



Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife

11 Tips on Hunting Etiquette

1. Acquire permission to hunt on someone's private land with a formal request.

You can print a [Private Land Permission Form](#) and either mail it or bring it directly to the landowner (visiting the landowner in person is more friendly and shows a stronger commitment than sending a mailed request, and may increase your chances at getting permission). There are many different reasons why a landowner may refuse a request, so remember always to be respectful regardless of their decision. Remember, your method of handling the situation could impact similar opportunities for future hunters.

2. Always be respectful of the landowner and their property.

The best rule of thumb is to leave the land better than you found it. Report any signs of disturbance to the landowner, pick up trash if you see it, and leave no trace of your own. Leave any gates exactly how you found them, open or closed. Do not shoot near or towards any homes. Even if the shot is too far away to be dangerous, the sound can be disruptive and discouraging to neighboring landowners considering opening their parcel to hunters. Remember to pick up your shells before you leave.

3. Know the boundaries of the property you have permission to hunt.

No matter how tempting, never shoot or chase a deer on property you do not have explicit permission to be on. Not only is it rude, but it's against the law in Indiana. If chances are high that your hunting spot will put a wounded deer on neighboring property, either find another spot or try to get permission from that property's owner before you hunt.

4. Never use your scope to identify people or anything but a target.

It is a good idea to have a small pair of binoculars at all times so that approaching persons do not ever have a gun pointed at them.

5. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it; do not shoot in the direction of homes or vehicles.

6. Do not dispose of unwanted animal parts (your gut pile or leftovers from butchering) in waterways or anywhere they are likely to be seen by passers-by.

7. Maintain distance between yourself and adjacent hunters; do not crowd someone if they have already taken a spot.

Hunting spots are first come first serve so if yours is taken, move on. For this reason it's always a good idea to stake out multiple spots in advance.

8. If given permission to hunt on someone's land, or in someone's preferred hunting spot, don't assume that invitation extends to other friends of yours.

Ask the landowner or hunter explicitly if the permission is just for you, or if other people you know are welcome as well. If given permission to invite others, it's always polite to ask how many are allowed to accompany you.

9. Be considerate of other hunters and outdoor enthusiasts while you hunt.

Loud noises from talking, running an ATV, or dragging out your deer can ruin another person's hunting or general outdoor experience. If you need to make noise where you know another person is hunting, wait until they leave if you can.

10. Serve as a positive ambassador for hunters and hunting culture to those who are not familiar or who are undecided.

Cover your harvested deer with a tarp and transport them discretely, i.e. not on display in the back of your pickup truck with the tailgate down. Be wary of how non-hunters perceive you so you don't convert them into anti-hunters, intentionally or unintentionally.

11. Most importantly, value your hunting excursion by the total experience.

It is easy to estimate the value of your effort by how many deer you took, or how big the trophy was, but really hunting is about the total package. You don't need to take your total bag limit to have a great experience- show restraint and take only what you need. Participate in youth development and teach your children ethical and responsible hunting. If given the opportunity, take the time to complete a Deer Hunter Survey for the DNR to improve the experience for both yourself and future generations.