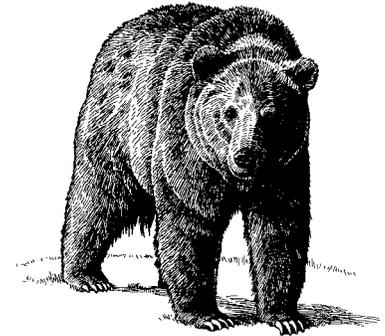




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Tips for Elk Hunters in Grizzly Country

As a hunter in the fall in grizzly country, you have a higher chance than hikers and other visitors of encountering a grizzly bear. Typical hunting behavior is what increases this risk: hunters move quietly, downwind from game, and often travel during the same early morning and late evening hours bears are most active. In addition, hunters may move through dense timber, along trails, and in other areas frequented by bears. Hunters produce carcasses and gut piles that are very attractive to hungry bears trying to build body fat before winter hibernation.

If you choose to hunt in areas inhabited by grizzly bears, you need to learn how to avoid having a confrontation with one of them. Killing a grizzly bear in the Lower 48 States is both a federal and state offense that can bring criminal and civil penalties of up to \$50,000 and a year in jail. Hunters are responsible for being sure of their target before they pull the trigger, and claims of self-defense are thoroughly investigated. Unnecessary killing of grizzlies only contributes to their decline, and may result in more restrictive hunting privileges in the future.

- **Learn about bear behavior:** Bears often sleep during the day in dense “dark” timber; if disturbed in their day beds, they are often surprised and will sometimes charge in confusion. Bears like berries, so try to avoid large brush patches; if you must travel through a brush patch, watch for moving bushes and always make noise to alert bears you are coming.
- **Avoid hunting alone:** Always try to travel in pairs.
- **Always carry pepper spray and know how to use it:** While bear spray cannot prevent an encounter, it can deter a bear’s charge and prevent or shorten the duration of an attack.
- **Learn to recognize signs of bears in the area:** Leave when you see fresh tracks, scat, and diggings.
- **Always keep a clean camp:** Avoid attracting and rewarding a bear with food. Remember, all food and beverages, including canned food, garbage, pet food, and scented toiletries are bear attractants.
- **After the kill, remove the carcass from the area as soon as possible:** Immediately field dress the animal and move the gut pile at least 100 yards from the carcass; never leave it near or on a trail, which could endanger others. Gut piles can be easily slid on a piece of visqueen plastic or tarp. If you cannot immediately pack out the carcass, hang it at least 10 feet above ground (cut it into quarters if necessary). Leave the carcass where you can see it from a distance.
- **Be aware that where there is a carcass, there may be a bear:** When returning to a carcass, observe it with binoculars from a safe distance before approaching. Make noise and approach from upwind if possible. If a bear has claimed a carcass, let the bear have the meat and leave the area immediately! Do not risk your safety. Report the incident as soon as possible to the proper authorities.
- **Bugles and cow calls can attract bears:** Stay alert!