



Sunday Hunting | State Legislation

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Eleven states have statutes that either

completely ban or otherwise restrict hunting on Sundays. Some states specify the location or the types of game permitted for hunting on a Sunday. West Virginia requires a ballot measure in individual counties to bans on Sunday hunting on private lands. During the 2014 session, Virginia enacted legislation ([H.B. 1237](#)) that allowed hunting on Sunday more broadly, including for

raccoons, waterfowl and on private land with permission of the landowner. Maryland also enacted legislation ([S.B. 472](#) and [S.B. 473](#)) in 2014 that decreased the restrictions on Sunday hunting for certain species in certain counties. During the 2015 session, seven states – Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Jersey, North Carolina and West Virginia – considered legislation related to Sunday hunting. In 2015, Connecticut ([H.B. 6034](#)) and North Carolina passed [H.B. 640](#) both of which relaxed aspects of their Sunday hunting bans.

The table below includes state statutes that ban or restrict Sunday hunting.

[Connecticut](#) | [Delaware](#) | [Maine](#) | [Maryland](#) | [Massachusetts](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [North Carolina](#) | [Pennsylvania](#) | [South Carolina](#) | [Virginia](#) | [West Virginia](#)

STATE STATUTES BANNING OR RESTRICTING SUNDAY HUNTING		
State	Citation	Summary
Connecticut	Conn. Gen. Stat. §53A-217E(d)	A person is guilty of negligent hunting if he or she hunts out of season or on a Sunday. A person may hunt deer with bow and arrow on private property. Sunday hunting is allowed only on licensed shooting preserves when the operator has permission from the town, according to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

STATE STATUTES BANNING OR RESTRICTING SUNDAY HUNTING

State	Citation	Summary
Delaware	Del. Code Ann. tit. 7, §572 and Del. Code Ann. tit. 7, §712	No hunting on Sundays except for trapping, training dogs, hunting red foxes with dogs or participating in commercial game preserve operations. It is unlawful to hunt on Sunday except to chase red fox in season.
Maine	Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 12, §11205	No hunting on Sunday.
Maryland	Md. Natural Resources Code Ann. §10-410	No hunting on Sunday, except: 1. a person using state certified raptors to hunt game birds or mammals during open season, 2. an unarmed person participating in an organized fox chase and 3. persons hunting on regulated shooting areas may shoot captive raised game birds. Deer hunting is allowed in some counties on private land on certain dates, and limited turkey hunting in two counties. Sunday hunting of game mammals and game birds, except for migratory game birds and wetland game birds, allowed in three counties on private land or designated public land.
Massachusetts	Mass. Gen. Laws Ann. ch. 131 §57	No hunting on Sunday except for regulated private hunting grounds and in defense of one's property.
New Jersey	N.J. Rev. Stat. §23:3-32 and §23:4-24	No person may hunt with firearms or any other weapon or carry a gun in the woods

STATE STATUTES BANNING OR RESTRICTING SUNDAY HUNTING

State	Citation	Summary
		<p>or fields or on the waters on Sunday except: 1. any person hunting raccoon between midnight on Saturday and sunrise on Sunday during the prescribed season, 2. a person possessing a valid and proper rifle permit licensed to trap fur-bearing animals to humanely dispatch legally trapped animals, 3. a person using a bow and arrow to hunt deer during any bow and arrow hunting season for deer prescribed by the State Fish and Game Code, provided the person possesses a valid bow and arrow license, or a valid "All Around Sportsman License" if applicable, issued by the division, abides by all applicable provisions of the code, and is hunting on a State wildlife management area or on private property and 4. any person authorized to shoot pheasants, quail, and partridge. 5. hunting of pheasants, rabbits, jackrabbits, hares, chukar, partridge, quail, squirrels, wild turkeys and woodchuck on Sundays with raptors is permitted during the prescribed seasons. The Sunday hunting ban does not prohibit farm landowners, lessees, immediate family members or farm employees from hunting or destroying crows, woodchucks, foxes and vermin on that land.</p>

STATE STATUTES BANNING OR RESTRICTING SUNDAY HUNTING

State	Citation	Summary
North Carolina	N.C. Gen. Stat. §103-2	<p>There is no Sunday hunting, however there are a number of exceptions, although Sunday Hunting is not allowed in a county with a population greater than 700,000 people. The exceptions are as follows: 1. Any landowner, member of the landowner's family, or any person with written permission from the landowner, may hunt with the use of firearms on Sunday on the landowner's property, except that all of the following limitations apply: Hunting on Sunday between 9:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. is prohibited, except on controlled hunting preserves; Sunday hunting of migratory birds is prohibited; the use of a firearm to take deer that are run or chased by dogs on Sunday is prohibited; hunting on Sunday within 500 yards of a place of worship or any accessory structure thereof, or within 500 yards of a residence not owned by the landowner, is prohibited. 2. defense of one's own property 3. On military reservations 4. field trials authorized by the Wildlife Resources Commission 5. Falconry and dogs used in conjunction with falconry.</p>
Pennsylvania	Pa. Cons. Stat. Ann. tit. 34, §2303	<p>It is unlawful to hunt wildlife on Sundays. Exceptions include the hunting of foxes or coyotes and any hunting which occurs on</p>

STATE STATUTES BANNING OR RESTRICTING SUNDAY HUNTING

State	Citation	Summary
		noncommercial regulated hunting grounds holding a valid permit. The law does not apply to removal of lawfully taken game or wildlife from traps or the resetting of the traps on Sunday.
South Carolina	S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 123-40	No hunting on Sundays on Wildlife Management Area lands.
Virginia	Va. Code §29.1.-521	No hunting on Sunday, except for: 1. raccoons until 2 a.m. on Sunday mornings, 2. any person who hunts or kills waterfowl, subject to geographical limitations and except within 200 yards of a place of worship or any accessory structure, and 3. any landowner or member of his family or any person with written permission from the landowner who hunts or kills any wild bird or wild animal on the landowner's property except within 200 yards of a place of worship or any accessory structure
West Virginia	W. Va. Code §20-2-5	No hunting on public lands on Sundays after 5 a.m. No hunting on private lands on Sundays after 5 a.m. without the written consent of the landowner provided the county holds an election to let residents determine if Sunday hunting will be allowed on private land only.

Additional Resources

- Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation. "Sunday Hunting Restrictions"
- National Shooting Sports Foundation. "The Economic Impact of Sunday Hunting"
- <http://www.ncsl.org/research/environment-and-natural-resources/state-sunday-hunting-ban-statutes.aspx>