

# Poison Ivy Tips

The number one way to prevent getting poison ivy is by being able to properly identify it!

## Poison Ivy Identification

- Leaves are alternate on the plant and there are three of them that are usually mitten shaped.
- Can occur as a trailing vine low to the ground (4-10 inches in height)
- Can occur as a shrub (up to 4 feet tall)
- Can occur as a climbing vine up trees, buildings, fences, etc... Vines are extremely hairy looking.
- Does not have thorns

## How NOT to get poison ivy!

1. Learn how to identify it and avoid it whenever possible!
2. If possible wash of the urushiol oil with cold water within 10-15 minutes of exposure. Most of the oil is absorbed into the skin within 30 minutes.
3. Use a barrier cream if you know you are going to be near poison ivy like Iva Block or antiperspirant deodorant you can rub on your skin. Remember, these are not always effective.
4. Wear long pants, long sleeves, and enclosed footwear when hiking or working around poison ivy. Wash all clothing after exposure to poison ivy.
5. Rubbing alcohol can be used to clean contaminated surfaces such as garden tool handles.
6. Wear vinyl gloves if you have to handle the plants as urushiol can penetrate rubber.

## What should I do if I get poison ivy?

1. Consult a doctor if you have developed a moderate to severe rash from poison ivy. They will know best how to treat you specifically.
2. Try not to scratch! Cut your fingernails short to minimize the possibility of opening the skin and spreading bacteria.
3. Apply wet compresses or soak the area in cool water.

**Remember: Everyone reacts slightly different to the treatment of poison ivy.**



Poison ivy as a trailing vine low to the ground.



Poison ivy as a shrub.



Close up of Poison ivy as a climbing vine.