



HOW TO BE AN AXE THROWING COACH

ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO BE AN AXE COACH AND GROW THIS PORTION OF OUR BUSINESS

Axe throwing is likely the hottest new adult bar game to appear on the scene. It continues to grow rapidly across the country. That said, ensuring the guests safety and the amount of fun they will have is heavily dependent upon the lane coach. All fun goes out the window if there is an injury. And obviously it is more fun to stick an axe than it is to brick one off the wood. Safety while improving and developing the guest's axe throwing skills is what a good lane coach is about. The more axes a guest gets to stick, likely the more fun they will have. In return, you will likely make more money.

Being a great axe coach isn't about being the best at throwing an axe or how many bullseyes you can throw. It's about teaching others how to enjoy the game and celebrating with them as they progress into better players. If it takes a guest 15 throws to finally stick their first one, we need to celebrate that with them. The look on their face when they finally stick an axe is one of pure joy. When they throw their first bullseye, it's even better. How do we duplicate that feeling and continue to provide our axe-throwing guests with the best possible experience? It is completely up to the axe coach to figure out what those guests' needs are and how to make their experience more enjoyable.

With this being a brand new revenue stream for us, it also becomes another service that we provide. Just as the rest of the restaurant, guests will certainly be grading us on this new service. We always pay attention to our consumer reviews and what our guests are saying about us in every aspect of our business. If our coaches do not provide a great guest experience, this axe throwing venture will never be fruitful. With better reviews comes more hours for our coaches and more money. If guests feel like it's a waste of money and they didn't stick any axes, they won't recommend it to others.

Requirements to be an Axe Coach:

- Must be upbeat and personable
- Must communicate at a high level
- Must be reliable and punctual
- Must be detailed oriented
- Must enjoy helping/coaching people and celebrating their success
- Flexible- Available on weekends
- Approachable
- Punctual
- Organized
- Mature
- Patient
- Upbeat personality
- Attention to safety standards
- Able to lift 25 lbs
- Able/willing to use power tools (training provided)
- Did we mention that you must be upbeat?!!

Responsibilities:

- Coach and instruct all guests.
- Explaining and upholding all safety rules and guidelines
- Monitoring intoxication levels of guests who are playing
- Changing out targets as needed
- Making new targets as needed
- Ensuring we have enough scorecards for each lane each day
- Cleaning and maintaining axe lanes

What's in it for you:

- You get to build your own business. Engaging guests and providing a memorable experience will make you more money. It will create regulars and those guests will tell their friends to come in for a great experience.
- You keep the tips you earn. No tip share and nobody to tip out.
- You get to train other axe coaches.
- Tell me what job has more fun than throwing axes every day.

The key to being a good coach is obviously being upbeat, but you must possess a lot of patience. Some people will pick up axe throwing very quickly, while others might never get the hang of it. Coaches cannot show frustration with guests who take longer to get it. Guests who struggle to stick axes already feel inadequate and possibly embarrassed, so showing frustration or laughing will not help the situation. If we don't show patience with those guests, they will never improve their throwing. It will also hurt the guest's experience and eventually our reputation. However, if we have patience with them and work with them, they will recommend us to numerous people because we cared about their experience and hopefully improved their axe throwing skills.

We have created some informative videos about how to throw axes that you will find in this curriculum. Below will be the basics of how axes should travel through the air and how to coach when the axes hit the target at certain angles. It is important to know how to move guests forwards and backwards to accommodate the way their axe hits the target. **When coaching guests on technique, never ever touch them. It is acceptable to touch the axe to get their axe in the correct position but never touch the guest.**

For an axe to stick in the target properly it must travel through the air vertically with one full rotation and stick at a 45-degree angle. For that to happen the axe cannot flutter through the air towards the board. Some things need to happen to keep the axe flying vertically straight.



Proper Rotation



Incorrect Rotation



Perfect 45 degree stick

The best way to accomplish this is to keep your shoulders parallel to the target, take the axe back directly over your throwing shoulder like the Brave's "tomahawk chop", step towards the target with the opposite foot from your throwing shoulder and release the axe towards the bullseye.

If the axe starts to flutter, hit the board sideways, hit the board with the top of the axe or hit the board with the butt of the axe, there are some things you can do to help guests get back on track. If the axe is fluttering, make sure the guest isn't flaring their elbow out and they're keeping their elbow in while releasing the axe towards the target. They could also be stepping with their foot that is on the same side as their throwing arm. This will change the angle of their shoulders.

If the axe is hitting the target on top of the head like the picture below, this means that the axe has over rotated. We either need to get the axe to rotate slower or the axe has too much time in the air. There are several things you can do to get that axe to hit at a 45-degree angle. First thing you can do is, get the guest to stand closer to the target. If they are already as close as they can get, you can give them a longer axe or if there is room to grip the axe they currently have a little lower, they can do that.



The main reason axes are hitting on their head is because the guest is too far away, or they have choked up too far on the axe. The further up the axe handle you grip, the faster it will rotate. The further down the axe handle you grip the slower the axe will rotate.

If the axe is hitting the end of the handle, or butt, like the picture below, this means that the axe has under rotated. We either need to get the axe to rotate faster or we need to give the axe more time in the air so it can rotate another half rotation. There are several things you can do to get that axe to hit at a 45-degree angle. You can have the guest stand further away from the target, give them a shorter axe to throw or have them move their grip up the axe handle.



Although this axe hasn't hit on the end of the handle, it still hasn't rotated enough to stick at a 45-degree angle. It needs a quarter rotation more to be perfect.

Maintaining the Axes

The axes are obviously the most dangerous part of axe throwing and they will break down over time. When the axes don't hit the board correctly they will put stress on the wooden handles. Enough incorrect hits with the axes will eventually chip, split or break the handles. We use Kobalt axes because they have a lifetime warranty and can be exchanged for brand new ones. There should be a bucket or box labeled "Needs to be Returned" in the office or another designated area. This box or bucket will be used for axes that are beyond repair. Management should be exchanging these axes once every few weeks to maintain our par.

The most common injuries with axe throwing are from splinters and both the above scenarios can be a major culprit. Just because handles have chipped or split doesn't mean we cannot use the axes. You can tape these handles up tightly with the white duct tape and continue to use them. Once taped up, you should continue to monitor the axe to ensure that the damage does not get worse and potentially injure a guest. Obviously, broken handles like the one in the picture below need to be removed and put into the "Needs to be Returned" bucket.

Please inform management when the bucket is getting full or if you have gone through more axes than normal on a given shift.

Making Boards

As stated above, you will have to make target boards on a weekly basis. The bullseye board (center board) will need to be changed more often (probably 5-7 times a week) because it gets hit more often. The kill shot boards will be changed out a little less frequently (2-3 times a week) and the outside board at most will be changed once a week. It's important to have these boards pre-made, so if a board needs to be changed in the middle of the shift, it can be done in a matter of minutes.

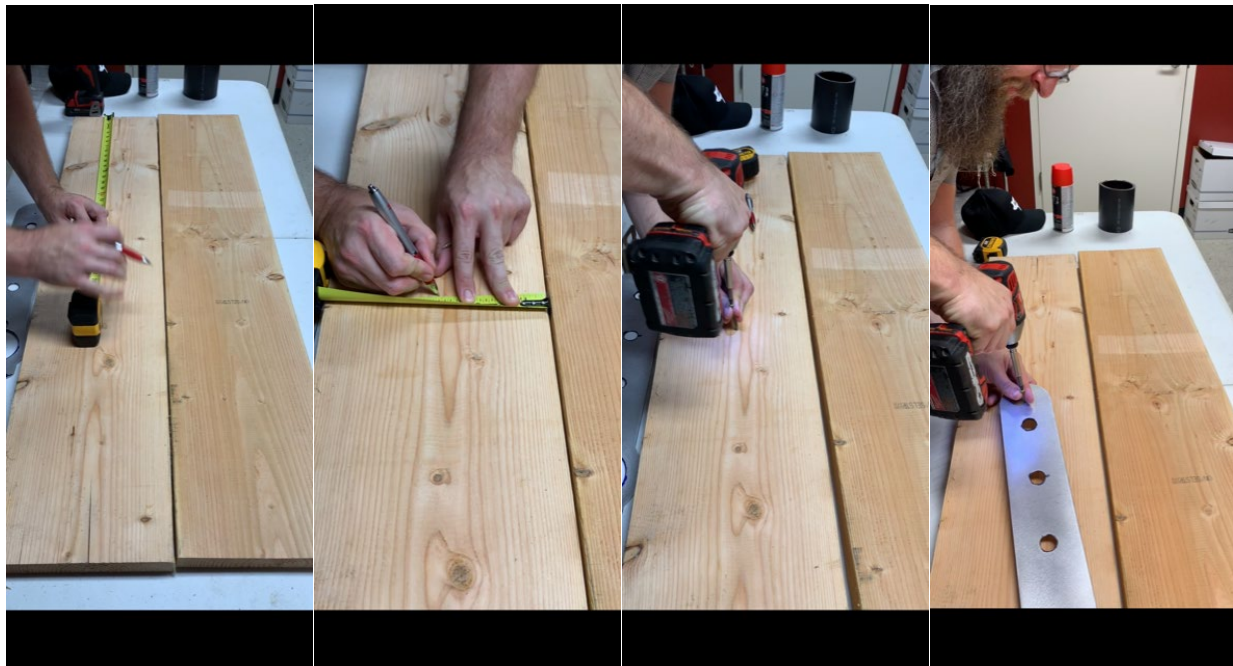
The best way to make boards is on a flat surface like a foldable table and if you're organized, this will take about 1-2 hours to make all your boards for the week.

Step 1- Start with the middle board. Measure 24 inches from the bottom of the board and make a mark with a pen. **Note- When choosing bullseye boards (center boards), you want to make sure that there are no knots in the board where the bullseye will be drawn. Knots are the hardest part of the board and axes will not stick in the board. If you find knots in the center of the board, put those aside for outside boards.**

Step 2- Measure 4 5/8 inches in from the side of the middle board as shown in the second picture. Where these 2 markings intersect will be the center of the board. Make an "X" where they intersect.

Step 3- Now you want to take the drill and a screw. You will want to drill the screw into the wood just enough to hold the stencil in place, maybe 1/8th of an inch. Unscrew the screw and grab your stencil with the 5 small holes and the large hole between the 4th & 5th hole.

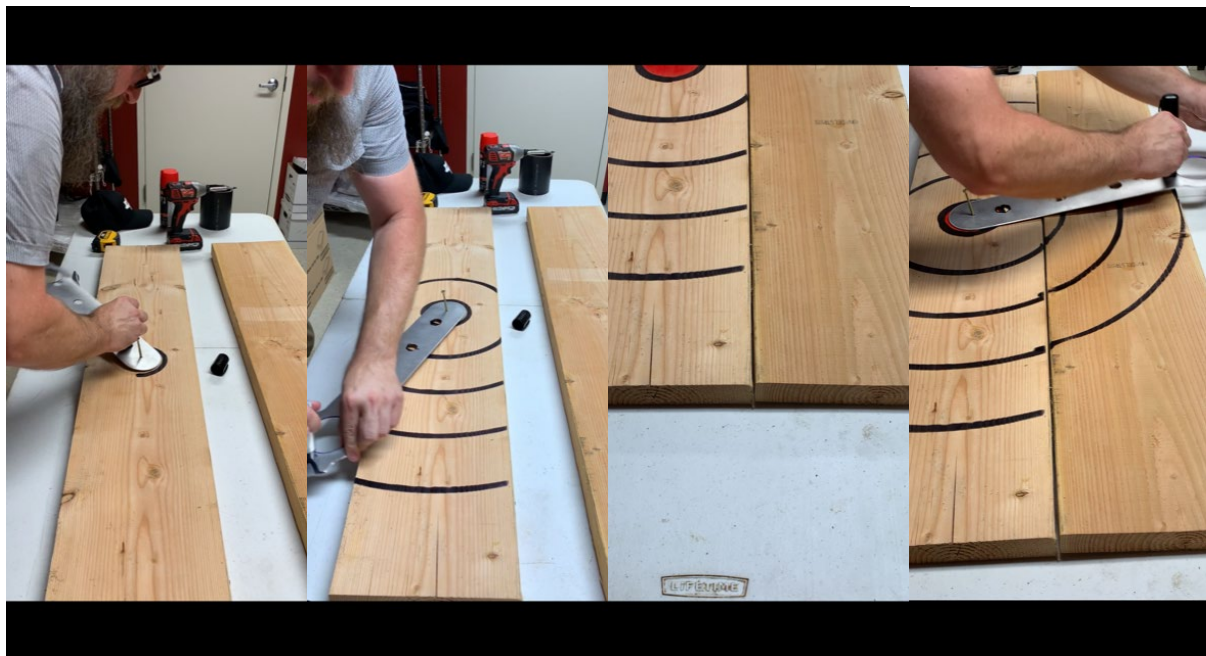
Step 4- Grab the same screw, stick it through the smallest hole at the end of the stencil and screw it back into the same hole you just created.



Step 5- Now that the screw and stencil are in place, grab your magnum black Sharpie. The end of the Sharpie should fit perfectly in the 5 small holes. Stick the pen through the first hole, located closest to the screw, and move the stencil in a circle creating the circle around the bullseye.

Step 6- Once the bullseye circle is drawn, move to the next hole on the stencil and draw the next circle. You will do this until you have completed all 5 circles as shown in the 2nd picture below.

Step 7- In the 2nd picture, we are creating bullseye (middle) boards. You will need to create all the boards, which should be easy to figure out at this point. To do this, lineup the kill shot boards on both sides of the bullseye board while the stencil is still in place. Continue to draw the circles onto the kill shot boards, as shown in the 4th picture below. You will continue to do this with both kill shot boards until targets are complete. If outer boards are needed just add the outer boards onto the outside of the kill shot boards and continue the process.



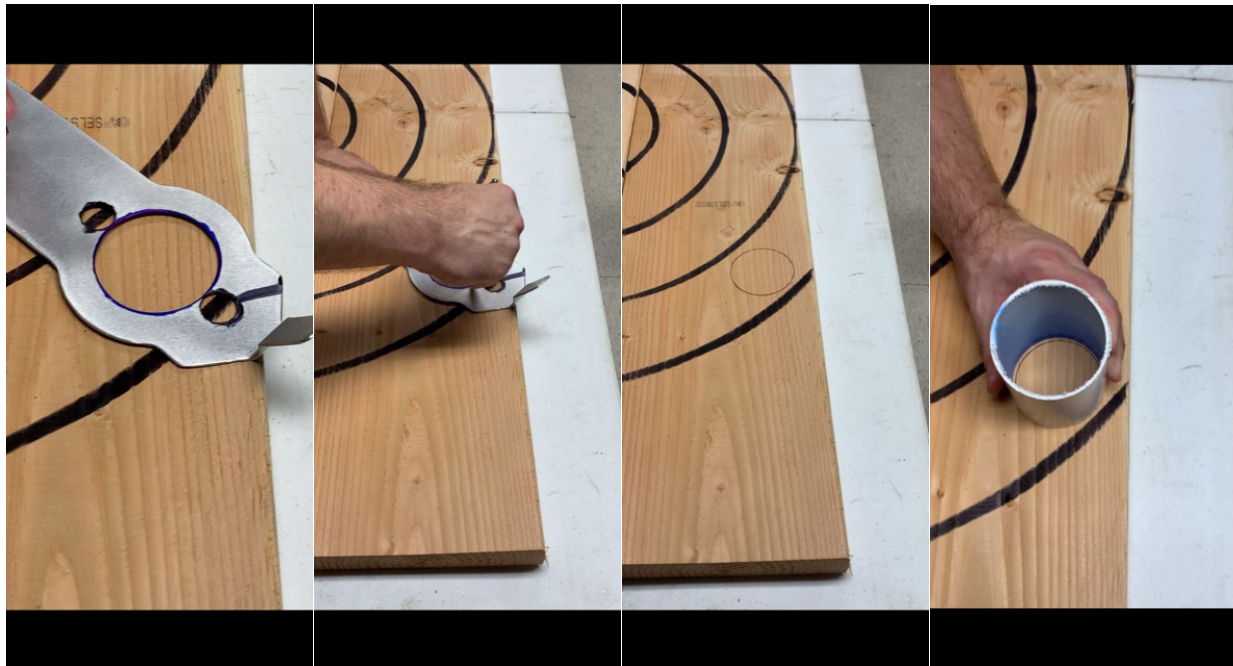
Step 8- Once all the circles are drawn, we now need to create the actual kill shots. Move the stencil to the outer part of the kill shot board where the bend of the large circle straightens out to the end of the stencil, as shown in the first picture below.

Step 9- With the stencil in that position, take out a pen and draw an outline of the kill shot circle, as shown in pictures 2 & 3 below.

Step 10- Grab your 3-inch white PVC pipe and blue spray-paint. Put the PVC pipe over the kill shot circle (shown in picture 4 below) and lightly spray the blue paint in the pipe. You do not need to spray much, just 3-4 pulses with the spray-paint can should do.

Step 11- You should also have a black 4-inch PVC pipe and a red spray-paint can. The black PVC pipe should fit right over the bullseye circle and you can repeat Step 10 but with red spray paint over the bullseye.

*****Note-** *When changing boards, you do not need to use new boards every time. Every board has 2 sides, so you might be able to get use out of the outside boards by turning them around and re-marking them to maximize the life of each board.*



During the shift:

Depending on how busy we are on certain shifts, you could have to change boards or redo the bullseye and the kill shot. If the boards are still acceptable to throw at, you can easily take either PVC pipe, put it over the bullseye or kill shot, and lightly spray the paint on the appropriate target. This will make the target more visible again and guests can resume throwing axes.

There will be times where you need to change the boards in the middle of the shift. If boards are pre-made, this should be quick and easy. Deciding on when to change the boards can be tough because boards could look pretty beat up but could still be in great condition. When boards are chewed up the axes will stick better than when they are brand-new, so knowing when to change them is important. We want our guests to have the best possible experience and we also don't want to waste money by putting up new boards when they're not needed.

The board below looks pretty beat up but is actually in perfect condition to keep playing. The center board just needs a quick bullseye upgrade with the PVC and red spray-paint. It should last for a few more games depending on the types of players on the lane. If the players on the lane are throwing softly, the board should hold up for a while. If you have some big strong throwers, you might have to change it sooner.



The time to change boards is when there are large chunks missing from a board or guests are hitting the boards behind the target boards. You can also determine if the chunk missing isn't in a high-volume target area. If not, it shouldn't impact the game if it's far enough away from the center. The goal is to maximize the life of each board without negatively impacting the game or experience. It is a best practice to change questionable boards at the end of the night when there are no guests in the building so we do not disturb their dining experience. When you change out a new board, you want to use the sprayer to lightly water the board. You only need to do this on new boards, and it is only necessary to do it once.



To remove the boards (see above photos) you will need the supplied impact drill and Torx (star) 25 power bit. Simply remove two top and two bottom screws, saving the screws to install the next round of boards. If your screw is stripped or damaged for any reason please discard. ** Due to swelling, when replacing just the center board you might need to remove a board to the left or right of it for the board to come loose. There might be times that the new center board isn't as wide as the board you just took out. This will leave too large of a gap between boards so you might need to unscrew the 2 boards on either side to ensure the boards are together tightly.

Running the Lanes:

Guests will check in at the host stand where the hosts will either put them on a waitlist or send them directly over to the coach(es) at the lanes. The maximum amount of people to a lane is 6. This allows people to learn how to throw and get in a few games if they stay on track. Below are some likely scenarios that you will have and how to handle them.

No matter how large the group, you will always ensure all guests have on closed-toed shoes. Have all guests sign a waiver and pay for the axe throwing. After they have paid and signed their waiver, distribute wristbands to each guest. You will then seat/assign them the appropriate lane in the Open Table app. This will allow you to track their time in the lane and also quote other parties who want to wait. Once guests have done all of that, you will bring them into the lanes and give a safety briefing and point out the posted rules. The following 3 things you will need to verbally describe to each group before they are allowed to throw axes:

1. Should the axe come back towards you at any point, do not attempt to catch the axe with your hands or stop it with your feet. Move out of the way and let the axe come to a rest on its own.

2. When retrieving your axe, do not put your hands on the target to try and gain leverage. Simply move the axe up and down until it becomes loose enough to pull out of the board. Putting your hands on the target or board could result in splinters.
3. There is a one axe at a time rule, which means that you throw an axe, retrieve it and repeat. You do not throw 2 axes at a time, nor do you throw an axe and then throw another axe before retrieving the previous axe.

For the following scenarios, let's assume that the coach has gone over all of these steps. Every time a group buys time on a lane, they will get an hour and 15 minutes to ensure a safety briefing happens along with throwing instruction. This will ensure we don't take time away from them while they learn to throw.

One party (2-6 people) Not on a Wait- Bring all guests into the same lane and go over proper throwing techniques. Give each guest a chance to throw a few axes while coaching any opportunities. Once all guest have thrown get them involved in a game. If there are any guests who are still struggling, politely recommend moving to another lane (if available) so you can help them get down the throwing technique. Once their throwing becomes consistent get them back with the group and involved in the game. If the lane they were practicing in is still open, allow the group to use both lanes so they can get more throws in. Make sure they know that they will have to reduce to one lane should more guests come in and require the empty lane.

One party (2-6 people) On a Wait- Bring all guests into the same lane and go over proper throwing techniques. Give each guest a chance to throw a few axes while coaching any opportunities. Once all guest have thrown get them involved in a game. As each person rotates through, pay attention to the guests who are still struggling to get the axes to stick and continue to coach. Most of their group will probably want to see them succeed and give them more throws. However, don't let that guest monopolize the lane while the other guests sit out.

Two parties (3-6 people per party) Not on a Wait- If the 2 lanes both parties are occupying are next to each other, bring both parties inside the lanes if possible. If not, allow some of the party to listen from outside of the lanes but ensure they are paying attention. Go over proper throwing technique with both groups and then allow individual guests to practice throwing while you observe both parties. If the lanes aren't next to each other allow one group to go first in their lane while the other waits outside of their lane. They can get started with drinks and food with their server while they wait. Once the first group is set up, get the group that waited going on their lane. Make sure that you don't start their time until you begin your instruction. If a lane opens up next to one of the parties during their time, allow both parties to share that lane for practicing.

Large Party Buyout (15+ guests)- For large party buyouts there should be at least 2 coaches scheduled for the whole event. You want to choose which coach will do the safety briefing if you're in Walnut Creek. In Sacramento, you could split the group into 2 and have both coaches do their own safety briefing. Depending on the size of the groups, give everyone details on how to throw and have people rotate through for coaching. As people get the hang of it, get them involved in some games. If there is a large number of people who are struggling, you might recommend that group move to one lane for more coaching while others get started. Once more coaching has taken place and everyone has the hang of it, the group can figure out on their own how they want to work the lanes. Coaches must stay engaged with the group for any rule clarifications, safety concerns or extra coaching needed by guests.

At the End of the Shift:

Once your shift is done, you will need to make sure your side work is done. Here is what your task list at the end of each shift will look like:

- Change any boards that will not last through one more game. We want to make sure that we do not have to change a board in the middle of our first guest's experience the next day.
- Re-paint any bullseyes or kill shots that have been destroyed but where the boards are still usable.
- Assess each axe making sure that each one is in good condition. If one needs to be sharpened, please do so. If one needs some duct tape to cover up any chips, apply the tape. If one is beyond repair, put it in the return bucket for exchange.
- Ensure all axes are put away safely and no axes have been left inside of the lanes.
- Sweep all of the wood chips in each lane, leaving each lane clean for the next day.
- Do a detailed walkthrough of each lane ensuring there are no safety concerns or any repairs that need to be done. If there are, please involve a manager and assess.
- Clock out and go home.

Conclusion:

Axe throwing is a huge venture for Sauced and gives our guest a chance to do something different during a dining experience. This part of our business will not be fruitful without great people driving it. We are relying on a group of hospitable, kind, caring, energetic, engaging, and fun people to drive this portion of our business. How well we do in this area is solely on the experience you provide to them.

We hope you have fun in this exciting position and welcome to the Sauced Team!