



Today's hunt prep topics discuss the basics of preparing you for your hunt, we want to give you some tips on equipment, physically preparing for your hunt, and finally some other tips that will help you make the most of your trip out west this fall!

### **Licenses:**

Your license will be a Unlimited Rifle Bull Elk OTC License, also referred to as a OTC (Over the Counter) License. You did not need to apply for this license, and it will be available for purchase starting in early August, we will notify you of the specific date as we get closer.

You will be able to purchase your Unlimited Rifle Bull Elk OTC on-line (by logging into your CPW I- Paws Account) or in person at a CPW (Colorado Parks & Wildlife) vendor. You can find locations on CPW's website by clicking the link below and entering a location zip code or city:

<https://www.cpwshop.com/issuerlist.page>

**NOTE: YOU WILL NEED YOUR HUNTER SAFETY INFORMATION TO PURCHASE YOUR LICNESE. IF YOU'RE PURCHASING IN PERSON, YOU WILL NEED TO SHOW YOUR HUNTER SAFETY CARD, AND YOU NEED TO CARRY YOUR HUNTER SAFETY CARD ON YOUR PERSON WHILE HUNTING IN COLORADO.**

### **Hunting Out West:**

For anyone who has not hunted the western states prior to this trip, it can be a bit overwhelming...the first thing you will notice is you can see a long way!! I grew up in Michigan and my hunts were mostly looking at thick timber with shots of 100 yards at the most. There is an enormous difference in trying to judge distance and just seeing game in the vast open landscape of the west. It takes some time for eyes to adjust and be able to pick up an elk, sometime even as close as 100 yards. The most important piece of equipment to help with this adjustment is a quality set of binoculars (minimum of 10 x 42), not only having them with you, but using them consistently to find game. Judging distance takes time in this open landscape, so another great tool to have is a rangefinder. Most of you will have a guide with you on your hunt, they will be equipped with both good binoculars and a good range finder, but it's just as important for you to have these important tools with you as well so add them to your packing list. If anyone

is looking to purchase either for your trip, do not hesitate to reach out if you need any advice on what to look at.

### **Physical Readiness:**

Taking good care of yourself, getting some sort of physical activity, and drinking plenty of water before and during your trip will help you all in terms of being prepared for your hunt from a physical standpoint. I would consider our hunts on the easy side of a western deer hunt, but open terrain and dry air can influence your health if you are not in the best of shape. Our altitude is around 4,000 feet above sea level, so not a huge impact on your health, but it will have an impact on sighting in your rifle...see more info on this below under the Weapon Preparation section of this email.

### **Weapon Preparation:**

Does not matter if you are hunting with a bow, muzzle loader, or rifle, the name of the game is practice! Let us break this down:

#### **Rifle:**

- When sighting in your rifle, make sure you are around 2" high at 100, that will put most calibers around 3 – 3.5" high when you shoot at the lodge due to the altitude.
- Scopes should have the largest reticle as possible. Scopes that magnify from 4-9 just are not large enough for our open country, and scopes with larger diameters hold light better in low light situations. A scope that has adjustable turrets or multiple reticles with-in the scope are best for the longer distances you may be shooting (most shots are between 100 and 350 yards). If anyone needs recommendations on scopes, please contact us and we will give you some recommendations based on your personal budget.
- Make sure you purchase ammo with the same lot number and same grain as you will be hunting with and be consistent on shooting that ammo. Different lot numbers could have a huge ramification on the rifle's grouping ability as well as different bullet weights. Find a bullet style/weight that groups best with your rifle and stick with that ammo!
  - Ammo is quite difficult to find right now, from what we are hearing it may be hard to get for the foreseeable future. This will affect your ability to practice unless you re-load or have ample ammo on hand. Our recommendation is to get your ammo as soon as you can and keep looking right up until the time you will be leaving for your trip.
- If you can shoot at a range out to 300 or 400 yards, take advantage of this.... again, we look for shots to be 300 - 350 yards and under but being a good shot at 400 yards makes you a great shot at 100 yards.

- Scope power should be a minimum of 4-2 x 50 MM, and scopes with adjustable turrets or multi-reticles are the best! If you are putting a new scope on your rifle for this hunt, do so as soon as you can and practice with it as much as possible. Please make sure you understand how these scopes work, if it is new to you, it's important to know and understand everything about your scope and how it performs on your rifle.
- Try to mentally put yourself in the moment of truth when practicing, it really does help! Practice from your shooting sticks as much as you can, there are huge differences on stability and recoil when moving from a shooting vice or bench to sticks. Even the tri-pods style sticks I recommend are not as stable as your favorite shooting bench, so it takes practice to get good on those sticks.
- If you are thinking of replacing your scope or purchasing shooting sticks for the first time, do it asap and make sure your used to them well before you arrive in camp!

### **Other Equipment:**

<https://www.skregear.com/ref/172/?campaign=l&AOutfittersClientProgram>

Our website has a great gear recommendation list, and you can even purchase equipment through one of our preferred partners – SKRE Clothing by clicking on the link above. For now, let's just talk basics:

### **Things you WILL need!**

Binoculars

Range Finder

Good Pack (You do not need a huge pack, just big enough to carry water, food, extra cloths)

Rain Gear (Early Seasons Aug/Sept)

Cold Gear (Later Seasons - Oct/Nov)

Good Hunting Boots/Quality Socks

500" of Hunter's Orange (Firearm Seasons)

Good Gloves/Head ware

Headlamp/Flashlight

Weapon

Ammo

Proper Clothing/Camo Clothing (Layers especially important) \*\*

Camp Cloths

Toiletries

Chap stick is especially important

### **Things you will not need:**

Knives/skinning equipment  
Spotting Scope  
GPS  
2 Way Radios  
Sleeping Bag  
Towels  
Game Calls  
Pillows  
Eating utensils

Our lodge is fully equipped to handle all your needs, so all you need to pack is your hunting equipment/clothing.

**The Most Important Factor of Equipment; know your equipment and practice with it with BEFORE your hunt:**

Every year clients show up with brand new equipment just purchased off the internet or their hunting store of choice. Booking a hunt comes with all the excitement of not only the adventure, but the chance to purchase new equipment. As exciting as this is, it can also be overwhelming, there are so many gadgets being marketed to hunters today, one could go broke just purchasing camo!

Our advice is to keep it simple; you do not need half the things you may think you need!

**Binoculars**

Should be at least 10x42.

**Rangefinders**

Should go out to 500 yards and work off any solid object, not just a reflective target.

**Shooting sticks**

Should be Tripods only! They should easily adjust up and down (our favorite Tripod is the Primos Shooting stick, it has a trigger that allows you to move up and down with the press of a finger). Monopods and bi pods are just not steady enough to ensure a solid rest! Our other word of advice on shooting sticks, practice shooting off them, do not use practice using bench rests like the "Lead Sled"...you want to practice REAL WORLD shooting which means practicing off shooting sticks. Most bench rests do not allow your rifle to recoil properly which will cause it to pattern differently than using shooting sticks.

**Clothing**

Should be light in weight in the early seasons. Layers are especially important all seasons as we can see temps in the 70's in the afternoon and teens to 20's in the morning. Gore-Tex is a must. You will want to bring rain proof clothing in the early season, and snow gear in the later seasons. Camo pattern is not so important, but function is extremely important! Check out our Trusted Partner SKRE Clothing, they offer a wide range of clothing that works great for fall/winter in Colorado or anywhere in North America.

**Boots**

Mountain Hunts - We hunt a lot of boggy areas in the early season, so a waterproof lightweight boot that goes up the calf along with boot gators going up the calf almost to the knee are a must, later seasons you will want a heavier boot that wicks moisture easily! It should be good for sitting and stalking! Leave muck boots and other rubber boots at home, they do not work well on this type of hunt!

Plains Hunts: Light boots that wick moisture is the key to the plain's hunts!

**Packs**

Early season, smaller light packs work well, keep in mind you will not be hunting all day in most cases, so you just need a pack to carry your personal items, extra clothing, water, and snacks. Do not overdo it with a huge pack you would use if hunting in the back country for days.

You will want to carry your weapon in your hands, it just does not work well to have your weapon on your pack, sometimes things happen fast, and you can miss your opportunity if your weapon is on your back!