

Tree stands are a basic tool of many deer hunters, but they can be dangerous if not used properly, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Nebraska Hunter Education Coordinator Mike Streeter says most tree stand accidents are caused by carelessness and can be avoided by following these steps:

- Wear a full-body harness before climbing into the stand, until back on the ground after climbing down.
- Attach to the tree starting when on the ground. Remain attached until back on the ground.
- Use equipment that is in good condition. Follow the instructions provided with tree stand. Check equipment regularly.
- Avoid hunting from heights above 15 feet.
- Maintain a short tether to the tree. Allow only enough slack for turning and shooting. The tether should be tight when seated in the stand.
- Use a haul line to raise and lower equipment. Wait until are in the stand and safely secured before loading a firearm or drawing an arrow from the quiver.
- Never use a homemade tree stand. A stand made of wood and nailed or screwed to a tree is dangerous.