Beaudesert Outdoor Adventures

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) & Risk Assessment:
Soft Axe Throwing

Document ID: SOP-BOA-SOFTAXE-001

Effective Date: 5th January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

1.0 Purpose

To outline the standardized and safe procedure for conducting a Soft Axe Throwing session. This activity is designed as a fun, accessible introduction to throwing sports, suitable for younger age groups or indoor environments where steel axes are not appropriate.

2.0 Scope

This SOP applies to all instructors and participants engaging in Soft Tomahawk activities.

- **Instructor Requirement:** Instructors must be briefed on the specific setup and safety rules of this mobile activity but do not require the full "Axe Throwing" assessment.

3.0 Location & Ratios

3.1 Location

This is a Mobile Activity that can be set up in various locations:

- **Outdoor Ranges:** Can be set up on the main Axe Throwing range (using separate targets) or other suitable flat grass areas.
- **Indoor Locations (Stables & Warren):**
  - **Dimensions:** These buildings are approx. 6-7m wide x 15m long.
  - **Access Control:** Doors at **both ends** must be managed. The door behind the targets must be **locked** or physically blocked to prevent entry during the session.
  - **Kitchen Areas:** Participants must be kept away from the kitchen areas at the end of the buildings during activity.

3.2 Ratios

- **Standard Ratio:** 1:12 (One Instructor to twelve participants).
- **Maximum Ratio:** 1:15 (Extended session).

4.0 Equipment

- **Throwing Equipment:**
  - Plastic Axes with foam edges.
  - Plastic Throwing Darts (if available).
- **Targets:**
  - "Stickle Brick" type bristled targets mounted on specific stands.
- **Floor Markers:** Cones or throw-down lines to mark the throwing line.

5.0 Safety Briefing & Range Rules

Mandatory briefing before any equipment is handled.

1. **Instructor Authority:** The instructor is in charge.
2. **Range Commands:**
   - **"Throw When Ready":** Only throw when commanded.
   - **"STOP":** All throwing ceases immediately.
   - **"Collect":** Walk forward to retrieve axes/darts only when instructed.
3. **Handling:**
   - Do not throw axes at people or walls.
   - Although "Soft," they can still cause injury if thrown with excessive force at close range.
4. **Movement:**
   - Walk, do not run.
   - **Indoors:** Be aware of the confined space and noise levels.

6.0 Session Procedure

6.1 Pre-Session Checks (Instructor)

- **Location (Indoors):**
  - Check that **both** doors (Stables/Warren) are secure. The door behind the target area **must be locked**.
  - Ensure the firing line is at least 3-4 meters from the targets.
  - Ensure the "Waiting Area" is clear of the kitchen/equipment.

- **Location (Outdoors):**
  - Ensure the range is set up on flat ground where possible.
  - Check wind conditions (foam axes are light and affected by wind).
- **Equipment:** Check targets are stable on their stands. Check plastic axes for cracks or missing foam.

6.2 Introduction & Setup

1. **Welcome:** Explain the activity is a fun version of axe throwing.
2. **Safety:** Brief the "Stop" and "Collect" commands.
3. **Technique:**
   - Hold the handle near the bottom.
   - Bring arm up past the ear.
   - Throw forward with a release point aiming at the target.

6.3 Activity Phases

- **Phase 1: Practice:** Allow participants to get used to the weight (very light compared to real axes).
- **Phase 2: Scoring:**
  - *Stickle Brick Target:* Use the rings for points (e.g., Bullseye = 5).
  - *Darts vs. Axes:* If using darts, explain the different throwing style (dart style vs. axe swing).
- **Phase 3: Games:**
  - *Around the World:* Hit different colours/rings in order.
  - *Team Relay:* First team to stick 10 axes wins.

7.0 Session Conclusion

1. **Pack Down:**
   - **Indoors:** Ensure the room is returned to its original state. Unlock doors if required.
   - **Mobile:** Return all targets and axes to the designated storage area (do not leave them in the Stables/Warren).
2. **Review:** Debrief the group.

8.0 Emergency Procedure

1. **Command:** "STOP".
2. **Action:** All equipment grounded.
3. **Injury:** Administer First Aid. Contact Duty Manager.

9.0 Risk Assessment

Activity: Soft Tomahawks

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)
Hit by thrown object	Participants, Instructor	• **Equipment:** Axes are plastic with foam edges (low impact injury risk). • **Control:** Strict "Collect" procedure to prevent people walking in front of throwers. • **Spacing:** Targets spaced adequately to prevent cross-fire.	**Trivial**
Unauthorized Entry (Indoors)	Non-participants	• **Door Control:** In Stables/Warren, the door **behind the targets** must be locked/barricaded to prevent someone walking in during throwing.	**Trivial**
Slips, Trips & Falls	Participants	• **Indoors:** Ensure floor is clear of bags/coats (use waiting area). • **Outdoors:** Check grass for uneven ground.	**Tolerable**
Equipment Failure	Participants	• Check plastic handles for sharp cracks/snaps (plastic can shatter if stepped on). • Remove broken items immediately.	**Trivial**
Damage to Buildings	Infrastructure	• Targets placed away from windows/kitchen units in Stables/Warren. • Soft axes generally do not damage walls, but care should be taken.	**Trivial**

10.0 Staff Acknowledgment

I, the undersigned, confirm that I am a designated Instructor for Beaudesert Outdoor Adventures. I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to all procedures and safety rules outlined in this SOP (SOP-BOA-SOFTAXE-001) and Risk Assessment.

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11.0 Document Control & Review History

Document Creation

Action	Name / Role	Date
Created By	Martin Kirby – Operations Manager	December 2025
Approved By	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 (V1.0). Specific controls for Stables/Warren doors added.	January 2027