

BEACH SAFETY – RIP CURRENTS

Rip currents are one of the greatest, and most common, hazards on Australian beaches. On average, rip currents are responsible for at least 21 drownings deaths in Australia each year. In addition, lifeguards perform countless rescues each and every year to assist swimmers who have been caught in rip currents.

There are many myths about the ocean, but rips are the number one hazard on Australian beaches. Avoid rips by swimming at a patrolled beach between the red and yellow flags.

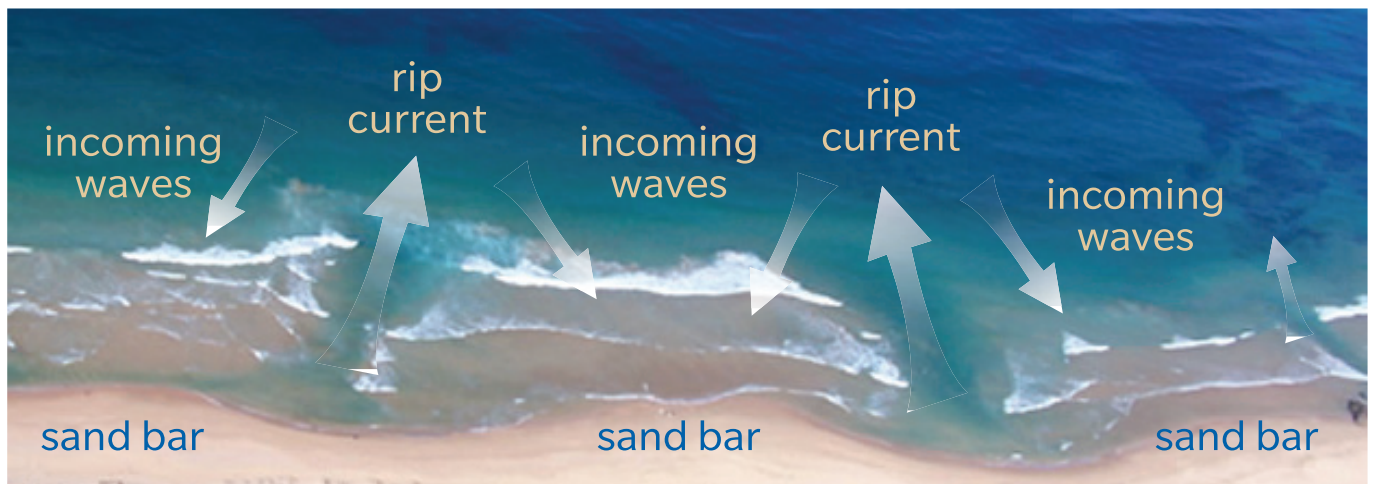
We're drawing the line on rips to make you stop and think before getting in the water. **STOP** to check for rips. **LOOK** for other dangers. **PLAN** how to stay safe.

HOW TO SPOT A RIP CURRENT

The key signs to look for are:

- Deeper and/or darker water
- Fewer breaking waves
- Sandy coloured water extending beyond the surf zone
- Debris or seaweed
- Significant water movement

Sometimes it can be easier to look for where the waves are breaking consistently, and then look to each side where they don't break consistently. Those areas are rip currents.



HOW TO SURVIVE A RIP CURRENT

If you're caught in a rip current, stay calm, conserve your energy and consider these options:

- Stay calm
- Seek help. Raise your arm and call out. You may be rescued
- Float with the current. It may return you to a shallow sandbank
- Swim parallel to the beach or towards the breaking waves. You may escape the rip current