

Don't run if you see a bear on a California hiking trail—or on your lawn. Do this instead

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California is home to black bears, so it shouldn't be a surprise if you run into one while you're out hiking or camping—or if they show up rummaging around your lawn.

On Monday, a [woman](#) in Southern California found a bear that died in her front yard after being hit by a car.

If you see a bear while traversing a trail or if it's near your home—and appears injured or alive—here's what you should do:

The bear is injured

If you see any [wild animal](#) that looks sick, hurt, abandoned or in danger, call the California Wildlife Center's emergency hotline at 310-458-WILD.

You can also report wildlife deaths to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to help the agency track disease, mortality and improve prevention and control.

The department advises that you do not touch the animal and fill out its online form.

Reporting a sighting

You can also report bear sightings to the CDFW at 916-358-2917 or online.

The form can also be filled out if there was property damage or nuisance caused by the animal.

Take steps to be safe

You can prevent [bears](#) from being near your home by cleaning out trash containers, using bear-resistant trash cans and storing grills indoors when not in use, the department advises.

It recommends that you bring in bird feeders at night and feed pets indoors. Do not leave [food](#) outside for pets or wildlife.

Bear attacks are rare. If one does come after you, according to the National Park Service, it's likely defending its cub, food or territory.

If you do see a live bear

A bear might not be aware of your presence, but if you encounter each other, the National Park Service advises that you stay calm and talk so that the bear knows you are human and not a prey animal.

You should pick up small children and make yourself look big.

You should not give the bear food, drop your backpack, run or climb a tree. And don't scream.

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