



How to Survive Animal Attacks

Seven Methods: [Mountain Lions and Other Large Cats](#) [Bears](#) [Wolves and Wild Dogs](#) [Venomous Snakes](#) [Constricting Snakes](#)
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Wild animal attacks are extremely rare. However, there are several techniques to help you survive attacks from several species of wildlife.

Steps

- 1 Know your area.** Use a field guide and information from the local parks department to find out what wildlife lives in the area, and if any attacks have been recorded.
- 2 Bring supplies.** Bells, pepper spray, a knife, a snake stick and extra clothing can help you fend off attacks.

Method
1

Mountain Lions and Other Large Cats

- 1 Prevent an encounter by wearing a bell or other noisemaker to scare off any mountain lions that might be nearby.**
- 2 Stand your ground.** Mountain lions, like most cats, don't want to attack prey that will fight back.
- 3 Make yourself scary by yelling, holding out extra clothing like wings, or climbing onto someone's shoulders.** If your hiking companion is smaller than you, hoist them onto your own shoulders.
- 4 Fight back by throwing rocks and spraying pepper spray if the mountain lion doesn't back off.**
- 5 Protect your neck if the cat attacks.** Cross both arms behind your head to shield the back of your head and neck. Crunch your shoulders up around your ears to protect your neck and throat.

Method
2

Bears

- 1 Prevent an encounter by wearing a bell or other noisemaker to scare off any bears that might be nearby.**
- 2 Avoid bear cubs as mother bears will attack viciously to protect their young.**
- 3 Play dead if a bear approaches you further.**

Method
3

Wolves and Wild Dogs

- 1 Avoid eye contact with the wolves, as eye contact is a sign of aggression.**
- 2 Slump your lower body and lower your head in a submissive gesture.**

Method
4

Venomous Snakes

- 1** Avoid an encounter by keeping alert for snakes.
- 2** Wear protective clothing such as long pants, tall hiking boots, long sleeves, and gloves.
- 3** Watch the snake for signs it might strike, while backing away. Snakes must coil before striking.
- 4** Fend off the snake with your snake stick if it moves towards you, while backing carefully away from the snake.
- 5** Administer first aid if you or your companion are bitten. *DO NOT* attempt to suck the venom from the wound!

Method
5

Constricting Snakes

- 1** Avoid an encounter by keeping alert for snakes.
- 2** Fend off the snake with your snake stick if it approaches.
- 3** Stay calm if the snake loops around you. If you relax, it may not attempt to constrict you-- in fact, it may just be curious. Struggling, however, prompts the snake to squeeze.
- 4** Wrap your non-dominant arm around your ribs for stability and protection.
- 5** Take slow, shallow breaths as the snake uses breathing as a cue for constriction.
- 6** Grab the snake's head with your free hand, and pull it backwards to unwind the coil.

Method
6

Alligators, Caymans and Crocs

- 1** Prevent an attack by keeping your arms and legs out of water where these animals live.
- 2** Watch out for "nervous water", eyes poking above the surface, or other signs of crocodiles.
- 3** Hit the animal on the nose if it grabs a limb. Avoid being shaken or pulled into the water.

Method
7

Sharks


- 1** Avoid lying on the surface in areas frequented by sharks. In profile, you will look like a seal or other tasty prey. Try to keep vertical in the water.
- 2** Stay calm if you see a shark. Move *slowly* towards shore and keep your head above water. Excessive splashing or activity attracts sharks.
- 3** Remain still if you feel the shark brush against you. Sharks often investigate unknown objects by nosing them, then swimming away.

4 Signal for help above water by waving your hands, shouting, etc. You'll want to be extracted from your situation if you're surrounded by a swarm of sharks.


5 Fight back if the shark bites you. Punch and scratch at the eyes and gills. The shark will often let go.

Community Q&A


What if a shark grabs hold of my head? What do I do then?

 Continue to punch and scratch at the gills. Do not flail, as this gives them ample opportunity to attack an additional limb.
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What should I do if a shark pulls me underwater?

 Continue to fight back as aggressively as possible and it will release you as sharks don't want to fight for a meal.
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So if a wolf tries to attack me, I'm just supposed to be submissive and not try to scare it off at all?

 Try to slowly walk away from it without making eye contact and be non-aggressive.
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Are all sharks dangerous?

 Not all sharks are, such as the hammerhead shark and the tiger shark. They will generally nose around and leave, but always treat them like other sharks, which can be lethal.
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What do you do if a rhino is close to you?

 If it is charging at you, try to get out of its way. If there is a tree near you, climb it or get behind it, as rhinos tend to avoid large obstacles. Always try to keep a big distance between you and the rhino. Try not to run your way out, because rhinos can run up to 35 MPH. Always try to avoid them if you can.
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What if a grizzly bear tries to hunt me down after I've made contact with its cub(s)? What should I do? Hide?

 There's not really much you can do to hide! Bears have excellent sense of smell. Most can climb trees and move pretty quickly. If a bear attacks you, DO NOT PANIC OR SHOW ANY SIGNS OF PANIC. Instead, try to appear as least aggressive as possible, and don't fight back. If the bear approaches you, it just may be curious. If it shows any signs of aggression, the time may be right to make yourself look larger or more dangerous. Hoist a party member on your shoulders to fend it off. Use pepper spray in its eyes to blind it.
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I heard that if you stay still, a shark will let go. Is this true?

 They will let go, but by then it may be too late, as you may already have a bite taken out of you. It's a bite they'll regret, but still one you don't want them taking. Bop the shark on the nose or attack the gills before they strike to make them leave before a bite has a chance to occur.
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Will I die if a shark grabs hold of my head?

 If a shark gets your head, you will most likely die. Learn techniques to evade a shark attack and try your best to make sure it never happens.
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Are polar bears like ordinary bears?

 Yes, polar bears attack the same way as "ordinary" bears.
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But if I encounter a wolf, doesn't lowering your body show that you are weak? Shouldn't I make myself look bigger and make loud noises? Or will that cause the wolf to attack?

 If it's a lone wolf you should make yourself look bigger and more aggressive. Wolves and other animals of prey are less likely to attack another animal that looks aggressive and will fight back. However, if faced with more than one wolf, your

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best bet would be to appear submissive or just run and try to climb a tree because the odds of you surviving a pack of wolves is very unlikely.

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