

# 2024 Deer Hunting Regulations

## 2024 Season Dates

Archery	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31, 2024
Muzzleloader	Dec. 1 - 31, 2024
Special Landowner	Nov. 9 - 11, 2024
November Firearm	Nov. 16 - 24, 2024
October River Antlerless Firearm	Oct. 1 - 15, 2024
Late Antlerless Firearm Only	Jan. 1 - 15, 2025

## Legal Weapons for Firearm Season:

- .22-caliber or larger rifle that deliver at least 900 foot-pounds of energy at 100 yards
- .357 magnum rifle, .45 Colt rifle and hand-thrown spear are legal
- Handguns or muzzleloading handguns that deliver at least 400 foot-pounds of energy at 50 yards
- Muzzleloading rifles .44-caliber or larger
- Muzzleloading muskets .62-caliber or larger, firing a single slug
- Shotguns of 20-gauge or larger that fire a single slug
- Long bow, compound bow, recurve bow, shoulder-fired non-electronic crossbow (with a draw weight of at least 125 pounds), hand-thrown spear
- Ammunition with multiple projectiles is illegal
- Semi-automatic firearms capable of holding more than six cartridges are illegal
- Full-metal jacket or incendiary bullets are illegal
- Arrows or spears must have a sharpened hunting head with a blade of at least 7/16-inch cutting radius from the center of the arrow shaft. Arrows or spears containing poison, stupefying chemical or having an explosive tip are illegal.

## Legal Weapons for Archery Season:

- Bows and spears as defined above.

## Legal Weapons for Muzzleloader Season:

- Muzzleloading rifles, muzzleloading handguns and muskets as defined above.

**Shooting Hours** - It is legal to shoot 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.

**Sights** - It is unlawful to use any electrical device to amplify natural light or to project a light beam or image to a target, including night-vision or infrared scopes and laser sights. Red-dot and illuminated reticle sights and scopes are permitted. Magnifying and variable-power scopes are allowed.

**Permit** - A permit must be signed by the permittee. It is unlawful to transfer a permit to another person.

**Minimum Age** - 10 years of age for deer hunting.

**Youth Permit Requirements** - Youths age 16 may hunt with youth deer permits provided they are age 15 when they apply and are not more than 15 on Sept. 1, 2024.

**Habitat Stamp** - Residents age 16 and older and all nonresidents must carry proof of a valid Nebraska habitat stamp while hunting big game. Individuals with valid, fee-exempt permits and landowners

hunting their own land with a landowner permit are not required to purchase a habitat stamp to hunt big game. A 2024 stamp is valid for deer hunting in January 2025.

## Unlawful Hunting Methods - It is unlawful to:

- chase, run, harass, kill or shoot any deer from a moving motor vehicle or vessel.
- shoot from the right-of-way of a public road.
- carry a firearm on a snowmobile, except when it is unloaded and in a case.
- hunt from or with a snowmobile.
- use a spotlight or other artificial light from a vehicle or vessel while having in possession or control any firearm, crossbow or bow and arrow.
- possess a night-vision scope while hunting game animals and game birds.
- use two-way radios, cell phones or any other electronic devices to transmit information about the location of any game animal or game bird to or from a conveyance of any type (vehicles, aircraft, boats, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, etc.).

**Permission** - Permission is required to hunt on private land. It is unlawful to hunt with a rifle within 200 yards of an occupied dwelling or feedlot without specific permission for that purpose or within 100 yards using other methods.

**Sale of Parts** - It is lawful to sell the hide, hair, hooves, bones, and antlers of any deer which is taken legally. The sale or purchase of deer meat is unlawful.

**Hunter Orange** - Any persons hunting deer under the authority of a firearm permit during an authorized firearm season must display on his or her head, chest and back at least 400 square inches of hunter orange material. Hunter orange requirements also apply while hunting under the authority of a muzzleloader permit during muzzleloader seasons. Archery deer hunters must do the same while archery hunting during the November firearm deer season and during the late antlerless seasons. Firearm hunters during the Special Landowner Deer Season must wear hunter orange; archery hunters are exempt.

**Baiting** - It is illegal to hunt any big game animals or turkeys within 200 yards of a baited area. An area is be considered baited for 10 days following the complete removal of all bait. The hunter and the animal must be outside of the baited area during the harvest or attempted harvest. A baited area is any location where grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, hay, minerals (including salt), or any other natural food materials, commercial products containing food materials, or by-products of such materials that may attract big game or turkey. The use of scents alone, normal environmental conditions, standard farming and ranching practices, forest management, wildlife food plantings, orchard management, or similar land management activities do not constitute a baited area. It is unlawful to create a baited area on lands owned or controlled by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

**Checking** - Registering your deer harvest is mandatory in Nebraska and must be completed before the carcass leaves the state.

- It is unlawful to separate a deer, antelope or elk carcass into sections smaller than quarters before completing the harvest check in process. Quartering is defined as four legs, with femur or scapula naturally attached, and loins.
- Deer harvested during the November firearm season must be delivered to a check in location or checked via Telecheck no later than 1 p.m. on the day following the close of the season. A list of check stations may be found on the deer regulation sheets and at [OutdoorNebraska.gov](http://OutdoorNebraska.gov).
- Each permit holder must accompany the deer to the check station and check in their deer.
- Deer harvested outside the November firearm season must be checked via Telecheck within 48 hours of kill and before 1 p.m. on the day following the close of the season.
- Permit and check station seal number or check station verification number must be retained when transporting all or a portion of the carcass to a point of permanent storage or processing. **Hunters must record the seal number on their permit.**

**Telecheck** - Telecheck allows hunters to check deer by phone or online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. See [OutdoorNebraska.gov](http://OutdoorNebraska.gov) and search "Telecheck" for more information.

- There are several ways to access and complete your harvest report:
  1. Scan the QR code on your permit with your smartphone.
  2. From your permit profile at [GoOutdoorsNE.com](http://GoOutdoorsNE.com). Once logged in, select "Game Check Reporting" in the left-hand column and submit the required information.
  3. Or, from the login page on [GoOutdoorsne.com](http://GoOutdoorsne.com), select "Report Your Harvest – Big Game Check-In" in the list of white boxes below the login options.
  4. Or, call 844-279-4564 to complete over the phone.
- All deer harvested outside the November firearm season must be checked via Telecheck.
- When completing Telecheck, the following information will be required from your permit or animal: species, permit code, permit number, date of kill, county of kill, management unit, weapon used, sex of animal, and age of animal (adult or fawn).
- You may be asked questions about biological information, such as inside spread (between main beams) in inches for deer.

The seal number must be written on the permit once Telecheck is completed.

**Tagging** - Immediately after a deer is taken, the hunter must punch holes in the permit, showing species, sex and date of kill. The canceled permit must be kept with the deer at all times.

**Hunting Other Wildlife** - During the November firearm deer season, only hunters with a valid unfilled deer permit may hunt wildlife other than deer with centerfire rifles or centerfire handguns, provided they are hunting in the deer management unit for which their deer permit is valid. Fall turkey permit holders, wearing hunter orange required only for hunting in the November firearm deer season, may hunt turkeys, with legal shotguns or archery weapons, during the November firearm deer season.

**Possession** - There is no restriction on the length of time game birds or game animals may be possessed.

**Hunter Education** - Hunter education is required for hunters ages 12 through 29 hunting with a firearm or air gun. Bow hunter education is required for those ages while hunting big game with a bow and arrow or crossbow. They must carry with them proof of certification.

**Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate** - Available for two consecutive years for hunters who have not completed hunter education. The fee is \$5.

**Accompaniment** - All deer hunters age 10-15 and all hunters using the Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate must be accompanied by a licensed hunter age 19 or older when hunting. The accompanying person, if age 19-29, must be certified in firearm hunter education if hunting with a firearm or crossbow, or bow hunter education if hunting with bow and arrow. He or she must be at all times in unaided visual and verbal communication with the hunter. There may be no more than two hunters using the certificate accompanied by the experienced hunter at any time.

#### **Public Land Closures -**

- All federal and state public lands are closed to the use of River Antlerless deer permits.
- Antlerless mule deer may not be taken on lands open to public hunting, except Open Fields and Waters lands.
- Bessey Ranger District of the Nebraska National Forest, McKelvie National Forest, and the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge are closed to AO SCA deer permits, antlerless bonus tags and harvest of mule deer does on November Firearm permits.
- Harlan County Reservoir (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land) is closed to AO SCA Republican deer permits.
- Red Willow, Enders, Medicine Creek and Swanson SRA/WMA are closed to all Frenchman AO SCA.

#### **County Refuge Closures -**

**Garden County Refuge:** Those portions of Garden County within 110 yards of the banks of the North Platte River are open to archery deer hunting from Sept. 1 – Oct. 31 with landowner permission, except that portion of the Clear Creek Refuge portion of the Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area west of the Garden County line is open to deer hunting during all established seasons from Sept. 1 through the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

The following statutory refuges are open to all deer hunting, though landowner permission is required: Boyd-Holt County Refuge, Dodge-Saunders County Refuge and Lincoln County Refuge.

#### **Use of Drones**

It is unlawful for any person one day before or throughout any open season to spot, locate, or place under surveillance any game animal or game bird with the aid of any aircraft (to include drones) and convey information about such animal's or bird's location to any person or group of persons by radio or other electronic device (which includes photography taken from unmanned aircraft). The use of aircraft (which includes drones) any time to hunt, drive, molest, chase, or harass game birds or game animals is illegal.