



# **Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures**

## **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Risk Assessment:**

### **Air Rifles**

**Document ID:** SOP-BOA-RIFLE-001.1

**Effective Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Review Date:** February 2027

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#### **1.0 Purpose**

To outline the standardized, safe, and progressive procedure for conducting an Air Rifle shooting session at Beaundesert Outdoor Adventures. This ensures a high-quality instructional experience while maintaining paramount safety standards in line with National Small-bore Rifle Association (NSRA) guidance and UK Firearms law.

#### **2.0 Scope**

This SOP applies to all instructors (NSRA qualified) and participants engaging in air rifle activities.

- **Instructor Requirement:** The Lead Instructor must be **over 21 years of age** to supervise participants under 18.

#### **3.0 Location & Ratios**

##### **3.1 Location**

The activity will only take place at the designated Covered Rifle Range – Number 4 – Walled Garden.

- **Access:** (Archery) Range 4 – Designated Air Rifles Range
- **Signage:** The warning notice **“SHOOTING IN PROGRESS, STRICTLY NO ADMITTANCE”** must be displayed on the Range before the session begins.

##### **3.2 Ratios**

- **Standard Ratio:** 1:12 (One Instructor to twelve participants).
- **Maximum Ratio:** 1:15. This may only be increased if the session time is extended to 1.5 hours to ensure quality and safety.





## 4.0 Equipment

- **Rifles:** .177 Air Rifles (sub-12ft/lb limit).
- **Ammunition:** .177 Lead Pellets (Flat head recommended for paper targets).
- **Eye Protection (PPE):** Safety goggles/glasses are **mandatory** for all participants (including those waiting) at all times while the activity is in progress.
- **Targets:** Paper targets or knock-down targets securely mounted in the catchers.
- **Cleaning:** Oily cloths for wiping down guns post-session.

## 5.0 Safety Briefing & Range Rules

*Mandatory briefing before any equipment is handled.*

1. **Legal Declaration (Section 21):** The instructor must ensure all participants are eligible to shoot. "It is an offence for a person prohibited by Section 21 of the Firearms Act 1968 to have a firearm or ammunition in their possession."

(Generally, applies to those with previous custodial sentences).

2. **Instructor Authority:** The instructor is in charge. Their word is final.
3. **Range Commands:**
  - **"Get Ready":** Shooters approach the bench.
  - **"Commence Firing":** Only given when the Range Officer is satisfied it is safe.
  - **"STOP":** (Or "STOP, STOP, STOP"). All shooting ceases immediately. Rifles placed down. Step back from the bench.
  - **"Make Safe":** Discharge any loaded pellets into the backstop (do not dry fire) and place rifle on bench.
4. **Handling:**
  - Rifles must *always* point downrange toward the target.
  - Never "dry fire" the rifle (firing without a pellet) as this damages the mechanism.
  - Rifles are only loaded at the firing point.
5. **Movement:** No running. Remain behind the waiting line until instructed.
6. **Hair & Clothing:** Long hair must be tied back. No baggy coats, scarves, caps, or long earrings.

## 6.0 Session Procedure

### 6.1 Pre-Session Checks (Instructor)

- **Keys & Ammo:** Collect gun cabinet keys & first Aid Kit from Activity Hut and designated pellet tin(s) from separate Safe in the Hut.
- **Transporting Equipment:** Children can help carry the extra items (Paper targets, Glasses) but instructor **MUST** transport the guns and pellets in carrying bags.
- **Infrastructure:** Ensure the backstop (steel plate) is secure. Check the floor is clear of trip hazards.
- **Hygiene:** Ensure hand washing facilities are available nearby (essential for lead safety).





## 6.2 Introduction & Setup

1. **Welcome & Section 21:** Confirm no participants are prohibited persons. Ensure parental consent is in place for under-18s.
2. **PPE:** Issue Eye Protection to everyone.
3. **Briefing:** Explain the range layout, the "Waiting area," and the "Firing Line."
4. **Laying out the equipment:** Ensure the barrels of the rifles are broken and the safety flags / markers are in the barrels when not in use to ensure they are empty.

## 6.3 Phase 1: Instruction (Bench Rest)

- Note: Early parts of the session are conducted from the bench to ensure stability and safety.
1. **Demonstration:** Instructor demonstrates the loading and firing cycle using the **IDEAS** model (Introduction, Demonstration, Explanation, Activity, Summary).
  2. **First Detail:** Max **3 participants** approach the firing point.
  3. **Position:** Seated or supported bench rest.
  4. **Firing:** Participants fire their first detail under close supervision.
  5. **When finished the detail:** break the barrel and reinsert the safety flag / marker into the barrel before leaving the rifle on the bench.
  6. **Target Change:** On the command "**Change Targets,**" shooters wait for the "All Clear" to move forward to manually collect targets and replace paper targets / reset metal drop down targets.

## 6.4 Phase 2: Guided Shooting & Progression

- Once competency is shown, the instructor may allow continuous details.
- **Standing Shots:** Only competent groups/individuals should be invited to shoot from a standing, unsupported position.
- **Troubleshooting:** If a pellet gets stuck or a gun malfunctions, the participant must raise their hand. They must not turn around with the gun.

## 6.5 Phase 3: Scoring

- Introduce scoring elements (e.g., grouping size or numeric score on rings).
- **Note:** Keep pellets separate from participants when they are not at the firing point to prevent ingestion or loss.

## 6.6 Phase 4: Coaching

- **Introduce coaching elements** – breathing control, trigger pressure, eye dominance etc.
- **Shooting with feedback** – Try to improve the participants through coaching points

## 6.7 Phase 5: Games

- **Suitable age-appropriate games and challenges**





## 7.0 Session Conclusion

1. **Make Safe:** Ensure all rifles are discharged and empty. Re-insert the safety flags / markers.
2. **Cleaning: All guns are to be wiped over with an oiled cloth** to prevent rusting before storage.
3. **Hygiene:** Instruct all participants to **wash their hands** thoroughly to remove lead residue.
4. **Storage:**
  - o Rifles returned in bags to the metal cabinet and locked.
  - o Pellets returned to the secure store (stored separately from guns).

## 8.0 Emergency Procedure

1. **Command:** “STOP” (or “STOP, STOP, STOP”).
2. **Action:** All rifles placed on the bench pointing downrange. Participants step back behind the waiting line.
3. **Injury:** Administer First Aid as qualified. Contact Duty Manager. Follow Site Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

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## 9.0 Risk Assessment

Activity: Air Rifles

Review Date: January 2027

Assessment by: Martin Kirby - Operations Manager

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
<b>Being shot by a pellet</b>	Participants, Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSRA qualified/approved instructor (Age 21+) leading the session.</li> <li>• Strict adherence to Range Commands (STOP, Commence Firing).</li> <li>• Rifles only loaded at the firing point.</li> <li>• Barrels checked clear before anyone goes downrange (if applicable).</li> <li>• Max 3 shooters at once.</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>



What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	Controls: What are you doing to control hazards?	Risk Rating (with controls)
<b>Eye Injury (Ricochets)</b>	Participants, Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safety Goggles are mandatory</b> for all persons on the range.</li> <li>• Backstop designed to absorb energy (angled steel/sand).</li> <li>• Walls clad/softened to prevent side ricochets.</li> <li>• Only lead pellets used (they deform on impact).</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>
<b>Lead Poisoning</b>	Participants, Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hygiene:</b> Participants must wash hands after the session.</li> <li>• <b>No food or drink</b> allowed in the range.</li> <li>• Instructor wipes down surfaces/guns.</li> <li>• Regular cleaning of the range floor (using appropriate methods to avoid raising dust).</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>
<b>Prohibited Persons (Legal)</b>	Beaundesert Centre, Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Section 21 Declaration:</b> All participants must be cleared (via consent form or verbal declaration) that they are not prohibited by law from possessing a firearm.</li> <li>• Rifles stored securely and keys strictly controlled.</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>
<b>Air Quality</b>	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ventilation/Extraction fans must be used during the session to remove airborne lead dust/particulates.</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>
<b>Slips, Trips &amp; Falls</b>	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Floor checks pre-session.</li> <li>• Clear waiting area defined behind the firing point.</li> <li>• Instructor vigilance regarding trip hazards (e.g., bags).</li> </ul>	<b>Tolerable</b>
<b>Transport/Storage</b>	Public, Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rifles transported in sleeves/cases if moved outside the range.</li> <li>• Rifles and ammunition stored separately.</li> <li>• Keys signed out/in, to specific staff.</li> </ul>	<b>Trivial</b>



## 11.0 Document Control & Review History

### Document Creation

Action	Name / Role	Date
<b>Created By</b>	Martin Kirby - Operations Manager	December 2025
<b>Approved By</b>	Martin Kirby, Luke Chance & Oliver Tombs (OM/SI/AOM)	January 2026

### Review Log

This document is to be reviewed annually or following any significant incident or change to the activity.

Date of Review	Reviewed By	Comments / Changes Made	Next Review Due
January 2026	MKirby / OTombs / LChance	Document Created and Effective (V1.0). Aligned with Archery format. Added mandatory Ear Defenders & Section 21 checks.	January 2027
24 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	M. Kirby	Rifles Range location moved to outdoor range (Archery Range 4) due to issue with building. Requirement for ear defenders removed due to open area (Outdoors) and ventilation considerations removed due to being outdoors.	Feb 2027

