

Scottish Archery Coaching Committee

Return to Shooting Advice

Now that we can get back out on to the range, it is time to consider how to get back to our favourite sport.

Rather than go at it like a bull in a china shop and head down to the range to shoot 6 dozen arrows at 70 metres, maybe you should sit back and have a think about what you have done in the last year.

What is your fitness level? Have you been able to exercise regularly at home?

Let's assume you have had no chance to practise while you've been under lockdown...

To get back to shooting, you are going to have to build up progressively to your competition bow weight.

Always start off any practice session with a warm up to get the muscles going again, and always work within your fitness level. If you push too hard, you risk injury. If possible, work with a Coach.

An example of an archery warmup can be found here : [Improve Your Game - How to warm up - YouTube](#)

Step 1

Start with a light exercise band. Use the band to remind yourself of the actions you perform during the shot process; standing on the line, raising the bow, drawing back, coming to full draw, and release. It will probably feel odd, using muscles you haven't used for a while. If you are finding the elastic band too easy, you can change the resistance, either by shortening the band, or getting a band with greater resistance. If you increase the resistance, lower the amount of repetitions you are performing, and build back up gradually. If you can, practise in front of a mirror for visual feedback, as this will let you see how you are doing.

Step 2

Move on to a lightweight bow which you may be able to borrow from your club, or to your competition bow, but with light limbs. Obviously, ensure that when you are practising, you are doing so safely, with no arrow loaded. A FormMaster or similar device will help with this. Practise your draw, etc, and if you can, practise your release, but don't let go of the string when there is no arrow loaded in the bow. Gradually build up the amount of repetitions you can perform. To add resistance, tie an exercise band to the riser and the string. If you add resistance, lower the amount of repetitions you do, and build up gradually. Practise drawing the bow under control at all times.

If you are increasing draw weight, it is advisable to increase in increments of no more than 2 pounds at a time, to avoid risk of injury. If you increase the draw weight, then do fewer repetitions, and gradually build up the amount of repetitions you perform.

Step 3

Move on to your competition bow. If it is set at the highest weight setting, set it to its lowest, and build up to your competition shooting weight. Take things gradually, build up the number of repetitions you can perform, adjust the bow weight, lower the number of repetitions you perform and so on, until you have reached your competition draw weight.

Now it is time to get out on the range, but even here, take things gradually. If you go straight up to 70 metres, you could spend more time picking arrows out of the ground than you do shooting. Please remember that you may tire quickly whilst out on the range, so if you feel tired, rest for an end (or two), or shoot alternate ends.



Step 4

Shoot at a short distance, say 20 metres, and re-acquaint your body with the shooting position. Shoot each arrow to the best of your ability, and aim for groups. When you feel comfortable with your grouping, move the target back to a longer distance, again shooting for groups, until you have reached your full distance.

All of the above will take time, but if you do not build up gradually to your full competition bow weight and shooting distances, you risk injury and being disillusioned.

If you require help with finding a Coach, please contact coaching@scottisharchery.org.uk

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