

Making a Career Arrow

Revision: 1.0
Date: 3-Feb-2009



This document contains instructions for making a Cub Scout Career Arrow.

Contents. This document has an accompanying PPT file containing scale drawings of the ribbon portions as colored boxes (for use as a template) and XLS worksheet with calculations of thread colors and amounts necessary to make one or more arrows.

Materials you need.

1. Wooden arrow – preferably one hand-made with tied feathers and stone arrowhead.
2. Scissors
3. Craft glue – quick-dry works well
4. Your Scout's achievements and arrow points, etc, that you want to put on the arrow. It is suggested to edit the attached PPT and XLS and print out a scaled template .the 'working length' of the arrow in the picture is 19.5". Bear in mind - the picture shown is one Scout's achievements - your Scout may vary, so planning is essential!
5. If you wish to use any other colors/ideas – plan for appropriate materials.

The string used in the example here is DMC brand embroidery floss (8.7yd/spool)– with colors as called out in the diagrams below.



Scaled to 1/4" diameter for the arrow shaft

Arrow of Light Webelos

Bear Wolf Bobcat Tiger Religious

Swamp Fox Winter Camp

Family Camp Summer Camp Camping with the Cubmaster

Extra bars match color for each year (beyond 1st) attended

template

Alternative suggestions for Bear and Wolf

- Yellow # 444
- Red # 321
- Aqua # 800
- Orange # 720
- Dk. Purple # 550
- White (blanc)
- Brown # 801
- Green # 909
- Royal blue # 796
- Dark blue # 823
- Black # 310
- Light purple # 3837
- Gold # 783
- Silver # E168
- Gold # E3852
- Bronze # E3821

Construction Steps:

Planning and layout.

1. Plan out the achievements/events and colors to be used – these make ‘**ribbons**’ as shown above. Above is one example – but be creative according to your Scout’s Pack favorite activities.
2. Determine the ‘working length’ of the arrow. This will determine how many achievements will reasonably fit onto the arrow. See the example below.



3. Construct the template appropriate to the arrow from the PPT file.
4. Print a copy of the template and cut/paste the segments together with the “Arrow of Light” coming at the point end of the arrow. Typically, the Scout ‘grows’ from feather-to-point on the arrow, but as in the example shown, camps and events are ordered at your discretion. Be sure to keep the spacing such that the bands appear evenly distributed.
5. Determine how many times around the arrow the wide bands require to reach the length equal to the template. Be sure to account for some extra length if tying on the thread versus gluing it.

6. Measure the length of thread required for this number of rotations and the tightness that you're planning on wrapping – looser wrapping requires lower length of string, but also provides a different 'look' to the arrow.
7. Repeat the above two steps for the short bands.
8. Modify the XLS file and record these thread lengths in the XLS spreadsheet for the colors and numbers of each band that you're using. This will then provide the amount of thread to purchase, as well as you can plan for multiple equivalent arrows if working as a Den with similar Scout achievements.

Thread wrapping.

Note- it is easiest to start from the feather end of the arrow and work toward the tip in a linear fashion.

9. Tape the paper template to a working surface.
10. Mark on the arrow with pencil where the 'back' of the arrow will be, such that all threads can have their beginning and end on the back, or the tie-off can be placed to the back. For a 3-feather arrow, split the difference between two feathers.

Picture: Make pencil marks on the arrow at AQUA lines for the example ribbon shown at right.



11. Mark with pencil on the back of the arrow where the first ribbon bands start and end. Be sure to work from the feather end of the arrow.
12. Cut the first band (narrow) thread to length, typically ~ 6".
13. Glue one end to the 'back' of the arrow, at the marked end of the band.
14. Apply a short 'line' of glue on the back end of the arrow between pencil marks.
15. Pick one direction to wrap the thread, and start wrapping the thread around the arrow, making sure between successive wraps to work 'down' the arrow toward the 'end' of the band.
16. When you near either the end of the thread or end of the band (pencil mark), determine where to cut the thread such that it will end on the 'back' of the arrow. Cut the thread to this length and glue this end down. You should now have one complete small band.
17. Continue the above method for the wide portion of the first ribbon, making sure to use a longer section of thread (~18" typical).
18. Continue the process for all the other ribbons, making sure to keep the spacing even as you work down the arrow.

NOTE – rather than gluing the thread ends, you may also choose to tie on the threads.

Keep in mind that the Career Arrow is meant to collect *your* Scout's achievements – so make it creative and their own, so as to emphasize Scouting events and achievements that were most important to them.