

# Arrows 101: How To Care For Your Fletchings

You've been shooting archery for a while and you're loving it. But the **arrows** you bought aren't brand-new anymore, and you're not sure if they need replacing.

If your arrows are looking a little rough, don't worry. An **archery shop** can easily replace all your arrow components, whether you need new points, nocks or fletching.

**Fletchings** have an important job: They stabilize the arrow in flight. Without them, arrows fly erratically. But fletchings don't last forever. As you practice and your shooting improves, your arrows will group more tightly. That causes fletchings to continually hit each other, which causes wear and tear. Similar wear occurs when you miss a target and the arrow passes through brush, grass, wood or other obstacles. Eventually, all fletching wears out and requires replacing.

Replacing fletching is much like replacing car tires, in that it varies by how much abuse they endure. Well-maintained arrows can last over a year, but if you shoot a lot they might need new fletching earlier. Don't worry: This is a natural part of shooting archery, and one that's easily remedied. An archery shop will assess your arrows and replace your fletchings, if needed. Best of all, replacing fletchings provides an opportunity to **personalize your arrows** with fun colors and patterns.

Here's how to tell if your arrows need new fletchings.

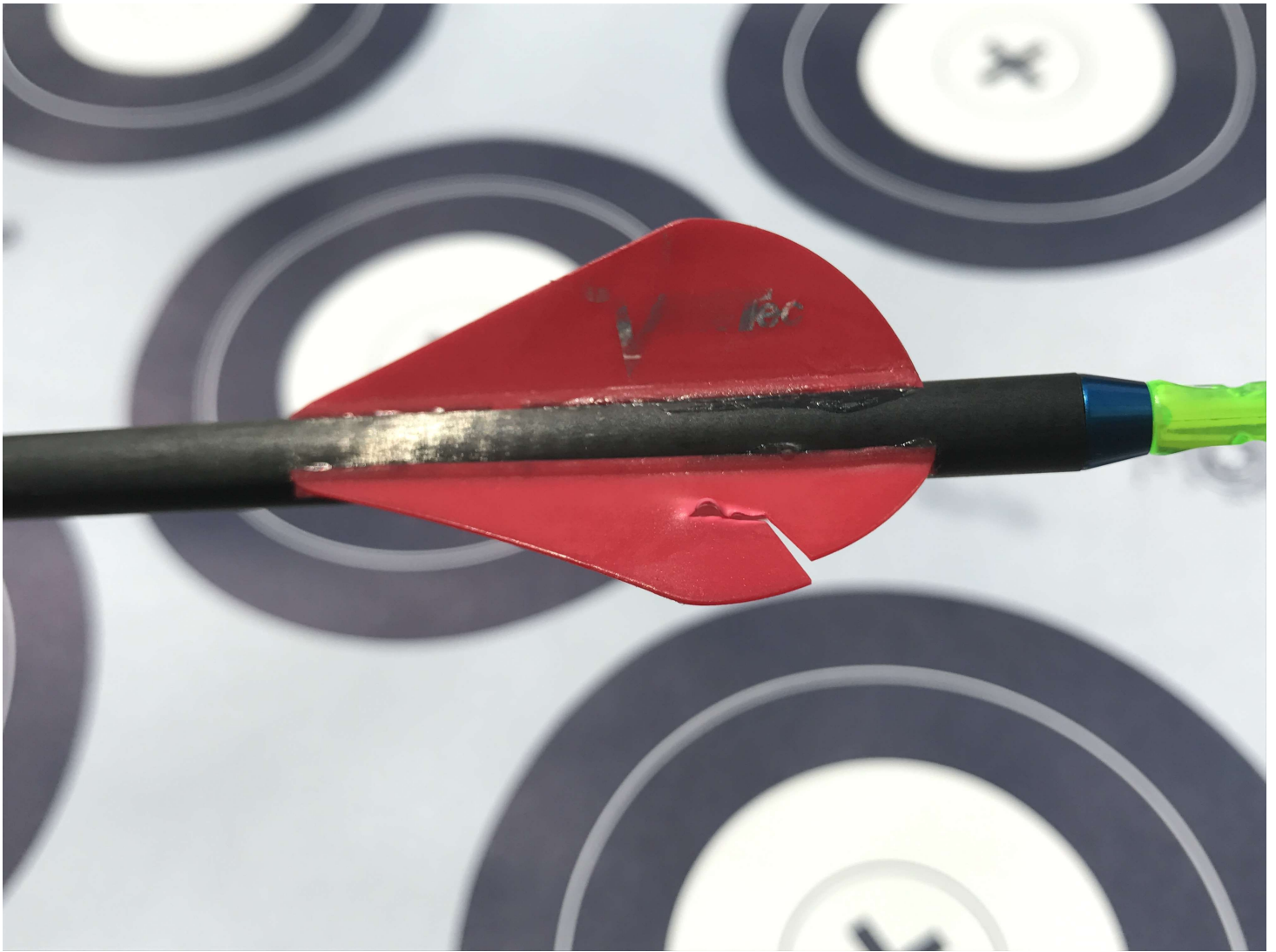
## LOOSE FLETCHING



Loose fletchings can cause drag on your arrow, which makes it fly and hit differently from other arrows. Set it aside and have an archery shop repair it. Photo Credit: Scott Einsmann

Loose fletching makes a fluttering noise when shot. When you inspect the arrow, you'll notice one end of the fletching has separated from the shaft. Loose fletching causes drag on your arrow, which makes it fly and hit differently from other arrows. Set it aside and have an archery shop repair it.

## **RIPPED FLETCHING**

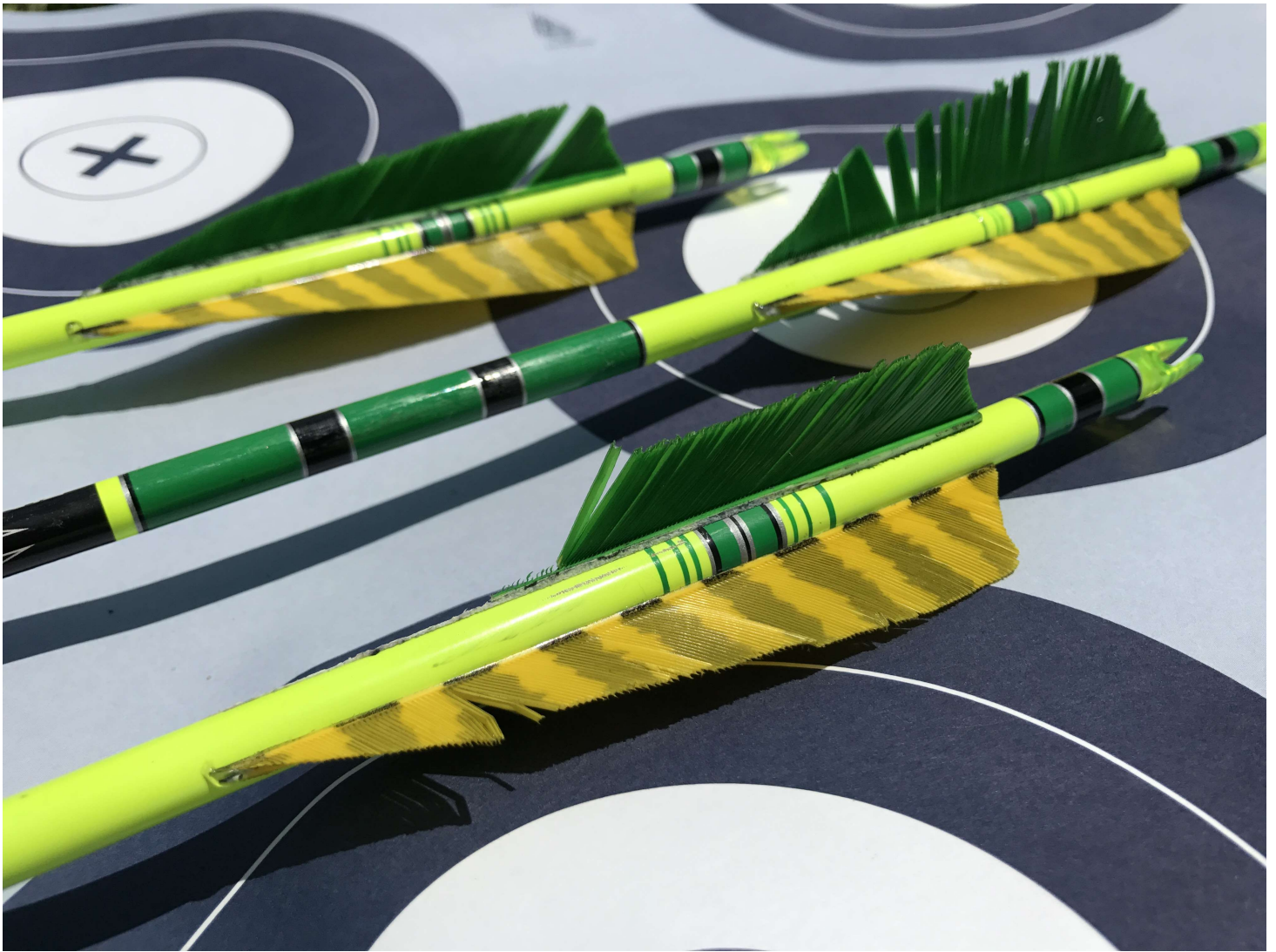


Ripped fletching makes a fluttering noise in flight because the loose section creates extra drag. If any of your fletchings get torn, set those arrows aside and have an archery shop repair them. Photo Credit: Scott Einsmann

When using plastic vanes for fletching, inspect them often for tears. Ripped fletching also makes a fluttering noise in flight as the loose section creates extra drag. If any of your fletchings get torn, set those arrows aside and have an archery shop repair them.

## **MISSING A SECTION**





Sometimes feather fletchings may get flat and crinkled, or sections may fall off during flight. Replace missing sections at an archery shop, or rejuvenate crinkled feathers with steam. Photo Credit: Scott Einsmann

**Feather fletchings** are authentic and beautiful. But after hundreds of shots, you might notice a section of missing feather. The arrow shoots fine if the missing section isn't too large, but you must replace it eventually. When in doubt ask the pros at your archery shop.

Feather fletching tip: If your feathers get flat or crinkled, rejuvenate them with steam. Simmer some water on the stove or use a steam iron to bring your feathers back to life. After a few minutes of steaming, they'll look new again.

## MISSING A FLETCH



Sometimes an entire fletching, maybe even two, comes off in extreme heat or when the arrow strikes something hard and breaks the bond between the glue and the arrow. Photo Credit: gohunt.com

Strong super-glues hold fletchings to the shaft, but sometimes an entire fletching comes off in extreme heat or when the arrow strikes something hard and breaks the bond. If an arrow is missing a fletching, you'll need to get it repaired.

Fletchings aren't delicate, but they need proper care and maintenance for optimal accuracy. Part of that maintenance is replacing damaged or worn-out fletchings. Your [local archery shop](#) can repair your arrows so you can keep shooting bull's-eyes.