

Hunter Etiquette



Hunting is an enjoyable pastime for many Mississippians, but some situations can be annoying or even dangerous. Practicing good hunting etiquette can help prevent problems with landowners, law enforcement officers, other hunters, and nonhunters.

Sometimes hunters, especially on public land, tend to be possessive of certain areas. If they have hunted an area for an extended period of time, they begin to think of it as “theirs.” Some hunters have the attitude of “if I can’t have it (turkey, deer, duck, etc.), then no one will.” These hunters will intentionally ruin a hunt for another person by coming into the hunting area when they know someone else is already there. They may even fire a gun in order to scare the game away.

These are examples of extremely poor sportsmanship. If you are hunting public land, remember that it is just that—open to the public. You have no more ownership of where you are standing than the next person.

Another problem hunters sometimes experience is having their personal property vandalized. Deer stands can be damaged, trail cameras stolen, vehicles broken into, tires slashed, boat plugs removed, and decoys stolen. When your property is vandalized, it can be easy to feel that retaliation is justified. However, remember the old saying “two wrongs don’t make a right.” Use lawful means to report vandalism, and let the appropriate authorities handle the situation.

Confrontation is something that most people don’t enjoy, especially when they are outdoors hunting. Emotions and firearms are not a good combination, so it is important to keep a cool head to avoid an escalation in the situation. The number one thing to remember is, **when you see an opportunity to leave the situation, do so.** You are the only one who is in control of your response, and your reaction to the situation should focus on keeping everyone safe.

As in any situation, if you come in contact with anyone, be sure to identify yourself in a kind, friendly manner. It is always good to know who you are talking to. You should also know the laws of your state as it pertains to your rights and actions that could be taken against trespassers. Be sure to document conversations you have. This will be helpful if a trespassing issue escalates into a legal matter.

If you are not the primary landowner, you may find that you do not have permission to interact with other hunters about their behavior. Educate yourself on your rights and the rights of others.

Whatever the case, safety is always the most important consideration. Do not get into a heated argument with another hunter or anyone else. If a conversation turns into a war of words, step away and leave. A calm temperament is always best!

The great outdoors is there for everyone, so take it easy and enjoy it!



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