

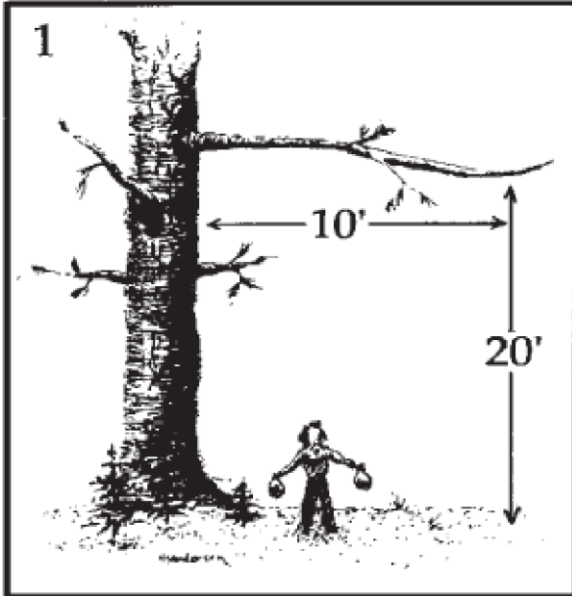


# COUNTERBALANCING FOOD

## Sierra National Forest

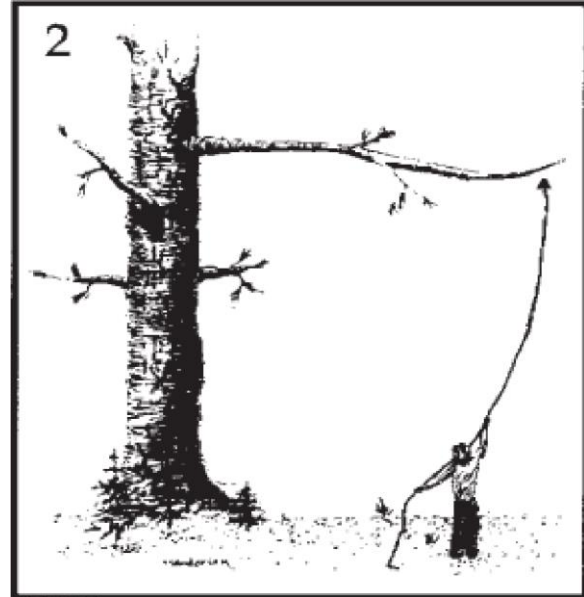
If you do choose to hang food in a tree, any method other than counterbalancing will probably not protect it. Hang food only when canisters are not available. Keep in mind that alpine areas will not have tree limbs long enough to counterbalance properly.

**If a bear does get your food, you are responsible for cleaning up and packing out all debris, and for reporting it to the nearest ranger.**



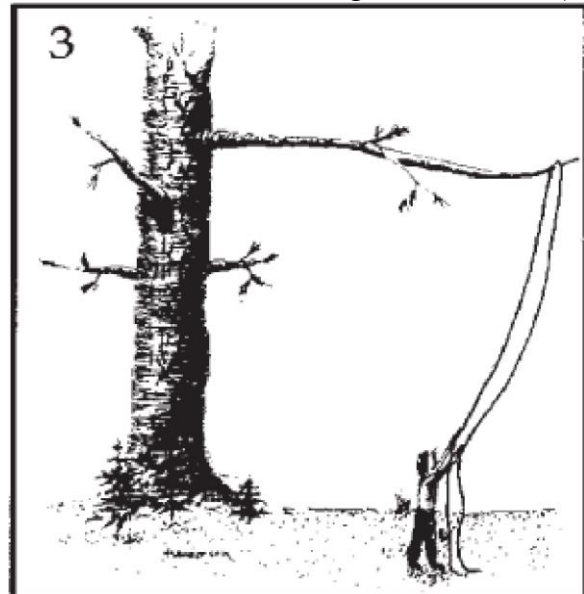
Hanging food illustration 1.  
National Park Service

Find a tree with an appropriate live branch, even if you must select a different campsite. Approximately **10 feet** away from the trunk, the branch should still be approximately **20 feet** off the ground. Divide food into two balanced bags. Store soap, sunscreen, deodorant, toothpaste, and garbage in the same way as food, since bears are attracted to anything with an odor.

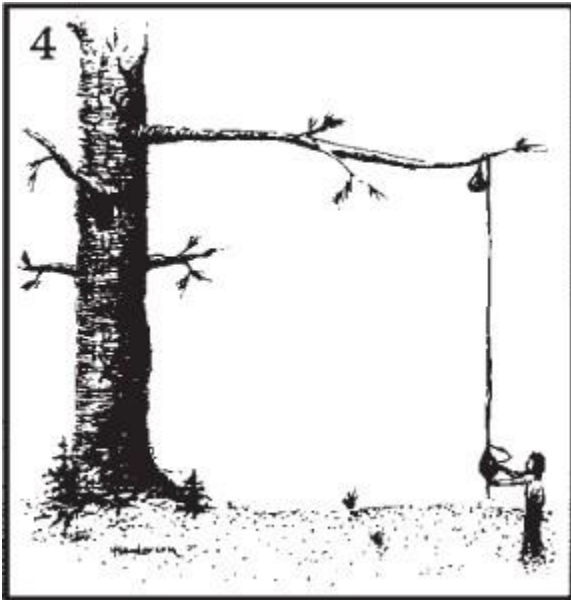


Hanging food illustration 2.  
National Park Service

Use enough rope to go over the branch and back to the ground. Toss the rope over the branch where the branch is about **20 feet** off the ground and at least **10 feet** away from the trunk (to where the branch is strong enough to support the weight of the food but not the weight of a bear cub).



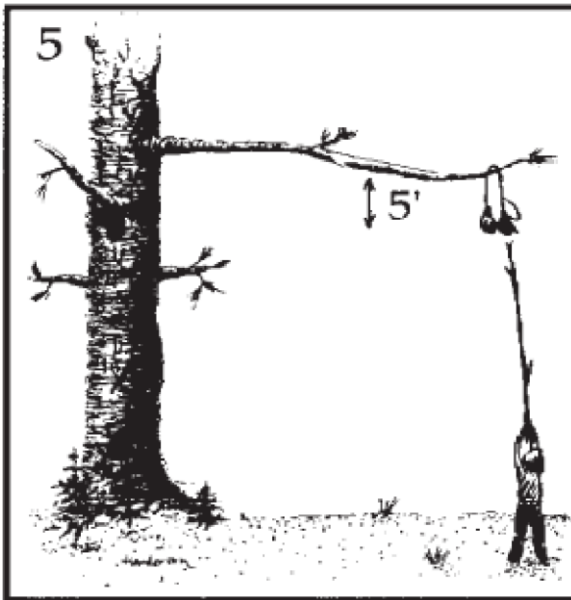
Hanging food illustration 3.  
National Park Service



Hanging food illustration 4.

*National Park Service*

Tie one end of the rope to the first sack and pull it up to the branch. Tie the second sack as high as you can on the rope; put the excess rope in the sack, leaving a loop out so you can retrieve it.

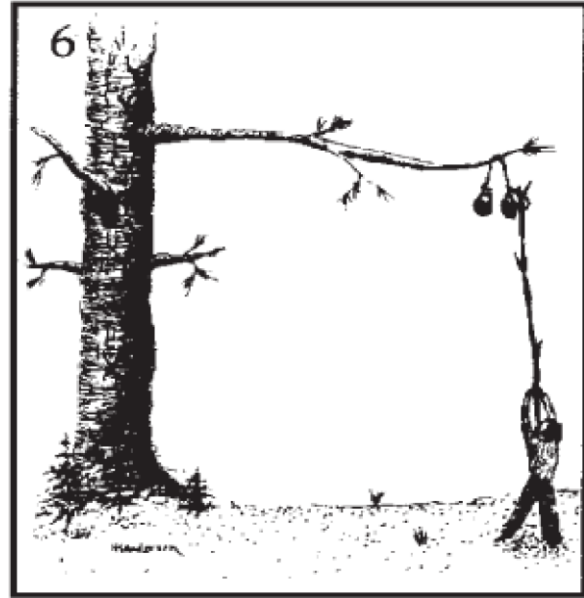


Hanging food illustration 5.

*National Park Service*

Toss or push the lower sack until both sacks are at equal height at least **12 feet** off the ground. This minimizes the chance of a bear reaching down for the bags from above,

reaching up to them from the ground or reaching over to them from the trunk.



Hanging food illustration 6.

*National Park Service*

To retrieve the sacks, hook a long stick through the loop of excess rope. Pull slowly to avoid tangles.

By making loud noises and throwing objects you can often scare bears away before they get to your food. Be bold but keep a safe distance and use good judgment. Never attempt to retrieve food from a bear. Never approach a bear or get near a cub.

Bears are active both day and night. At night and any time, you are away from camp, remove all food from your pack and store it properly. Leave your pack on the ground with flaps and pockets open.

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