

Archery Fitness and some simple steps to improve and relax.

We shall now see how easy it is to keep fit while doing archery and associated activities.

Standing Tall:



This exercise can easily be done at any time. Here we see the Archer reading the target list and location map, demonstrating it.

Stand tall, with one foot forward as if walking. Start with the weight on the back foot, then tighten your stomach muscles and slowly rock forward onto your front foot. Hold, let go and repeat.

It is critical to keep the chin tucked in and give the impression of being well constipated. This ensures opponents will think you are no threat. Obviously, the idea here is to ensure they are under this misapprehension so that the beans and beer drunk the previous night can have the correct effect when your shooting partner is at full draw, hence the reason we need to control the stomach.

Tummy Strengthening:



The Archer is frequently out in sorts of weather conditions. Breathing is known to be important. We therefore need to practice...

Here we see a typical Archer in "civies", from the picture you cannot tell she is quietly doing this exercise in preparation for the torrential rain and gales that will appear at the first blow of the whistle.

To perform one must stand tall, and use your muscles to draw your navel in towards your spine. Make sure the back doesn't move, hold for 10s and slowly let go. Breathe in as the navel approaches the spine and out, slowly, before turning blue. Practice here will ensure you can hold that shot on the gold for 60s with no effort. What a boon in windy conditions.

Shopping for kit:



The following pictures demonstrate the sorts of exercise that can be done when shopping.

The first demonstrates arm strengthening, the second, benefits the legs and circulation.

To improve arm strength (LH Picture), reach out for a bag of sugar etc on a shelf. Feet are hip width apart, draw in the lower abdominal muscles and lift on to the toes. Reach up, grab the item, hold your balance, count to 15 slowly and lower slowly. Now repeat. (Note you may end up with a lot more sugar or similar items if you do not remember to move along the shelves)

Magazine top shelves are best avoided as the items on the top shelf are a bit light.

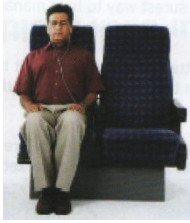
The second (RH picture) is best performed in a supermarket as it doesn't work well without the trolley giving additional support.

Holding the trolley with your Right hand, tighten the stomach muscles, stand on the right leg, bend at the hips and gently lift a straight left leg behind you, lifting your shopping from the trolley as you go. Now replace the shopping and repeat with the other side.



This is best performed in the checkout queue as the other shoppers will be able to give an assessment of how straight your leg was, how quickly you raised it and whether it should have been a bit slower. All valuable assistance.

Shoulder Relaxation:



For our International archers, this technique enables them to be relaxed between arrows and when travelling. Here we see a typical International Archer sat in his tent waiting to shoot. See how calm he appears. You too can achieve this, as follows:

Sit with your hands down in your lap and pull your shoulders down as if they have a heavy weight on them (eg 2 or 3 fully kitted bows). Now slowly pull your shoulder blades slightly back as if you were going to touch them together (as if you were drawing the bow). Keep pulling the shoulders down while doing this. Hold for 10s and slowly release.

Tournament Organiser Relaxation:

We see here the Tournament organiser in her normal state, tense baffled as to why some archers cannot read their entry forms, or why they cannot enter before the closing date. Wondering why the field party has disappeared to the bar just as the judges need arrows finding etc



Clearly some form of relaxation is required so:

While sat at the PC entering the incorrectly added scores, gently roll your shoulders forward and then backwards. Alternatively, hire a masseur...

The Organiser and the winging Archer:



There's always one. As can be seen the Organiser feels like her back is against the wall and has no-where to go, so the secret is. smile dumbly and find a wall.

With your back to the wall, bend the knees and lean back until your shoulder blades and base of the spine are against the wall. Drop your shoulders and breath out. Hold for as long as is comfortable then explode in front of the culprit. This will have many benefits. It keeps you fit, and gives you a reputation for not being messed around.

Finally, the Walker:



Most archers are good at this as it is needed to collect the arrows. Admittedly, some are better than others and so it is useful to demonstrate how Walking can be achieved:

Wear comfortable shoes (the things that go on the feet) with cushioned soles and low heels. Lady Archers with high heels tend to get a reputation, not least for aerating the grass... Now by means of leaning very slightly forward and lifting and swinging the Right leg forward with the Left arm backwards at the same time (tricky I know), the body will stagger forward. Just as touchdown is achieved, quickly repeat this with the opposite side (ie Left leg and Right arm). Practise this and it soon becomes second nature. The by doing "walking", you can reduce weight and get a close look at your arrows at the target as well as seeing the field from a different perspective.