

Safety Equipment



What Safety Equipment Do I Need?

Safety should always be your top priority when waterfowl hunting. This Fish & Game resource outlines the essential safety equipment you need before heading into the field. Whether you're hunting from a maimai, boat, or in waders, having the right safety gear can prevent accidents and potentially save lives. Remember, no hunting opportunity is worth compromising safety. This guide is part of our complete resource collection for waterfowl hunters - visit fishandgame.org.nz for more information.

Essential Safety Items

There are four important items of safety equipment:

1. Ear Protection

Hearing protection is essential when hunting waterfowl, as repeated shotgun blasts can lead to permanent hearing damage. Use earplugs or earmuffs designed for shooting. Modern electronic earmuffs are very useful as they amplify ambient sounds (the sounds of ducks flying/quacking) while blocking harmful noise from a shotgun.

2. Life Jacket

If you're using a boat or kayak while hunting, a life jacket is non-negotiable, as accidents on the water can happen. Look for a comfortable, low-profile life jacket that won't interfere with shooting or movement. Inflatable life jackets are a great option for waterfowl hunters.

3. First Aid Kit

A small first aid kit with a few of the basics (bandages, antiseptic wipes, pain relievers, waterproof dressings) is worth including in your hunting pack. Pain relief tablets are always good to have on hand. Store the kit in a waterproof container to ensure it stays dry and ready to use.

4. Wading Belt

If you are using waders, you should always wear a wading belt. Should you fall over, the belt creates an air bubble in your waders, enabling you to float and stay safe. This belt can be an ammo belt as well.

Additional Safety Items to Carry

A knife is always a good tool to have on you when hunting. From cutting extra cover, retying decoy strings to processing birds - always have a sharp knife. Also carry some heavy string, some cable ties and most importantly, emergency toilet paper in a plastic bag. A lead is good to have if you are taking a hunting dog, even if well trained.