



MassWildlife

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

Susan Langlois, *Hunter Education Administrator*

Ten Basic Rules of Firearm Safety

1. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded.
2. Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. Keep the action open and unloaded. Keep the safety "on" and your finger off the trigger.
3. Be sure the barrel of the firearm is clear of obstructions. Check the chamber and magazine every time you pick it up. Only carry and use ammunition appropriate for your firearm.
4. Never point a firearm at anything you do not intend to shoot. Agree to safe fields of fire for yourself and hunting companions and never swing beyond your area.
5. Positively identify your target and what lies beyond. Make sure there is an adequate backstop when hunting or target practicing
6. Unload your firearm when climbing a tree, crossing a fence, jumping a ditch or traversing slippery or steep terrain. Never pull a firearm toward you by the muzzle.
7. Be aware of the potential for ricochet. Never shoot at a hard, flat surface or water.
8. Unload firearms when not in use, leaving the action open. Transport and carry firearms unloaded and cased when traveling to and from the field or target practice
9. Store firearms and ammunition separately in locked compartments and beyond the reach of children.
10. Never use alcohol or drugs that can impair your judgment before or while shooting.

Twenty Points associated with the "Ten Basic Rules of Firearm Safety"

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| 1) | Treat every firearm as if it were loaded. | (One of the Four Primary Rules a.k.a. the Cardinal Rule) |
| 2) | Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction. | (One of the Four Primary Rules) |
| 3) | Keep the action open and unloaded. | |
| 4) | Keep the safety "on" and your finger off the trigger. | (One of the Four Primary Rules) |
| 5) | Be sure the barrel of the firearm is clear of obstructions. | |
| 6) | Check the chamber and magazine every time you pick it up. | |
| 7) | Only carry and use ammunition appropriate for your firearm. | |
| 8) | Never point a firearm at anything you do not intend to shoot. | |
| 9) | Agree to safe fields of fire for yourself and hunting companions and never swing beyond your area. | |
| 10) | Positively identify your target and what lies beyond. | (One of the Four Primary Rules) |
| 11) | Make sure there is an adequate backstop when hunting or target practicing | |
| 12) | Unload your firearm when climbing a tree, crossing a fence, jumping a ditch or traversing slippery or steep terrain. | |
| 13) | Never pull a firearm toward you by the muzzle. | |
| 14) | Be aware of the potential for ricochet. | |
| 15) | Never shoot at a hard, flat surface or water. | |
| 16) | Unload firearms when not in use, leaving the action open. | |
| 17) | Transport and carry firearms unloaded and cased when traveling to and from the field or target practice | |
| 18) | Store firearms and ammunition separately in locked compartments. | |
| 19) | Store firearms and ammunition beyond the reach of children. | |
| 20) | Never use alcohol or drugs that can impair your judgment before or while shooting. | |

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