



# How BearWise® Are You?

Bears are curious and will follow their powerful noses to just about anything with an odor (it doesn't have to be a good odor). Bears may also investigate anything they've learned can yield a food reward: garbage, birdseed, pet food, chickens, beehives...you get the idea.

Use our [Be BearWise Checklist](#) to learn what attracts bears and how you can keep bears away from your home and property.

## BBQ Grills, Smokers

- Grill and/or smoker is stored inside when not in use. *If not:*
  - Drip pans and grates are cleaned after every use.
  - Grill/smoker is kept covered.
- Utensils are stored indoors.
- Food is not left unattended when cooking or eating outdoors.



### Be BearWise:

Keep a look-out when you cook-out. Thoroughly clean grills and smokers.



## Trash, Recycling

- All trash containers are cleaned often to reduce odors.
- Recycling is rinsed out and clean.
- Bear-resistant trash containers are always closed and latched.

### *If containers are not bear-resistant:*

- Regular trash cans are stored inside a sturdy locked building or bear-resistant enclosure.
- Garbage is put out the morning of pick up (not the night before).



### Be BearWise:

For certified bear-resistant containers and ways to modify your standard trash cans, visit [BearWise.org](#).

## Vehicles Parked Outside

- No food or anything with a fragrance is left in vehicles, car trunks or truck beds, including pet food, birdseed, food, beverages, scented air fresheners and trash.
- Vehicle windows are kept fully closed and doors locked.



### Be BearWise:

Keep a small trash bag in your vehicle and empty daily. Use an odor-removing spray. Roll up and lock up.

## Feeding Birds

- Birds/hummingbirds are not fed when bears are active in your area.
- Bird food is stored in bear-resistant containers or inside a sturdy, locked building.
- Bird food containers are not stored inside screened porches or sheds where bears will be able to rip screens or break through windows to access the seed.



### Be BearWise:

Download our bulletin: *Attract Birds, Not Bears* for feeder-free options.

## Feeding Pets, Strays

- Food is not put outside for stray animals or wildlife.
- Pets are fed indoors.

### *If you must feed pets outside:*

- Pets are fed in single portions; bowls are removed and feeding area cleaned as soon as pets have eaten.
- Pet food is stored in a sturdy locked building or bear-resistant containers.



### Be BearWise:

Download our bulletin: *Dogs + Bears = Problems* for more safety tips.

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## Fruit Trees, Gardens

- Fallen fruit is picked up daily OR fruit is picked before it ripens.
- Fertilizers are free of blood-meal and bone-meal.
- Electric fencing protects the fruit trees, edible gardens, berry bushes, and ornamental fruit-bearing trees (such as flowering crabapples).



### Be BearWise:

Avoid planting and consider removing ornamental fruit-bearing trees and bushes.

## Compost

- Meat, bones, fish, oil, grease, dairy products, eggshells, garbage or large amounts of fruit are not put in the compost.
- Compost is protected with a bear-resistant enclosure or electric fence.



### Be BearWise:

Follow USDA composting guidelines. Consider using an indoor composter.

## Unexpected Attractants

Be aware that some outdoor features that can't be removed or easily protected can attract bears, such as:

- ◆ Swimming pool, hot tub, pond, stream, water features.
- ◆ Nearby woods, dense bushes, conservation areas.
- ◆ Natural foods (i.e. berries, acorns).



### Be BearWise:

Don't give naturally curious bears **any other reasons** to stick around and look for people-provided 'food'.



If properly installed for your soil conditions and maintained, electric fencing is an effective deterrent for keeping bears out.

## Chickens, Farm Animals

Bear-resistant buildings, enclosures, containers and/or electric fences protect:

- Animals at night
- Newborns, always
- Livestock feed
- Dead animals are not buried near homes, buildings, livestock areas.



### Be BearWise:

Take extra steps to keep your animals safe and their feed away from bears.

Bears may dig up buried carcasses. Consult your county for other options.

## Beehives

- Permanent or portable electric fencing protects the beehives.
- Beehives are at least 3 feet away from the electric fencing.
- Beehives are at least 300 feet from dense bushes, trees or other places bears could hide.



### Be BearWise:

Wisely locate and protect beehives. Spread the word to your fellow beekeepers.

## Homes, Outbuildings

- **Doors and windows** in houses and outbuildings are kept closed and locked, especially at night or when people are not home. Pay special attention to sliding glass doors, inward-swinging doors, French doors and doors with lever handles.
- **Crawl spaces and small openings** under home and other buildings are barricaded before hibernation.
- **Refrigerators and freezers** are kept inside sturdy, locked buildings.
- Attractants are not stored on **upper-level balconies/decks** that bears can reach by climbing stairs, trees or deck posts.
- **Garage doors** are kept closed to keep bears away from stored attractants (i.e. pet food, birdseed, trash, food in fridge/freezer).
- **Coolers** with food/drinks are not stored on the porch, patio, deck or in a vehicle.
- **Pet doors** are locked at night.



### Be BearWise:

Screens don't keep out bears. Visit [BearWise.org](https://www.bearwise.org) to learn how to use bear unwelcome mats and get other practical tips for keeping bears out.

## Bears are smart, quick learners and may be active at any time of day.

Check with your state wildlife agency to find out when bears are most active in your area and what solutions are most effective (state and local regulations may vary).

Thanks for helping to keep people, pets and property safe and bears wild.



Learn More:  
**BearWise.org**

BearWise® CREATED BY BEAR BIOLOGISTS, SUPPORTED BY STATE WILDLIFE AGENCIES



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