Crossbows for Hunting

by April Andy

Article published on July 19th 2012 | Others

Hunters are choosing crossbows for hunting more than ever before. Partly due to crossbows now being a legal means of hunting in many states, and partly because using a crossbow for hunting is now becoming more socially acceptable. If youâ€™re already a bowhunter, not much will change in your hunting strategies when you take to the woods with a crossbow. If youâ€™re a gun hunter who is looking to spend more time in the woods, and have now chosen a crossbow for hunting, you may or may not have to adjust your hunting tactics. Letâ€™s take a look at some of aspects of hunting with a crossbow that you gun hunters may want to consider before heading to the woods with a crossbow for the first time.

First thing first. You are now bow hunting. Bowhunting is about getting close. Forget about deer drives and standing at the edge of a field with your shotgun. While it is still perfectly fine to hunt from the ground when hunting with a crossbow, you now will have to get closer to your prey than you ever may have been before. Ground blinds are a hugely popular method of bowhunting, especially with a crossbow. They are great for concealing a hunters movement and most offer plenty of room for a crossbow. Treestands are probably the most popular way to bow hunt. If youâ€™re an able body hunter without a fear of heights, hunting from a treestand can have many advantages compared to sitting on the ground. Treestands offer a better vantage point allowing a crossbow hunter to observe game at further distances. By being elevated, they help hide human scent and also get the hunter out of the line of sight from keen eyes. One key factor to point out is that arrows shot from a crossbow at an elevated position may not hit the same point as they do when shot from a crossbow at ground level at the same distances. As a rule they normally donâ€™t. Most of the time they will hit a couple inches higher. So I strongly suggest practicing from an elevated position before heading to the deer woods for the first time with your crossbow.

Your shot distance while crossbow hunting will be shorter of that with a gun. While many of todays crossbows are capable of some pretty amazing groups at longer yardages, most of the time they are achieved while shooting your crossbow from a bench. The arrow from your crossbow does not shoot like the bullet from your gun. It doesnâ€™t take much to change the path of a crossbow arrow. Unseen branches or limbs can deflect a crossbow arrow to the point of actually missing a deer completely, or even worse, wounding one. Try to only take shots that have open paths between you and the animal. Cutting shooting lanes before season is good practice. Your maximum distance to shoot should be a personal decision. Remember that deer are moving targets. Just because you can shoot the â€œXâ€• out of a bullseye at 60 yards with your crossbow in your backyard doesnâ€™t mea should be your max yardage when hunting with a crossbow in the field. The farther the shot, the higher the margin for error. I said it once before and Iâ€™ll say it again. Bowhunting is about getting close!!!

Shot placement is the next thing to consider when making the switch to crossbows for hunting. No more aiming for the shoulder or taking that neck shot. Most times you will only get one shot when hunting with a crossbow, so make it count. When hunting with arrows and broadheads, animals die from hemorrhage not shock. That means a well placed arrow is key. Youâ€™ll want to set the sights of your crossbow behind the shoulder in the vital organs. A broadside shot or slightly quartering away shot is ideal.

Crossbows are generally loud. Not as loud as a shotgun or rifle, but loud compared to most compound bows. Expect your deer to â€œjump the stringâ€• which actually means that they are ducking the string. So pay attention to the demeanor of the deer. Is it calm and relaxed or is it alert and attentive? If it is relaxed, then aiming mid way up the body to just below midway is good. If it is alert

and has made you out, aiming at the lower third of the body, or at the heart will give you some extra room if the deer does duck the string. A well placed crossbow arrow will dispatch a deer in a matter of seconds. Which brings us to the next topic for the novice crossbow hunter. What to look for after the shot and how long should you wait before tracking.

Hopefully when you shoot your crossbow youâ€™ll also be able to follow the arrow until it hits the animal. The first thing you should do is pay attention to where your arrow hit. Did the shot look good? Meaning was it behind the shoulder and in the vitals? Did the shot feel good? Were you able to follow through with your shot, or did you pick your head up to try and â€œpeakâ€•? What did the deer do after the shot. Did it run off gracefully or did it look injured? Listen up!!! Did you hear the deer fall over? Or could you hear it run until it was out of earshot. All these factors will be indicators of when you should start tracking. The general rule of thumb is to wait at least a half hour before tracking on a well placed shot. Of course if you see the deer fall over, youâ€™ll be able to go to it immediately. If youâ€™re not sure where you hit it, or you know it was a marginal shot, give it time. How much time really depends on your schedule. The more time the better. Most times, deer shot with a marginal hit will not run very far if not pushed. Go get breakfast or lunch, or even wait until the next morning if you can. Even with little to no blood, often times you can recover deer in this situation just by giving them plenty of time to expire. However, all too often the anxious hunter starts tracking marginally hit deer too early only jump them from their bed. Doing so often results in the wounded deer running to the next county leaving the crossbow hunter empty handed. Knowing when and when not to track deer comes from experience. Hopefully, if you are gun hunter converting to crossbows for hunting you will already have some experience under your belt. If not, it will be part of the process when learning to crossbow hunt.

The paragraphs above will give you a good head start when using a crossbow for hunting the first time. It would be almost impossible to cover all of the aspects that make hunting with a crossbow different than hunting with a gun. Some things you can only learn from experience with your crossbow and spending time hunting with it in the woods. Sometimes what works for one hunter may not apply to another. In the end, only you will be able to decide for yourself what works the best for you. Hopefully Iâ€™ve given you a head start on what to expect when deer hunting with a crossbow and what may be different compared to hunting deer with a gun.Crossbow Nation website will give you a good head start when using a crossbow for hunting the first time.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/others-articles/crossbows-for-hunting.htm - Article Side

April Andy - About Author:
Crossbow Nation website will give you a good head start when using a a crossbow for hunting the first time.

Article Keywords:
crossbows,crossbow hunting,crossbow forums,crossbow arrows,compound bows

You can find more free articles on Article Side. Sign up today and share your knowledge to the community! It is completely FREE!