

BACK2BASICS

finger tabs

If you need specialist help, **just ask!**



We all need a little help now and again. That's why we are running a new series of back to basics guides put together by **Adam Lewis of Wales Archery**. Here he takes a look at the dos and don'ts of finger tabs and any potential issues.

Finger tab size

Before we look at technique we need to look at how your tab fits your hand. In most cases finger tabs have too much material left on them. Excess material can cause problems such as contacting the arrow – and the normal culprit is the top finger. With too much material hanging over, it drags the tab face down on to the shaft. Thankfully it's an easy fix by just trimming the tab length and height, then checking to see if the rest of the tab needs trimming down. But make sure you do this in very small stages as you can't put it back on.

Finger spacer

The finger spacer is very important if you are shooting Mediterranean style (one finger above and two below). The idea is to stop your fingers contacting and pinching the arrow.

Don't assume because you have a finger spacer that it is working for you – we all have different size hands and fingers. Get someone to check how your fingers look at full draw. It is important we check it at this stage because, at full draw, the angle of the string will force your fingers together. If they are contacting, you will need to build the space up accordingly using tape, leather, sugru putty and various other materials.

Shooting finger contact

We need to talk about how our fingers influence the string – and what that does to the flight of the arrow.

What we are looking for is equal pressure on the top, middle and bottom fingers showing a nice straight line down the tab face as in **figure 1**. This allows the string to leave the tab cleanly without any interference, resulting in a clean forgiving shot.

What we see a lot of, whether it is in new archers or those who have been shooting for years, is finger contact of some kind. A good indication of this is if you look at your tab and there is a line going at an angle. This means that you are either not putting enough pressure on your middle, bottom or both fingers or putting too much on just one.

Figure 2 shows a clear angled line. This is very common and caused by not enough, if any pressure on the third finger. One

of the problems caused by this is that the hand wants to rotate as the string is let loose, causing you to dog leg the string. This results in the top finger contacting the arrow giving very poor arrow flight.

There are a few things you can do to solve this problem. The first is getting more pressure on your third finger by curling in your pinky finger as both the third finger and pinky share the same flexor tendons. The next thing is, when you are at anchor, rotate your wrist so that your pinky finger touches your neck. You should feel the muscles in your forearm engage and this will stop the wrist from rotating during the release.

If you have any questions at all, please just get in touch.

