

GET YOUR BOW READY FOR HUNTING SEASON PRE-SEASON PREP CHECKLIST

When the moment of truth has come and gone, you're going to feel one of two ways. Either you'll know the elation of a solid hit and a short blood trail, or you'll have an awful gnawing pain in the pit of your stomach and then a flood of regret. If the reason for a bad shot was equipment failure that could have been avoided with simple preventive maintenance – you'll have no one to blame but yourself. If you follow this checklist of pre-season tuning of your bow and equipment, the chances of mechanical failure will virtually disappear.

CHECK THE CAMS

Over the course of a hunting season, there are many ways you could nick or bend the cams on your bow. That can cause cable wear that might only show up now after an off-season of practice. Check the cams carefully. If you find damage, get it repaired immediately. Before you shoot again.



TIGHTEN SIGHTS

Top end bow sights have great adjustability, but that also means a lot of parts that move and can come loose. Check every nut with the appropriate size hex wrench and make sure they are all snugged tight. The screws attaching the sight to the riser should get Loctite.

WAX THE STRING

Waxing the bowstring is the simplest form of maintenance, but it's too often neglected. Wax the string several times each year. It will prevent fraying, make the string less prone to take on moisture, and prolong the life of your string by years. You'll be glad you did.



INSPECT THE D-LOOP

Modern hunting bows use a D-Loop as the attachment for a mechanical release directly behind the arrow. It is stressed each time the bow is drawn. Look it over carefully and feel for wear. Same goes for the knots holding it on the string. If in doubt, have it replaced.



SILENCE THE QUIVER

You can take every other precaution to make your bow operate silently, but if the connection between the riser and the quiver is loose or rattles, it will all be for naught. Inspect this important contact point often for wear or a loose fit. For additional silence buffer with moleskin or tape.



NOCKS AND VANES

At the moment of truth, it would be a shame to be let down by the least expensive components in your rig. Make certain nocks are in good repair – and positioned properly relative to the cock feather. Be sure vanes or fletches are securely attached front to back.



CHECK THE ARROW REST

The modern arrow rest is a mechanical marvel. In good condition and properly adjusted, it allows the arrow to fly perfectly. But if there's a loose screw or the timing is out of sync it can be the source of unexplained misses and big time frustration. If you're unsure, it's worth getting professional help.



BUY A SPARE RELEASE

With a modern compound bow, a release is required for accurate shooting. In fact, a broken, lost, or forgotten release can end a hunt. Even if your release checks out for mechanical function, always have an identical spare where you can get it if you need it.



SHARP BROADHEADS

Virtually all modern broadheads feature replaceable blades. You should consider them "single-use" for big game hunting. If you shot a broadhead one time – even at a target – put in new blades before you go hunting. Also make sure they are secured tightly on the arrows.

