Antler-Restricted Moose Hunts

Selective harvest strategies

Many Alaska Game Management Units (units) use selective harvest strategies to manage moose populations. One common method is the antler-restricted hunt, where hunters may only harvest bull moose that meet specific criteria. In many units, regulations restrict the harvest of bull moose to a specific antler size or configuration.

The illustrations in this brochure provide general assistance to hunters in the identification of moose antlers. It must be emphasized that moose antlers vary considerably. Each hunter is responsible for determining if a moose is legal before attempting to take it.

Why use antler restrictions?

Antler restrictions are a type of selective harvest strategy that protects a portion of the bull population.

In areas with spike or spike-fork restrictions, about half of the yearling bulls (second-year animals) are legal for harvest. The rest are protected to grow into larger, breeding-age bulls. In areas with antler spread or brow tine rules, some mature bulls are also legal to harvest.

What are antler restrictions?

Antler restrictions vary by unit and may be based on:

- Number of points.
- Antler spread width (e.g. 50 inches).
- Number of brow tines.

Estimating a 50-inch antler spread in the field is difficult. The brow tine requirement helps hunters determine legality when there is uncertainty about antler spread. If you are not sure about the number of brow tines or antler spread—don't shoot.



Photo: Tim Bowman, ©ADF&G

Know your hunt regulations.

It is up to you, as the hunter, to shoot only moose that fit the legal description in the current hunt regulations. Antlers must be salvaged where there are antler restrictions and must remain naturally attached to the unbroken or uncut skull plate if the required number of brow tines are not present.

Regulations are available at your local ADF&G office, on the ADF&G mobile app, and at **regulations.adfg.alaska.gov.**

Learn and prepare before your hunt.

Hunters may be required to complete an online orientation or quiz prior to hunting. Review the regulations for your hunt before going out in the field.

To learn more about hunting moose in Alaska including field dressing methods, how to care for meat in the field, wildlife diseases, hide tanning and more, go to **hunt.alaska.gov.**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This summary is available in alternative communication formats. If you need assistance, please contact the Department ADA Coordinator at (907) 465-6078. Hunters founded the modern wildlife conservation movement. They, along with trappers and sport shooters, provided funding for this publication through payment of federal taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and through state hunting license and tag fees.

Tips for judging antlers in the field

1. Know your regulations.

- Take your time to be certain you are shooting a legal moose. Not all moose fit neatly into a single antler configuration.
- It is up to the hunter to shoot only moose that fit the legal description in the regulations.

2. If the antlers are small, remember:

- "Spike" means antlers of a bull moose with only one point on at least one side. "Fork" means antlers of a bull moose with only two points on at least one antler.
- Some calves have a small amount of antler growth covered with hair and skin. These are still calves and are not legal in spike, spike-fork, or antlered bull hunts.
- Young bulls with small palmated antlers are seldom legal under spike or fork regulations.
- View antlers from multiple angles. Look for any hard-to-see second or third points emerging from the main beams near the head.

3. If the antlers are large, remember:

- Judge antler spread from the front. Antler spread is the widest distance between the outermost points of the antlers when measured perpendicular to the head.
- Assess brow tines carefully from the front. Hunters viewing antlers from the side may mistake other tines for brow tines.
- Brow tines emerge from the first branch or brow palm on the main beam of a moose antler, and have a different orientation than the rest of the antler.
- Mid-antler/mid-bay tines are common. Mid-bay tines do NOT originate from the brow palm and are not brow tines.

When in doubt, don't shoot!

Want to learn more? Check out the "Is This Moose Legal?" video at **legalmoose.adfg.alaska.gov.**

Moose Hunting

in Antler Restricted Areas

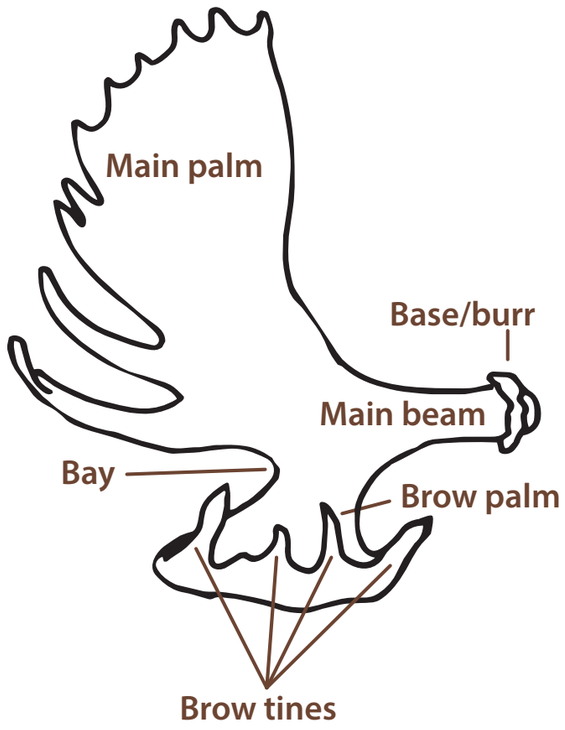


Photo: Tim Bowman, ©ADF&G

Know what's legal and think before you shoot.

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Moose Antler Parts & Terminology



Base/burr: a raised bony rim of the main beam closest to the skull.

Main beam: grows out from the base and supports the brow palm and the main palm.

Palm: the flat areas of the antler extending from the beam.

Main palm: the outermost and usually widest portion of the antler located beyond the brow palm.

Bay: wide indentation in the antler separating the main palm from the brow palm. Some antlers do not have a bay.

Brow palm: the first branch on the main beam that is forward-facing; this can be a palm with multiple tines, or a single, forward-facing tine. The brow palm is often separated from the main palm by a wide bay; a tine originating in or after this bay is ***not*** a brow tine.

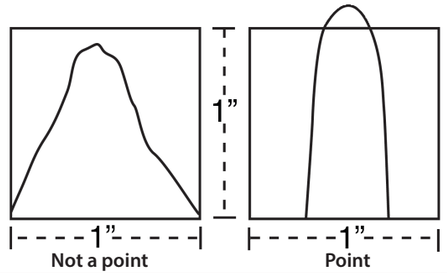
Tine/point: an antler projection at least 1 inch long and longer than it is wide, with the width measured 1 inch or more from the tip. A tine or point originating within 2 inches from the base and less than 3 inches long is not a tine.

Brow tine: a tine emerging from the first branch or brow palm on the main beam of a moose antler. A tine/point originating within 2 inches from the base and less than 3 inches long is ***not*** a brow tine.

Palmated antlers: Antlers with a single palm throughout their length do not have a clearly defined brow palm.

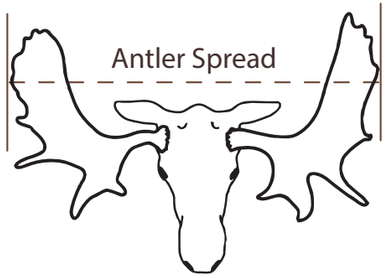
How to identify points or tines

A point or tine must be at least one inch long, and longer than it is wide, with the width measured one inch or more from the tip. A point originating within 2 inches from the base and less than 3 inches in length will not be counted as a brow tine.



How to measure antler spread

Antler spread is the widest distance between the outermost points of the antlers when measured perpendicular to the head. The spread increases with age for the first 5-8 years, then changes little after that.



Antler Configurations

Spike-fork (1x2)



This moose's right spike is legal under both spike and spike-fork regulations, regardless of the configuration on the other side. The fork on the moose's left side is legal under the spike-fork regulations, regardless of the configuration on the other side.

Fork (2 points)



This moose's right antler has 2 points (fork) making it legal under spike-fork regulations but not under spike regulations. The moose's left antler is palmated and both sides lack brow palms.

2x3 Brow Tine



The brow palms extend forward and are separate from the main palms. This moose is legal in areas restricted by 3 brow tines as it has 3 brow tines on its left side and 2 brow tines on its right.

4x2 Brow Tine



This moose has four brow tines on its right side and two brow tines on its left. This moose would be legal in areas restricted by 3 or 4 brow tines.

All photos ©ADF&G

3 Point, not 50” spread



These antlers have three points on both sides, and the antler spread does NOT measure at least 50 inches.

2x2 Brow Tine



This is a 2x2 brow tine moose. The 3rd point on the moose's left antler (see arrow) is not a brow tine; it is a mid-antler/mid-bay tine. This moose is not legal in areas restricted by 3 or 4 brow tines.

2x2 Brow Tine



These points (see arrows) are not part of the brow palm, and therefore are not considered brow tines. There are only 2 brow tines on each palm, making it not legal in areas restricted by 3 or 4 brow tines.

3x3 Brow Tine



This 3x3 brow tine moose would be legal in an area restricted by 3 (but not 4) brow tines. Note that these brow tines are separate from and have a different orientation to the rest of the antler.