

COLORADO HUNTER EDUCATION FAQs

Who needs hunter education?

Colorado law requires that anyone born on or after January 1, 1949, complete an approved hunter education course before applying for or buying a Colorado hunting license. Colorado accepts approved hunter education certificates from all US states and Canadian provinces, and from many foreign countries. Hunter education in Colorado became mandatory in 1970, and hunters who were 21 or older that year were exempt.

In April 2016 Colorado Hunter Education started offering two Test-Out Options and an Apprentice Hunter Certificate. This is only for hunters born after 1/1/1949 who have not completed the hunter education requirement.

Who is eligible for the test-out option?

There are two test-out options. Adults age 50 and older, and U.S. military veterans, active-duty, reserve-duty and National Guard members of any age, may complete a timed test-out of the hunter education certification requirements. They must pass with a score of 90% or better. This online test can only be taken once.

Military who successfully pass the test must bring test voucher and military identification to a CPW office to verify military status. Copies of the military I.D. are not accepted. To qualify, a veteran must be discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. Acceptable forms of military identification include: DD 214; DD Form 2; DD Form 2765; Active, retired, veteran military identification card; a current Colorado Drivers License or state issued identification card with the word "veteran" printed on it as specified in 42-2-303(5)(a) C.R.S.; or a VA medical card.

To complete the Test Out 50 you must have a CID number from CPW. If you have not had a previous Colorado hunting or fishing license please call our offices to create a CID number.

Can I use these new options if I'm not a Colorado resident?

Yes. The new options are available for all hunters.

Is the test only available online?

Yes. It can be taken on a mobile device, tablet, laptop or desk top computer. If someone doesn't have a computer the test can be taken on a computer at the library, or on a friend's phone/tablet. However, the test can only be taken one time with no interruptions, so be sure the device is reliable.

How many times can a customer take the test-out test?

The test for both Military and 50 and over can be taken one (1) time only.

How long will customers have to take the test?

This is a timed test that must be completed in 30 minutes in one online session. Once you log in the 30 minutes begins, so do not register on the test site and then expect to go back and complete the course at a later date.

If someone passes the test-out option, how long is their hunter education number valid?

It will be a permanent hunter education number that will not expire.

Can customers immediately purchase licenses if they pass the test?

Anyone completing the 50 and older Test-Out will need to wait up to 24 hours before purchasing a license. It will take that long for information to transfer from the online provider to CPW. Anyone taking the military Test-Out will need to print their voucher and take the voucher and their military I.D. to a CPW office for verification. Once verified they can purchase licenses.

How much does it cost to take the test-out test?

The online test charge is \$25.

What score do I need to pass the test?

90% or higher.

What happens if I fail the test?

Use Apprentice Hunter Certificate for one year only or take a Hunter Education class.

Do I get a card?

No, you receive a verified HE number that is part of your Colorado hunting record. If you need a card, you can purchase one online or from an agent for \$5.

What is the Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

The Apprentice Hunter Certificate is a free one-year hunter education requirement waiver that can only be obtained once and is valid from April 1 to March 31, regardless of when the Apprentice Hunter Certificate is obtained.

Where can customers obtain the Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

At a CPW office, a license agent or online through the CPW purchasing system.

What species does the Apprentice Hunter Certificate allow me to hunt?

The Apprentice Hunter Certificate allows the Apprentice Hunter to apply for and/or purchase multiple Colorado hunting licenses, as long as the licensee meets age requirements and the season occurs while the Apprentice Hunter Certificate is valid.

If I have an Apprentice Hunter Certificate in another state, will it be valid in CO?

No, only Colorado Apprentice Hunter Certificates are valid in Colorado and the Colorado waiver will not be valid in other states.

How much does the Apprentice Hunter Certificate cost?

The Apprentice Hunter Certificate is free.

How will an officer in the field be able to tell if someone holds an Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

"Apprentice Hunter" will print on the second panel of a hunting license with all other valid licenses.

How old does a mentor need to be?

A mentor must be 18 or older and have proof of hunter education or be age exempt. The mentor must carry proof of age and their hunter education card with them in the field.

When an apprentice is in the field hunting, how close does the mentor need to be?

The apprentice must be in voice and visual contact with their mentor at all times.

As a mentor, how many Apprentice Hunters can I mentor at a time?

A mentor may accompany up to two (2) apprentices in the field.

At what age can someone get the Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

The Apprentice Hunter Certificate can be obtained at the age of 10 (the age to purchase a big game license is still 12 years old).

If someone obtained an Apprentice Hunter Certificate will they be able to use it to apply for a big game preference point for that year?

Yes, if someone obtains the Apprentice Hunter Certificate between April 1 and the application deadline (early April), they can apply for a preference point for that year. Be sure you are selecting the correct year if obtained before April 1.

Can someone go into the spring turkey draw using the Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

Yes but it's very important that the dates of the Apprentice Hunter Certificate are the same as the dates of the spring turkey season. There will be two Apprentice Hunter Certificates with different dates available for purchase during the turkey application process. Be sure to purchase the one that will be valid when hunting after April 1 of the year the license will be used.

If I've hunted in other states and I'm an adult, will I still be required to have a mentor with me while hunting using the Apprentice Hunter Certificate?

Yes, any hunter using the Apprentice Hunter Certificate to hunt must have a mentor with them in the field, no matter their experience or age.

How old do you need to be to take hunter education?

There is no minimum age requirement to enroll in a hunter education course in Colorado, but students 10 or older are more likely to be successful. Students must be mature enough to understand the information presented, pass the written test and safely participate in the live fire. Younger children with less upper body strength may also have a problem handling a firearm. A parent or guardian may be required to attend with a child, depending on the instructor's preference.

What is the cost of the course?

The maximum charge for the classroom portion of a regular hunter education course is \$10. Students taking the internet conclusion course will pay an additional fee for the online portion of the course. The online portion of the internet conclusion course is offered by an independent vendor, with the approval of Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Will my Colorado hunter education card expire?

No. The regular hunter education card does not expire. If a hunter has a temporary hunter education card, from Colorado or any other state, it will expire on December 31 of the year issued.

How many students take the Colorado hunter education course every year?

More than 18,000 hunter education students in almost 700 classes are certified each year in Colorado.

Will other states honor my Colorado hunter education certification?

Yes. All US states recognize valid hunter education certificates issued through other state conservation or wildlife agencies. Unless taught by a Colorado Hunter Education Instructor, certificates earned through Scouts, 4-H, or other similar organizations are not recognized.

What does it mean when my hunter education card is verified?

Colorado licensed hunters have a customer identification number (CID). The hunter education number can be matched to the CID number, and when that happens the hunter education card is verified. When a hunter purchases a license and they are verified, the hunter education number and a "V" for verified will print on the license.

How can I get my record verified?

Stop by a CPW office with the card, or if the card was issued by Colorado, give CPW a call. The card must either be in the Colorado hunter education database, or CPW must physically see the card. Cards can only be verified over the phone if a person has previously purchased a hunting or fishing license so there is a record to verify.

How do I replace my lost Colorado hunter education card?

If your card was issued by Colorado, and your record is verified, you can stop by a license agent or you can order a duplicate card online through CPW licensing. If your card is not verified, stop by any CPW office or request a replacement by mail. Download, print, and complete the [duplicate hunter education application form](#) and mail it in with a check or money order for \$5 payable to CPW. If your name has changed since receiving your original card be sure to include your legal proof of name change. Cards purchased through the online system will be printed on the same green paper as a license. The traditional orange reissue card is only available at CPW offices.

I have my card but it's very worn and hard to read.

Damaged and worn cards will be verified for validity by inspection or through a records check. Colorado replacement hunter education cards are free by mail or in a CPW office *if* the old card is surrendered.

What are the options for completing a Colorado hunter education course?

There are two options. Our traditional hunter education course is usually completed over a two day period or several evenings. The internet conclusion course allows the student to complete some of the coursework online, and then attend a one or two day shortened course.

How do I find a class?

All classes are listed on the CPW website. Click on the word CALENDAR at the top of each page of the CPW website, and then click on "Looking for a Hunter Education Course, Boating Safety Course, Clinic or Seminar?" Select the type of class you would like to attend: Hunter Education Course, Hunter Education Internet Conclusion Course or Bowhunter Education Course. After selecting course type you can enter a zip code to find the classes in your area.

Where are the courses held?

Courses are held throughout the state at various facilities, including some CPW offices, community centers, recreation centers, sporting goods stores, etc.

Why aren't there more courses in my area?

The majority of hunter education classes are taught by Colorado-certified volunteer instructors, and some areas of the state have very few instructors.

What topics are covered in the hunter education course?

The basic information covered in class will include firearm safety, wildlife management, laws and regulations, hunter responsibility, ethics of hunting and wildlife ID. Other subjects when time allows will include survival, game care and introduction to bowhunting and muzzleloading.

How long is the course?

The standard course is a minimum of 10 hours, plus the written test and live fire. The internet conclusion class is a minimum of 4 hours, plus the written test and live fire, which doesn't include the time needed to complete the online study course. The classes might be longer depending on the number of students attending the class and any extra material the instructor chooses to include. Look at the days and hours in each class when registering online.

What is the best time to take this course?

Courses are offered throughout the year. The busiest months are March, August and October, so finding space in a class during those times may be difficult.

What do I need to bring to class?

Most materials are provided, but a pen or pencil is a good idea. All firearms and ammunition for the live fire will be provided. If your instructor indicates there will be outdoor activities please be prepared for all weather conditions.

What do I do after completing the online portion of a course?

Please register for an internet conclusion class **BEFORE** completing the online course. The conclusion class is **NOT** available in all parts of the state. Before starting the online course, go to the statewide calendar and register for a conclusion class. Once a class is scheduled and the online course is completed take your Certificate of Completion to class and complete the class time and written test and live fire.

Is there an online only option for this course?

No. The online course only replaces a portion of the regular hunter education class. Students who complete the online course are still required to attend a shortened class and pass a written test and live fire.

Will I shoot a gun?

Yes. All students must safely shoot a .22 rifle to pass the hunter education course. The purpose of the live fire is for students to demonstrate safe firearm handling. The rifles and ammunition are supplied by CPW and personal firearms **CANNOT** be used for the live fire.

Can I take the hunter education course if I have a felony conviction?

No. If you cannot legally handle a firearm you cannot pass the course. In most cases this includes any type of weapon, including a bow.

Will I receive my hunter education card at class?

Yes. The hunter education instructor will issue cards to successful students at the end of the class.

Are there more classes available than listed on the website?

Generally, no. Classes are added on a continual basis as the instructor provides the information. Keep checking back to see if other courses are added.

Can I arrange a private class?

No.

I can't find a course that meets my schedule. Can I attend parts of different classes?

No. While all instructors teach the same material, it may not be in the same order, which makes it impossible to attend more than one course and receive all the required information.

Do I need to attend all portions of a course?

Yes. Whether a class is a one-day internet completion course, or a multi-evening regular class, all scheduled sessions must be completed.

Can I fail this course?

Yes, you can fail the course because of unsatisfactory knowledge, skill or attitude as evaluated by your instructor. The minimum score for the final exam is 75 percent. However, if you achieve a higher score, but lack safe firearm handling skills during the live fire exercise, or as a result of classroom disruptions, attitude or incomplete attendance, you may fail the course.

What if I registered for a course but can't attend?

Please cancel your registration so someone else can attend. Our classes often have waiting lists, so if someone fails to cancel they may keep someone else from attending.

Are there any special requirements to buy a mountain lion hunting license?

Anyone who wants to purchase a mountain lion license must pass the [Mountain Lion Education and Identification Course](#) before purchasing a license.

What if I need special accommodations as a result of a disability?

Please contact the Hunter Education Instructor or the Hunter Education Office at (303)291-7233 or (303)291-7470. If you are hearing impaired and need Sign Language Interpretation, please download the [Accommodations Form](#) and send by e-mail to dnr_wildlife.huntered@state.co.us or by fax to (303)-291-7113. We request that you contact us at least 15 days prior to the event. If the student has a reading disability, please contact the instructor or our office at the above phone numbers. To know more about how we provide opportunities to individuals with disabilities see our [Disabled Accessibility page](#).

In previous years I used my hunter education card to purchase a license in Colorado. Why do I need to have it again when I purchase a license?

If you purchased your license at a CPW office and a CPW employee verified your hunter education, you may not need to carry the card. However, if you purchased your license anywhere else in Colorado, or online, you need to have your card with you at all times when hunting. Both Colorado and out-of-state hunter education cards can be verified at a CPW office.

Do I need hunter education to apply for the Big Game Limited Draw License in April?

Yes. A completed hunter education course, or an Apprentice Hunter Certificate valid during the big game season, is required before applying for a license. The hunter education card number will be required when applying.

Do I need an additional bowhunter education course to purchase an archery license?

No. The standard hunter education course will allow hunters to purchase a rifle or archery license. A bowhunter hunter education card can only be used to purchase an archery only license. It is not valid proof to purchase a rifle license or a license where the method of take isn't specified (i.e., turkey or small game). Bowhunter education is considered an advanced hunter education course and is not mandatory to purchase an archery license in Colorado.

Can I use a hunting license from my state as proof of hunter education?

Maybe. A few states print the hunter education number on licenses, but it would need to be preapproved. Please don't assume that a hunter education number on your license will be accepted in Colorado.

My hunter education card doesn't have a number.

If an out-of-state hunter education card doesn't have a card number printed on it, use the card issue date and the originating state of issue when applying for or purchasing a license. All Colorado hunter education cards are numbered.

I am an experienced hunter and hunter education certification is not required in my home state. Am I required to take hunter education to hunt in Colorado?

If you were born on or after January 1, 1949, you need hunter education to hunt in Colorado. Even if it isn't required in your state you can still take the course in your home state and use that certification in Colorado, or use the one-time Colorado Apprentice Hunter Certificate.

I am in the military/law enforcement. Does the law still apply to me?

The Colorado Legislature allowed for a Test-Out Option for US military, but there are no exemptions for law enforcement.

I have a concealed carry permit. Do I still need hunter education certification?

Yes. A CC permit is not the same as hunter education.

Can I use my hunter education card to apply for concealed carry?

Generally, no. We discourage use of hunter education for that purpose. We do not cover concealed carry information in our classes and do not cover handgun use, Title 18 laws, or using a firearm for personal protection.

Is this course only for hunters?

Hunter education is not just for hunters. This class is a valuable program for anyone who enjoys the outdoors and has an interest in conservation.

Who teaches the hunter education courses?

The course is taught by Colorado certified volunteer hunter education instructors and CPW Officers.

How do I become a hunter education instructor?

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is always interested in recruiting new instructors. If you are enthusiastic and are committed to making hunting safer [read the position Description and complete the Application](#) to start the process of becoming an Instructor.