**2020 Wisconsin BEAR HUNTING Regulations**

**Shooting and Bear Dog Training Hours**

**Bear shooting and bear dog training hours are 30 minutes before opening to 20 minutes after ending during the bear harvest season.** The table below lists these times for Zone A. To determine opening (AM) and closing (PM) times for other zones, add the minutes shown on map at left to the times listed in the table below. Prior to the harvest season, when training dogs between July 1-Aug 31, these hours do not apply.

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**2020 Season Dates**

- **Zone A, B, and D:** September 15 to October 13
- **Zone C:** September 9 to October 13
- **Zone E:** September 11 to October 13
- **Zone G:** September 13 to October 13

- **Zone F:** September 15 to October 13
- **Zone H:** October 2 to November 1
- **Zone I:** October 4 to November 2
- **Zone J:** October 5 to November 3
- **Zone K:** October 7 to November 4
- **Zone L:** October 9 to November 5

**License Issuance**

- **A valid Class A license is required to shoot and tag a bear. Hunters may only hunt in the management zone indicated on their license.**

**License Issuance**

- **A person of any age may acquire bear preference points or apply for a Class A bear license.**
- **2021 bear hunting seasons are expected to be available in summer 2020, pending legislative review of reauthorizing to implement the bear management zone structure identified in the recently-approved Wisconsin Bear Management Plan. Visit dnr.wi.gov, keyword “bear” or search keyword “bear.”**

**Licensing Requirements**

- **A valid Class A license is required to shoot and tag a bear. Hunters may only hunt in the management zone indicated on their license.**

**Gun Requirements**

- **A person of any age may acquire bear preference points or apply for a Class A bear license.**
- **To be considered for a Class A Bear license in 2021, an applicant must pay a $45.00 application fee and provide zone preference to the license agent at the time of purchase. Applications may be sold online starting in summer 2020, pending legislative approval of bear management zone modifications. The application deadline is Nov. 15, 2020.**
- **If you select a zone at the time of purchase and you are selected in the drawing, your preference points will be reset to zero even if you do not purchase a Class A license. Unsuccessful applications automatically receive a preference point.**
- **Applicants who do not wish to hunt in 2021 but would like a preference point should inform the license agent at the time of purchase.**

**Hunting Requirements**

- **During the 2-day youth gun deer hunt on Oct. 10 and 11, 2020, hunters under age 12 must be in visual or voice contact with an adult while in possession of a firearm.**

**Hunter Education Requirements**

- **Persons born on or after January 1, 1973 must present their Wisconsin Hunter Education Certificate or proof of successful completion of hunter safety course recognized by the department from another state, province or country; or a Wisconsin hunting license from a previous year that has the hunter safety number printed on it or proof of successful completion of basic training in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of National Guard to purchase a Class A Bear License. Applicants utilizing this program are required to hunt within their 2020 Class A bear license and must pay a $4.50 application fee and provide zone preference to the license agent at any time beginning March 2020.**

**Non-Residents**

- **Non-residents may purchase Class A licenses at the resident rate if they are current active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces and were Wisconsin residents when they enlisted.**

- **Hunters drawn for a 2020 Class A license can purchase their license at any time beginning March 2020.**

**For more information on Wisconsin hunting regulations:**

- **Go to gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method).**
- **Call 844-426-3734 (844-GAME-REG).**
- **Visit an in-person station. Go to dnr.wi.gov and search “registration station” to find an agent near you.**

**Registering Bear Harvest with GameReg**

**Deadline:** October 7 to October 13

- **Persons born on or after January 1, 1973 must present their Wisconsin Hunter Education Certificate or proof of successful completion of hunter safety course recognized by the department from another state, province or country; or a Wisconsin hunting license from a previous year that has the hunter safety number printed on it or proof of successful completion of basic training in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of National Guard to purchase a Class A Bear License. Applicants utilizing this program are required to hunt within their 2020 Class A bear license and must pay a $4.50 application fee and provide zone preference to the license agent at any time beginning March 2020.**

**Report Natural Resource Violations**

- **Call or text:** (800) TIP-WDNR (800) TIP-WDNR
- **TTY access via relay - 711**
- **Visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword “bear.”**

**Bear Registration**

- **Registration is mandatory.**
- **Successful hunters must electronically register bears they harvest, in the county of kill or in an adjoining county, by 5 p.m. the day after recovery. Register a bear in one of three ways:**
  - **Go to gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method).**
  - **Visit an in-person station. Go to dnr.wi.gov and search “registration station” to find an agent near you.**
  - **Upon request, the DNR will defer the use of a Class A bear license holder if they apply and are not drawn for a Class A license. For each bear harvest, a person with the highest preference points in the zone, they apply and are not drawn for a Class A license. For each bear harvest, a person with the highest preference points in the zone, they apply and are not drawn for a Class A license.**

**Submittng Bear Tooth Samples**

- **Successful hunters are required to provide two upper pre-molar teeth in 2020.**

**Hunting Mentorship Program**

- **Persons born on or after January 1, 1973 must present their Wisconsin Hunter Education Certificate or proof of successful completion of hunter safety course recognized by the department from another state, province or country; or a Wisconsin hunting license from a previous year that has the hunter safety number printed on it or proof of successful completion of basic training in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves of National Guard to purchase a Class A Bear License.**

**Youth-12-13 who have not completed hunter education must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth 12-13 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth 14-17 who have not completed hunter education must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth 18 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Backup Shooters**

- **Backup shooters must adhere to the following rules:**
  - **may only shoot if the Class A bear license holder possesses an unused bear carcass tag valid for the zone being hunted;**
  - **may only shoot for the purpose of killing a bear that was shot, but not killed, by a Class A license holder;**
  - **may only shoot if the killing bear is necessary to protect the safety of the members of the hunting party or others.**

**Highly Visible Clothing Requirement**

- **During the 2-day youth gun deer hunt on Oct. 10 and 11, 2020, hunters under age 12 must wear blaze orange or Blaze Pink.**

**Bear Registration**

- **Registration is mandatory.**
- **Successful hunters must electronically register bears they harvest, in the county of kill or in an adjoining county, by 5 p.m. the day after recovery. Register a bear in one of three ways:**
  - **Go to gamereg.wi.gov (fastest and easiest method).**
  - **Call 844-426-3734 (844-GAME-REG).**
  - **Visit an in-person station. Go to dnr.wi.gov and search “registration station” to find an agent near you.**
- **Upon request, the DNR will defer the use of a Class A bear license holder if they apply and are not drawn for a Class A license. For each bear harvest, a person with the highest preference points in the zone, they apply and are not drawn for a Class A license.**

**REMINDERS FOR 2020!**

- **Submission of two teeth from harvested bears is mandatory for 2020.**
- **A person of any age may acquire bear preference points or apply for a Class A bear license.**

**Youth under age 12 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth ages 12-13 who have not completed hunter education must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth 14-17 who have not completed hunter education must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Youth 18 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Hunter Education Requirements**

- **In order to possess a firearm and bear a bear under a Class A license or serve as a backup shooter in the presence of or under the guidance of a hunter, a person must meet the following requirements:**
  - **Youth under age 12 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**
  - **Youth ages 12-13 who have not completed hunter education must be under adult supervision, within visual and control of the adult.**
  - **Youth ages 14-17 who have not completed hunter education must be under adult supervision, within visual and control of the adult.**
  - **Youth 18 must be in compliance with all the Hunting Mentorship Program requirements.**

**Backup Shooters**

- **Backup shooters must adhere to the following rules:**
  - **may only shoot if the Class A bear license holder possesses an unused bear carcass tag valid for the zone being hunted;**
  - **may only shoot for the purpose of killing a bear that was shot, but not killed, by a Class A license holder;**
  - **may only shoot if the killing bear is necessary to protect the safety of the members of the hunting party or others.**
Hunting Near Roadways

**It is illegal to:**
- hunt within 50 feet of the roadway's center;
- discharge a firearm, shoot an arrow from a bow or a bolt from a crossbow, from or across a highway or within 50 feet of the roadway's center. This prohibition applies to all public roads which are either paved or indicated on the current Department of Transportation county highway map.

(Note: Class A and certain Class Bcluded builder permit holders are exempt from the requirement when hunting from a stationary vehicle. Contact the DNR for more information.)

Firearm and Archery Restrictions

It is illegal to:
- hunt bear with a muzzle-loading firearm of .45 caliber or larger, or a rifled muzzle-loading firearm of 40 caliber or larger;
- hunt a bear with a bow having a pull of less than 30 pounds.

(Note: A bow is considered to be in a loaded state if it is loaded and the string is held by the archer or if it is loaded and discharged from a crossbow, from or across a highway or within 50 feet of the roadway's center. A loaded crossbow cannot be unloaded and reloaded while hunting.)

- hunt bear with a crossbow, unless it has a minimum draw of 100 pounds, a workable safety, and uses a 1-3/4-inch, long-bolt arrows or equipped with broadheads. Compound bows equipped with a drawstop mechanism that is capable of holding the bow at full draw are considered crossbows, which are exempt from the 100-pound requirement but must meet the 100-pound minimum.
- possess in a vehicle or transport in or on a moving vehicle any firearm (other than a firearm or bow in a loaded state) or bow equipment in a loaded state (including any crossbow unless it is unloaded and decocked or unloaded and enclosed within a carrying case);
- load a firearm other than a handgun while it is in a vehicle, or discharge any firearm in or from any moving vehicle**; a stationary motorized vehicle except that certain disabled hunters with proper permits.
- **A loaded firearm can be placed on, but not in, a vehicle which is stationary.**
- hunt, train dogs, or pursue bear with a dog that is not tattooed or de-haired.
- hunt or train dogs to pursue bear before or after established open season for hunting bear,
- use a crossbow, from or across a highway or within 50 feet of the roadway's center, to hunt or pursue any free-roaming wild animal with the aid of a crossbow, unless it is illegal for any person to place, use or hunt over bait placed for bears:
- beginning the day after the bear season closes and continuing through the following April 14;
- in excess of 10 gallons of bait at any site;
- that is not totally enclosed in a hollow log, a hole in the ground, or any container except rock capped with rocks or rock depicting a natural occurring and unprocessed substances which peculiarly describe the material;
- unless, when bait site is checked or re-baited, all bait has that been unaccounted for is again enclosed and made inaccessible to deer;
- unless the state wildlife officer or the bait owner is the person who may establish.

*Solid blocks of chocolate should not be used. Chocolate is toxic and can be lethal to bears and other wildlife, especially cubs.*

**Validation and Tagging**

- The hunter is required to possess a paper carcass tag on your person while hunting. Electronic copies of carcass tags are not accepted.
- Immediately upon killing a bear, validate the paper carcass tag by removing the bottom portion (the “validation stub”).
- **If you leave it, tag it!** You may not leave the bear carcass unless the validated carcass tag is attached to it. If you leave the carcass, tag it as soon as you plan to leave the carcass. Attach the tag with string or other fastener.
- Carcass tags must be kept intact and legible; consider protecting the tag using a zip-top plastic bag.
- No person may possess or transport a bear carcass unless it is also in possession of the legally killed and validated carcass tag.
- No person may possess, while hunting or aid, more than one copy of a unique carcass tag, nor possess, borrow, loan, or give another’s license, permit or tag.
- If a backup shooter kills a bear that was shot, but not killed, by the Class A bear license holder, it is still the Class A bear license holder’s responsibility to validate that carcass tag.

**Field Dressing**

- A bear may be divided into not more than 5 parts, not including the hide, only to facilitate removal from the field. The hide shall be placed in a pile or a bag provided or distributed by the DNR.
- No person may possess, while hunting or aid, more than one copy of a unique carcass tag, nor possess, borrow, loan, or give another’s license, permit or tag.
- A backup shooter kills a bear that was shot, but not killed, by the Class A bear license holder, it is still the Class A bear license holder’s responsibility to validate that carcass tag.
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- A backup shooter kills a bear that was shot, but not killed, by the Class A bear license holder, it is still the Class A bear license holder’s responsibility to validate that carcass tag.

**Finding Land Open to Hunting**

Nearly 7 million acres of land are open to public hunting in WI. Visit df.wi.gov and search for public land throughout the state. You may only hunt in the zone indicated on your license. Bear Management Zone and Game Management Units that appear on this map are intended to help successful hunters register their bear.

**Transport**

While afield, no person may possess or transport another hunter’s bear, even after it has been registered, unless accompanied by the person issued the carcass tag which is attached to the bear, except that anyone may still transport another person’s registered bear on a public road or possess it at a residence, home, camp or business.

**Dog Training and Use**

Dogs may be trained statewide by pursuing bear from July 1 through Aug. 31. It is legal to train dogs in Zones A, B, and E during the season when hunting bear with aid of dogs is open. While hunting bear, or training dogs to pursue bear during the open season for hunting bear, it is illegal to:
- hunt or train dogs to pursue bear before or after established shooting hours (except when training dogs from July 1 - Aug. 31, these hours do not apply);
- hunt bear with dogs in Zone C;
- hunt, train dogs, or pursue bear with a dog that is not tattooed or a dog that has been given the owner’s name and address;
- hunt, train dogs or pursue bear with more than 6 dogs in a single pack, regardless of the number of bear hunters or the dog’s ownership.

(Note: dogs that fall out of the chase may be replaced, but no more than six dogs may be used to pursue bear)

- allow the dogs to kill any wild animal;
- hunt or pursue any free-roaming wild animal with the aid of any dog, May 1 to June 30 north of the highways shown on the map below, except for approved dog trials and training on free-roaming rabbits or raccoons under a hound dog training permit.