

# CHAPTER 6:

## TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICAL COACHING

### Introduction:

People learn by observation, example, transfer, guidance, trial and error, and repetition.

The learning of new skills involves teaching proper basic form, not correcting minor initial faults. Correction of faults is done after the basics have been learned.

The primary tasks at the entry level are:

- Simplify the novice's initiation to archery;
- Make the novice understand what to do;
- Highlight what needs to be focused on;
- Give feedback on the current execution quality.

The feedback gives the novice the necessary information regarding what should be done and how it differs from what is being done. This ability to compare current form versus the ideal leads to learning to execute the skills properly.

Putting this into practice as a coach requires being aware of the archery skills and their key elements as presented in this chapter. Also the coach needs to know how to:

- Demonstrate the skills;
- Create learning situations;
- Provide effective feedback and encourage communication.

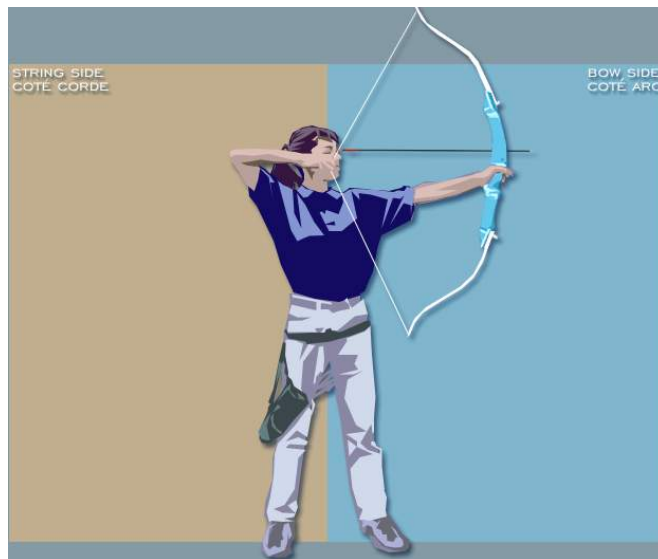
Coaching theory courses teach four phases of technical skill teaching. Applied to archery, they are:

- Skills and their key elements;
- Demonstration – its organisation and presentation;
- Practice and planning;
- Feedback and observation.

These phases and their implementation will be described in detail in this chapter.

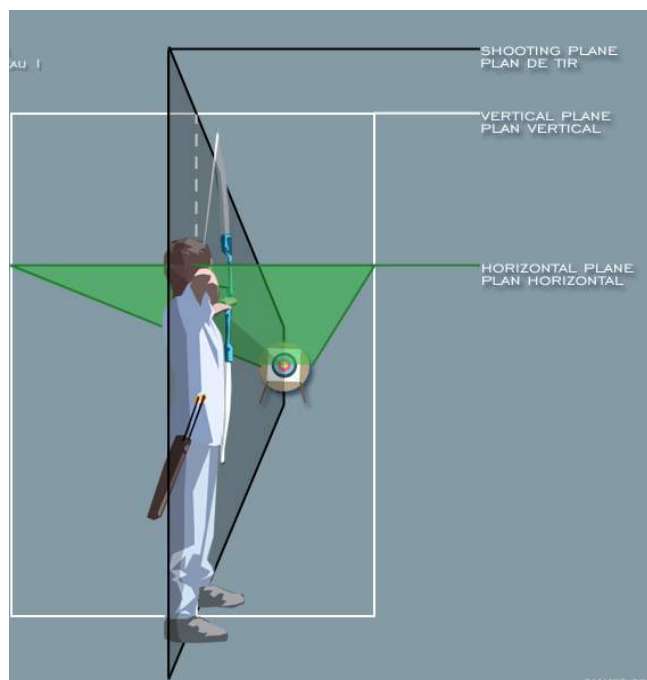
### Some terminology:

For right-handers and left-handers the action of archery is reversed with respect to the side of the body that is involved. For example, the right side of a right-handed archer and the left side of a left-handed archer are called the string side. Thus terms such as "bow arm" or "string ear" shall be used to describe body sides unambiguously.



For similar reasons, we refer to the following three planes:

- Shooting or flight plane: the vertical plane in which the arrow flies;
- Horizontal plane: the plane parallel to the ground, including the nock;
- Vertical or sagittal plane: the plane perpendicular to the ground along the shooting line, relating to an imaginary plane that divides a human body into right and left halves.



The reference planes.

- Some mimics (hands only) and simulations with elastic band or elastic string on the bow
- Shooting under self-observation, using mirrors, photos, video, etc.;
- Discovering the feeling of the skill at hand through shooting with closed eyes;
- Shooting without any aiming task, i.e. without a target face;
- Assimilation of the skill by increasing the difficulty level, i.e. shooting at targets that are progressively more and more challenging. For instance shooting at successively smaller spots. Another example is the use of cut-out targets: starting with a target face largely cut-out (i.e. only with the white rings), then shooting at a target less cut-out (only the white & black rings) and so on until shooting at a full target face;
- Evaluation of skill endurance: Shooting with a target, with double scoring or a game.
- Ending the session with shots at a blank butt and/or with closed eyes is a good way to link the proper feeling to a well implemented skill.

## Structure of this chapter

The steps of the shooting sequence, also called the "technical elements," and their key points are explained in this chapter.

It is important for the coach to make sure the novice executes these elements accurately. Individualizing key elements occurs when the novice has mastered the basics. The responsibility for this lies with a level II coach. Each technical skill and/or step of the shooting sequence is presented here with a two-step approach its instruction.

- First, the relevant complementary knowledge for each technical skill and/or step of the shooting sequence is highlighted in the order in which they are normally performed. Although it is not a technical skill, and introduction to the breathing sequence has been included in this manual. The shooting process starts from the stance, and is completed with the follow-through.
- Then exercises that may be used in order to teach that step of the shooting and/or breathing sequence are presented.

**Note:** For several exercises the coach may need to manipulate the novice in ways as described below. It is important to always get permission before touching the archer.

The use of the "Standard Teaching Process" (STP) is highly recommended in these exercises. After some explanation and a demonstration from the coach, the STP includes having the novice do the following:

The STP is illustrated in the exercise "Motionless and Stable Head – Exercise 2"

The formats of the exercises below vary, in order to keep training fresh and effective. These exercise come from various authors and/or from the same author but written at different times; since many coaches always strive to improve their services, they change their exercises' formats once in a while.

As not all novices respond to the same training methods, it is suggested that each exercise be selected to suit each individual novice and training session being conducted.

The following list is not exhaustive, but it is a basis upon which a training program can be developed.

World Archery is always looking for new and interesting exercises that enhance the teaching of archery to beginners. Submissions from novices and coaches are most welcome

## 6.1. STANCE

### 6.1.1. Complementary Knowledge

Type:

Preliminary action.

Goals:

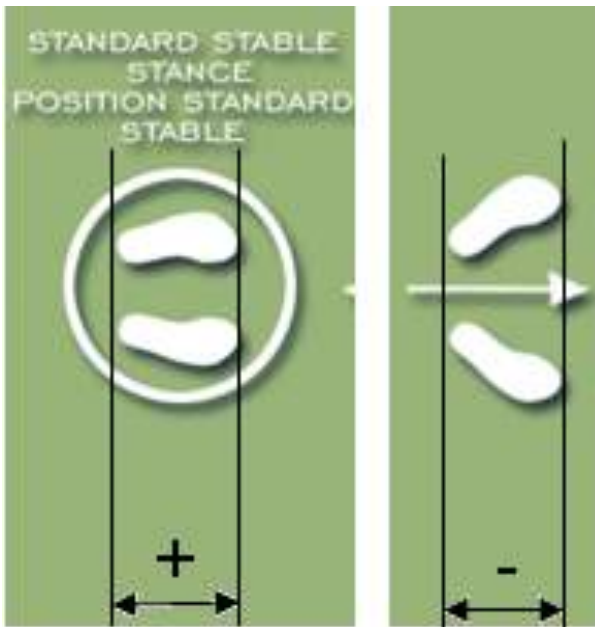
Consistent spatial relationship to the target and achieving optimal stability.

Form:

Feet parallel to the shooting line/axis, positioned at approximately shoulder width apart, with a little more weight on the front part of the feet.

Rationale:

Such a stance gives novices the opportunity to repeat actions easily and accurately. It provides sound support for pull and push efforts in the shooting plane, gives consistent direction to the body in the flight plane, and makes the coach's observation easier. Additionally, it reduces potential back problems and provides the optimum body stability in the toes-heel direction, by using the full length of the feet.



The stance creates the foundation for a good shot. It is such an important issue in an archer's form that it should be repeatedly practiced without bow and arrow so that they will be able to find the same position each and every time with ease and with minimal or no variation.

### 6.1.2. Exercises

#### Stance and Body Stability – Exercise 1

Objective:

Show to the novices that, with parallel feet, they use the full length of their feet for stabilizing the body on the heels-toes direction, which is the most critically unstable direction.

Situation:

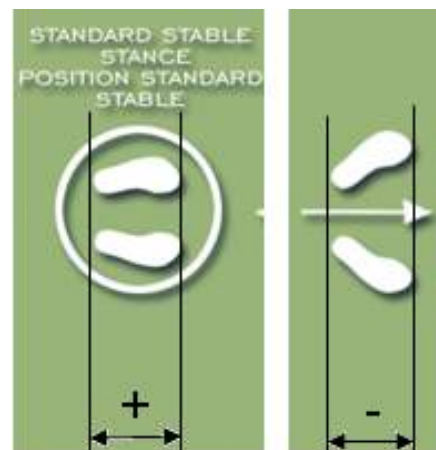
Full draw or in a regular standing position, eyes closed and without a bow, feet at more or less shoulder width apart

Instructions:

- First situation: toes spread out/heels in. This is comfortable, but the body may tilt towards the front;
- Second situation: toes close together/heels spread out. This is uncomfortable and the body may tilt backwards;
- Third situation: feet virtually parallel. This is often the most stable of the three positions.

Conclusion:

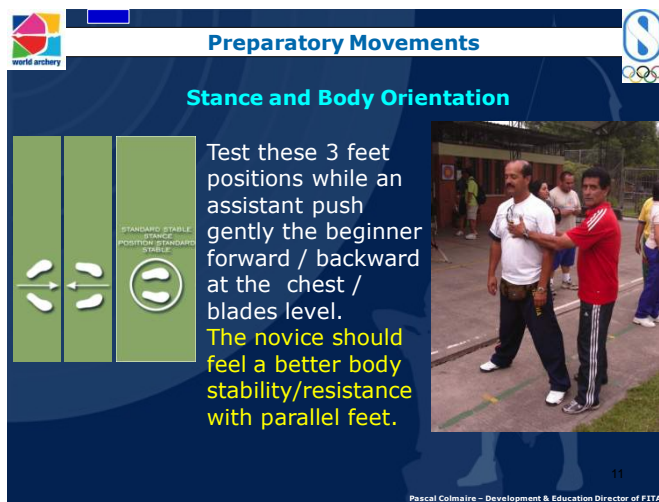
Parallel feet position offers the greatest stability. Any other feet orientations use a shorter feet length than with parallel feet for stabilizing the body in the heels-toes direction (the most unstable one).



Alternately the coach gently pushes the novice on the chest (heels direction) and then back (toes direction). Repeat this exercise with the novice using different stances. This is another way to confirm that parallel feet position offers the most stability from heels to toes.

## Instructions:

1. The assistant applies some pressure on the novice's body, particularly in the heels/toes or toes/heels direction.
2. The novice adopts various feet positions (Parallel, opened, closed).



## Objective:

To show the novices that parallel feet provide better resistance to backwards/forwards influences than feet with opened or closed toes.

## Stance and Body Stability – Exercise 2

### Objective:

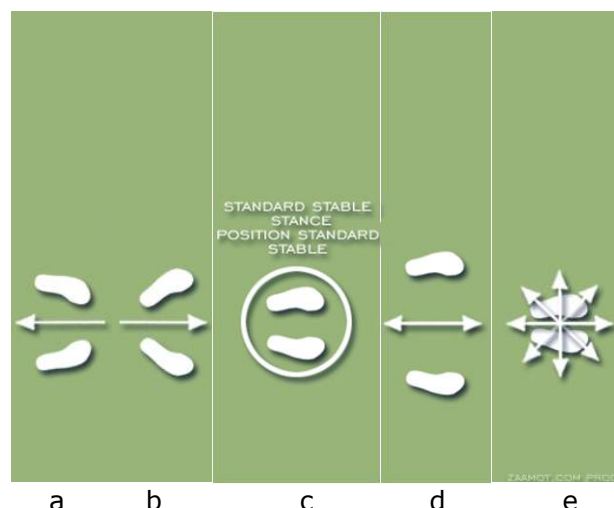
To find the distance between the feet that provides the best balance in both planes - shooting and vertical.

### Situation:

Full draw or just in a regular standing position, eyes closed and without a bow.

With feet parallel to each other:

- First situation: large distance separating the feet. Good stability in the shooting plane, but unstable in the vertical plane;
- Second situation: feet close together. unstable in all directions, perhaps even more so in the shooting plane;
- Third situation: feet spread at shoulder width apart.



The various stance are identified "a" to "e" from left to right.

- **a & b** -The body moves toward the open side.
- **c** - A standard stable stance.
- **d** - A wide stance makes body move forward **and** back.
- **e** - Feet close together is the most unstable stance.

### Equipment:

Optionally, this exercise can be implemented with a bow braced with an additional elastic string.

### Instructions:

The novice gets a feeling for possible unstable stances and chooses the most stable one. If stability is not satisfactory, try the following:

- Make sure the archer's feet are parallel;
- Spread the feet if the body is moving to the left or right in the shooting plane;
- Bring the feet closer together (but not less than shoulder width) if the body is moving forward or backward in the vertical plane.
- Reduce the weight on the heels. The weight of the body should be taken on the full foot. With the balance on the forward portion of

the foot the body is able to compensate for wind and other influences. String clearance is also improved at the chest level.

- As a last resort, spread the toes apart or bring the toes closer together, up to a maximum of ten degrees and according to the direction of the instability. For instance turn the toes in towards each other if the body tends to lean or fall forwards.

### Stance and Body Stability – Exercise 3

Put little marks at right-angles and on both sides of the shooting line where the archer's feet should be located.

Or

Draw footmarks on the ground where the archer's feet should be located (i.e. trace the archer's feet when properly placed).

Have the novice close their eyes then lead them to their standing position and get them to take up their proper stance position. The coach can then check this stance position with the aid of these marks.