

# Monterey Bay Aquarium

## Tide Pool Etiquette

The Monterey Bay and its coastline are part of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, which protects many marine habitats and the plants and animals that live there. Visiting the rocky shore can provide an exciting look at ocean plants and animals in their native habitats. Here are a few reminders to help keep you and the rocky shore animals safe and healthy.

### **Watch where you step.**

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, rip slippery seaweeds or risk a fall.

### **Look closely.**

Instead of picking them up, quietly stop and watch the rocky shore animals for a few minutes. You'll see and learn much more this way. Using a homemade aquascope (see page two), you can watch tide pool life right where it is and leave the animals in their homes.

### **Touch gently.**

In the Sanctuary, plants, animals, rocks and shells are protected. Collecting them isn't allowed—even those found high on the beach. If you do touch an animal, wet your hands first and touch gently. Touching animals with dry fingers can damage their delicate surfaces. If the animal tries to escape, let it go. 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're homes for many animals.

### **Keep an eye out.**

Large waves can be dangerous, even deadly. Don't turn your back on the ocean, even for a moment.

### **Use all your senses.**

Listen to the sounds of the waves and birds; feel the cool ocean breeze; smell the salty air.

## 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

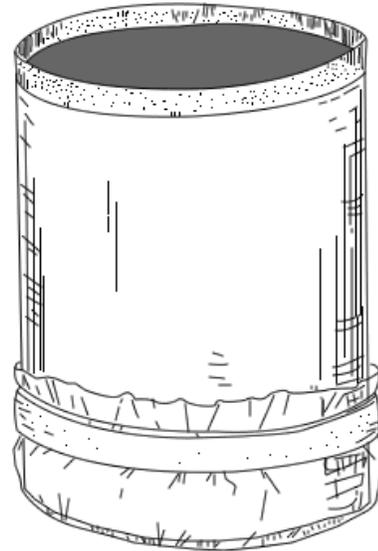
Heavy rubber bands

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.



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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.

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