

Watching whales and dolphins can be an awe inspiring and unforgettable experience. Whale and dolphin watching trips should be calm, controlled, and guided by a deep concern for the animals' well-being and safety.



The following information is intended to give general guidance only – be sure to find out about local rules and regulations.

GENERAL DOS AND DON'TS

- To make encounters as unthreatening as possible, always allow the whale or dolphin to control the nature and duration of the encounter
- Never pursue or harass whales or dolphins
- If they appear agitated or disturbed, leave the area
- Keep a good look out at all times to avoid collisions or inadvertent harassment
- Be especially careful around mothers and calves – keep at a distance and never separate them
- Keep all noise to a minimum
- Experts advise not to touch or feed whales or dolphins
- Take litter home with you: trash can kill, especially when it is mistaken for food
- Do not buy whale products – they are strictly protected under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)



SIGNS OF AGITATION IN WHALES AND DOLPHINS MAY INCLUDE

- Rapid changes in direction or speed
- Erratic behaviour
- Escape tactics such as prolonged diving
- Tail slapping or tail swishing



SWIMMING WITH WHALES AND DOLPHINS

Whale and dolphin behavior is not thoroughly understood: to protect humans, whales and dolphins, experts advise that it is best to observe and appreciate the animals without entering the water.



Participating in whale watching programmes helps to protect whales by raising awareness about them and providing income to local people

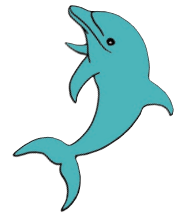
Be sure to find out about local laws and regulations as they may differ from these general guidelines



VIEWING GUIDELINES

Whales and dolphins are much less likely to show signs of disturbance if they do not feel threatened. It is therefore important not to chase or herd them and for boats to move in a predictable manner. For example:

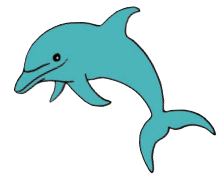
- Keep to a no-wake speed and never try to overtake whales or dolphins
- Avoid sudden changes in speed, direction or noise level
- Keep a safe distance (100 metres – 110 yards) from whales and dolphins
- Do not encircle, chase or separate animals and always leave an escape route
- Never approach whales or dolphins from the front, and stay out of their path so they are not forced to change course
- Do not engage in “leapfrogging” or jumping ahead of a whale’s path to force an encounter



In the “viewing zone”

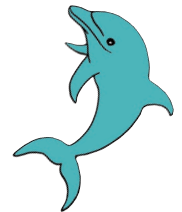
The “viewing zone” is generally considered to be 100–400 metres (110–440 yards) behind and to the side of a group of whales or dolphins. Boats should:

- Exercise caution and keep to a no-wake speed when moving into or out of viewing zones
- If possible, coordinate approaches into the viewing zone with other vessels to avoid “trapping” whales or dolphins
- Limit viewing time to around 30 minutes per vessel
- Limit the number of vessels in the viewing zone to one or two at a time
- Stay on a course parallel to that of the whales or dolphins



If whales or dolphins approach within 100 metres (110 yards)

Boats should maintain their course and continue dead slow or stop, leaving the engines to run in neutral.



Dolphins and bow riding

- Boats should not drive through groups of dolphins to encourage them to ride the bow wave – not all dolphins will want to bow ride and many will find it stressful
- If dolphins approach to ride the bow wave, the boat should try to maintain the same speed and direction, or slowly stop and let them pass

CAUTION – TO LET WHALES AND DOLPHINS KNOW WHERE BOATS ARE
 Do not approach whales or dolphins under sail only or with engines off
 Always keep the boat’s engine running even when drifting

