

# PBS Code of Ethics and Equipment Policy Statements

The proliferation of modern technology in the ancient sport of bowhunting is of concern to all bowhunters when innovation leads to a significant increase in big game harvests and consequences that include the scrutiny of liberal archery seasons by those responsible for wild game management and hunting regulation. Technological innovation can also blur the distinction

between what has traditionally been the concept of “fair chase” and unethical hunting behaviors. For these reasons, the Professional Bowhunters Society® has deemed it necessary to establish the following Code of Ethics and Equipment Policy Statements, which we believe our members have come to exemplify and we hope will be adopted by the larger bowhunting community.

## *Compound Bows and Acceptable Draw Weight “Let-Off”*

A member of the Professional Bowhunters Society® will not hunt or pursue game with any bow capable of more than 65% let-off, as defined by the Pope & Young Club’s Definition of a Hunting Bow, Arrow, and Broadhead dated May 1998.\*

\*1.D. Let-Off for Compound Bows:

1. Definition of let-off: That characteristic of a bow that results in a reduction of the force necessary to increase the draw length after the highest level of draw force has been reached. This is a characteristic generally associated with, but not restricted to, compound bows.
2. The maximum let-off on a compound bow shall be measured at a point in the draw cycle after the peak draw weight has been attained. It shall be measured near the end of the draw cycle where the minimum holding force is reached. This point in the draw cycle on a compound bow is known as “the bottom of the valley.”
3. Determination of the percent of let-off: The values of the peak draw force and the let-off force shall be used to calculate the percent of let-off. The peak force is the maximum force obtained during the draw cycle. The let-off force is the lowest force reached following the peak force during a single uninterrupted draw cycle. In all cases, both the highest and lowest force shall be read from a scale during a single and continual pull condition, without relaxation. This technique eliminates the introduction of hysteresis, which can distort the reading.  
$$\% \text{ Let-off} = 100 \times \frac{[(\text{Peak Draw Force}) - (\text{Minimum Holding Force})]}{(\text{Peak Draw Force})}$$
4. The nominal percent of let-off for hunting bows shall be a maximum of 65 percent. It is recognized that variations in draw length and/or draw weight can affect the percent of let-off on compound bows. For these reasons minor variations in let-off are acceptable.

## *Definition of a Hunting Arrow*

A hunting arrow will be a projectile at least twenty-four (24) inches in length when measuring the arrow from the back of the broadhead to the bottom of the nock groove. The arrow will have fletching attached immediately forward of the nock and the broadhead will be mounted at the front of the arrow. The weight of a hunting arrow shall be no less than 450 grains with the broadhead attached. Broadheads will have at least two stationary cutting edges and be at least .875 inches (7/8 inch) at the widest point. Neither the arrow nor the broadhead will utilize any type of electronic, hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical, chemical, pharmaceutical, or pyrotechnical component.

## *Use of the Crossbow Prohibited In Archery Seasons*

While the Professional Bowhunters Society® recognizes the rights of hunters to choose other weapons in separate hunting seasons, the crossbow is not a bow and a member of the Professional Bowhunters Society® will not use a crossbow, or any device that holds a bow at full or partial draw, during archery seasons.

## *Artificial Illumination*

Artificial light will not be used by any member of the Professional Bowhunters Society® to aid in the pursuit of North American big game. No light will be attached to or used to illuminate the bow, bow sights, or arrow. Where legal, an artificial light may be used to aid in the recovery of wounded game.

## *All Terrain Vehicles*

The Professional Bowhunters Society® defines an ATV as any motorized conveyance used to transport an individual to or through a hunting area. The ATV will not be used in the direct pursuit of big game as this is considered a violation of the rules of fair chase. ATV use will be limited to roads and trails deemed open for travel by said vehicles by the managing authority of both public and private lands. If a hunter is transported in any portion of the ATV in an “open-air” situation, then the bow, regardless of design, must be unstrung or fully cased during transport or otherwise rendered unavailable to the hunter.

## *Electronic Devices*

Members of the Professional Bowhunters Society® will not use electronic technology in the pursuit of big game. Possession of communication devices such as two-way radios, cellular and satellite telephones, and global positioning devices is not prohibited so long as these devices are not utilized in the direct pursuit of big game.

## *Adherence to Game Laws*

All members of the Professional Bowhunters Society® will adhere to all written game laws and regulations of the locality where the hunt is taking place. It will be the member’s responsibility to research and know these game laws prior to the hunt. Members will not knowingly hunt with any individual who violates these laws and regulations. A member of the Professional Bowhunters Society® will fully cooperate in a polite, courteous, and professional manner with law enforcement officials.

## *The Rules of Fair Chase*

The Professional Bowhunters Society® understands and accepts the fact that bowhunting limits the opportunity of the hunter to successfully take an animal. Considering these accepted limitations, the taking of a big game animal through any practice or device that prevents, eliminates, or significantly reduces a big game animal from ordinary means of escape from the hunter will be considered a violation of the ethics of “fair chase.”