



Stash, Latch, Secure Your Trash

It's garbage to us; it's dinner for days for bears. Trash is a smelly, concentrated and dependable source of easy, high-calorie meals. That's why trash attracts bears to homes and communities and keeps them coming back for more.



Trash Storage Solutions That Work

- 1** Sturdy, Locked Building
- 2** Secure Trash Enclosure
- 3** Bear-Resistant Containers (Manufactured or Modified)



Open doors are an open invitation to bears. Keep trash out of sight, smell and reach. Always close and lock doors and windows.



When building your own or buying a trash enclosure, choose durable construction and multiple latches or an auto-locking mechanism.



Modified with 4 straps & buckles

Ask your waste service company if they can provide a bear-resistant container (BRC). If not, ask if they will service modified trash cans or a BRC if you purchase one, and if containers must be unlatched before pick up.

How to modify a trash container (if allowed): use four nylon straps with buckles (not stretchy rubber straps) or locking metal hasps. Secure cans so bears can't "work" them.



A determined bear can easily claw through a wooden door. In areas where bears have learned to rely on human-provided food sources, steel doors or electric mats are recommended.

Power Up to Protect

Just one encounter with an electric fence or unwelcome mat delivers a shocking lesson that quickly teaches the bear to leave your stuff alone. **Getting zapped may hurt but doesn't harm.** Properly installed electric deterrents are safe for people, pets and bears. *CHECK LOCAL REGULATIONS.*



Electric unwelcome mats in front of doors and below windows will safely deter bears.



An electric fence makes a great enclosure for regular trash cans.



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Keep bears out. Keep people and property safe and bears wild.

BearWise® Homeowners

- Always close and latch bear-resistant trash containers (BRCs). Keep containers that are not bear-resistant in a sturdy, locked building or bear-resistant enclosure.
- Put garbage (including any frozen food scraps) and recycling out the morning of pick up, not the night before.
- Never leave trash or food / animal feed in a vehicle or open truck bed. Clean truck beds often.
- Never store trash on or under decks, porches or balconies. Screens don't keep out bears.
- Rinse out cans, bottles and other recycling to reduce odors.
- Clean trash containers often. Avoid fruit-scented cleaners.



BearWise® Businesses

- Use bear-resistant containers / dumpsters / enclosures. Post clear instructions to lock after every use, even during the day.
- Post signage in common areas and parking lots to 'Stash & Latch Your Trash' and to lock vehicles.
- Educate residents, renters and visitors. Share BearWise materials.
- Train employees to recognize what attracts bears, to be vigilant and address issues immediately (i.e. pick up stray trash, verify containers are latched, patrol parking lots).
- Post signs and inform workers to never put food scraps or trash in open construction dumpsters.
- Clearly state trash policies, pick-up times and management's contact information. Ask people to report issues immediately.

Easy-to-access trash is the number one thing that attracts bears to homes and communities.



Enterprising bears have learned to recognize trash containers and deduce that where there is one, there are more. Trash smells like dinner to a bear, so anything you can do to reduce odors and make trash hard to get at will help deter bears.

Motion-Activated Devices

Motion-activated sprinklers and/or alarms may startle bears but are not permanent solutions. Use them while you pick the long-term solution that works best for you.



Composting Food Scraps?

If you live in active bear country, consider an indoor composter (available in various sizes). **If composting outside:** no meat, bones, fish, oil, grease, dairy products, eggshells, garbage or large amounts of fruit. Locate compost pile far away from your home and protect it with a bear-resistant enclosure or electric fence.



BearWise Can Help Visit BearWise.org

- More information about bear-resistant containers: [BearWise.org/keep-bears-out](https://www.bearwise.org/keep-bears-out)
- Free PDF downloads in our Store:
 - Action Plan for Communities
 - Electric Fences Keep Bears Out
 - BearWise At Home checklist
 - BearWise Guest checklist
- Stickers & Signs



Contact your state wildlife agency for other solutions that work in your area.

Thanks for doing your part to keep bears wild.



Learn More:
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