

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF FIREARM SAFETY

1. Watch that muzzle! Keep it pointed in a safe direction at all times.
2. Treat every firearm with the respect due a loaded gun. It might be, even if you think it isn't.
3. Be sure of the target and what is in front of it and beyond it. Know the identifying features of the game you hunt. Make sure you have an adequate backstop -- don't shoot at a flat, hard surface or water.
4. Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot. This is the best way to prevent an accidental discharge.
5. Check your barrel and ammunition. Make sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions and carry only the proper ammunition for your firearm.
6. Unload firearms when not in use. Leave actions open and carry firearms in cases and unloaded to and from the shooting area.
7. Point a firearm only at something you intend to shoot. Avoid all horseplay with a gun.
8. Don't run, jump or climb with a loaded firearm. Unload a firearm before you climb a fence or tree, or jump a ditch. Pull a firearm toward you by the butt, not the muzzle.
9. Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely. Store each in secured locations beyond the reach of children and careless adults.
10. Avoid alcoholic beverages before or during shooting. Also avoid mind- or behavior- altering medicines or drugs.



conservation of wildlife is critical to ensure the survival of Michigan's resources for future generations.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations.

The Natural Resources Commission is the governing body for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. In providing a strategic framework for the

DNR to effectively manage the state's resources, the NRC works closely with a broad cross-section of constituencies to establish and continuously improve natural resources management policy.

Poachers Steal from Everyone! REPORT ALL POACHING

Call: 800-292-7800

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunities for employment and access to Michigan's natural resources. Both state and federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, height, weight or marital status under the U.S. Civil Rights Acts of 1964 as amended, 1976 MI PA 453, 1976 MI PA 220, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire additional information, please write: Human Resources, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909-7528, or Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Cadillac Place, 3054 W. Grand River Blvd., Suite 3-600, Detroit, MI 48202, or Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

For information or assistance on this publication, contact the Law Enforcement Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 30031, Lansing, MI 48909. This publication is available in alternative formats upon request.



Great Lakes, Great Times, Great Outdoors
www.michigan.gov/dnr

Who Needs Hunter Safety?

Each year approximately 30,000 persons successfully complete a Michigan hunter education course. Successful completion of this class is required for all first-time hunters born on or after January 1, 1960.



Hunting is a time-honored tradition in Michigan. It provides citizens with millions of pleasurable hours of wholesome, challenging outdoor recreation. Most hunters develop an intense appreciation for the wilderness, wildlife and

a clean environment through their participation in hunting. The challenge of becoming a sports person becomes a lifelong quest. Most hunters know the lasting fun of hunting comes only when it is conducted safely and responsibly. Safe hunting begins with hunter education.

The Program

Hunter education courses teach new hunters firearm safety, responsibility, ethics, wildlife conservation and wildlife identification, game care, survival and first aid. Courses are offered year-round throughout the state.

The program is funded in part through the Federal Pittman-Robertson tax on archery equipment and handguns and is made possible by a partnership between more than 2,700 Michigan volunteer hunter education instructors and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division. These volunteers give freely of their time and talents to share their love of Michigan's natural resources and the sport of hunting.

Hunter education instructors work to plant the seeds of sportsmanship in each student. Properly nurtured, these seeds will grow into the future leaders in natural resource management. The skills learned in these classes can be used throughout the

student's life and be passed on to the next generation of sportsmen and sportswomen.

The hunter education course is not intended to be all there is to know about hunting, nor does it meet requirements for carrying a concealed weapon. It is instead an introduction to a lifelong recreational activity, a foundation to a better appreciation of Michigan's natural resources and a springboard to continued learning.

In 2006, the age for hunting small game was lowered to 10 years old, and the age for hunting deer, bear and elk with a firearm on private land was lowered to 12. Michigan's new apprentice hunter program also allows individuals 10 and older to hunt without first obtaining a hunter safety certificate. Apprentice

hunters must be accompanied by a licensed hunter 21 or older who is mentoring them in the sport. Although the apprentice license is an opportunity to introduce individuals to hunting, it is not a replacement for hunter education. An apprentice hunter may participate in the program for two license years before being required to take a hunter safety course. See the current Michigan hunting and trapping guide for regulations regarding apprentice licenses and minimum-age requirements.

The DNR is striving to recruit the most-qualified instructors available and provide them with the best materials and training necessary to conduct hunter education courses throughout the state. If you are interested in becoming an instructor, please write to:

**Hunter Education Program
Law Enforcement Division
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30031
Lansing, MI 48909-9785**



Hunter Ethics

The aim of hunter education is to preserve Michigan's hunting tradition. Responsible, ethical behavior and personal involvement are essential to sustain and nurture the natural world. This means acting responsibly toward the sport or activity in which you are engaged and acting with consideration for other outdoor users. The ethical utilization and conservation of wildlife is critical to ensure the long-term survival of Michigan's outdoor heritage.

The responsibility for the future of hunting begins with you. If our young people can learn to be responsible hunters, negative public attitudes toward hunting that grew from past mistakes may change and private lands now open to hunting may remain open. It is the careful and courteous hunter who is helping preserve our hunting heritage for future generations.

Hunter Incidents

The goal of Michigan's Hunter Education Program is to train responsible hunters while further reducing the number of hunting incidents. Nearly all hunting incidents can be prevented if hunters remember the three keys to safe firearm handling:

- Treat each firearm as if it were loaded
- Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times
- Make certain of the target and beyond before pointing or shooting

Hunter Education has had a dramatic impact on reducing hunter incidents in Michigan.

Persons seeking information about hunter education or about upcoming classes in their area may find this information under Recreational Safety Classes in the "Quick Links" section on the front page of the DNR Web site:

www.michigan.gov/dnr

