

# BEACH SAFETY

Surf and beach safety are an extremely important issue when visiting the popular Australian beaches.

## First remember the Ten Commandments of Surf Swimming:

1. **Do Not** bathe outside the red and yellow flags which mark the safe swimming area.
2. **Do Not** bathe directly after a meal or under the influence of alcohol.
3. **Do Not** bathe when beach is closed. Observe the visual sign "Danger - Reserve closed to bathing" and the red flag.
4. **Do Not** bathe where there are no safety flags in position.
5. **Do Not** get excited if caught in a current or undertow, but raise one arm up and float until help arrives.
6. **Do Not** struggle if seized with a cramp, but raise your arm for help, float and keep the affected parts of your body perfectly still.
7. **Do Not** go out far when a yellow flag is flying, it means the surf is dangerous.
8. **Do Not** bathe if unsure of surf conditions, but seek the advice of the lifeguard or lifesaver.
9. **Do Not** struggle against a rip or current, but swim diagonally across it. If caught in a rip, stay on your float or surfboard.



**Below are the flags** that you may see when at the beach, and the relevant meanings for each of them. Please make sure that you abide by these flags. They are there for your safety.



**Second beware the sun in Australia, Skin cancer is the most lethal issue down under, so SLIP on a shirt, SLOP on sunscreen and SLAP on a hat.**

The perfect way to relax in Australia is to go to the beach. Although it is great fun, there are a few guidelines you should follow to ensure a safe and enjoyable day

- Always use a high protection sunscreen.
- Wear a hat and sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Avoid sitting out in the sun during the middle of the day.
- Make sure you cover up if going into the water (wear a T-shirt).
- Keeping out of the sun between 10am and 3pm
- Do not swim after you have eaten or if you have consumed alcohol.
- Follow all instructions from the Lifeguards on duty.
- Do not swim on beaches that are closed or that aren't patrolled by Lifeguards.
- Stay out of the water if unsure of the surf conditions or there are no safety flags.

**SUNSCREENS: Advice from the cancer fund**

- The sun does not need to feel hot to damage your skin. The damage is done by ultraviolet (UV) radiation, not related to temperature. UVA ages the skin and UVB burns the skin. Both can cause skin cancer.
  - Sunscreens should not be relied on as the only means of protection. It should be used with natural protection – staying in the shade, wearing protective clothing including a hat...
  - There are two types of sunscreen. *Absorbers* (e.g. cinnamates) soak up UV rays and prevent them reaching the skin. *Reflectors* (e.g.) zinc oxide) reflect or scatter UV rays away from the skin.
  - Not all sunscreens have the same ingredients – if your skin reacts, try another with different chemical. Reflectors may be more suitable for sensitive skins.
- Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30+. Broad spectrum means it blocks out UVA and UVB. Make sure the sunscreen is water resistant and check the use-by date!
- Water-resistant sunscreens should be used for swimming, outdoor activities and work, and in humid climates.
  - Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outdoors. Apply generously and evenly on clean, dry skin. Reapply every two hours.
  - SPF Stands for 'Sun Protection Factor'.