

## Hunting techniques

Traditions are of great importance in hunting in France, but we have to consider this pastime in the modern age. Hunting is enjoyed by many young people in the country and has seen a real rise in popularity since the turn of the millennium.

There are 1.1 million active hunters, creating a significant economy on the national scale with the purchase of hunting permits, equipment, insurance and so on.

There are many different types of hunting, responding to an array of aspirations. You can hunt with or without a shotgun, with or without a dog, on foot, on horseback or from a stand, in all kinds of landscape from plains to mountains or the forest.

A brief look at hunting techniques still practiced in France

### **AN AGE-OLD ART**

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In France, the art of hunting has a rich past and traditions, but it continues to be widely enjoyed today. It is an art that can be practiced in many ways, some of which go back centuries but which are today governed by the Environment Code.

A pastime that takes many forms: You can hunt alone or with a group, and with or without firearms.

## Nine hunting techniques are listed in France.



Firstly, **shooting**, the most common form of hunting, practiced all over the country. We talk about **big game hunting** and **small game hunting**. Wild boar and roe deer are hunted all over France, along with smaller game animals such as hares, pheasants and partridges.

**Hunting with hounds** is a very vibrant tradition and is currently gaining in popularity. In fact, small and big game hunting with hounds is a pastime that has been pursued passionately for almost 600 years! This is a group activity, with the hunt staff surrounded by a pack of dogs.

If you prefer spending time alone, you can enjoy a more solitary form of hunting such as **woodcock hunting**, where you can walk for hours with your

dog. Youâ€™ll need to be quite fit!

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**Falconry** remains rather marginal but has its enthusiasts. It involves raising birds of prey to catch game. It doesnâ€™t require any weapons but you will need good training!

**Waterfowl hunting** is based around ponds. The hunting blind is called a hutte, gabion or tonne, depending where in France you are! An array of different birds can be hunted in the wetlands.

**Traditional hunts** do not require a shotgun, with the birds being trapped instead. The rules on this differ from one region to another. For example, in the Ardennes region, they hunt lapwings, thrushes and blackbirds, while bird traps are used to catch larks in the fields of the Landes, Lot-et-Garonne, Tarn and Garonne.

Larks are caught in nets (known as pantès) in Gironde and birdlimes are used to trap thrushes in Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, Alpes-Maritimes and Bouches-du-Rhône.



The snaring of small animals is a very ancient practice, dating back to prehistoric times. Even back then, hunters and gatherers followed the trace of their game. **Snare hunting** is highly regulated because it helps contain harmful species that can be dangerous for game stocks. Regulations on this type of hunting therefore differ from region to another.

In France, hunting is thus a diverse activity, with its practices closely linked to the region and the people who keep the tradition alive.

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