

## Hibernating Bear

Big Brown Bear is looking for food. He's very hungry today. It's important that he eats a lot because there's something he must do soon. Do you know what it is?

Big Brown Bear loves to eat. He likes acorns, ants, bark, berries, birds, bugs, eggs, fish, frogs, fruits, grasses, grubs, leaves, mice, mushrooms, roots, seeds, and lots of other delicious things. He especially loves salmon and honey.

Today, he is in search of squirrels, because he knows they will lead him to the winter supplies like the acorns they have been busy gathering.

He eats his fill and finishes his feast with some sweet, crunchy roots. Big Brown Bear has gained a lot of weight with a thick layer of fat. This will help him survive his long winter sleep.

The days are getting shorter and colder. Big Brown Bear grows a thick fur coat to keep him warm.

He's almost ready to hibernate, but he needs to find a good place to spend the winter. It needs to be warm and protect him from danger, but easy to get in and out of.

His big, flat feet carry him along, and his little eyes search carefully in the bushes and shrubs that grow along the rocks and mountainsides of the forest. Suddenly, he spots an opening in the rocks.

Big Brown Bear carefully squeezes himself through the crack, sucking in his stomach and inching himself bit by bit through the small part of the entrance. Inside there is a spacious cave with a soft dirt floor. It's not too big and not too small. It's just the right size for Big Brown Bear.

His tummy is full, his coat is thick and warm, and he is ready for a long winter nap. He tucks himself into the farthest corner by a rock and curls up tightly.

His big mouth opens in a huge yawn. His small round ears listen carefully to be sure no enemy is approaching, and he closes his eyes sleepily. Big Brown Bear begins to snore.

Many months later, it's spring again. Inside the warm den, Big Brown Bear stirs. He slept a long time, but now it's time to get up. He's so hungry! All the weight he gained is gone. It's time to start eating again. Big Brown Bear wonders what delicious treats are waiting for him.

---