

# 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.*



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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

Black bears are seldom aggressive and attacks are rare.

- **Carry bear spray and know how to use it.**
- **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 is 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](https://www.bearwise.org) to learn what to do if a black bear approaches, charges or follows you.

Learn More:  
**BearWise.org**



Helping People  
Live Responsibly with Black Bears