

# GEAR

// PACKAGE



## CRITTER-PROOF YOUR CAMP

**1.** I've gone back and forth on carrying a gun in the backcountry. The choice is ultimately yours, but it's not one to take lightly. I've confronted both black and polar bears and had to kill an habituated black bear that wouldn't scare off. Consider a basic pump-action shotgun loaded with a pattern of 'cracker' (noise-maker) shells, shot and slugs. Remington's Model 870 Shotguns are dependable models that will perform should this unfortunate situation arise ([remington.com](http://remington.com)). **2.** Capsaicin (pepper) sprays are the non-lethal alternative, and also lighter and handier. Though affected by wind and rain, sprays are usually adequate. Just ask Mark Matheny, who developed UDAP's Pepper Power bear deterrent after a being mauled by an irate grizz. This high-power spray features a potent initial burst, extinguisher-like pattern and 30-foot range. The faint background hum of UDAP's Bear Shock electric fence also helps everyone sleep easier by enclosing a 27-square-foot campsite. Tested by field biologists who left Alaskan camps unattended for days, the fence (only 3.7 pounds with two D batteries) runs for up to five weeks (\$47 spray, \$300 fence, [pepperpower.com](http://pepperpower.com)). **3.** Get There! Designs' Food Pack Hanger kit cuts down the comic frustration of hoisting a monster food sack with a simple throw-sack and pulley system that's easy to use, and, unlike most food-hanging schemes, very adaptable (\$47, [piragis.com](http://piragis.com)). **4.** No trees? Plastic barrels have been shown to essentially zero out food scents and food-related bear encounters in Denali National Park. Coupled with a pack system, they're also easy to portage. Eureka! Canada's burly StormShield Barrels come in 30- and 60-liter sizes, which fit comfortably in a canoe hull (\$24 and \$34, \$57 and \$67 for Deluxe Harnesses, [gear-up.com](http://gear-up.com)). **5.** The Insect Shield Barrier Crew augments a line of bug-resistant clothing from ExOfficio. The shirts, hats and pants remain effective through repeated washings, are odorless, and withstand moderate bug intensity in high fashion (\$60, [exofficio.com](http://exofficio.com)). — Alan Kesselheim