside of the skull cavity due to external forces. Generally categorized into mild, medium and severe, and can affect various physical and cognitive processes depending on the site of brain injury.

Universal Compound Bow: A hand-drawn, hand-held bow with no draw stop that uses cables, a wheel and a cam. Universal compound bows maintain their draw weight throughout the shot, allowing for the bow to accommodate archers of virtually all sizes.

Visual Impairment: A severe reduction in vision that cannot be corrected with standard glasses or contact lenses.



PARTICIPANT CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: _____ AGE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

HOW DO YOU PREFER TO BE CONTACTED?

☐ EMAIL? ☐ PHONE CALL? ☐ TEXT?

ARCHERY EXPERIENCE AND GOALS

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY GOALS FOR ARCHERY?

☐ RECREATION ☐ COMPETITION ☐ HUNTING

HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN ARCHERY BEFORE? ☐ YES ☐ NO

IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: _____

HEALTH AND DISABILITY INFORMATION

WHAT IS YOUR DISABILITY?: _____

DO YOU UTILIZE ANY MEDICAL OR MOBILITY ASSISTANCE DEVICES? ☐ YES ☐ NO

IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE: _____

PLEASE CHECK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING THE APPLY TO YOU:

- ☐ VISUAL IMPAIRMENT
- ☐ HEARING IMPAIRMENT
- ☐ TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY
- ☐ POST TRAUMATIC STRESS
- ☐ SPEECH IMPEDIMENT
- ☐ INTELLECTUAL/COGNITIVE DISABILITY
- ☐ CHRONIC PAIN
- ☐ HISTORY OF SEIZURES
- ☐ LIMITED MOBILITY/STRENGTH
- ☐ ABNORMAL MUSCLE TONE
- ☐ DIFFICULTY LIFTING ITEMS OVER 10 POUNDS
- ☐ BALANCE ISSUES
- ☐ DIFFICULTY WALKING LONG DISTANCES/STANDING FOR LONG PERIODS
- ☐ DIFFICULTY REGULATING BODY TEMPERATURE
- ☐ SENSORY PROCESSING DIFFICULTIES (i.e. touch/sound/environment)

IF YOU CHECKED YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, PLEASE PROVIDE ANY FURTHER DETAIL YOU THINK MIGHT ASSIST YOUR ARCHERY INSTRUCTOR WHEN PUTTING TOGETHER AN ADAPTIVE PLAN: _____

PLEASE PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION YOU THINK WOULD BE HELPFUL: _____

ADAPTIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

THIS SHEET SHOULD BE FILLED OUT BY THE INSTRUCTOR/COACH BASED ON THE INFORMATION SHARED IN THE ARCHER PROFILE AND ANY FOLLOW UP INTERVIEWS. IT SHOULD BE UPDATED THROUGHOUT THE ARCHER’S LESSON PROGRESSION TO ENSURE EQUIPMENT NEEDS, GOALS, ETC. ARE UP TO DATE.

STUDENT NAME: _____ FIRST LESSON DATE: _____

EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

BOW TYPE: ☐ RECURVE ☐ COMPOUND

SIGHT TYPE: _____ DRAW LENGTH: _____

DRAW WEIGHT: _____ ARROW TYPE: _____

RELEASE AID: _____

PLEASE LIST ANY SHOOTING LINE ACCESSORIES REQUIRED (i.e. stool, chair straps, wedges)

ADAPTIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT ARE THE ARCHER’S GOALS/OBJECTIVES AND HOW WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH THESE?

(Goals can be archery specific, or relate to social skills, physical skills, enhanced self image, etc. Feel free to also include any goals the coach has for the archer)

PLEASE LIST ANY RANGE SET UP ADJUSTMENTS OR VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS



APPENDIX C: ADAPTIVE ACTION PLAN

PLEASE NOTE ANY ADAPTATIONS OR CONSIDERATIONS
FOR THE ARCHER TO EXECUTE A SHOT

(i.e. resting bow on chair – nock, body alignment adjustments –
posture, relaxing jaw to release mouth tab – release)

PLEASE LIST ANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
