

HOW TO SURVIVE A RIPTIDE

Riptides, or rip currents, are long, narrow bands of water that quickly pull any objects in them away from shore and out to sea. They are dangerous but are relatively easy to escape.

1 Do not struggle against the current.

Most riptide deaths are caused by drowning, not the tides themselves. People often exhaust themselves struggling against the current, and cannot make it back to shore.

2 Do not swim in toward shore.

You will be fighting the current, and you will lose.

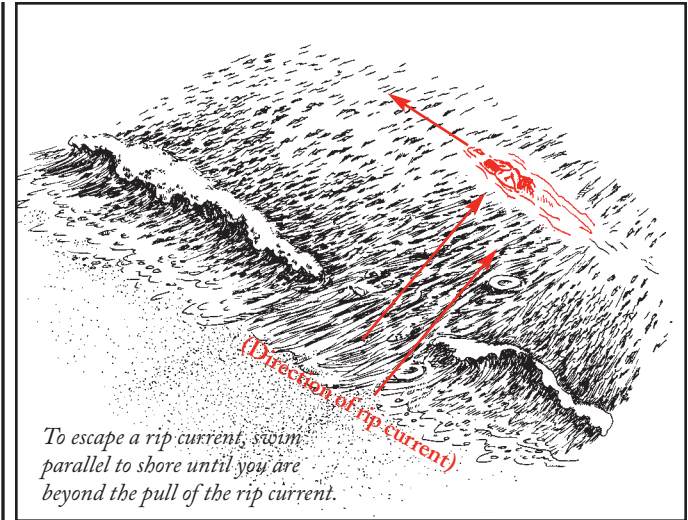
3 Swim parallel to shore, across the current.

Generally, a riptide is less than 100 feet wide, so swimming beyond it should not be too difficult.

4 If you cannot swim out of the riptide, float on your back and allow the riptide to take you away from shore until you are beyond the pull of the riptide.

Rip currents generally subside 50 to 100 yards from shore.

5 Once the riptide subsides, swim sideways and back to shore.



Be Aware

- Riptides occur more frequently in strong winds.
- Streaks of muddy or sandy water and floating debris moving out to sea through the surf zone are signs that riptides are present, as are areas of reduced wave heights in the surf zone and depressions in the beach running perpendicular to shore.