



# BearWise Outdoor Safety Tips

## Hiking



- 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.
- Double bag your food and pack out all food and trash.

*Leaving scraps, wrappers or even "harmless" items like apple cores teaches bears to associate trails and campsites with food.*

## 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.
- In the backcountry, set up camp away from dense cover and natural food sources.
- Cook at least 100 yards from your tent, downwind if possible.

## Hunting & Fishing



Hunters and anglers are more likely to encounter bears because they move quietly and travel during early morning and late evening hours 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 Bear

Black bears are seldom aggressive and attacks are rare.



- **If you see a bear before it notices you:** stand still, don't approach and enjoy the moment. Then move away quietly in the opposite direction.
- **If you encounter a bear that's aware of you:** don't run; running may trigger a chase response. Back away slowly in the opposite direction and wait for the bear to leave.

Visit [BearWise.org/bear-safety-tips/](http://BearWise.org/bear-safety-tips/) to learn what to do if a black bear approaches, charges or follows you.

## Precautions for Dog Walkers, Cyclists and Joggers



- **Keep dogs leashed.** Letting dogs chase or bark at bears is asking for trouble; don't force a bear to defend itself.
- **Leave earbuds at home.** Cyclists and joggers traveling quickly and quietly can easily surprise bears. Be aware of your surroundings and make noise periodically.



Learn More:  
**BearWise.org**



Helping People  
Live Responsibly with Black Bears