

My first introduction to using a deer scent was hunting the McAlester Navy Ammunition Depot in the late '60s. It was Pete Rickard's Doe Lure. It definitely worked; I never saw so many deer check it out during the two-day hunt. That made a lasting impression on me. I have been using deer lure and scent-control products ever since.

Millions of dollars of scent-free clothing is sold today. You can also do everything to stay as scent-free as you can. I put my hunting camo clothes in a plastic bag with a pine bow to give them a natural flavor. Watch about gassing up the truck on the way to the woods or stepping on gasoline around the pump. Mike Cowling always drags a heavily scented rag on the way to his stand. It works and he has killed several deer that way.

I always place scent near a scrape or trail 20 yards or less from my tree stand. Lately, I have been using Active Scrape, a scent dripper that will keep it fresh for two weeks. I also use Trail's End Doe in Heat scent on a drag rag or by hanging it off a tree limb. Hugo's Wal-Mart has a whole wall of Tink's and several varieties of scent-attractant lures.

You can also find spray scent remover and soap that will leave no detergent smell on your hunting clothes. A twig stuck in your hat won't hurt anything, either. Check the wind. I use a puff bottle to check the wind. Always approach your stand walking into the wind. Every time I see a deer or hear a shot, I check my watch for the time. It gives me an idea when deer are moving. The best times to hunt are sunrise, mid-morning, noon and dusk. A deer can show up at any time – always be ready.

Ground blinds are very popular now. They conceal you and hide your scent. Put local brush on them to make them look natural.

Before tree stands, we just climbed a tree and sat on a limb. Tree stands now bolt on a tree and some ladder stands hold two hunters. Most ladder stands are 12 to 15 feet.

I prefer a ladder stand around 15 feet. Any higher and I can't see as well. When the leaves fall, it doesn't hurt to hunt higher. For bow hunting, I mark off 25 yards around my tree stand. That's my effective archery range. If a deer walks in that circle and presents a killing shot, I will take it. If not, I don't move. It may come back later.

Standing around campfires or being in the kitchen where the cooking is going on will smell you up real good before you enter the woods. Be scent conscious on everything you do. It may make the difference for a successful hunt. Wear a safety harness anytime you're in a tree stand. You can't be too safe.

Remember, get your deer to the meat processor as soon as possible. Put a bag of ice in the body cavity and take it to Shorty Porter's as quick as you can. Good Luck and Happy Hunting.

- L. FRY