

How to Choose a Recurve Bow



#1: What Do You Want to Use it for?

Do you want to use your recurve for hunting, or target practice?

If you want a bow for target practice only:

Pretty much any bow will do. So you can pretty much just buy one which is within your budget and which looks good to you.



If you want a bow for hunting:

While every single recurve bow is suitable for target practice, not all will be suitable for hunting. The main parameter that determines if you can hunt with your recurve is the draw weight on the bow, not the actual model you purchase. In case you don't know, draw weight refers to the amount of force you need to apply to the bow string in order to pull it over a distance of 28" (in the case of recurve bows). The higher the draw weight on your bow, the more powerful it will be and the further your arrow will travel (and with more force).

When target practicing, you don't need a very powerful bow. Your arrow only needs to penetrate the foam or cardboard of your bullseye, which doesn't require much energy. On the other hand, when you're hunting, your arrow often needs to go through the thick skin, fat tissue, and sometimes even the bone of your prey.



Choose a recurve bow which has a draw weight of **40 pounds minimum**. Now, you can hunt perfectly well for smaller game like turkey and rabbit with a 35 or even 30 lbs. bow, but for anything larger than that (deer, elk) you'll need 40 lbs. or more.

Archer's Weight	Suggested Draw Weight
Small Children (70-100 lbs.)	10-15 lbs
Larger Children (100-130 lbs.)	15-25 lbs
Small-Frame Female (100-130 lbs.)	25-35 lbs
Medium-Frame Female (130-160 lbs)	25-35 lbs
Small-Frame Male (120-150 lbs)	30-45 lbs
Medium-Frame Male (150-180 lbs)	40-55 lbs
Large-Frame Females (160+ lbs)	30-45 lbs
Large Frame Men (180+ lbs)	45-60 lbs

So while you might not be able to handle more than 30 lbs. according to the chart above, after a few weeks or months of practice a 40 pounder will be more than manageable.

#2: Do You Need a Take-Down Recurve?

When you are choosing a recurve bow, you need to decide if you want a “Take-Down” or not. A bow is considered a Take-down when the two limbs of the recurve can be separated from the riser. There are three reasons why you’d want to choose a take-down recurve rather than a “one piece”:

1. Take-down bows are easier to transport. Since you can remove the limbs from the riser, the bow is much easier to store and fit into a small hand bag. If this sounds like something that is important to you, then opt for a take-down construction.
2. A take-down recurve is easier to service. If anything were to break by accident, you can simply remove the part that needs fixing and send that for repair / servicing, rather than having to send the entire bow.
3. Finally, **a Take-down bow is good for beginners** because it allows you to adjust your draw weight. Basically, the draw weight of your bow is determined by the stiffness and construction of the limbs. So if you were to buy a recurve with 30# draw weight, and you were to decide a few months later than you want to upgrade to 40#, you don’t need to get a whole new bow – all you have to do is purchase a new set of limbs with the draw weight that you would want to upgrade to, and replace your current limbs.



#3: How Heavy Should The Bow Be?

Draw weight isn’t the only thing that matters. The actual weight of the bow itself is also somewhat important. Keep in mind that you will often need to hold the bow in front of you for extended periods of time while shooting. The majority of solid recurves weigh between 2 and 3.5 pounds, and these are typically safe to go for if you’re a beginner. If you aren’t sure of how much you can handle, just play it safe and choose a bow that weighs 3 pounds or less.

#4: How Long Should The Recurve Be?

You want a bow that is at least twice as long as your draw length. If your draw length is 28”, you want a recurve that’s 56” or more. The longer the bow, the more accurate it generally is.

#5: Do You Want Accessories on Your Recurve?

Another thing to consider when deciding which recurve bow to choose is whether you want to attach a bow sight and other accessories to it. Some recurve bows come pre-drilled for such attachments, while others don’t. Many traditional archery enthusiasts prefer not to use any sort of sights or accessories, simply because they prefer the pure “stick and string” experience. However, even if a riser isn’t drilled for these accessories, you can still add a simple peep sight (which can be attached to the string of any bow), or a glue-on arrow rest.

#6: What Arrows Should I Get?

Since the subject of arrow selection is quite subjective, the most important element to consider is to get the correct length arrow. There is of course much more to choosing the best arrows for your recurve bow than this. You could analyze fletching length and materials, different nock points, arrow weight, materials, diameter, etc.

#7: What Other Accessories Do I Need To Get Started?

You will need to get a few extra accessories, in addition to your bow, before you can start shooting. Here are some of the things needed to get started and what is optional,

Need:

- Bow Stringer
- Arrows
- Nocking Points
- Glove or Finger Tabs
- Quiver

Optional:

- Bow String Wax
- Targets
- Arm Guard
- Sight
- Arrow Rest
- String Whisker Silencers

Summary

Here is a recap of how to choose a recurve bow:

- Choose the draw weight according to your body type, and make sure that you go for at least 40 lbs. draw weight if you want to hunt.
- For target practice, any draw weight will do.
- Decide whether you want a Take-down bow or a one-piece based on the information provided above.
- Make sure that the weight of the actual bow is no more than 3.4 pounds for starters.
- Get a bow that is at least twice as long as your draw length.
- Decide if you need a bow that is drilled for extra attachments such as a bow sight.