










Go on a beach clean


Educator Notes

Age				
Early Years	4-7	8-12	12-15	16+
				

Time				
> 10 mins	> 30 mins	> 60 mins	> 2 hours	Long term
				

Season				
All year	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
				

Curriculum Links	
Expressive Arts	
Health & Wellbeing	
Literacy & English	
Mathematics	
Sciences	
Social Studies	
Technologies	

Location		
Indoors	Outdoors	Either
		

Equipment list
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong bin bags (or buckets) • Thick gardening gloves • Sturdy footwear (ideal for rocky beaches!) • Litter pickers (optional - you can ask your local council if you can borrow some)

Instructions

You could start with a little interactive quiz about litter, asking your group how long they think these items take to break down in the environment. Remember, plastic never fully goes away – it just breaks into little pieces.

- Fishing line - 600 years
 - Plastic bottle - 450 years
 - Tyres - Up to 2000 years
 - Crisp packet - 100 years
1. Make sure you read our Visiting the Coast Safely sheet (next page) before you head out.
 2. Avoid picking up any broken glass or sharp objects, anything very large or heavy, and anything that appears dangerous. Try not to overfill bags to avoid splitting.
 3. Discuss the findings with the group... Did anyone find anything weird or interesting? What can we do to stop litter ending up in the environment?
 4. Afterwards, you could separate everything out into different piles and record the rubbish you found. Surveys are very helpful for researchers! You can download a litter survey form from the Marine Conservation Society's website [here](https://www.mcs.org.uk/litter-survey-form).



Visiting the Coast Safely

If you are taking your group to visit the coast, it is important to do so safely! Before your trip, it is important to assess the site you are visiting and complete a comprehensive **risk assessment**. We have included some things to keep in mind below.

Take a read of the [Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#) and [Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code](#) before you go. These guidelines are there for your safety and the protection of nature. They also have resources and activities on their website that you can use with your group.







Check out The Royal National Lifeboat Institution's (RNLI) guidance when it comes to visiting coasts and beaches by visiting their website [here](#).

Things to keep in mind before and during your rock pooling:

- It is important to know the **tide times** when visiting the coast – you can find this by visiting the MET office website [here](#). While you're out, be aware of your surroundings and the tide's direction.
- Prepare for the **weather** - coasts can be windier! Many layers if it's cold. Alternatively, sun cream and hats if it's warm. Always check for weather warnings before heading out.
- Look up your **nearest public toilet** before heading out. You could contact cafe/leisure facilities ahead of time to ask if your group can use their toilets too.
- Be aware of limited **phone reception** in remote places. Keep a mobile to hand. Know your nearest landline (a nearby café?)
- Keep to **designated paths and dune boardwalks**. Beware of uneven, unstable or slippery ground (rocks can end up particularly slippery!). Don't climb up or go near the top or bottom of a cliff.
- Stick together. Having your group wear brighter clothing can help. A great way to **set boundaries** with young people is to get them to identify the boundaries themselves. Explain what the activity is and then ask them to suggest where is on limits and where is off limits.
- Treat **coastal wildlife with care**. Keep a distance from seals who are enjoying the beach too. Be mindful of **ground nesting birds** in the summer by sticking to paths and keeping **dogs** on leads – and read signs as many beaches don't allow dogs during breeding season. Leave animals where you find them. Carefully lift and replace any rocks you move and leave attached seaweed in place.
- Take **your rubbish home** (and any rubbish you can see and pick up safely). Bring a rubbish bag with you.

Go on a litter pick or beach clean

You will need:

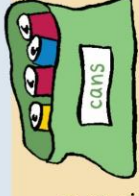
- an adult helper
- a group of friends (optional but useful!)
- thick gardening gloves 
- strong bin bags 
- brightly coloured clothes (for visibility near roads) 
- suitable footwear (sturdy boots for rocky beaches) 

Ask an adult to take you on a litter pick or beach clean.

Ask an adult if you're not sure whether to pick something up.



carrier bags



Try not to overfill bags to avoid splitting.



You could try separating litter into different bags for recycling.

Things to avoid

- broken glass
- sharp objects
- dog poo bags
- anything dirty or dangerous
- large or heavy rubbish
- bottles of liquid



cigarette butts



bits of plastic



empty cans



crisp packets or wrappers



fishing net



empty bottles



paper