

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department- Hunter Education-Basic Course-Outline

1. Why is it important to take Hunter Education? (Exam #2)
- To reduce hunting and shooting related injuries and fatalities.
 - To develop safe and ethical behavior.
 - To learn and follow Texas law.
 - To continue the heritage of hunting.

2. The 4 Primary Rules of Firearm Safety (Textbook- inside front cover, Exam #7))
- FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT-Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.
 - Treat every firearm with the respect due a loaded firearm.
 - Be sure of your target, and what is in front of and beyond it.
 - Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
- (Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see: Lesson Plan 1- Firearm Status Check)*

3. Attitude (Textbook- pg. 5, Exam #3)
- Is most important to be able to learn about hunting and to become an ethical hunter.

4. Who pays for Wildlife Conservation in America? (Textbook- pg 5, Exam#1)
- Hunters!
- 1937- Congress approves the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act.
 - Other similar laws passed, now known collectively as Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) programs.
 - Money collected by federal government through excise taxes on sporting arms, ammunition, archery and fishing equipment is distributed back to states by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

WSFR has provided over \$12 billion nationwide to:

- Restore wildlife habitat
- Fund wildlife management
- Conduct research
- Support Hunter Education

5. Basic parts of a Firearm
- The first step to becoming a responsible hunter is knowing your firearm and how to use it safely. (Exam #5)

- Stock
- Action
- Barrel (Textbook- pg 6, Exam#4)

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6. Actions (Textbook- pg 6, Exam#9)
- The action of a firearm is made of parts that load, fire, eject and/or unload the cartridge or shotshell.
 - Bolt, lever, semi-auto, pump, break action
7. Safeties (Textbook-pg 14, Exam #10)
- A safety is located around the receiver of the firearm and is a device that blocks the action to prevent the firearm from shooting.
 - Safeties are mechanical devices that can fail. Never rely on a safety as an alternative to safe firearm handling.
8. Correctly match Firearms with proper Ammunition (Textbook- pgs. 9 & 19, Exam #6)
- Caliber (or gauge) and chambering stamped on barrel, end of cartridge or shot shell, also marked on ammo box.
 - No rimfire ammo of any caliber is legal for hunting white-tailed deer, mule deer, desert bighorn sheep and pronghorn antelope.
 - Keep track of ammo and do not mix gauges or calibers. Be certain no 20 gauge ammo mixes in with 12 gauge ammo. A 20 gauge shell can inadvertently fit into 12 gauge chamber along with a 12 gauge shell behind it.
9. Know you firearm's effective range! (Textbook- pg. 20, Exam #11)
- A firearm's range varies caliber to caliber, gauge to gauge. It is critical to understand at what distances your firearm could cause injury and also at what range you are able to make a clean, ethical kill.
10. How far can a bullet travel?
- Remember that a bullet travels a lot farther than you think.
11. Safely Storing Firearms (Textbook- pg.22, Exam#8)
- Firearms should be stored unloaded, lightly oiled, in a locked location and separate from ammunition.
12. Be an accurate shooter (Text book- pg.23,Exam #13)
- Good marksmanship is hitting your target accurately and consistently.
 - Practice often at a shooting range.
 - When hunting, being accurate with your firearm is critical for a clean, ethical kill.
- (Textbook- pg.23, Exam#14)
13. Use Eye and Ear Protection
- Wearing eye and ear protection is mandatory at the shooting range.
 - Wearing eye and ear protection is a wise choice when hunting, especially when bird hunting.

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14. Shots to the Vital Areas (Textbook- pg.36, Exam#17)

- Heart and lungs are vital organs.
- Learn where the vital organs are located inside the animal you are hunting.
- Aim for the vital organs for a clean, ethical kill.

15. Wait for the best Shot Angle! (Textbook- pg.36, Exam #20)

- A broadside shot is the most effective shot on deer, antelope and other large game animals.

16. Other Shot Angles (Textbook- pg.36 & 37, Exam #25)

- Quartering towards and quartering away still give an opportunity to hit the vital organs.
- Head-on is not recommended- high potential for crippling, waste of meat.
- Never take rear end shot.

17. After the Shot (Textbook- pg.37, Exam #21)

- When approaching a downed deer or other large animal, you should pause above and behind the animal's head and watch the chest cavity for any movement.

18. Valid Texas Hunting License

- You must have a current and valid Texas hunting license to hunt in Texas. Hunting some animals also requires specific "stamps" or endorsements.

19. Correctly Tagging (Textbook- pg.38, Exam #18)

- If a game animal requires it, a tag should be completed and secured to the animal immediately after the kill. Cut out month and day, write ranch and county with pen on the tag.

20. White-tailed Deer Harvest Log (Exam 42)

- If needed, complete the White-tailed Deer Harvest Log on the back of the license.
- Include county, property name, date, type of tag (buck, antlerless, etc)
- Also check box if antler restricted county.

21. Field Care of Game (Textbook- pg.38, Exam #22)

- Proper cleaning and processing harvested game will insure high quality meat for the table.
- Bacteria spoils meat. Three factors increase the growth of bacteria: heat moisture & dirt.

22. Legal Transportation of Game (Textbook- pg.39)

- Tagged to final destination
- Proof of sex
- Legal Quartering
- Proof of Species- (waterfowl)
- Wildlife Resource Document- transfer of game

23. Hunting Safety (*Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see Lesson Plan 2- Safe Firearm Handling*)

Good judgment before and during hunting is critical to being a safe hunter.

- You are responsible for your behavior and its consequences to yourself, to others, to wildlife and to property.

24. Common Causes of Hunting Incidents

(Textbook- pg.51, Exam #24)

HUNTER JUDGMENT

- Victim out of sight /moved into shooter's line of fire
- Victim covered by shooter swinging on game
- Victim mistaken for game
- Horseplay with loaded firearm
- Use of alcohol or drugs

CARELESS HANDLING

- Improper Loading/Unloading gun
- Dropped firearm
- Discharge of firearm in or around vehicle
- Improper crossing of an obstacle
- Walking with loaded firearm

25. Safe Firearm Carries

(Textbook- pgs.52-53, Exam #29)

(*Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see Lesson Plan 3- Safe Firearm Carries*)

Muzzle control, safety on, finger off trigger.

- Two- Handed Carry-The two-handed carry provides the most control of your firearm.
(Textbook- pgs.53, Exam #30)
- Trail Carry-The trail carry uses one arm to carry the firearm, leaving the other free for balance.
- Shoulder Carry- The shoulder carry balances the rifle or shotgun on your shoulder, controlling the firearm by a hand on the grip. This is a good carry when walking beside someone or behind others. It is not a good carry if others are behind you. When at a shooting range the correct shoulder carry for a break action shotgun would be with the action open, unloaded, barrel pointing down and forward, controlled by both hands.
- Cradle Carry- The cradle carry rests the gun across your forearm and elbow. The hand easily secures the firearm by grasping the stock. It is a comfortable carry that reduces arm fatigue.
- Elbow or "Side" Carry- The elbow or "side" carry is a very comfortable carry for break-action firearms. The pivot of the open action rests easily in the crook of your elbow and down over your forearm. Others can easily see that your action is safe and open.

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- Sling Carry- A sling carry uses a sling placed over your shoulder to support the firearm. Keep your hand on the sling while walking to keep the firearm from slipping. It is a good carry when walking with others.
26. Safe Carries in a Group (Textbook-pg.54)
- When hunters are walking in a group, each hunter must choose a carry that keeps their muzzle in a safe direction and away from each other.
 - As the terrain changes, the choice of carry may change.
27. Safely Crossing Obstacles (Textbook- pg.55, Exam #31)
- When hunting alone and crossing a fence with a firearm, unload, place the gun on the ground, muzzle covered, pointed away from you on the other side of the fence, then cross.
(Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see Lesson Plan 5- Fence Crossing)
28. Steps for Crossing Obstacles with a Partner (Textbook- pg.55)
- Muzzle in a safe direction
 - Unload both firearms
 - One hunter crosses fence
 - Unloaded firearms passed over fence
 - Other hunter crosses
29. Safely Loading & Unloading (Textbook- pg.56, Exam #32)
- Many accidents occur when loading and unloading a firearm.
 - Always treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
 - To safely load or unload a firearm you should always point the muzzle in a safe direction and make sure the safety is on.
 - NOTE: Some models of rifles will not allow you open the bolt if the safety is on.
30. Safely Transporting Firearms (Textbook- pg.57, Exam #33)
- Never transport a loaded firearm in a gun rack, visible through the windows.
 - It should be unloaded, cased, and not in view.
 - Be sure to unload magazines, remove bolt if possible.
 - Ammunition should be stored separately from firearms.
31. Safe Zone of Fire (Textbook- pg.58, Exam #34)
(Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see Lesson Plan 2- Safe Zone of Fire)
- A hunter's "zone-of-fire" is the area in which a hunter can safely shoot. Many accidents occur because someone shoots outside of their safe zone of fire.
- Generally it is between 10 and 2 o'clock.
 - Be ready to adjust as conditions dictate.
 - When in doubt, pass on taking a shot.
 - Hunter orange is essential, especially when hunting quail or pheasant.

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- Maintain constant awareness of your companion's positions and communicate frequently.
 - Anticipate hazards and when you may lose sight of each other.
32. Safely Enter or Exit Elevated Blinds (Textbook- pg.60, Exam #23)
- Muzzle always in safe direction.
 - Unload
 - Use a haul line
33. Tree Stand Safety (Textbook- pg.61, Exam #35)
- When hunting in a tree stand you should always use an approved fall arrest system.
 - When climbing up or down always maintain **3 points of contact** with the ladder and if possible use a lineman's climbing belt.
 - When moving a firearm or bow into an elevated stand always use a haul line to bring it up or down. (Textbook- pg.61, Exam #36)
34. Reasons for Hunting Laws (Exam #19)
- Public Safety
 - Conservation of Natural Resources
 - Fair Share
 - Equal Opportunity
 - Fair Chase
35. Texas Laws and Regulations (Exam #12)
- Most of the hunting regulations are published each year in the *Outdoor Annual*. Rules and regulations change, and you must be up-to-date on those changes. Always read the current issue to know these changes and be sure to check the specific county listing where you hunt.
 - A special supplement, the *Texas Waterfowl Digest*, contains all the rules and regulations for hunting waterfowl in Texas.
 - Electronic versions are usually the most accurate.
36. Antler Restrictions
- Check the *Outdoor Annual* to see if the county where you hunt has antler restrictions.
 - Almost half of all Texas counties now have antler restrictions. Check your county!
37. Wildlife Identification
- It's important for hunters to correctly identify the animals they will harvest.
38. Ethical Hunting
- Good hunting ethics are NOT usually covered by written laws.
 - "Ethical behavior is doing the right thing when no one else is watching, even when doing the wrong thing is legal. "Aldo Leopold (Textbook- pg.67, Exam #39)

39. Ethical Hunters (Textbook- pg.67, Exam #15 & #40)

- Make every effort for quick, clean kills.
- Tries to minimize pain and suffering of animals.
- Do not waste meat and usable parts.
- Follow game laws and regulations.
- Handle firearms safely and insist others do, too.
- Leave the land better than they find it.

40. Respect for Natural Resources (Textbook- pg.67, Exam #41)

- Responsible hunters treat both game and non-game animals with respect.

41. Image Matters (Textbook- pg.68, Exam #27)

- Don't offend non-hunters by careless display of game.
- Don't give anti-hunters an opportunity to exploit your behavior.
- Don't transport an exposed carcass. Meat will taste better if you quarter it and transport iced in a cooler.
- When taking pictures: clean up blood, tuck in tongue, fold legs in natural positions. Don't straddle. Display tag. If firearms are visible: muzzle in safe direction, actions open.

42. The Three Questions (Exam #38)

- Before taking any shot always ask yourself:
- Is it safe?
- Is it legal?
- Is it ethical?
- Example- if animals are close together or one behind the other, wait for a clear shot on the one you want when it gives you a good shot angle. If you don't get a clear shot, pass on the shot.

(Exam#28)

(Opportunity for Hands-on Exercise- see Lesson Plan 6- Skills Trail)

43. Hunter Orange (Textbook- pg.73, Exam #45)

- The safest and most important clothing choice for hunting is fluorescent orange clothing.
- Not a color found in nature, visible at long distance and through some types of cover.

44. Landowner Rights (Exam #49)

95% of the land in Texas is privately owned. Hunters need to respect the rights of private landowners and abide by their rules.

- Landowners can grant or deny permission to hunt on their land.
- Landowners can require and charge for a hunting lease.
- Landowners can require hunters to sign a liability waiver.
- Landowners can impose stricter bag limits or harvest requirements, within existing game laws.

45. A Game Warden's Authority (Exam #43)

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- Texas Game Wardens are certified state peace officers.
- Their priority is the enforcement of all hunting and fishing laws and regulations.
- Game Wardens also protect and serve the public of the State of Texas by enforcing all other state laws and have the authority to do so anywhere within the boundaries of Texas.
- Game Wardens may enter onto any land or water to conduct inspection of licenses or equipment used by individuals participating in an activity or believed to have been participating in an activity regulated by law.
- Game Wardens may also inspect wildlife resources taken or possessed by individuals.

46. Plan your hunt - hunt your plan

(Textbook- pg.72, Exam #16 & #44)

Essential information:

- Where you are hunting
- Who you are hunting with
- Specific directions of the route to your hunting area, when you expect to return home.
Leave a copy with a family member or friend.

47. Preparation for Hunting

(Textbook- pg.73)

- Be in good physical condition.
- Be in good health- take along needed medications.
- Be in good mental health- proper judgement and attitude.
- Wear proper clothing- layer, anticipate weather.
- Carry a survival kit- signal devices, cell phone, shelter construction, fire building, first aid, water, food.
- Become certified First Aid and CPR.

48. Priorities for Survival

(Textbook- pg.77, Exam #26)

- Mental Awareness- if lost, admit it. Make a plan.
- First Aid
- Shelter
- Fuel-fire
- Signalling
- Water
- Food

49. International Emergency Signal for Distress

(Textbook- pg.77, Exam #46)

- Three shots evenly spaced, three blasts from a whistle evenly spaced, or three fires evenly spaced.

50. Hypothermia

(Textbook- pg.78, Exam #47)

SYMPTOMS

- Uncontrolled shivering

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- Slow, slurred speech
- Memory loss
- Irrational behavior

TREATMENT

- Remove wet clothing
- Get out of wind
- Warm victim with blanket or dry clothing
- Body-to-body Contact
- Move to warm shelter

51. Heat Exhaustion (Textbook- pg.80, Exam #48)

SYMPTOMS

- Pale clammy skin
- Headache
- Nausea
- Muscle cramps

TREATMENT

- Drink water
- Move to shade or cooler place

52. Necessities to sustain wildlife (Textbook- pg.85, Exam #50)

- Food
- Water
- Cover
- Space
- All these in a suitable Arrangement

53. Carrying Capacity (Textbook- pg.86, Exam #37)

- The maximum number of animals that the environment can support, given the amount of food, water, cover, and other necessities available in the environment.
- Carrying capacity is dynamic and can change from season to season and from year to year.
- Regulated hunting, fishing, and trapping are important tools for preventing populations of certain species from exceeding the carrying capacity of their habitat.

54. The Hunter's Role in Wildlife Conservation (Textbook- pg.86-87)

- We no longer have a large number of free-ranging, large predators. Hunting helps populations of animals stay in balance with available food, water and cover.
- "The central thesis of game management is this: game can be restored by the creative use of the same tools which have heretofore destroyed it – ax, plow, cow, fire, and gun." Aldo Leopold

55. Will you be a Hunting Ambassador?

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- As a safe and ethical hunter, your behavior and judgment can inspire many to be like you.
- Reach out to others and help the tradition of hunting endure and flourish.