

HUNTING IN BEAR COUNTRY



Sudden unexpected encounter

When hunting in bear country you are at risk of surprising a bear, cougar, moose, or even a rattlesnake

Safety Tips from the Be Bear Aware Campaign

Carry Bear Spray readily accessible on your waist, hip, shoulder, or chest.

When Buying Bear Spray look for 7+ seconds of spray duration and distance of 30+ feet.

Head out to Hunt in a Group and stay close to at least one person.

Look, Listen & Smell for bear signs such as tracks, scat, claw marks on trees, rocks/logs rolled over, and foul, pungent odors from carrion or a bear that has rolled in it.

Be Extra Careful when travelling near or through thick brush, around blind corners or cresting a hill, on windy days, and when near noisy streams and rivers.

Be Aware that the act of hunting puts you at risk; and elk bugling, game calls, and cover scents may attract bears.

Once you Harvest an Animal look for ways a bear can approach the carcass. Return cautiously with your group, bear spray ready.

Wear Gloves and Apron when field dressing game to minimize odors on clothing. Wash hands thoroughly and change clothes when done.

Separate the Carcass from Entrails and remove the carcass from the area as soon as possible. Avoid areas by campsites, trails, etc.

Hang Carcass and any blood-stained items where you can see it from a distance. That way you can observe it as you return.

Consider Using a Portable Electric Fence. It can be used to protect your cache, or, to protect your campsite while sleeping or away.

If You Encounter a Bear, stop and quickly assess the situation as you ready your bear spray. Follow bear encounter protocol.



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How to Avoid Encounters

Proper Food Storage

Bear Identification

What to do in an Encounter

How to Deploy Bear Spray

BE BEAR AWARE CAMPAIGN

Bear Spray

The Be Bear Aware Campaign promotes the carrying and proper use of a quality bear spray when hiking, biking, fishing, camping, and hunting in bear country. We recommend you purchase bear spray that has a spray duration of at least 7+ seconds and has a spray distance of at least 30+ feet. Meeting or exceeding this standard gives you extra protection for more than one charge, multiple bears, wind, rain, cold, erratic spraying, or accidentally spraying over top of the bear.

Remember, the moment you take down an animal you have just set a bear attractant.

Go in expecting a bear to be on the carcass or bedded nearby when approaching the carcass. Approach carefully with your bear spray ready. Have members of your group be on the lookout while you field dress your game.

Do not attempt to chase off a bear that has claimed your harvest.



What If You Encounter a Bear?



If you see, or suspect, a bear is in the area, stop and get your bear spray ready for quick use.

If the bear is in the distance and **does not** notice you, take a route that detours around the bear and remain cautious.

If the bear is in the distance and **does** notice you, stop, talk in a non-threatening, monotone voice and assess the situation.

Can you back away and take a detour? Is the bear approaching you? Does it appear agitated, aggressive, or ready to charge?



What If You are Charged by a Bear?

When the charging bear is about **60 feet away**, spray slightly downward to a point about 30 feet in front of you. The bear spray will come out with a whooshing sound and reddish-orange coloring, this sometimes is enough to deter the bear from its charge.

When the bear charges from **30 feet**, spontaneously spray downward toward the front of the bear. The bear spray will make a cone-shaped cloud that expands outward and upward. DO NOT AIM, just spray and keep spraying until the bear diverts its charge.

If the charge is from **15 feet**, spray if you are prepared. If contact is inevitable, drop to the ground and lie flat on your stomach and clasp hands behind your neck. If you can, spray the area both you and the bear are in. **It is never too late to use bear spray.**