

4 Basic Rules of Firearms Safety – K

In recent years one third of all hunting incidents have been self inflicted injuries. That means that hunters are shooting themselves! The 4th and last rule of basic firearms safety is the practice of keeping your finger outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot. Of course muzzle control is critically important as well since the muzzle most often is pointed at the hunter in almost 100% of the self inflicted injuries.

Keeping your trigger finger outside the trigger guard should be a habit and not just a practice. If you think about that it makes perfect sense. Here are a few examples that drive home the point. Say you are hunting in rough terrain and have your finger inside the trigger guard but off the trigger. If you stumble or fall your hand will automatically do what is called sympathetic response. It will do whatever your other hand does and in many cases that is it will close. Even if you don't close your shooting hand just having your trigger finger inside the trigger guard during a stumble or fall could cause the finger to touch the trigger. There is a reason that part of the firearm is called a trigger "guard;" its purpose is to protect the trigger so that nothing (not even your finger) touches the trigger when it's not supposed to.

Too often investigations find out that self inflicted injuries involve hunters that have the safety in the off safe position, a finger inside the trigger guard and the muzzle pointed at themselves when the firearm discharged. Keeping your finger outside the trigger guard until you are ready to shoot would reduce the number of self inflicted injuries and unwanted discharges. Remember safe hunting is no accident; you have to plan to be safe.