

It's fun to have fun, but you have to know how," says Dr. Seuss's wily Cat in the Hat. Having fun certainly means not getting hurt, and at the beach, the way to avoid getting hurt is to respect and have some knowledge of the ocean. You can supply the respect; our aim here is to give you some knowledge you can use to ensure that your experience at the beach is only fun.

Take a few moments to review the following pointers with family members before you get to the beach. You'll be glad you did.

Before going on the beach

- Know when the tide is coming in and going out. You can obtain tide cards or books at motels, sport shops, sporting goods stores, and other shops. Most tidebooks contain coastal fishing and shellfish regulations, too.
- Know what you can and can't collect. The law regulates the gathering of sea stars and other marine life in all areas. Ask local authorities about restrictions.
- Leave guns at home. Shooting any kind of firearm is prohibited on Oregon beaches.

Driving on the beach

Inviting as it may look, the beach is not a good highway. Driving on the sand can do a lot of damage to your car, and if you're not careful, you could lose it entirely.

Driving on Oregon beaches is regulated. When you plan to drive on the beach, check the beach access sign as you enter. It spells out the regulations applying to that part of the beach. The speed limit on the beach is 25 miles per hour. Careful driving on the beach is just as important as it is on a road.

- Keep your car out of soft sand.
- Use caution when crossing streams.
- Never park your car and leave it unattended for long, especially at low tide—you could find it under several feet of water when you return.
- Don't drive over vegetation. In many areas, vegetation has been planted to protect private property from being buried by sand.
- Valuables aren't secure in your vehicle—take them with you.

Tides

Every 24 hours 50 minutes, the tide rises and falls twice. The outgoing tide is the most dangerous for swimming because it can pull almost anything, including huge logs, in its path.

Incoming tides are most dangerous for fishing and exploring—when you're not paying attention.

If you're boating, check not only the tides but also weather, wave conditions, and fog. The Coast Guard can supply this information.



High waves

Be alert at all times for extra-high waves. They come unexpectedly and they're especially dangerous to children—and to people who fish from low rocks and jetties. Occasional "sneaker" waves build up and come much higher than others.

Never play on or around logs and driftwood that can be rolled or tossed by unexpected waves. Many people have been disabled or even killed under the crush of rolling logs in the surf.



Rip currents or undertows

Strong outward currents of water, rushing out to sea, create such a force at certain spots along the beach that you can be swept off your feet and carried outward. Tides flowing in or out of bays and around jetties also cause very strong currents.

If you do get caught:

- Don't panic.
- Get into a horizontal position and stay afloat.
- Don't waste energy fighting against the strong current—keep calm.
- Swim or drift on down the beach to get out of the current.
- Swim in to shore at a different spot.

Sand dunes

Playing on the sand dunes is lots of fun, but exploring them alone is not for the inexperienced or for children. Sand is very unstable. Digging and tunneling in sand is hazardous and can be fatal. Tunnel walls can collapse and bury anyone caught in them. And, like snow in an avalanche, sand on the dune surface can slide downhill, filling holes and trapping unwary occupants.



Sunbathing and swimming

Sunbathing and swimming can be a fatal combination on hot summer days unless you exercise caution. In areas protected from the wind, air temperatures often climb into the 80°F range as a result of heat reflected from the sand. You might be tempted to plunge into the cold ocean (47 to 52°F) for relief, but the sudden temperature change can cause hypothermic shock and you can lose consciousness and drown. If you want to swim, enter the water *gradually*, so your body can become accustomed to the cold water.

Bay areas

Bays offer many recreational activities and abound in fish and shellfish. Slippery rocks and soft mud can be a hazard in some areas.

Hiking and climbing

Stay behind retaining walls. Cliff trails are slippery in wet weather. Don't trust shallow-rooted shrubs on coastal cliffs for climbing support. They could cause you to fall.

Many cliffs are undercut and unstable. Stay back from the edge.

Offshore rocks and jetties are a temptation to people who fish or explore nature—and to children. Often exposed during low tides, they may be under violent waves as the tide returns. Many lives have been lost when people became trapped offshore by incoming waves and tides.

Be careful when walking or playing on logs and driftwood piles. They often contain nails, broken glass, and other snags.

Do not climb or carve names on beachfront banks. They are major causes of erosion.

Also, please respect private property by using public accesses to and from the beach.

Exploring the beaches, bays, rocks, tide pools, dunes, and driftwood is exciting and educational. Enjoy them in safety—set a good example to children by observing precautions yourself.



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Beach fires

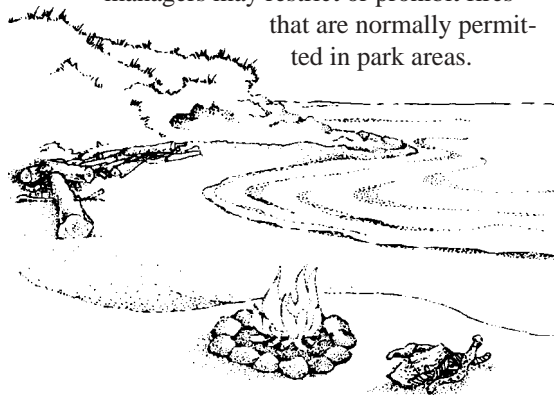
If you cook on the beach, check local regulations.

- Use fire pits that won't allow the wind to scatter and spread the fire.
- Douse untended fires with wet sand or water. Along parts of the coast, sand dunes have been stabilized with special grasses and shrubs. Untended fires can spread to this cover, damaging property and destroying years of work.
- Building a fire in driftwood is prohibited. Coastal breezes could easily fan a fire into an uncontrollable blaze. Build fires away from drift logs and beach or dune grasses.

In state parks, build fires only in approved places:

- camp stoves or fireplaces provided for this purpose
- portions of the beach designated as permissible for fires
- portable stoves in established campsites, park picnic areas, and designated beaches where fires are permitted

Note: When there's a high fire hazard, park managers may restrict or prohibit fires that are normally permitted in park areas.



Summary of beach safety pointers

- ✓ Never turn your back on the surf.
- ✓ If you play in the surf, pick the right place and time.
- ✓ Use only safe, marked trails to the beach.
- ✓ Don't let children explore alone on beach, surf, rocks, or sand dunes.
- ✓ Fires on beaches fronting state parks and waysides are subject to state park rules.
- ✓ Outside state park boundaries, recreational fires are permitted downwind and away from drift logs and beach or dune grass.
- ✓ Put out fires with wet sand or water when you leave.
- ✓ Use the buddy system when swimming, exploring, or beachcombing. Let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return.
- ✓ Check regulations, tides, and weather conditions before driving, hiking, swimming, or boating.

Enjoy Oregon's beautiful beaches in safety!

In case of emergency, contact:

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|---------------------|---------------------|
| Oregon State Police | Oregon State Parks |
| U.S. Coast Guard | U.S. Forest Service |
| Fire departments | Civil Air Patrol |

Or dial 911

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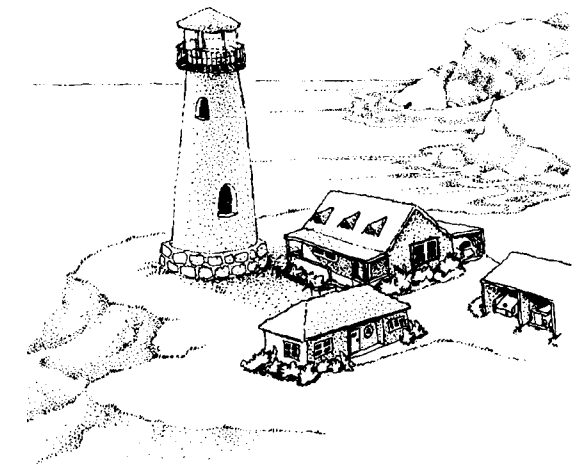
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Edited by Rick Cooper.



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Enjoy the beaches in safety



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