

Hunting

GUIDE



Try to Break a Record

While many hunt for enjoyment and to feed their families with the game they take, others strive to participate in the sport competitively.

Whether you're only beginning the journey into the outdoors or are a skilled veteran, claiming the top spot in hunting history provides significant bragging rights.

In America, hunting accomplishments are maintained by the Boone and Crockett Club. The organization was formed in the late-1800s by Theodore Roosevelt to restrict irresponsible land use, conflicts and the destruction of natural resources.

After years of dedicating itself to the betterment of wildlife and conservation, the group formally recognized outstanding North American big-game trophies in its first record book published in 1932.

Check out some long-standing records and others that have been topped in recent years, according to Field and Stream.

Trophy: Stone's Sheep
Hunter: L.S. Chadwick
Muskwa River, British Columbia, 1936

Before becoming a notable hunter, L.S. Chadwick earned a degree in engineering and obtained over 250 patents for



© ADOBE STOCK

upgrades on items like razor blades and car brakes. At age 62, he traveled deep into the woods of British Columbia and began a lengthy hunting excursion.

According to an interview with Outdoor Life in 1937, during the trip, Chadwick set up 16 camps, each pushing further into the Rocky Mountains. After finding a group of three sheep, the record holder began filming them before ultimately taking

a shot. He downed the estimated 14-year old sheep that is considered the most magnificent big-game trophy in North American history.

Its broken right horn measured just over 50 inches, while its in-tact companion was 52 inches with a 31-inch spread.

Trophy: Whitetail Deer
Hunter: Milo Hanson
Biggar, Saskatchewan, 1993

In more recent records, Milo Hanson claimed the record for the most abundant Whitetail Deer after downing a buck that measured over 213 inches. The obscure farmer became an overnight celebrity when he shattered the previous title by more than seven inches. While the title is long-standing, there is a rumble in the hunting community that a potential record-breaking deer has been spotted roaming in Kentucky.

Trophy: Alaska Brown Bear

Hunter: Roy Lindsley
Kodiak Island, AK, 1952

While the number two and three trophy bears were hunted in 2013 and 2009, Roy Lindsley remains the titleholder for his achievement made back in 1952.

The behemoth had a skull that measured over 30 inches. Today, the bear is owned by the Los Angeles County Museum.

Tips for the New Hunter

Learning to hunt as an adult can be an intimidating experience. The task of learning to safely handle a weapon and respect nature, and learning intricate wildlife preservation laws can make some hesitant to participate in the sport.

Fortunately, with proper preparation, you can flawlessly begin a new hobby that will likely transform into a passion.

While taking hunting education classes is essential, one of the most beneficial ways to learn the ropes is by hiring a guide to introduce you to the lifestyle. With their assistance, you will gain hands-on experience that is hard to replicate in a classroom.

If possible, join an excursion as a guest before investing in licensing and purchasing gear or weapons. The sport takes immense patience before a payoff occurs, and the pace might not be right for everyone.

OBTAIN SAFETY CERTIFICATION

Find a hunter's safety course in your area to gain valuable knowledge about legal and ethical hunting. You may be surprised by the dense legalities regarding different seasons and



© ADOBE STOCK

limits for the allowed game. In efforts to preserve resources and conservation efforts, many animals are protected throughout most of the year before a short hunting season is allowed.

The course is also a beneficial introduction to keeping yourself and other hunters safe around firearms. It's also an excellent place to meet other like-minded peers who can

give you tips about the sport and find the heartiest game.

DETERMINING WHAT TO HUNT

Across America and beyond, there are numerous types of game available to hunt legally. The animals vastly range in size, will challenge your skills and provide leaner meat than commercially packaged foods.

The five most popular types of wildlife hunted, as reported by the organization American Hunter, are the Whitetail deer, beaver, Mallard duck, elk and squirrel.

It's good practice to focus on one type of game as you get started. Once you're more familiar with the sport, consider learning the skills and buying the gear for different animals.

THE RIGHT GEAR

To hunt more successfully and comfortably, hunters should stock up on numerous tools. A few staples you need include warm clothes when shooting in cold climates, a flashlight, knife and high-quality optics like binoculars.

You should also find a sizable backpack to store drinks, snacks and emergency first-aid kits.

Learn to Build a Campfire

Hunting big-game trophies will require some to stay outside during hazardous weather conditions.

During extended excursions, building a quality campfire can be beneficial for warming up and cooking hot meals.

If you plan to take extended hunting trips, knowing the rules about making a fire and dealing with it safely are critical.

GEAR TO BUILD A CAMPFIRE

Gone are the days of rubbing two sticks together to get a fire started. Modern hunters have the conveniences of packing tools that will quickly ignite their campfire, even during wet conditions. The experts at Scouting Magazine recommend bringing along a sharp knife, a folding saw and a small hatchet.

When selecting wood for a fire, you should cut an arm-thick limb from a downed tree. Touch the center of the wood to your cheek and ensure it feels dry. Try to avoid freshly cut branches that smell damp as they will inhibit your efforts.

Use your hatchet to reach the driest sections of the fire starter and slice off thin sec-



© ADOBE STOCK

tions to use as fuel.

BUILDING THE FIRE

If you're making a fire while it's raining, it's essential to prepare the wood under a tarp to ensure it remains dry. Next, follow these instructions for a triumphant finale.

- Use two 1-inch-thick sticks about 6 inches apart on the ground. Apply pencil-thin sticks across the base.

- Place your thin wafer shavings on top of the support sticks, allowing space for airflow.

- Next, place fine, split kindling across the support sticks parallel to one another, leaving space in between.

- Apply a match directly under the tinder. Wait for the first flame to appear before adding more wood shavings. Wait to add more fuel to the

fire until there is a reliable blaze, produced on the raised base.

WHEN COOKING MEALS

If you plan to cook the game you acquire, while on your hunting trips, make sure to do so safely. Invest in sharp knives to assist in skinning your meals and a digital thermometer to check the meat's temperature accurately.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention warns hunters of a disease called trichinellosis, which results from eating undercooked wild game. The condition develops when people eat raw meat that is infected with trichinella larvae. The acid found in our stomachs will quickly dissolve a hard cyst around the eggs, which ultimately releases live worms into a host.

Purify Drinking Water

Tracking wild game or spending overnights on hunting trips can take you far from nature's beaten path. If you are committed to living off the land, it's critical to learn how to purify water from sources like ponds or lakes.

Understanding necessary outdoor survival skills can ultimately be the difference between life and death.

When you're thirsty, and the canteen is empty, it can be tempting to wet your lips on any water you stumble across. However, it's imperative to be aware of the dangers of drinking unpurified liquids. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests drinking impure water can result in these dangerous conditions.

- **Cryptosporidium:** microscopic parasites that cause diarrheal disease cryptosporidiosis.

- **Giardia:** a parasite found in soil, food, surfaces or water that has been contaminated with feces by an infected human or animal.

- **Shigella:** an intestinal disease caused by bacteria that causes severe diarrhea, which is often bloody.

- **Norovirus:** a very contagious virus that is known for causing nausea, stomach pain or vomiting.



© ADOBE STOCK

Unless you have thoroughly decontaminated the water, avoid drinking it at all costs. Here are some tips to purify H₂O from nearly any source, as recommended by American Hunter.

BOILING

The easiest way to purify

water is by boiling it, however, it requires plenty of energy and planning to be performed correctly. Before attempting to clean the liquid, you must consider the altitude of where you are visiting.

If at sea level, it's safe to ingest after boiling the water for one minute. However, for

elevations above 6,500 feet, you should allow the process to occur for at least three. Higher levels drop the boiling point of water.

PORTABLE FILTER

In cases where you won't have the convenience of building a fire to boil water, consider

packing a portable filter. Look for models that are advertised to work quickly in case you find yourself in a pinch.

Make sure to bring along extra filters and storage containers when you're outdoors for extended stays and are unsure of the next available water source.

Be a Thoughtful Hunting Partner

The act of hunting can be an incredible companionship sport with the right company. Becoming an excellent partner is beneficial to both your enjoyment and results while outdoors.

When choosing someone to join in on the adventure, make sure you have a trusting relationship. Because of the possible accidents that can occur while hunting, it's critical to know you can rely on a person.

One of the most prominent qualities, but sometimes forgotten by new hunters, is protecting your sweet spots. While it's fun to brag about trophies, be vague about successful locations you navigate. If you and your partner know about a place where the big game is generous, keep the area a secret, so it doesn't become overrun with other hunters.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR PARTNER

When you find yourself in the field with little luck or action, it can be tempting to call it a day and head back to camp. However, this is a significant flaw in partnership and can lead to safety issues if your companion chooses to hunt alone.

Always discuss reasons that make it OK to quit on an



© ADOBE STOCK

excursion and stick to the guidelines. Some may be factors like a family emergency at home, serious injuries or illnesses.

SHOW UP ON TIME

Be respectful of your partner by arriving on time. You

should have a strict plan in place regarding when you will be set up and ready for a hunting excursion. Consider packing your gear the night before and get to bed early.

Make sure to wake up in time to travel to your location and set up your equipment

before wildlife gets active.

DISCUSS BOUNDARIES

While hunting can build lifelong friendships, it's imperative to discuss the boundaries with your partner. For instance, if you are sharing a tree stand or blind, who gets

dibs on the first animal that is spotted.

You should also agree on wildlife that is off-limits even if one arrives in your sights. Be respectful of each other's wishes and ethics to eliminate disagreements and enjoy the time spent bonding.

A Guide to Hunting Ethically

Avoid becoming a hunter that gives the sport a bad name.

When unethical decisions are made in the field, the result can be people getting a false impression of all hunters being disrespectful to nature.

Whether you are a beginner or have numerous years under your belt, some guidelines must never be broken.

Take a look at some ways to ensure you're hunting ethically, as provided by the National Wild Turkey Federation.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Any time you are responsible for taking a life, it must be practiced with extreme care. Make sure to spend ample time brushing up on your shooting accuracy at the range.

Also, ensure your weapon is safe for use and your partners are just as committed to honing their skills.

A factor that is often forgotten during the heat of the moment is to try to make your shots as efficient as possible. Taking down wildlife quickly and least painfully is critical. Avoid becoming excited when you're staring down the sights and firing a shot that will only wound the animal. You may spend the



© ADOBE STOCK

rest of the day tracking the prey, which will be left suffering.

RESPECT PROPERTY AND LANDOWNERS

Always ask for permission to hunt if you will be on private property. Not only can failing to do so land you in serious legal trouble, it's also unethical and against the

rules. You should also do your best to respect the area by picking up after yourself.

Bring along garbage bags to clean up any water bottles or snack wrappers to leave the ground as you found it. If you are hunting on private property, consider thanking the owner by gifting them a portion of the game you capture.

Hunters will likely come

across those enjoying recreational activities while outdoors. Be courteous and careful when interacting with a peer, and always investigate a noise before opening fire.

RESPECT ANIMALS

The prey you hunt should be respected both during the hunt and at the time of harvest. When preparing your

own meat, don't allow any to waste and dispose of the carcass properly. While taking pictures with a downed trophy is acceptable, make sure they are honorable.

Too many trophy hunters spread tasteless photos of their wildlife in unethical poses across social media and beyond, painting the sport under a shameful light.



© ADOBE STOCK

Hunting Statistics

Successful hunters play a significant role in keeping wildlife populations regulated while ensuring the land is maintained.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service reports that each year, \$200 million in hunter's federal excise taxes are distributed to state agencies to support wildlife management.

Some areas where the taxes benefit

the hunting industry's progress include the purchase of lands for hunters, education safety courses and enhancing the habitats of wildlife. As you prepare to take down your next big trophy, pat yourself on the back to follow the rules and do your part in progressing the industry.

Here are some other ways hunters help out conservation efforts, as reported by the National Shooting Sports Foundation.

- Hunters' spending generates more than \$185 million per day for the United States' economy.

- In 2016, there were 7.9 million active deer hunters and 2.6 million hunted waterfowl birds.

- U.S. hunters outnumber the population of 43 states.

- If the hunting industry were an independent company, it would rank 104 on the Fortune 500.

- Hunters spend about \$6.3 billion on food, lodging and transportation, which is 50% more than Hyatt's annual revenues.

- Across the nation, hunting supports about 525,000 jobs.

- The annual \$5.3 billion collected

in federal taxes on hunting purchases can provide Social Security benefits to nearly 325,000 retired workers.

- In 2016, \$5.9 billion was spent on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment.

- Spending by hunters generates \$3.4 billion in state and local taxes.

- Deer hunting alone contributed to nearly \$20.9 billion to our nation's GDP and supported over 305,400 jobs.

- Thanks to hunting-related occupations, \$12.4 billion worth of wages went into circulation.