

Deterrents...

- Include 12 gauge cracker shells, air horns, flares, bear bangers, and chemical repellents such as bear spray.
- Are not completely effective against every bear in every situation.
- Should not make you less careful to avoid bear conflicts.
- Are potentially dangerous so use with extreme caution.
- If you are using a chemical repellent, try to stay upwind of the bear before using.

If a Bear Charges...

- Polar bears don't normally bluff charge. If the bear is charging, it's likely going to attack.
- If a polar bear charges, be prepared to fight back. Try to hit the bear in sensitive areas like the eyes and nose.
- Chemical repellents are not always effective at very cold temperatures.
- If you have a firearm and contact appears unavoidable, shoot to kill.
- If a polar bear attacks you, do not run. FIGHT BACK! Use any potential weapon, stay in groups and make loud noises.

If you must shoot a bear in self-defence, report the kill to a Renewable Resource Officer as soon as possible and provide an explanation of the incident, the date and location of the incident, and any other information requested by an Officer. You may not keep any part of a bear killed in self-defence.



For more information, contact the
Environment and Climate Change
regional office nearest you:

Inuvik 867-678-8091
ext. 53247

Inuvik Wildlife Emergencies
(May-Oct)..... 867-678-0289

Wildlife Collisions/
Report a Poacher 866-762-2437



www.ecc.gov.nt.ca



Safetyⁱⁿ Polar Bear Country




Government of
Northwest Territories

Welcome to Polar Bear Country

Polar bears can be found throughout the circumpolar North. They are an important part of the northern ecosystem. Northerners are committed to maintaining healthy populations of all wildlife, including polar bears. Treat bears with respect. Remember, you are in a bear's territory.

Male Polar Bear


1. Large tracks
2. Triangular heel marks
3. High hump with longer and thicker neck
4. Flat bottom



What's the Difference Between...?

Female Polar Bear

1. Round tracks
2. Horseshoe-shaped heel marks
3. Stocky, fatter body
4. Yellow staining around base of tail



While You are Travelling...

- Always be alert.
- Travel in groups.
- Travel only during daylight.
- Avoid carrying strong smelling foods.
- Make noise where visibility is limited.
- Avoid bear travel areas, including shorelines and trails.
- Watch for fresh bear droppings and tracks.
- Carry bear deterrents.

If You are Camping...

- If possible, camp inland on a high butte or bluff with a good view of the surrounding terrain.
- On Arctic Islands, do not place summer camps on beaches as they tend to be used extensively by bears.
- Don't keep food in tents or areas of your camp other than the cook tent or kitchen/cooking area.
- Keep a clean camp. Wash all dishes and utensils after every meal.

- Avoid cooking greasy foods.
- Burn all garbage every day or take it to a bearproof disposal site. **Burying garbage does not eliminate odours.**
- If you are going to leave your campsite:
 - Bearproof your camp. Store food and other attractants (dish detergent, toothpaste, dog food, etc.) in an inaccessible place.
 - Let someone know where you are going.
 - Take a partner and bear deterrents with you.

If You Are Fishing...

- Be cautious near streams or lakes. Bears frequent these areas.
- Clean fish and dispose of guts away from camp.
- Keep and take home fish you catch on your last day only, to minimize bacterial growth in fish, and fish smells in camp.
- Don't wear clothes to bed that smell like fish.

If You are Hunting...

- Avoid hunting late in the day and returning to your camp in the dark.
- Stay alert when dressing game or handling meat and make sure you are away from your camp.
- Avoid shooting more than your party can pack out in a single load.
- If you must leave meat in the field, protect it from disturbance by other animals or the natural environment. Clearly mark the cache as yours before leaving it. Make sure you have a clear approach route when returning, and retrieve the meat as soon as possible to prevent wastage. Mark the meat to identify the harvester.
- Don't keep bloodied clothes in your tent.

If You Encounter a Bear...

- Remember the 3 S's... Stop, Stand still, Stay calm.
- Make sure others know a bear is in the vicinity.
- Do not run.
- Leave the bear an open avenue of escape.

...at a DISTANCE

- Alert the bear to your presence by speaking in low tones and slowly waving your arms.
- Quietly walk backwards the way you came or make a wide detour.
- Keep an eye on the bear.
- Stay downwind.
- Consider using warning shots, noisemakers.

...that is NEARBY

- Do not shout or make sudden movements.
- Avoid direct eye contact.
- Back away slowly.