

2026-27 MAINE HUNTING QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Please reference the *Maine 2026-27 Summary of Hunting Laws* for more details, available at mefishwildlife.com/huntinglaws.



LICENSES

To hunt in Maine, you need to have one of the 30+ hunting licenses available. These vary by category of game, equipment used, resident status, age, and other factors. Go to mefishwildlife.com to see which license type is right for you, and to read what the license allows, when it allows it, and what permits are included or need to be purchased separately.

PERMITS

To hunt for certain game or with certain equipment, you need to buy a permit. For example, to hunt wild turkey, a hunter needs a big game or a small game hunting license and a turkey hunting permit.

Some permits are included in certain licenses. For example, the junior hunting license includes a bear permit, but non-resident licenses don't. These license-holders must buy regular or November (late-season) bear permits to hunt for bear during the firearm season on deer.

STAMPS

Waterfowl hunters age 16 and up must purchase state waterfowl permits and federal duck stamps. 16-year-olds still hunting on a junior license may hunt on a youth day, but need a Federal duck stamp. A federal EStamp can be purchased online through participating state websites found at fws.gov/service/buy-duck-stamp-or-e-stamp.

Migratory waterfowl permits are not required to hunt Crow, Woodcock, Common Snipe, Sora & Virginia Rails, or Gallinules. A pheasant permit is required to hunt pheasant in York and Cumberland counties.

OPERATION GAME THIEF

Call 1-800-ALERT US (253-7887) to report game law violations. Caller identification protected. Rewards paid. Poachers are thieves — help us stop them.



SUNDAY HUNTING IS ILLEGAL IN MAINE

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS:

1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset. Exceptions: Migratory game birds, raccoons, and coyote.

HUNTER ORANGE CLOTHING

Hunter orange is defined as a daylight fluorescent orange color with a dominant wave length between 595 and 605 nanometers, excitation purity of at least 85% and luminance factor of at least 40%. A decal on an article of clothing that is otherwise solid hunter orange is permissible. Articles of hunter orange clothing must be in good and serviceable condition and visible from all sides.

See hunting law book for details.



ETHICS ARE WHAT WE DO WHEN NO ONE ELSE IS WATCHING

In the Maine woods, rarely will anyone be there to notice your ethical behavior, but the landowner and the hunters that follow will greatly appreciate it. Ethical behavior is vital to Maine's sporting future, and it encourages landowners to keep their property open for all to enjoy. So remember: always respect the rights of landowners, and please *ask first*.

OUTDOOR PARTNERS LANDOWNER RELATIONS PROGRAM

For \$15.00, you can become an Outdoor Partner and support the MDIFW landowner relations program, which works to preserve and enhance access, helps landowners with access issues, and promotes responsible, ethical sporting behavior.

Each year when you make a contribution to the Outdoor Partners Program, you are entered into our weekly drawing for a chance to win exclusive merchandise from our sponsoring businesses and organizations. You can join at any time — either as an add-on to your license purchase or at mefishwildlife.com/outdoorpartners.



2026-27 MAINE HUNTING SEASONS

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DEER	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Expanded Archery	Designated areas only	September 12, 2026	December 12, 2026	Only 1 antlered deer may be harvested annually Exceptions: - For 2026, in WMDs 21-25 and 29 during the firearms and muzzleloader seasons, or statewide during the regular archery and youth hunt seasons, hunters may harvest one deer, either antlered or antlerless, under the authority of their big game hunting license. This deer counts as the hunter's one deer for the year. If a hunter wants to take additional deer, an antlerless deer permit is required. - Additional deer may be harvested by hunters possessing antlerless deer permit(s) or during the expanded archery season with appropriate permits.
Regular Archery	All	October 3, 2026	October 30, 2026	
Youth Deer Hunt	All	October 23, 2026	October 24, 2026	
Maine Resident Only Day*	All	October 31, 2026		
Firearms Season	All	November 2, 2026	November 28, 2026	
Muzzleloader Statewide	All	November 30, 2026	December 5, 2026	
Muzzleloader	12-18 and 20-29	December 7, 2026	December 12, 2026	

BEAR	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Youth Bear Hunting with Bait	All	August 28, 2026	August 29, 2026	2 Bears Per Year 1 by hunting, 1 by trapping
General Hunting Season	All	August 31, 2026	November 28, 2026	
Hunting with Bait <i>Bait can be placed Aug 1, 2026</i>	All	August 31, 2026	September 26, 2026	
Bear Trapping	All	September 1, 2026	October 31, 2026	
Youth Bear Hunting with Dogs	All	September 12, 2026		
Hunting with Dogs <i>Bear dog training season is July 1-August 27, 2026</i>	All	September 14, 2026	October 30, 2026	

MOOSE BY PERMIT ONLY	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	ANNUAL BAG & POSSESSION
Bull-Only	1-7, 10-13, 15, 18, 19, 27 and 28	September 28, 2026	October 3, 2026	1 Moose Per Year A person may only harvest one moose per year, regardless of how many permits they may be listed on.
Bull-Only	1-15, 17-19, 27, 28	October 12, 2026	October 17, 2026	
Antlerless-Only	1-6, 8	October 26, 2026	October 31, 2026	In order to harvest a moose a person must be either the permittee or sub-permittee.

Permit application period: April - May of each year.

*A non-resident who owns 25 or more acres of land in Maine and leaves land open to hunting, holds a valid hunting license, and is not otherwise prohibited by law, may hunt deer on the Resident only day, anywhere in the state. A verification form must be completed and can be located on our website.

FALL WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
General Hunting Season	15-17, 20-25	September 14, 2026	November 7, 2026	5 Wild Turkeys*	No more than two wild turkeys (either-sex, any age) may be harvested per permit holder per day, but cannot exceed the WMD bag limit.
	26	September 14, 2026	November 7, 2026	3 Wild Turkeys*	
	28	September 14, 2026	November 7, 2026	2 Wild Turkeys*	
	3, 6-8, 10-14, 18, 19, 27 & 29	September 14, 2026	November 7, 2026	1 Wild Turkey**	
	1, 2, 4, 5, & 9	Closed to taking of Wild Turkeys			
Youth Fall Wild Turkey Day	September 12, 2026				

*May harvest up to 5 turkeys for the fall season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.

SPRING WILD TURKEY <i>Archery equipment or shotgun</i>	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	SEASONAL BAG & POSSESSION	
All Hunters	7 and 9-29	May 3, 2027	June 5, 2027	2 bearded Wild Turkeys**	
	1-6 and 8	May 3, 2027	June 5, 2027	1 bearded Wild Turkey**	
Youth Spring Wild Turkey Days		April 30, 2027	May 1, 2027	May harvest up to 2 bearded Wild Turkeys from WMDs that have a 2 bird limit.	

**May harvest up to 2 turkeys for the spring season, but an individual WMD bag limit cannot be exceeded. The order in which they are harvested from a WMD does not matter.

UPLAND AND MIGRATORY BIRDS	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
Ruffed Grouse & Bobwhite Quail	All	September 26, 2026	December 31, 2026	4	8
Pheasant	All	September 26, 2026	December 31, 2026	2	4
Woodcock	All	September 26, 2026	November 17, 2026	3	9
Common Snipe	All	September 1, 2026	January 2, 2027	8	24
Sora & Virginia Rails (and Gallinules)	All	September 1, 2026	November 20, 2026	25	25
Crows	1-6	August 1, 2026 January 30, 2027	September 19, 2026 April 15, 2027	No daily bag or possession limit	
	7-29	August 1, 2026 January 15, 2027	September 19, 2026 March 31, 2027		

OTHER SPECIES	WMDs	SEASONS		LIMITS	
		FIRST DAY	LAST DAY	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
Gray Squirrel	All	September 26, 2026	January 30, 2027	4	8
Gray Squirrel (Falconry)	All	September 26, 2026	February 27, 2027	4	8
Snowshoe Hare	All	September 26, 2026	March 31, 2027	4	8
	Season on Island of Vinalhaven	September 26, 2026	February 27, 2027		
Bobcat	All	December 1, 2026	February 20, 2027	No Limit	
Fox	All	October 19, 2026	February 27, 2027	No Limit	
Raccoon	All	October 1, 2026	December 31, 2026	No Limit	
Skunk, Opossum	All	October 19, 2026	December 31, 2026	No Limit	
Coyote	All	During daylight hunting hours No Closed Season for Hunting		No Limit	
		Night hunting December 16, 2026 - August 31, 2027			
Woodchuck, Porcupine, Red Squirrel	All	No Closed Season		No Limit	
Spruce Grouse, Lynx, Cottontail Rabbit		No Open Season for Hunting			

Note: Except for migratory game birds, there is no hunting season on any species of bird or animal which is not listed above. All dates are inclusive except that hunting is prohibited on Sunday.

This time chart is NOT the sunrise and sunset time table and has already been adjusted to display the actual legal hunting hours.

2026-27 LEGAL HUNTING HOURS												
DAY	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
01	5:27 - 7:42	6:03 - 6:46		6:23 - 4:26	6:43 - 4:35	6:25 - 5:13	5:43 - 5:52	5:46 - 7:33	4:55 - 8:10	4:22 - 8:44	4:23 - 8:55	
02	5:29 - 7:40	6:04 - 6:44	5:45 - 4:52	6:24 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:36	6:23 - 5:15	5:41 - 5:54	5:44 - 7:34		4:22 - 8:45	4:23 - 8:55	4:52 - 8:30
03	5:30 - 7:38	6:06 - 6:42	5:46 - 4:51	6:25 - 4:25		6:22 - 5:16	5:40 - 5:55	5:43 - 7:35	4:52 - 8:13	4:21 - 8:46	4:24 - 8:54	4:53 - 8:29
04	5:31 - 7:36		5:47 - 4:49	6:26 - 4:25	6:43 - 4:38	6:21 - 5:18	5:38 - 5:57		4:51 - 8:14	4:21 - 8:46		4:54 - 8:28
05	5:32 - 7:35	6:08 - 6:38	5:49 - 4:48	6:27 - 4:24	6:43 - 4:39	6:20 - 5:19	5:36 - 5:58	5:39 - 7:38	4:49 - 8:15	4:21 - 8:47	4:25 - 8:54	4:55 - 8:26
06		6:09 - 6:36	5:50 - 4:47		6:42 - 4:40	6:19 - 5:20	5:34 - 5:59	5:37 - 7:39	4:48 - 8:16		4:26 - 8:53	4:57 - 8:25
07	5:35 - 7:31	6:11 - 6:34	5:51 - 4:46	6:29 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:41			5:35 - 7:40	4:47 - 8:17	4:20 - 8:48	4:27 - 8:53	4:58 - 8:23
08	5:36 - 7:29	6:12 - 6:33		6:30 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:42	6:16 - 5:23	5:31 - 6:02	5:33 - 7:41	4:45 - 8:19	4:20 - 8:49	4:27 - 8:53	
09	5:37 - 7:27	6:13 - 6:31	5:54 - 4:43	6:31 - 4:24	6:42 - 4:43	6:15 - 5:25	5:29 - 6:03	5:32 - 7:43		4:19 - 8:50	4:28 - 8:52	5:00 - 8:21
10	5:38 - 7:25	6:14 - 6:29	5:56 - 4:42	6:32 - 4:24		6:13 - 5:26	5:27 - 6:04	5:30 - 7:44	4:43 - 8:21	4:19 - 8:50	4:29 - 8:52	5:01 - 8:19
11	5:39 - 7:23		5:57 - 4:41	6:33 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:45	6:12 - 5:28	5:25 - 6:06		4:42 - 8:22	4:19 - 8:51		5:02 - 8:18
12	5:40 - 7:21	6:17 - 6:26	5:58 - 4:40	6:34 - 4:24	6:41 - 4:46	6:10 - 5:29	5:23 - 6:07	5:26 - 7:46	4:40 - 8:23	4:19 - 8:51	4:31 - 8:50	5:04 - 8:16
13		6:18 - 6:24	6:00 - 4:39		6:40 - 4:48	6:09 - 5:30	5:22 - 6:08	5:25 - 7:48	4:39 - 8:25		4:32 - 8:50	5:05 - 8:15
14	5:43 - 7:18	6:19 - 6:22	6:01 - 4:38	6:35 - 4:25	6:40 - 4:49			5:23 - 7:49	4:38 - 8:26	4:19 - 8:52	4:32 - 8:49	5:06 - 8:13
15	5:44 - 7:16	6:21 - 6:20		6:36 - 4:25	6:39 - 4:50	6:06 - 5:33	6:18 - 7:11	5:21 - 7:50	4:37 - 8:27	4:19 - 8:53	4:33 - 8:48	
16	5:45 - 7:14	6:22 - 6:19	6:04 - 4:36	6:37 - 4:25	6:39 - 4:51	6:04 - 5:35	6:16 - 7:12	5:19 - 7:51		4:19 - 8:53	4:34 - 8:48	5:08 - 8:10
17	5:46 - 7:12	6:23 - 6:17	6:05 - 4:35	6:37 - 4:25		6:03 - 5:36	6:14 - 7:14	5:18 - 7:53	4:35 - 8:29	4:19 - 8:54	4:35 - 8:47	5:09 - 8:08
18	5:48 - 7:10		6:06 - 4:34	6:38 - 4:26	6:37 - 4:54	6:01 - 5:37	6:12 - 7:15		4:34 - 8:30	4:19 - 8:54		5:11 - 8:07
19	5:49 - 7:08	6:26 - 6:13	6:08 - 4:33	6:39 - 4:26	6:37 - 4:55	6:00 - 5:39	6:10 - 7:16	5:14 - 7:55	4:33 - 8:31	4:19 - 8:54	4:37 - 8:45	5:12 - 8:05
20		6:27 - 6:12	6:09 - 4:32		6:36 - 4:57	5:58 - 5:40	6:09 - 7:17	5:13 - 7:56	4:32 - 8:32		4:38 - 8:44	5:13 - 8:03
21	5:51 - 7:04	6:28 - 6:10	6:10 - 4:31	6:40 - 4:27	6:35 - 4:58			5:11 - 7:58	4:31 - 8:33	4:19 - 8:55	4:39 - 8:44	5:14 - 8:02
22	5:52 - 7:03	6:30 - 6:09		6:40 - 4:27	6:34 - 4:59	5:55 - 5:43	6:05 - 7:20	5:09 - 7:59	4:30 - 8:34	4:19 - 8:55	4:40 - 8:43	
23	5:53 - 7:01	6:31 - 6:07	6:13 - 4:30	6:41 - 4:28	6:34 - 5:01	5:53 - 5:44	6:03 - 7:21			4:20 - 8:55	4:41 - 8:42	5:17 - 7:58
24	5:55 - 6:59	6:32 - 6:05	6:14 - 4:29	6:41 - 4:29		5:52 - 5:46	6:01 - 7:22	5:06 - 8:01	4:28 - 8:37	4:20 - 8:55	4:42 - 8:41	5:18 - 7:56
25	5:56 - 6:57		6:15 - 4:29	6:41 - 4:29	6:32 - 5:03	5:50 - 5:47	5:59 - 7:24	5:04 - 8:03	4:27 - 8:38	4:20 - 8:55		5:19 - 7:55
26	5:57 - 6:55	6:35 - 6:02	6:17 - 4:28	6:42 - 4:30	6:31 - 5:05	5:48 - 5:48	5:57 - 7:25	5:03 - 8:04	4:26 - 8:38	4:21 - 8:55	4:44 - 8:38	5:20 - 7:53
27		6:36 - 6:01	6:18 - 4:27		6:30 - 5:06	5:47 - 5:50	5:56 - 7:26	5:01 - 8:05	4:26 - 8:39		4:45 - 8:37	5:21 - 7:51
28	6:00 - 6:51	6:38 - 5:59	6:19 - 4:27	6:42 - 4:31	6:29 - 5:08			5:00 - 8:06	4:25 - 8:40	4:21 - 8:55	4:46 - 8:36	5:22 - 7:49
29	6:01 - 6:49	6:39 - 5:58		6:42 - 4:32	6:28 - 5:09		5:52 - 7:29	4:58 - 8:08	4:24 - 8:41	4:22 - 8:55	4:47 - 8:35	
30	6:02 - 6:47	6:41 - 5:56	6:21 - 4:26	6:43 - 4:33	6:27 - 5:10		5:50 - 7:30	4:57 - 8:09		4:22 - 8:55	4:49 - 8:34	5:25 - 7:46
31		6:42 - 5:55		6:43 - 4:34			5:48 - 7:31		4:23 - 8:43		4:50 - 8:33	5:26 - 7:44

**Legal hunting hours are based on sunrise/sunset in Bangor, Maine (Eastern Standard Time) and are to be used statewide.
Exceptions: Raccoon, Coyote, and Migratory Bird hunting (see separate legal hunting hours for these species).*