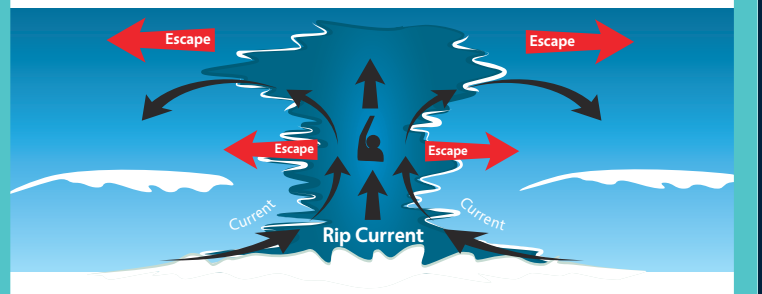
Rip Currents are powerful and fast-moving currents of water flowing away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmers out to sea.



If you get caught in a rip current...

Remain calm. Conserve your energy and remember to breathe.

Go with the flow. Don't try to fight the current. Float or calmly tread water. **Rip currents are not undertows.** The current will eventually release you offshore. Once this happens, swim at an angle away from the current toward shore.

Call or signal for help if you still require assistance, or if there are large waves or shoreline hazards.

Sharks will usually leave human swimmers alone, but chance encounters do happen. Here are some tips to lessen the chance of a shark encounter:



Do:

- Swim with a buddy or in a group.
- Leave the water if fish or turtles start to behave erratically.

Don't:

- Don't enter the water if you have any open wounds or are bleeding in any way. Sharks can detect blood and bodily fluids in extremely small concentrations.
- Don't enter the water when the water is murky, cloudy, polluted from run-off or has poor visibility for any reason.
- Don't enter the water at dawn, dusk or night when sharks are most active and/or moving closer to shore to find food. Be aware that some shark species, like tiger sharks, are always active, no matter what time of day.
- Don't swim, surf or dive near harbor entrances, river mouths and channels, especially after heavy rains. These types of waters are known to be frequented by sharks.

If in doubt, **DON'T GO OUT!**

For more information on beach safety, please visit the following websites:

Hawaii Beach Safety
www.hawaiibeachsafety.com

National Weather Service Forecast Office
www.prh.noaa.gov/pr/hnl

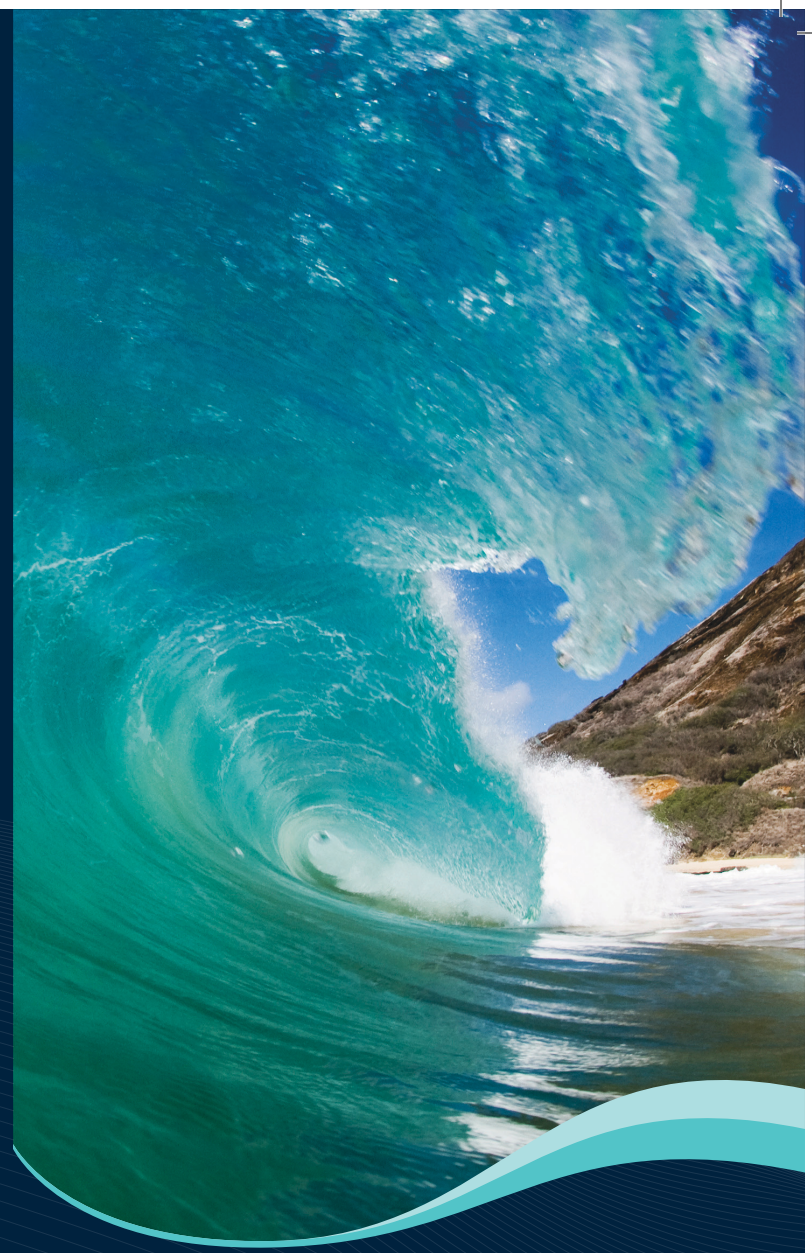
Official Ocean Safety Video and Swim Safe Tips
County of Maui, Ocean Safety
www.mauicounty.gov/oceansafety

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This educational brochure was produced in the interest of public safety and drowning prevention and cannot guarantee or warrant your safety at any of the locations described herein. The County of Maui and any of the individuals or organizations mentioned herein accept no responsibility, express or implied, for the use or mis-use of this educational brochure.



Official County of Maui

OCEAN SAFETY GUIDE

Beach Map • Essential Safety Tips

Maui County consists of the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai.

Maui itself is the second-largest island in the State of Hawaii and has more miles of sandy beaches than any other island. Lifeguards can be found at designated county beaches and at Makena State Beach Park ("Big Beach"), all of which are labeled on the map below with a ◆ symbol.



Makena Beach State Park

Also known as Big Beach, Makena Beach State Park has **an increased risk of neck and back injuries due to potentially large shorebreak**. Please exercise caution, listen to lifeguard warnings and pay attention to any warning signs posted.

See this symbol?

This is the official symbol worn by our County of Maui Ocean Safety Officers. Unless you see a lifeguard with this symbol along with a lifeguard tower, **you are not at a guarded beach.**

Some visitors assume that hotel or resort employees are watching you when you jump into the ocean. This is not their job nor their responsibility. Please be aware, and be safe.

Essential Safety Tips

- **Many ocean activities can be strenuous.** Please consult a doctor about any such activities beforehand, especially if you have a preexisting medical condition or are on medication.
- **Know your limits.** If you get tired while swimming in the ocean, you run the risk of drowning.
- **If you are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol** you increase your risk of drowning while in the ocean.
- **Ocean conditions can change in an instant.** Consult a lifeguard about ocean conditions if one is available.
- **Heed all posted warning signs.** They are there for your protection and safety.



- **Wave heights can increase very quickly.** If you find yourself faced with a large wave, do a "duck dive" underneath the wave and come up behind it, then swim to shore between wave sets. Make sure to check for rocks before you dive.



- **Waves can break in shallow waters and throw swimmers onto shore with great force.** Pay attention to the shorebreak and never turn your back to the ocean.
- **Hazards exist in all coastal areas**—not just in the water but on shore as well. Be careful on sand and rocks, both wet and dry.
- **For stand-up paddle boarders:** You are required to have a lifejacket if paddle boarding beyond the surf zone (half a mile from shore). The U.S. Coast Guard will require any paddle boarders in violation to go back into shallower waters.