

Make an Aquascope to Explore Tide Pools

Visiting the rocky shore offers an exciting look at ocean plants and animals in the place they call home. Though tide pool creatures survive harsh conditions, they're easily hurt or disturbed by human visitors. Using a homemade aquascope, you can watch tide pool life right where it is and leave the animals in their tide pool homes.

Materials

Large "No. 10" can or large coffee can with both ends removed

Waterproof plastic tape

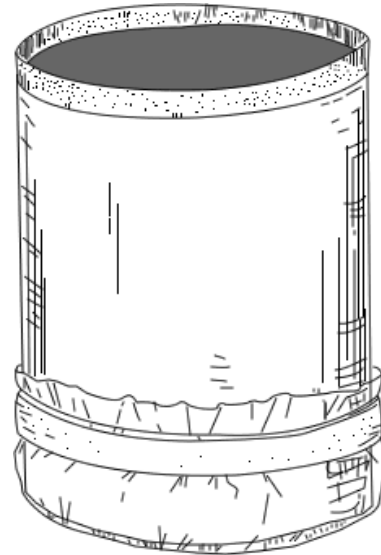
Heavy rubber bands

Clear plastic bag or food wrap

Black paint (optional)

Directions

1. Paint the inside of the can with black paint (optional but helps viewing).
2. Cover the top and bottom rim of the can with plastic tape to cover the sharp edges.
3. Stretch the plastic bag or food wrap TIGHTLY over the bottom of the can.
4. Secure the plastic bag or wrap against the can with one or more heavy rubber bands.
5. Seal the edges of the plastic against the can with waterproof tape if available.



Barnacles and other tide pool dwellers thank you for stepping carefully when you visit their homes—remember, you could be walking on someone's head or feet! Stay on bare rocks where you won't crush animals or rip slippery seaweeds.



The best and safest times to visit tide pools are when the tide is low and still going out. You'll find tide times in newspapers, TV weather reports and sporting goods stores. For safety's sake, keep your eyes out for waves, and visit tide pools with friends or family.

Leave ocean animals in their homes. Most will die if pried from the rocks, and all of them need the oxygen from seawater to breathe. Always return animals exactly as you found them. Replace any rocks or shells that you turn over—they are homes for many animals. In the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, plants and animals, rocks and shells are protected. Collecting them is not allowed, even those found high on the beach.