

BearWise Vacation Tips

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.
- **If a black bear makes contact with you**, do NOT play dead; fight back aggressively.

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



Washington
Department of
**FISH &
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Learn More:
BearWise.org

Helping People Live Responsibly with Black Bears

