

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE DIRECTIVE

TO: COMMISSIONED PERSONNEL

FROM: Steve Gray, Chief

SUBJECT: Allowable Deer Handgun Cartridges



Effective

April 2, 2006



Purpose

To provide enforcement personnel guidance with respect to deer hunting with handgun regulations.

Statutory

[1531.02 O.R.C.](#)

[1501:31-15-11](#)



Reference



Resource

Immediate Supervisor, Division of Wildlife Columbus Law Enforcement Staff

It is our responsibility to keep Ohio hunters informed of the acceptable handgun calibers for use in hunting deer. Questions are received annually by our staff from hunters asking about calibers which are not familiar to most except those with extensive knowledge of handgun and rifle ballistic/cartridges.

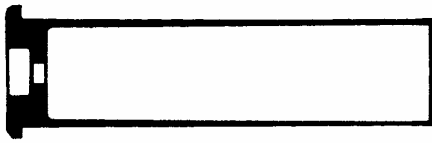
The implementation of this law was designed for deer handgun hunters to broaden caliber choice to enhance their opportunity, while limiting the ability to use light caliber rifle cartridges and minimizing the impact range.

Ohio wildlife rules 1501:31-15-11 outlines two fundamental criteria when considering a handgun cartridge for deer hunting.

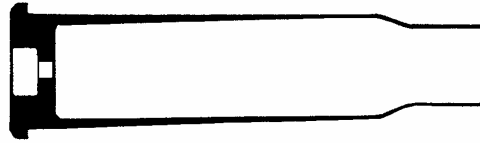
a. Bullet diameter: must be greater than .357 inches.

This is measured by micrometer in through the center of the bullet.

b. Cartridge design: must be straight wall design and may not have any shoulder/neck. Cartridges with a straight tapered wall are acceptable cartridges for handgun deer hunting. (See accompanying cartridge diagram designs.)



Straight Wall Cartridge
 Legal



Cartridge with Shoulder
 Illegal

Cartridge names are not always accurate in describing the caliber (diameter of the bullet) of the firearm. An example of this would be the 380 ACP. In name, the 380 ACP appears larger than .357 but its bullet diameter is actually .355 inches. This is the same bullet diameter as the 9 millimeter. The 380 ACP is therefore prohibited for deer handgun hunter use because the diameter is less than .357 inches.

Please use the following information as a quick reference guide to allowable and prohibited handgun calibers. Keep in mind that NEW handgun cartridges surface each year and may not be listed below. *If the NEW cartridge meets the criteria of the Wildlife Rule it will be legal to use for deer handgun hunting.* Additional questions are to be directed to the Law Enforcement section for guidance.

Allowable (Legal to use) Cartridges (Most popular handgun cartridges)

357 Magnum	357 Maximum	38 Special	375 Super Magnum
375 Winchester	38-55	10 Millimeter Auto	41 Action Express
41 Magnum	44 Special	44 Magnum	44 Auto Mag
445 Super Mag	444 Marlin	45 ACP	45 GAP
45 Long Colt	45 Winchester Magnum		454 Casull
460 Smith & Wesson	480 Ruger	45-70	475 Linebaugh
500 Smith & Wesson	500 Linebaugh	500 Action Express	

Prohibited (Illegal) Cartridges (identifies shouldered/necked cartridge case)**

380 ACP	9 Millimeter Luger	9 Millimeter Parabellum	
9x19	357 Sig	38 ACP	38 Super
357-44 **	357 Herret**	35 Remington	375JDJ**
38-40 Winchester**	44-40 Winchester**	30-30 Thompson Contender**	