



YOU ARE IN Bear Country

Safety tips for campers, hikers and homeowners Learn to live with bears!

YOU ARE IN
**Bear
country**

Store food safely and
keep campsites clean.



Learn to live with bears!



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Black bears are Utah's largest predators. Thousands of them live in our forests and mountains—often in the same places we like to camp, hike and build our houses. This poses a safety concern for both humans and bears.

If a bear obtains food from a home or campsite—even once—it may become aggressive in future attempts. This almost guarantees the bear will have to be destroyed. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to protect both you and the bear.

Bears do *what* in the woods?

CAMP AND HIKE RESPONSIBLY

Sloppy campers and hikers don't just endanger themselves, but also future visitors. Bears have amazing memories; they will return to a site repeatedly if they ate there at some point in the past.

When in bear country, you should:

Maintain a bear-safe campsite

- Store food, drinks and scented items securely (in your vehicle, a bear-safe container or tree—never in your tent)
- Dispose of trash in bear-proof dumpsters, if available
- Wipe down picnic tables
- Burn off stoves or grills
- Pitch tents away from trails in the backcountry
- Always sleep inside your tent
- Never approach or feed a bear
- Report bear sightings to your campground host

Take precautions while hiking

- Stay alert at dawn and dusk, when bears are more active
- Go with a group, if possible
- Make noise as you travel through dense cover
- Stay away from animal carcasses
- Store food, trash and scented items (such as sunscreen) in airtight plastic bags
- Keep kids in the center of the group

Bears search for food—wherever they can.

Report a nuisance bear

If you see a bear in a residential area or you encounter an aggressive bear, please contact the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources immediately. We will notify a conservation officer or transfer you directly to law enforcement personnel. If your encounter or sighting occurs after business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m.) or over the weekend, please call the police. They will contact a conservation officer to handle the situation.

Cedar City, (435) 865-6100
Ogden, (801) 476-2740
Price, (435) 613-3700
Salt Lake City, (801) 538-4700
Springville, (801) 491-5678
Vernal, (435) 781-9453

wildawareutah.org



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PROTECT YOUR HOME AND PROPERTY

If a bear enters your yard, give it an obvious escape route—do not corner it. Black bears can quickly inflict thousands of dollars in property damage. You can reduce or eliminate visits from bears if you:

Dispose of trash carefully

- Store trash in a secure location or bear-safe container
- Put your trash out for pick-up in the morning, not the previous night
- Clean your trash container regularly

Use deterrents

- Put up electric fencing
- Place bear unwelcome mats (wood planks with nails or screws protruding) in front of doors or windows
- Install motion-activated lights or noisemakers
- Get one or more dogs
- Turn on garden hoses or sprinklers
- Spray the bear with bear spray

Black bears usually avoid contact with people, but encounters in Utah's woods and mountains are not uncommon.

IF YOU ENCOUNTER A BEAR

- **Stand your ground.** Never back up, lie down or play dead. Stay calm and give the bear a chance to leave. Prepare to use your bear spray or another deterrent.
- **Don't run away or climb a tree.** Black bears are excellent climbers and can run up to 35 miles per hour—you cannot out climb or outrun them.
- **Know bear behavior.** If a bear stands up, grunts, woofs, moans or makes other sounds, it's not being aggressive. These are ways a bear gets a better look or smell and expresses its interest.

IF A BEAR ATTACKS:

- **Use bear spray.** Then leave the area. Studies have shown bear spray to be 92 percent successful in deterring bear attacks.
- **Shoot to kill.** If you use a firearm, never fire a warning shot—aim for the center of the bear and keep firing until it is dead. Notify the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources immediately.
- **Always fight back.** And never give up! People have successfully defended themselves with almost anything: rocks, sticks, backpacks, water bottles and even their hands and feet.

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DID YOU KNOW?

- Black bears aren't always black—their color can vary from white to black to every shade of brown.
- Meat makes up less than 10 percent of a typical black bear's diet, and much of that is scavenged carcasses and insects. The rest of its diet is typically nuts, berries, grasses and other plants.
- Black bears can live 25 years or more in the wild.
- A typical female black bear weighs 120 to 150 pounds, while an average male is 180 to 300 pounds. The largest male on record weighed 880 pounds.