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ARCHERY



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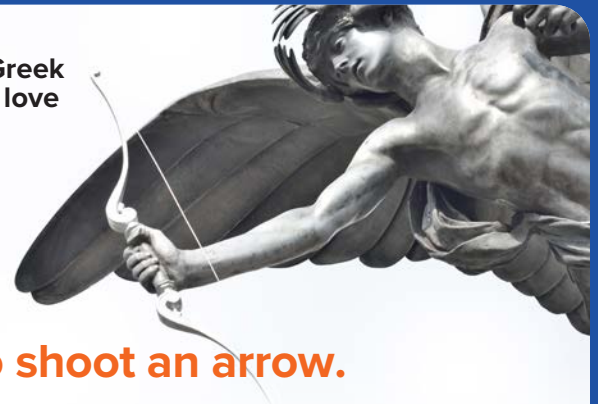
**THE STORY OF
PRINCE ARJUNA,**
a mythological
demigod and skilled
archer, appears in
the ancient Hindu
scripture called
The Bhagavad Gita.

In this issue,

Students will learn about archery, the National Archery in the Schools Program, and get an introduction to bowhunting.

WHAT IS ARCHERY?

Eros, Greek god of love



In simple terms, archery is using a bow to shoot an arrow.

The word archery comes from the Latin word **arcus**, meaning bow. A basic bow is made with a stick that has a string that is stretched and attached at both ends. The arrow has a notch in its back end that the string rests in, and when the archer (a person practicing archery) pulls back on the arrow and string, the bow curves. When the arrow and string are released, the bow returns to its straight position and the force of this action causes the arrow to shoot forward. More details about different types of bows can be found on page 6.

Historically, archery was primarily used for combat,

defense, and hunting. The earliest known evidence of bows and arrows is from bone and stone fragments found in South Africa, dating back more than 60,000 years ago; the oldest confirmed evidence in Europe dates back more than 17,000 years. Many early civilizations hunted using bows and arrows, and there were a lot of archers in most armies.

Archery also played an important role in many different myths from around the world. Two of the best-known examples are Eros and Cupid, the Greek and Roman gods of love. Both are armed with a bow and quiver filled with arrows. Other examples include Artemis and Diana, the Greek and Roman goddesses of



Artemis, Greek goddess of the hunt



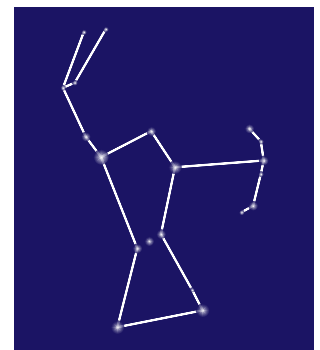
Ullr, Norse god of skiing

hunting; Ullr, an old Norse god who lived in Ýdalir, which means 'yew grove' (yew wood is favored in Europe for making traditional bows); Hou Yi, a Chinese deity with the title of "Lord Archer," who is said to have shot down nine suns that scorched the Earth; and Arjuna, a Hindu archer who had a magical golden bow and two quivers that never ran out of arrows. India awards a yearly prize to Olympic athletes, named the Arjuna. Lastly, the constellation Orion, named for a Greek hunter and visible in the winter night sky, forms the shape of an archer with a drawn (ready to shoot) bow.

Archery continued to play a very important role in hunting and in battle for thousands of years, but it began to decline with the development of firearms. Today, archery is primarily a competitive sport, a recreational activity, and a common form of regulated hunting. The most popular form of archery is called target archery, which, as the name implies, means shooting at targets. Archery is a sport that is practiced in many countries and can be found in the Olympics and Paralympic Games, as well as many other national, state, and local competitions. While not as popular as target archery, many people also hunt using bows and arrows, which is called bowhunting. You can learn more about bowhunting on page 7.



Hou Yi, a mythological Chinese archer



Constellation of Orion, a Greek hunter



National Archery in the Schools Program

What is NASP®?

The **National Archery in the Schools Program** (NASP®) is designed to teach international target style archery to students in 4th–12th grades. This program is taught during physical education classes and is intended to be a universal fit for all that participate. NASP® is inclusive for students with a wide range of physical abilities. They **learn focus, self-control, discipline, and life lessons** that are valuable both on the range and in the classroom. Students in NASP® use Genesis® compound bows, widely known as the simplest and most durable design, along with other NASP® certified equipment. NASP® is a co-ed sport with participation being equal—**50 percent male to 50 percent female students**.

NASP® emphasizes the process of shooting with the **11 steps to Archery Success**.

NASP® focuses on **target style archery**, using a standard 80 cm yellow, red, blue, black, and white circular bullseye. NASP® partners with the International Bowhunter Organization in 3D Tournaments. In these tournaments, students use 3D animal shaped targets like those pictured below.



History of NASP®

NASP® began in Kentucky in 2002 and, since then, it has grown quickly—with 1.3 million active current student archers! NASP® has also helped archery grow outside of the program; in 2002, there were 7 million people participating in archery sports outside of school, now there are more than 19.2 million archers. **Today, NASP® is being practiced in schools around the world;** participating schools are in 49 of the United States (including Washington, DC), 10 Canadian Provinces, New Zealand, and the British Virgin Islands. In the history of the program, the only sport safer than NASP® archery is table tennis, which you may know by the name of ping-pong!

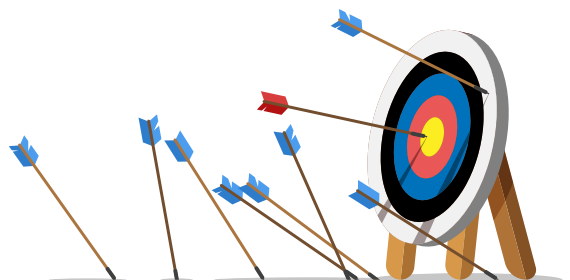
New York NASP®

NASP® was first introduced to New York State in 2008. Now, there are nearly 350 schools that teach NASP® archery to their students. During the 2023-24 school year, more than 44,700 New York State students participated in the program. **New York had 698 students travel to Syracuse to compete in the 2024 Bullseye State Tournament.** New York is one of the top 10 states for NASP® participation in the United States. Learn more about NASP® in New York State on DEC's website at dec.ny.gov/get-involved/education/teacher-information/national-archery-in-the-schools-program.



11 STEPS TO ARCHERY SUCCESS

1. STANCE
2. NOCK
3. DRAW HAND SET
4. BOW HAND SET
5. PRE-DRAW
6. DRAW
7. ANCHOR
8. AIM
9. SHOT SET-UP
10. RELEASE
11. FOLLOW THROUGH/REFLECT

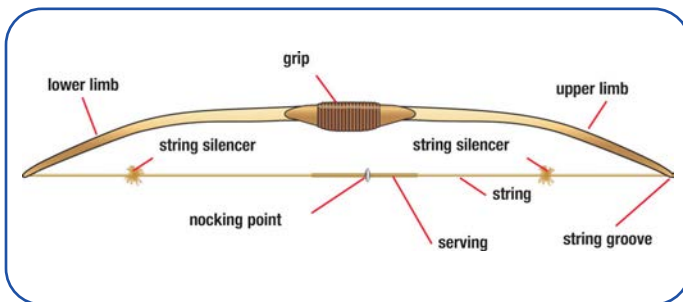


BOW TYPES EXPLAINED

Genesis®
compound bow

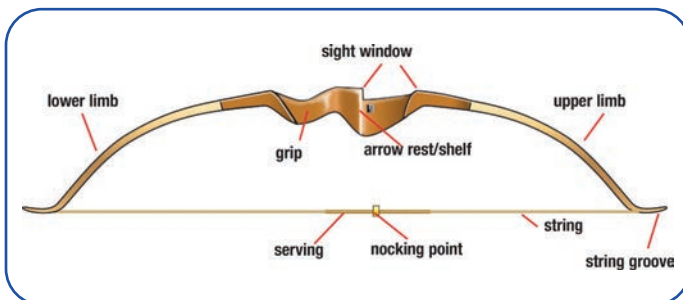


Traditionally, there have been three main types of bows used in archery and bowhunting: the longbow, recurve bow, and compound bow. Here are some of the differences between them:



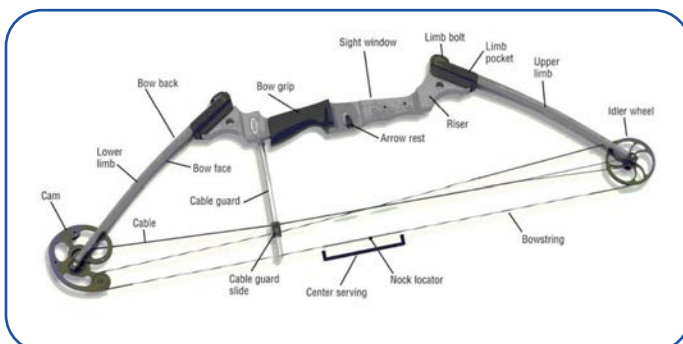
Longbow

- One of the oldest types of bows
- Includes no sights, rests, cams, etc., and the design doesn't allow for upgrades
- Singular long piece of curved wood with string between ends
- Has become less popular over time because of its size and amount of practice needed to master



Recurve

- Used in the Olympics
- More traditional styles are still used for hunting
- Harder to pull back heavier weights than the Compound bow, because of a lack of pulleys to allow for weight distribution
- Called recurve because limbs curve away from the archer, which allows them to be shorter in length while maintaining a greater force to the arrow



Compound

- Popular in hunting and target archery
- Uses sights and other upgrades to personalize the equipment to each archer
- Uses cables and pulleys (known as cams) to disperse weight and make it easier to draw back more weight, providing a mechanical advantage compared to longbows and recurve bows
- NASP® uses a Genesis® compound bow

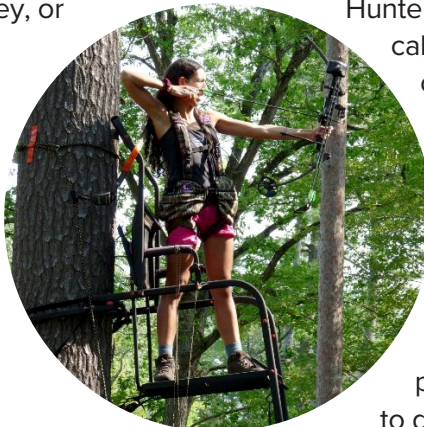


BASICS OF BOWHUNTING

Bowhunting involves using a bow and arrows to shoot game animals for food. In some countries and cultures, bowfishing is also very popular. When bowfishing, unlike with bowhunting, the arrow is usually tied to a string to make it easier to retrieve fish that are shot.

People bowhunt to get a healthy, local source of food, but they also choose to hunt for lots of different reasons. Hunting involves closely studying the biology and behavior of the deer, turkey, or other game animals you are pursuing, as well as the habitats that they use. In this way, hunting helps people connect to nature, get exercise, and spend time with family and friends outdoors. **Through the experience of hunting, people are inspired to help protect and improve habitats that wildlife need**—often referred to as a "conservation ethic."

In New York State, bowhunting is regulated by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Bowhunters must take steps to ensure safe and ethical hunting by completing both a general hunter education course and a bowhunting specific course. In New York, anyone aged 11 or older is eligible to take the courses and can hunt beginning at age 12. As with all forms of hunting,



there are regulations that must be followed, and hunting must take place during the allowed seasons for the types of animals being hunted. **Some types of animals that can be hunted with a bow include big game (white-tailed deer and black bear), small game (squirrels and rabbits), and wild turkey.** More information about the regulations, seasons, and hunter education program can be found on DEC's website at dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/hunting.

Hunters often hunt from an elevated platform called a "tree stand" to avoid being seen or smelled by the game animals they are pursuing. If you intend to hunt from a tree stand, it's always a good idea to practice shooting from a tree stand first. This enables you to be sure you are safe and secure in the tree and that you know how it feels to shoot from that position. Finding reference points in the woods that correspond to different distances away from you will help you aim more accurately when hunting.

It's important to wear a safety harness and stay connected to the tree from the time you leave the ground until you get back down.

Remember to always wear safety orange or pink when hunting and when in the woods during hunting seasons, so that you remain visible to those around you!

Activities to Practice Your Archery Skills at Home

Don't have the space to set up a range? Find yourself somewhere that you can't use your bow? Try these exercises to keep your skills sharp!



Hint: Watch this helpful video for more information.



1. MAKE A STRING BOW™

- Fold a long (~90 inches) string in half and put the archer's groove of your draw hand through the loop.
- Hold the ends of the string in your bow hand. Pull back with your draw hand as though you were drawing your bow.
- Once you have your draw hand anchored, tie the loose end of the string at this length. You now have your string bow!

2. RESISTANCE BAND

Strengthen Your Muscles!

- Take your stance
- Pull back resistance band like a bowstring
- Hold and aim
- Slowly ease your draw back down
- Repeat!

3. OVERDRAW REPS

In your shooting stance with an elastic or resistance band held out in front of you, draw your string back past your anchor point. Slowly ease the string all the way back. Repeat.

4. SHARPEN YOUR FORM

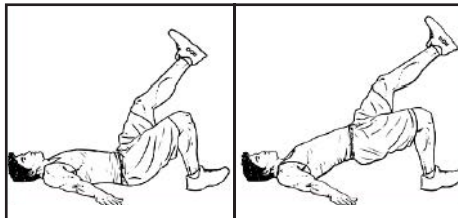
Take your stance and aim at a target, without an arrow or with an elastic. Draw back into your anchoring position. Hold your aim for 30 seconds while focusing on your whole stance and form. Repeat 4 times and rest for 2 minutes.

5. MIMING YOUR DRAW

With a pair of dumbbells or other heavy object, take a modified stance with your feet together and both arms in front of you. Point your thumbs at the ceiling then slowly pull your draw hand back to the anchor point. Keep your shoulders down and back as you pull. Slowly return your draw hand to the starting position, then repeat with opposite hand.

6. MIRROR DRILL

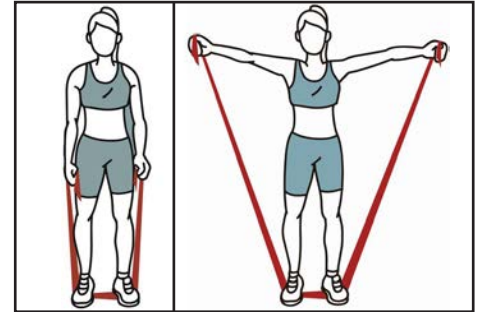
If you have a tall mirror, stand in front of it at an angle so you can check your form. Practice your draw without firing, checking the mirror without moving your head. Repeat this practice to improve your form.



7. ONE-LEGGED HIP BRIDGES

Lie down on a bench or the ground with your head and shoulders flat. Keep both feet on the ground directly below your knees. Plant one heel on the ground and lift your opposite hip until your leg is in line with your knees and shoulders. Hold this position while keeping your heel planted! This helps

build the core strength at the foundation of your stance and draw.



8. LATERAL SHOULDER RAISE

Another exercise for your shooting form that works the back and shoulder muscles. With dumbbells (or standing on a resistance band), stand up straight with your feet together and arms at your side. Set your shoulder blades back. With your palms facing forward, lift your arms slowly until they are just shy of being parallel with the ground.



9. THE SALUTE

Take your stance with your bow arm extended. Make sure to keep your arm as straight as possible and parallel to the ground throughout the exercise. Curl your bow hand towards your chest by bending your elbow. Return your arm to the starting position by following the same pattern. Repeat to strengthen and stabilize your bow arm!



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Supplement for Classroom Teachers – All About Archery – Fall 2024

This issue of *Conservationist for Kids* introduces students to the sport of archery. Archery has been around for thousands of years and people shoot archery today for hobby and sport. Archery is a great way to get students to interact with the outdoors through target shooting and bowhunting or to get students to participate in school activities through the implementation of the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP®) in Physical Education classes. Archery as a sport is less physically exhaustive than most other team sports, thus allowing students of a wide range of physical ability to participate and thrive in the sport. Archery helps students learn focus, self-control, discipline, and life lessons that are valuable on the range and in the classroom.

Online Resources

NASP® Archery www.naspschools.org

NASP® Tournament Photos www.flickr.com/photos/nysdec/albums/72177720316599860

DEC Bow Hunting Info dec.ny.gov/things-to-do/bowhunting

How to Join NASP®

1. Generate support from the school administration to allow archery to be a part of the Physical Education curriculum 10 hours per year. NASP® suggests at least two weeks of every year be dedicated to the program.
2. Designate a willing instructor, preferably in physical education, to be a point of contact for the school and teach archery in their classes.
3. Have all teachers who plan on teaching archery attend a NASP® Basic Archery Instructor certification. This is required to implement the program and is set up directly with the New York State NASP® Coordinator at a time that works for everyone.
4. Obtain a set of NASP® approved equipment: www.naspschools.org/equipment. This step can be further discussed with the State Coordinator if you are considering bringing NASP® to your school.

Contact the State Coordinator and/or Education Assistant for more information regarding implementing NASP® at your school.

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The poster on the back can be found in color at naspschools.org/download/magic-of-nasp-poster/?wpdmdl=7488

Conservationist for Kids and an accompanying teacher supplement are distributed free of charge to fourth grade classes throughout New York State three times per school year (fall, winter, and spring). If you would like to be added to or removed from the distribution list, need to update information, or if you have questions or comments, please e-mail the editor at KidsConservationist@dec.ny.gov or call 518-402-8047. Limited quantities of some back issues are also available on request. The full archives can be found online at dec.ny.gov/news/conservationist-magazine/conservationist-for-kids/issues-index

THE MAGIC OF NASP®



National Archery in the Schools Program

Changing lives one arrow at a time.

Since its inception in 2002, NASP has put a bow and arrow in the hands of over 19.2 million students, grades 4 – 12. What happens next is truly magical...



1.3 MILLION STUDENTS
in 8,967 schools
participate annually in archery



87,504
unique competitive archers during the
2022-2023 season



104,650 EDUCATORS
have been trained in archery since
the inception of NASP



Student participation is literally
50%-50% MALE/FEMALE
and they participate together



58% OF STUDENTS
say they feel **more connected** with
their school, thanks to NASP



40% OF STUDENTS
report that they are more engaged
in the classroom, thanks to NASP



66% OF NASP STUDENTS
are first time archers



In 2022/23, there were
1,638 TOTAL NASP
tournaments, a 20% increase over
the previous year



2019 NASP Eastern National Tournament,
14,946 ARCHERS PARTICIPATED
making it the world's largest
archery tournament ever



NASP has awarded over
\$4 MILLION
in cash scholarships to over
2,000 students



Since NASP started in 2002
archery participation (outside of school)
in the U.S has grown from
7 MILLION to 19.2 MILLION



91% OF STUDENTS
pursue other outdoor activities
thanks to NASP