

Types of Rips

Fixed rip

Found only on sand beaches, they pull offshore in one location because the depth directly underneath is greater than surrounding depths. There rips are usually created when the water transported by incoming surf “piles” up between the shore and offshore sandbars, as well as incoming surf. The water returns to sea, following the path of least resistance, which is normally a low point in the sandbar system. When surf conditions change, fixed rips may also change if wave action moves underlying sand. Thus, a fixed rip may lie in a spot for an extended period of hours, days, or months, or change or even disappear within a matter of hours.

Permanent rip

These rip currents are stationary year-round, though they may vary in intensity. They’re usually found on coastlines with rocks or reefs and exist due to undulations in the bottom that don’t change. The speed and power of these rips depends entirely on the size of the surf. These rips usually pull harder than sand beach rips because water moves more forcefully over solid stationary obstacles, and the excess flow of water may be more concentrated in pronounced, fixed channels. Piers, rock jetties, drainpipes, projecting points of land, and some beach contours may also force lateral currents to turn seaward, creating permanent rip currents.

Flash rip

Temporary rips generated by increased volumes of water brought to shore from concentrated sets of waves are called flash rip currents. These do not typically accompany depressions in the bottom. Flash rips, like flash floods on land, occur unexpectedly and without warning. When they strike an otherwise safe swimming area suddenly, part of the crowd can be quickly swept from shallow water.

Travelling rip

These do not accompany depressions in sand or reef formations. They move along the beach pushed by the prevailing direction of the waves. Travelling rips usually occur in a strong, one-direction swell movement with long, well-defined periods. The wave action moves the rip away from the set of waves that feeds it. A travelling rip usually continues moving and pulling well into the lull period until the excess water has dissipated. The next set of waves starts the process all over again. They can be pushed 2-300 yards and farther along the beach. They are like flash rips except that their movement is predictable once their sequence has begun and the established pattern repeats itself.

Adapted from Open Water Lifesaving – The United States Lifesaving Association Manual with permission.



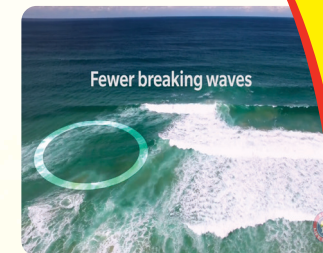
A narrow, darker gap between areas of breaking waves is one sign of a rip current.

Safety tips

- Know how to swim.
- Never swim alone.
- If in doubt, don’t go out.
- Swim near a lifeguard.
- Know how to recognise a rip current

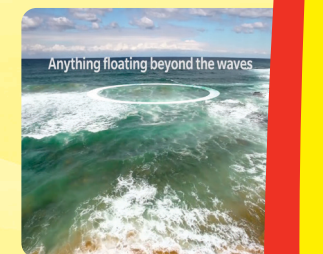
Where can I get more information about rip currents?

- Before you leave for the beach, check the latest National Weather Service forecast for local beach conditions.
- When you arrive at the beach, ask lifeguards about rip currents and other hazards.
- Look for signs highlighting hazards
- More information about rip currents can be found on; www.weather.gov/safety/ripcurrent oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/ripcurrent.html rnl.org/safety/know-the-risks/rip-currents



BREAK THE GRIP OF THE RIP!®

HOW TO SPOT AND SURVIVE RIP CURRENTS



Rip currents account for more than 80% of rescues performed by surf beach lifeguards.

What are rip currents:

- ❏ Rip currents are channelized currents of water flowing away from shore like a river flowing very fast seaward.
- ❏ Rip currents typically form at breaks in sandbars, and also near structures such as jetties and piers.
- ❏ Rip currents are commonly found at all surf beaches.

Why are rip currents dangerous?

- ❏ Rip currents pull people away from shore.
- ❏ Rip current speeds can vary from moment to moment and can quickly increase to become dangerous to anyone entering the surf.
- ❏ Rip currents can sweep even the strongest swimmer away from shore.

What are the clues that a rip current may be present?

- ❏ A narrow gap of darker, seemingly calmer water between areas of break waves and white water.
- ❏ A Channel of churning, choppy water.
- ❏ A difference in water colour.
- ❏ A line of foam, seaweed or debris moving seaward.

What if I'm caught in a rip current?

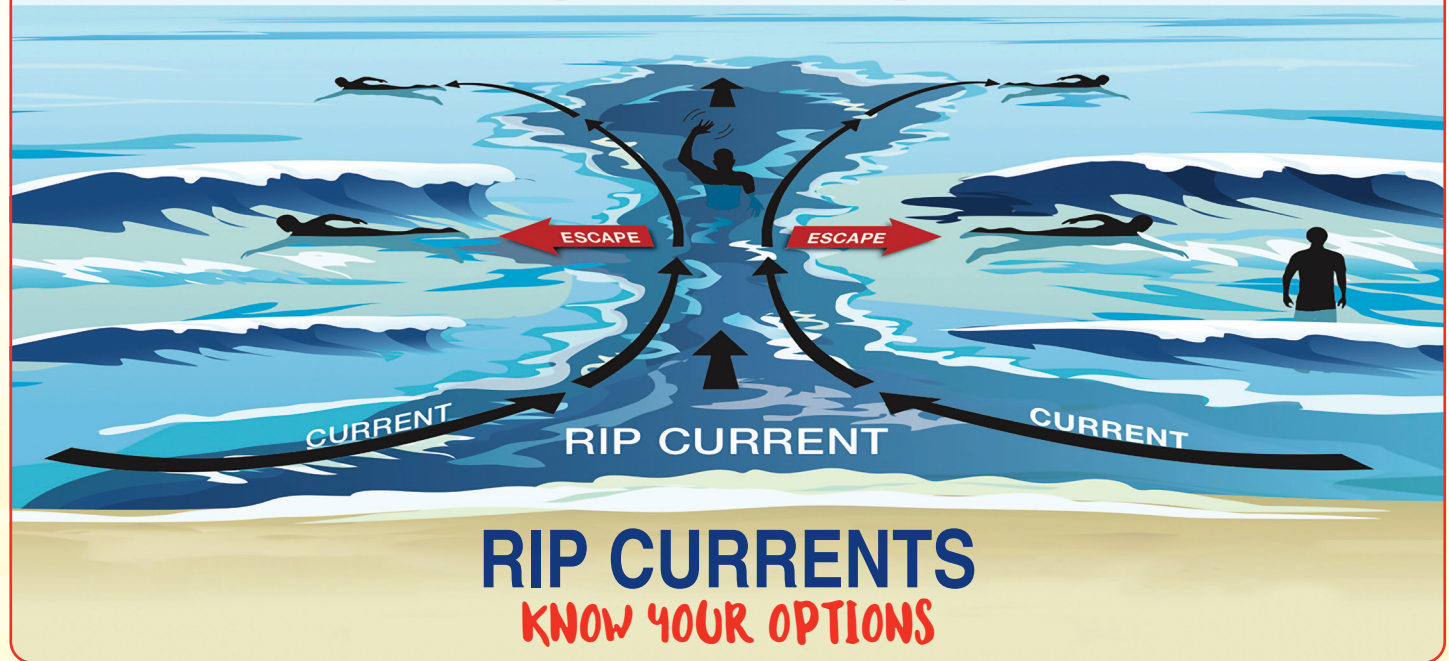
- ❏ Relax, rip currents don't pull you under.
- ❏ Don't swim against the current.
- ❏ You may be able to escape by swimming out of the current in a different direction following the shoreline, or towards breaking waves, then at an angle towards the beach.
- ❏ You may be able to escape by floating or treading water if the current circulates back towards shore.
- ❏ if you feel you will be unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself. If you need help, yell and wave for assistance.



Beware of rip currents

RIP CURRENTS

Know your options



How do I help someone else?

Don't become a victim while trying to help someone else!

Many people have died trying to rescue rip current victims.

- ❏ Get help from a lifeguard.
- ❏ If a lifeguard is not present, call 999 or 112, then try to direct the victim to swim following the shoreline to escape.
- ❏ If possible, throw the rip current victim something that floats.
- ❏ Never enter the water without a flotation device.



Scan me to find your nearest Ringbuoy

Facts about rip currents

- ❏ Rip current speeds can vary. Average speeds are 1-2 feet per second, but they have been measured as fast as 8 feet per second — faster than an olympic swimmer!
- ❏ Rip currents can be very narrow or more than 50 yards wide.
- ❏ Sometimes a rip current ends just beyond the line of breaking waves; however, others may continue to flow hundreds of yards offshore.
- ❏ Rip currents do not pull people under the water — they pull people away from shore, it is the panic and exhaustion that leads to drowning.
- ❏ Rip currents are sometimes mistakenly called undertow or riptides but these terms are not correct. Only the term rip currents is technically correct.



EVERYONE GOING ONTO THE BEACH SHOULD MAKE THEMSELVES AWARE OF THE RINGBUOY LOCATIONS.