

# Black Bear Encounter Rules

The Division offers the following advice for those who may encounter a black bear:

1. Remain calm. Most bears are easily frightened into leaving.
2. Never approach the animal and observe only from a distance. Make your presence known through clapping, talking, singing or making other sounds.
3. Make sure the bear has an escape route.
4. The bear may utter a series of huffs, snap (pop) its jaws and swat the ground. These are all warning signs that you are too close. Slowly back away.
5. If a bear stands on its hind legs, it is merely trying to get a better view rather than acting in a threatening way.
6. Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" when cornered, threatened or attempting to obtain food. Stand your ground and slowly back away.
7. If you encounter a bear at close range, remain standing upright, avoid direct eye contact, back up slowly and speak in a calm, assertive voice.
8. Never run from a bear it will arouse his predatory instinct to chase and take down the prey.
9. If the bear will not leave, move to your car or house, if available. If not, the same rules as in numbers 7 and 8 above apply.
10. Never attempt to feed a bear. Bears learn very quickly. Black bears that associate food with people may become aggressive and dangerous. This may lead to personal injury, property damage and the need to euthanize problem animals.
11. Report all bear damage and repeated nuisance incidents to the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife at 908-735-8793.
12. If in the unlikely event that you are attacked, fall to the ground, curl up into a ball - knees into the chest, put your hands behind your neck protecting this vital area - a kill area for a bear, keep your face down to the ground protecting your face and lie perfectly still. The bear should eventually leave you alone.