

# IHEA-USA Hunter Education Standards

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Recommendations Submitted by the Standards and Evaluations Committee

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## Hunter Education Core Curriculum

Course content designed for students to be instructed and assessed according to performance-based learning objectives related to safe, legal, and responsible hunting (core curriculum captured in blue boxes)

## Non-Core Curriculum

Course content designed for students to receive information about next steps.

### Reasons for Hunter Education and Justification for Hunting

Safe Firearms  
Mechanical Handling

Safe Firearm Field  
Practices

**Safe**

Wildlife Identification

Hunting Regulations

**Legal**

Personal  
Responsibility and  
Behavior

Hunter Best  
Practices

Responsibility to  
Wildlife

Hunter's Role in  
Conservation

Key Wildlife and  
Management  
Principles

**Responsible**

To foster graduate participation in hunting, emphasize importance of continuing education, and illustrate value of mentorship and social support.

**Participate, Learn,  
Connect**

## 1. REASONS FOR HUNTER EDUCATION AND JUSTIFICATION FOR HUNTING

Curricula Category	Subtopic(s)	Learning Objective(s) Students will be able to:	Specific Content
Justification for Hunter Education	Why hunter education is important	<b><u>Objective 1:</u></b> <b>Identify the purpose and importance of hunter education.</b>	The goal of hunter education is to train safe, responsible and law abiding hunters. Hunter education is important because it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decreases hunting-related shooting incidents and other hunting injuries</li> <li>promotes responsible hunter behavior, including compliance with hunting laws and regulations</li> </ul>
Hunter's Role in Wildlife Conservation	Role of hunting in conservation	<b><u>Objective 2:</u></b> <b>Identify hunters and recreational hunting as key to wildlife conservation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunters are primary source of financial support that benefits all wildlife species</li> <li>Hunters advocate and support legislation that protects wildlife resources</li> <li>Hunters assist wildlife agencies with management of some wildlife populations</li> </ul>
Hunter's Role in Wildlife Conservation	North American Model of Wildlife Conservation	<b><u>Objective 3:</u></b> <b>Describe the central principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish and wildlife are public resources and every citizen has the opportunity to pursue them within legal limits</li> <li>Wildlife populations are sustained and scientifically managed by professionals in government agencies</li> </ul>
Hunter's Role in Wildlife Conservation	Conservation funding for wildlife management, habitat management and hunter education.	<b><u>Objective 4:</u></b> <b>Describe how license fees and excise taxes support wildlife conservation.</b>	Wildlife management is funded largely by users who directly benefit from the resource. Two primary funding sources for wildlife management are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excise taxes on hunting equipment and ammunition from 1937 Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act</li> <li>revenue from state natural resource agencies, including hunting license fees</li> </ul>
Key Wildlife Ecology & Management Principles	Basic factors of wildlife conservation	<b><u>Objective 5:</u></b> <b>Describe how wildlife and habitat interact.</b>	Factors that affect wildlife production and survival are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>quality and amount of habitat</li> <li>climate</li> <li>reproductive potential of species</li> </ul> Habitat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is most important factor affecting wildlife survival</li> <li>changes over time through natural succession providing benefits to distinct species at different stages of growth</li> </ul>

Key Wildlife Ecology & Management Principles	Basic factors of wildlife conservation	<p><b><u>Objective 6:</u></b></p> <p><b>Identify key components of wildlife habitat.</b></p>	<p>Habitat consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food</li> <li>• water</li> <li>• cover</li> <li>• space</li> <li>• arrangement</li> </ul>
Key Wildlife Ecology & Management Principles	Biological basis of hunting	<p><b><u>Objective 7:</u></b></p> <p><b>Describe how carrying capacity, biological surplus and limiting factors affect the size of a population.</b></p>	<p>Carrying capacity is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of animals of a given species that an area can support without damage to the habitat</li> </ul> <p>Biological surplus is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of animals in a population beyond the carrying capacity</li> </ul> <p>Limiting factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• factors that limit population growth</li> <li>• Examples include: disease, predation, weather, and a lack of food, water, cover, or space</li> </ul>

## 2. SAFE FIREARM HANDLING

Curricula Category	Subtopic	Learning Objective(s) The Student will be able to:	Specific Content
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Major causes of incidents	<p><b>Objective 8:</b> Identify common causes of hunting and shooting-related incidents.</p>	<p>Four main types of hunting-related shooting incidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunter Judgment Mistakes—such as mistaking another person for game or not checking the foreground or background before firing</li> <li>• Safety Rule Violations—including pointing the muzzle in an unsafe direction and ignoring proper procedures for crossing a fence, obstacle, or difficult terrain</li> <li>• Lack of Control and Practice--which can lead to accidental discharges and stray shots</li> <li>• Mechanical Failure—such as an obstructed barrel or improper ammunition</li> </ul> <p>Most common causes of hunting incidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• failure to identify the target (15.5%)</li> <li>• shooter swinging on game (12.8%)</li> <li>• careless handling of firearm (11.4%)</li> <li>• victim out of sight of shooter (8.3%)</li> </ul> <p>(NSSF, Industry Intelligence Reports, 2007)</p>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Parts of a firearm including safety mechanisms	<p><b>Objective 9:</b> Identify the basic parts of a firearm and state their purposes.</p>	<p>The three main parts of a firearm are the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• action</li> <li>• stock</li> <li>• barrel</li> </ul> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• loads and fires ammunition</li> <li>• ejects the spent case</li> </ul> <p>Stock:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• serves as a platform for supporting the action and barrel and is held by the shooter</li> </ul> <p>Barrel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That part of a firearm through which a projectile or shot charge travels under pressure from burning gunpowder, compressed air or other like means. A barrel may be either smooth or rifled</li> <li>• guides the projectile in the intended direction</li> </ul> <p>Rifling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is a pattern of spiral grooves cut into the bore of the barrel</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• puts spin on a bullet when fired</li> <li>• allows for more accurate shooting</li> </ul> <p>Other parts of the firearm include: trigger, trigger guard, safety, barrel stamp, muzzle, and sights</p> <p>Trigger:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allows shooter to initiate the shot</li> </ul> <p>Trigger guard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protects trigger from unintended movement</li> </ul> <p>Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a device that is designed to block the trigger and therefore to prevent the firearm from firing. A safety does not necessarily block the gun's firing mechanism. Never depend solely on a safety to prevent a gun from firing.</li> </ul> <p>Barrel stamp:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific information stamped on the side of the barrel about the correct ammunition (caliber or gauge) to use</li> <li>• allows shooter to correctly match ammunition to the firearm</li> </ul> <p>Muzzle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• part of the barrel from which the projectile emerges</li> <li>• must always be pointed in a safe direction</li> </ul> <p>Sights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allow precise alignment of the firearm with the target</li> </ul>
<p>Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)</p>	<p>Differences between rifles, shotguns and handguns</p>	<p><b><u>Objective 10:</u></b>  <b>Describe the characteristics of rifles, shotguns and handguns.</b></p>	<p>Rifles and handguns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are distinguished by spiral grooves in the bore known as rifling</li> <li>• fire cartridges typically with a single projectile called a bullet</li> <li>• are aimed by aligning the sights and are fired by carefully squeezing the trigger to avoid disturbing sight picture</li> <li>• are used for stationary targets</li> <li>• extra care must be taken to control the muzzle of a handgun, because of the short barrel length</li> </ul> <p>Shotguns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• usually have a smooth bore</li> <li>• fire shotshells with multiple projectiles or a single projectile known as a slug</li> <li>• if designed to fire slugs, may have a rifled barrel</li> <li>• are pointed, rather than aimed and are fired by quickly “slapping” the trigger when the shooter is ready to fire</li> <li>• are typically used for moving targets in the air</li> </ul>

Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Basic rules of firearm safety	<p><b><u>Objective 11:</u></b>  <b>Apply the basic rules of firearm safety.</b></p>	<p>Four basic rules of firearm safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always treat the firearm as if it is loaded</li> <li>• Control the muzzle by keeping the firearm pointed in a safe direction</li> <li>• Keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot</li> <li>• Be sure of the target and what lies beyond</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Common firearm actions	<p><b><u>Objective 12:</u></b>  <b>Identify common types of modern firearm actions.</b></p>	<p>Common firearm actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bolt</li> <li>• break or hinge</li> <li>• lever</li> <li>• pump or slide</li> <li>• semi-auto</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Parts of ammunition	<p><b><u>Objective 13:</u></b>  <b>Describe how ammunition functions in a firearm.</b></p>	<p>Rifle and pistol cartridges consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• case</li> <li>• primer</li> <li>• powder</li> <li>• bullet</li> </ul> <p>Shotgun shells consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hull</li> <li>• primer</li> <li>• powder</li> <li>• wad</li> <li>• shot</li> </ul> <p>Cartridge or shotshell firing sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trigger is pulled</li> <li>• firing pin strikes the primer, which ignites the powder in the case</li> <li>• burning powder increases pressure from hot gases</li> <li>• heat and pressure propel the bullet or shot and wad out of the barrel</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Failure to fire	<p><b><u>Objective 14:</u></b>  <b>Describe how to safely handle a firearm during and after a misfire.</b></p>	<p>Steps to handle a misfire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain safe muzzle control</li> <li>• keep the action closed and firearm pointed at a safe backstop</li> <li>• wait 15 seconds (60 seconds for a muzzleloader)</li> <li>• if gun still has not fired, remove shell or cartridge from chamber</li> </ul>

Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Proper ammunition	<p><b>Objective 15:</b>  <b>Match ammunition to the respective caliber or gauge of a firearm.</b></p>	<p>Steps to correctly match ammunition to firearm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• locate and understand barrel stamp on firearm</li> <li>• locate and understand head stamp on ammunition</li> <li>• correctly match proper caliber or gauge and length of shell</li> <li>• You must match the descriptions exactly</li> </ul> <p>Example of the importance of correctly matching firearm to ammunition: A 20 gauge shotshell loaded into a 12 gauge shotgun can slide forward beyond the chamber. If another shell is fired, there is a barrel obstruction which can cause the barrel to rupture.</p>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Loading and unloading firearms	<p><b>Objective 16:</b>  <b>Show how to load and unload common modern firearm actions.</b></p>	<p>Loading sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point the muzzle in safe direction</li> <li>• If possible, engage the safety</li> <li>• Keep finger off the trigger and outside the trigger guard</li> <li>• Open the action</li> <li>• Load the correct ammunition into the chamber or magazine</li> <li>• Close the action. The firearm is loaded</li> </ul> <p>Unloading sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point the muzzle in safe direction</li> <li>• If possible, engage the safety</li> <li>• Keep finger off the trigger and outside the trigger guard</li> <li>• Remove the magazine</li> <li>• Open the action</li> <li>• Eject cartridges if it is the only way to remove them</li> <li>• Physically and visibly check to make sure the chamber and magazine are empty</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling	Passing firearms safely	<p><b>Objective 17:</b>  <b>Show how to transfer a firearm from one hunter to another.</b></p>	<p>Basic rules for passing a firearm to another person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the firearm pointed in a safe direction</li> <li>• Unload the firearm with your back toward the other person</li> <li>• Engage the safety</li> <li>• With the action open, check the chamber and magazine to be sure there is no ammunition</li> <li>• With the action open, allow the recipient to verify that there is no ammunition in the chamber or magazine</li> <li>• Allow the recipient to grasp the firearm securely</li> <li>• Maintain your grip until the recipient acknowledges a secure hold by saying "Thank you" or "I got it"</li> </ul>

<p>Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)</p>	<p>Shooting skill</p>	<p><b><u>Objective 18:</u></b> <b>Explain the fundamentals of rifle marksmanship or shotgun shooting.</b></p>	<p>Shooters should determine and use their dominant eye for shooting. Fundamentals of rifle marksmanship are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proper shooting position(s) (benchrest, prone, kneeling, sitting, standing)</li> <li>• sight alignment</li> <li>• sight picture</li> <li>• breath control</li> <li>• trigger squeeze</li> <li>• follow through</li> </ul> <p>Fundamentals of accurate shotgun shooting include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proper stance</li> <li>• mounting the shotgun</li> <li>• pointing the shotgun</li> <li>• proper lead on moving targets</li> <li>• “slapping” the trigger</li> <li>• follow through</li> </ul>
<p>Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)</p>	<p>Eye and ear protection</p>	<p><b><u>Objective 19:</u></b> <b>Explain why it is important to wear eye and ear protection while shooting.</b></p>	<p>Firing a cartridge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates loud noise which can damage hearing</li> <li>• sends the projectile down range</li> <li>• discharges small particles of the projectile, burning gas and other residue which can damage eyes</li> </ul> <p>Wear eye and ear protection at all times when shooting</p>
<p>Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)</p>	<p>Performance characteristics of ammunition</p>	<p><b><u>Objective 20:</u></b> <b>Describe the differences among rifle, shotgun and handgun ammunition</b></p>	<p>Characteristics of cartridges and shotshells greatly affect performance of projectiles. Cartridge and shotshell performance depends on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bullet weight</li> <li>• shot size</li> <li>• design of the projectile</li> <li>• materials used to manufacture the projectile</li> <li>• type and amount of gun powder</li> </ul> <p>Rifles and pistols usually fire a single projectile, called a bullet, which is caused to spin by the rifled barrel. The spin leads to greater accuracy.</p> <p>Shotguns usually fire multiple projectiles, called shot. The pattern of the shot may be tightened (brought closer together) by the choke in the end of the barrel.</p> <p>Shooter’s choice of cartridge or shotshell should be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• species to be hunted</li> <li>• environment</li> <li>• hunting regulations</li> <li>• Rifle and pistol bullets usually travel further than shotgun pellets.</li> </ul>

Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Performance characteristics of ammunition	<p><b>Objective 21:</b>  <b>Explain the importance of a safe backstop when taking a shot.</b></p>	<p>When shooting, a safe impact area is necessary. Backstop needs to be solid enough to capture fired bullets and is constructed of a material that will not allow ricochets. Also when hunting the shooter must be certain that the area beyond intended target is clear of any non-target objects.</p> <p>Examples of projectile travel distances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• .22 bullet can travel over 1 ½ mile</li> <li>• centerfire bullet can travel several miles</li> <li>• small shot can travel 200-350 yards</li> <li>• larger shot can travel over 600 yards</li> <li>• slugs can travel over 800 yards</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Transporting firearms	<p><b>Objective 22:</b>  <b>Describe how to make a firearm safe for transport in a vehicle, watercraft, or ATV/UTV.</b></p>	<p>When transporting a firearm in a vehicle, boat, or on a horse, snowmobile or ATV/UTV, firearms should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have the safety engaged</li> <li>• be completely unloaded</li> <li>• have the magazine removed</li> <li>• be cased</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Cleaning firearms	<p><b>Objective 23:</b>  <b>List the steps to safely clean a firearm.</b></p>	<p>Cleaning firearms ensures safe, proper function of the action and performance of the ammunition. Steps for cleaning a firearm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safely unload the firearm</li> <li>• remove all ammunition from the cleaning area</li> <li>• use cloth and gun cleaning solvents to remove dirt, powder residue, skin oils and moisture from all metal parts of the firearm, including the action</li> <li>• use cleaning rods, brushes, patches and solvent to clean the bore</li> <li>• disassemble the firearm for more thorough cleaning</li> <li>• apply a coating of gun oil to protect the firearm from rust</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Handling (mechanics)	Storing firearms	<p><b>Objective 24:</b>  <b>Describe how to safely store firearms and ammunition.</b></p>	<p>Safety precautions for firearm storage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• firearms should be unloaded when stored</li> <li>• firearms should be stored so that unauthorized persons cannot access them</li> </ul>

			<p>Preferred conditions for firearm storage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store firearms in a locked cabinet or safe</li> <li>• Store firearms and ammunition separately</li> </ul> <p>Control of firearms when not in storage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hunter must maintain physical control of firearms whenever they are not in storage to prevent unauthorized use. This could mean being physically present, using gun locking mechanisms or locking the firearms in a vehicle.</li> <li>• Firearms should be unloaded except when actually hunting. This includes in a home, yard or vehicle.</li> <li>• Family members should be taught what to do if they find a firearm which has not been properly stored.</li> </ul>
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### 3. SAFE FIREARM FIELD PRACTICES

Curricula Category	Subtopic	Learning Objective(s) The Student will be able to:	Specific Content
Safe Firearm Field Practices	Handling firearms in hunting situations	<b><u>Objective 25:</u></b> <b>Describe how to make a firearm safe when entering or exiting a ground blind.</b>	<p>When entering or exiting a blind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keep muzzle(s) pointed in a safe direction</li> <li>• safely unload the firearm(s) and engage the safety</li> </ul>
Firearm Field Practices	Proper field carries	<b><u>Objective 26:</u></b> <b>Choose safe firearm carry methods while hunting alone and with others.</b>	<p>Methods of carry include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sling carry</li> <li>• trail carry</li> <li>• cradle carry</li> <li>• elbow or side carry</li> <li>• shoulder carry</li> <li>• two-handed or “ready” carry</li> </ul> <p>When choosing a carry method, you must consider muzzle control. Never allow your muzzle to be pointed at anyone. Weather or terrain may limit your choices. Also keep your finger off the trigger and keep the safety “on”. Two-handed or ready carry is the best carry for control of the muzzle and it allows the hunter to get into shooting position quickly. In case of a fall, the two-hand ready carry allows a hunter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better control of the firearm with both hands</li> <li>• to keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction</li> </ul>

Safe Firearm Field Practices	Safe zones of fire	<p><b><u>Objective 27:</u></b></p> <p><b>Apply the concept of safe zone of fire while hunting in groups.</b></p>	<p>A safe zone of fire is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an area into which the hunter may safely shoot</li> <li>• an area where no persons, houses, outbuildings or domestic animals are in range</li> </ul> <p>When hunting with one or two partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• each hunter's zone of fire is the area that extends in a 45° angle directly in front of the hunter</li> </ul> <p>Hunters must walk abreast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hunter must never swing or shoot outside the safe zone of fire</li> <li>• Hunters must not move away from an established "stand" location without notifying all other hunters in the group</li> <li>• Changing location will change the safe zone of fire for not only that hunter but for the rest of the hunting party</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Field Practices	Handling firearms in hunting situations	<p><b><u>Objective 28:</u></b></p> <p><b>Choose the proper response when presented with safe/unsafe shot opportunities.</b></p>	<p>Before taking a shot the hunter must always:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be sure of the target. Positive identification of the target eliminates "mistaken for game" incidents</li> <li>• be sure of what lies in front of and beyond the target. Being sure of a safe backstop means that the projectile cannot hit an unintended target</li> </ul> <p>Also, never shoot at sky-lined animals or animals out of range.</p> <p>Extreme caution should be used when shooting at running or fast-moving game. Shoot only within your zone of fire. Do not shoot unless you are confident that you can make an effective shot.</p>
Safe Firearm Field Practices	Barrel obstructions	<p><b><u>Objective 29:</u></b></p> <p><b>Determine how to clear an obstruction from the barrel of a firearm.</b></p>	<p>For clearing obstructions in a firearm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• always point the muzzle in a safe direction</li> <li>• open the action</li> <li>• make certain that the chamber and magazine are unloaded</li> <li>• check for obstructions by looking from the breech toward the muzzle, if possible</li> <li>• alternatively, check from the breech using a tool, such as a barrel light</li> <li>• Clear the obstruction using a cleaning rod</li> </ul>
Hunter Field Safety	Elevated stands	<p><b><u>Objective 30:</u></b></p> <p><b>Identify the causes of falls from an elevated stand.</b></p>	<p>The number one cause of injury or death when using elevated stands is falls. Falls from elevated stands are caused by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• errors in the placement and use of equipment</li> <li>• errors made while climbing into or out of the stand</li> </ul> <p>Falls may also be caused by equipment damage due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weathering or stress</li> <li>• insufficient familiarity with the equipment</li> <li>• weather</li> </ul>

Hunter Field Safety	Elevated stands	<p><b><u>Objective 31:</u></b>  <b>Identify safe practices for hunting from an elevated stand.</b></p>	<p>Always use caution when off the ground. Stay attached with a full body harness/fall arrest system (FBH/FAS) whenever off the ground. A full body fall arrest system should include a full body harness with a tether strap and lineman's belt and a suspension relief system. Users should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• follow the manufacturer's instructions</li> <li>• practice at ground level before climbing</li> <li>• inspect the stand and accessories before each use</li> <li>• use three points of contact when climbing</li> <li>• use a haul line to pull up firearms, bows or other equipment</li> </ul>
Hunter Field Safety	Full Body Harness/Fall Arrest Systems	<p><b><u>Objective 32:</u></b>  <b>Explain how the fall arrest system/full body harness is essential for reducing the risk of serious injury.</b></p>	<p>A properly used full body harness/fall arrest system (FBH/FAS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevents the wearer from falling to the ground</li> <li>• has a shock absorbing feature built into the tether</li> <li>• includes suspension relief to avoid suspension trauma</li> <li>• allows the wearer to re-enter the treestand</li> </ul> <p>Some systems allow a safe and gradual descent to the ground in the event that it is not possible to re-enter the stand</p>
Hunter Field Safety	Full Body Harness/Fall Arrest Systems	<p><b><u>Objective 33:</u></b>  <b>Describe how to recover from a tree-stand fall.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not panic—the full body harness/fall arrest system (FBH/FAS) will hold you</li> <li>• Signal for help</li> <li>• Recover and get back on the platform as quickly as possible</li> <li>• Take action to avoid suspension trauma if you cannot quickly get back on the platform or the ground. Your FAS/FBH should have a suspension relief strap, step into the loop and stand up to relieve pressure caused by the leg straps. If you do not have a suspension relief strap, keep moving your legs.</li> </ul>
Safe Firearm Field Practices	Crossing obstacles	<p><b><u>Objective 34:</u></b>  <b>Show how to cross an obstacle or hazardous terrain when hunting alone and with others.</b></p>	<p>To safely unload a firearm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times</li> <li>• Engage the safety and unload</li> <li>• Keep the action open</li> </ul> <p>When crossing fences, logs and other obstacles alone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safely unload the firearm</li> <li>• cover the muzzle</li> <li>• place the firearm on the opposite side of the obstacle</li> <li>• cross the obstacle (near a post if crossing a fence)</li> <li>• retrieve the firearm</li> <li>• check the barrel for obstructions before loading and continuing the hunt</li> </ul> <p>When crossing obstacles with one or more hunting partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safely unload all firearms while standing back to back</li> <li>• the first hunter hands his/her firearm to the second hunter</li> <li>• the second hunter visually confirms that both firearms are unloaded and</li> </ul>

			<p>that the actions are open and verbally confirms control of both firearms by saying “I got it” or “Thank you”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the first hunter crosses the obstacle (near a post if crossing a fence)</li> <li>• the second hunter passes both firearms over the obstacle to the first hunter using visual and verbal confirmations</li> <li>• the second hunter crosses the obstacle (near a post if crossing a fence) and retrieves his or her firearm using visual and verbal confirmations</li> <li>• both hunters stand back to back to reload, before continuing the hunt</li> </ul>
Hunter’s Best Practices	Hunter orange	<p><b><u>Objective 35:</u></b>  <b>Explain the importance of wearing hunter orange to prevent hunting-related shooting incidents.</b></p>	<p>Wearing hunter orange allows an individual to be more easily seen and identified as a human. Wearing hunter orange prevents hunting-related shooting incidents. Most states require hunters to wear hunter orange clothing for certain hunting activities</p>
Hunter’s Best Practices	Avoid alcohol and drug consumption	<p><b><u>Objective 36:</u></b>  <b>Identify reasons for avoiding alcohol and drug consumption prior to and during the hunt.</b></p>	<p>Alcohol and drug consumption prior to and while hunting can impair a hunter’s motor skills and judgment, leading to serious injuries or death</p>
Hunter’s Best Practices	Outdoor preparedness	<p><b><u>Objective 37:</u></b>  <b>Identify items that should be included in every survival kit.</b></p>	<p>Every survival kit should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fire building device</li> <li>• method of procuring safe water for drinking</li> <li>• personal first aid kit</li> <li>• signaling device, material for shelter construction</li> <li>• map &amp; compass</li> <li>• emergency food</li> </ul> <p>Additional Items will vary based on hunting conditions and personal preferences</p>
Hunter’s Best Practices	Outdoor preparedness	<p><b><u>Objective 38:</u></b>  <b>Describe the essential steps necessary to survive an emergency situation in the outdoors.</b></p>	<p>During an emergency situation a hunter should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop—remain calm and analyze situation</li> <li>• Think—what should I do now</li> <li>• Observe—survey terrain and look for familiar land marks</li> <li>• Plan—what’s the next best course of action</li> </ul> <p>A hunter should remember and follow the STOP principle.</p>

Hunter's Best Practices	Outdoor Preparedness- Prepare a hunt plan	<p><b><u>Objective 39:</u></b>  <b>Identify reasons for preparing and following a hunt plan.</b></p>	<p>A hunter should prepare and follow a hunt plan in case of becoming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lost</li> <li>sick</li> <li>injured</li> </ul> <p>A hunter should leave the hunt plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with a friend or family member so that searchers will know where to find the hunter</li> </ul> <p>A hunter should prepare and follow a plan when hunting in groups to prevent accidental shootings. A well-planned hunt is usually more successful.</p>
Hunter's Best Practices	Outdoor Preparedness- Physical conditioning	<p><b><u>Objective 40:</u></b>  <b>Explain the importance of personal preparedness when outdoors.</b></p>	<p>Preparation is important for reducing the likelihood of serious emergencies while hunting. Staying in shape can prevent exhaustion and heart attacks. Carrying medication for known medical conditions allows immediate treatment in the field. Proper clothing and a survival kit can be used to reduce the effects of harsh weather conditions.</p>
Hunter's Best Practices	Outdoor preparedness	<p><b><u>Objective 41:</u></b>  <b>Identify causes, symptoms and treatments of hypothermia and heat exhaustion.</b></p>	<p>Hypothermia is a decrease in the body's core temperature caused by cold, wind and wet conditions. Signs and symptoms of hypothermia are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mild hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering</li> <li>more severe hypothermia: confusion and lack of judgment</li> </ul> <p>To treat hypothermia: remove the victim from cold, windy and wet conditions and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>re-warm gradually</li> <li>get medical help if severe</li> </ul> <p>Heat exhaustion is caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excessive heat</li> <li>dehydration</li> </ul> <p>Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cool, clammy, pale skin</li> <li>dry mouth</li> <li>fatigue</li> <li>weakness</li> <li>dizziness</li> <li>headache</li> <li>nausea</li> </ul> <p>To treat heat exhaustion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>move victim to a cool or shady place</li> <li>provide water or sports drinks</li> <li>keep victim inactive</li> <li>seek medical attention if severe</li> </ul>

Hunter's Best Practices	Outdoor preparedness	<b>Objective 42:</b> <b>State the importance of wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) when hunting on the water.</b>	A personal flotation device (PFD) is worn to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keep the individual afloat in water</li> <li>• prevent drowning</li> <li>• delay the onset of hypothermia</li> </ul>
Hunter's Best Practices	Outdoor preparedness	<b>Objective 43:</b> <b>State the importance of first-aid training for hunters.</b>	First aid skills are necessary for treating life threatening emergencies while hunting, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• heart attacks</li> <li>• drowning</li> <li>• broken bones</li> <li>• cuts and bleeding</li> <li>• tree stand falls</li> <li>• burns</li> <li>• snakebites</li> </ul> Other issues may be specific to individual jurisdictions

#### 4. HUNTING LAWS, REGULATIONS AND WILDLIFE IDENTIFICATION

Curricula Category	Subtopic	Learning Objective(s) The Student will be able to:	Specific Content
Hunting Regulations	The reasons for hunting laws and regulations; entities responsible for regulating hunting	<b>Objective 44:</b> <b>Explain why hunting laws and regulations are important.</b>	Hunting laws and regulations have been enacted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protect people and property</li> <li>• protect wildlife populations</li> <li>• ensure fair chase</li> <li>• ensure a fair distribution of game</li> </ul>
Wildlife Identification	Wildlife identification skills for hunters	<b>Objective 45:</b> <b>Explain the importance of wildlife identification skills for hunting.</b>	Correct identification of wildlife species can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevent unintentional killing of non-target wildlife</li> <li>• prevent accidental shootings during which people are "mistaken for game"</li> </ul>
Hunting Regulations	Use resources for find current hunting regulations.	<b>Objective 46:</b> <b>Locate information regarding hunting regulations by using an official resource.</b>	Resources for hunting regulation, places to hunt, and species-specific information include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• official state publications</li> <li>• wildlife agency websites</li> <li>• hunting access guides or booklets</li> <li>• mapping software</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• contact with agency personnel</li> </ul> <p>These resources provide information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to obtain a license</li> <li>• hunting season dates and hours</li> <li>• hunting Implements – legal means and methods</li> <li>• hunter orange requirements</li> <li>• bag limits and other restrictions on taking game</li> <li>• permit and/or stamp requirements</li> <li>• tagging, transporting and reporting requirements</li> <li>• trespass laws</li> </ul>
Wildlife Identification	Wildlife identification skills for hunters	<p><b>Objective 47:</b></p> <p><b>Identify game species and their distinguishing features.</b></p>	<p>Game animals are wildlife that can be hunted legally. Game animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are useful, primarily for food</li> <li>• are abundant and have population levels that can be sustained</li> <li>• offer a unique or traditional challenge for hunters</li> </ul> <p>State resource agencies typically classify wildlife species into several categories including Big Game, Small Game, Upland Game, Migratory game birds, Furbearers, Non-game and Endangered species (including Threatened and Special concern).</p> <p>Characteristics to consider when identifying wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General description (shape, size , color and distinguishing features)</li> <li>• Habitat and Range</li> <li>• Behaviors such as daily activity patterns</li> <li>• Wildlife sign such as tracks, scat and calls</li> </ul>

## 5. PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND NEXT STEPS

Curricula Category	Subtopic	Learning Objective(s) The Student will be able to:	Specific Content
Personal Responsibility and Behavior	Responsible and respectful hunters, behaviors that promote positive image of hunters and hunting	<p><b>Objective 48:</b></p> <p><b>Describe how responsible hunters show respect for natural resources, other hunters, landowners, non-hunters and themselves.</b></p>	<p>Responsible hunter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respects wildlife and the environment</li> <li>• respects landowners and property</li> <li>• shows consideration for non-hunters</li> <li>• hunts safely</li> <li>• knows and obeys hunting laws</li> <li>• supports wildlife conservation</li> <li>• hunts using fair chase methods</li> <li>• becomes knowledgeable about wildlife</li> <li>• hunts only with ethical hunters</li> </ul>

			<p>A responsible hunter will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• display game in a respectful and responsible manner</li> <li>• wear clean, appropriate clothing in public places</li> <li>• present a professional image when talking to the media</li> <li>• avoid alcohol and drugs before or during a hunt</li> <li>• take tasteful photographs</li> <li>• harvest only as much game as can be used or shared</li> </ul>
Personal Responsibility and Behavior	Responsible and respectful hunters promote positive image of hunters and hunting	<p><b>Objective 49:</b>  <b>Explain why developing responsible hunting behavior is important for every hunter and the future of hunting.</b></p>	<p>Hunters should develop a personal code of conduct (sportsman's code), which includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• following laws and regulations</li> <li>• ensuring proper and appropriate behavior at all times</li> </ul> <p>By developing this code, the hunter will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act more responsibly</li> <li>• respect his or her own behavior</li> </ul> <p>Positive actions by responsible hunters lead to a more positive image of hunters by the public. The result can be greater acceptance of and support for hunting, as well as greater awareness and interest in becoming a hunter.</p>
Personal Responsibility and Behavior	Hunters who follow fair chase principles show respect for game.	<p><b>Objective 50:</b>  <b>Describe the concept of "fair chase".</b></p>	<p>Fair chase balances the skills and equipment of the hunter with the abilities of the animal to escape. Standards of Fair chase are defined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• law</li> <li>• regional preferences</li> <li>• personal choice</li> </ul> <p>Fair chase is primarily defined by individuals and their level of hunting ability. The expert hunter may use more restrictive and less effective techniques than the novice hunter. Fair chase emphasizes self-restraint and the development of skills.</p>
Responsibility to Wildlife	Effective shot placement ensures a quick kill.	<p><b>Objective 51:</b>  <b>Describe effective shot placement for a quick kill.</b></p>	<p>Hunters must understand the anatomy of the birds and animals they hunt to kill game quickly. The effective kill shot for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• big game is the heart, lung and liver</li> <li>• turkeys is in the head and neck</li> <li>• flying birds is in the head, spine, heart and lungs to ensure recovery</li> </ul> <p>Hunters must adjust their shots for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• varying angles in relation to the game</li> <li>• location of large bones in big game</li> </ul> <p>Broadside or quartering away shots are most effective for big game</p>
Responsibility to Wildlife	Game Recovery – Tracking techniques and reading sign	<p><b>Objective 52:</b>  <b>Describe the basic steps of big game recovery.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait before trailing game. Normally this time period is between ½ and 1 hour</li> <li>• Carefully observe every movement of a game animal after you shoot it</li> <li>• Once at the site look for signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Blood on the ground or vegetation</li> <li>- Broken twigs or branches, or scattered leaves</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A “dew” line if early in the morning</li> <li>- Tracks</li> <li>- Hair, meat or bone fragments</li> <li>- Downhill trails, especially towards water</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a downed animal is found, approach the animal carefully from above and behind the head</li> <li>• Check the animal’s eyes. The eyes of a dead animal are normally open</li> <li>• If the animal is still alive it should be finished with a well-placed lethal shot</li> <li>• Once the animal is dead, follow the state’s regulations for reporting or recording a kill. You may be required to immediately sign, date and affix a tag to the animal</li> <li>• Then begin field dressing</li> </ul>
Responsibility to Wildlife	Proper and legal care of game helps prevent meat spoilage	<p><b><u>Objective 53:</u></b>  <b>Describe how to properly and legally care for harvested game.</b></p>	<p>Hunters use harvested game to provide meat for the table, it should never be wasted. Big game must generally be tagged immediately. Removing internal organs of all harvested game animals by field dressing should be done as soon as possible after the kill to delay meat spoilage. Heat, dirt and moisture can spoil meat. Latex gloves can protect hunters from wildlife diseases</p>
Responsibility to Wildlife	Proper selection of a firearm for hunting satisfies legal requirements and supports accuracy	<p><b><u>Objective 54:</u></b>  <b>Select a proper firearm and ammunition for the game to be hunted.</b></p>	<p>Firearms chosen for hunting must often meet minimum legal requirements for caliber, gauge or energy produced by the projectile. The firearm for hunting should be powerful enough to kill game:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quickly</li> <li>• effectively</li> </ul> <p>The firearm should fit the hunter to allow accurate shooting. Many shooters practice more often and shoot more proficiently if they use a firearm with moderate recoil. Selection of ammunition for hunting should be based on the type of game to be hunted. Most manufacturers recommend specific ammunition for each species.</p> <p>For hunting with a shotgun, be sure to select the proper choke and ammunition combination.</p>