

Dept. of Natural Resources: Seeking volunteers to teach hunters of all experience levels

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking basic and advanced hunter education volunteers to teach and certify basic hunter education students and teach hunters of all experience levels practical outdoor skills. Volunteer opportunities are available in all parts of the state.

Becoming a volunteer instructor is a great way to shape the future of hunting in Wisconsin, get hands-on teaching experience, work closely with DNR staff and engage with your local community.

Basic Hunter Education

[Basic hunter education](#) is a firearm safety class required by law for anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1973, and who intends to hunt independently.

The DNR relies on volunteer hunter safety instructors to teach the standardized, internationally approved curriculum and administer the written and practical exams required for certification.

Volunteers must be certified to teach basic hunter education by apprenticing with an existing group of hunter education instructors or attending a staff-led mini academy that takes volunteers through each lesson that instructors are expected to teach at a basic hunter safety class. Instructors must also pass an exam based on the [DNR's Hunter Education Policy & Procedure Manual](#).

Once certified, basic hunter education volunteer instructors should teach at least one class and attend an instructor recertification workshop every three years.

Advanced Hunter Education

Beyond basic hunter education, the DNR and its contracted partners (Becoming an Outdoors Woman, National Deer Association, Pass It On – Outdoor Mentors, Pheasants Forever and Raised at Full Draw) offer additional instruction and continuing education to hunters of all experience levels. We are seeking volunteers to coordinate and instruct [programs that teach hands-on skills](#) to help participants gain the experience and confidence needed to hunt independently. Training is currently optional and provided upon request.

- **Outdoor Skills** – Outdoor Skills programs teach specific skills related to hunting and the outdoors, such as turkey calling, shooting basics and cooking wild game. We have lesson plans available for you to use as a guide, but if you have a hunting or shooting sports skill you can teach, reach out to our program staff to talk more.
- **Learn To Hunt** – The [Learn to Hunt program](#) is a unique opportunity in Wisconsin that allows volunteers to host educational mentored hunts outside of the normal hunting season. During Wisconsin's turkey seasons, the program offers flexibility for new hunters to hunt with a mentor when it works for their schedules.
 - The Learn to Hunt program requires at least four hours of pre-hunt instruction to participants, and program volunteers must have at least five years of experience hunting the target species. At least one mentor must be an active basic hunter education instructor.

All volunteer instructors must pass a background check, either through the DNR or through one of its partner organizations.

For more information about becoming a volunteer instructor or to apply, contact Emily Iehl, DNR hunting & shooting sports program specialist, at Emily.iehl@wisconsin.gov.