



accidents don't have to happen

xylem

Coastal Safety: Social Media Toolkit

Introduction

A day at the beach or a walk along the coast 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, many of which have the potential to turn a fun day out into a dangerous situation.

Some of the more common hazards at beaches and the coast include:

- **Tidal cut offs** – this is where the tide comes in quickly, trapping you in inaccessible areas of the beach
- **Rip currents** – these are strong currents running out to sea which can quickly carry you away from the shore
- **Off-shore winds** – these winds blow away from the shore and out to sea, and are particularly dangerous when doing watersports like paddleboarding or kayaking
- **Cliff edges** – the ground can be unstable and uneven, causing trips and falls.

Some countries may experience other coastal hazards based on their native climate or wildlife. Before you spend time at the coast, take a few minutes to do some research online about what hazards to expect and what precautions you should take to keep yourself and others safe.

Safety advice

- **Choose a lifeguarded beach.** The lifeguard can tell you where it's safe to swim and will be able to help you if you get into trouble in the water
- **Check the weather forecast.** If strong winds or storms are forecast, it is safer to stay home
- **Check the tide times.** The tide can come in very rapidly, which could cause you to become cut off or trapped. Check the tide times before you go and only explore as the tide is going out
- **Pay attention to water safety signs and flags.** Water safety signs and flags can warn you of dangers, tell you where it's safe to swim and provide you with other instructions on how to stay safe around the water



- **Don't use inflatables in the sea.** Rubber rings and novelty inflatables like blow-up flamingos and unicorns are too light to be used in the sea - wind and strong currents can sweep you and your inflatable away from the shore and out to sea in seconds
- **Stay back from cliff edges.** Cliffs can be less stable than they look, and uneven ground can cause trip and falls
- **Take a fully charged mobile phone.** However you're spending time at the coast, it's important to take your phone with you in case you need to call for help.

What to do in an emergency

If you get into trouble in the water, Float To Live:

1. Tilt your head back with your ears under the water
2. Stay calm and breathe normally
3. Move your hands to help you float
4. Don't worry if your legs sink, everybody floats differently
5. Once you feel calm, shout for help or swim to safety

If you get caught in a rip current:

- Don't try to swim against it – you'll get exhausted
- If you can stand, wade back to shore
- If you can't stand, swim parallel to the shore until you are free of the current and then make your way to shore
- Raise your hand and shout for help.

If you see someone in trouble in the water, remember Phone Float Throw:

- **Phone** the emergency services to get help
- Tell the person to stay calm and **float** on their back
- **Throw** them rescue equipment to help them float until the emergency services arrive.



Social media posts

We have created these posts to help you share information about staying safe at the coast with your family, friends and colleagues. You can post the images and captions directly to your feed or share the information privately via direct message. Posts can be used for Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn.

Post 1

Image

Here are some simple precautions you can take when visiting the beach or coast. They will help keep you and others safe and help ensure your visit to the beach is a fun one.

1. Choose a lifeguarded beach. The lifeguard will be able to help you if you get into trouble in the water.
2. Check the tide times and weather forecast. If strong winds or storms are forecast, it is safer to stay home.
3. Pay attention to water safety signs and flags. They warn you of dangers, tell you where it's safe to swim, and provide you with other instructions on how to stay safe.
4. 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.
5. Take a fully charged mobile phone with you in case you need to call for help.





Post 2

Image

A day at the beach is a fun way to spend time with friends and family. However, beaches and coastlines can be dangerous places if you don't know the risks.

Some of the more common hazards include:

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

There may be other hazards you should be aware of depending on where you are in the world. Always take a few minutes to do your research before you go – it will help keep you and others safe.

