

What Should I Do If I Encounter a Bear?

In their natural habitat:

- Encountering a bear in the wild is not that common.
- Make noise as you walk.
- Allow the bear to walk away.
- Don't corner or feed the bear.
- You can also scare the bear away by waving your arms, stomping your feet, and speaking softly as you back away. Do not run or climb a tree.
- Bluff charge: A bear charges but suddenly stops before making any contact. They are scary, rare, and a sign the bear is fearful, not aggressive.

In residential areas ~ near your home:

- Most bears are just passing through. Do nothing. Stay inside.
- Do not feed the bear!
- If you must discourage him; you can use basic aversive conditioning techniques. Start intense and vary your tactics.
- You can wave your arms, open an umbrella, stomp your feet, use air horns, bear bells, pepper spray, shake coins in a tin can, garden hoses, whistles, loud noises, etc. Be creative.

Visit www.bearsmartnj.org for more information.