BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage I — *Stance*

The foundation of every shot — feet, hips, posture.

*Stage 1 of 8*

**01**

SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL**

Build a *stable, repeatable base* for every arrow. The stance is the foundation: if the feet move, everything above moves too. Most beginners start with a *square stance* — feet either side of the shooting line, parallel — before exploring an open variation.

## I. Stance

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

SQUARE STANCE · BODY ALIGNMENT — PLAN & REAR

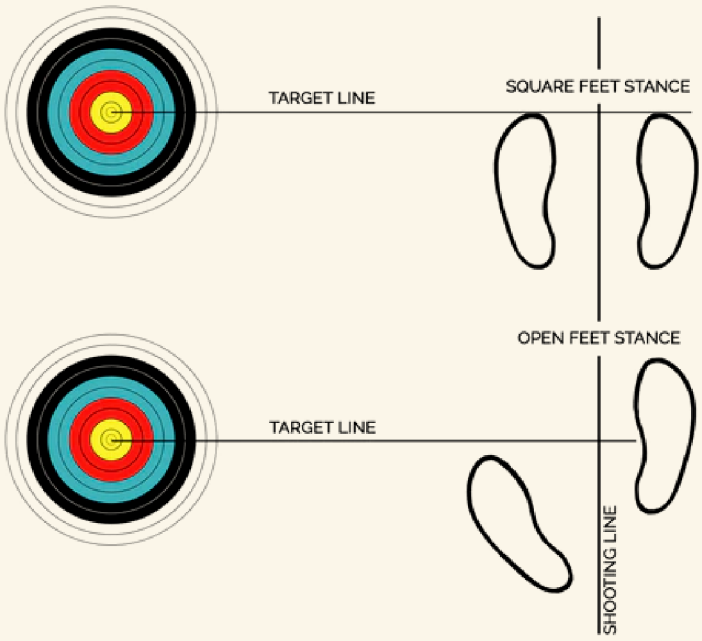



**PHOTO REFERENCE**

### Stance · Side & Front

Drop two photos here: archer at the line in open stance, viewed from the side and from in front of the target.

### Key Points

- Feet **shoulder-width apart** — no wider, no narrower.
- Toes touching the shooting line; one foot each side.
- **Open stance** — front foot turned ~15° toward target.
- Weight **50/50**, slightly into the balls of the feet.
- Hips and shoulders **square** to the target line.
- Head upright; turn the chin to the target, don't lean.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Feet too narrow** — archer sways at full draw.
- ✕ **Locked knees** — kills shock absorption, head bobs.
- ✕ **Leaning back** away from the bow — hip thrust forward.
- ✕ Standing **parallel** to the line one shot, angled the next.

**COACHING CUE**

**Build the platform first.** *Same feet, same line, every end. A loose stance is the first thing you fix — everything else cascades from it.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage II — *Nock*

Loading the arrow correctly & consistently every time.

*Stage 2 of 8*

02

SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL**

*Load the arrow correctly* every time. The arrow nocks *under* the nocking point with the *index vane* (the odd-coloured one) pointing *away* from the bow. A click — then a check.

## *II.* Nock

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

NOCKING THE ARROW · CORRECT VS FAULT — CLOSE-UP

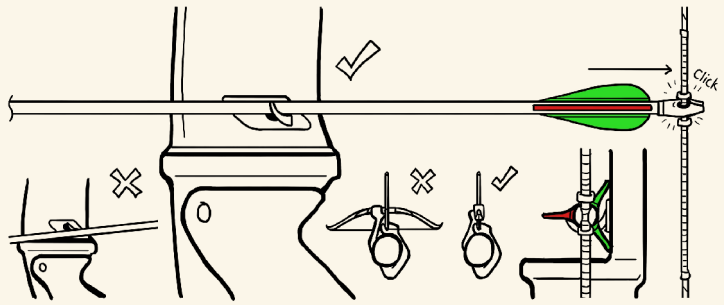



PHOTO REFERENCE

### Nock On String

Drop a close-up photo here: hand placing the arrow on the rest, with the nock snapping onto the string under the nocking point.

### Key Points

- Bow held vertically, arrow placed **on the rest**.
- Arrow goes **under** the nocking point.
- **Index vane** (odd colour) points away from the bow.
- Push the nock on until you hear and feel a **click**.
- Once nocked, fingers stay **away from the point**.
- Keep the arrow horizontal — no waving it about.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Index vane wrong way** — fletchings clip the rest.
- ✕ Nock above the point — arrow flies **low and weak**.
- ✕ Forcing the nock — it should click, not jam.
- ✕ Pointing the arrow off the line while loading.

**COACHING CUE**

**Click. Then check.** *Every archer says it out loud for the first few sessions — click on the string, vane in the right place, point at the target.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage III — *Set*

Hook the string & place the bow hand — set hands before you move.

*Stage 3 of 8*

03
SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL**

Place the *hook* on the string and the *bow hand* on the grip *before any movement*. The hands you set here are the hands the arrow leaves — once you raise the bow, you can't fix them.

## *III.* Set

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

**HOOK & BOW HAND · VARIATIONS** CLOSE-UP

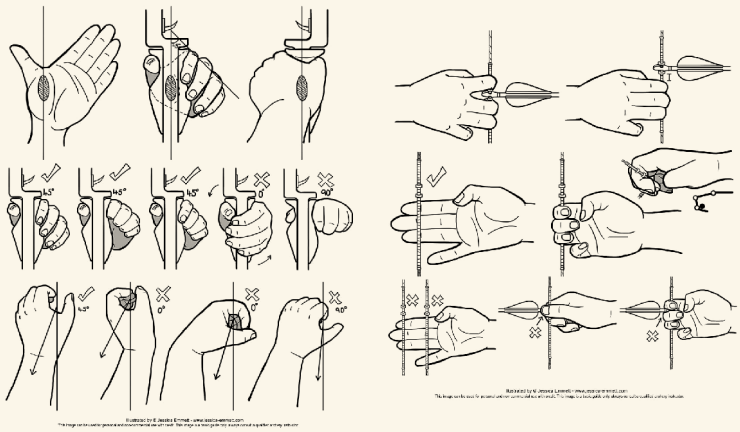


**PHOTO REFERENCE**

### Hands Set

Drop two close-up photos here: the drawing-hand three-finger hook on the string, and the bow hand showing pressure on the lifeline of the palm.

### Key Points

- **Three fingers** on the string — index above, middle & ring below the nock.
- Hook at the **first joint**, not the fingertips.
- Back of the drawing hand **flat & relaxed**.
- Bow hand: pressure into the **lifeline** of the palm.
- Fingers **relaxed** on the grip — never gripping tight.
- Thumb and index finger form a loose 'V' around the bow.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Deep hook** past the second joint — slow, plucked release.
- ✕ **White-knuckle grip** — torques the bow at release.
- ✕ Wrist **bent** on the bow hand — pushes shots left/right.
- ✕ Drawing-hand thumb curled over the fingers.

**COACHING CUE**

Hook the string like a coat hanger. *Hang the bow off the fingers — don't squeeze it. The bow hand presses; the string hand holds.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage IV — *Set-Up*

Raise the bow with shoulders down — body ready to draw.

*Stage 4 of 8*

04
SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL**

Raise the bow into position with *shoulders down* and the bow shoulder *locked into the back*. A good set-up makes a good draw inevitable; a poor one is impossible to fix later.

## *IV.* Set-Up

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

SIDE VIEW · PRE-DRAW — SIDE

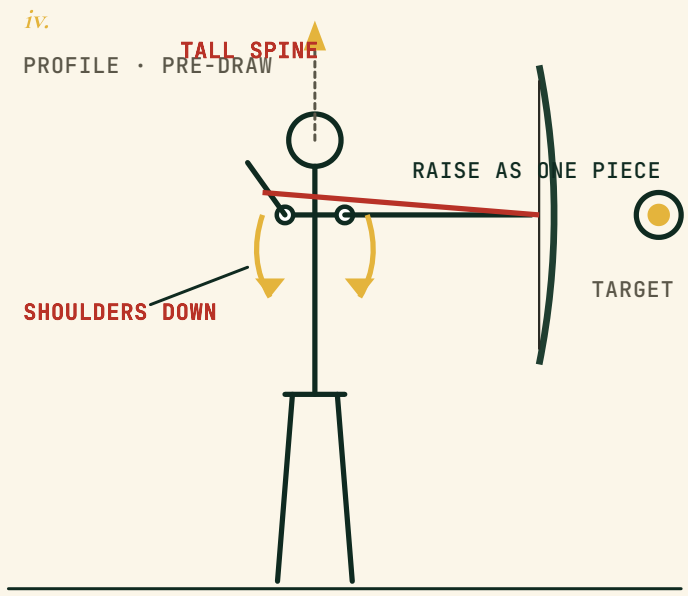



PHOTO REFERENCE

### Bow Raised, Pre-Draw

Drop a side-on photo here: archer with bow raised to shoulder height, string hand at the corner of the mouth height, before the draw begins.

### Key Points

- Raise the bow to **target-line height** as one piece.
- Bow arm **straight but not locked** — elbow rotated down.
- **Shoulders down** — no shrugging, no rising trapezius.
- Bow shoulder set **into the back**, not pushed forward.
- String hand starts moving as the bow rises (pre-draw).
- Head stays still — the bow comes to you, not you to it.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Shoulder shrug** — neck tension, inconsistent draw.
- ✕ **Hyperextended bow arm** — string slaps the forearm.
- ✕ Lifting bow first, drawing second — wastes energy.
- ✕ Tilting the head down to meet the bow.

**COACHING CUE**

**Tall spine. Long neck. Low shoulders.** *Imagine a string pulling the crown of the head up while the shoulder blades slide down the back.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage V — *Draw*

Pulling the string with the back, not the arm.

*Stage 5 of 8*

05
SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL** Pull the string to the face using the *back* — the shoulder blade sliding in toward the spine — not the bicep. The arm is a hook; the back is the engine.

## V. Draw

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

SIDE VIEW · FULL DRAW — SIDE

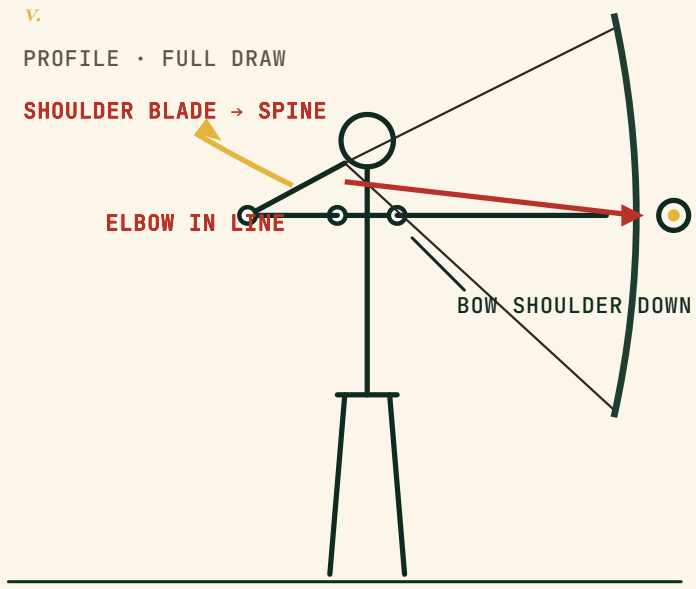



PHOTO REFERENCE

### At Full Draw

Drop a side-on photo here: archer at full draw, drawing elbow in line with the arrow, shoulder blade engaged, string touching the face.

### Key Points

- Draw the string **straight to the anchor**, not in an arc.
- Drawing elbow **in line with the arrow shaft**.
- **Shoulder blade slides in** toward the spine.
- Bow shoulder stays **down and back** — does not creep up.
- Bow arm pressure stays **into the target**.
- Breathe in on the lift, out as you reach anchor.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **High elbow** — pulls with the shoulder, not the back.
- ✕ **Low elbow** — uses the bicep, weak hold.
- ✕ Bow arm **collapsing** as the string comes back.
- ✕ Drawing fast — tension goes into the wrong muscles.

**COACHING CUE** **Pull the shoulder blade, not the hand.** *If you can feel the inside edge of the back working — you're drawing correctly.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage VI — *Anchor*

A consistent reference point on the face — same place every shot.

*Stage 6 of 8*

06

SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL**

Bring the drawing hand to *exactly the same place on the face* every shot. The anchor is the rear sight of the bow — without consistency here, nothing else can be consistent.

## *VI.* Anchor

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

DETAIL · ANCHOR REFERENCE — FRONT / PROFILE

*vi.*

PROFILE · FACE & STRING

3 CONTACT POINTS:

- HAND TO FACE
- STRING TO NOSE
- STRING TO CHIN

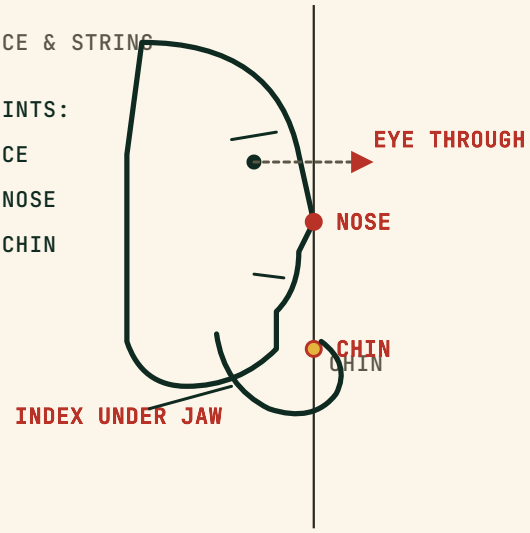



PHOTO REFERENCE

### Anchor & String Alignment

Drop a head-on photo and a profile photo here: index finger tucked under the jaw / corner of mouth, with the string ghosted down the centre of the bow.

### Key Points

- **Index finger** tucks under the jaw or to the corner of the mouth.
- String touches the **tip of the nose** and the centre of the chin.
- Same **three contact points** every shot.
- Drawing hand stays **flat against the face** — not floating.
- Eye looks **through the string** — string ghosted over the sight.
- Settle into anchor for a beat — do not rush to release.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Floating anchor** — different spot each time = different shot.
- ✕ **String off the nose** — head turned away from the target.
- ✕ Pulling the hand **past the anchor** and back into it.
- ✕ Looking **around** the string instead of through it.

**COACHING CUE**

**Three points, every time.** *Hand to face, string to nose, string to chin — same triangle every shot or the rest doesn't matter.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage VII — *Aim & Release*

Sight picture, expansion, and a clean loose.

*Stage 7 of 8*

07
SHOT CYCLE



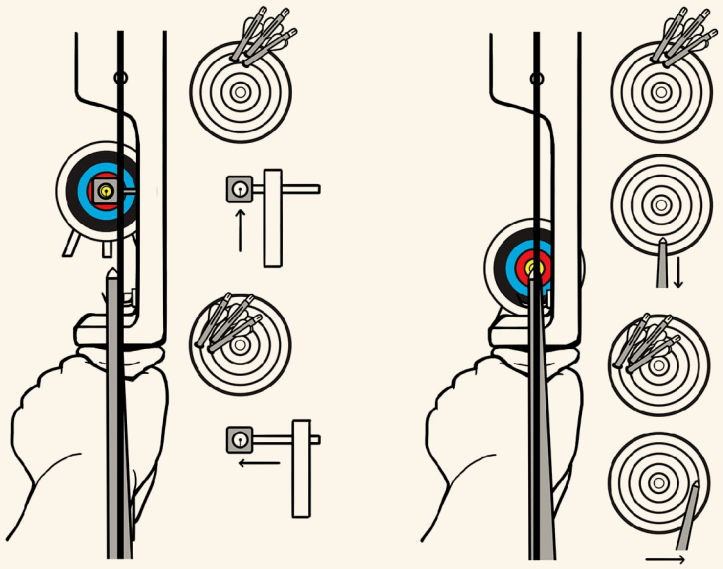
**THE GOAL**

Settle the sight in the gold, *expand* through the shot, and let the fingers *relax off the string*. The release is not a movement — it is the *absence* of holding on.

## *VII.* Aim & Release

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

SIGHT PICTURE · AIMING CYCLE — ARCHER'S-EYE



Illustrated by © Jessica Emmett - www.jessica-emmett.com
This image can be used for personal and non-commercial use with credit. This image is a basic guide only, always consult a qualified archery instructor.

PHOTO REFERENCE

### Sight Picture · Release

Drop two photos here: the archer's-eye sight picture (pin floating in the gold), and a close-up of the drawing hand the instant after release.

### Key Points

- **Aim the body** first — sight floats, it doesn't lock.
- Let the pin **hover** in the gold; accept some movement.
- Continue to **expand** through the back as you aim.
- Release by **relaxing** the fingers — do not open them.
- String hand **recoils back along the jaw**, not outwards.
- Eye stays on the gold — do not 'look' the arrow in.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Plucking** — actively opening the fingers, hand flies out.
- ✕ **Snap shooting** — letting go the moment the pin touches gold.
- ✕ **Collapsing** — losing back tension just before release.
- ✕ **Peeking** — moving the head to see the arrow land.

**COACHING CUE**

**Aim. Expand. Surprise.** *A good release should surprise the archer — the string leaves before the mind decides to let go.*

BEGINNERS' COURSE · SHOT CYCLE

# Stage VIII — *Follow-Through*

Hold the line — the shot isn't over when the string leaves the fingers.

*Stage 8 of 8*

08

SHOT CYCLE



**THE GOAL** The shot isn't over when the string leaves the fingers. *Hold the line* — bow arm to the target, drawing hand back — until the arrow has hit. A good follow-through proves a good shot.

## *VIII.* Follow-Through

FORM · REFERENCE SHEET

SIDE VIEW · AFTER THE SHOT — SIDE

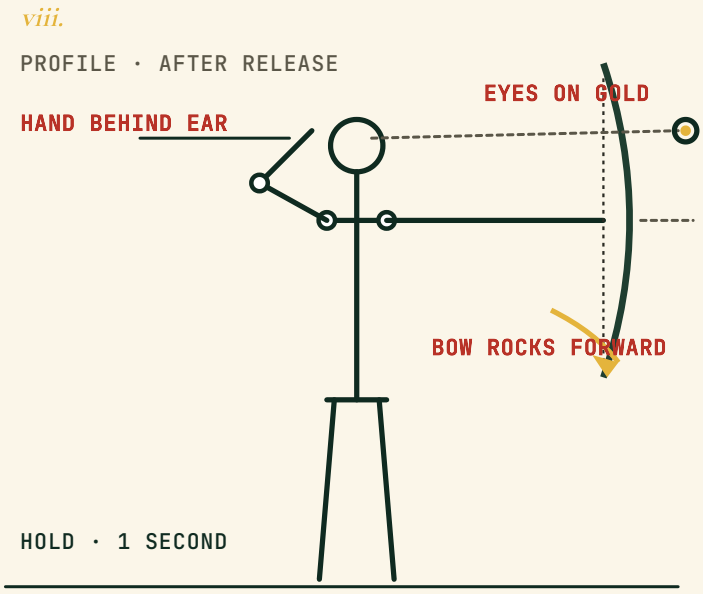



PHOTO REFERENCE

### Held Follow-Through

Drop a side-on photo here: the archer one second after release — bow arm still toward the target, drawing hand behind the ear, eyes on the gold.

### Key Points

- Hold the position for a **full second** after the shot.
- Bow arm stays **pointed at the target**.
- Drawing hand finishes **behind the ear** or along the neck.
- Bow rocks **forward** in the bow hand — not dropped.
- Eyes stay on the gold — **watch the arrow in**.
- Only lower the bow when the arrow has struck.

### Common Faults

- ✕ **Dropping the bow** the instant the string is loosed.
- ✕ Drawing hand flying **outwards** — sign of a pluck.
- ✕ Bow arm **collapsing down** toward the ground.
- ✕ Looking away before the arrow lands.

**COACHING CUE** Hold — watch — reflect. *Every arrow earns a moment of stillness. What did the shot feel like? Carry that feeling into the next.*