

Safety Tips

Beach Holiday safety advice from The Royal Life Saving Society UK



Top 10 beach safety tips

1. Seek advice from your travel agent when booking a holiday to ask if the beach is safe and whether trained lifeguards will be on duty
2. Be aware that the most common time for children to have accidents on holiday is within the first hour of a holiday when parents are unpacking and distracted. Parents should take care during this time to make sure that they know where their children are
3. When you have unpacked, visit the beach and look for yourself what the potential dangers are before going into the sea
4. While at the beach never let your young children out of your reach –supervision is the key to preventing serious accidents
5. Always ask for local advice, for example from lifeguards, tourist information offices, local coastguard stations, or even local fishermen, on where and when it is not safe to stroll on the beach or enter the water
6. Do not swim near or dive from rocks, piers, breakwater and coral
7. Water safety signage can be very different in different countries, so find out what local warning flags and signs mean – and adhere to them
8. Inflatable dinghies or lilos are a well-known hazard – each year there are drownings as people on inflatables are blown out to sea. Do not use them in open water. Rather, use them in sheltered and confined spaces, such as rock pools
9. If you get stuck in quicksand or mud do not stand up. Lie down, spread your weight, shout for help and move slowly in a breaststroke action towards the shore
10. If you witness an emergency, whether it is in the UK or overseas, know how to summon help

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Do's

Do stay out of the water for at least an hour after eating

Do swim parallel with the beach

Do swim where you can be seen by other people on the beach

Do keep inflatables on the beach

Do go on a basic lifesaving course to learn how to avoid accidents and how to cope with them if they do occur

Do be aware of dangerous rip currents and strong tides

Do swim and dive in open water away from rocks, piers, breakwaters and coral

Do go swimming with a responsible friend or adult

Do swim close to the shore

Do drink alcohol only after going swimming – never drink and dive

British beach flag signs

It must be remembered that beach flag systems are different across the world. However, current discussions are taking place to hopefully co-ordinate the flags for the future.

Red – don't go into the water

Yellow – strong swimmers only

Green – safe to go into the water (NB Advice is that it is never totally 'safe' to go into the water and to enjoy your swims but to take all due care)

Red half over yellow - lifeguarded area – swim between the flags

Black and white quarters – surfing area, swimmers keep out

Orange wind sock – shows the direction of the wind. If the wind is blowing out to sea do not go into the water on an inflatable (NB Advice is never to go into the sea on an inflatable)

Red and white quarters – shark warning (unusual in this country)

For more information on RLSS UK and water safety advice, please visit www.rlss.org.uk

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Notes to News desks:

The Royal Life Saving Society UK, is the governing body and leading provider of training and education in lifesaving, lifeguarding, water safety and life support skills in the UK. Each year its volunteers train approximately 1 million people in water safety, rescue techniques and life support, including 95 per cent of all pool and beach lifeguards. As a national charity, *RLSS UK* relies on public support.