



Utah Elk Application Guide

Nonresident Step-by-Step Application Walkthrough — Bonus Points (LE) + Preference Points (General) | OTC Archery Available

This guide covers everything a nonresident archery elk hunter needs to apply in Utah. Verify all deadlines and fees at the official state agency website before applying — regulations change annually.

HUNTER INFORMATION

Your Name	_____	State Account / Username	_____
Application Year	_____	Points Currently Held	_____
Preferred Unit / Region	_____	Backup Unit / Region	_____

KEY DATES

MILESTONE	TYPICAL WINDOW	YOUR DATE	NOTES
Application Opens	Late March 2026 (approx.)		Set calendar reminder now
Application Deadline	April 23, 2026 at 11:00 PM MST		DO NOT miss this deadline
Draw Results	By May 31, 2026 (email + utahdraws.com)		Check email and state portal
License / Payment Due	After draw results		Pay promptly or forfeit tag
Archery Season Opens	Early–Mid September		Confirm year-specific dates

POINT SYSTEM — HYBRID BONUS POINT + OTC SYSTEM

Utah uses a HYBRID DUAL SYSTEM. **BONUS POINTS:** Used for limited-entry elk, deer, antelope, and once-in-a-lifetime species. Bonus points increase your draw weight in a squared system: $(points + 1)^2 = \text{your entries}$. With 4 points = 25 entries. Points reset to zero when you draw a LE tag. **PREFERENCE POINTS:** Used for general-season deer tags. **OTC OPPORTUNITY:** Utah has one of the best OTC archery programs in the West. General archery any-bull and spike elk tags go on sale July 7, 2026 (unlimited quota). General any-bull rifle tags: 15,000 quota, on sale July 9. General spike rifle: 15,000 quota, on sale July 16. Note: LE elk tag cost increased in 2025 — nonresident now \$1,950. Top LE units produce bulls scoring 350"+ and require 15–20+ years of points to draw. You CANNOT hold more than one limited-entry tag per year.

Strategy tip: The OTC archery tag is Utah's secret weapon for nonresidents — unlimited quota, no draw required, and you can hunt during the September rut. Apply for LE every year to build points while hunting OTC archery in the meantime. For OTC tags, have your license ready and be logged in on July 7 at the on-sale time — these have sold out in under 1 day in recent years.

COST SUMMARY



ITEM	COST (APPROX.)	PAID?	DATE PAID
Hunting License	~\$144 (nonresident basic hunting license)		
Elk Tag / Permit	~\$1,950 (limited-entry bull) ~\$660 (general season)		
Application Fee	~\$10 per bonus point application		
Archery Permit (if required)	Varies by state		
Conservation / Habitat Stamp	Varies by state		
TOTAL ESTIMATED	~\$800–\$2,100+ depending on tag type		

APPLICATION STEP-BY-STEP

Step 1: Purchase Required License

Buy a valid Utah nonresident hunting license (~\$144) at wildlife.utah.gov or during the application process. Required before applying.

Step 2: Log In and Apply

Go to wildlife.utah.gov > Licenses & Permits > Big Game Application. Applications open late March 2026.

Step 3: Select Your Species and Hunt Type

Choose Limited Entry Bull Elk for the LE draw, or apply for a bonus point only if you are not ready to hunt. You can apply for multiple species (LE elk, LE deer, LE antelope).

Step 4: Choose Unit and Season

Select your preferred unit and weapon/season combination. First choice: _____ Second choice: _____

Step 5: Review Draw Order

Utah draws in this order: LE deer, LE elk, LE antelope, once-in-a-lifetime species, youth general deer, then general deer. You cannot hold two LE tags in the same year.

Step 6: Submit & Confirm

Submit by April 23, 2026 at 11:00 PM MST. Results by May 31, 2026 via email and utahdraws.com.

Step 7: Watch July Sale Dates for OTC Tags

If you did not draw LE, or want to hunt archery in addition: General archery any-bull on sale July 7. Any-bull rifle on sale July 9. Spike rifle on sale July 16.

UNIT RESEARCH NOTES

Top LE bull units: San Juan, Boulder, Book Cliffs, Paunsaugunt (bucket list — 20+ years). North Slope, Summit, and West Daggett are strong LE options with better odds at lower point levels. OTC any-bull general areas are statewide — research units with strong bull ratios. HAMS units (handgun/archery/muzzleloader/shotgun) have September archery and offer different opportunity — worth researching for lower-pressure hunting.



UNIT / REGION	PUBLIC LAND	TROPHY POTENTIAL	TERRAIN	MY NOTES
North Slope	High	Trophy	High alpine, remote	Top LE unit; 10+ yr wait
Book Cliffs	High	Trophy	Canyon / plateau	Strong bull ratios
San Juan	Very High	Trophy	SE Utah canyon country	20+ yr wait; bucket list
Boulder / Paunsaugunt	Very High	Trophy	Red rock / timber	Max point units
General OTC Archery	High	Moderate–Good	Varies by area	No draw; July 7 on sale

SEASON DATES (CONFIRM ANNUALLY)

LE Archery: August 15–September (varies by unit). General archery any-bull: On sale July 7, 2026 — unlimited quota. General any-bull rifle: July 9 on sale — 15,000 permit cap. General spike rifle: July 16 on sale — 15,000 permit cap. LE any-weapon (rifle) hunts: Early September, mid-October, late October (varies by unit). Late archery LE: December (difficult but excellent odds). Confirm all season dates at wildlife.utah.gov.

STRATEGY NOTES & REMINDERS

Utah's OTC archery program is one of the best in the West — do not overlook it. While you build LE points over time, the archery any-bull tag lets you hunt rut-active bulls every September on quality public land. Log in early on July 7 to secure your OTC archery tag — it goes fast. For LE applications, nonresidents can apply for all LE species — do not skip antelope and deer. Utah is a long-term investment for trophy bulls, but the OTC system makes it huntable annually. Apply at wildlife.utah.gov.

MY NOTES

Always verify current regulations at the official state agency website. Use GoHunt and OnX Hunt for research. More at huntinggrowth.com