

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Reproductive Strategies

## **Animal Profile:** **GRIZZLY BEAR (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)**

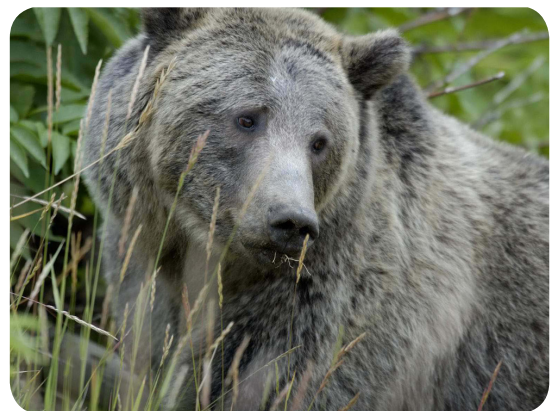
Grizzly bears used to roam throughout the Great Plains of North America, hunting elk and moose and nibbling on berries and grasses. Grizzly bears still do these things, of course, but habitat loss and hunting have confined the bears to rough, mountainous areas. In the lower 48 states, they're only found in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Washington.



US Fish and Wildlife Service/Larry Aumiller

Grizzly bears are enormous animals that require large territories, especially when food becomes hard to find. Males can weigh as much as 453.6 kg (1000 pounds), females can clock-in around 317.5 kg (700 pounds), and their territories can be as large as 906.5 square kilometers (350 square miles). Though grizzlies spend most of their days wandering around alone, they come together to mate during early summer. During mating, the male deposits his sperm into the female, where her eggs are fertilized. Females delay implantation of the fertilized eggs, so the embryos don't begin developing until the females are nestled into their warm dens in November. Mothers give birth 8 weeks later to between 1 and 4 cubs. Until they leave the den in late spring, the cubs live off their mom's milk, which means mom has to eat enough in the summer and fall to survive hibernation and to feed her cubs, too!

Cubs stay with their mother for 3 years or so. She won't reproduce again until they leave her side. Because reproduction and growth are slow and the bears need large territories with a lot of food to survive, grizzlies are sensitive to over-hunting and habitat loss. Thankfully, they're protected by the Endangered Species Act, and many conservation and wildlife biologists are working to keep the grizzlies a part of our natural world.



US Fish and Wildlife Service/Terry Tollefsbo