

BLACK BEAR HUNTING TIPS

1 FOOD

Both fall and spring bear seasons correspond to high-calorie intake times for bears. Key on areas that include the known forage for bears during the season and you will increase your odds of finding that big bruin. Some bear buffets include acorns in the fall, lush grasses in the spring, and grubs and moths under boulders and dead logs year round.

*Make sure baiting is legal in the state you plan to hunt



2 WIND

Bears have an excellent sense of smell. Be sure to keep wind direction and thermals in mind when setting up to the glass. Consider where you expect to see bears and what direction the prevailing wind is from. Once you spot the bear you're after and begin to make a plan for pursuit, make sure you take into account the wind direction.

*Check all state regulations to comply with baiting in those states as many limit the number of baits per hunter and require them to be registered.



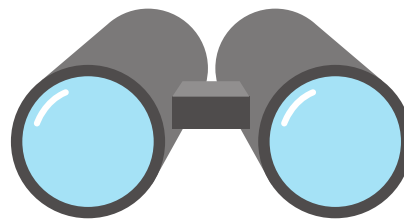
3 WATER

In high mountain country and alpine desert areas, where bears are often hunted with spot and stock style, water is a high commodity. Identifying a drainage with a good supply of fresh water and scouting it with good optics from a vantage point can be a great way to identify your target bear.



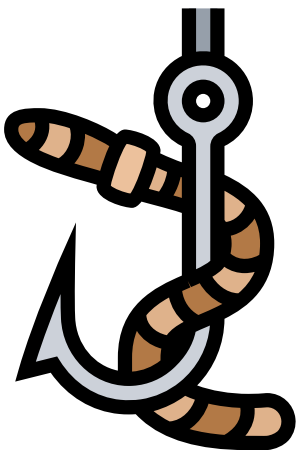
4 GET OUT AND SCOUT

Figure out ahead of time where the deer are wintering. One of the easiest ways to do this is to just drive back roads as the sun is setting and figure out what fields they are feeding in. This will give you the X for shed hunting.



5 HUNT AN ACTIVE BAIT

It may seem obvious, but when you put in the time on stand make sure you're hunting an active bait. Bait stations for bear hunting should be along travel corridors in areas that bears are known to travel. Game cameras are vital tools to use over bait stations to determine bear activity and to pattern bears on the bait.



6 HUNT TO THE BAIT

Approach the bait and stand as if there is a bear already there. Although bears are typically most active in the late afternoon and evening, it is not uncommon for bears to visit baits earlier in the day. Using the wind to your advantage, come into the bait ready to make a shot.



7 USE MULTIPLE BAIT STATIONS

Bait is effective at attracting bears and getting them into range, but limiting yourself to a single baited stand will only limit your odds. Setup bait stations ideally miles apart and for different wind conditions. Having multiple hunting locations will allow you to hunt different bears and during varying weather conditions.



8 USE SCENT CONTROL MEASURES

Human odors like food, engine exhaust, and sweat will alert bears in the area to your presence. Take care to use scent control detergents when preparing your clothing for the hunt. Minimize your human odor by using scent free soaps and shampoos designed for hunting, and scent control spray when you are on stand.



9 BEARS ARE CREATURES OF HABIT

If you spot a bear in an area feeding or traveling that isn't conducive to the evening's hunt due to weather, wind, or limited daylight; remember bears often follow the same routine. If left alone to feed and travel, as usual, there is a good chance that bear will be back the next evening or two when you can put a stalk or ambush together in more favorable conditions.

