



2026–27 Illinois Hunting & Trapping Season Cheat Sheet

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■ Deer & fall turkey

SEASON	DATES (INCLUSIVE)	NOTES
Archery deer	Oct 1–Nov 19, Nov 23–Dec 2, Dec 7, 2026–Jan 17, 2027	Firearm-deer counties + Kane W of Rt 47. Closed during firearm deer.
Archery deer (Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane E of Rt 47)	Oct 1, 2026–Jan 17, 2027	Open straight through
Youth firearm deer	Oct 10–12, 2026	Youth permit
Firearm deer	Nov 20–22 & Dec 3–6, 2026	All counties except Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane E of Rt 47
Muzzleloader-only deer	Dec 11–13, 2026	ML permits also valid Dec 3–6 with muzzleloading rifle
Late winter antlerless & special CWD	Dec 31, 2026–Jan 3, 2027 & Jan 15–17, 2027	Open counties only – IDNR posts the list
Fall turkey (shotgun)	Oct 24–Nov 1, 2026	Open counties only (see IDNR map). 1 either-sex bird/permit
Fall turkey (archery)	Oct 1, 2026–Jan 17, 2027	Closed during firearm deer in firearm counties

Deer hours: ½ hr before sunrise to ½ hr after sunset. Statewide antlered limit: 2 per year across youth, archery, muzzleloader and firearm seasons (except special CWD).

■ Upland & small game

SPECIES	DATES (INCLUSIVE)	DAILY / POSS.	NOTES
Pheasant (roosters only)	N: Nov 7, 2026–Jan 8, 2027 S: Nov 7, 2026–Jan 15, 2027	2 / 6	Sunrise–sunset
Quail (bobwhite)	Same as pheasant	8 / 20	Sunrise–sunset
Hungarian partridge	Same as pheasant	2 / 6	
Rabbit (cottontail, swamp)	Nov 7, 2026–Feb 15, 2027	4 / 10	
Squirrel (gray, fox)	Aug 1, 2026–Feb 15, 2027	5 / 10	Closed Nov 20–22 & Dec 3–6 in firearm-deer counties
Dove (mourning, white-winged)	Sep 1–Nov 14 & Dec 26, 2026–Jan 9, 2027	15 / 45	HIP required
Woodcock	Oct 17–Nov 30, 2026	3 / 9	HIP required
Crow	Oct 28, 2026–Feb 28, 2027	No limit	

Upland zones: North/South split along U.S. 36 (Indiana line to Springfield), IL 29 (Springfield to Pekin) and IL 9 (Pekin to Dallas City), then due west to the Mississippi. **Will County is in the North upland zone.**



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Source: IDNR 2026–2027 Illinois Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations and Quick Reference Card (dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/hunttrapdigest.html), checked Oct 26, 2026. This is a summary, not a legal document. **Verify at IDNR before you go** — dates, open counties and rules can change.

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■ Waterfowl by zone (2026–27)

SPECIES	NORTH	CENTRAL	SOUTH	DAILY / POSS.
Ducks	Oct 24–25 & Oct 31–Dec 27	Oct 31–Dec 13 & Dec 19–Jan 3	Nov 14–Dec 6 & Dec 19–Jan 24	6 / 18
Canada geese	Oct 24–25 & Oct 31–Jan 26	Oct 31–Dec 13 & Dec 19–Jan 31	Nov 14–Jan 31	3 / 9
Light geese (snow/Ross's)	Same as Canada geese	Same as Canada geese	Same as Canada geese	20 / no limit
White-fronted geese	Oct 31–Jan 26	Oct 31–Dec 13 & Dec 19–Jan 31	Nov 14–Jan 31	2 / 6
Light goose conservation order	Jan 27–Apr 30, 2027	Feb 1–Apr 30, 2027	Feb 1–Apr 30, 2027	No limit
Youth waterfowl days	Oct 17–18	Oct 24–25	Nov 7 & Jan 30, 2027	Same as regular

Hours: ½ hr before sunrise to sunset. Dates run into 2027 where they cross New Year's. Duck daily limit of 6 may include no more than: 4 mallards (2 hens), 3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 3 pintails, 1 mottled duck; scaup 1/day for the first 15 days in each zone, then 2. Mergansers 5/day (2 hooded) and coots 15/day don't count toward ducks. Early seasons already closed: teal Sep 5–13, early Canada goose Sep 1–15.

Zones changed for 2026–2030: the old South Central and South zones are now one **South** zone. There is no South Central zone this year. **Will County straddles two lines.** Ducks: the North/Central line runs along Peotone-Beecher Rd, IL 50, Wilmington-Peotone Rd, IL 53, New River Rd and I-55 — north of it is North, south of it is Central. Geese: the North/Central line is **I-80** — north of I-80 is North, south of I-80 is Central. Check the exact line for your blind.

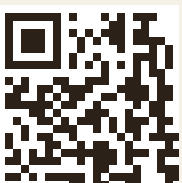
■ Furbearer trapping & hunting

SPECIES	TRAPPING	HUNTING
Raccoon, opossum, mink, muskrat, weasel, striped skunk	Nov 10, 2026–Feb 15, 2027 · no limit	Raccoon & opossum: Nov 10–Feb 15*. Skunk: year-round*
Red fox	Nov 10, 2026–Feb 15, 2027	Nov 10, 2026–Feb 15, 2027*
Coyote	Nov 10, 2026–Feb 15, 2027	Year-round* (unfilled firearm deer permit holders may take coyotes during firearm deer with deer-legal guns)
Beaver	Nov 10, 2026–Mar 31, 2027 · no limit	—
River otter	Nov 10, 2026–Mar 31, 2027 · 5/season, registration permit within 48 hrs	—
Gray fox	CLOSED	CLOSED

*Furbearer and coyote hunting is closed during firearm deer (Nov 20–22 & Dec 3–6) in counties open to firearm deer. Badger trapping Nov 10–Feb 15 (North 2, South 1 per season). Bobcat by permit only, open zone only. Trapping needs a trapping license; see the digest for trap-size, checking and ID rules.

■ Youth hunts

Youth deer: Oct 10–12, 2026. Youth waterfowl: North Oct 17–18; Central Oct 24–25; South Nov 7, 2026 & Jan 30, 2027 (adult 18+ must accompany). Spring youth turkey: Mar 27–28 & Apr 3–4, 2027. Site-specific youth upland, dove and deer hunts vary by IDNR site — check huntillinois.org.



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