

## Exercise 5- Fence Crossing

Objective: Students will learn how to safely cross a fence when hunting alone or with other hunters.

Time Allotted: 20 minutes

Materials: Two or more firearms (dummy or operational), matching dummy ammunition, material to simulate wire on a fence (i.e. rope, string, surveyors tape, duct tape, broom stick), and a hunter orange hat. Optional: A 'no trespass sign' to talk about legality of crossing fence, i.e. need permission to cross onto property. Discuss fence post painted with stripe of purple paint.

Preparation: Place three chairs in a row, 8 to 10 feet apart. Connect them with rope or tape at the top of the chair backs and again near the seat, creating the facsimile of a "fence." You can do the preparation of setting up the fence while giving the introduction. (See attachment)

Introduction: Ask if anyone in the class has ever encountered a fence that they had to cross while hunting. If you get any affirmatives, ask them what they did, what safety issues are encountered. Praise correct comments. Note they may have omitted a step or two.

Presentation: Select a volunteer, have them choose a firearm and wear the hunter orange hat. Ask them to follow the directions you give on how to safely cross a fence by yourself.

- 1) Find the place where you are going to cross the fence, then go at least one post down from crossing spot.
- 2) Point muzzle in safe direction.
- 3) Make sure safety is on.
- 4) Unload firearm, put ammo in pocket.
- 5) Take off your hat and place it under the "fence" on other side.
- 6) Keeping the muzzle in a safe direction, place the firearm on the other side of the "fence" with the barrel pointing away from crossing spot. Barrel tip rests on hat.
- 7) Go back to crossing point and cross fence. Try to cross under fence. If you must climb over try not to damage or alter fence. Climb at a sturdy post and use post to carry most of your weight (gloves are good here). If a tree is growing near the post use it to help distribute weight if safe to do so.
- 8) Pick up firearm. Keep muzzle in safe direction, fingers outside of trigger guard.
- 9) Check barrel for obstructions.
- 10) Reload and put safety on.
- 11) Many people say that they would prop the firearm upright leaning on the fence and then cross. This is dangerous if the firearm is loaded. Also point out that even if it's not loaded and it falls it may get broken, scratched and the scope sights may be knocked off.

Activity: Select another volunteer give them a firearm. Now have both volunteers stand on the same side of the fence and have them cross the fence as a team. Coach as necessary.

- 1) Find the place where you are going to cross the fence.

- 2) Stand back to back and safely unload guns. Point muzzle in safe direction, put ammo in pocket.
- 3) Determine who will cross first. That hunter hands firearm to the other.
- 4) Go to crossing point and cross fence.
- 5) Pass firearms over fence. Muzzles in safe direction.
- 6) Second hunter crosses fence.
- 7) Hand back gun.
- 8) Safely reload and put safety on.

Evaluation: Ensure that all participants follow the correct steps, watch for muzzle control, and fingers outside of trigger guards.

Summary: There are numerous situations in the field where hunters encounter obstacles. Rough terrain and fences are the two most common situations. Unloading a firearm before you cross an obstacle is the first step. Don't ignore or diminish the risk, a conscious awareness of safety must be maintained at all times. Ask class what safe carries they would use and how they would cross other obstacles such as a steep hill with loss rocks and gravel, a stream or ditch full of water. Discuss the legality of crossing a fence, i.e. leases. Discuss the ethics of crossing a fence, i.e. don't destroy it, go through a gate when possible, cross at the most stable point.

Attachment- (duct tape can keep simulate barbed wire, i.e. will catch on hunters.)

