



# Tips for the Hunting Mentor

## Becoming a Hunting Mentor

Want to give the ultimate outdoor gift? Sharing the hunting tradition with someone new can be a rewarding experience. Mentoring provides an opportunity to give back to the hunting culture and thereby conserve the hunting legacy for future generations. Moreover, mentoring provides an opportunity to give back to the person that mentored you!

## Mentoring New Hunters can be Mutually Rewarding

Going hunting yourself is one thing, teaching someone new about hunting is another. Keeping a hunting trip relaxed and expectations to a minimum will benefit both novice and veteran hunter. The following are some helpful tips:

- **Focus on the new hunter's needs first:** It's easy for the passionate and experienced hunter to become engrossed in the seriousness of the hunt. Relax and try to remember your first hunt and the overwhelming newness of it all. Slow down and spend time explaining and sharing rather than expecting. Spending time "together" on stand for the first few outings is a good way to provide "on-the-spot" guidance to the new hunter.
- **Be safe, legal, and sure:** Discuss and practice safe gun handling and tree stand safety prior to the hunt and routinely throughout. Periodically review hunting regulations. Discuss the importance of properly identifying the game being hunted before pulling the trigger or releasing a bow string.
- **Limit expectations:** As an experienced hunter, it is easy to take for granted all the knowledge and experience accumulated over many years. Understand that the new hunter has not had the privilege of time and experience.
- **Easy does it:** You may be able to walk for miles in rugged terrain with a full backpack all day long. Trying to impose that method on a new hunter, youth or adult, may discourage them from ever going again. Instead, make the initial outings interesting, enjoyable, educational, and relaxed.
- **Fits and starts:** Be sure that new hunters have the clothing and the necessary hunting equipment that fits to get them started.

- **Commit to comfort:** Whether in warm or cold temperatures make sure the new hunter remains warm and comfortable. Being considerate of the new hunter's comfort can make the outing more enjoyable and rewarding.
- **Full tank:** Breakfast should always be a start to any day a field and be sure the new hunter has plenty of snacks and water, especially young hunters.

### **Indirect Mentoring Opportunities**

Introducing someone new to hunting is the ultimate form of mentoring, but, it is not the only way. Indirect mentoring can be just as valuable and have nearly the same impact as direct mentoring. A few indirect mentoring opportunities include:

- Share hunting stories and outdoor skills.
- Share a wild game dinner.
- Share a hunting magazine subscription.
- Take someone along on a pre-hunting season scouting or shooting trip.
- Introduce someone to the outdoors through a simple walk in the woods.
- Invite someone to a hunter education course
- Become a hunter education instructor!

**“Those of us privileged to take to the field are entrusted by fate and circumstance to hold and nurture the hunter’s legacy.”**

**-Theodore Roosevelt-**