



## Recover Bolts

**Make every effort to recover your bolts after a shot!**

Bolts lost in hay fields or other agricultural fields may create problems for farmers or landowners.

Parts of bolts could end up in hay and feed crops, possibly placing expensive livestock at risk.

The result of not recovering your bolts could be more land closed to hunting.

## Hunting Ethics

The future of hunting depends on the ethics of sportsmen and women. By using your crossbow in a safe and responsible manner, you are helping project a positive image of hunting to the public. Be respectful, and your actions will reflect positively on sportsmen as a group.

## Landowner Permission

Always ask permission before hunting on private property!

**Three steps used to acquire permission to hunt on private property:**

1. Contact the landowner well in advance of the season.
2. Check with the landowner to see if there are any special concerns to observe while on his/her property.
3. Stop at the landowner's house to thank him or her and if successful, to share any harvest.

## Tips for Hunters Using Crossbows:

- New Hampshire Hunter Education Course and hunting license are required.
- Practice target shooting, handling, loading and proper maintenance of your crossbow.
- Wear eye protection.
- Always keep your fingers below the flight track and out of the cable's way.
- Comply with all hunting regulations as specified in the current **New Hampshire Hunting Digest**.

# CROSSBOW HUNTING SAFETY & EDUCATION

Crossbows may be used to take a deer during the regular firearm deer season in New Hampshire. A \$5.00 Deer Crossbow Permit is required; download an application at: [www.HuntNH.com](http://www.HuntNH.com).

**Crossbows are not permitted during archery and muzzleloader seasons\*.**

When operated properly, crossbows are as safe as a bow and arrow or a firearm. Please follow these safety guidelines when hunting with a crossbow.

\*Disabled people may apply for a permit to use a crossbow to hunt deer during the special archery season; a disabilities permit and appropriate licenses are required.

For further information, contact:



**N.H. Fish and Game Dept.  
Hunter Education Program**  
11 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 271-3214  
[www.HuntNH.com](http://www.HuntNH.com)



**National Bowhunter Education Foundation**  
PO Box 180757  
Fort Smith, AR 72918  
(479) 649-9036  
[www.nbef.org](http://www.nbef.org)

**The American Crossbow Federation**  
PO Box 251, 20 NE 9th Ave.  
Glenwood, MN 56334  
(320) 634-3660  
[www.horizontalbowhunter.com](http://www.horizontalbowhunter.com)

Some materials in this publication were adapted from the Northeast Hunter Education Manual.



**NEW HAMPSHIRE  
HUNTER EDUCATION  
PROGRAM**  
[www.HuntNH.com](http://www.HuntNH.com)

## Crossbow Safety Rules

- Never fire your crossbow until you are 100% sure of your target and what is beyond.
- Always use an adequate backstop and target when target shooting.
- Always unload your crossbow when climbing and descending from an elevated platform and when traveling to and from hunting areas. A cocked crossbow loaded with a bolt should never be hauled to or from an elevated platform.
- When hunting from an elevated stand:
  - Be sure you are firmly attached to the tree with a full-body harness at all times. It could save your life!
  - Use a haul line to bring gear to and from the ground, keeping the line away from trigger mechanisms while hauling the unloaded crossbow stock-first.
  - Make sure that the limbs of the crossbow are clear of any tree branches when taking a shot. If the crossbow's limbs strike a tree branch upon firing, the shooter may be knocked out of the stand.
- Never point your crossbow at anything other than a lawful target and always keep the safety engaged until you are ready to shoot.
- When cocking a crossbow, be sure that your foot is firmly planted in the cocking stirrup. If your foot slips out during cocking, the crossbow will fly up into your chest and face and can cause serious injury.
- Make sure your equipment is in good working order by inspecting it every time you use it.
- Read your owner's manual and follow the manufacturer's recommended operating procedures.

## Tips on Using a Crossbow

**NOTE:** Crossbow features and safety mechanisms may differ; please refer to the manufacturer's instructions for specific information on the model you have chosen. The following tips apply to many crossbow models.

### Cocking the Crossbow

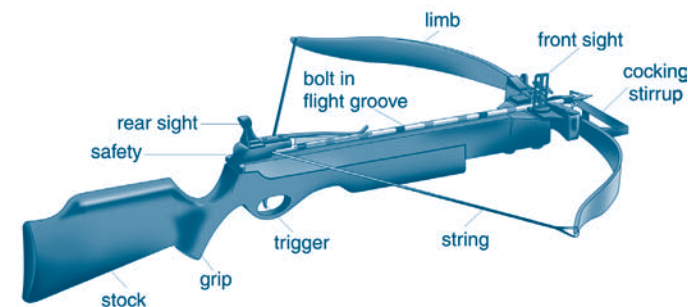
Place the cocking stirrup on the ground and insert your foot, with the stock end resting against your midsection. Place both hands on the string about one inch on each side of the crossbow body. (A rope cocking aid may be used in place of your hands.) With even pressure, pull the string back until it locks into the trigger mechanism with an audible "click." Slowly release hand pressure on the string until you are sure it is locked securely into the trigger mechanism. The crossbow is now cocked with the safety on.

### Loading the Crossbow

First, place the point of the bolt forward under the sight bracket until it lies flat on the flight groove with the cock feather down. Then, slide the bolt back under the bolt retainer until it contacts the string. The bolt retainer should exert enough downward pressure to the rear of the bolt to hold it in place, but should not lift the front of the bolt off the flight groove. The bolt should be lying directly parallel with the flight groove. **A word of caution: The bolt must be long enough to clear the front of the flight groove.** The crossbow is now loaded and should be handled with extreme caution.

### Firing the Crossbow

The safety must be released to fire the bolt. The release button is located near the trigger mechanism. To release the safety, point the



crossbow in a safe direction, and push the button forward. The crossbow will fire when the trigger is pulled. The safety must be disengaged in this manner prior to every shot. Be sure to keep fingers away from the top of the flight groove while shooting. This prevents your hand from being struck by the string as it travels forward.

### Sighting in the Crossbow

To sight in the crossbow, first shoot it at close range. If the rear sight is adjustable, remember that lowering the rear sight will lower the point of impact, and moving the rear sight left or right moves the point of impact in the same direction. The opposite applies for adjustable front sights.

### Unloading the Crossbow

By far the easiest way to unload a loaded crossbow is to fire the bolt into a target or into the ground (free of rocks). This should be done with a field tip or blunt point, not a broadhead. However, your crossbow can be unloaded manually if desired. First, remove the bolt, then grasp the string firmly with both hands and place your foot in the cocking stirrup. Release the trigger with your thumb and let the string down slowly with both hands.