

# HOW TO VISIT TIDEPOOLS

## Safely, Responsibly & Ethically

The intertidal zone along our coastlines supports lots of lifeforms and is a sensitive habitat. Tidepools are an incredible habitat to explore, but we must visit them with kindness and caution in order to prevent negative impacts on the marine life that we call the intertidal zone home. Below are some tips for making your trip to the shoreline safe for yourself and for the creatures.

Plan accordingly, first step is to **check a tide chart**. Each day there are two low tides and two high tides. [Willy Weather Tides](#) is a great resource. Look for values below one foot, but the best low tides are below zero ("minus tides").

Wear **sturdy shoes** and clothes that can get wet. Rubber boots are preferred by many people. Layer up and bring sunscreen! The shoreline can be windy and cold at times, and other times very hot; plan accordingly.

### At the tidepools:

1. **Walk, don't run.** Rocks can be slippery, and unstable. Walking also applies less pressure on the plants and animals under your feet.
2. **Watch where you're walking**, and step on exposed rock or sand instead of a plant or animal when possible.
3. Keep your eye on the ocean, **don't turn your back on the ocean** for long!
4. Observe the tidepool from its edge, instead of getting inside the pool.
5. If you turn over rocks, do so gently, and always **place the rock back** where you found it. Many creatures live underneath and on top of the rocks, so be gentle and slow when handling.
6. The intertidal zone is a marine habitat, so **get your hands wet** with seawater before handling any creatures (to avoid transferring chemicals/oils on our hands). Some intertidal animals are very delicate, so always **touch them gently**.

**Take only memories and photos.** Do not remove, collect, or harvest any animals or plant life from the tidepools. Many marine areas are protected, so taking anything is illegal. Check local rules and regulations if you plan to take anything.

Practice good **leave-no-trace** principles. If you want to collect, consider collecting trash, and properly disposing of it when you get home!



Left: Opalescent Nudibranch (*Hermisenda opalescens*), Top Right: Ochre Sea Star (*Pisaster ochraceus*) Bottom Right: Tidepool

#### References:

- Tidepooling in Alaska Etiquette, [Alaska Department of Fish & Game](#)
- Low tide etiquette: 10 ways to stay safe and respect tide pools on the Oregon coast, [The Oregonian](#)
- How to Keep the Tidepools Healthy, [Fitzgerald Marine Reserve](#)

**MORE INFO AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS: [WWW.PACIFICBEACHCOALITION.ORG](http://WWW.PACIFICBEACHCOALITION.ORG)**