

Polar Bear Safety & Rifle Handling

Understanding how to stay safe in bear country is a core skill for any Arctic guide. Whether you're leading landings in Svalbard or supporting scientific teams in the field, knowing how to assess risk, avoid conflict, and handle a rifle responsibly can make all the difference.

During the course, we cover:

Polar bear behavior and how to read warning signs

Safe field routines and best practices for group management

Use of deterrents

Live-fire rifle training with a qualified instructor (no hunting license required)

What to do in case of an emergency

The training is calm, supportive, and open to guides of all experience levels — even complete beginners. The goal is to build confidence, awareness, and a safety-first mindset you can carry into the field.

Want to explore more?

Check out AECO's Field Guidelines for Staff and Crew (PDF) – a helpful resource covering bear safety, wildlife approach distances, and field conduct in the Arctic.

<https://www.aeco.no/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/AECO-Guidelines-for-field-staff-and-crew-2023.pdf>