

2026 World Archery rule changes: advice for Archery GB judges

Change in terminology across all Books: instead of Outdoor and Indoor, it is now Long Distances (30m, 40m, 50m, 60m, 70m and 90m) and Short Distances (25m and 18m).

Book 2 - Events

- World records must now be claimed by AGB within 48 hours, so Tournament Organisers need to let AGB know straight away.
- The maximum altitude of a Target event has been added. It is 1800m above sea level normally.
- The minimum space for an athlete at the Short Distances (18m and 25m) has been reduced to 70cm, it was previously 80cm. This is the minimum; the Organiser can make it bigger if they wish.
- Specific rules for Mixed Team rounds at the Short Distances (Indoors) have been introduced, for example the target face layout.
- A new face has been introduced for Field. Instead of it being black with a yellow centre, it can now also be teal with a yellow centre. The black and yellow face is still legal at every event except World and Continental Championships, so it can still be used here. However, you cannot mix black and teal faces at a competition.

Book 3 – Target

- It now says, “Any athlete found to be using equipment contravening World Archery Rules at any point during the tournament will be disqualified and will lose any position gained.” Previously, the practice was to remove the score up until that point and then allow them to continue.
- Barebow – it clarifies that any markings within the aiming area that could be used for aiming must be taped over.
- Barebow – the rule on attachments now says, “The bow (braced or unbraced and regardless of the bow’s orientation or angle), including any combination of weights, vibration dampeners, and other attachments, must pass through a ring with a diameter of 12.2 cm (+/- 0.5 mm) without moving, flexing, or turning the attachments. The attachments must not aid the athlete in aiming or ranging in any way”. Therefore, basically anything is allowed anywhere on the bow as long as it goes through the 12.2cm ring without being moved and does not help with aiming or ranging.

- It clarifies that if an archer is covering their non-sighting eye/glasses, then “The type of coverage must not create a clear reference line”.
- Rules on smoking have been adjusted to including vaping, as well as smoking and electronic cigarettes not being allowed.
- For people who have a bye in a head-to-head match, it has now been clarified that Recurve and Barebow (who use the set system) can only shoot three arrows in the first three sets.
- For marking arrow holes, it now says the length of the marks will not exceed 5mm. We’d recommend not going around measuring the marks, but if someone is making excessively long marks, we now have this rule to back us up.
- It is now the archer’s responsibility to make sure that following scoring they remove their arrows from the target, previously it was the judges’ responsibility.
- The system for ties at the Long Distances has changed from 10s + Xs then 10s to be:
 - The greatest number of Xs (inner 10s).
 - If still tied, the greatest number of 10s
- The rules for ranking for results purposes have changed in a head-to-head, it is now done with average arrow score.
- There are some small changes to the “Consequence of Breaking Rules” chapter which should be re-read carefully by all.

Book 4 -Field and 3D

- Recurve bows – the serving is now no longer allowed to end within the archer’s vision when at full draw, and they are limited to one or two nocking points.
- Barebow – the rule on attachments now says, “The bow (braced or unbraced and regardless of the bow’s orientation or angle), including any combination of weights, vibration dampeners, and other attachments, must pass through a ring with a diameter of 12.2 cm (+/- 0.5 mm) without moving, flexing, or turning the attachments. The attachments must not aid the athlete in aiming or ranging in any way”. Therefore, basically anything is allowed anywhere on the bow as long as it goes through the 12.2cm ring without moving and does not help with aiming or ranging.
- For Traditional bows, it is clarified that a single anchor or face walking is permitted, but string walking is not permitted.
- Several clarifications on head-to-head events in Field and 3D.
- There are some small changes to the “Consequence of Breaking Rules” chapter which should be re-read carefully by all.

Para – all para rules have been moved into Book 5

- Change in terminology will be coming in:
 - W1 will be known as PI1
 - W2 and Standing will be known as PI2
 - VI1 remains as is
 - VI2/3 will be known as VI2
- W1/PI1 now shoot in sets in match play rather than cumulative score.

Book 6 is what was Book 5, and includes Run Archery and Clout.

World Archery are looking to introduce an app in the near future for the rules, so judges will be able to search the rules quickly at events. Once details of this are released, we will forward this information on.