



# 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](http://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.

### If you feed birds when bears are active:

- Bird food and feeders are brought in nightly.
- Fallen birdseed and leftover food is picked up daily before dark.



### 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.

*continued >*



## 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



© 2023