

Conducting a Learn to Hunt Event – Frequently Asked Questions

My local hunting club is interested in hosting a Learn to Hunt program for novice hunters in our community. What do we need to do to qualify?

A member of your club must fill out the application to conduct a Learn to Hunt program ([Form 2300-260](#)) and the list of authorized mentors ([Form 8500-167](#)). Email or mail the completed forms to your local wildlife biologist who approves or rejects the application. At least one of the Learn to Hunt instructors must be a certified Hunter Education Instructor. That person must include his or her Hunter Education Instructor number on the application.

One of the instructors must carry the Department approved application form with a complete list of participants during the entire event. Applicants should also include the address of the lands on which the hunt will be conducted. If DNR lands are used, the applicant must obtain the written approval of the property manager. Applications should be turned in to [your local wildlife biologist](#) at least 30 days before your event.

All mentors shall have at least 5 years of hunting experience and all mentors must complete a background check form and turn it in to the DNR if they have not done so before. To undergo the required mentor background check process, complete the mentor background check authorization form ([Form 4100-217](#)) and send it to the Learn to Hunt coordinator, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53704.

After the event, sponsors must send a copy of the application (Form 2300-260) and the list of the participants ([Form 8500-166](#)) to the Learn to Hunt coordinator.

Who can participate in a Learn to Hunt event?

A “novice participant” may participate in a Learn to Hunt event. A “novice participant” is anyone who is 10 years old or older, who has not received an approval authorizing hunting in any prior hunting license year, including a Class B bear license, for the species that will be pursued in the specific educational outdoor skills activity they desire to attend. A hunter may not participate in more than one Learn to Hunt event for the same species.

Are participants required to have a DNR Customer ID?

Yes, all learn to hunt participants must have a DNR Customer ID. Every customer is assigned a unique DNR Customer Number the first time they purchase a license or approval through the Automated License Issuance System. If a participant does not yet have a DNR Customer ID, they may call 1-888-936-7463 (seven days/week, 7am -10pm) to obtain one.

How many hours of classroom or field experience are required before the hunt?

A minimum of 4 hours of classroom and field instruction must be conducted prior to the hunting activity whether or not participants have passed hunter education.

Club members hosting a Learn to Hunt program should consider the needs of their novice hunters and provide additional training as necessary. Classroom and field training should be held as close to the actual hunting experience as possible.

What should we teach during those 4 hours?

Instructors should emphasize firearm safety. They should review the types of firearms used when hunting the featured game animal. Instructors may also review safe handling, chokes, and shot size. It is also important that instructors include target practice using live rounds prior to the actual hunt.

Instruction should also include information regarding the featured game animal. For example, Learn to Hunt Turkey program instruction could include topics such as scouting, how to select and set up a blind, how to safely and properly place decoys, how to call in a turkey, turkey biology, ecology, and management, rules and regulations.

Who are mentors and what are their qualifications and responsibilities?

The Learn to Hunt program involves mentors teaching novice hunters how to hunt. Mentors may be the course instructors or they may be a parent or other adult guardian of the participant. All mentors shall have at least 5 years of hunting experience and all mentors must complete a background check by submitting an application ([Form 4100-217](#)). As seasoned hunters, mentors help their assigned novice hunter with any hunting-related questions or situations that may arise in the field during the actual hunt.

Mentors cannot hunt or handle/carry the firearm used by the participant, unless the firearm jams and the participant requires help getting it in working condition or for safety reasons like fence crossing.

What is the required ratio of novice hunters to mentors?

During the actual hunt a mentor shall be assigned to no more than one participant at a time. This ratio- one mentor to one participant- provides the highest level of instruction and greatest safety.

What game animals can be hunted in a Learn to Hunt program?

Pheasant, wild turkey, upland game, waterfowl, deer or bear may be hunted in a Learn to Hunt event. Sponsors should select only one game animal per event.

Learn to Hunt programs can occur outside of the normal hunting season for most game animals, except waterfowl. Waterfowl hunting seasons are controlled by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and so any Learn to Hunt program involving waterfowl must be held within the federal framework.

Do game animals harvested during the Learn to Hunt event have to be tagged or registered?

Deer and bear must be tagged and registered. Turkeys must be tagged, but registration is optional though a count of the harvested birds must be reported to your local wildlife biologist. The [LTH Coordinator](#) will provide you with necessary tags and registration

forms you may need as well as provide you with a location where participants can register their harvested game.

What fees, licenses, permits, or stamps are required?

The Department waives the state's license, stamp and application fees for all Learn to Hunt events. Learn to Hunt events focusing on migratory birds must be offered within federal framework, using federally mandated bag limits. HIP certification is required for all participants that involve migratory species and a federal waterfowl stamp is required for all hunters 16 years of age and older.

The applicant or members of the group hosting the Learn to Hunt event may not charge participants a course instruction fee that exceeds the cost of course materials, equipment rental, meals and overnight accommodations. Most clubs have not charged their participants any fees.

Are there any special sign posting requirements?

The area involved in conducting field activities and the mentored hunt shall be posted with a sign advising of activity. This is particularly important if the hunt takes place on a DNR public wildlife area. Posting signs at all access points on the property (parking areas, gates, trailheads, or access roads) provides added safety.

Does the Department provide liability insurance for clubs sponsoring the program?

The Department does not provide liability coverage for Learn to Hunt events. Wisconsin Recreational Use Statute (*Wis. Stats. 895.52*) limits property owner's liability for people who use their property for recreation. It is recommended that you review this statute before your event. The Department has partnered with the Hunter's Network of Wisconsin to find an insurance provider that will write policies. Contact John W. Klinzing at 608-310-3924 for more information on this insurance option.

How are participants selected?

We encourage sponsors to recruit participants who would not otherwise have an opportunity to learn to hunt, especially adults and families. Events can be posted on the DNR LTH website for signup details. Contact the [LTH Coordinator](#) for more information. It is suggested that clubs consider local advertising for their event and develop an application form and enrollment deadline. If you have more applicants than your group can accommodate, hold a random drawing.

Are there minimum or maximum numbers of participants?

The maximum number of participants will depend upon the number of instructors, their ability to handle large class sizes, how much hunting land is available and how many mentors are available.

Are there any reports our club has to submit following the Learn to Hunt event?

The Department wants to know who participated in a Learn to Hunt program and what game they harvested. This will help us prepare an annual report to Wisconsin hunters.

Therefore, all applicants must submit the Educational Outdoor Skills Activity Participant Report ([Form 8500-166](#)) to your local wildlife biologist.