



# HUNTING IN FINLAND



SUOMEN  
**RIISTAKESKUS**  
FINNISH WILDLIFE AGENCY

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Finland's rugged nature and severe winter offer possibilities of survival to relatively few species of game. Due to the northern position and length of our country, the living conditions for game vary considerably from area to area. Our game species include those valued by hunters, such as capercaillie and moose, though game densities remain lower than in, e.g. Central Europe.

The most commonly hunted game are grouse, mountain hare, moose and white-tailed deer, as well as the mallard and wood pigeon. Foxes, beavers and marten are hunted as fur-bearing game. Among large carnivores, bears and lynx as well as some wolves and wolverines are bagged with derogation on the basis of population management or damage prevention. Raccoon dog, mink and muskrat are commonly caught listed/harmful invasive species.

There are over 300,000 hunters in Finland who pay the annual game management fee in the form of a hunting card. The proportion of female hunters is about ten per cent, and the number is growing strongly. Six per cent of Finnish citizens have a hunting card, which is the highest proportion of hunters in Europe.

## Hunting in Finland requires

- a Finnish hunting card
- a hunting permit granted under the right to hunt or issued by the land owner or holder of hunting rights
- right to keep and maintain firearms
- for certain species of game, a hunting licence or a derogation

## A successful shooting test is required

- in hunting moose and deer, bear or wild boar with a rifled firearm
- in hunting of ungulate game such as white-tailed deer, roe deer or wild boar with a hunting bow. It is not allowed to hunt moose with a hunting bow.

## Hunting card

Anyone who engages in hunting must pay the game management fee to the State each hunting year. The receipt obtained for payment serves as the hunting card for the hunting year concerned. The amount of the game management fee is set annually in the State budget, and is EUR 43 for the 2023–2024 hunting year. The game management fee is 10 euros for per-

sons under 18 years old by 1st of August. Person must have passed the hunting exam to be able to pay the game management fee.

In order to obtain a Finnish hunting card, foreign hunters must present a hunting card or other reliable clarification which indicates that they have valid right to hunt in their homeland. These documents should be presented to the director of the game management association. In practice, it is best to allow the Finnish host to look after the procedures of the hunting card and possible shooting test in advance.

If a foreign person is unable to provide a reliable explanation for the right to hunt, one must complete the Finnish hunting exam. The game management associations organise hunting exams, which are subject to payment.

The hunting card is valid for one hunting year, which starts 1 August and ends 31 July of the next calendar year. Hunting insurance is included in the game management fee, which covers injuries caused with a hunting weapon in connection with hunting. This insurance is valid during the entire valid period of the hunting card.

## Right to hunt

The right to hunt belongs to the landowner, who can lease that right to others. Private persons own 65 per cent of Finland's forest, field and inland water areas.

Hunters have established hunting associations which have leased areas for hunting and game management. The purpose is to form hunting areas that are sufficiently large and uniform for hunting deer and moose in particular. There are currently over 4,000 hunting associations in our country, with hunting areas usually between 2,000 to 10,000 hectares.

The State owns approximately 25 per cent of Finland's surface area. State lands are mainly found in Eastern and Northern Finland. Metsähallitus organizes hunting and game management on the state lands.

## Hunting permits

Hunting right holders, such as the landowner or hunting association, can sell hunting permits to their

English	Scientific	Finnish	Swedish	German
mallard	Anas platyrhynchos	heinäsorsa	gräsand	Stockente
teal	Anas crecca	tavi	kricka	Krickente
garganey	Anas querquedula	heinätavi	årta	Knäkenete
wigeon	Anas penelope	haapana	bläsand	Pfeifente
pintail	Anas acuta	jouhisorasa	stjärtand	Spießente
shoveler	Anas clypeata	lapasorsa	skedand	Löffelente
pochard	Aythya ferina	punasotka	brunand	Tafelente
tufted duck	Aythya fuligula	tukkasotka	vigg	Reiherente
goldeneye	Bucephala clangula	telkkä	knipa	Schellente
long-tailed duck	Clangula hyemalis	alli	alfägel	Eisente
red-breasted merganser	Mergus serrator	tukkakoskelo	småskrake	Mittelsäger
goosander	Mergus merganser	isokoskelo	storskrake	Gänsesäger
common eider	Somateria mollissima	haahka	ejder	Eiderente
coot	Fulica atra	nokikana	söthöna	Blasshuhn
greylag goose	Anser anser	merihanhi	grågås	Graugans
bean goose	Anser fabalis	metsähanhi	sädgås	Satgans
canada goose	Branta canadensis	kanadanhi	kanadagås	Kanada-gans
woodcock	Scolopax rusticola	lehtokurppa	morkulla	Waldschneepfe
black grouse	Tetrao tetrix	teeri	orre	Birkwild
hazel grouse	Bonasa bonasia	pyy	järpe	Haselwild
capercaillie	Tetrao urogallus	metso	tjäder	Auerwild
willow grouse	Lagopus lagopus	riekko	dalripa	Schneehuhn
ptarmigan	Lagopus mutus	kiiruna	fjällripa	Alpenschneehuhn
partridge	Perdix perdix	peltopyy	rapphöna	Rebhuhn
pheasant	Phasianus colchicus	fasaani	fasan	Fasan
wood pigeon	Columba palumbus	sepelkyyhky	ringduva	Ringeltaube
rabbit	Lepus cuniculus	kani	kanin	Kaninchen
northern hare	Lepus timidus	metsäjänis	skogshare	Schneehase
brown hare	Lepus europaeus	rusakko	fälthare	Feldhase
red squirrel	Sciurus vulgaris	orava	ekorre	Eichhörnchen
European beaver	Castor fiber fiber	euroopanmajava	europesk bäver	europäischer Biber
Canadien beaver	Castor fiber canadensis	kanadanmajava	kanadensk bäver	kanadischer Biber
nutria	Myocastor coypus	rämemajava	nutria	Nutria
muskrat	Ondatra zibethica	piisami	bisamrätta	Bisamratte
red fox	Vulpes vulpes	kettu	räv	Fuchs
arctic fox	Alopex lagopus	naali	fjällräv	Blaufuchs
raccoon	Procyon lotor	pesukarhu	tvättbjörn	Waschbär
raccoon dog	Nyctereutes procyonoides	supikoira	mårdhund	Marderhund
otter	Lutra lutra	saukko	utter	Fischotter
American Mink	Neovison vison	minkki	mink	Mink
polecat	Mustela putorius	hilleri	iller	Itis
badger	Meles meles	mäyrä	grävling	Dachs
pine marten	Martes martes	näättä	mård	Marder
ermine	Mustela erminea	kärppä	hermelin	Hermelin
grey seal	Halichoerus grypus	halli	gräsäl	Kegelrobbe
ringed seal	Pusa hispida botnica	norppa	vikare	Ringelrobbe
harbour seal	Phoca vitulina	kirjohylje	knubbsäl	Seehund
wild boar	Sus scrofa	villisika	vildsvin	Schwarzwild
mufflon	Ovis musimon	mufloni	mufflon	Muffelwild
moose	Alces alces	hirvi	älg	Elch
red deer	Cervus elaphus	saksanhirvi	kronhjort	Rotwild



English	Scientific	Finnish	Swedish	German
white-tailed deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	valkohäntäpeura	vitsvanshjort	Weisswedelwild
fallow deer	<i>Dama dama</i>	kuusi-peura	dovhjort	Damwild
sika deer	<i>Cervus nippon</i>	japaninpeura	sikahjort	Sikawid
forest reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus fennicus</i>	metsäpeura	skogsvildren	Waldren
roe deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>	metsäkauris	rådjur	Rehwild
wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo</i>	ahma	järv	Vielfrass
lynx	<i>Lynx lynx</i>	ilves	lo	Luchs
brown bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>	karhu	björn	Bär
wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	susi	varg	Wolf

land and water areas. This provides hunting opportunities without the right to hunt based on land-ownership or leasing.

Metsähallitus sells small game hunting permits to State lands. The duration of the permits is 1–7 days. Small game permits are alternatively sold either for all small game or for other small game than grouses. A small game permit is personal and is subject to a harvest quota. Metsähallitus also sells moose hunting permits for hunting groups/associations as well as personal bear hunting permits.

The sale of hunting permits for State lands begins in late spring. The sale of short-term small game permits is staggered in two parts to June and August. It is best to check the more precise dates from the Metsähallitus website.

Those planning to make a hunting trip to Finland should in advance clarify how and for which area they can obtain/buy a hunting permit.

This best succeeds through Finnish friends or a travel

organiser. The amount of the hunting permit fees is decided by the holder of hunting right. Normally a harvest quota is linked with the permits which must not be exceeded. Permit fees vary greatly, depending on the species of game hunted and the area concerned.

### Regulations governing the import and possession of firearms

A foreign hunter can use either his/her own firearms for hunting in Finland or obtain the necessary equipment for hunting use from the Finnish host. The regulations governing the import of firearms vary, depending on what country the hunting guest arrives from. If, for example, a private import licence or parallel firearms licence is applied for from the police authority for the guest, the host should clarify from the police well in advance as to what documentation is required as well as which procedure apply together with the processing periods.

### Importation firearms and cartridges

In Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark, a fire-



## Weapon requirements

Game species	
Ducks*1)	R1, S, B
Seabirds*2)	R1, S, B
Eider, male	R1, S, B
Eider, female	R1, S, B
Coot	R1, S, B
Greylag goose	R2, S, B
Bean goose	R2, S, B
Canada goose	R2, S, B
Woodcock	R1, S, B
Black grouse	R2, S, B
Hazel grouse	R1, S, B
Capercaillie	R2, S, B
Willow grouse	R1, S, B
Ptarmigan	R1, S, B
Partridge	R1, S, B
Pheasant	R1, S, B
Wood pidgeon	R1, S, B
Northern hare and brown hare	R2, S, B
Rabbit	R1, S, B
Red squirrel	R1, S, B
European beaver	R3, S, B
Canadien beaver	R3, S, B
Red fox, blue fox and badger	R2, S, B
Polecat	R1, S, B
Pine marten	R1, S, B
Ermine	R1, S, B
Lynx	R3, S
Otter	R2, S, B
Ringed seal	R3
Grey seal	R3
Wild boar	R4, B
Mufflon	R3, B
Moose	R5
White-tailed deer	R4, B
Forest reindeer	R4, B
Fallow deer	R4, B
Roe deer, male	R3, S, B
Roe deer, female and calf	R3, S, B
Brown bear	R5
Wolf	R3, S

Listed/Harmful invasive species	
American mink and Muskrat	R1, S, B
Raccoon dog	R2, S, B

arms licence granted for the possession of a firearm entitles the holder to bring in or transfer the firearm concerned as well as the required quantity of cartridges to Finland, in addition to keeping them in one's possession for a maximum of three months. The requirement for importation is participation in a shooting or hunting event, which should be possible

\*1) Mallard, teal, garganey, widgeon, pintail, shoveler, pochard, tufted duck and goldeneye  
\*2) Long-tailed duck, red-breasted merganser and goosander

### Weapon requirements

$R1 = E0 > 100 \text{ J}$ ,  
 $R2 = \text{bullet weight} > 2,5 \text{ g}, E100 > 200 \text{ J} / E0 > 300 \text{ J}$ ,

$R3 = bw > 3,2 \text{ g}, E100 > 800 \text{ J}$ ,

$R4 = bw > 6 \text{ g}, E100 > 2000 \text{ J}/bw > 8 \text{ g}, E100 > 1700 \text{ J}$ ,

$R5 = bw > 9 \text{ g}, E100 > 2700 \text{ J}/bw = 10 \text{ g}, E100 > 2000 \text{ J}$ ,

$S = \text{shotgun, with shot}$

$B = \text{bow, strength} \geq 180 \text{ N}$ , (arrow with hunting tip, use of crossbow is forbidden).

The use of shotgun slugs is forbidden in moose and bear hunting.

### Open seasons

[riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/](https://riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/)

### Metsästysajat

[riista.fi/metsastys/metsastysajat/](https://riista.fi/metsastys/metsastysajat/)

### Jakttider

[riista.fi/sv/jakt/jakttider/](https://riista.fi/sv/jakt/jakttider/)

### Die Jagdsaison

[riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/](https://riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/)

### ОХОТНИЧИЙ СЕЗОН

[riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/](https://riista.fi/en/hunting/open-seasons/)

to show by means of, e.g. a letter of invitation.

If a hunting guest arrives from a member state of the European Union, the easiest way is to bring in or transfer hunting guns under the authority of a European Firearms Pass. The holder of a Firearms Pass may bring a hunting gun into Finland for hunting specific to the B or C class intended for hunting and marked with a Firearms Pass, as well as cartridges appropriate for the gun concerned. In addition, the holder of a Firearms Pass must have a written invitation or other reliable explanation upon arrival in Finland where it is indicated that bringing a firearm is required in order to participate in the hunting event. A Firearms Pass must be kept along with the firearm and cartridges when carrying or transporting.

Another alternative for the transfer of firearms and



cartridges (from an EU country) and bringing them into Finland (from outside the EU) is a police authority-issued private import licence, which entitles the holder to transfer, bring into Finland and keep the above-mentioned items in one's possession. In applying for a private import licence, a certificate issued by an authority in the foreign person's country of residence must be presented to the police authority. This certificate should show that the person has the right in his/her country of residence to possess the firearm concerned. In the same connection, a copy of the person's passport as well as power of attorney to apply for an import licence is required if the Finnish host puts in the application on the guest's behalf. During the import licence application process, the police authority may demand to see other clarifications as well, such as the invitation sent to the guest, a hunting card, and/or a shooting test certificate. A private import licence is issued for one year at maximum and can entitle possession of the items brought in under its authority for no more than three months. The period of validity is generally limited only to the period of the hunting event concerned. In bringing in firearms and cartridges from outside the European Union, the items and a private import licence must be shown at Finnish Customs.

### **Borrowing a firearm from a Finnish person**

With consent of the Finnish firearm permit holder, Finland's police authority can grant a foreign person a parallel right to possession of a firearm (parallel firearms licence). In order to obtain a parallel firearms licence, the foreign person must present a permit issued by an authority in his/her country of residence for possession of a firearm. In addition, one must provide a written explanation of intent to possess a firearm in Finland. A parallel firearms licence can be requested from the

Finnish Police Department. If a Finnish host applies for a parallel firearms licence on behalf of a guest, one should also present a printed copy of the guest's passport, power of attorney, the invitation if possible, a hunting card, and a shooting test certificate. A parallel firearms licence as generally granted is limited only to the period of the hunting event concerned.

A Finnish person can lend a firearm to a foreigner if one has a document in his/her possession that entitles the foreigner to possess the firearm in Finland. These sorts of documents are either a firearms licence issued in Finland, a European Firearms Pass granted in a member state of the EU, or a firearms licence issued in Norway, Sweden, Iceland or Denmark. It is, however, only possible to borrow a corresponding or less hazardous firearm than that entitled to the person to keep in his/her possession, as outlined in the above-mentioned documents. Loaning of a firearm is regulated in the Firearms Act (Ampuma-aselaki), section 87.

### **Supervised usage requires the direct presence of a supervisor**

A hunting event is occasionally short in duration for a foreign hunting guest: for example, one evening of duck hunting or it is not considered appropriate for hunter to apply for a firearms permit from the police for some other reason. In this case, the guest can use a firearm in hunting under supervised circumstances regulated in section 88 of the Firearms Act. According to the above, a person entitled to possess a firearm who is at least 18 years of age may provide a gun for use under direct supervision if one is capable of effectively supervising and guiding the user of the firearm so that its use does not cause any hazard. In practice, this means that the supervisor and supervisee are "an arm's length away" from



each other whilst hunting, so that the supervisor has a real possibility of interfering with the use of the firearm.

### **The rules connected with firearms should be communicated to guests**

The Finnish host should always tell his foreign guests about the Finnish requirements regarding storage of hunting weapons during the hunting event. The reaction to transporting hunting weapons in motor vehicles is also quite strict in Finland: in other words, when in a moving vehicle they must always be unloaded and in a gun case or placed in a protected place such as the boot of a car. Similarly, they should be told that the shooting of a game animal is prohibited from inside or from cover provided by a motor vehicle, or within a 100-metre radius of a vehicle immediately after stopping.

Safety perspectives are highly pivotal in Finland. A firearm may generally be loaded only in the designated hunting area, and the cartridges must be taken out of the gun when the hunter is leaving designated area or position. Shooting in the direction of the neighbour's designated hunting area in a hunting party is prohibited, and the prohibition sector can even be 90 degrees wide. The hunting leader always provides safety instructions which must be observed with respect to each hunting event.

### **Shooting test**

A shooting test must be performed if one intends to hunt deer, moose, bear or wild boar with a rifled firearm. Shooting tests are arranged by the game management associations during the summer and early autumn. Shooting tests are public occasions, and a fee of EUR 20 is charged for each test session. A shooting test certificate is valid for three years.

A bow shooting test should be performed if one intends to hunt fallow deer, red deer, sika deer, roe deer, white-tailed deer, wild boar or mouflon with a bow.

The game management association gives a foreigner a shooting test certificate (shooting test reciprocal identification) if the person has the right in his/her homeland to hunt game of corresponding size and can provide a reliable explanation of this or present a currently valid shooting test certificate. A fee of EUR 20 is charged for a shooting test certificate.

### **Hunting licence and derogation**

The hunting of deer, moose, large carnivores and seal is more precisely regulated based on hunting license, derogation permit or it is based on regional quota which are issued and set by the Finnish Wildlife Agency.

The National Resources Institute provides population and harvest data on annual basis for taxation planning with regard to large carnivores, deer and moose. With respect to large carnivores, planning is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry annually with the maximum quotas set. The Finnish Wildlife Agency makes derogation decisions within this context. With regard to deer and moose, the harvest management planning is carried out by means of the Wildlife Agency's hunting licences.

### **Duty of catch reporting**

In addition to catches made under hunting licences and exemptions, a statutory catch declaration must be made for several other species of game. A catch declaration must be submitted for catches of roe deer, wild boar, fitch, bean goose, graylag goose, wigeon, northern pintail, garganey, shoveler, po-



chard, tufted duck, common eider, long-tailed duck, red-breasted merganser, goosander and coot via the My wildlife electronic service (Oma riista) or using a form approved by the Finnish Wildlife Agency. The catch declaration must be submitted within seven days of catching the bird or animal.

**Please note.** Always check the Finnish Wildlife Agency website to find the annual hunting seasons for each species and any hunting season restrictions.

## Importation of dogs

### Importation of a dog from EU countries requires

- An identification mark using a microchip
- Rabies vaccination in accordance with the international standard (OIE). Vaccination must be performed at least 21 days before importation.
- Procedures against echinococcosis should be handled 30 days prior to the arrival of the animal in Finland.
- A pet passport, which contains information respective to the animal's ID as well as an entry by a veterinarian concerning valid rabies vaccination and echinococcosis medication.

A veterinary border check is always performed on animals brought from outside the EU countries (with certain exceptions). For pets not transported for commercial reasons, the Finnish Customs performs inspections as part of the Customs supervision at the approved points of entry. A foreign person must ensure that one is able to return his/her dog to its homeland after the hunting trip is over.

## Other matters to take into consideration

### The following, for instance, are prohibited in hunting:

- artificial light sources as well as sighting devices intended for night shooting which electronically enlarge or change the image (except when shooting harmful invasive species)
- semi-automatic firearm with magazine holding more than three cartridges

- semi-automatic firearm with magazine holding more than two cartridges, used in the hunting of birds and mammals mentioned in the nature directives
- killing traps that do not kill immediately
- the use of lead shot in the hunting of waterfowl
- the use and possession of lead shots in wetland areas and their 100-meter-wide buffer zones
- the dusk hunting of waterbirds during the time period between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunrise on 1 August 2023 – 31 July 2026

## Safety regulations

- 150-metre regulation with regard to shooting in the vicinity of a building of habitation
- in hunting deer and moose, hunters must wear orange headgear and jacket or vest that covers the torso.

There are also a number of other regulations governing hunting and trapping methods, which should be clarified before hunting.

All obligations and restrictions affecting Finnish hunters also apply to foreign hunters. It is also good to get acquainted beforehand with the concept of "everyman's rights", including its rights and restrictions, and how it applies to camping, arranging campfires, and mobility in unfamiliar areas.

## More information

### Finnish Wildlife Agency

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### Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Tel. +358 (0)29 516001  
www.mmm.fi

### Metsähallitus Game and Fisheries Services

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