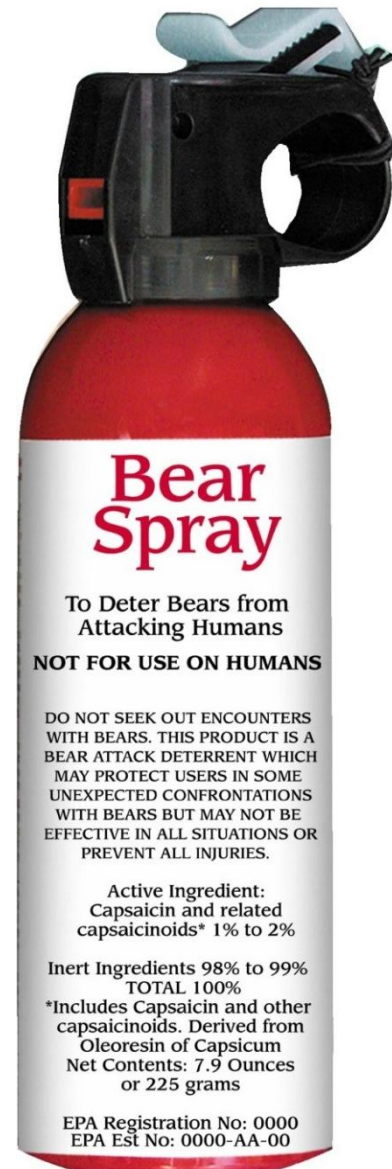




The Be Bear Aware Campaign recommends the use of bear spray as an effective tool when used in conjunction with proper bear avoidance safety techniques. Bear spray is not a substitute for following proper bear avoidance safety techniques. (Never approach, attempt to follow, interact with, or feed a bear.) Bear spray has demonstrated success in stopping threatening, charging or attacking bears. The proper use of bear spray may reduce human injuries caused by bears. (Bear Spray is for using on charging or attacking bears.)

## Selecting, buying and using bear spray

- To purchase the correct product, ask the sales person specifically for Bear Spray.
- All bear sprays **MUST** be registered and tested with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Purchase products that clearly state "for deterring attacks by bears." The EPA registration number is displayed on the front label. (Always call it bear spray)
- The active ingredient is Capsaicin and related Capsaicinoids and must be a concentration of 1% to 2%. The inflammatory and irritating chemicals effect the bears' eyes, nose, mouth, throat, and lungs.
- Personal defense, law enforcement or military sprays (often referred to as "pepper spray") may not be formulated correctly, contain the correct ingredients or have the proper delivery systems to divert a charging or attacking bear. Pepper spray is not bear spray.
- Suggested minimum spray duration of a can of bear spray should be 7+ seconds. The amount of spray needed in individual charges may vary due to wind, multiple bears, those that zigzag, circle, or re-charge, and for the hike out. Each individual charge may require a 2-3 second burst.
- Suggested minimum spray distance of a can of bear spray should be 25+ feet. This enables you to discharge an expanding cloud which a bear, charging from within 60 feet, will meet at about 25-35 feet, giving it time to feel the effects and divert its charge.
- Each person working, hunting, living or recreating in bear country should carry a can of bear spray in a hip or chest holster or outer pocket in cold weather. Bear spray should also be readily available in the sleeping, cooking and toilet areas of a camp. Cold weather affects bear spray performance.
- To respond spontaneously to a charging bear, practice removing the canister from the holster, placing your thumb in front of the safety wedge and pull back to remove it. Hold the can firmly so it does not tilt up while spraying.



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# **Be Bear Aware Campaign**

Bear Spray Basics - Bear spray works and is easy to use

**What is bear spray?** Bear spray is a powerful bear deterrent that contains inflammatory and irritating agents that is disbursed in a *powerful, well atomized expanding cloud* that a charging bear has to travel through to reach you.

**Suggested duration and distance of spray** is 7+ seconds in order to provide additional spray to adjust for wind, more than one bear and the hike out. Spray distance should be a 25-35 foot range so the bear will meet the cloud at about 25-35 feet from you and have time to divert its charge.

**Active Ingredients:** 1-2% Capsaicin and related Capsaicinoids irritate the bear's nose, mouth, throat, lungs and reaches the brain. Oleoresin is an oil; not the active ingredient.

**Research and Development:** Bear spray was researched and developed as part of a bear avoidance research project at the University of Montana. The lead researcher was Carrie Hunt, an internationally known bear biologist.

**Purchasing Bear Spray:** Always call it "bear spray" not "pepper spray". Make sure the can is clearly labeled as bear deterrent or for use on aggressive, charging or attacking bears, not for use on people.

**Not all Bear Sprays are equal:** Some spray for as little as 4 seconds while others spray for 9 seconds. Not all have the same ingredients or quality of ingredients. When buying, know the **duration** and **distance** of the bear spray you are purchasing.

**Carrying Bear Spray:** Bear spray should be carried in a hip or chest holster. In cold conditions, it should be easily accessible in a pocket.

**Holding the Canister:** Put forefinger through the hole in the handle, wrap fingers to palm of hand and place thumb over curl of safety clip. Hold can firmly so it does not tilt up.

**Removing Safety Clip:** Place your thumb in front of the safety clip curl and pull directly back, exposing trigger beneath.

# **Bear Spray Basics - Bear spray works and is easy to use**

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**When to use bear spray:** Bear spray was developed to be used on *aggressive, charging or attacking bears* that represent an immediate threat. Bear spray is not to be used on bears that are not threatening, approaching or because it stands up to see what it smells and hears.

**Directing, NOT Aiming:** Because bear spray is dispersed in a powerful, expanding cloud, it is not necessary to try and aim. Aiming takes time that you do not have if a bear is charging. The downward directed expanding cloud becomes a barrier that the bear must pass through to reach you. Once the bear enters the cloud, it will affect its eyes, nose and mouth, causing it to divert its charge.

**Charging Bear Entering Within 60 Feet:** *This is a close charge.*

Direct spray downward and towards an area about 30 feet in front of the bear with a slight side-to-side movement creating a wide barrier in case the bear tries to run around the cloud. The charging bear will meet the cloud at approx 25-35 feet exposing its eyes, nose, mouth and throat to the irritant and inflammatory agents. Prepare to re-spray in case the bear makes it through the first cloud of spray.

**Charging Bear Within 30 Feet:** *This is a very close charge.* Direct spray downwards in front of bear so the cloud billows up in front of it. Continue to spray until the charging bear diverts its charge. The bear may zig-zag or try to circle around so redirect the spray at the front of the bear until it diverts its charge.

**Charging Bear Within 15-20 Feet:** *This is an extremely close charge.*

Direct spray at the front of the charging bear and continue spraying until the bear either diverts its charge or is about to make contact. If you think the charging bear is about to make contact, drop to the ground, lay flat on your stomach clasping hands together behind your head and neck and hold on to the bear spray canister. Remain still until you are sure the bear is gone. When you get up, be ready to re-spray the charging bear.

*In cases where bears have successfully made contact, bear spray has shortened the length and severity of maulings.*

# **Bear Spray Basics - Bear spray works and is easy to use**

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**Always call it “Bear Spray”:** It is extremely important that everyone properly indentifies bear spray. When the terms “pepper spray” or “bear pepper spray” are used, consumers and retailers start confusing bear spray with generic pepper spray. Unlike bear spray, pepper spray is not regulated or monitored by the Environmental Protection Agency. It may or may not have effective ingredients to stop a charging bear.

Consumers need to know that pepper spray websites, labels, displays, brochures, etc are not regulated as bear spray is and may provide misleading information. Pepper spray manufacturers can change the ingredients or change the labels at any time. In some cases, they can use water as a solvent, which is very ineffective.

**The “Hotness”:** There are no research studies showing that the hotness in bear spray indicates how well a bear spray works. The EPA does not allow any reference to the hotness of bear spray on labels, counter displays or promotional brochures. Some manufacturers co-mingle pepper spray promotional information with bear spray.

**When bear spray hasn’t worked:** The Be Bear Aware campaign has monitored bear spray incidents, reports, newspaper articles, TV shows and interviewed people involved in bear maulings for over 25 years. When people have claimed that bear spray does not work it is due to:

- Started spraying before the charging bear was within 60 feet and ran out of bear spray for when the charging bear was within range.
- Did not hold the can firmly so the spray went over the bear, allowing the bear to charge under the cloud.
- Waited to spray the bear directly in the face to reach the eyes, nose and mouth resulting in the bear being too close to divert its charge. This is why bear spray is dispersed in a powerful expanding cloud