

R U R E D E ?



What makes good bowhunting practice?

Answer: bowhunting. There is not other way to become good at bowhunting other than to bowhunt. There are portions of bowhunting that you can improve on without actually being on a bowhunt, but you must be in the field to become a better bowhunter.

Let's explore some to the things you can do to help prepare you for the bowhunt.

1. Shooting- you can stand on a range or in the back yard and shoot one arrow after
2. another. You will become good at this

particular exercise but bowhunting brings many different situations. 3-D foam animal shooting has advanced us into a better realm of practice for bowhunting. However, if you just walk the trail, stand straight up and take several minutes to pre-prepare for each shot your most likely doing yourself a dis-service. Get on your knees, get on one knee, stand with your back to the target and twist around for a shot, sit on your butt, sit on a log, stand on uneven ground. Practice while wearing the clothes you will be hunting in. If you wear a pack, practice with that on. If you use sights, learn to judge yardage. Yeah Bushnell wants you to own a range finder. Great, give them some money and own one. But then practice with it. In the days of my pins I had a Ranging brand range finder. I would walk to a target on the range. Calculate the range in my head, take the shot, then range find it to learn how far it really was. Then I would take a second arrow to learn for sure. Four weeks prior to the hunt I never shot the range or any other target with the range finder. The point and range, range finders of today don't take much of a movement to use but they still take two movements that you may not always be able to take. So wean yourself from them incase you can't use it. Know the anatomy of an animal. Know when and where to take the shot.

3. Clothing- Make sure your shoes are broken in. Nothing will ruin your hunt quicker than blistered feet. Break in your clothing; wear them to work around the yard in, wear them, wash them and wear them some more. I like to have several different patterns to help match the foliage of the areas I'll be hunting in. Make sure you have clothing to fit the seasons. Can you imagine how great it would be to get a snow to hunt in the first of September? Can you also imagine how bad it would be if all you had taken with you was summer gear?

4. Day Packs- I don't want to just survive a couple of days if I need to....I want to be comfortable doing it. Make sure you have shelter construction material, several reliable ways to start a fire, signal devices, food and water available in your pack. I also carry everything I need to take care of an animal and get it broken down and boned out on the spot. Then my first trip to the vehicle I will be able to carry some part of the animal back with me. This is especially important if you don't have pack animals to help you get the animal out. A pack can give you the peace of mind you need to help you focus on the task at hand. Staying over night might mean the difference between success or another unnecessary walk in and out. Make sure someone knows where you are going. You can give them a few options of where you plan to hunt, but then stay with the plan. No animal is worth dying in the woods over.
5. Tree Stands-If you are into hunting in tree stand make sure your stand and harnesses are in good repair before you go. 14 feet above the ground is not a good place to find out that the mice had eaten through your webbing last winter. If you are using one of the new commercial blinds practice out of it. Practice out of your tree stand while on a camping or scouting trip. Know the laws about using stands where you plan to use them. A call to the BLM or Forest Service can help you out.
6. Hike-Running gets your lungs going but hiking gets the whole system together. It gets your wood legs under you. So spend some time walking in the woods.
7. Mental-Give yourself some time to go hunting. Get time to get there, stay there and hunt. Even if it is a short day hunt get there so you relax away the amped up life and don't let it follow you into the woods. Know your hunting companions and if your not compatible....dump em! You shouldn't have to worry if they are going to obey the law, be on time, help you trail or pack a critter.

There doesn't seem to be enough days available to learn all there is about bowhunting during the hunt, so these 6 steps will give you a leg up on the time deficit we seem to have. Make sure you involve your kids in these processes even before they are old enough to hunt it may give them the exposure they need to drill in that anticipation for hunting. It is even more difficult for a kid to find enough time to be in the woods to learn during the bowhunt because school is in the way. If your lucky you may get two weekends that they can go.

If you can find a bowhunter education course take one. The class will set you on the path to have a better time while bowhunting. Make sure to take your kids along to class.

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