

Equipment check list for a new Olympic shooter

Revised 7/14

Bow –

These days, I'm hard pressed to recommend anything other than an ILF rig. The functionality, versatility and tuneability cannot be matched with any one piece or simple takedown bow.

Most adult males should start under 30# AT THEIR DRAW LENGTH. Female archers should generally begin in the 20 – 24# range, again, at their draw length.

Risers –

The 25" Hoyt Horizon was introduced in 2011 and is basically a longer version of the Excel with lateral limb adjustments and a removable clicker extension plate. A better choice for a 25" riser is the newer Sabstien Flute Forged Plus riser. Same price as the Horizon, but better built, and with more options than the Horizon. It comes with a very usable flipper rest and plunger. The grip is a little different than the Hoyt and may not be as comfortable for some people. I do admit, that since I have become more accustomed to it of late.

Since the last revision of this checklist, newer risers from Sabstien Flute, Cartel and several other manufacturers have become available and all appear to be quite serviceable, most considerably less expensive than the Hoyt Horizon.

The 25" Hoyt Eclipse is a larger, heavier, "TEC" or braced riser. Unfortunately, Hoyt discontinued the Eclipse in 2011, but it is still available through some dealers and on the used market.

The 23" Hoyt Excel ILF riser is a good choice if a shorter, lightweight single beam riser is desired. The 21" Both Excel risers are better suited for young archers, archers with a short draw length (under 25") or those more interested in a hunting or field bow. Sabstien Flute has introduced a 23" version of their Forged Plus riser and very inexpensive Axiom Plus riser. Both are excellent choices for those needing a shorter riser.

There are a number of older (discontinued) Hoyt risers on the used market as well. The venerable Gold Medalist is one example. Even high-end risers from a few years ago may be available at prices comparable to new entry level pieces. Several of my students have found older high-end risers for less than the cost of new entry level models.

Limbs –

Most of my new shooters use the Samick Privilege and Sebastien Flute Axiom Plus or Premium limbs in either glass/wood or carbon/wood). Despite the difference in price, performance is remarkably similar and will shoot as well as the higher priced limbs for new and intermediate level shooters.

The Hoyt limbs are decent shooters, but pricey compared to the Samick and Flute limbs. The older Hoyt limbs (Gold Medalist, Carbon Plus, and FX limbs) are very serviceable as well. Stick to wood core limbs with fiberglass or carbon surfaces, as carbon core limbs provide no advantage to beginning or intermediate shooters.

Limb length (short, medium or long) depends on draw length.

Basic rule of thumb:

People with a 27" or shorter draw length should opt for a 66" bow.
(23" riser + medium limbs OR 25" riser with short limbs)

People with a 27 - 28" draw length should opt for a 68" bow.
(23" riser with long limbs OR 25" riser with medium limbs)

People with a 29" or longer draw length should opt for a 70" bow.
(25" riser with long limbs)

Note that limbs of a given weight on a 25" riser will be 2# HEAVIER on a 23" riser and vice versa.

Vintage wood riser target bows from Hoyt, Bear, Wing, Ben Pearson, etc., can be viable alternatives for new target archers, but upgrading to an ILF rig will be required sooner or later.

Strings –

Endless loop strings are preferable over the more traditional looking Flemish Splice strings.

A 14 strand D97 of the appropriate length will handle any weight from 20# - 50# and provide perfect nock fit when used with a .020" serving and small groove "G" nocks (see below). Having a spare string is always good idea.

For modern ILF bows the string's actual length should be 3" shorter than the advertised bow length. For example a 68" bow should use a 65" string.

If a vintage target bow is being used, use ONLY DACRON strings; 12 strands is optimal for all typical target weight ranges. If the .020" serving is used, "G" nocks will fit.

Bow stringers –

Bateman or Cartel bow stringer. A dual cup string is preferable to a stringer with a friction block.

Rests –

Best – Cavalier/AAE Champion II. It's fully adjustable and bulletproof. (These had been discontinued by AAE, but are apparently still available from a number of dealers.)

The ARE Magnetic Flipper is excellent quality, but pricey.

Budget – WW / KAP Magnetic Partner rest. The newer rests from Win & Win/Flute and Fivics are very serviceable, but the arm height adjustment feature, if present, may be less than 100% reliable. The venerable plastic Hoyt Pro or Super Rest for \$2.50 is still an option and is usually supplied with most Hoyt risers. It's probably seen more Olympic games than all the newer rests combined.

Plungers –

Best – Cavalier/AAE Master Plunger or Shibuya DX. The shorter plungers will work on some applications. More expensive plungers provide no benefit at this point.

Budget – Flute, Fivics and some Cartel plungers.

Slings –

A cord type WRIST sling is preferable, as it is the most convenient and foolproof, but finger or bow slings can be used initially.

Stabilizers –

Cartel X-Pert or Midas approx. 28" – 30" long. Buy or fabricate extra end weights. Stabilizers have gotten very expensive in the last few years. Since they only are an extension tube to hold an end weight away from the riser, you can do very well on eBay searching for old style tapered aluminum stabilizers.

Sights –

When ready, do NOT scrimp on a sight! A good sight should last as long as your bow.

Best – Sure-Loc Contender-X. Sights from Shibuya or Cartel in the \$200 – \$250 range are very serviceable as well, but may not be as user friendly. Again, if your budget is tight, don't forget the used market. Old style Check-it or Acra-sights work very well, but since they will be purchased used, confirm with the seller that the sight and mount are complete.

Sight Apertures –

While most sights come with apertures, most are less than optimal. More user-friendly apertures can be obtained from your local hardware store by combining nylon spacers and a 3" 8-32 threaded rod. I prefer an inside diameter of 3/8" – 1/2" for new shooters.

Clickers –

Should not be used by new shooters, but you will need one later on.

Best – Beiter Clicker (Standard .025" thickness works for most people.)

Budget – Cartel Clicker

Special case – In the event that longer than standard length arrows are necessary, sight-mounted clickers such as the Cavalier/AAE or Cartel Magnetic clicker should be used.

Bow cases –

Several hard cases are available from Neet, SKB, Aurora and Cartel, as well as soft cases/duffel bag type cases from Cartel, Hoyt/Easton, etc. Models range from about \$50 to over \$300. If you plan on traveling with your bow, you may need one that is airline approved and has TSA type locks.

Arrows –

Best – Easton Platinum Plus arrows with NIBB points, small groove "G" nocks, and 3" feathers. X7 arrows offer few advantages, unless the size you need isn't available in the Platinum Plus line.

Budget – Easton Blues or Jazz arrows with glue-in target points, 1/4" glue-on nocks, and 3" feathers.

Quiver –

Personal choice The Neet target quiver is a long-time standard and very economical. Offerings from Cartel and Hoyt/Easton are optional but can be pricey.

Tabs –

Cavalier/AAE Elite – Sorry, no options on this one for Olympic type shooters. The tab size is based on the width of the back plate, not the length. The cordovan leather is the most durable and tends to give the cleanest release.

Arm guard –

Any one you like, just keep it simple! (Yes, you'll need one.)

Chest Protector –

Yes, you will need one sooner or later. Neet makes a very affordable one and the Easton version is quite popular; and no, one size does not fit all!

Accessories –

Nocking points, bow squares, string wax, etc. can be purchased or borrowed from the local range or club.

Coach –

Probably the most important thing a new (or experienced) shooter will need.