

Tree stands are a basic tool of many deer hunters, but they can be dangerous if not used correctly.

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

- Always wear a full-body harness from the time you are on the ground before climbing into the stand, until you are back on the ground after climbing down.
- Always attach yourself to the tree starting when you are on the ground. Remain attached until back on the ground.
- Only use equipment that is in good condition. Follow the instructions provided with the tree stand. Check equipment regularly.
- Avoid hunting from heights above 15 feet.
- Maintain a short tether between yourself and the tree. Allow only enough slack for you to turn and shoot. The tether should be tight when seated in your stand.
- Always use a haul line to raise and lower your equipment. Wait until you 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.