



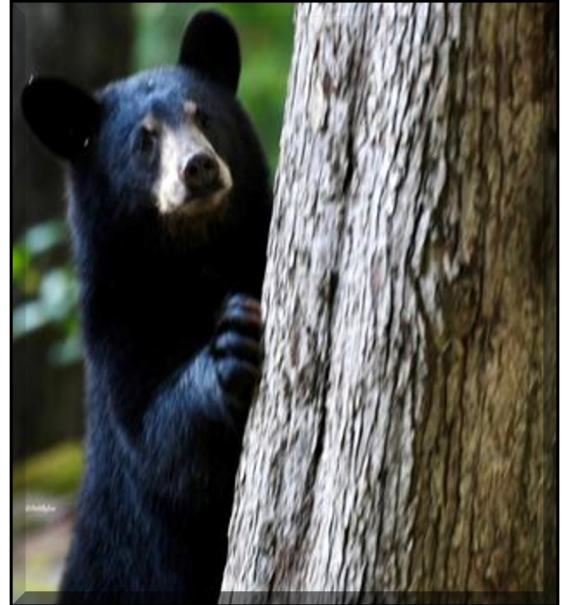
Be Bear Prepared on the BMT

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/visit/know-before-you-go/bears>

Be Bear Aware

Being outdoors means being with wildlife. Many people never encounter a bear. But if you do, here's some simple advice:

- ◆ DO NOT RUN!
- ◆ Remain calm.
- ◆ Group together and pick up small children.
- ◆ Continue to face the bear and back away slowly, talking calmly to identify yourself as a human.
- ◆ If the bear continues to approach, try to scare it away by making yourself as large and imposing as possible by stretching your arms overhead and making loud noises.
- ◆ Carry and know how to use bear spray, which is available at many outdoor retailers and can be used to deter a charging bear.



Food Storage

Bears are always searching for food. Bears are curious, intelligent animals that have great memories. Their eyesight is similar to humans and their sense of smell is seven times more powerful than a bloodhound's, enabling them to smell food from miles away.

Those are the very traits that can sometimes get them – and us – into trouble. Most bears are wary of humans and try to avoid them. However, bears can learn to associate people with food and be tenacious in their pursuit of something to eat. Even if humans are around.

Bears remember and recognize familiar food sources like favorite berry patches, decaying logs swarming with delectable insects and streams and rivers teeming with fish that provide much needed fat and protein.

But bears also remember human packs, campsites, and dwellings offer tempting options. While bears are attracted to any edible food, they also might try to feast on items we might not consider edible:

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ◆ toothpaste | ◆ wrappers |
| ◆ shampoo | ◆ coolers |
| ◆ lotion | ◆ pet food |
| ◆ soap | ◆ bird seed |
| ◆ cooking utensils | ◆ garbage |
| ◆ empty cans | ◆ petroleum products (including fuel) |

Everyone in bear country must do their part to store food and other attractants in bear-resistant containers at all times, and dispose of trash in bear-resistant dumpsters.

Bear-Resistant Food Canister

With forethought and planning, it's amazing how much food you can fit into a canister. If you choose the right foods and repackage them, you can maximize canister space. It takes a little effort and time but the results are rewarding.

Remember, when you are using a canister ALL scented items - food, toiletries and garbage - must fit inside the canister throughout your entire trip.

How to Do It

- ◆ Choose the right foods.
- ◆ Measure out every meal.
- ◆ Repackage your food and toiletries into baggies or small containers.
- ◆ Carry the first two meals outside of the canister: lunch and dinner.
- ◆ At the trailhead, make sure that ALL food, trash, toiletries and scented items will fit inside the canister the first night.
- ◆ Put the canister and your kitchen 50 feet from your sleeping area. Leave the canister on the ground. Do NOT hang the canister from a tree.



Food Choices

Choose foods that are compact, compressible and high in calories. This includes rice, tortillas, jerky, flat pastas, dehydrated powders, nuts, dried fruits, peanut butter, candy and nutritional bars. Try to put as much food in the canister that you can. Think about volume when you purchase food. For example, instead of bread rolls, buy tortillas. Instead of macaroni, choose spaghetti. You get the picture - don't waste space on bulky food items.

Plan Your Menu

Carefully count every meal that you will be eating. By doing this, you will save weight and space. Put all the food on a table and plan each meal, snack, drink and condiment. Pre-measure and pre-mix food.

Repackage Your Food

Take food out of its original package. This allows you to fit more food inside a canister and reduces the amount of garbage you generate. Repackage food from boxes, bottles, jars and cans into resealable plastic bags. These bags are flexible and fit into small spaces. Force air out of packages. Poke tiny holes in freeze-dried packages to release the air. Save instructions for cooking and put inside meal bags. Write food contents on outside of bags with a permanent marker.

Toiletries

Pack toiletries similarly to foods. Put toothpaste, soap, sunscreen, bug repellent, etc. into small containers. Stores sell small, lightweight plastic containers that work well for this. Don't take more than you need.

Benefits of Using a Canister

- ◆ Less stress, increased peace of mind
- ◆ More time at camp to relax instead of thinking of ways to store food
- ◆ Guaranteed food supply if bears or other animals visit your camp
- ◆ No aborted trips because bears ate your food
- ◆ Freedom to camp anywhere: above tree-line or away from food storage lockers
- ◆ No need to search for the right tree or carry ropes and food sacs for counter-balancing
- ◆ More time at camp to relax instead of thinking of ways to store food
- ◆ A small table to use, something to sit on
- ◆ Increased safety for you and protection of wild animals

Suggested Food Items

- ◆ Cheese
- ◆ Jerky, sliced meats
- ◆ Tortillas, pita bread
- ◆ Trail mix, raisins, nuts
- ◆ Dried fruit, candy
- ◆ Spaghetti, flat pastas
- ◆ Rice

Dehydrated Food

- ◆ Fruit, vegetables, soups, sauces, beans
- ◆ Nutrition bars
- ◆ Peanut butter
- ◆ Freeze dried meals

Packaged Food

- ◆ Condiment packets
- ◆ Oatmeal
- ◆ Powdered milk
- ◆ Instant coffee
- ◆ Tea



Hiking in Bear Country

- ◆ Do not feed bears or other wildlife.
- ◆ Visit or call the local Forest Service office to learn about special requirements or guidelines for the area.
- ◆ Let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- ◆ Read all signs at trailheads.
- ◆ Stay alert, do not wear headphones and cautiously approach any blind corners in the trail.
- ◆ Carry bear spray such that it is easily accessible. Know how to use it.
- ◆ Hike as a group, keep children with you and dogs leashed.
- ◆ Make plenty of noise.
- ◆ For extended trips, keep food and other attractants in personal use size bear resistant containers.
- ◆ If you see a bear, maintain a safe distance and alter your route to avoid the bear. Never block a bear's travel route.
- ◆ If you see a cub alone, don't approach. Momma bear could be nearby.

Camping in Bear Country

- ◆ Do not feed bears or other wildlife.
- ◆ Visit or call the local Forest Service office to learn about special requirements or guidelines for properly storing food while camping in the area.
- ◆ Keep a clean camp site.
- ◆ Do not store food or any scented items in a tent, including clothing with food residues.
- ◆ Do not leave food unattended at a campsite or in your vehicle.
- ◆ Use bear-resistant food lockers and dumpsters where provided or bring your own.
- ◆ Clean utensils and food prep area thoroughly after cooking.
- ◆ Do not store garbage at camp site. Use a designated dumpster.
- ◆ At an undeveloped camping location, cook and store food away from sleeping area.

Remember: You are responsible for your own safety and for the safety of those around you.

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