

Deer Hunting Regulations
National Conservation Training Center

1. NCTC reserves the right to cancel any hunt at any time due to NCTC mission obligations or severe weather conditions. Every effort will be made to post cancellations in advance; however, this may not always be possible due to the potential for unexpected situations.
2. All hunters must complete the online registration by **30 September**. To register, visit the NCTC Deer Hunt website and click on the registration link. Prospective hunters must download and read the NCTC Deer Hunt Regulations before the system will allow one to proceed with registration. Failure to complete the registration by **30 September** will result in a hunter not being allowed to enter NCTC.
3. Registered hunters must present a Real ID compliant identification to enter NCTC. For a list of acceptable Real ID compliant identification, visit <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification>.
4. Hunters must comply with all NCTC hunting regulations and West Virginia state hunting laws and regulations. WV hunting laws and regulations can be obtained from local license agents or online at http://www.wvdnr.gov/hunting/hunting_regis.shtm.
5. All hunters, except hunters with a valid WV Apprentice Hunting and Trapping License, are required to have completed an approved hunter education course. Holders of WV Apprentice Hunting and Trapping License must be chaperoned by a properly licensed hunter with a valid hunter education certificate. Information about WV DNR sponsored courses can be found online at <https://register-ed.com/programs/westvirginia/189-hunter-education-program>.
6. All people hunting on NCTC must obtain the appropriate WV deer hunting license, stamps, and hunters education certificate, and present them at check-in. For information on WV hunting licenses and stamps go to <http://www.wvdnr.gov/hunting/licensing.shtm>.
7. Children must be at least 10 years of age to hunt at NCTC. Youth hunters 10 to 14 years of age must possess a hunter education certificate and be accompanied by a licensed adult that also has successfully completed a hunter education course. Refer to WV DNR hunting regulations for appropriate license requirements for youth hunters and hunters age 65 or older.
8. All hunters using elevated stands must use a commercially made safety harness. Home-made harnesses are not permitted.
9. Hunters may not wire, screw, bolt, or nail steps, stands or other objects to trees. Pruning and cutting brush or limbs is not permitted.
10. All archery weapons legal for hunting deer in West Virginia, including crossbows, are allowed on NCTC and may be used during all NCTC deer hunts.

11. All archery equipment must be unloaded while traveling to and from designated hunting locations. Traditional and compound bows are considered loaded when an arrow is knocked. Crossbows are considered loaded when a bolt is in the flight groove. Crossbow strings may not be cocked until a hunter is in place in a tree stand or blind.
12. Archery hunters within designated archery only zones may hunt from a pre-existing ladder stand or blind, or a personal stand or blind erected by the hunter within 50 yards around the pre-existing ladder stand. Only portable climbing equipment and ground blinds are permitted within 50 yards of a pre-existing ladder stand or blind and must be removed at the end of the hunt. Hunter erected free-standing or ladder stands are not permitted. Placing personal hunting stands the day before a hunt is not permitted.
13. Archery hunters may fire in any direction.
14. All hunters during the NCTC firearms hunts must wear a minimum of 400 square inches of blaze orange, including archery hunters.
15. Shotgun and muzzleloader hunters must hunt from an NCTC provided ladder stand or blind and must limit shooting to within the zone marked by white and orange painted posts. No firearms hunter will be allowed to use a personal stand or blind. Hunters who are not comfortable hunting from a ladder stand may hunt from the base of the tree containing an NCTC provided ladder stand, facing the same direction as the ladder stand.
16. Modern shotguns of 20 gauge or larger and muzzleloaders meeting WV requirements are permitted during the NCTC firearms seasons.
17. Non-toxic ammunition is recommended in all firearms. Non-toxic ammunition is also known as lead-free or non-lead. See the USFWS Lead Free website for more information at <https://www.fws.gov/initiative/lead-free>.
18. Only muzzleloaders and archery equipment may be used during the December NCTC muzzleloader deer hunt. Refer to WV deer regulations for archery equipment regulations during the WV muzzleloader season.
19. Possession of handguns on NCTC is prohibited by federal law. Handguns may not be used for deer hunting on NCTC.
20. Firearms must be unloaded with the action open while traveling to and from designated hunting locations. Muzzleloaders are considered unloaded when uncapped, when the priming charge is removed from the pan, or when the primer is removed from an inline muzzleloader.
21. All hunters participating in regular NCTC deer hunts must harvest an antlerless deer (doe, or male deer with no antler longer than 3-inches) on NCTC before being eligible to harvest an antlered deer on NCTC. Harvesting an antlerless deer at any time during the current year's season on NCTC entitles a hunter to take an antlered deer during the same season on NCTC, provided all relevant WV hunting licenses and stamps are obtained and regulations are followed. A hunter who harvests two consecutive antlerless deer before harvesting an antlered deer would be eligible to harvest two consecutive antlered deer in accordance with WV antlerless and antlered deer harvest regulations and have the appropriate licenses and stamps.

22. During the Special Early Hunt on 17 October 2026, hunters are permitted to harvest two deer which shall not be applied to the regular archery or firearms bag limits in accordance WV deer hunting regulations.
23. Hunters participating in an NCTC designated mentorship hunt may harvest any deer in accordance with their WV deer hunting license and stamps.
24. The use of scents is permitted. However, scent applicators and all litter must be removed at the end of your hunt. Failure to remove litter will result in being ineligible for future NCTC deer hunts.
25. All hunters are required to check in at the NCTC check station prior to hunting and check out at the NCTC check station when they are finished hunting. All harvested deer must be checked in electronically and tagged at the NCTC check station before they are removed from the property. All harvested deer will be weighed and aged at the NCTC check station.
26. Hunters must park in the designated parking spot for their hunt location without blocking trails or roadways. Hunters must use designated trails when walking to and from hunting locations.
27. Tracking wounded deer beyond 100 yards from a hunting stand or blind must be done in the presence of an NCTC staff member.
28. Hunting weapons must be unloaded while tracking beyond 100 yards and may be loaded for dispatching a found deer when determined to be necessary by the accompanying NCTC staff member.
29. Deer must be field dressed a minimum of 50 yards from any hunting stand, blind, trail, or road or at the designated field dressing area near the NCTC Hunt Check Station if the above-mentioned conditions cannot be met. Hunters using locations 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28 must use the designated field dressing area near the NCTC Hunt Check Station.
30. The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, drones) is not permitted on NCTC.
31. The hunt closest to Veterans Day will be a Military Preference Hunt. Hunters showing proof of current or former military service will draw for hunt locations first. All other hunters will be drawn for any remaining hunt locations after the Military Preference draw.
32. Call 911 immediately for any severe or life-threatening injuries before notifying NCTC staff or Security. Report any injury or accident to staff at the NCTC Check Station in person or by phone (304-876-7782), or to NCTC Security (304-876-7911) as soon as possible.