

# Crystal Gauvin Uses This 3-Step Method for Goal Setting

January 27, 2016 by [Crystal Gauvin](#)

Crystal competing at the 2015 Archery World Cup. Photo: World Archery

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*Crystal Gauvin quit her full time job in 2013 to become a professional archer, and succeeded in making the U.S. Archery Team, World Cup team, and clinching World Championships medals – within less than three years. We asked her to share her goal-setting secrets, and here they are!*

January is when most people reflect on the past year, make resolutions, and strive to improve some aspect of their lives. For me, those reflections always include archery; I take time to reflect on the past season and set goals for the next.

You can set goals using nearly any method, but the method you choose must push you while setting attainable goals. Here is how I push myself to keep improving.

## Dream Goal

Each year I sit down and determine my No. 1 goal in the sport. This is not something that can usually be achieved in one season or year; it's literally a long-term, high stakes goal, and it may be dependent on your archery skills improving. For example, when I started in the sport, my goal was to win the annual winter New England tournament, then make the [U.S. Archery Team](#). Currently my goal is to be the world's top-ranked archer.

Meanwhile, beginners might want to set a goal of shooting more often, or becoming more accurate when you practice...or even trying a local competition. Your dream goal is important. It frames up all of your other goals, and provides something to think about when your motivation is waning. Many people put pictures of a goal where they will regularly see it. They also write it in their training journal, or dream about it while lying in bed each night. Ultimately, this goal must be important to you, and big enough to carry you through days when you're frustrated or feeling lazy.



It's okay to dream big! The important thing is to own your goal. Photo: World Archery

## Midrange Goals

I work backward from my No. 1 goal, so my goals line up in sync. After determining my dream goal, I consider which steps will get me there. From there, I set midrange goals. For example, to become the world's No. 1 archer, I need to compete in outdoor **World Cups**. The only way to do that is to rank in the top four in the United States. That means a good midrange goal is to make the U.S. World Cup team, requiring strong finishes at national tournaments. However, I took this a step further and said if I want to be No. 1 in the world, I should first shoot for No. 1 in the United States. That will guarantee me a spot on the World Cup team, and first choice at any other opportunities to attend other world ranking events that might pop up.

For someone who's new to archery, let's assume your midrange goal is to try 3D archery. If that's the case, you'll often do this by going to a "Sunday shoot" at your local club. A good midrange goal might be just trying your first 3D shoot, learning what the targets look like and how to judge yardage. Successfully completing that goal not only gives you confidence, but will help define future goals,

helping you to stay motivated. For me, midrange goals are the meat of goal setting. They're meant to be challenging but attainable if you keep pursuing them.



No matter which archery game you want to try, setting goals can help you succeed. Photo: Rob Patton

## Short-Term Goals

The final step in my process is to set short-term goals. This is where most people miss. They're so focused on the big picture that they forget to set quick, attainable goals to build confidence and mark the progress they're making.

Short-term goals for me might mean winning a tournament, but the best way to achieve that short-term goal is to ignore all other competitors and focus on my own performance, because I can't control how others train or how they compete. For example, one of my recent short-term goals was to shoot above 690 outdoors in a 72 arrow round, with a possible total score of 720 points. If I did that once, I knew I

could do it more consistently, which would build confidence, and set me up for making the World Cup team.

Score-based goals aren't the only short-term options. Process-based goals – goals that relate to how you shoot a bow – are great for the short term, too. For example, at least twice in my career I've struggled with knowing when I should “let down” the shot instead of releasing my arrow. Not letting down when I should can cause me to be less accurate and can cost valuable points. Therefore, at the next tournament, I set a process goal to let down at least half of the time I “should” let down. Obviously, my longer term goal was to make this 100 percent, but my short-term goal was to improve from never letting down.

Short-term goals can be even smaller. They could mean working on one aspect of your technique during one 15-minute segment of your next practice, or committing to shoot X number of arrows in the next week. Or maybe you could just take your first lesson, or listen to what your coach tells you without questioning the advice. Ultimately, short-term goals are baby steps. They're about things that help set you up to achieve your midrange or “dream” goals.



Improvement comes one arrow at a time, whether you're a beginner or a pro. Photo: Teresa Johnson



When setting goals, it's important to ...

- Write them down.
- Be specific and set a deadline.

This one is big. If you don't set a timeframe for the goal, it's easy to push it aside and forget its purpose. Setting a deadline instills urgency. Instead of just saying, "I want to be good at archery," you should say, "I will win a state archery title by the time I'm 18."

- Keep them positive.

Write your goals as positive statements. For example, write something like, "Keep a clean release," instead of, "Don't let my hand come away from my face."

- Regularly review and modify your goals.

This is one of the most important but often overlooked steps in setting goals. It's important to reflect often on your goals. Ask yourself if your motivations or primary goals changed. Are your midrange goals unattainable for the time specified? Be honest with yourself. If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, it's time to edit your goals.

Finally, some archers might ask, "Why set any goals?" I've heard this question before, and here is one of my favorite answers:

"The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score." — Bill Copeland

Ultimately, goals draw my road map. They show me where I'm going, they let me re-evaluate my ambitions at any time, and they inspire extra motivation when I might not feel like practicing.

Ready to set goals of your own? Start locally, [at a nearby archery store](#), where you can find out about lessons, equipment rental and more.