

# How to stay safe at the coast

A day at the beach is a fun way to spend time with friends and family. However, coastlines and beaches around the world can present all sorts of different hazards, which can turn a fun day out into a dangerous situation:

- **Tidal cut offs** – when the tide comes in quickly, trapping you in inaccessible areas of the beach
- **Rip currents** – strong currents which can quickly carry you away from the shore
- **Off-shore winds** – winds that blow away from the shore and out to sea
- **Cliff edges** – unstable and uneven ground at cliff edges can cause trips and falls

Some countries may experience other hazards based on their climate or wildlife. Before you spend time at the coast, research online about the risks to expect where you are and what precautions you should take to keep yourself and others safe.

# Safety tips



**Choose a lifeguarded beach.** The lifeguard will be able to help you if you get into trouble in the water.



**Check the tide times and weather forecast.** If strong winds or storms are forecast, it is safer to stay home.



**Pay attention to water safety signs and flags.** Signs and flags warn you of dangers, tell you where it's safe to swim, and provide you with other instructions on how to stay safe.



**Leave inflatables for the pool.** Inflatables are too light to be used in the sea - wind and strong currents can sweep them out to sea in seconds.



**Stay back from cliff edges.** They can be less stable than they look, while uneven ground can cause trips and falls.



**Take a fully charged mobile phone.** Take your phone with you in case you need to call for help.

**For more information, visit the RoSPA website:**  
[rospa.com/water-safety](https://rospa.com/water-safety)

