



# Be Bear Wise



BEARS CAN  
BE DANGEROUS

Most human-bear conflicts occur when bears are attracted by smells and rewarded with an easy meal. When bears pick up a scent with their keen noses, they will investigate it – even at your cottage. If bears are rewarded with feasts of bird food, garbage or pet food, they will return as long as the food source is available. It takes all cottagers working together to eliminate these attractants and to stop bear problems. Here are some tips to help avoid these unwanted visitors.

**If you would like to report a bear problem, call 1 866 514-2327. In a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or the local police.**

## Don't invite black bears to the cottage.

### What cottagers can do:

- Never leave garbage behind. If you must leave before garbage day, or if you do not have curbside collection, take your garbage with you when you go. Take it to an approved waste disposal site.
- Fill bird feeders only through the winter months.
- Never purposely feed bears (or other wildlife) or try to approach them.
- Put garbage in containers that have tight fitting lids, and only put it out on garbage day, not the night before.
- Store garbage in a bear-resistant container, secure shed or garage. Do not store garbage in plywood boxes, old freezers or vehicles.
- Do not stockpile garbage. Take it to an approved waste disposal site regularly.
- Keep meat scraps in the freezer until garbage day.
- Remove grease and food residue from barbecue grills, including the grease trap, after each use.
- Do not put meat, fish or sweet food (including fruit) in your composter.
- Pick all ripe fruit off trees, and remove vegetables and fallen fruit from the ground.
- Encourage your neighbours to practise Bear Wise habits.
- If you rent your cottage, tell your tenants the importance of being Bear Wise.
- You are responsible for your own personal safety. Take precautions when you are outdoors.

Visit [ontario.ca/bearwise](http://ontario.ca/bearwise) for more information on bears:

- What to do if you see or encounter a bear on your property
- How to avoid encounters with black bears while enjoying the outdoors.

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Garbage is the number one reason bears are drawn onto properties, followed closely by bird seed, suet and nectar. Whether you are closing the cottage for the season, or just between stays, you can take a few simple precautions to avoid problems with bears and other animals too.

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## Before you leave the cottage.

### Before you go:

- Remove your garbage. Take it home or drop it off at an approved waste disposal site on your way out.
- Use a strong disinfectant to eliminate all odours from garbage and recycling containers and lids.
- Never discard cooking grease outside. Instead, place it in a container with a lid, transfer it to a plastic bag and include it with other properly stored garbage.
- Take your barbecue with you when you leave the cottage, or store it in a secure shed. Make sure it is clean.
- Do not leave any food or food scraps outdoors for pets or other wildlife.
- When packing up, remember to remove all the food from the inside of your cottage. A box of pudding or fruit flavoured dessert mix is all it takes to attract a bear.
- Do not leave scented products outside. Even non-food items like suntan lotion, insect repellent, soap and candles attract bears.
- Close and lock all windows and doors.
- If you are away for an extended period of time, have someone you trust check in and look for signs of a bear visitor or break in.

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There's more, over ►►