

Kyudo – Measuring a Ya

Kyudo, or Zen Archery, is a Japanese martial art. Kyudo uses a yumi, or bow, to shoot a ya or arrow.

A ya can be fletched, that is, have feathers, or not. For indoor shooting, at close range, a non-fletched ya is used. For outdoor shooting, a fletched ya must be used.

The ya must be long enough for your reach, or draw length.

WARNING: Shooting with a ya that is too short for you is dangerous. If you overdraw your ya, the tip can catch on the body of the yumi and break on release of the shot, harming you, the archer.

PREPARATION:

- Do NOT wear your kake, or glove, when measuring the ya.
- Select a ya that looks like an appropriate length from the ya storage box. If you think the ya you have selected is too short, put it back and select a longer ya.
- Check that the ya has both a tip and a nock. Make sure they are each securely fastened to the ya body.
- Make sure you have plenty of room around you when measuring the ya.
- You must be mindful and focused, DO NOT be talking to someone else when measuring the ya.

Instructions for measuring a ya:

1. Place the tip, the sharp point, of the ya at the middle of your chest, hold with your left hand and lay the ya along your extended right arm and hand. See Figure 1.
2. With your right arm extended, grasp the ya with your right thumb to hold the ya. The ya still lays along the line of your fingers.

3. Release the tip of the ya from your chest and bend your right arm at the elbow to point your right fingers up, still holding the ya. See Figure 2.
4. Reach over with your left hand and place on the ya, at a right angle to the ya, the index, middle and ring fingers of your left hand. Place them at the end of your right hand fingers. See Figure 3.
5. Note where your left hand index finger is on the ya.
6. If your left hand index finger is not on the ya because it is beyond the end of the ya, that ya is too short for you. If the ya extends beyond your left hand index finger, the ya is long enough for you and you may use it for shooting.
7. Place the ya with your selected yumi for retrieval later for shooting.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3