

Bear Safety Guidelines

Below are some general tips for avoiding conflicts with bears and reacting to a possible encounter with a bear. According to Colorado Parks and Wildlife, bear sightings are not uncommon along the Front Range, even in neighborhoods and residential areas. In most cases, bears are simply seeking new habitat and will pass through residential areas without conflict.

If You Meet a Bear, Stay Calm

1. **NEVER RUN.** Running can make a bear chase you.
2. Keep your distance. Back slowly away facing the bear. Avoid direct eye contact.
3. Slowly and calmly leave the area. Talk aloud so the bear will become aware of you.
4. Be extra careful around a female with cubs. Never approach a cub.
5. **NEVER throw food** to distract a bear. This teaches a bear to approach people for food.
6. Fight back if attacked. Black bears have been driven away when people fight with rocks, sticks, binoculars, or even bare hands.
7. **DON'T LITTER!** Please dispose of all litter in bear-proof trash cans when you are in bear habitat. Remove it from the area if trash cans are full. Your consideration could save a bear's life!
8. Report sightings to Police Dispatch – 303.438.6400. Call 911 if it's an emergency.

STAY SAFE!

Bear-Proof Your Backyard

Once a bear finds food, it will come back for more.

1. Bear-proof your trash. Keep garbage indoors until trash pick-up or use a bear-proof garbage can.
2. Feed pets inside and store pet food indoors.
3. Lock up grills. Burn barbecues to clean them immediately after use and store indoors.
4. Only feed birds in winter when they need it and when bears sleep. Bears love bird seed and hummingbird feeders. You can also string feeders high out of reach on a cable. This saves your feeder from bear damage, too!
5. Never store any food outside. Bears will tear open locked freezers.
6. Keep a clean car. Never leave food, trash, pet food, or coolers in your car. Bears will tear open doors and break windshields.
7. Fruit-bearing trees and bushes attract bears. Harvest fruit and vegetables as they ripen. Pick up fallen fruit from the ground. Keep your lawn mowed and free of flowering dandelions and clover.
8. Keep compost clean and enclosed securely.
9. Educate your neighbors. If you follow these steps but neighbors don't, bears may still come to your backyard.

If You See a Bear in your Backyard:

1. Stay calm. If the bear finds no food, it will usually leave.
2. Stay away. Bears may attack when they feel threatened.
3. Warn others. Bring kids and pets indoors. Remind others to keep their distance.
4. Scare that bear. Make sure the bear has a clear escape path. Make lots of noise, turn on lights, bang pots. Don't let the bear become comfortable around your home.
5. Remove attractants. After the bear is gone, make sure your home is bear proof.
6. If the bear is threatening human safety or pets, or is destroying property, call the police at 911.

Colorado has been home to bears since their earliest ancestors crossed the Bering Land Bridge. These large, powerful animals play an important role in the ecosystem. Today, increasing numbers of people routinely live and play in bear country. For many people, seeing a bear is rare and the highlight of an outdoor experience. Learning about bears and being aware of their habits will help you fully appreciate these unique animals and the habitat in which they live. Where bears and people share habitat, following these simple precautions will reduce your risk of conflicts. Learn as much as you can about bears and their habitat. When you are in bear country, know what areas a bear may use during different seasons. Watch for bear signs (tracks and droppings). Be aware of your surroundings, and try to determine if bears may be present. Wildlife scientists estimate that Colorado could hold about 12,000 black bears and zero grizzly bears. Grizzly bears have been extinct in Colorado since about 1970. All bears in the Boulder/Broomfield area are American black bears, even though some may not have black fur. It's not unusual for black bears to possess brown, cinnamon-colored, or even blond fur!