



## Archery

**Activity Permitted for:** B J C S A

**3-D Archery Permitted for:** C, S, A

**Council Approval:** Required as per Council Policy P1;  
[Activity/Trip Permission \(2129\)](#)

**Vendor Approval:** Required for archery vendor

**Required Training:** Level I Archery Instructor Certification. *See below for training prerequisites*

*When leading archery target sport activities with Girl Scouts, volunteers must hold the required certifications or work with an approved archery vendor. Troops/Groups are required to use council approved indoor and outdoor archery ranges. Council must approve all sites in advance.*

## 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, Daisies may participate in using slingshots as a progression to learn rules and range commands for archery. Nerf, Stick-it, or Inflatable archery sets can be a safe alternative. Bows and arrows should be appropriate to the age, size, strength, and ability of the girls. Never aim at people, ever, or targets in the image of human beings.

**3-D Archery.** Cadettes 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 to enhance accuracy and skill level. Never shoot at targets in the shape of human beings.

**Slingshots** for Daisies should be simple, fun, and easy to use when the equipment is designed for children of that grade level and body size. Participants must be old enough to understand safety procedures and handle the equipment so as not to endanger themselves and others. *See Slingshots Safety Activity Checkpoints for details.*

## Learn More

- Archery tournaments and events: [National Field Archery Association](#)
- Archery clubs/events: [Team USA Archery](#)
- Videos on archery basics: [YouTube](#)

## Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities

Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the location and/or the instructor in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities. For more information visit [Move United](https://www.disabledsportsusa.org/sport/archery/)<https://www.disabledsportsusa.org/sport/archery/> and [Team USA Archery](#) for information on equipment, adaptations, and finding a program near you.

**Equity.** In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity.

**Infectious Disease Guidelines.** Girl Scouts use a commonsense approach to health and safety. Before participating in Girl Scouting activities, members are to undergo health checks at home for any symptoms such as fever of 100.4 (or need for fever-reducing medications) chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, stomach aches, nausea, or vomiting. Members with any of these symptoms or in need of fever-reducing medication **MUST** stay home until fully recovered.

**Emergency Action Plan (EAP).** Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before taking girls out for any activity and review it with the girls so they too are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

## Archery Checkpoints

**Vendor Approval Required for indoor and outdoor archery ranges, as well as non-Girl Scout instructors (vendors).** Review Vendor Approval section under the *Standard Safety Guidelines for vendor approval timelines*. Connect with your Girl Scout council for approved vendor suggestions to ensure they are properly insured. If it is not, allow enough time to have the vendor approved. The owner operator should be able to confirm one million dollars General Liability insurance upon request. For privately/locally owned outfitters (vendors), the council will request a certificate of insurance to document evidence of the insurance coverage and name the council as additional insured. Most facilities will accommodate this request if they are able to administratively. [See High Adventure Approved Vendors List \(#2127\)](#).

**Required Prerequisite Training:** Troop/Group Program leaders must complete GSUSA's online leadership courses and GSVSC's 281 GS 201 Trips & Overnights course in gsLearn. Adult volunteer chaperones must complete GSVSC's 281 GS 104 Orientation for Support Volunteers online course in gsLearn.

**Required Certification:** Level I Archery Instructor Certification.

**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.

**Verify instructor knowledge and experience.** One adult needs to be a certified USA Archery instructor or have equivalent certification or documented experience according to your council'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 different from the adult-to-girl ratio found in [Introduction: Standard Safety Guidelines](#). 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).

Use chart below to verify required instructor certifications. **Required Certifications:**

Shooting Type	Grade Level Minimum Age	Participant-to-Instructor Ratio	Instructor/Expert Certification
Archery	B, J, C, S, A	B – 5:1 J, C, S, A – 10:1	One adult is Level I certified by National Field Archery Association, USA Archery, or Easton Foundation.
3-D Archery	C, S, A	10:1	One adult is Level I certified by National Field Archery Association, USA Archery, or Easton Foundation.

**Select a safe site.**

If not using a council-owned range, check with council staff to see if an approved vendor list is offered. The council will look for organized indoor and outdoor archery ranges. The council staff will call the facility to determine the following safety information is in order:

- Equipment is stored in box/closet/cabinet and locked when not in use.
- Equipment, including targets, are checked each time and in good condition.
- 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. Backstops should be a safe backstop that’s larger than your intended target and specifically designed to be reliably capable of stopping arrows; use of arrow netting when hillside backstop/berm is not an option.
- Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers are known to the entire facility population.
- Shooting line is clearly defined.

**At an outdoor range, check that:**

- Targets are not placed in front of houses, roads, trails, or tents.
- Areas with pedestrian traffic are avoided.
- Backstops are specifically designed for stopping arrows or specific safety zone areas are set behind targets. Areas are clear of brush. A hillside backstop is recommended and/or use of arrow netting. Arrow netting is in good condition.
- 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 (150 feet) behind the targets and 20 yards (60 feet) on each side of the range.

- Target line is 5 feet from targets, shooting line is 15-30 feet from the target line, and waiting line is 15 feet from the shooting line, and there is a controlled access spectator area behind the waiting line.
- The range is not used after nightfall.

**At an indoor range, make sure:**

- Targets are well-lit.
- There is controlled access. Doors or entries to the range are locked or blocked from the inside.
- Fire exits are not blocked.
- The shooting area and the spectator area behind the shooting area are clearly marked.

**Select the right shooting equipment:**

- Equipment is properly sized for the girls.
- Compound bows are offered in both right- and left-handed models, are the proper size, and have the correct draw weight for the girls.
- Only target tip arrows are used, never broadhead/hunting tips.

**Girls should learn about archery and shooting.** Girls develop skills based on proper procedures and form, handling the equipment, getting the right stance, sighting, aiming, and observing safety practices.

**Always keep the bow pointed down range in a safe direction.** This is the primary rule of target sport safety. A safe direction means that the bow is always pointed down range 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.

**On the Day of Shooting**

**Dress appropriately for the activity.** Make sure girls and adults avoid wearing dangling earrings, bracelets, and necklaces that may become entangled in equipment. Also, make sure long hair is tied back and always wear closed toed shoes.

**Ensure the instructor reviews the rules and operating procedures with girls beforehand.** The instructor covers safety procedures, including:

- Safety whistle commands and archery range rules
- No “dry” firing, as it can damage equipment and people
- Always keeping the bow pointed down range in a safe direction
- Demonstration of proper arrow retrieval

**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