

Hike Bear Smart

- ◆ Carry bear spray and a safety whistle.
- ◆ Hike in groups; don't let kids roam ahead or lag behind.
- ◆ Stay on trails and stay alert.
- ◆ Stop, look and listen every 15 minutes or so.
- ◆ Avoid areas where bears might be foraging, like berry patches.
- ◆ Be on the lookout for fresh tracks, bear scat and other signs that bears might be around.
- ◆ Unplug and enjoy the sounds of nature. You won't hear a bear coming if you're wearing earbuds.
- ◆ Stay a safe distance from wildlife. No sneaking up for selfies.
- ◆ Clap your hands and make noise from time to time; don't rely on bear bells, they're annoying and not effective. In some areas they may actually attract bears.
- ◆ Avoid hiking at dawn, dusk and at night when wildlife is active and often uses people trails.
- ◆ Store lunch, leftovers and trash in freezer plastic bags. Leaving food or packaging near trails teaches wildlife to associate trails with treats.



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Dogs & Bears Don't Mix

Dogs were a factor in more than half of 92 cases of bears attacking people between 2010 and 2014. Most dogs were off leash, and most likely surprised the bear and then led it back to their owner. One person was killed and many were injured, some seriously; 25 dogs were injured or killed.

If you love your dog, keep it on a short leash at all times.



Bears' Home Turf

When you go outside to play, you're venturing onto the home turf of bears and other wildlife. It's up to you to learn how to do so without causing problems for people and wildlife.

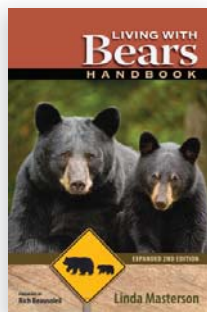
Bears are not out to get you; in most cases, bears will do their very best to get away from you before you even realize they're around. Discover more ways to avoid attracting bears and what to do if you encounter one by reading *Living With Bears Handbook*.

COURTESY OF
WDFW Wildlife Program

call 1-360-902-2200
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Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE



Find a wealth of helpful info in the
Living With Bears Handbook
by Linda Masterson

LivingWithBears.com

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PLAYING in Bear Country

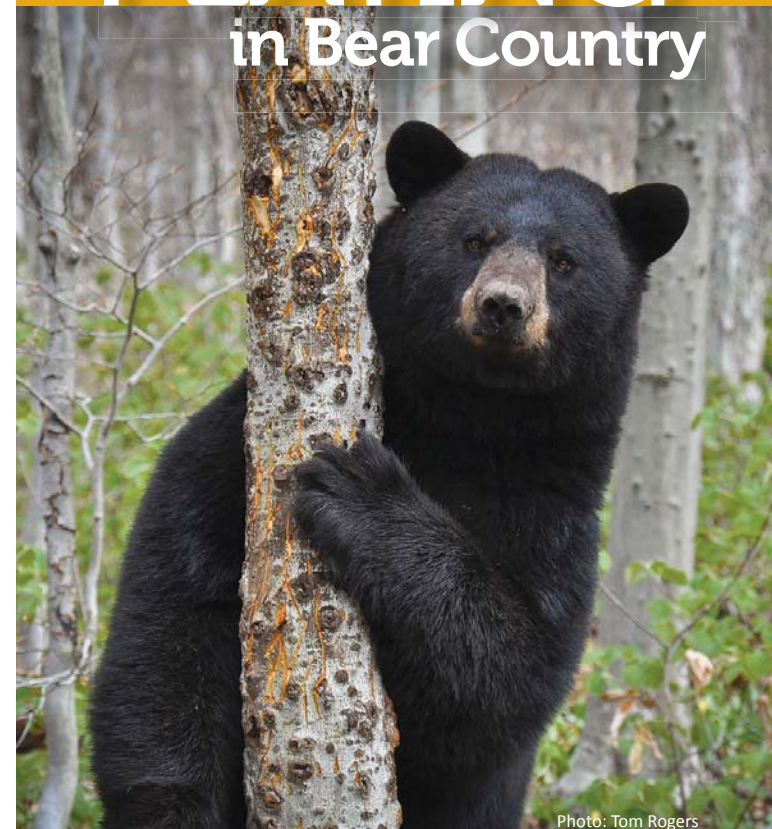


Photo: Tom Rogers



Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Bear Smart Tips for
Hikers and Campers,
and What To Do
If You Encounter
a Black Bear

Encounters on the Trail

Bears usually detect people and do their best to avoid us. But if you encounter a black bear, remember these tips:

- ◆ Don't run; running often triggers a chase response, and you can't outrun a bear.
- ◆ If the bear hasn't seen you, calmly leave the area, making enough noise to alert the bear.
- ◆ If the bear has seen you and is curious about you, don't act aggressively. Show the bear you mean it no harm. Talk softly and calmly and back away slowly while facing the bear.
- ◆ Learn how to interpret bear postures, behavior and vocalizations. Most of what we think is aggressive is actually curious or defensive behavior. But if we respond aggressively, bears may do likewise.
- ◆ If the bear approaches you, stand your ground but don't act aggressively. Get your bear spray ready just in case.
- ◆ Never fall to the ground and play dead unless you are absolutely positive you are dealing with a bear defending cubs or a food source.



Photo: Sylvia Dolson

Encounters in Camp

Bears can be attracted to campgrounds by all the good smells wafting their way. And once a bear learns people in tents and campers have lots of food, it may start exploring all the camping areas it comes across.

If a bear comes into a developed campground, do your best to chase it off without cornering it or putting yourself or other campers in danger. Yell, bang on pots and pans; blaring whistles, car horns and air horns work well too. This is your chance to teach the bear a life-saving lesson.

After the bear leaves, see if you can figure out what attracted it. Food? Garbage? Dirty grills or picnic tables?

If you hear a bear outside your tent, start talking in a firm, monotone voice so it knows there's a person inside the big mushroom.

If a bear enters your tent, don't play dead. Yell and fight back with anything handy.

If the unlikely event you do have an aggressive encounter with a bear, move to another camp and report it immediately.

*Bears are individuals; these general guidelines are just an overview. For an in-depth look at understanding black bear behavior and responding appropriately to all types of bear encounters, see the section "Crossing Paths with Bears" in the **Living with Bears Handbook**.*



Photo: Great Smoky Mountains National Park

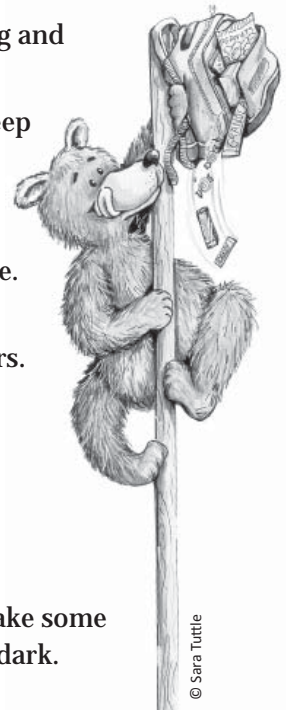
When we camp, we often pitch our tents or park our campers in a bear's backyard. Then we bring things that attract bears, including food and scented toiletries, and leave trash. Losing your food to a bear is no fun for you and teaches bears a potentially deadly lesson.

Keep a Clean Camp

- ◆ Store food out of sight and smell, in a bear-proof container or food locker, properly suspended from a tree or stored in a sturdy container and locked out of sight in your vehicle.
- ◆ Store scented toiletries with your food, or even better, avoid using scented products.
- ◆ Sleep away from cooking and food storage areas.
- ◆ If you're in a camper, keep food in cupboards or closed containers inside and don't leave any food or trash outside.
- ◆ Use and latch bear-resistant trash containers.
- ◆ Don't burn food or packaging in grills or fire pits.
- ◆ Clean picnic tables after every use.
- ◆ Take a flashlight and make some noise if you're out after dark.



Photo: Warren Beilenberg



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Read chapters 16 – 23 for more helpful tips.