

How To Inspect Combat Archery Tubular Ammunition

*This is a **quick reference guide** for inspecting combat archery tubular ammunition.. This is not a replacement for the information in the Combat Archery Fighter and Marshal Handbook or on <http://www.35footspear.com/>*

As a Combat Archery Marshal in Training (CA-MIT) or a warranted Combat Archery Marshal, you must know the most current inspection standards. There may have been additions or alterations to the standards since this was published. It is YOUR responsibility to keep up to date on all changes to the Middle Kingdom Combat Archery inspection standards on the Marshal's website and the 35-Foot Spear website

The following process has been written to help you make sure that you remember to check all of the standards along the way. Start at the beginning and go through in order to the end. Make sure you address all of the questions in each section. Some essential details are included after many questions, though you may come up with more.

General ideas when inspecting ammunition-

Make sure you have a good place to work, especially if there will be a lot of inspections that day. Having a chair/stool and shade (or rain shelter) can go a long way toward having a pleasant day.

Start with a "to be inspected" pile on to one side of you. As you inspect each piece, put it in a "passed" pile on your other side or a "failed" pile somewhere separate (between your feet or under the chair/stool sometimes works well).

If another CA Marshal or a CA MIT is working on the same batch of ammunition with you, they may want to sit facing you, so you can share the same piles and consult with each other easily.

As you inspect, feel free to ask the archer for additional information about their ammunition.

For example... Did you make the ammo? Is everything built the same way and with identical materials? Type of tip? Do all stoppers have holes? Sil-o-flex or equivalent tubing? Documentation of equivalency, if necessary?

Confirm that the archer remembers... No gleaning is allowed for fiberglass ammo! If the scenario allows it for tubular ammo, make sure they know how to do it properly. (If it will fit in their LIGHT bow/crossbow, they might pick it up!)

MINORS- (16 & 17 year-olds) If they don't have a parent or legal guardian present, they must show their "Medical Authorization Form for Minors" at the list table. It is not our job to check it, but remind them to do it anyway.

Passed Ammunition-

At smaller events, the archer can pack up the passed ammunition as soon as you are done with it.

If the event is large enough to paint inspected ammunition, have the archer lay it out in the designated area so you can spray it. The archer can pack it up as soon as it is dry enough.

If the event is collecting data on how much ammunition is getting inspected, get all the information before you let the archer have their ammunition.

Failed Ammunition-

If the failure is minor (and the archer has time/materials), encourage them to make the repairs for immediate re-inspection.

Make sure the archer keeps any failed pieces separate from the rest of their ammunition! One easy method is to tape the failed ammunition into a bundle. Ask them to put the bundle somewhere separate from their other ammunition.

The Process:

1. Look at the basics.

Is the head completely covered in contrasting color duct tape? (not black or yellow)

Which type of tip does it have?

Rubber stopper with ¼ inch hole or modified classic Baldar Blunt

Is the label complete?

Machine-printed in English in a readable font.

Owner's Name and Kingdom. If it lists a Group Name as owner, it must also have an individual listed as a point of contact.

Covered in clear wrapping/shipping tape. (No reinforced or strapping tape!)

Note – it is suggested to put the label towards the tail end because when ammo is spray-painted to show it has been inspected, the paint is normally towards the head.

Are there any slits/cuts in the shaft?

Slits/holes are NOT allowed. Check (look/feel) under any fletching to be sure.

A nock may be cut up to ½ inch deep in the end.

Is there fletching?

Must be duct tape. May project only ½ inch from the shaft.

Does the ammunition have a lot of yellow color or other disallowed markings?

Maximum 10% yellow allowed.

6 inches of alternating red/green bands of tape are not allowed. They are only for experimental weapons... which these are not!

2. Look at the tubing.

Is it the correct diameter and thickness?

Check the tail end. You will get a feel for what looks and feels too thick/thin. Check the manufacturer's markings as necessary.

1-inch interior diameter or 1.25-inch exterior diameter.

Is it made of the correct materials?

PE 3408, PE 3608, PE3710, or PE4710

100psi and 125 psi are the only allowable pressure ratings of Sil-o-flex equivalent tubing.

Check the printing on the tube to see if it is Sil-o-flex or an equivalent.

Note- Bolts may only show part of the information due to their length, so you may need several pieces of ammunition to see all the info.

Is it the correct length?

Maximum 28 inches from string-acceptor/nock to base of head. Bolts should be obvious; arrows need to be measured. You may do all of them at the end after the rest of the inspection.

If the length of very short bolts causes you concern or questions as to whether they will fly safely, they may need to be shot to make sure they fly well once they have passed the rest of the inspection. (See Additional Notes at the end)

3. Look at/inside the tail end.

Is the tail is round?

If not, ask the archer to fix it (make it round). Make sure the archer hands it back to you or puts it in the “to be inspected” pile, not the ‘passed” pile.

If there seem to be a lot of flattened tubes, ask the archer to check and fix them all before putting them into the “to be inspected” pile.

Is the tail open? Does it have a nock?

Must be open to see the tip. No wooden nocks, plugs, etc. Nothing else, either!

A nock may be cut ½ inch into the shaft.

Is there a hole in the rubber stopper? (Only if rubber stopper tip.)

A rubber stopper must be size 6.5 with a ¼” or 3/8” inch hole in the center

This is a good time to get details about construction. Ask the archer whether all stoppers have holes. Check every piece of ammo, even if you know the builder!

You can pick up a handful at a time for a quick look with a flashlight.

4. Check the head – of Rubber Stopper tip

Is the foam firm enough? **If it is squishy-**

Squeeze the head to see if you can feel the edges of the stopper, etc.

Check that it can't go through a 1 ½” round hole of a gauge.

Check that it can't go more than ½” into the slot the 1” slot of a gauge.

Rubber Stopper heads must have a side wrap!

Is the head at least 1 ½” in diameter? And round?

Check using the 1 ½” round hole of a gauge (can't go through) if necessary.

The tip padding disks must be round (not square), so there shouldn't be any corners sticking out.

Do the ends of the side wrap meet without a gap?

Is the edge of the side wrap flush with the foam tip padding?

The tip padding should not stick out from the side wrap.

Is the side wrap long enough?

The side wrap must be at least 1 ½ inches long.

Note- (min. ½” tip padding + ½” stopper + min. ½” overlap = minimum 1 ½”)

Does the head slide up/down on the shaft?

Does the tip have at least ½” of padding on the end?

NOTE- if the foam is firm enough, you may not be able to tell exactly how much padding is on the tip, but you should be able to feel if it is not enough.

5. Check the head – of modified classic Baldar Blunt tip

Note- Baldar Blunt heads do NOT need side wraps!

Does the tip have at least ½” of padding on the end?

Look at and feel the foam (you can also ask).

You may not be able to tell exactly how much padding is on the tip, but you should be able to feel if it is not enough.

Is the head at least 1 ½” in diameter? And round?

Check in the 1 ½” round hole of a gauge (can’t go through).

The tip padding disks must be round (not square), so there shouldn’t be any corners sticking out.

Is the foam firm enough?

Squeeze the head to see if the foam compresses too easily.

Check in the 1” slot of a gauge (can’t go more than ½” into slot) if necessary.

6. Put it in the “passed” or “failed” pile.

Additional Notes-

The most important and crucial part of inspection involving ammunition is answering the questions “is it safe?” and “does it meet the rules and construction standards of both the Society and the Middle Kingdom?”

The more ammunition you have checked and the more familiar you are with the rules and construction standards, the easier it is for you to determine if ammunition is safe. If in doubt, consult another CA Marshal, especially someone more senior or higher in the chain of command.

If the ammunition is extremely short, you may need to fire the ammunition out of the bow/crossbow of the owner to determine if it flies straight or if it wobbles and/or tumbles.

All ammunition must have the complete pre-battle inspection described above to make sure it is safe and has been constructed correctly. Later inspections during the same event are primarily looking for safety issues that may have occurred during use.

Gleaning is when a combat archer picks up a piece of ammo from the ground to reuse it during a battle. Gleaning is NOT permitted for fiberglass ammunition! All archers should know the proper gleaning process.

Field Inspections (performed by the archer on the battlefield) are NOT permitted on fiberglass ammunition!

A **between-battles Inspection** (if permitted by scenario rules) must be performed by a Combat Archery Marshal. Ammunition must be checked for safety (secure head/APD, round APD, etc), label and, if paint is used, make sure the ammo has the proper paint color(s) for the day/battle.

If you are ever in doubt, ask the most senior Combat Archery Marshal on site for guidance.