

How to Access Private Land and Work with Landowners

Private landowners in Montana will often welcome those hunters who make it apparent that they care about them and their lands. They may also welcome hunters who want to help with their wildlife challenges and want to hunt for meat.

Here are some tips that you should know when approaching landowners about hunting.

- Be honest and transparent.
- Offer your skill and expertise, such as weed spraying, fence building, ditch digging etc.
- Be thoughtful of times you choose to contact a landowner.
- Check in with landowners in the spring; Don't wait until hunting season begins.
- Don't expect phone calls to be returned.
- Offer help with wildlife management by taking doe deer and antelope or cow elk only.
- Don't argue if you are told no. Say thank you and move on.
- Do not ask landowners how many acres they have or how many head of cattle they are running; this can be considered rude and intrusive similar to someone asking you how much you have in your bank account.

And here is some basic etiquette to follow if you are granted access:

- Understand the ranch rules and follow them: Leave gates the way you find them unless told otherwise and go where you are told.
- Use appropriate roads.
- Make a plan with the landowner for retrieval if you do harvest an animal.
- Report downed fences and cows outside of fences, etc. to the landowner.
- Report trespass.
- Identify noxious weeds and mark them on onX.
- Pick up trash.
- Say thank you. Write a note, deliver a homemade pie or jam, or their favorite bottle.