Safety Activity Checkpoint

Archery

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required

Council Approval: Required
Activity Permitted For: B J C S A
NOTE: 3-D archery permitted only for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors

Activity Not Permitted For: Daisies
* Daisies are allowed to participate in Nerf or suction cup archery

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 are 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 Nerf archery, and rubber tip archery as a progression to learning the rules and range commands for archery. Bows and arrows should be appropriate to the age, size, strength, and ability of the girls. Girls do not aim at people, ever, or targets in the image of human beings.

3-D Archery. Brownies and older may participate in a 3-D archery course where a girl moves up to the target that could be set up between trees and use a target that is other than a circular shape in order to enhance accuracy and skill level. Girls do not shoot at targets in the shape of human beings.
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.

**Learn More:**
- Archery tournaments and events: [National Field Archery Association](https://www.nfaa.com)
- Archery clubs/events: [Team USA Archery](https://teamusa.org)
- Videos on archery basics: [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com)

**Include Girls with Disabilities**
Talk to girls with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. See [Disabled Sports USA](https://www.disabledsportsusa.org) and [Team USA](https://teamusa.org) 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](https://www.usaarchery.com) instructor or have equivalent certification or documented experience according to GSNorCal’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 2019-2020.” 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 [GSNorCal's Approved Vendor List](https://gsnorcal.org/safety).

The vendor should follow the following safety information:
- 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.
- The entire facility population knows clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers.
- Shooting line is clearly defined.

At an outdoor range:
- 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:
- 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. They 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. Girls and adults should wear closed-toed shoes. 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

**Target Sports—Archery Progression Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shooting Type</th>
<th>Grade Level/Minimum Age</th>
<th>Participant-to-Instructor Ratio</th>
<th>Instructor/Expert Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>B J C S A</td>
<td>B - 5:1</td>
<td>One adult is certified by National Field Archery Association, USA Archery, or Easton Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-D Archery</td>
<td>C S A</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>One adult is certified by National Field Archery Association, USA Archery, or Easton Foundation. Or demonstrates equivalent experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Girl Scouts of Northern California’s Approval Process for Archery

Archery is considered a high-adventure activity and must be pre-approved by the council.

- **Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form**: Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity. Gather the following information to complete this form:
  - Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California and have a current background check. Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
  - Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop.
  - Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in your [Volunteer Learning Portal](#) in the section called Trip & Outdoor Advisor.
    - For example, the **Camp Out course** is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.
    - The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.
    - The **Backpacking course** is required before you take girls on an overnight backpacking adventure.

- **High-Adventure Approved Vendor List**: GSNorCal troops/groups must select a high-adventure vendor from the [High-Adventure Approved Vendor List](#), which consists of organizations that meet Girl Scouts safety and insurance requirements for the activity. For the safety of our members, before a troop uses a high-adventure site/vendor for a troop or service unit event, the council must approve the high-adventure site/vendor. This process is designed to ensure a safe experience and protect the council’s and volunteer's legal interests.