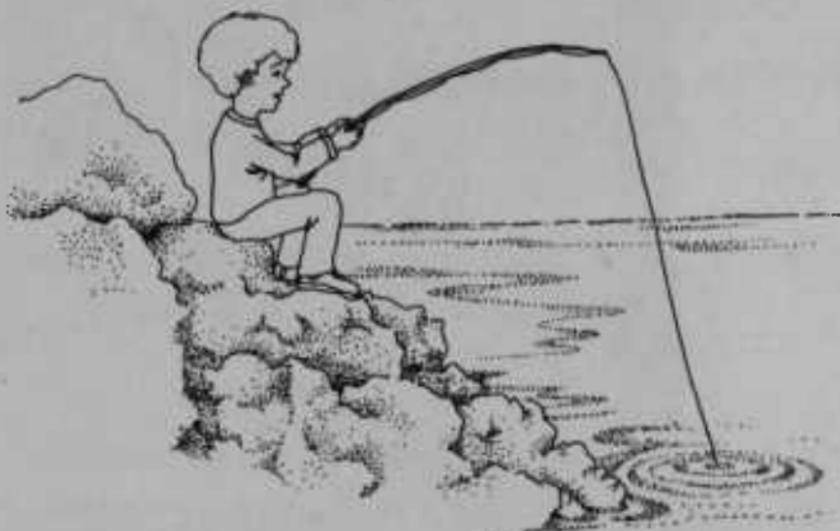


# Enjoy the Beaches --in Safety



**Oregon State University**  
**Extension Marine Advisory Program**  
**A Land Grant / Sea Grant Cooperative**  
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Welcome to the beautiful Oregon coast! We hope your visit will be one to remember joyfully—and we are sure it will be *if you treat the ocean with respect*.

Beachcombing, picnics, hiking, and taking pictures will all be happy memories of your holiday if you and your family heed the special safety rules for the coast areas:

Inviting though it looks, the beach is not always a good highway. Driving on the sand can do much damage to your car, and if you are not careful, you could lose it entirely.

If you plan to drive on the beach, check the current Oregon highway map, which will indicate whether driving is permitted on the section of beach you plan to visit. Driving is prohibited on some beaches—from Newport to Neskowin, for example. Signs are posted at most beach access points, and these usually include notices about driving rules. Remember that the beach speed limit is 25 miles per hour.

Careful driving on the beach is just as important in saving lives as it is on the highway. Keep your car out of soft sand and be cautious about crossing streams. Never park your car and leave it unattended for long, especially at low tide—or you could find it under several feet of water when you return!

Check the tide before going on the beach, rocks, or in the water. Tide cards or books may be

obtained at motels, sports shops, sporting goods stores, and other shops. Most tide books contain coastal fishing and shellfish regulations, too.

The law regulates gathering starfish and other marine life in some areas. Ask local authorities about restrictions and don't "collect" yourself into trouble.

Discharge of firearms is prohibited on Oregon beaches.

Here are a few marine cautions you will want the family to understand.



### Tides

Every 24 hours and 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 to unwary fishermen and explorers. If you are boating, you should check not only the tides, but also weather, wave conditions, fog, and so on. The Coast Guard can supply this information.

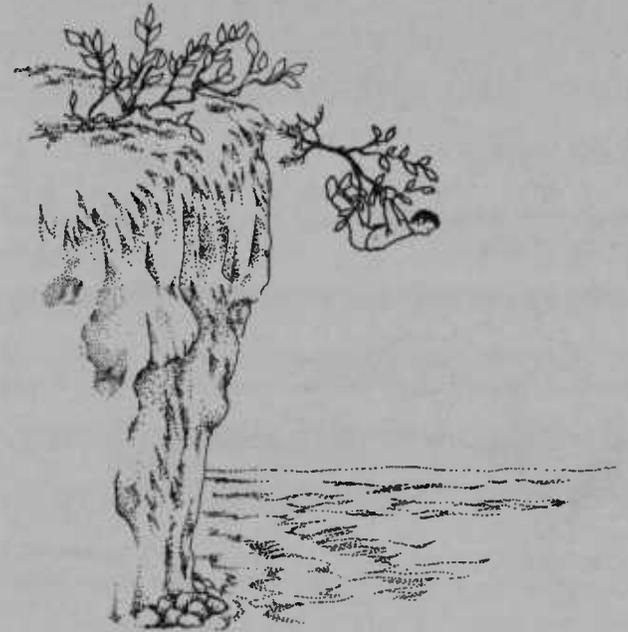


### High waves

Be alert at all times for extra high waves. They come unexpectedly and are especially dangerous to children and people of any age who fish from low rocks and jetties. Occasional "sneaker" waves build up and come much higher than others. Never play around logs and driftwood that can be rolled or tossed by unexpected waves. Many people have been crippled for life—and some have been killed—under the crush of rolling logs in the surf.

### Undertows or rip currents

Strong outward currents of water, rushing out to sea, create such a force at certain spots along the beach that a person can be swept off his or her feet and carried outward. Tides flowing in or out of bays and around jetties also cause very strong currents. If you *do* get caught, do not panic. Get in a horizontal position and stay afloat. Do not waste energy fighting against the strong current. Keep calm, swim or drift on down the beach to get out of the current, and swim in to shore at a different spot. Better yet, do not get caught.



### Hiking and climbing

Stay behind retaining walls and be sure the children do, too. Cliff trails are *slippery* in wet weather! Shallow-rooted shrubs on coastal cliffs cannot be trusted for climbing support, and they could cause the downfall of a thrill seeker. The thrill is gone when an adventurer falls to the rocks below.

Offshore rocks and jetties are a temptation to fishermen, nature explorers, and children. Often exposed during low tides, these may be under violent waves as the tide returns. Many lives have been lost when unwary persons let themselves be trapped offshore by incoming waves and tides.

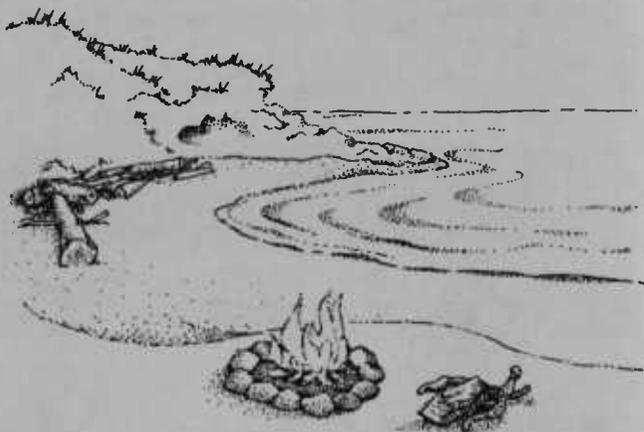
Logs and driftwood piles often contain nails, broken glass, and other snags. Treat them with respect.

*The coast is fun! Exploring the beaches, bays, rocks, tide pools, dunes, and driftwood is exciting and educational. But enjoy them in safety! Set a good example to children by observing sensible precautions yourself.*



### **Sand dunes**

Playing on the sand dunes is lots of fun, but exploring them alone is not for the inexperienced or for children.



### **Beach fires**

If you cook on the beach, check local regulations. Use fire pits that will not allow the wind to scatter and spread the fire. Douse unattended fires.

Building a fire in driftwood is prohibited. Coastal breezes could easily fan a fire into an uncontrollable state. Sand dune stabilization, with special beach grasses and shrub plantings, has been done along parts of the coast. Unattended fires can spread to this cover and destroy years of costly work as well as damage property.

### **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.

### **In case of emergency, contact:**

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

*Dial 0. The operator will help.*

### **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.
- Do not let children explore alone on beach, surf, rocks, or sand dunes.
- Build fires only in approved places. Put them out with sand or water when you leave.
- Use the buddy system when swimming or exploring.
- Check regulations, tides, and weather conditions before driving, hiking, swimming, and boating.

*Enjoy Oregon's beautiful beaches in safety.*

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