Guide to Online Game Check – Black Bear

This tutorial will guide you through the process of using the MassFishHunt system to check your black bear online. Please take a few minutes to read through this guide before beginning.

To check a harvested black bear online, there are a few, but very important pieces of information needed. Required information will include: town of harvest, date of harvest, and the bear's sex, your hunting method, equipment used, the habitat where you encountered the bear, whether or not you will submit a tooth for aging, and whether or not the bear had a radio collar or ear tags. In addition, optional data questions will include: bear weight, whether the bear was gutted, and whether the weight is an estimate or from a scale.

Remember the harvest tag must remain attached to the black bear throughout this process. After the completion of the online game check, a confirmation number will be generated that must be written on the harvest tag. All successful hunters must check their harvested black bear within 48 hours either online through the MassFishHunt system or at a traditional check station. NOTE: You must check your harvested bear BEFORE you process the bear for food or taxidermy purposes. Please use care when entering information on the harvested bear into the MassFishHunt system, particularly the date of harvest. Please contact the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (DFW) during business hours at 508-389-6300 if you have issues checking your black bear online.
1) To start, go to the official **MassFishHunt** webpage by clicking below, or copy and paste the following link into your webbrowser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari) to reach the official **MassFishHunt** webpage.

http://www.mass.gov/massfishhunt

Click the [Enter MassFishHunt] button shown above.
2) To enter the **MassFishHunt** system, enter your **Last Name** and **Customer ID** number from your hunting/sporting license or black bear permit in the appropriate field and click **NEXT**. Your Customer ID number can be found in the top left corner of your hunting/sporting license or black bear permit, and in the top left corner of the harvest tag.
3) Once logged into the *MassFishHunt* system you can begin your online black bear check; click on the REPORT A HARVEST button.
4) Click the **Black Bear** option on the left side under **HARVEST MENU**. On this page, you may also see options to check your harvested deer, turkey, or furbearers during their respective seasons if you have the appropriate licenses or permits.
5) You are now ready to begin your online game check for a harvested black bear. Click the ADD button.
6) The 2013 BLACK BEAR HARVEST REPORT consists of a series of questions, many of which are multiple-choice. Questions 1-8 are required information, the rest are optional. You will need to examine your black bear for some of these questions. Your responses to these questions provide DFW biologists important information used to evaluate and manage the statewide bear population. Please take a few minutes to answer each question accurately. Also, please consider submitting a tooth for aging (guidance is provided in step 8b). Simply click in the box to the right of each question and enter or click on the appropriate response.
6a) You can click on the blue question marks to the right of each question for additional information to help answer each question.
6b) The Division collects bear teeth to determine the age structure of the harvest. If you submit a tooth for aging, we will mail you a letter in June with your harvested bear’s age. If you would like to contribute to the scientific management of Massachusetts’ black bear population and would like to know the age of your bear, please follow the instructions below.

1. The tooth you should remove is the first premolar (see photo below). This is a very small tooth, just behind the large canine tooth. It does not matter if you take the left or the right tooth. However, the root is the most important part. Do not break the tooth.

2. Using a small sharp knife, or a sharp ¼-inch wood chisel, slide the blade down the side of the tooth and cut or separate the gum tissue where it sticks to the tooth. Using a small needle-nose pliers or the pliers on your multi-tool, wiggle the tooth slightly until you can pull it out of the jawbone and the gum. The tooth is only about ½-inch (or less) in length. Go easy and do not break it.

**REMOVE THIS TOOTH**

3. Put the tooth in the small envelope provided, or other small envelope, and mark it with your name, Customer ID number and confirmation number (or seal number) of your bear. Also include your name and mailing address. Put the small envelope in a regular mailing envelope and send it to:

   MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
   100 Hartwell Street, Suite 200
   West Boylston, MA 01583
7) Once you have completed answering all questions, click the **Submit** button (NOTE: not all fields are required). You will have a chance to edit your responses before they are finalized, but please double-check to ensure that all required fields are accurately entered.

Please ensure that the date of harvest and all other fields are entered accurately.
8) You will need to confirm the submission by clicking YES on the pop-up. Before doing so, make sure all the information provided is accurate as you will not be able to edit any information after clicking YES. If you need to edit any information, click NO and then change your entries. When finished proceed from step 7.
9) After completing your online game check, a unique CONFIRMATION NUMBER will be generated. It is required that you **write this confirmation number on the harvest tag** (that should still be on the harvested bear), where it shall remain until the bear is processed for food or taxidermy purposes. Butchers or taxidermists should not accept bears without an official metal tag (bear checked at a physical check station), or a harvest tag with a confirmation number (online game check).

Click on the **OK** button after you have recorded the confirmation number.
10) A hunter can harvest 1 bear per year. Thus, once you submit a harvest report for a bear, you can no longer add an additional black bear harvest report. If you reprint your bear permit, it will show that your permit has been fulfilled. If you made an error on your harvest report, you can no longer edit it and must contact MassWildlife.

The *MassFishHunt* system will store the game you have checked online. To view the specific details of any one online harvest report, click the **VIEW** button.
11) After clicking **VIEW**, this is what your harvest report looks like. The **MassFishHunt** system will store the submitted game checks, you may print a copy of these submitted harvest reports at any time.