



25 Do's & Don'ts for Instructors

The following are suggestions for improving the hunter education instructor's performance in a teaching situation. They are based on my personal experiences as a hunter education instructor and public school educator. Use these as a basis to develop your own personal style of instruction.

25 Do's for Hunter Education Instructors

- DO prepare the teaching material. Study the lesson well in advance of the class. Being well prepared is key to overcoming any nervousness in speaking to an audience.
- DO prepare the classroom. Be sure you have adequate comfortable seating. Check audiovisual equipment or PA system beforehand to be sure all is in good working order.
- DO coordinate with the facility operators to be sure the teaching facility is available on the dates planned.
- DO communicate, prior to the class, with assisting instructors, to assign or clarify their part of the instruction.
- DO greet the students as they arrive.
- DO present yourself as a clean, well-groomed, take-charge instructor.
- DO speak clearly with sufficient volume to be heard.
- DO have sufficient class materials available, i.e., student manuals, pencils, tests, etc.
- DO make eye contact with your students.
- DO introduce the staff and guests and make announcements regarding facilities, breaks, and schedule.
- DO begin and end the class sessions on time.
- DO acknowledge students who ask questions.
- DO respond positively to the students even if incorrect answers are given.
- DO teach the lesson exactly as designed by your state or province.
- DO recognize the reading and comprehension levels of the students. Your instruction may have to be somewhat flexible to accommodate slower students.
- DO wear something that identifies the instructor(s).

A nametag, instructor vest, shirt, or patch will identify the teaching staff.

- DO use humor when or where appropriate.
- DO smile!
- DO give clear, simple instructions regarding testing.
- DO thank the students for their attention and participation.
- DO file class reports with proper agency administrators in a timely manner.
- DO thank the instructors who assisted with the class.
- DO thank facility operators or class sponsors.
- DO evaluate the student's response to testing. What areas of instruction require more or less emphasis?
- DO evaluate yourself. Can you identify areas where you need to improve?

25 Don'ts for Hunter Education Instructors

- DON'T assume anything. Proper planning prevents poor performance.
- DON'T take the teaching of the hunter education course lightly. You have a very serious responsibility to the students.
- DON'T assume that every student wants to be there. You must involve and challenge every student and keep his or her attention.
- DON'T allow students to sleep, put their heads down, read unnecessary materials, or do anything that indicates they aren't paying attention.
- DON'T answer your own questions!
- DON'T ever use profanity in a teaching situation!
- DON'T ever criticize a student.
- DON'T ever touch a student without their permission.

- X DON'T** pass around training aids to students while teaching. They won't hear anything you say while they examine the object.
- X DON'T** use training aids too small to see from the back of the classroom.
- X DON'T** use language over the heads of the youngest students.
- X DON'T** teach if you have bad breath, body odor, or other personal habits that might divert students' attention.
- X DON'T** always assume all your instructors will show up to teach. Be prepared to teach all material if they don't.
- X DON'T** use visual aid items (videos, slides, etc.) if all students can't see them clearly.
- X DON'T** allow other instructors to interrupt you without being recognized to speak.
- X DON'T** teach stuck behind a lectern. Move around, eyes will follow movement.
- X DON'T** speak in a monotone voice. You'll put the students to sleep quickly.
- X DON'T** voluntarily contribute technical material that will likely be beyond the understanding of your students. Teach the curriculum.
- X DON'T** let one student monopolize all the questions or all the answers.
- X DON'T** let students waste valuable teaching time on "What if" questions or personal stories.
- X DON'T** waste the students' time with long personal stories irrelevant to teaching topic.
- X DON'T** allow students to handle firearms in the classroom without direct instructor supervision.
- X DON'T** ridicule any student who fails to pass the course.
- X DON'T** allow an adult or other student to publicly berate a student who fails the course.
- X DON'T** feel sorry and pass a failing student anyway. Your safety, my safety, and the public's safety are at stake! +