

## Bison seasons

### Fall season

- September 1 to October 31.

Includes:

#### Highway corridors

- **Alaska Highway Corridor:** a 3-km wide corridor along the north side of the Alaska Highway between Whitehorse and the Slims River bridge.
- **North Klondike Corridor:** a 1-km wide corridor along the west side of the North Klondike Highway between Whitehorse and Braeburn.
- **Game Management Zones**  
3, 4 (except 4-03 and 4-51), 7, 8, 9.
- **Game Management Subzones**  
5-01, 5-04 to 5-07.

Hunting in the fall season helps keep bison within their core range. Hunting bison found near the highways is intended to reduce traffic incidents.

### Winter season

- November 1 to March 31.

Includes:

- **Game Management Zones**  
3, 4 (except 4-03 and 4-51), 5, 7, 8, 9.

### Bison map recommended

Hunters are encouraged to purchase the **Yukon wood bison core range map**, which includes hunting subzones and both Category A and B Settlement Lands, from any Department of Environment office. It can also be viewed or downloaded for free: [Yukon.ca/hunting](http://Yukon.ca/hunting).

The map insert in the *Yukon hunting regulations summary* only shows Category A Settlement Lands.

## After the hunt

### All bison hunters must:

1. **Report the kill within 10 days** to any Department of Environment office.
2. **Submit the incisor bar (lower jawbone) with meat on it** to an Environment office **no later than 15 days after the end of the month** in which the bison was killed.

For more information on bison or bison hunting, contact the **Department of Environment** at **867-667-5652** or toll-free **1-800-661-0408, ext. 5652**.



**You must make every effort to track down and kill a wounded bison.**

# HUNT WISELY: BISON



## BISON ARE LARGE. BE PREPARED.

- A cow typically weighs **360 to 630 kg (800 to 1400 lbs)**.
- A mature bull could weigh over **1,000 kg (2,200 lbs)**.
- The head and hide of a mature bison weighs about **200 kg (450 lbs)**.

## A special opportunity

By the late 1800s, wood bison were no longer found in Yukon. The reasons behind this are not clear.

Since the release of 170 animals between 1988 and 1992 as part of a national wood bison recovery program, the growth of the Aishihik wood bison herd in Yukon has provided harvest opportunities for many.

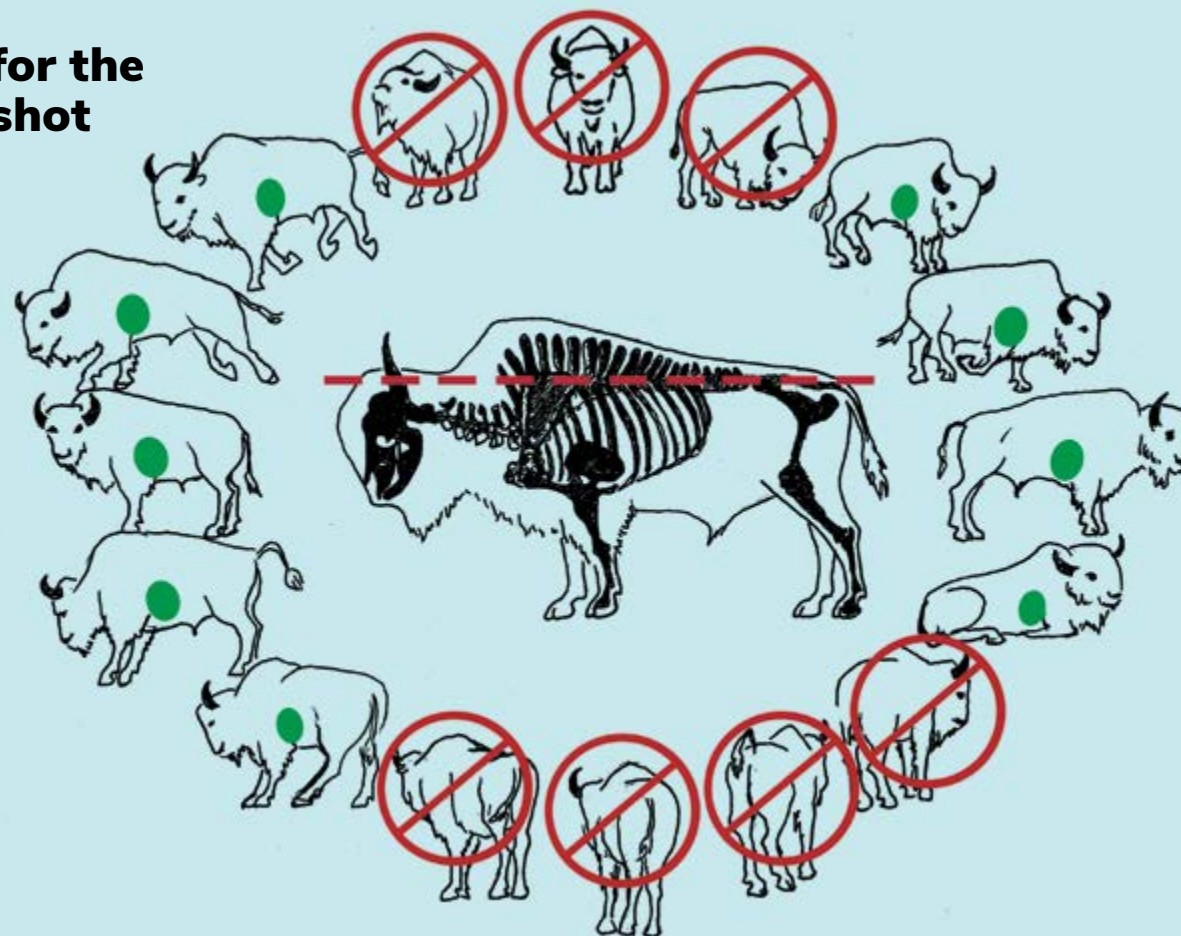
Harvest by hunters is permitted in only a few herds in Canada. Hunting wild wood bison is a special opportunity.

### Be respectful when hunting

- **Follow existing trails**, especially in the fall. Do not create new trails.
- **Respect private residences and property**, and do not leave gut piles nearby.
- **Do not use marked trapper trails** – look for Active Trapping Area signs before following snowmobile tracks in winter. **Trapping season is October 1 to March 31.** Never interfere with trap sets. Unless you have permission, do not use or disturb trappers' cabins or any equipment you find there.
- **Be respectful** of other hunters and backcountry travelers.



## Wait for the right shot



## Bison are tough to kill.

1. **Be certain of your skill with your rifle and your ability to cleanly kill a bison.** If you can't hit the heart/lung area well, don't shoot. Avoid long distance shots and poor angle shots.
2. **Remember that the kill zone on bison is much lower than on other species because of their hump.** Don't shoot too high. The vital organs are all below the base of the horns.
3. **Head shots made from a distance are not effective.** Shoot from as close a range as possible and aim for the heart/lung target area. An animal standing broadside will give you the best shot. Be cautious about deflections and ricochets off heavy bone.
4. **If you're not sure whether you hit a bison, check the area carefully for signs of a hit such as blood and hair.** You must make every effort to track down and kill a wounded bison.
5. **Monitor a downed bison carefully to make sure that it is dead and not only wounded.** Approach the downed bison from the spine side. Make sure the animal isn't moving. Have a follow up shot ready in case the bison gets up – especially when you approach it.
6. **Take follow up shots to ensure the bison is hit adequately.** Head shots should only be used to dispatch animals at close range.
7. **Choose a bison that is separate from the herd and keep an eye on it after it has been shot.** Wounded animals may rejoin the herd and can be difficult to track.

Bison are big, the meat needs to cool. Skin, gut and quarter is the rule!



Even at -30°C, bison meat can spoil if not dealt with properly. The thick hide, fat, and hair on bison are incredible insulators. The hide must be removed immediately followed by the guts. Quartering the animal as soon as possible will also help cool the meat.



A properly field dressed bison. All of the meat has been removed.



The only parts that should be left behind in the field are the gut pile, the spine and perhaps the head and hide. Other bones can be left only if all the meat has been removed. No meat can be left in the field.



Every year charges are laid for meat wastage and, on conviction, Yukon courts have imposed significant penalties on offenders. Watch the video on how to field dress bison at [youtube.com/environmentyukon](https://www.youtube.com/environmentyukon).

**If you observe illegal or suspicious activity, call Turn in Poachers & Polluters 1-800-661-0525**

Or report it online at [Yukon.ca/TIPP](https://www.Yukon.ca/TIPP)

All calls are anonymous. Cash rewards may be available if your information leads to a prosecution.

Photo: Government of Yukon



## Minimum firearm requirements

### Centrefire rifle

- **.30 calibre** or larger.
- **Minimum 180 grain bullets** (premium ammunition is highly recommended, designed for large or dangerous game and loaded with expanding copper, bonded, or partition-constructed bullets).
- **Minimum 2,800 ft/lbs energy** at the muzzle

! A .30-06 calibre rifle with 180 grain bullets meets the minimum legal requirements but is not recommended.

OR

### Black powder rifle

- **.50 calibre** or larger;
- firing an elongated bullet with **minimum 90 grain charge**; and
- **minimum 2,800 ft/lbs energy** at the muzzle.

Note: Hunters using a black powder rifle must have a centrefire rifle (see above) accessible as back up.

It's against the law to use bows to hunt bison.

## Choose a cow

### Cow

- Rectangular head shape.
- Thin horn base.
- Smaller hump.

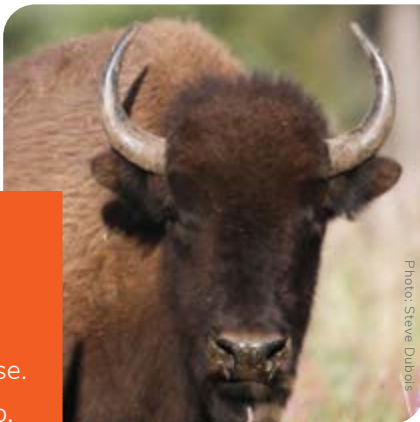


Photo: Steve Dubs

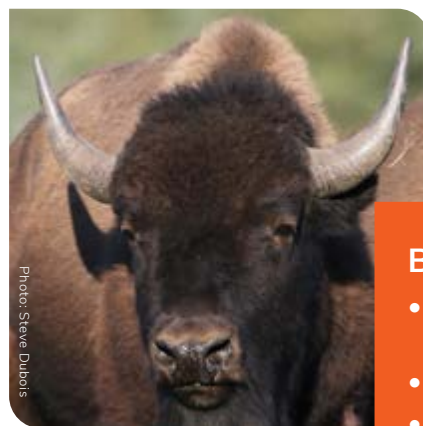


Photo: Steve Dubs

### Bull

- Triangular head shape.
- Thick horn base.
- Large hump.

To learn how to tell the difference between cow and bull bison, review the wood bison section of the Yukon hunting regulations summary, or watch the video *Wood bison field identification*, available online at [youtube.com/environmentyukon](https://www.youtube.com/environmentyukon).



### Don't shoot collared animals

Check whether the bison is wearing a collar before shooting. **If you mistakenly kill a collared bison, you must care for the meat and report it right away.**

Bring the collar to a Department of Environment office so staff can check the capture dates and let you know if the meat is safe to eat, as drugs are used to capture and collar the bison.

### Do not shoot at running bison.

## Permissions required

- Hunters need **written permission** from the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN), and/or the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN), and/or the Kluane First Nation (KFN) if they intend to harvest bison on Category A and B Settlement Lands. **Contact CAFN at 867-634-4200. Contact LSCFN at 867-863-5576. Contact KFN at 867-841-4274.**
- **All bison hunters require permission to hunt within one kilometre of any residence**, whether occupants are present or not. Be aware of the direction you are shooting, as bullets can travel farther than one kilometre.

## If you wound it, track it

Conservation officers have observed that some animals harvested were wounded previously. Wounded bison can suffer for years from bullet injuries and in many cases die a slow, painful death. Ethical hunters make every effort to track down and kill a wounded bison.