



Be BearWise AT HOME

Six At-Home BearWise Basics



Never Feed or Approach Bears

Intentionally feeding bears or allowing them to find anything that smells or tastes like food teaches bears to approach homes and people looking for more. Bears will defend themselves if a person gets too close, so don't risk your safety and theirs!



Secure Food, Garbage and Recycling

Food and food odors attract bears, so don't reward them with easily available food, liquids or garbage.



Remove Bird Feeders When Bears Are Active

Birdseed and grains have lots of calories, so they're very attractive to bears. Removing feeders is the best way to avoid creating conflicts with bears.



Never Leave Pet Food Outdoors

Feed pets indoors when possible. If you must feed pets outside, feed in single portions and remove food and bowls after feeding. Store pet food where bears can't see or smell it.



Clean & Store Grills

Clean grills after each use and make sure that all grease, fat and food particles are removed. Store clean grills and smokers in a secure area that keeps bears out.



Alert Neighbors to Bear Activity

See bears in the area or evidence of bear activity? Tell your neighbors and share information on how to avoid bear conflicts. Bears have adapted to living near people; now it's up to us to adapt to living near bears.

Black bear is a species; common colors include black, brown and cinnamon.



Learn More:
BearWise.org

Helping People Live Responsibly with Black Bears





PHOTO: PAT GAINES

Be BearWise OUTDOORS

Six Outdoor BearWise Basics



Stay Alert & Stay Together

Pay attention to your surroundings and stay together. Walk, hike, jog, or cycle with others when possible. Keep kids within sight and close by. Leave earbuds at home and make noise periodically so bears can avoid you.



Leave No Trash or Food Scraps

Double bag your food when hiking and pack out all food and trash. Don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill. *Leaving scraps, wrappers, or even "harmless" items like apple cores teaches bears to associate trails and campsites with food.*



Keep Dogs Leashed

Letting dogs chase or bark at bears is asking for trouble; don't force a bear to defend itself. Keep your dogs leashed at all times or leave them at home.



Camp Safely

Set up camp away from dense cover and natural food sources. Cook as far from your tent as possible. **Do not store food, trash, clothes worn when cooking, or toiletries in your tent.** Store in approved bear-resistant containers OR out of sight in locked vehicle OR suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 10 feet from any part of the tree. *Local regulations vary.*



Know What To Do If You See a Black Bear

If you see a bear before it notices you, don't approach. Stand still, enjoy, then quietly move away. **If a bear sees you**, back away slowly. Never run; running may trigger a chase response. **If a bear approaches**, hold your ground, wave your arms and yell "Hey Bear" until it leaves. Stay with your group. **If it keeps approaching**, use bear spray. **If a black bear makes contact with you**, do NOT play dead; fight back aggressively.



Carry Bear Spray & Know How To Use It

Bear spray is proven to be the easiest and most effective way to deter a bear that threatens you. It doesn't work like bug repellent, so **never** spray your tent, campsite or belongings.

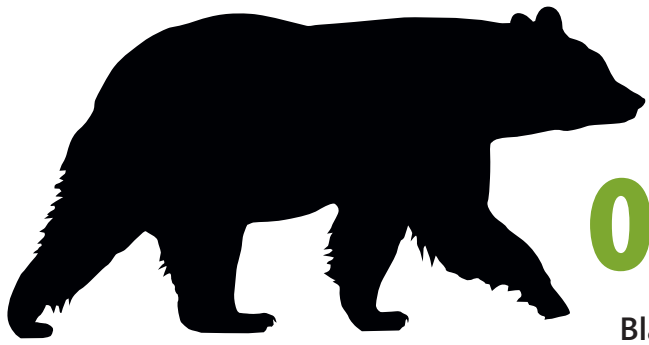
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BearWise Outdoor Safety Tips

Black bears are seldom aggressive and rarely injure people. Follow these BearWise tips to avoid encounters.

Camping



- Keep a clean camp.
- Don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill.
- **Do not store food, trash, clothes worn when cooking, or toiletries in your tent.** Store in approved bear-resistant containers OR out of sight in a locked vehicle OR suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 10 feet from any part of the tree. *Local storage regulations vary.*
- Cook downwind and as far from your tent as possible.
- Set up backcountry camps away from dense cover and natural food sources.



Precautions for Cycling, Jogging

If you travel quickly or quietly, you can easily surprise bears. **Stay alert;** music and phones are distracting. Be aware of your surroundings; make noise periodically.

Hiking, Walking



- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Try not to hike alone.
- Keep kids within sight and close by.
- Make noise periodically so bears in the area can avoid you.
- **Keep dogs leashed at all times, or leave them at home.** Don't force a bear to defend itself.
- Double bag your food and pack out all food and trash. *Leaving scraps, wrappers or "harmless" items like apple cores teaches bears to associate trails and campsites with food.*

Fishing, Hunting



- You are more likely to encounter bears when moving quietly and traveling early and late day when bears are most active.
- Follow tips for hiking and camping safely.
- Know that carcasses, gut piles, and bait may attract bears.
- If a bear beats you to your catch or kill, don't try to reclaim it; leave the area when it is safe to do so.



Carry Bear Spray & Know How To Use It

Keep bear spray accessible; it's proven to be the easiest and most effective way to deter a bear that threatens you. It doesn't work like bug repellent, so **never** spray your tent, campsite or belongings.

If You Encounter a Black Bear

- **If you see a bear before it notices you,** don't approach. Stand still, enjoy the moment, then quietly move away.
- **If a bear sees you,** back away slowly. Never run; running may trigger a chase response.
- **If a bear approaches,** hold your ground, wave your arms and yell "Hey Bear" until it leaves. Always stay with your group. **If the bear keeps approaching,** use bear spray.
- **If a black bear makes contact with you,** do NOT play dead; fight back aggressively.



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BearWise Vacation Tips



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You are in bear country, so there's a good chance you'll see black bears here, even if you never go into the woods.

Don't Feed the Bears



- Don't leave food, trash or pet food outdoors when no one is around. A few seconds is all it takes for a hungry bear to swipe it.
- Feeding bears or using food to encourage bears to approach you is often illegal and always dangerous.
- Don't throw scraps or leftovers out the car window or into the woods behind your vacation rental.
- If trash container or dumpster is full, don't pile trash outside; take it with you when you leave.

Bear Viewing Guidelines



- Stay in your vehicle; even bears that seem comfortable around people are still wild animals.
- Never approach bears or entice them to approach you.
- Enjoy bears from a safe distance. Stay at least 50 yards or 10 car lengths away.
- Don't block the road to view bears. If permitted, pull over and take photos from the safety of your vehicle.

If you want to see bears, early morning and early evening are good times for viewing and photography.

Driving in Bear Country



- Stay alert, stick to the speed limit and scan the roadsides. If a bear crosses the road, watch for cubs before you drive on.
- Be especially alert at dawn and dusk when bears are most active; black bears are fast and hard to see.
- If you hit a bear, don't try to help it. Call 911 or report to authorities as soon as you can.

Wildlife collisions are not always covered by insurance.



Dogs and bears don't mix. **Keep your dog on a leash at all times when outdoors.** Letting your dog approach or lunge at a bear puts you and your pet in danger.

Discourage Break-Ins



- Lock vehicles; don't leave windows open even a crack. Remove anything with an odor (food, drinks, trash, pet food, scented products).
- Keep exterior doors closed, even when you're there.
- Don't stash food, beverages, trash or recycling on porches/patios/decks.

If You See a Black Bear



- If a bear comes around your place, try to scare it away by making lots of noise yelling or banging pots and pans together from a safe distance.
- If you see a bear near a dumpster or in a building, don't approach or corner it. Give the bear an escape route.

In the Woods

- **Carry bear spray and know how to use it.**
- **If you see a bear before it notices you**, don't approach. Stand still, enjoy, then quietly move away.
- **If a bear sees you**, back away slowly. Never run; running may trigger a chase response.
- **If a bear approaches**, hold your ground, wave your arms and yell "Hey Bear" until it leaves. Always stay with your group. **If it keeps approaching**, use bear spray.
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