



Tips for Avoiding BEAR ENCOUNTERS

Encountering a black bear in Oklahoma is a real possibility, a fact that still surprises many residents and visitors who never realized the animals are commonly seen in some parts of the state. Sightings are possible anywhere in the eastern half of the state and the western tip of the Panhandle.

To Avoid Bear Encounters While...



Hiking or Walking

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Hike in groups and stay together.
- Keep kids within sight.
- Keep dogs on a leash or leave them home.
- Make noise in thick cover.
- Carry bear spray.



With your Dog

- Keep dogs leashed.
- Do not let dogs chase or interact with bears.
- If you encounter a bear while with your dog, back away and leave the area.



Camping

- Keep a clean camp.
- Don't burn food scraps or trash in your fire ring or grill.
- Don't store food, trash, clothes worn when cooking, or toiletries in your tent. Store in approved bear-resistant containers, out of sight in a locked vehicle, or suspended at least 10 feet above the ground and 10 feet from any part of the tree.
- Cook downwind and as far from your tent as possible.





HOW TO SCARE THE BEAR

Desiree Cline

The black bear's natural diet includes nuts, berries, grasses, insects, eggs, honey, small mammals, and carrion. But bears are opportunists and can be attracted by easy food sources provided by people, such as unsecured garbage or pet food left outdoors. May is typically when human-bear conflicts begin. August typically has the most conflicts as soft mast sources diminish and grasses and other vegetation dry out or become unpalatable.

Hazing Rules

- ✓ Never approach, corner or chase the bear.
- ✓ Stand in a safe place (50 yards or more away).
- ✓ Be sure the bear has an escape route, away from you.
- ✓ Stop hazing when the bear runs away or climbs a tree.
- ✓ If the bear approaches, do not run. Use **bear spray**.
- ✓ Be careful. Any hazing is done at your own risk.

Safe Ways to Scare a Bear



Make Noise

Blow a whistle, air horn or car horn. Clap your hands, bang pots, or shout. Your voice is a powerful deterrent!



Assert Dominance

Make eye contact with the bear. Wave your arms above your head to look bigger.



Carry Bear Spray

Keep bear spray accessible. It's the most effective method to deter a threatening bear. It doesn't work like bug repellent, so never spray your tent, campsite or belongings.