

# Elk Hunting in Alberta, Canada with Mike's Outfitting

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### 1. Do I have to put in for a draw to get my license?

No, all of our licenses are guaranteed.

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### 2. Do you hunt public or private land? How much land do you have to hunt? Is there much hunting pressure?

We hunt a mix of private and public land but we don't have exclusive permission on any of the private land and most of the public land that we hunt has very few hunters. We have access to hundreds of thousands of acres and we hunt where we have seen the elk earlier in the season and where they have been pushed into because of hunting pressure in other areas

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### 3. What's the country/terrain like? What elevation? Do I need to be in good shape?

The hunting area is a mix of farmland and thick woods with some fairly deep river valleys. It is at low elevation, 3000 ft. You don't have to be in high elevation, mountain elk hunting shape but you still need to have some decent physical fitness, able to walk several miles each day if you want a good chance for success. The better shape you are in the more likely you are to get your elk because you will be able to chase after any bugling bull no matter how deep a river valley he goes into. You also won't be afraid to help pack it out of some deep hole too.

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### 4. How do you hunt them?

We spend most of our hunting time in the woods or walking creek bottoms trying to bugle in the bulls. Sometimes we can also catch them out in the open fields at first or last light.

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### 5. What size of elk do you shoot?

You have an excellent chance to shoot a mature, heavy 5 or 6 point bull scoring up to about 300. There are some big 300+ score bulls in our area but even if you are willing to hold out for one and you can hike good it is still an unlikely goal to complete. Legally you can shoot any bull elk with at least 3 points on one side.

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### 6 What's your success rate?

It has varied quite a bit since 2006 depending on the skill and fitness level of the hunters and how the weather has been. If you are in decent shape and the weather is anywhere near normal there is no reason you would not kill an elk.

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## 7. How do you handle 2 hunters with one guide?

It isn't tough to give a good hunt with 2 hunters to the one guide on a rut elk hunt. When calling for elk you can be set up 100 yds. apart or one hunter could be in ambush watching a field edge. We also usually have several hunters and guides in camp at that time hunting elk and mule deer and the elk hunt often quickly becomes a one on one guided hunt as soon as one elk or even a mule deer gets killed.

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## 8. If we kill one how do we get it out?

Most of the country we hunt is fairly accessible to four wheelers and we can use a chain saw to help us get close so we have had good luck getting our elk out whole or just cut in two. It would be best though if you were willing and able to pack an animal out of a fairly deep river valley. With 2 fit hunters and a guide you could pack an elk out of almost anywhere in a ½ day. There are usually 4 hunters and 2 guides in camp so it can become a big team effort to take the animal out in one trip too. Just don't count on skipping out on the packing part.

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## 9. What caliber of gun do you prefer, bullets?

An elk is the toughest animal we hunt so we do prefer a larger caliber gun but most of all you need to be accurate. A 30-06 with 180 grain bullets is big enough though. **The only bullets we won't allow are ballistic tip bullets**, especially the smaller grain weight ones. In our experience they will blow up in impact and not even enter the chest cavity on an elk.

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## 10. How do you deal with the meat, antlers and cape?

If you don't want the meat it can be donated, at no cost to you, to landowners who let us hunt their land or to needy families. We really appreciate anybody who does this but you certainly don't have to. If you drove up the cheapest way to deal with it is to take the elk home in your vehicle but we have heard of some hunters having trouble getting through the border with spine or brain matter, others have had no trouble at all. Removing the spine would be possible with a saw but that would be up to you to do, we have the saws to do it. Even better though is that we have an excellent butcher who can cut, wrap in paper and freeze your meat. Cost is about \$1 a lb. hanging meat. The average elk is 300 lbs. You could get a whole or half elk done in about 36 hours. You could then load up one or more coolers for your trip home. We have coolers here for a cost of \$30 each. If you are flying the airlines will usually charge for each cooler, about \$100 for a 50 lb. cooler. We take no responsibility though if airlines policy changes or they charge much more than that. It is up to you to figure out before your hunt how much it will cost and what is allowed.

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## 11. What temperatures and weather can I expect? What clothes are best? Do I need blaze orange?

### Gear list?

The normal temperature range for the September elk hunt is about 35 to 70 F. It can be hot and dry or cool and rainy, possibly snowy. Be prepared for both. No blaze orange required, you can wear full camo.

### Gear, clothing list:

- Quiet rain gear, pants and jacket with a hood
- Leather, waterproof, ankle high boots.
- Light gloves
- Extra sweaters, long underwear
- Binoculars, range finder, no spotting scope needed.
- Gun & 2 boxes of bullets
- Camera, if digital, extra battery, charger & memory cards. Sorry, we will not email pictures to you.

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Call Mike to book your next Alberta elk hunting adventure

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