

25 Deer Hunting Scent Control Techniques



A 12-point buck with double drop-tines stands at high alert. Eyes dart around. Ears spin like radars on swivels. The slight swirl of wind carries just a stray whiff of your stink straight up its nostril, and that sends its straight into fight-or-flight mode. Within seconds, it snorts and bounds away into cover. Your dream buck was so close, but is now so far away.

If you'd have implemented sound deer hunting scent control techniques, the outcome would have been significantly different. Perhaps it would have been a record-class whitetail with your name on it. Maybe just a personal best. Regardless, you would've shot that deer if not for the aroma-based blunders.

So, learn how to fool a whitetail's best defense – its nose. Here are tips to help with scent elimination when hunting deer and other big game.

Wear Scent-Free Clothing & Gear

1. Wash Hunting Clothing After Each Hunt

It's crucial to maintain your **hunting clothing**. This includes washing your camouflage after each hunt. Use a scent-reduction detergent to complete this process.

2. Utilize Ozone- or Ozone-Esque Technologies with Clothing

For about a decade, hunters have been using ozone technologies. Others use similar tech that accomplishes comparable results. One application, regardless of the route taken, is treating hunting clothing to remove unwanted sent.

3. Store Hunting Clothing in a Dedicated Container

Store hunting clothing in dedicated containers. This keeps them contained and away from aromas that might be floating around nearby. This also allows you to place a cover scent, such as cedar, inside of that container. Oftentimes, these containers are paired with ozone machines.

4. Implement a Clothing Scent Management Regimen

No matter what your process, be sure to implement a clothing scent control regimen. Doing so will decrease the amount of scent in your clothing and minimize how much is emitted in the field.

5. Wear Scent-Free Boots

Your feet leave behind a significant amount of scent. To reduce this, wear scent-free **boots**. At least, wear boots that aren't as likely to deposit unwanted scent. Generally, this requires wearing rubber boots, or better yet, hip boots or waders.

6. Put on Hunting Clothes at the Hunting Property

Another tip is not putting on your hunting clothes until you reach the property you're actually hunting.



Waiting to put on hunting clothes until you arrive and park reduces the chances of scent contamination between home and the farm.

Eliminate Everyday Odors Before Hunting

7. Minimize Foreign, Especially Pungent, Scents

Do everything possible to minimize foreign scents. Be especially mindful and restrictive of highly pungent aromas. Examples include gasoline, scented deodorants, cologne, air fresheners, and more. These are foreign smells to the deer woods that whitetails will not tolerate.

8. Avoid Smelly Habits

Likewise, avoid smelly habits. Examples include getting gas in your camo, eating in your hunting clothing, smoking tobacco products, etc. These odor-causing habits that can prove just enough to botch a hunt.

9. Swear Off Smelly Foods

Continuing with the theme, swear off smelly foods. You are what you eat. Therefore, you will smell differently according to what you consume. Don't eat foods that cause indigestion or gas. Refrain from things that produce bad breath or increased smell when sweating.



Use Scent Reduction Products

10. Deploy Scent-Reduction Products

There is no way to completely remove human scent and other odors. However, you can use different **scent-reduction products** to minimize these as much as possible. Therefore, deploy available products that you have access to, and which are within your budget.

11. Benefit From Cedar Branch Scent Cover

There are numerous things that work well for cover. One example is cedar. Benefit from cedar scent cover in your hunting clothing container, as well as in the field while hunting. You might even hunt in a cedar tree which in itself can be a scent management tactic.

12. Use Other Cover Scents

Don't like cedar? Use other cover scents instead. Earth scent is a popular choice. Apple, deer scents (but not deer urines), etc. are also options. While these won't completely mask scent, these can assist with treating clothing, packs, and other gear.

13. Set Up a Scent Stopper

Another good application for scents is setting up a scent stopper. Hang or spray a scent on each side of your downwind scent cone. This can stop deer and give you a shot opportunity before they smell you.

14. Don't Sweat At All

Sweating is the worst thing you can do to minimize scent. Move slowly, don't get hot, and leave off warm layers until you reach your hunting spot. Whatever you do, just don't sweat (literally).

15. Implement Ozone- or Ozone-Esque Technologies in the Field

Ozone machines and similar technologies are good for treating clothing. Some can also be used in the field. Positioning these on the downwind side of your position can help neutralize some of your scent.

Manage Hunting Conditions for Scent Control

16. Maintain Constant Wind Direction Awareness

Always be aware of the current wind direction. Maintaining constant observation is needed for ensuring you continue to have an acceptable wind direction and speed.

17. Use Thermals to Your Advantage

Thermals are independent of the prevailing wind direction. These are best defined as the rising and falling of wind columns that are influenced by the heating and cooling of the landscape. These are also impacted by topography, and even bodies of water. You can use these to your advantage. In the morning, the rising sun heats up an area, and thermals rise.



So, hunters should benefit by hunting above expected deer activity. In the afternoon, the setting of the sun cools the area, and thermals fall. So, Hunters should set up below expected deer movement. Interestingly, in the late afternoon, when there's minimal wind, water sources can pull scent down toward and along the surface.

18. Hunt a Just-Off Wind Direction

Some mature deer are more likely to move in certain areas when the wind is somewhat in their favor. Therefore, hunt a just-off wind direction to give them the confidence to move, even though it's just good enough to keep them from smelling you.

Optimize Your Hunting Location & Setup

19. Use Good Scent Blockers

I'm not talking about product-based scent blockers. These are large physical objects in the field that keep deer from getting downwind of your position. Maybe that's a steep bluff, steep riverbank, big brush pile, downed tree, etc. Use these and more to your advantage.

20. Choose the Right Stand Locations

Select the right treestand location and you won't have a need for extensive scent management. The stand location and wind direction will handle everything.

21. Hunt From Scent-Proof Blinds

Some hunting blinds don't retain scent. Others do, though. Hunting from these enclosed blinds, and keeping doors and windows sealed, can retain much of the scent within your blind. This can effectively keep deer from smelling you.

22. Chart Effective Entry Routes

Taking the wrong entry route into a hunting property can cause deer to smell you before the hunting begins. They might catch your wind scent along the walk, or ground scent after the fact, but either scenario can ruin the hunt. Thus, follow entry routes that don't alert deer.

23. Follow the Right Exit Paths

Choosing the wrong exit route out of a hunting area can also alert deer to your presence. This can ruin future hunts and slowly erode the quality of your hunting spots. So, choose exit paths that don't spook deer.



24. Rotate Stand Location Selections

In most situations, hunting the same treestand location repeatedly isn't good. That can lead to burnout, especially if deer continuously catch your scent (directly or on the ground). To avoid this, rotate stand locations to keep deer guessing.

25. Manage Pressure and Overhunting

There's a delicate balance between managing pressure and overhunting a spot. Walk that line between hunting just enough to get your shot, and not so much that you pressure deer. That requires choosing your days wisely and hunting when conditions are best.

Don't Stink Up Your Deer Hunt

There are many deer hunting scent control techniques available to deer hunters. Use the above tips to reduce scent when hunting. Don't stink up your deer hunt, and you'll experience better results and fill more tags.