

UPLAND HUNTING GEAR CHECKLIST



Much of the beauty of upland hunting is derived from the simplicity of the act itself. If you have a comfortable pair of boots, a vest, a shotgun, and a dog (and for some of us even the dog is optional) then you have everything necessary for a successful upland hunt.

However, that does not mean there isn't ancillary gear that will help you tremendously in your upland pursuits. In addition to the no-brainer needs such as a shotgun and shells, here's a list of items to consider for your own upland kit.

FOR YOUR VEST

- Water:** And lots of it.
- Shotgun shells:** If hunting prairie grouse or pheasants carry 10-15 shells. If hunting covey birds like quail or Huns 20 is usually as many as you'll need.
- Cell phone with OnX Maps:** This is an indispensable tool, particularly if you hunt public land and public-access walk-in areas or are hunting new areas. It's good to know where, exactly, you're standing in areas where borders are poorly marked or non-existent, and the tracking feature will help keep you from getting lost.
- Small first-aid kit:** This should serve double-duty for both you and the dog. A few assorted bandages and band-aids, tape, vet wrap, a pair of tweezers (for small thorns and splinters) a tube of EMT Gel, and a small bottle of saline eye wash is a good place to start.
- Six-foot lead:** This serves double duty. You never know when you'll need to leash your dog in the field, and a stout six-foot lead also serves as a tension-release tool if your dog gets caught in a conibear trap.
- Hearing protection:** Extremely important, but often overlooked. Soundgear is the gold standard.
- License/stamps/permits:** Always double-check and always have them on you in the field.
- Cable cutters:** Never hurts to be overly prepared when it comes to potentially encountering snares.
- Multi-tool:** They're indispensable, and at some point you will use the needle-nose pliers to pluck out porcupine quills, sandburs, cactus spines, etc.
- E-collar/transmitter**
- Whistle/lanyard**

FOR YOUR WILD GAME & SHOTGUN

- Game shears:** Very handy for breaking down birds.
- Ziplock bags:** You need something to store them in the field.
- Cooler with ice:** Get your birds cooled

down as soon as possible. Always carry an ice-filled cooler on every trip.

- Small gun cleaning kit:** You won't be doing any major gunsmithing in the field. A bore snake or four-piece rod, a cleaning jag, a bronze brush, some patches or rags, and a small bottle of your favorite gun oil should do the trick.

FOR YOUR DOG

- Crate or kennel:** Getting to and from your hunting spots might be the most dangerous aspect of your trip, keep your dog(s) safely secured in a kennel.
- Water/water bowls:** Always carry more water than you think you'll actually need. Remember to bring a water bowl for each dog on extended trips.
- Tie-out stakes/chain gang:** However you prefer to tie out your dogs, don't forget tie-out stakes and a hammer or mallet.
- Leads/leashes/check cords:** Bring an extra, many people also prefer to use an extended 20-foot check cord to air dogs on long trips.
- Dog boots:** You never know when you'll encounter sand burs and your dog's pads could become raw during extended trips. Also, bring extra, because your dog will lose them.
- Food:** On longer trips, bring more than you think you'll need. And don't forget the scoop you use to measure food at home.
- Canned food/broth:** This is a trick to entice it to eat in the evenings if your dog isn't showing interest in his or her normal kibble.
- Purina Fortiflora:** Keeps all that gastrointestinal plumbing in good working order during some of the anxious and exciting times associated with travel.
- Dog medication/vaccine record:** Don't forget this on an extended trip. Also, it is a very good idea to have contact info for local vets in the area you'll be hunting, just in case.

- Shovel/plastic trash bags:** For shoveling and disposing of the by-product of all that digested dog food. Be a responsible dog owner.

- Chargers for all your canine electronics:** One missing charger could cause a very big headache on extended trips.

- Extension cord/power strip:** This is extremely handy to have on long trips if you need to charge multiple collars/transmitters, phones, camera batteries and other devices.

FOR YOUR VEHICLE

- First aid kit:** Keep a more robust first aid kit in your truck for real emergencies (human and dog).
- Tow/Recovery Strap:** Everyone gets stuck. Use a tow strap (which doesn't stretch) when winching yourself out. Use a recovery strap (which does stretch) when someone else can pull you out with their vehicle.
- Traction mats/boards:** Before you resort to straps, try to use these first. They're great for getting unstuck from mud, snow, and sand.
- Shovel:** A good shovel is an indispensable tool, not only for around camp, but for digging yourself out of any number of vehicular messes.
- Aftermarket jack:** The jack that comes with your vehicle is designed to change a tire on level pavement. It may not be suitable or large enough for changing a tire or lifting a vehicle for recovery on the side of a muddy county road or two-track.
- Portable air compressor:** Forget the cheap plastic ones. Buy a good compressor that will fill a truck tire.
- Tire plug kit:** There are times when it's faster, safer, or more convenient to temporarily plug a tire rather than change it. Buy a good, all-metal plug kit and learn how to use it.
- Battery jumpstarter:** A dead battery is one of the most common ways to get stranded, and jumper cables do you no good when you're alone. A good portable lithium-ion battery jump-starter is a lifesaver.
- Leather gloves**
- Lights:** Flashlights, LED lanterns, headlamps
- Tarps:** You won't question why this is on the always-carry list once you're forced to root around in the mud under your vehicle.
- Basic tool kit:** You don't need to have a complete mechanics set, but a basic kit with an assortment of screwdrivers, pliers, sockets, Allen wrenches, etc., will come in handy.