



An introduction to game hunting

Important information
for first time game hunters

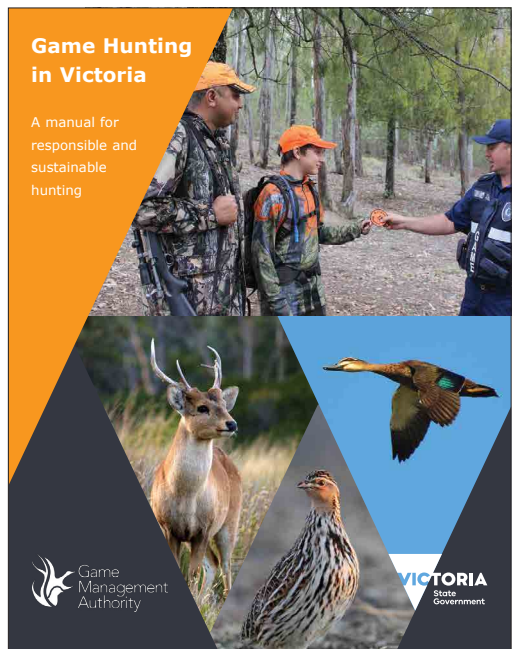
Congratulation on deciding to become one of more than 50,000 licensed game hunters that make a significant contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of all Victorians. Victoria has a long tradition of game hunting that has been regulated and actively managed since the 1860s.

With strong deer, duck, quail, partridge and pheasant populations, combined with generous seasons, bag limits and expansive public land available for game hunting, Victoria is regarded as having some of the best hunting opportunities in Australia.

As a hunter, you must comply with all hunting and firearms laws and hunt in an ethical, sustainable and humane way. By maintaining the highest standard of behaviour, you can be proud of hunting, enjoy your hunting even more, and improve the perception of hunting in the community.

To help you become a responsible and successful game hunter, read and understand *Game Hunting in Victoria - A manual for responsible and sustainable hunting*. The manual contains detailed information about game hunting, including equipment suggestions and tips that will help you become a better hunter. It is available to download free of charge from Game Management Authority's (GMA) website www.gma.vic.gov.au

Enjoy your hunting and always RESPECT:
Hunt Responsibly.



Know the law

Before you enter the field for the first time, you must pass any required tests and purchase the correct licence for the game you are going to hunt. You also must know the laws that ensure hunting is conducted safely, sustainably, humanely and fairly.

An entire chapter in the Game Hunting in Victoria education manual is dedicated to explaining the hunting laws in plain, easy to understand language. Refer to the manual and learn how to comply with the legislation. There are significant penalties for non compliance with the law, including fines, licence cancellation, and even jail terms.

The GMA website also contains links to relevant laws. GMA staff are always happy to answer any questions you might have.

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Where to Hunt

There are many land classifications in Victoria and, depending on type of classification, hunting may or may not be permitted. The table below provides general information on where you may hunt.

Location	Is hunting permitted?
State forest, forest parks (Cobboboonee and Otway) and other unoccupied Crown land	Game species may be hunted during the open season only. Pest animals may be hunted at any time.
Licensed Crown land	Generally, game (during the open season) and pest animals (anytime) may be hunted, subject to the permission of the licensee.
State Game Reserves	Game duck may be hunted, but only during the open season. Sixteen State Game Reserves are available for Stubble Quail hunting, one for Sambar Deer hunting and six for Hog Deer hunting. Pest animals may not be hunted at any time, unless specifically authorised by Parks Victoria.
Private land	Game may only be hunted during the open season and pest animals may be hunted at any time, but only with the permission of the landowner/manager.
Sanctuaries	Game species must not be hunted at any time. Pest animals may be hunted at any time.
Melbourne Water catchment areas	Hunting of any type is not permitted at any time.
Flora and fauna reserves and nature conservation reserves	Hunting of any type is not permitted at any time.
Alpine resorts	Hunting of any type is not permitted at any time.

Location	Is hunting permitted?
National parks, state parks, coastal parks, wilderness parks, regional parks	<p>Generally, hunting of any type is not permitted at any time, but there are some exceptions (see below).</p> <p>No firearms are allowed in these parks except those that legally can be used for hunting permitted game and pest species (Except Lake Albacutya Park were other introduced species can be hunted).</p>
	<p>Alpine National Park, Lake Eildon National Park, Mitchell River National Park, Tara Range Park and Avon Wilderness Park: Sambar Deer may be hunted by stalking only in parts of these parks and only during prescribed periods. The use of dogs to hunt Sambar Deer is not permitted. Pest animals and other species must not be hunted.</p>
	<p>Cape Conran Coastal Park: On Sydenham Inlet in the park, game ducks may be hunted during the open season. Gundogs are allowed for the flushing or retrieval of ducks during the open season. Pest animals and other species must not be hunted.</p>
	<p>Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park: In certain sections, game ducks, Stubble Quail, and Hog Deer may be hunted in season. Gundogs are allowed for the flushing or retrieval of game ducks and Stubble Quail during the respective seasons. Check with Parks Victoria for details. Pest animals and other species must not be hunted. Hunters must have a permit from Parks Victoria to erect a hide in the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park.</p>
	<p>Lake Albacutya Park: The hunting of rabbits, foxes or cats is allowed as well as the hunting of game duck during the open season. Gundogs are allowed for the retrieval of game ducks during the duck open season. Hunting is not permitted in part of the park at the Western Beach visitor facilities, including near the boat ramp.</p>
	<p>Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park: Hunting for Hog Deer and game duck is permitted in certain sections in season. Pest animals and other species must not be hunted.</p>
<p>For more information refer to www.parkweb.vic.gov.au</p>	

For up to date information on game hunting, deer hunting maps, seasonal arrangements, hunting in State Game Reserves, and much more, visit www.gma.vic.gov.au or refer to Game Hunting Victoria smartphone app.



Game Management Authority

Download the free Game Hunting Victoria smartphone app

Available for iPhone and Android devices from the iTunes store and Google Play

www.gma.vic.gov.au

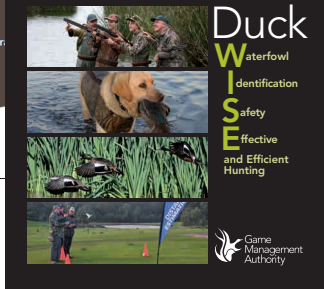
Land managers like the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Parks Victoria will do their best to help you identify areas open to hunting, but you will need to do the following before entering the field:

- Identify areas you wish to hunt and obtain maps of the area
- Determine the land classification
- Identify the respective land manager (see table on page 9)
- Talk to park rangers about location of park boundaries, prohibited areas, etc
- For Crown land, find out from the nearest DELWP offices if the area is licensed or leased or if hunting is prohibited
- Ensure that the use of firearms in the area you wish to hunt is not prohibited under the *Firearms Act 1996* for safety reasons.

If you intend to hunt on private land, you must first obtain permission from the landholder or the manager.

More information

Comprehensive and detailed educational material like: Be a better game bird – Shotgunning Education Program Handbook 2nd edition, Duck WISE DVD, A Guide to the use of hounds for hunting Sambar Deer in Victoria, RESPECT program information and multiple factsheets are available from the GMA website at www.gma.vic.gov.au



A guide to the use of hounds for hunting Sambar Deer in Victoria

Hunting's future depends on you



We're lucky in Victoria to have such great hunting.

If you want hunting as a kid or you go hunting with your kids. Maybe it's time to hunting on your own and happy to share some know-how.

Ever you are, one of the key traits of a good hunter is respect. Hunting community has formed friendship to promote a set of birds to ensure respectful and sensible hunting.

We will help to raise the awareness maintain the highest standards behaviour of all involved in hunting.

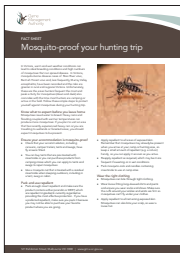
Through the below standards we can enjoy our hunting even more, improve the perception of hunting and be proud of hunting.

Respect for animals
Respect the environment
Respect other hunters
Respect non-hunters
Respect the hunt
Respect the laws

For more information on the standards visit www.gma.vic.gov.au

Hunting's future depends on you. Show respect and hunt responsibly.

Supported by:



Be an ethical, responsible and successful hunter

Responsible, ethical behaviour and personal involvement are essential to the future of hunting. You should consider joining a reputable hunting club, many of which run training programs for their members focusing on ethical behaviour, game biology and ecology, hunting methods, equipment, bushcraft, and many other areas that will help you become successful. Experienced club members are often happy to mentor new members and help them in becoming better hunters.

Some clubs are involved in conservation programs that make a real difference to game and non-game species and their habitats. Get involved and support these conservation initiatives.



Important contacts

If you want more information, contact the relevant government department:

- Game hunting laws
- Game Licensing

Game Management Authority (GMA)

www.gma.vic.gov.au

Customer Service Centre 136 186

Game Hunting Victoria phone app

- Game policy
- Animal Welfare

Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR)

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au

Customer Service Centre 136 186

- Where to hunt (State forest, forest parks (Cobboboonee and Otway) and other unoccupied Crown land and waterways.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

www.delwp.vic.gov.au

Customer Service Centre 136 186

- Where to hunt (State Game Reserves, National parks, state parks, coastal parks, wilderness parks, regional parks)

Parks Victoria

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

Customer Service Centre 13 1963

- Firearms laws and licensing
- Crossbow laws and licensing

Victoria Police

www.police.vic.gov.au

Phone: (03) 9247 6666

Emergencies: Triple Zero (000)

Don't tolerate illegal hunting

Don't tolerate illegal or irresponsible hunter behaviour. The irresponsible or illegal behaviour of some damages the reputation of hunters, can create unsafe or unsustainable situations and diminishes the public's confidence and support for hunting.

Report suspected illegal hunting to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000, the GMA's Customer Service Centre on 136 186, or online at www.gma.gov.vic.au or, in emergency situations, to Victoria Police on triple zero (000).

Important things to report are:

- Time and date of activity
- Is activity continuing or past?
- Place
- Activity
- Number of people involved
- Vehicle registration
- Equipment used

Even if officers can't respond to your report at the time, the information is recorded in a database and helps identify crime hotspots, patterns of behaviour and persons of interest.

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For more information about Game Management Authority go to www.gma.vic.gov.au

Cover photo: Game dish courtesy of Fowles Wine.

THE TEN BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY



1. **Treat every firearm as loaded.** Check every firearm yourself; do not take the word of another person that a firearm is unloaded. Pass or accept only open and unloaded firearms. Never accept or pass a firearm to another person unless the breech is open and all ammunition has been removed.
2. **Always point firearms in a safe direction.** Loaded or unloaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction. A safe direction will depend on where you are and what you are doing.
3. **Load your firearm only when ready to fire.** Avoid carrying loaded firearms around. Only load your firearm when you intend to use it and only in an area where it can be safely and legally discharged.
4. **Identify your target beyond all doubt.** Make sure of your target before firing. It is not good enough just to think that what you see is your target. Your target must be positively identified before firing; if in doubt, DO NOT SHOOT.
5. **Check your firing zone.** The firing zone is not only the area between you and your target but also the area beyond the target that is still within the extreme range of your firearm. If using a shotgun, the firing zone could be very wide due to the spread of the shot, particularly at longer ranges.
6. **Store ammunition and firearms safely.** When not in use, lock away firearms and ammunition separately, out of the reach of children. Not only is this good sense, but in Victoria, there is also a legal obligation that firearms and ammunition are locked separately in secure safes at the primary place of residence.
7. **Avoid alcohol or drugs when handling firearms.** Alcohol and many day-to-day drugs and medicines dull and slow your mental and physical reactions. When using firearms, never use alcohol or drugs. Wait until your firearm is appropriately secured before you have a drink, and insist that others do the same.
8. **Never have loaded firearms in the car, home, or camp.** Before entering a car, home, or camp, completely unload your firearm. Ensure that the action is open and that there is no ammunition in either the breech or the magazine.
9. **Avoid firing at hard surfaces or water.** Consider the area in which you are shooting. Could a ricochet occur? A ricochet will almost certainly result from shooting at water or smooth flat surfaces and rocks. Exercise extreme caution when despatching downed birds on water.
10. **Don't climb fences or obstacles with loaded firearms.** Before attempting to negotiate a fence or obstacle, unload your firearm. Do not rely on the safety mechanism. The safety mechanism, at best, only supplements the safe handling of firearms.

Respect for animals
Respect the environment
Respect other hunters

Respect non-hunters
Respect the hunt
Respect the laws



RESPECT
HUNT RESPONSIBLY

Hunting's future depends on you.
Show respect and hunt responsibly.