

Hunting With Dad



I started hunting with my dad at age five, which was the year dad got me a BB gun as my first gun. It was a daisy red rider, which was the best gun in the world to a five year old; the problem was I couldn't shoot it unless dad was with me. Dad was very strict on gun safety, at the time I thought he was hard on me, now that I look back on it he was a good teacher I am a safer and better hunter for it.

Dad liked to rabbit hunt he had a pen full of rabbit dogs, now I know what you are thinking they are beagle dogs, but dad called them rabbit dogs. He knew each dogs bark and could call each of their names when he heard them.

Dad had a full time job so we went hunting on the weekend, Saturday mornings we would load the dogs and our guns, dad would always ask if I had my bullets.

To a five year old bb's were bullets I would always have them in my vest. That vest was one that dad had almost worn out and gave to me.

It was a rabbit hunting vest, the kind with the sell holders and the game pouch in the back. After getting everything loaded we would be on our way, dads hunting spots were close, and so the trip was short. We would meet up with a couple of dads buddies, after they said there hello's we got our guns and turn the dogs out.

It didn't take long for the dogs to strike a rabbit, I had to stay right beside dad at all times, he was always teaching me gun safety and what the dogs are doing and what to watch for. I got to shoot at one if it stopped and set still, I can remember shooting about four with that BB gun.

I remember one hunt when I was about eight or nine, we had just turned the dogs loose and hadn't gone far from the truck when the game warden came walking up, dad and the warden were friends, so they talked for a minute then the warden asked dad for his hunting license.

Then he asked dad's buddy for his, he turned to me and asked for mine, I told him I didn't have a license, he said you have a gun and your hunting aren't you, I replied yes sir but it's just a bb gun, he said you have a gun and your hunting you need a license.

Dad said son didn't you get your license? I didn't know what to do I just stood there for a minute then one of them snickered then they all busted out laughing.

The warden patted me on the back and said just funning you son you don't have to have a license until you are sixteen. Well I heard about that one for a long time, every time we hunted one of dad's buddies would ask me if I had my license.

That day turned out to be a very eventful day for me, after the warden left we continued with our hunt. The dogs struck a rabbit; dad and I were standing on a pond bank when the rabbit came trotting around the other side of the pond and just stopped, dad looked at me and said he's yours. I asked if I could use his gun, dad just smiled and handed me the gun, then he stood behind me and said get him before he runs. I took careful aim and pulled the trigger, that thing knocked me flat on my butt. When my head cleared all I could hear is dad laughing, he laughed so hard he had to set down.

When he stopped laughing he said go get your rabbit you got him, I just said really!

I figured out why dad stood behind me, it was to catch the gun so it wouldn't hit the ground.

I got my first shot gun when I was about ten; it was a single shot 410, dad took me out for some practice and to show me everything about the gun. I killed a lot of cans that day. I could hardly wait to go hunting. Finally Saturday came, I had the dogs at the truck when dad came out of the house, he laughed and said are you a little excited? We got to our hunting spot and turned the dogs loose, as usual dad said stay beside me. The dogs ran one out about fifty yards from the truck. I was thinking I hope this one comes my way.

The dogs ran that rabbit over a little knoll and out of sight, then it got hard to hear them; dad said he'll be back. While I was waiting it hit me, I didn't have any bullets I looked at dad and asked if he brought my bullets? He kind of chuckled and said I wondered how long it would take before you remembered them. He gave me a shell and said load it up and make sure the safety is on. Wasn't but just a minute I heard the dogs coming our way, dad told me to look out in front of the dogs for the rabbit. The dogs got closer and closer then I saw him that rabbit was coming straight at me dad said get him, I threw the gun to my shoulder and fired. I hit right in front of him he jumped to the right, dad handed me another and said shoot again. I fired again and flipped that little cottontail suckers butt over his head. Yes first rabbit with my new gun!

I hunted with that gun until about age fifteen, and then gave it to my younger brother; my granddad gave me his single shot 16 ga.



I rabbit hunted with dad for many years with that 16ga, it is still my favorite rabbit gun.

A couple of days after a hunt when I was about sixteen, dad told me he was proud of me, I asked what did I do?

Dad said that one of his hunting buddies' bragged on me, they had watched me take the shell out of the gun before I crossed a fence, I could see dad swell up in side and that made me feel good. Dad got older and slowed down in his hunting so I started taking the dogs out with me and my friends. Every so often I would talk dad in to a short hunt just me and him, those hunts were priceless.

I lost my dad five years ago; I still miss him to this day.

If you still have your dad take him hunting, if you can't go hunting just sit down and relive the past hunts, you will be glad you did.

By Nick "tncowboy" Stallings

This article is the property of TalkHunting.com and cannot be reprinted or reproduced without the express written permission of TalkHunting.com