



How to find a place to hunt in Maine?

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Management Areas:

“WMAs comprise approximately 100,000 acres and contain a diverse array of habitats, from wetland flowages critical to waterfowl production to the spruce-fir forests of northern Maine on which Canada Lynx, moose and wintering deer are dependent. Spread geographically throughout all counties of the State the properties are available for a multitude of recreational opportunities, with a focus on hunting, fishing and trapping.

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/lands/wildlife-management-areas/index.html>

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry

“Over 700,000 acres are managed by the Bureau of Parks and Lands. Conservation easements and leases bring the total land area managed to over 2 million acres.”

GIS Mapping for State, Federal, and Private Conservation Lands in Maine:

https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/publications_maps/conservation_land_maine.html

Note: This map shows local, state, and federal public lands, lands held by land trust and other conservation groups, and private lands protected by conservation easements. Not all lands on this map are open to hunting. Click on the map for landowner information, and then contact the landowner to confirm user policies.

Land for Maine's Future Projects

The Land for Maine's Future Program (LMF) is the State of Maine's primary funding vehicle for conserving land for its natural, economic, and recreational value.

LMF has helped state and local partners to complete projects in all of Maine's 16 counties. Types of land protected include; mountain summits; shorelines of rivers, lakes, and ponds; coastal islands; beaches; forests; grasslands; wildlife habitat; farmland; and wetlands. Except for farmlands and working waterfront lands, LMF lands are open to hunting, fishing and trapping. Check with owner of the property to see if any restrictions apply.

Projects total over 616,000 acres of conservation and recreation lands. This includes 333,425 acres of working lands reflecting LMF's efforts to conserve the working landscape and keep lands in private ownership with permanent land conservation agreements.

A subset of protected LMF lands can be seen at [Recreation on LMF Property: Land for Maine's Future: Maine DACF](#). A comprehensive list of LMF lands sorted by county and town will be posted on the BHA website.



Private Lands

“Roughly 94% of Maine’s forest land is privately owned, and more than half of that land area is open to the public. In total, landowners voluntarily open up more than 10 million acres of working farms and forests.”

Accessing private land: there's the law, and then there's the unwritten rule.

The law - Unlike most other states, Maine operates under an implied permission structure, meaning that if land is not posted, it is legal to use the land.

The unwritten rule - Always ask permission. Hunting, fishing, or otherwise using private land without the owner's permission is a careless move that puts everyone's future access at risk.

When venturing into the Maine woods, follow the unwritten rule.

7 Ways to be a good land user

Landowners who permit you to use their land for outdoor recreational activities are not only doing you a favor, they are placing their trust in you. Here are seven ways you can prove their trust is not misplaced:

- **Always ask for permission,**
 1. Contact the town office to determine the name and address of the landowner(s).
 2. Look up the person or business's contact information online and give them a call, or send a letter with a self-addressed return envelope

Once a landowner has granted you permission, be sure to check in with them every year before the start of the season. Don't assume permission is indefinite.

- **Learn what matters most to the landowner** and abide by all special requests they make, including where you can or cannot drive or park a vehicle, and which specific activities are allowed.
- **Provide detailed information.** If requested, give the landowner your name, address, phone number and vehicle description, and consider using pre-printed [Landowner/Land user Courtesy Cards \(PDF\)](#). Good, thorough communication is a great way to build mutual respect.
- **Know your boundaries.** Learn the geographic property boundaries of the land you have permission to use and stay within them. There is no excuse for trespassing — it's a crime enforceable by all state, county, and municipal law enforcement officers, and if convicted, you may lose any license issued by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
- **Keep it clean.** Remember that you are a guest. Always leave the land as you found it, if not better. If you see trash that someone else left, pick it up.
- **Keep it legal.** Always obey the law, be safe and ethical, and report any land abuse that you witness. Land abuse is a very serious problem in Maine, and each year, access to private property is lost because of it.
- **Say thank you.** Thank the landowner for the opportunity to use their property for recreation. They'll love hearing that you enjoyed it, and that you recognize and appreciate their generosity.

Support MDIW's Outdoor Partners program and volunteer.

<https://www.maine.gov/ifw/programs-resources/outdoor-partners-program/index.html>

Apps:

Huntstand, OnX, BaseMap, Gaia, Calopto and others offer landowner information and layers for possible public access.