

# Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife: All outdoor users should wear blaze orange during hunting seasons

*Be safe, be seen. Hunters and non-hunters alike should wear blaze orange while recreating outdoors this fall.*

Hunting is a safe activity. The widespread use of blaze orange has helped dramatically reduce hunting-related firearms incidents in the field. While hunters are required to wear blaze orange during certain seasons, all outdoor users who are in the woods during hunting seasons should wear blaze orange clothing as a precaution. If you're curious about the effectiveness of blaze orange, watch the short video above for an eye-opening demonstration. If you plan to enjoy the outdoors during hunting season, review these tips:

## Notes for non-hunters

- **Know when and where hunting is allowed.** Review the 2021 Massachusetts hunting season dates. Hunting on Sunday is not permitted in Massachusetts. MassWildlife lands, including Wildlife Management Areas and Wildlife Conservation Easements are open to hunting. Most state parks and forests are open to hunting, and many towns allow hunting on municipal lands. Learn about lands open to hunting in Massachusetts. Research the property you plan to visit beforehand to learn if hunting is allowed. If being in the woods during hunting season makes you uneasy, find a location where hunting is not allowed or plan your outing for a Sunday or another day outside of hunting season.

- **Keep pets leashed and visible.** Place a blaze orange vest or bandana on your pet to keep it visible.
- **Make your presence known.** Talk loudly or whistle to identify yourself as a person. You may also consider wearing a bell. If you see someone hunting or hear shots, call out to them to identify your location.
- **Be courteous.** Once you've made your presence known, don't make unnecessary noise to disturb wildlife or hunting. Hunter harassment is against state law. Avoid confrontations with hunters. If you think you've witnessed a fish or wildlife violation, report it to the Massachusetts Environmental Police at 1-800-632-8075.

## Tips for hunters

Wearing blaze orange is a legal requirement during some hunting seasons.

- All hunters during shotgun deer season and deer hunters during the primitive firearms season must wear at least 500 square inches of blaze orange material on their chest, back, and head. (Exception: coastal waterfowl hunters in a blind or boat.)
- All hunters on Wildlife Management Areas during the pheasant or quail season on WMAs where pheasant or quail are stocked must wear a blaze orange cap or hat. (Exception: waterfowl hunters in a blind or boat, and raccoon and opossum hunters at night.)

Some hunters may worry that wearing blaze orange will hurt their chances of harvesting an animal. While deer are not colorblind, they lack the ability to detect colors like red and orange from green and brown. Wearing blaze orange will not matter to the deer, but may save your life.