

How to Avoid Bear Attacks

The Arctic Ecosystem Team Joint Venture offers these tips on how to avoid risky encounters with *Ursus maritimus*.

- Be Alert. Detect bears before they are a problem. Polar bears are unpredictable, and seeing one early decreases chances of a dangerous encounter.
- Keep away from food sources, keep a clean camp. Reduce food and garbage smells.
- Be careful around open water leads, or mammal carcasses—places where you may encounter a bear.
- Carry a weapon, travel with others, do not approach bears for photography or other reasons.
- Do not get between a female and her cubs.

If a Bear Approaches

- Get into a vehicle and drive away.
- Do not run. Stand your ground unless you can move away slowly to a safe shelter. Drop a pack or item of clothing if retreating.
- Gather together in a group, make yourself look bigger by holding a jacket over your head.
- Shout or make noise.

If a Bear Attacks

- Find safe shelter.
- Defend yourself.
- If you encounter a female defending cubs: get away from the bears and remove yourself as a threat to the cubs. Do not fight back.

Source: *Polar Bear Poster*, Arctic Ecosystem Team Joint Venture.