Before going on the beach
- Know when the tide is coming in and going out. You can obtain tide cards or books at motels, sport shops, sporting goods stores, and other shops. Most tidebooks contain coastal fishing and shellfish regulations, too.
- Know what you can and can’t collect. The law regulates the gathering of sea stars and other marine life in all areas. Ask local authorities about restrictions.
- Leave guns at home. Shooting any kind of firearm is prohibited on Oregon beaches.
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Driving on the beach
Inviting as it may look, the beach is not a good highway. Driving on the sand can do a lot of damage to your car, and if you’re not careful, you could lose it entirely.

Driving on Oregon beaches is regulated. When you plan to drive on the beach, check the beach access sign as you enter. It spells out the regulations applying to that part of the beach. The speed limit on the beach is 25 miles per hour. Careful driving on the beach is just as important as it is on a road.
- Keep your car out of soft sand.
- Use caution when crossing streams.
- Never park your car and leave it unattended for long, especially at low tide—you could find it under several feet of water when you return.
- Don’t drive over vegetation. In many areas, vegetation has been planted to protect private property from being buried by sand.
- Valuables aren’t secure in your vehicle—take them with you.

Sunbathing and swimming
Sunbathing and swimming can be a fatal combination on hot summer days unless you exercise caution. In areas protected from the wind, air temperatures often climb into the 80°F range as a result of heat reflected from the sand. You might be tempted to plunge into the cold ocean (47 to 52°F) for relief, but the sudden temperature change can cause hypothermic shock and you can lose consciousness and drown. If you want to swim, enter the water gradually, so your body can become accustomed to the cold water.

Bay areas
Bays offer many recreational activities and abound in fish and shellfish. Slippery rocks and soft mud can be a hazard in some areas.

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(Continued on the other side)
Summary of beach safety pointers

✓ Never turn your back on the surf.
✓ If you play in the surf, pick the right place and time.
✓ Use only safe, marked trails to the beach.
✓ Don’t let children explore alone on beach, surf, rocks, or sand dunes.
✓ Fires on beaches fronting state parks and waysides are subject to state park rules.
✓ Outside state park boundaries, recreational fires are permitted downwind and away from drift logs and beach or dune grass.
✓ Put out fires with wet sand or water when you leave.
✓ Use the buddy system when swimming, exploring, or beachcombing. Let someone know where you’re going and when you plan to return.
✓ Check regulations, tides, and weather conditions before driving, hiking, swimming, or boating.

Enjoy Oregon’s beautiful beaches in safety!

In case of emergency, contact:

Oregon State Police  Oregon State Parks
U.S. Coast Guard  U.S. Forest Service
Fire departments  Civil Air Patrol
Or dial 911

Beach fires

If you cook on the beach, check local regulations.
• Use fire pits that won’t allow the wind to scatter and spread the fire.
• Douse untended fires with wet sand or water. Along parts of the coast, sand dunes have been stabilized with special grasses and shrubs. Untended fires can spread to this cover, damaging property and destroying years of work.
• Building a fire in driftwood is prohibited. Coastal breezes could easily fan a fire into an uncontrollable blaze. Build fires away from drift logs and beach or dune grasses.
In state parks, build fires only in approved places:
—camp stoves or fireplaces provided for this purpose
—portions of the beach designated as permissible for fires
—portable stoves in established campsites, park picnic areas, and designated beaches where fires are permitted

Note: When there’s a high fire hazard, park managers may restrict or prohibit fires that are normally permitted in park areas.

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