

BEACH SAFETY TIPS

- Never swim alone.
- Always swim near an open lifeguard station.
- If you are at a beach where there are no lifeguards, be cautious at all times. Remember swimming in waves is not the same as in a pool or lake. If in doubt-don't go out!
- Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards. Lifeguards are trained to identify potential hazards. Ask a lifeguard about the conditions before entering the water. This is part of their job.
- Pay especially close attention to children and elderly when at the beach. Even in shallow water, wave action can cause loss of footing.
- Never dive into shallow water-Remember "feet-first every time".
- Use swim fins and a leash whenever body-boarding.
- Keep at least 100-feet away from piers, jetties, and rocks because permanent rip currents often exist along side these structures. Remember to always obey warning signs.
- Never throw sand and always fill in holes before you leave the beach.
- Please do-not litter-leave the beach cleaner than you found it!
- Protect yourself from the sun-use sunscreen, wear a hat and sunglasses.
- Respect other beach patrons and remember your beach manners.
- Bicycle paths along the beach are like roads-So always look both ways before walking across.
- If you or someone in your group gets lost, tell the nearest lifeguard.



Inshore Holes

- Inshore holes are very dangerous to non-swimmers and small children because they can be swept into deep water quickly.
- Inshore holes are caused by relentless wave action on the sandy bottom off out beaches. Sand is pushed off shore during winter months. Surf, pushes it back toward the beach.
- Inshore holes causes uneven bottom contours that result in a dangerous condition where a beach patron can be standing in waist-deep water one moment, and step into a deep inshore hole the next.
- Inshore holes can be very deep, and the person may not be able to touch bottom.
- Inshore holes are sometimes just long trenches along the beach, but at other times they are characterized by deep color and flattened wave action.
- Inshore holes often turn into channels that can also cause rip currents.

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Rip Currents

A rip current can pull you away from the shoreline. If this happens:

- Remain calm to conserve energy and think clearly.
- Never fight against the current. Think of it like a treadmill that cannot be turned off, which you need to step to the side of.
- Swim out of the current in a direction following the shoreline. When out of the current, swim at an angle--away from the current--towards shore.
- If you are unable to swim out of the rip current, float or calmly tread water. When out of the current, swim towards shore.
- If you are still unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself by waving your arm and yelling for help.

How to Avoid and Survive Rip Currents

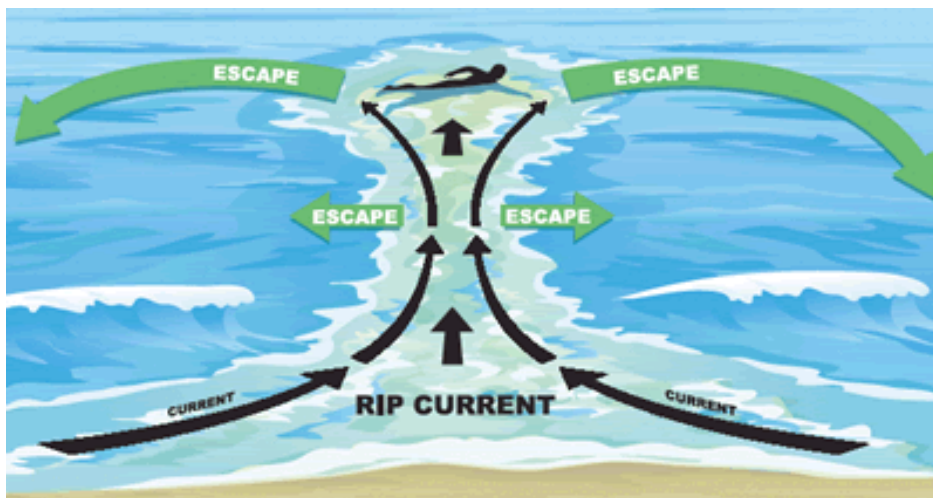


Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Field Research Facility at Duck, NC.

Ask The Lifeguard

- Always ask the lifeguard where it is safe to swim before going into the ocean.
- The lifeguard is the beach safety expert and is highly-trained in spotting both inshore holes and rip currents.

**Some material obtained from the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) and [Los Angeles County Fire Department](#)*