



BearWise

Visitor & Outdoor Safety Tips

You are in bear country! There is a good chance you will see black bears even if you do not go into the woods.

HIKERS/BIKERS/JOGGERS

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Try not to hike alone.
- Keep children close and in sight.
- Make loud noises periodically so bears avoid you.
- Keep dogs leashed at all times, or leave pets at home. Letting dogs chase or bark at bears is asking for trouble—don't force a bear to defend itself.
- Double bag your food and pack out all food and trash. When you leave food scraps, you are guilty of encouraging bears to frequent trails, campsites, and cabins with food.
- Don't litter!

CAMPsites & CABINS

- Keep a clean campsite.
- Don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill.
- Don't store food, trash, clothes worn when cooking, or toiletries in your tent.
- Store food in approved bear resistant containers—suspended at least 10 ft (3 meters) above ground and 10 ft from any part of the tree.
- Don't store/stash food, trash, beverages, or recycling on porches/patios/decks.
- Never leave food, scraps, or beverage wastes on the ground.
- When checking in, ask how to handle trash disposal.

BLACK BEAR VIEWING

- Stay in your vehicle—*bears are wild animals*—even when they seem to be comfortable around people.
- Never approach bears or entice bears or any wildlife to approach you.
- Stay a safe distance of at least 50 yds (45 meters), or ten car lengths away.
- Don't block the road to view bears or wildlife. If permitted, pull over to take photos from the safety of your vehicle.
- Bears are most active during morning and evening hours.

IF YOU SEE A BLACK BEAR

- in the woods

- Black bears are seldom aggressive—attacks are rare.
- If you see a bear before it sees you—stand still!
- Don't approach—enjoy the moment as you move away quietly in the opposite direction.

- around your campsite or cabin

- If a bear comes around your place, try to scare it by making lots of noise by yelling and banging pots and pans together from a safe place.
- If you see a bear near a dumpster or in a building, don't approach or corner it! Give the bear plenty of space to escape.
- If a bear is aware of you—don't run! Running may trigger a chase response. Slowly back away in the opposite direction and wait for the bear to leave.
- Carry bear spray and know how and when to use it.



WEST VIRGINIA
state parks

DON'T FEED BEARS!

No person shall attempt to feed any animal in a state park, forest, ... §58CSR 31

**Feeding wildlife is illegal.
Violators will be cited.**



Helping People
Live Responsibly with Black Bears

Learn more about what to do if a black bear approaches, charges, or follows you!

BearWise.org/bear-safety-tips/

BearWise®—Created and Supported by State Wildlife Agencies and Bear Biologists