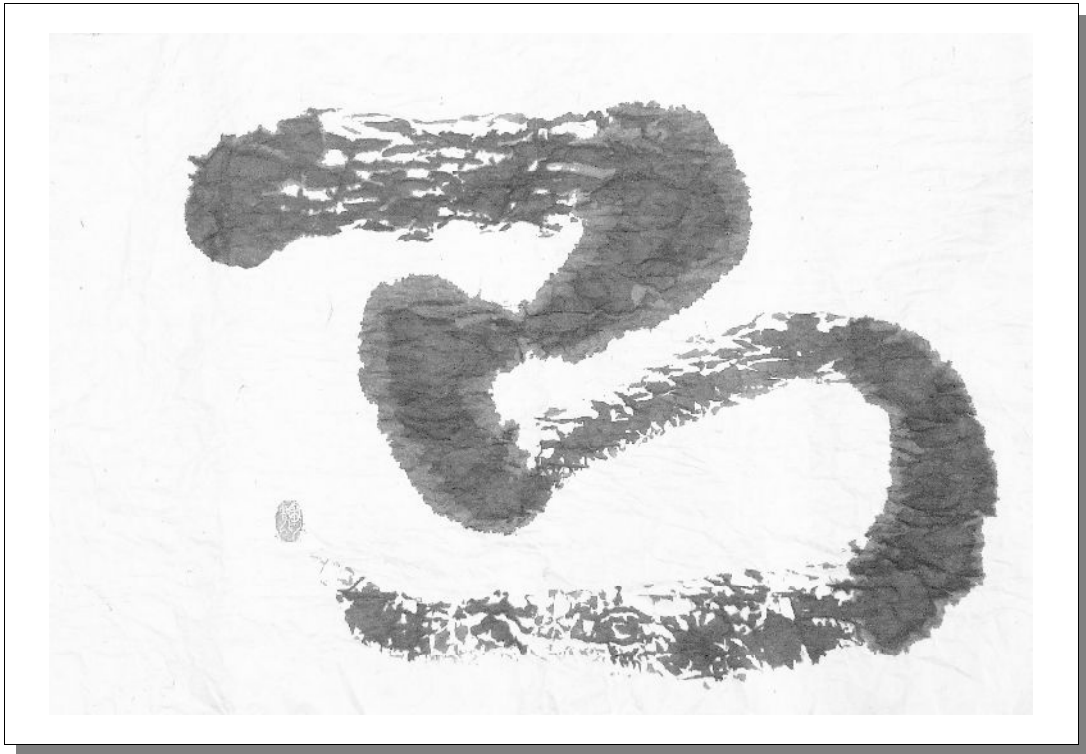


How to Take Care of a Bamboo Bow

Please read carefully before using



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How to String a Bow

Thank you for purchasing our bamboo bow. The bamboo bow you bought has been kept strung long enough and conditioned. As you may know, the bamboo bow is made from natural materials, such as Madake and Haze wood, so that each bow has its own distinct personality. Therefore, you need to look after each bow in different way. A new bamboo bow, especially, needs special attention; otherwise, it may be deformed or broken.

In order to assure that the bamboo bow matures into a good bow requires the archer's cooperation. We summarize the basics of care here. Please "grow" the bow into a better bow by referring to the following:

Points When Purchasing a Bamboo Bow

- When you buy a new bamboo bow you should choose one a little heavier than your desired strength.
- Until the bow becomes accustomed to the full-drawn shape, you need to gradually extend the draw length in increments by doing the following:
 1. Draw the bow string without an arrow, but do not release
 2. Do Makiwara shooting with an arrow
- After a week to 10 days you will be accustomed to the drawing strength. Then move to target shooting.
- Gradually increase the number of daily shootings.

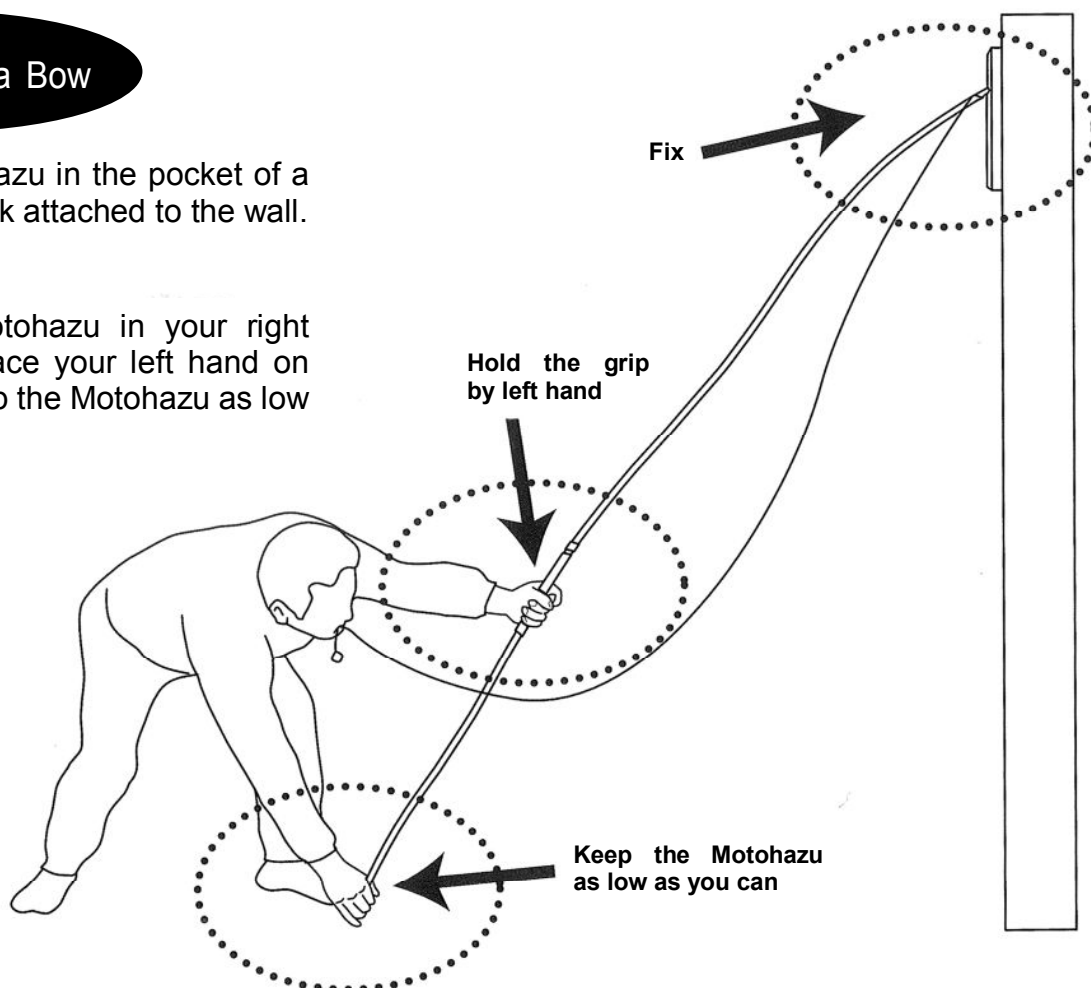
How to String a Bow

1

Set the Urahazu in the pocket of a stringing block attached to the wall.

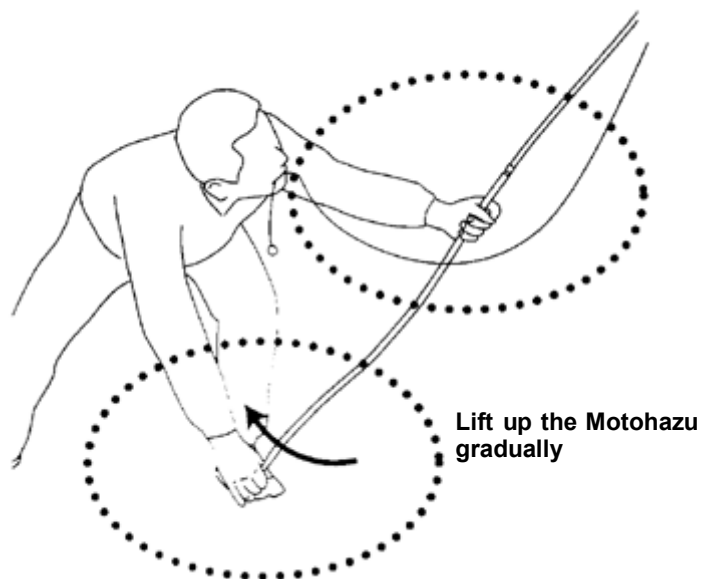
2

Hold the Motohazu in your right hand and place your left hand on the grip. Keep the Motohazu as low as you can.



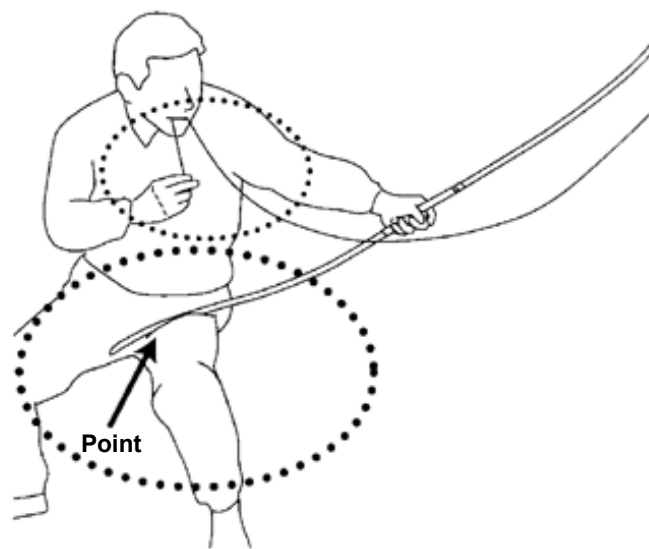
3

Straighten your left hand, using it as a brace, and lift up the Motohazu gently and carefully. Make sure to hold the bow so it does not invert.



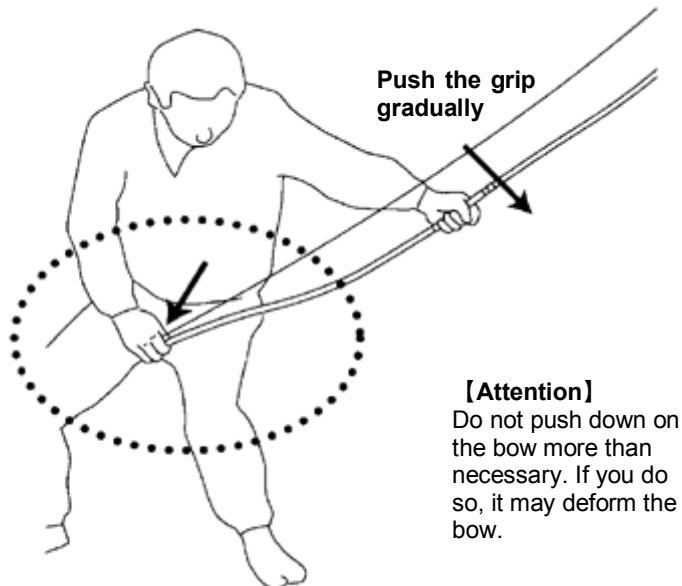
4

Place the Hikkakebushi, located above the Shimosekiita, on the base of your thigh firmly and prepare to string.



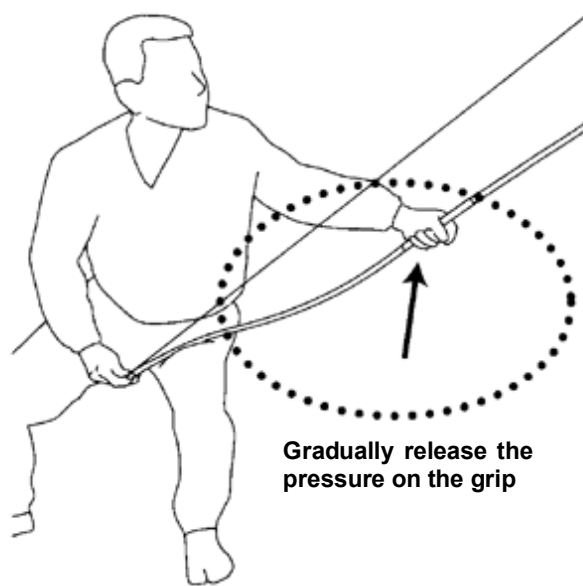
5

Push down the bow by leaning down on the grip just enough to place the lower string loop on the base of the Motohazu.



6

As you place the knot of the string loop at the center of the Motohazu, gradually release the pressure on the grip.



7

Once the bow is strung, check the Kyuha, the shape and string alignment of the bow.

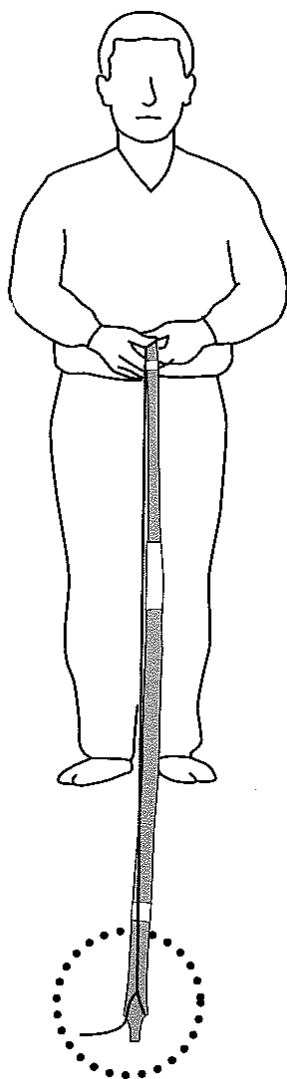
Points When Stringing the bow

- Please be careful to string the bow by lifting up the Motohazu gradually; not by pushing down on the grip.
- When you need to string a bow that has an excessive Urazori, you should tie the string and the bow with a cord at the Kiritsumedo of the Kamisekiita. That will keep the string from inverting.
- When stringing, do not push down the bow more than necessary. If you do so, it causes the bow to deform.

How to Take Care of a Bamboo Bow

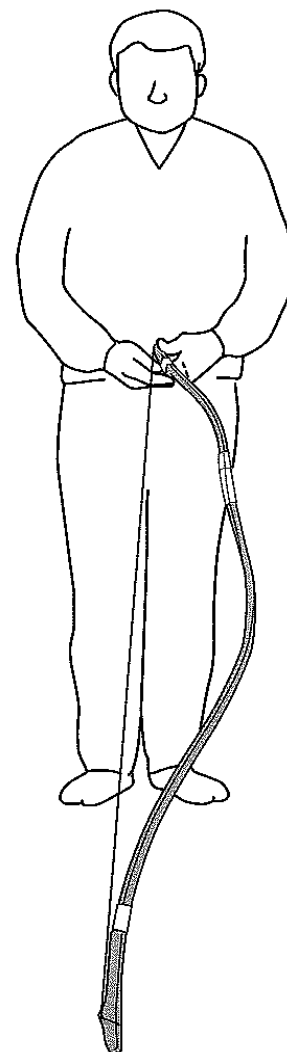
Tsuru Kakari (The string alignment)

Hold the Motohazu and lay the Urahazu on the ground. Place it in front of the center of the body (at the navel). Look down the line of the string. When the string lies to the right of center at the grip, it is the proper shape.



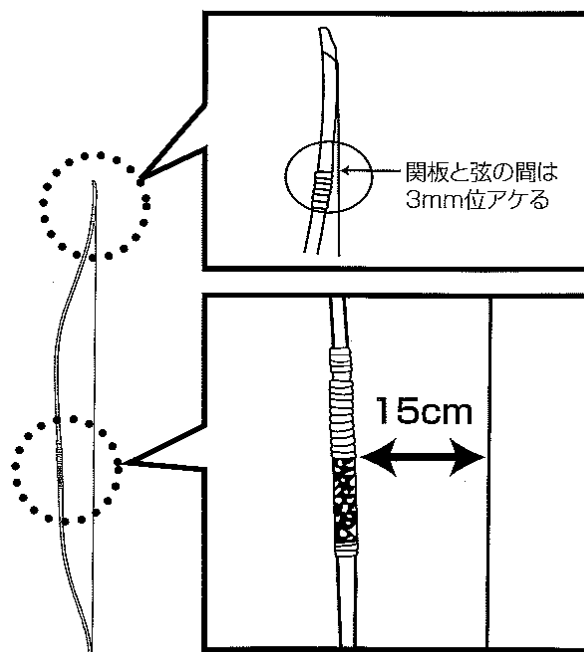
Yumi no Hariqao (The shape of the bow)

It is said that a good bow shape is when an imaginary line connecting the Shimonari with Uwanari is parallel to the string as you look down the bow from the side. When using the bamboo bow, the Shitanari tends to be strong. You should always check the string alignment and the balance between the Shimonari and Uwanari when strung. It is good idea to trace the shape of the new bow and refer to it as the bow matures.



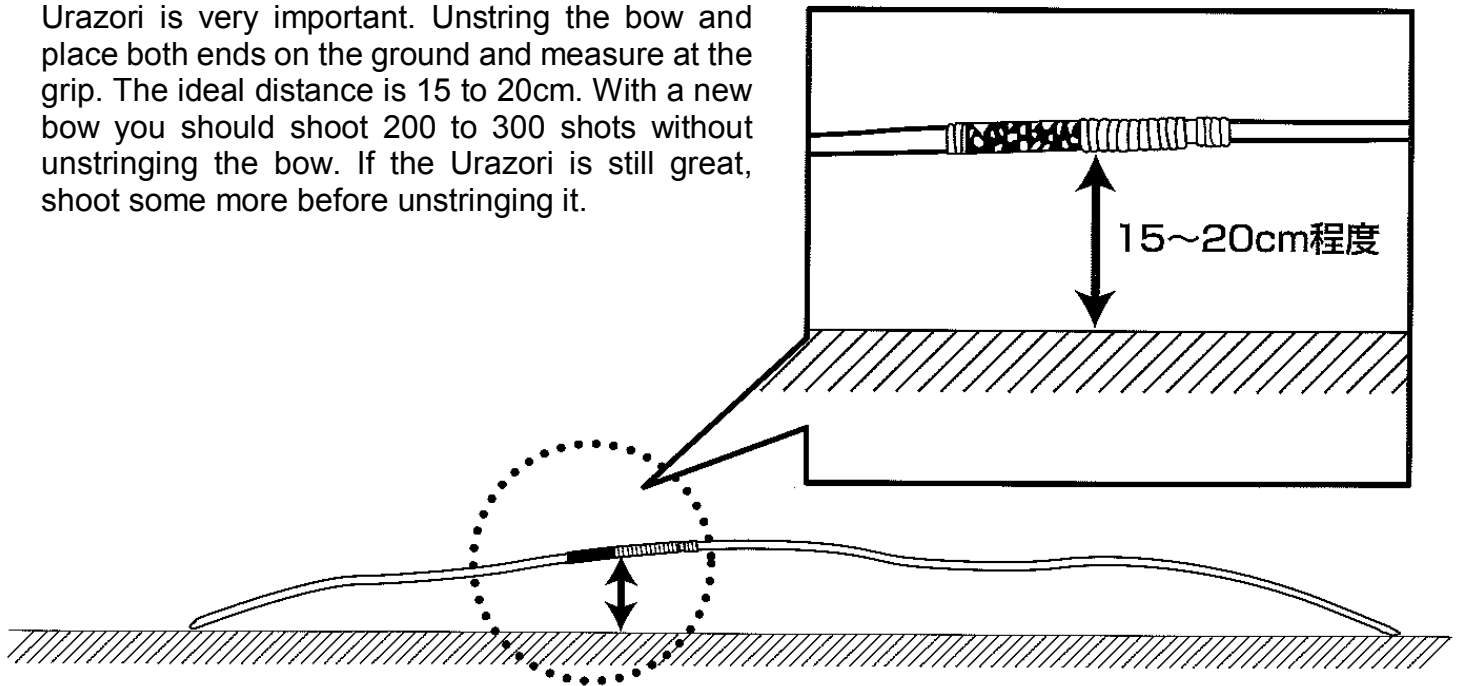
Kyuha

Throughout making of the bamboo bow, the string height is kept at 15cm. In particular, when it is a new bow, you need to pay attention on the Kyuha. When you do shadowing, drawing the bowstring without an arrow, Makiwara practice and shooting toward the target, beware that the Kyuha does not become less than 15cm. If you use the bow with a low Kyuha it will not only gain the habit of twisting but also cause the bow to invert and that can lead to breaking it.



How to Maintain the Height of Urazori

Urazori is very important. Unstring the bow and place both ends on the ground and measure at the grip. The ideal distance is 15 to 20cm. With a new bow you should shoot 200 to 300 shots without unstringing the bow. If the Urazori is still great, shoot some more before unstringing it.



Nibe Yumi

A Nibe Yumi is a bow that uses an adhesive called “nibe” which is made by slicing deer skin and boiling it for two days. It is the traditional technique and creates a high quality bow. In addition, the longer a bamboo bow is dried the more valuable it is. The best characteristic of the Nibe Yumi is that it provides a soft feeling of the draw from Daisan to Kai. Indeed, it has a special recovery power so that the Urazori can be maintained over the long term.

Points on Use and Maintenance

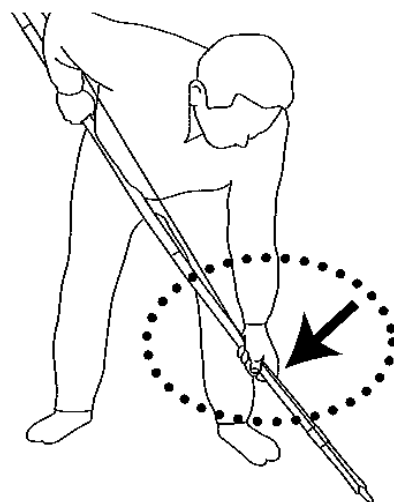
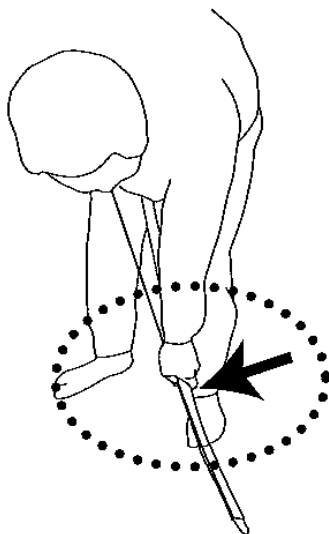
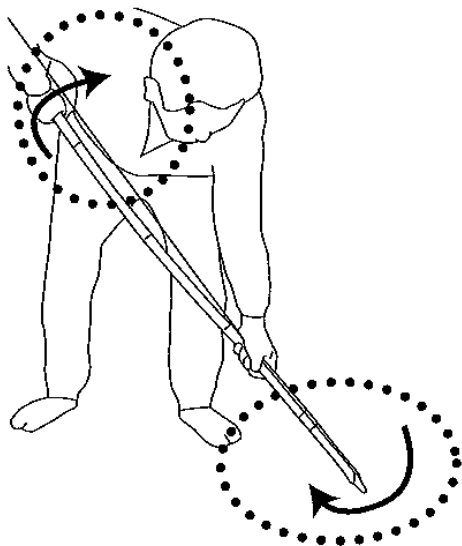
- 1) Due to the characteristic of the bonding agents, the bow strength will change in cold and hot environments. Therefore, you should use one for fall and winter and another for spring and summer.
- 2) Do not keep the bow in a place of high temperatures, such as inside a car.
- 3) You should keep the Nibe Yumi in a place of low humidity due to the fact that it absorbs moisture.
- 4) Do not expose it to direct sunlight.
- 5) Keep it away from insects.

How to Correct the Bow Shape

As you use the bow, it may develop several behaviors. The following are the major ways of correcting the bow.

In the Case of the Himezori Being Iriki

Put the Urahazu on the ground; make sure to hold the Himezori with the string by the left hand and the grip by the right hand. Twist both hands gradually as if you are wringing a towel. Furthermore, the bow can be corrected by twisting the bow gently clockwise several times by the left hand. You can more safely push the bow by resting the back of the hand on the left leg.



In the Case of the Himezori Being Deki

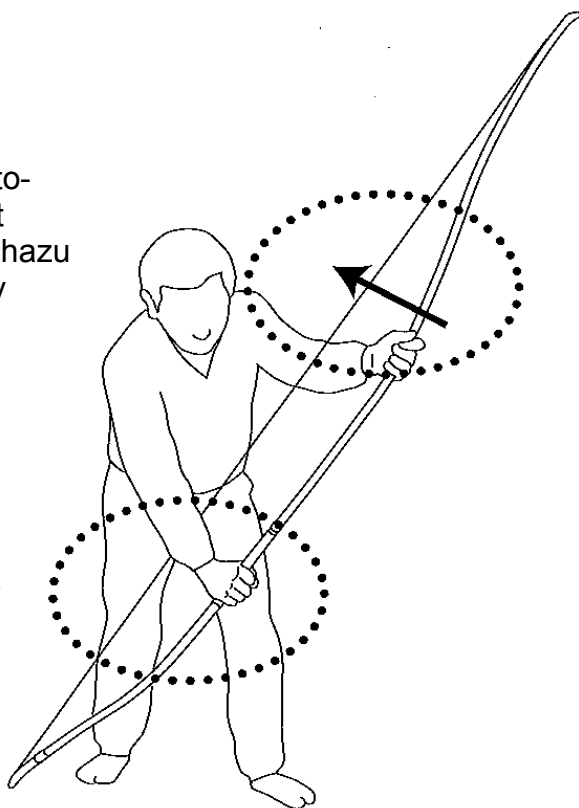
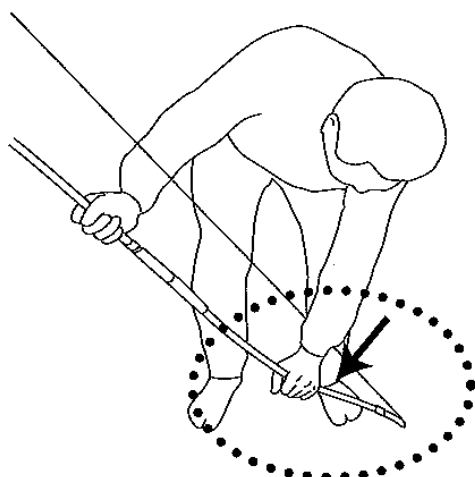
Do the opposite way for Iriki.

[Attention]

If you push too much, it may cause the bow to break.

When the Lower Part Is Strong

Do not push the part that is most curved. Instead push the Otokoshibushi or the Kozoribushi. Or, grip the Toriuchi by the left hand and grasp the grip by the right hand. Then put the Motohazu on the ground and push the bow with the right hand gradually against the ground.



[Attention]

If you think you cannot do it by yourself ask the bow maker or the shop where you bought it.

A Bamboo Bow with Carbon

High technology brought into the tradition

A bamboo bow with carbon is a bow that delivers easy handling and less deformation while maintaining the quality of the bamboo bow.

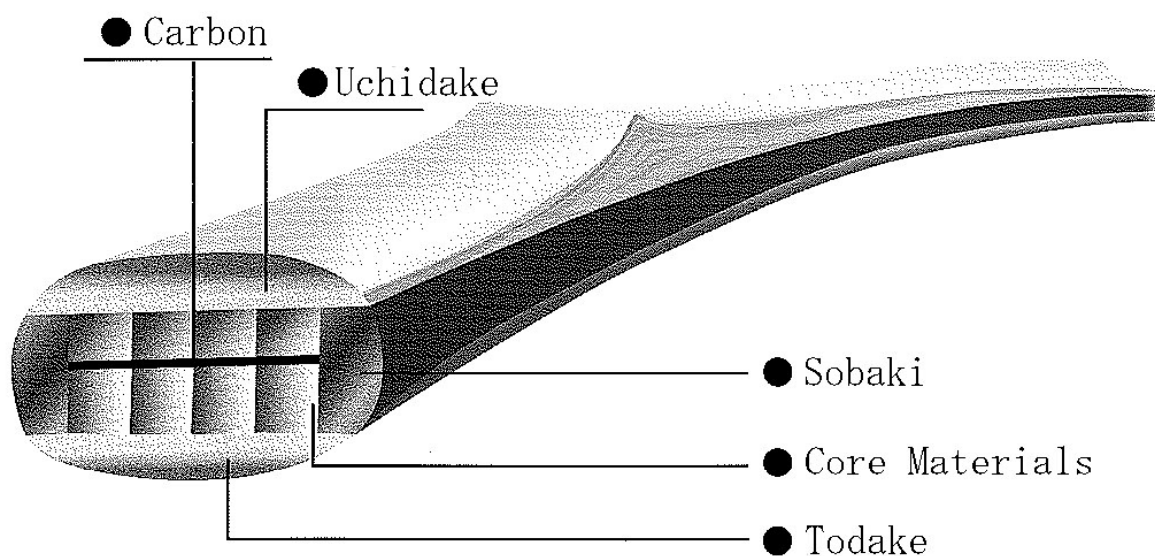
It has the same appearance as a bamboo bow. As you see in the drawing, carbon material is used as a reinforcement by being embedded or bound in the core layers.

A normal bamboo bow needs 50cm of Urazori in the binding process. However, a bamboo bow with carbon needs only 30cm of Urazori. Therefore, it settles down faster and has less deformation.

Features of the bamboo bow with carbon are the following:

- Easy to handle
- Less deformation
- Has good arrow flight
- Ability to make a strong bow in a lighter weight
- The bow width is narrower than normal

The Interior Structure of the Bamboo Bow with Carbon



Process of Making a Bamboo Bow

1. Cutting of the Bamboo for the Bow

Split in some pieces after cutting 2 different types of Madake: 18 to 21cm diameter bamboo for the outside and more than 30cm diameter bamboo for the core. Dry under shade for three to four months.



Cutting of Bamboo

2. Removing Oil and Drying

Remove oil from the bamboo splits by roasting outside. In a special room make a type of smoked bamboo with more recovery power that will become the Uchidake. Repeat for one to two years until light brown.



Removing Oil and Drying

3. Cutting of the Core Materials

Split *Haze* wood, which has been air dried for more than 10 years.

4. Carbonizing of the Bamboo Splits

In order to increase the repelling force, carbonize the bamboo splits by burning both sides.



Carbonizing of Bamboo Splits

5. Binding the Core Materials

Slice the carbonized bamboo splits and bind with the *Haze* wood. Wind a rope in a cross-coupled pattern and insert wedges into it and straighten the core materials.

6. Slicing the Core Materials

After gluing the core materials, slice it, making it thinner gradually toward ends.



Binding the Core Materials

7. Burning and Slicing Bamboos for Surfaces

Burn both faces of the inner bamboo and burn only the surface of the bamboo that is for the outside. Wipe out the oil. Slice them down toward the ends.

8. Binding the Bow

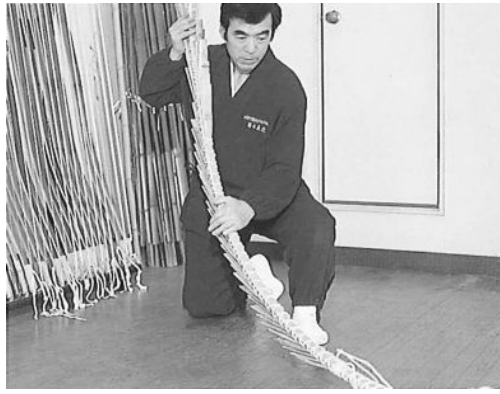
Glue the core materials with bamboo and the *Sekiita*. In order that a wedge does not damage the Uchidake and Todake, cover both faces with unused bamboo and wind them with a rope in a cross-coupled pattern. Tighten them with 80 to 100 wedges and form into a semicircular shape.

9. Stringing the Bow

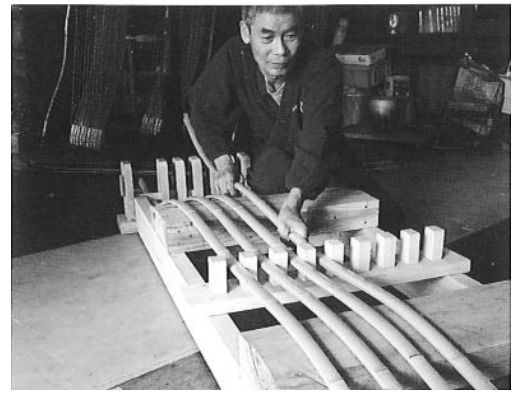
After removing the wedges and the rope, cut the ends of the *Sekiita* so that they are able to hold the string. Place bow on the shaping mount and leave for a half day. String the bow and check the shape; tune the bow by pushing the lower or the upper part. This determines a good or bad bow.



Slicing Bamboos for Surfaces



Binding the Bow



10. Finishing the Bow

Keep the bow on the shaping mount for 10 days. After the shape becomes settled down, whittle away its sides and the Sekiita and finish with sandpaper. In order to protect the surface, lacquer the sides of the bow and the Sekiita.

11. Final Adjustment and Decoration

Keep stringing the bow some more times, and make fine adjustments. Finally decorate with rattan.



Stringing the Bow



Finishing the Bow



Final Adjustment and Decoration

Vocabularies

Urazori

The inward curvature when a bow is unstrung. When the bow is new, the curvature is higher. With use, it becomes lower.

Kyuha

The distance between the string and the grip. The ideal distance is 15cm.

Harigao

The shape of the strung bow when looking down the bow from the side.

Himezori

The curved area that is beneath the Kamikiritsumedo and above the Toriuchi.

Iriki

The bow where the string sits to the right side of the center of the bow when holding the Motohazu and looking down the line of the string.

Deki

The bow where the string sits to the left side of the center of the bow when holding the Motohazu and looking down the line of the string.

Q & A

Q1. How much should a bamboo bow be dried before shooting?

A1.

When the Urazori becomes 20cm, you can shoot it. When the bow is kept strung for a long time, the Urazori will become very shallow; therefore, the bow should be unstrung sometimes to keep the Urazori at an appropriate distance.

Q2. How many centimeters is the bow strength written on the label measured?

A2.

The strength of the bow is measured at 85cm for Nami-sun, 90cm for 2 sun-nobi and 4 sun-nobi. But, please understand that the true strength may be different from the written strength due to the fact that individual draw length is different.

Q3. What is the most important thing to maintain the bow?

A3.

First of all, keep the Kyuha, the distance between the Yazuribushi and a string, at a certain distance. When the Kyuha becomes lower, the string slips and turns around, causing the neck to break. Indeed, turn the bow 90 degrees and use an imaginary line connecting the Shimonari with the Uwanari that it is parallel to the string (See Page 3.)

Q4. How much is a bamboo bow?

A4.

Somewhere around 110,000 yen. Indeed, the price differs not only by the maker but also by the composition of the core part, and how many days it takes to make the bow. These days, the price has increased due to difficulty of getting materials such as Madake and Haze wood.

Q5. What does a bow that makes a good sound look like?

A5.

The Tsurune, the sound of the bow, is not made by the bow but is the sound made when the archer and the bow are unified. You need to “grow” the bow in order to make a good Tsurune.

Q6. How long does it take to repair it if the outer face bamboo is partially broken away?

A6.

How to repair it is as follows: Using a plane, remove all the outer face bamboo carefully and glue on a new piece of bamboo. Since half of the bow becomes new, it needs to have the string attached until it settles in shape. It takes about 3 months. Please notice that it will not be exactly the same as before.

Q7. How is the inner face bamboo colored?

A7.

Susudake, the smoked bamboo, is colored by repeating the process in which bamboo is put in a special room and smoked and washed. It takes more than half year to create the natural shine that cannot be created by artificial paint.

Q8. How much is a Nibe Yumi?

A8.

It is 50% more than a normal bamboo bow.

Q9.

Is it possible to change the bow strength if the bow becomes weak/strong?

A9.

The bow strength is determined by the thickness of the core parts. The strength can be changed by removing the Todake (outer face bamboo) and shaving the core. A new layer of bamboo can also be added. However, it is very difficult work and it costs a great deal. Since these are natural materials, it is impossible to make the bow exactly to the strength you order. We can only make it close.

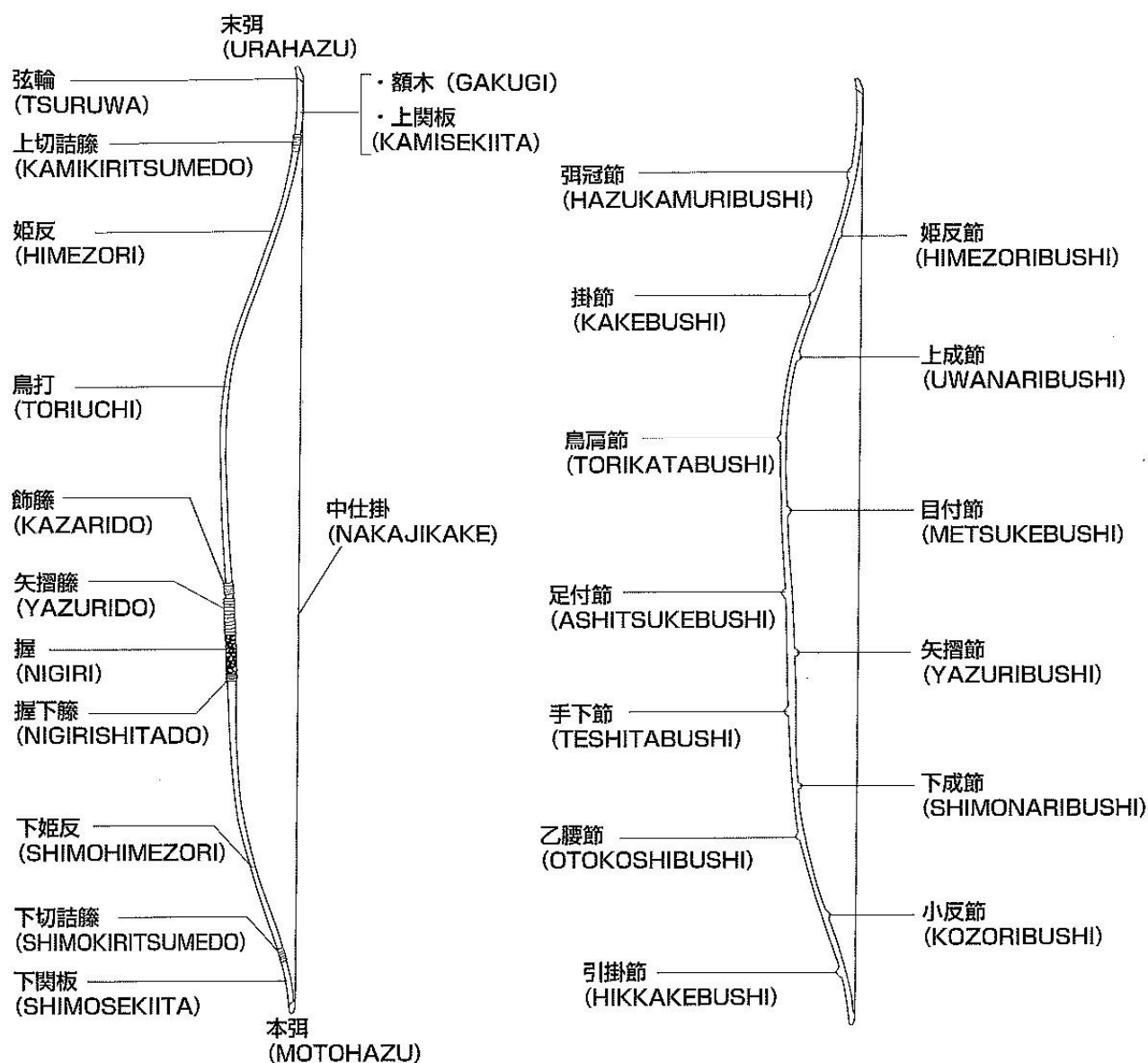
Q10.

Can any bow maker make a bamboo bow with carbon?

A10.

Previously there was a manufacturing patent problem but it has already been resolved. Feel free to purchase any bamboo bow with carbon from any bow maker.

Parts of the Bow



In Order to Use a Bamboo Bow Safely

A bamboo bow is made from natural materials such as Madake and Haze wood or woods of equivalent character. Furthermore, due to the fact that most of the processes are done by hand each bow has its own distinct personality. Please “grow” the bow with methods appropriate to each type of bow by referring to these instructions.

The Kyudo bow is a type of weapon; it may injure or kill, or cause damage to objects. When you use the bow please use it in a facility that takes adequate safety precautions.

Caution

This sign indicates that death or serious injury may occur if it is ignored or if the bow is used incorrectly.

Attention

This sign indicates content that assumes the possibility of serious injury or content that assumes occurrence of only property damage if it is ignored or if the bow is used incorrectly.

Caution	Prior to shooting, make sure that no person is positioned between the shooting line and the target.
Attention	Do not hit or throw the bow, it may cause damage such as Kougai, chipping of the bow's surface.
Attention	Keep away from small children.
Attention	When stringing the bow do not push too much, it may cause the bow to deform.
Attention	Keep the bow height at 15cm. It may invert the string and cause the bow to break if strung lower.
Attention	Do not keep in sunlight, high-temperatures or humid places.
Attention	When fixing the bow shape, do so right after stringing. It may not work efficiently as time passes.
Attention	When transporting or shipping the bow, protect the upper and lower Sekiita with a 30cm long piece of wood. It will help protect the neck from breaking.

*You are strictly prohibited to use (including duplication, copying) any part or all of contents in this booklet.

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