

ARCHERY HANDICAPS

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Put simply, an archer's handicap is a rating of how good they are. More precisely it's a measure of their ability to shoot a tight group of arrows. It ranges from 150 where arrows would be quite widely scattered, down to 0 which is the best handicap with the tightest groups.

Each archer has a separate handicap for indoor and outdoors, and it's calculated based on the archery round, bow type, gender and age group. That means you can measure your ability to shoot accurately regardless of the round being shot, or the bow type being used, and chart your progress that way. And you can compare the relative ability of different archers regardless of who they are and what they are shooting.

Handicaps work like this...

- Each time you shoot, there is a handicap rating for that score.
- As a shooting season progresses, this current handicap is adjusted depending on how well or badly you have been shooting. It can get better (lower number) but it doesn't get worse during the season.
- At the end of the season, each handicap is reassessed based on how you've done overall, and the handicap can go up or down compared with the current handicap. That's then your starting point for next season.

Calculating them...

Calculating a handicap rating for a score in each specific set of circumstances is complicated. So, ArcheryGB provide tables which make it easy to look up (similar to the AGB classification tables) and a clever spreadsheet, so that if you want you can look up your own handicap for a given shoot.

But for us it's simple. Each time you submit a score, it's entered into our database, and our records software calculates the handicap rating for that score. It also calculates your current handicap as you submit more scores. The individual score handicaps are published on the website as part of your score records. Periodically, the current handicaps are published on the website too.

A level playing field...

Having handicap ratings means that you can hold a competition where all the different sizes and shapes of archer can join in, and work out who is shooting best for their given circumstance. Archers with good handicaps get fewer points on the scoring while those with poor ones gets extra points, so it's a level playing field for everyone. It's not who gets the highest score, but who shows the best ability on the day given who they are and what they're shooting. We're thinking of setting up a competition on those lines in the future.

Finally...

All scores can count towards your handicap rating, so it's worth putting in all your scoresheets not just the ones you submit for badges.