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ARCHERY SAFETY

Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.



*Photograph Courtesy of
Tehama County 4-H Program*

Information available from the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission indicates approximately 3,200 people received hospital treatment for archery-related injuries during 2006. Most injuries involved lacerations and punctures to fingers and hands and contusions to forearms. Many of these injuries were due to archer inexperience, error, or inattention and could have been readily prevented.

Archery Safety Precautions

- Before using, always inspect the bow and arrows for defects or disrepair, including wear, cracks, twisting, or other damage to the bow, bowstring, cables, pulleys, and arrow shafts, nocks, and fletches. Assure all screws are tightened and bow accessories are properly attached.
- If the archery equipment fails your inspection, inform your group leader, parent, or guardian and remove it from use until it has been repaired.
- Pay attention when stringing a bow to assure that the bowstring is properly fitted in both of the bow tips. Use a bow stringer to string long and recurve bows.
- A good safety practice is to use both an arm guard and a finger tab or archery glove to protect your forearm and fingers, respectively, from the bow string.
- Before drawing the bow, always thoroughly inspect the line of sight to the target and areas to either side of the target to assure these arrow-flight zones are clear of people, pets, or other non-intended targets.
- Never draw a bow and point the arrow at or in the direction of another person.
- Do not shoot an arrow into an area where its path cannot be followed or straight upwards into the air.
- Only draw the bow when pointing the arrow at a target.
- Never draw back a bowstring further than the length of the arrow being used.
- Do not release a bowstring unless it has a nocked arrow.
- Always follow all instructions of the Archery Range Leader while at an archery range.
- When at an archery range, do not retrieve your arrows until the “stop shooting” and “all clear” signals have been given. Likewise, do not move past the firing line to pick up a dropped arrow or other equipment until these signals have been given.
- Never pass in front of other archers while at an archery range. Stay behind the archery shooting line.
- Stand to one side of the target when pulling out arrows.
- If you must search for arrows behind the target, let other archers know where you are by placing your bow in front of the target or having another archer stand in front of the target.
- Always carry arrows with the points facing down and do not run while carrying arrows.
- If you are injured while practicing archery, notify your project leader, parent, or guardian. Seek medical attention if the injury is serious.