

A Guide to Course Laying



Preface

This guide has been written as a steer and is not meant as a set of rules; course laying is more like an art than a science. Each patch of woodland is different to the next and should be treated on its own merits. Having said that the points set out below should help you lay a safe and interesting course in any woodland

Steps to laying a course

1. Start with a map and plan where you are going to place catering, admin, First Aid facilities, car park and camping if you have it.
2. Work out which way around your wood you are going to shoot
3. Unless you decide to stop for lunch, try to plan your course to go through the catering point and toilets at least twice, the reasons for this are twofold, it makes for a more comfortable day if you do not as an archer need to carry everything around with you all day drinks/food etc and also the more times you can get people through catering the more money you make for your club
4. Walk around the woods looking out for interesting shots and mark them on your map. At this point the type and size of the target has not been decided.
5. Mark your course out on the map, at the planning stage you are only looking at which target to use, and the direction of the shot. Once the map is complete return to the woods
6. Mark each end of the shot with a red peg and a flag or similar (I use a paper plate and a garden cane with the shot number on it.) at the target. At this point nothing is decided as to where the pegs or targets are going just a general area and direction. It is very difficult to visualise a shot without the target, there are sometimes exceptions to this, and you know exactly where you will put the target, this is better done with a group of people

Points to remember

- a. The shot must be hittable (Rule 26, page 13 Yellow Rule Book).
- b. The red, white and blue peg can be in any order; normally the red peg is the most difficult but always the longest.
- c. The yellow peg needs to be in range to the lowest powered bows.
- d. What happens if the arrow misses the target?
 - i. Where will the arrow end up?
 - ii. Can the overshoot area be seen from the red peg?
- e. How do the group leave the shot?
- f. How do the group arrive at the next shot?



National Field Archery Society

7. Laying out your course, at this point with the target with you, now is the time to find the definitive shot, place the target, and choose our peg positions. If you use a wasp peg, think how to make best use of it – perhaps to find a difficult window to challenge compound archers – rather than simply to add extra distance to the shot. There is no reason why the wasp peg needs to be further away from the target. Check that you can see the target and there is sufficient room around the pegs for all bow styles (or in the case of a wasp peg the bow classes that will shoot from this peg) left/right handed people, and people of all heights, don't forget to look up.
8. From your target you now need to find a safe path to the next shot. You should know when laying roughly where our pegs will be, so aim for that point in a straight and clear a line as possible. Clearly mark the path with your chosen method, It might be worth if, you are using barrier tap to use one colour for the path and another for hazards. It is important that the path leading to the next target does not lead in ahead of the pegs: otherwise there is a risk of one group walking into another's line of fire.
9. After you have placed your first shot, and have created your path to the next, you now have other factors involved in placing the following targets,
 - a. Overshoot from the previous target,
 - b. Overshoot to the following target,
 - c. Is your path in the safest possible place?
 - d. Do not to fan the pegs in too wide of an angle, (rule 27 page 14 yellow rule book).
10. Basically the whole course is repeating of the above, until it is all done.
11. When the whole course is complete get several groups' people to walk the whole course and makes notes of any issue that may become apparent. Some clubs use a shot check sheet to make sure everything is as safe as possible. If there are any questions about the suitability of a shot then it is probably wrong and should be changed.
12. At this point break out the bows and shoot each target in turn with at least three groups of people. If there aren't any problems your course is ready to shoot.