

MOCK PHEASANT OR QUAIL HUNT

Objectives

Participants shall:

- List four rules of firearm safety.
- List six or more statements in the “Hunter’s Code of Ethics” and demonstrate their personal code of ethics while on the “hunt”.
- Demonstrate how to safely cross a fence when hunting alone or with a partner.
- List and demonstrate five firearm carries (two-hand ready, shoulder, elbow, cradle, trail) and situations where each is used.
- Demonstrate the “ready to shoot” and “shooting” positions.
- Understand the importance of maintaining alignment while hunting with a group of hunters in a line
- Determine safe zones of fire and consider the safety of hunting dogs when birds are flying.
- Be familiar with their state’s trespass laws

Equipment

- 9 fence posts
- One “Parking Area” sign
- Six Pheasants Forever or Quail Forever “Habitat Management Area” signs
- Bailing twine or string to make “strands of fence”
- Two “No Trespassing” signs
- Two pointing dog silhouettes
- Four or more pieces of litter and trash can
- 10 or more spent shotgun shells or dummy ammunition
- Four or more orange hunting vests and orange hunting hats
- Four or more wooden “shotguns” or training firearms
- 12 or more Frisbees (must have two different colors, six of each color to represent hens and roosters when doing mock pheasant hunt)
- Engineer’s ribbon or “caution” tape used to delineate perimeter of the hunting area
- Hunting Licenses (Attachment #2)
- Four or more copies of the “Hunters Code of Ethics” (Attachment #3) and “Four Rules of Firearm Safety” (listed on the back of Hunting Licenses)

Mock Hunt Setup (See Setup Diagram – Attachment #1)

The “hunting area” should be approximately 80 feet wide by 150 feet long. Delineate the hunting area using fence posts in each corner and attaching a PF or QF Habitat Management Area sign. String the engineer’s ribbon or “caution” tape around the perimeter to further delineate the hunting area. You will be able to use the posts from the fence lines to help support the ribbon or tape.

The first station is the “parking lot”. Attach parking area sign to a fence post. Place litter and trash can in the parking lot.

Second station is the fence crossing. Construct a two-strand wire fence perpendicular to the perimeter of the hunting area using two fence posts and the bailing twine. Attach PF or QF Habitat Management Area signs to each fence post.

Third station is a pointing dog silhouette placed in an area “open to hunting”. Place the pointing dog near the end of your hunting area with enough room for birds (Frisbees) to fly and land within the hunting area.

The first three stations are spaced out along one half of the hunting area. The fourth and final station will be located on the other half of the hunting area on the return to the parking lot.

The fourth station is another two strand fence that is in line with the perimeter of the hunting area and has “no trespassing” signs on each post and a pointing dog silhouette pointing towards the private land.

Procedure

Each hunter should “purchase” a “Hunting License” (Attachment #2) and print their name on it. The Four Rules of Firearm Safety are listed on the back of the license.

Station 1 – Parking Lot

Outfit each hunter with a vest, hat, firearm and one spent shotgun shell. Begin at the parking lot with a safety talk.

Describe how the wooden shotguns are loaded and unloaded. When the spent shotgun shell is put into their vest pocket, the firearm is loaded. When they take the spent shotgun shell out of their vest pocket and hold it so everyone can see it, the firearm is unloaded.

If you are using training shotguns and dummy ammunition actions should remain opened and dummy ammo held for everyone to see when firearms are unloaded. **All firearms should be unloaded at this time.**

Discuss the benefits of wearing safety orange hunting clothes. Review the Four Rules of Firearm Safety, five firearm carries (two hand ready, elbow, cradle, shoulder, trail), “ready” and “shooting” positions and Hunter’s Code of Ethics. Make sure everyone has a “hunting license”.

Describe targets for the hunt and the importance of being able to identify wildlife. If your event is a pheasant hunt describe which color Frisbees are roosters and which are hens. (i.e. red Frisbee rooster, blue Frisbee hen). Practice identifying the target and communicating with fellow hunters by shouting “rooster” or “hen” when you show them the respective colored Frisbee. Those on a quail hunt can simply shout “bird” or “quail”.

Prior to leaving the parking lot hunters should recognize and pick up the litter in the parking lot. Discuss what to do with litter when there is no trash can (take it home and recycle or dispose of it there). Part of being an ethical and responsible hunter is being a good citizen. Their actions in and out of the field represent all hunters.

Line up the hunters and have each demonstrate a safe carry for their position in the line. It is also a good time to discuss the importance of staying aligned with hunters to their left and right. **Load firearms!**

Proceed toward the fence crossing while maintaining alignment and safe carries for each hunter.



Photos by Ben Bigalke

Begin the hunt with a safety talk.



Practicing the “cradle” carry at Station #1. Note garbage in “parking lot”.

Station 2 – Fence Crossing

Once the fence is reached demonstrate how to cross the fence when hunting alone. (Use a role player to demonstrate crossing the fence in an unsafe way. Let the hunters decide what was done right or wrong). Then demonstrate the correct way to cross the fence. The hunter should **unload the firearm** and place it under the fence with the muzzle pointed away from the direction that they will cross the fence. Care should be taken to make sure debris does not get into the muzzle or action. They should then cross the fence and retrieve and **reload the firearm on the other side.**

Demonstrate how to cross over the fence safely by using two volunteers. Both should **unload their firearms** and leave their actions open. One hunter hands the other their unloaded firearm and crosses the fence unarmed, then reaches back to take the two unloaded firearms from their hunting partner. The second hunter then crosses the fence and retrieves his or her firearm from the first.

Line the hunters back up (preferably in a different order) and have them demonstrate a safe carry for their new position in the line. **Load firearms!**

Station 3 – Pointing Dog In Area Open to Hunting

Proceed toward the pointing dog maintaining alignment and safe carries. As you approach the dog have the hunters get into the ready position (stock under their arm pit, barrel straight to the front and up away from the dog on the ground). Have hunters separate so there is equal number of hunters on each side of dog. Hunters and dog should now be aligned with all hunters in the ready position.

Review targets (red rooster, blue hens) and have them shout out “rooster”, “hen” or “bird”. Discuss safe zones of fire and have each hunter raise their shotgun from the ready to the shooting position as the instructor walks the raised Frisbee across the front of the line of hunters. Each hunter should raise their shotgun and shout “bang” as the target enters their safe zone of fire, lowering their firearm to the ready position as the target leaves their safe zone of fire.

The instructor should then get behind the line of hunters and begin throwing Frisbees from behind the hunters. As Frisbees are thrown, all hunters should be shouting “rooster”, “hen” or “bird” as the appropriate colored Frisbee is thrown. As a rooster or quail enters into their safe zone of fire each hunter should raise their firearm and shout “bang” and then return to the ready position.



A young hunter demonstrates how to safely cross a fence when hunting alone.

As the hunters are shooting, the instructor or another assistant should drop at least one spent shotgun shell at the feet of each hunter. After each hunter has shot at a bird in their safe zone of fire it is time to pick up the empty casings. Spent shells are made of plastic and metals, they last a long time! Have each of the hunters go out and retrieve a few of the Frisbees.

Reassemble the line, having each hunter choose a safe carry. The line of hunters will now maneuver a turn in the hunting area and return toward the fourth station and parking lot. It is important to maintain alignment during the turn, those on the inside of the turn must slow down or stop and those on the outside of the turn will need to walk a little faster.

Station 4 – Pointing Dog on Private Property Fence Line

Once the hunters are in a straight line proceed toward the pointing dog along the private property line. As you approach the pointing dog, the hunters should automatically get into the ready position (stock under their arm pit, barrel straight to the front and up away from the dog on the ground). The hunters should again separate with equal numbers on each side of the dog. The hunters should now be aligned with the dog facing the private property fence line.

It is now time to discuss trespass laws for the specific state and whether or not retrieval of game is allowed without permission from the landowner.

The instructor should then throw Frisbees from behind the line of hunters. Hunters now have to determine whether the bird is a rooster or hen, in their safe zone of fire and whether it is on their side of the fence. Again the instructor should drop spent shells at the feet of each hunter. Check to see if they pick them up.



Understanding local trespass laws is an important part of being a responsible hunter.

After each hunter has had a chance to shoot a bird they will need to go retrieve that bird. If your state law allows hunters to retrieve game from private property then the hunters should **unload their firearm**, point the muzzle in a safe direction and go retrieve their birds on the other side of the fence. It may be a good idea to leave their orange hat near the firearm so they can find it in the grass.

Hunters should then line back up and determine a safe carry for their location in the line. **Load firearm!**

Before the group returns to the parking lot. Another hunter will enter the hunting area (this new hunter is a role player) and commit a violation (shooting a hen pheasant and hiding it in their truck or any other violation) that your hunting group is a witness to.

Discuss with the group that although it is not their responsibility to confront that person (leave that to conservation officers) it is their responsibility to give that information to a conservation officer when they have a chance to or by calling the local TIP (Turn In Poachers) line. Those that violate game laws steal opportunities from ethical hunters and represent hunting in a bad way.

Station 5 – Return to Parking Lot

Return to the parking lot while maintaining alignment and safe carries. Once the group has reached the parking lot all **firearms should be unloaded**.

Go over with the group what was learned and ask for any questions. Discuss the role hunters have played in conservation and why it is important to purchase a license. Those license dollars, along with taxes on sporting goods, are used to improve wildlife habitat and protect our natural resources. We should consider wildlife biologists and Conservation Officers as our allies and partners in conservation.

This is now a great opportunity to involve a Conservation Officer into your program as a role player. He can check licenses and talk to the group about their day. Hopefully they will report the violation and have some questions.

Variations

Any scenario based training can be added to this activity so as to incorporate other safety, moral or ethical decision making skills into the activity. Asking permission from landowners, shoot/don't shoot situations, counting birds in their daily bag limit, etc.



Shotgun muzzles are up and to the front when approaching a "birdy dog"



Meeting the local conservation officer can foster the partnership between sportsman and resource professionals.

Mock Hunt Setup

