

Don't eat strong smelling foods that will leave unnatural scent.

RIGHT SMELLS

Use a **natural cover scent**. It won't compensate for carelessness concerning the details of washing, drying and storing we've already discussed, but it adds insurance. I make my own natural cover scent with a blender. (Guys, get an old blender at a yard sale. Don't use your wife's good one! Acorns can kill blender blades, and angry wives can kill thoughtless husbands!!!) Collect fresh leaves, weeds and acorns found in your hunting area. Puree it in the blender with a quart of distilled or boiled water, and strain twice through clean, de-scented cotton cloth. You may add more distilled water later if it's too potent. Use in a spray bottle or atomizer. It will stay fresh for 2-3 days as is, or indefinitely when frozen. Use **deer lure**. Commercial lures are expensive, but usually good quality. A local farmer collects estrous discharge from his dairy cows when doing A.I. I put it on cotton balls in clean film canisters and freeze it. It works great on boots, in scrapes, or as a drag rag going into the stand. Buck-fever+ products work well.

WATCH THE WIND

Approach your stand with the wind in mind. This includes going in before dawn and looking ahead to later in the day. Keep in mind the **forecast** and immediate **geography**. A cold front coming in, a high-pressure system, approaching dawn or dusk will all cause changes in air-flow. Prevailing westerly winds in a high-pressure system swing or swirl depending

on approaching weather systems. The warmth of sunlight at dawn creates a warm airflow ascending the ridge. Dusk is just the opposite, with colder air flowing downhill. This is especially noticeable on still days. (You don't play offense the same against man-to-man as you do with zone defense. Air currents will work against you if you don't play to the strength of the stand.) If the wind makes it impossible to hunt the stand, don't give yourself away needlessly. Have alternate locations ready for these situations. However, don't stay home when the weather is changing. An approaching storm front is the best time to be in your stand. Deer feed earlier in the evening and later in the morning with an approaching storm, and off and on all day in light rain.

The rifle hunter can use distance to his advantage. The archery hunter must learn to work in close, usually 20-30 yards from his prey. For thousands of archery hunters, it's this closeness of the quarry that has put the excitement back in the hunt. And that's why we work at doing "a thousand little things right". Pay attention to details, and it could pay off in a big way for you this fall.

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Archery Hunting for Whitetails Details, details, details!

I've forgotten the coach, but not his advice "Success means doing a thousand little things right." That's great advice not only for basketball players, but also for those who pursue archery season Whitetails. "Success means doing a thousand little things right." OK, there may be not a thousand little things. But there are a significant number of fundamentals that must not be overlooked. All the new improvements and expensive accessories are no substitute for paying attention to these fundamental details.

There are good reasons behind these old clichés

"The devil is in the details"

"and all for the want of a horseshoe nail"

"It's the little things that get you"

"Details details details."

"If you want to see more than tails, pay attention to details"

Archery hunters who are successful year after year have had to learn to pay attention to these details. They cover three of the five senses. Sight, Sound, and Smell. Let me highlight just a few that can give you the edge this season.

SIGHT HIDE

YOU: Start with good camo clothing including a facemask (or paint) and gloves. This is all the more important if you wear glasses. The unnatural reflection off lenses and frames ends a lot of potential deer and turkey success.

YOUR BOW: Cover all metal and glossy parts of your bow with black hockey tape.

It's cheap, quiet, and stays put even in the rain. Use dark or camo-pattern arrow shafts.

YOUR STAND: Get your tree stand high enough, usually 18-20 feet, so that your movement isn't easily detected. Put the stand 10-20 yards to the side of travel routes, not right on them. Keep the area as natural looking and undisturbed as possible. Carry cut branches and brush out of the area. Do all your stand and sight preparation a month or more before the season.

AND SEEK

Be able to see the deer before he sees you. Have clear shooting lanes. That means absolutely clear. It only takes a tiny twig in the wrong place to send your arrow sailing over, under, or past your target. Practice shooting from your stand, long before season. You must know the distances and be comfortable with various shooting lanes and stand set-ups. If you don't want to lug a deer decoy a long distance, try a turkey decoy. Have a turkey decoy placed 60 yards from your stand can focus a deer's natural curiosity, and thus keep his eyes off of you. This is particularly helpful if your stand can't be placed as high as you'd like it to be. Deer will often circle the decoy keeping 30-40 yards from it, as did the deer that filled my antlerless tag this year. It can create other interesting experiences as well.

A Red Tail Hawk once landed an arms length from me while considering having my decoy for lunch

SOUND WRONG SOUNDS

YOU: You must be silent and able to stay that way. Wear wool or quiet cotton. Keep binoculars tucked inside your shirt. Don't use noisy Velcro and zippers while in your stand.

YOUR BOW: Work your bow over carefully to make sure it stays quiet during the entire draw. Wax your string. Use graphite on your cable guard, guides, wheels and cams. Cover your risers and limbs with moleskin or hockey tape in the event the arrow falls off the rest. It will! After pulling your bow up into your stand, check that each arrow is securely in the quiver, and won't fall out as you begin to draw. (If some of these details seem to come from all too personal experience, they have!)

YOUR STAND: Do whatever you need to do to eliminate all squeaks from your tree stand, including wood, metal, and nylon. Make sure you can stand up and sit down in the stand soundlessly.

YOUR WALK: Getting to your stand location needs to be as silent as possible as well. Go over the trail several weeks ahead of time, and then again a week before season. Treat this last walk like an opening day. Go in scent free, don't work up a sweat, and don't stay any longer than necessary. Get in and get out. Deer need to feel safe to stay in the area and active in daylight.

RIGHT SOUNDS

A deer **grunt tube** can be effective any time, especially if you need to get a deer to stop or come in those last few yards. Tickling **antlers**, (clicking average or even

smaller sized antlers lightly together from time to time) can attract average bucks that would spook if you used big antlers aggressively. A **turkey call** used sparingly and quietly in an area frequented by the big birds sets deer at ease. I've observed this dozens of times. It can be particularly effective if you greet the dawn with a couple of quiet tree yelps, or used with the turkey decoy mentioned earlier.

SMELL WRONG SMELLS

CLOTHING: Wear clean, de-scented clothing from underwear to outerwear. Wash your hunting clothes with baking soda, or one of the commercial scent-free products. Dry your clothing outdoors, not in the dryer with its residual "Downey" smell. Rinse everything in fresh water every time you get home from a hunting foray. Store them in scent free bags with leaves, acorns, leaf matter, apples, etc. (No ticks, please.) Scent-lok and other carbon gear works!

FOOTGEAR: Wear rubber boots washed with baking soda and rinsed in boiling water, not leather footgear with petroleum based leather preservatives. Stay away from all unnatural odors. Fill up at the gas station the night before, not on the way to your hunting area. Gas odors linger and are lethal to hunting success. In a word: Think like a trapper!

YOU: Don't forget to wash yourself using a washcloth and baking soda before you go out. Baking soda is a good body deodorant for underarms, too. Brush your teeth with baking soda and water. Drink only water when hunting. In the stand, eat an apple, and rub the remnants of the core on your tree.