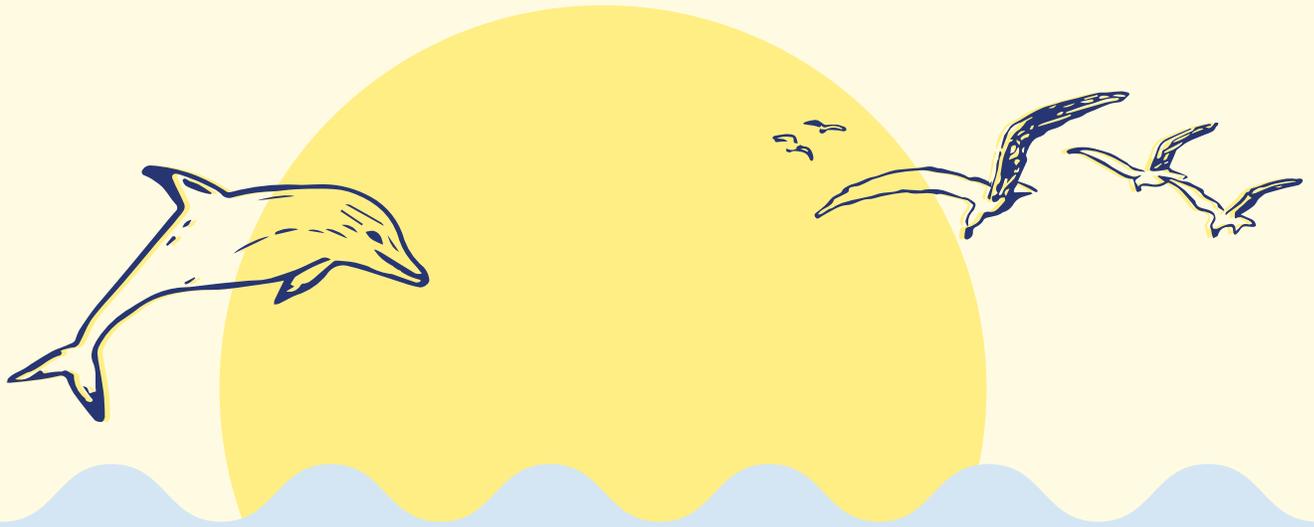


Junior Water Lovers Field Guide



Let's explore and learn about the ocean, waves
and beaches with The Surfrider Foundation.





Covering 71 percent of Earth’s surface and supplying half of our oxygen, the ocean is Earth’s support system. From our food and transportation to medicine and climate regulation, the world’s ocean provides countless benefits.

The ocean is home to millions of marine animals and some of the planet’s most diverse ecosystems. Freshwater rivers and lakes also provide habitat and water for animals across the planet and are often connected to the ocean downstream. The health of our ocean, coastlines and waterways determine the health of our planet—every drop of water we drink and every breath we take are dependent on their sustainability.



Here are some fun and engaging water-based activities that instill respect and love of our beaches and waterways, provide rich developmental learning outcomes and lend themselves to spending time outside.

Note: These activities are designed for kids ages 2–5, but can be modified for younger and older kids.



Activity 1

Make a boat.

Give little ones an introduction to the concept of preventing waste and reusing materials to make new things.

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY



30–40
mins.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Required by adult:



NEVER LEAVE A CHILD
UNATTENDED WITH WATER

Level of prep required:



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Something that floats for the base of your boat:

(lid of a small cardboard box, three corks tied together with string, two corks glued to the base of the cardboard, etc.)

Decoration materials

(e.g. foam stickers, permanent marker, etc.)

Wooden dowel or popsicle stick

Adhesive

(Gorilla Glue, hot glue or duct tape)

Safety scissors

WHAT YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING:

- Fine motor skills as they manipulate the materials
- Hand-eye coordination as they pick up and place materials
- Introduction to the concept of floating vs. sinking objects
- Introduction to the concept of preventing waste and reusing materials
- Vocabulary words related to boats, water and waves



Activity steps on next page.



What you do:

1



Create your boat base using your chosen floatable material (think: tie three corks together or locate the lid of a small cardboard box).

2



Decorate your base with waterproof items like foam shape stickers and permanent marker. Bonus points for getting creative with your decorations!

3



Create a mast by gluing or taping a wooden dowel or popsicle stick to the center of your boat base for optimal floating balance.

4



Make your sail by cutting a piece of cardboard or a rag into your desired shape (think: square or triangle) and tape or glue it to the top of the dowel.

5



Set her afloat in a backyard kiddie pool, your bathtub or even your kitchen sink!

6



When your voyage is complete, prevent waste by reusing the water, such as watering plants, for example.





Activity 2

Build a water play table.

Get acquainted with the ocean and currents with this easy spin on a sensory water table!

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY	 Open, ongoing	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	Required by adult:  NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED WITH WATER <hr/> Level of prep required: 	WHAT YOU'LL NEED	Vessel that holds 1 gallon + of water (e.g. cooler, reusable plastic tub) Toys (e.g. measuring cups, paint brushes, measuring spoons, squirt bottles, buckets, etc.) Bubble bath or mild dish soap Water!
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WHAT YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING:

- Hand-eye coordination as they move objects through the water
- Early physics concepts like motion and flowing water and floating vs. sinking objects
- Discussions about living and non-living items, as well as animal habitats
- Vocabulary words related to water, movement and sea life



Activity steps on next page.

What you do:



Activity 2

1 Fill your vessel with water and set up available water tools and toys

2 Incorporate the following activities into your exploration:



Go on a treasure hunt

Observe if certain objects sink or float in the “sea” and scoop them into a “treasure chest” bucket.



Go fishing

Introduce a stick to fish objects out of the water.



Add sea foam

Mix in bubble bath or dish soap for an ocean-like vibe.



Create an underwater world

Add natural elements, such as rocks, shells and plants to imagine an underwater ecosystem.



Go surfing

Make a floating surfboard with cardboard or tree bark for action figures to ride the waves (don't forget to play The Beach Boys in the background!).



Create a current

Draw circles in the water with your hand to form a current and watch as the water continues to move even after you take your hand out.

3



Discuss the following questions as you play:

- How does the water feel?
- What happens when you move the water around to create a current?
- What can you find in the water?
- How do your water treasures feel?
 - Are they smooth or bumpy?
 - Do they sink or float?
- Does your surfboard float and move in the water?
- Would fish live above or below the water?

See next page for Step #4



When done, prevent waste by reusing the water, such as watering plants.

*Any form of water play for children should always be closely monitored by an adult at all times.

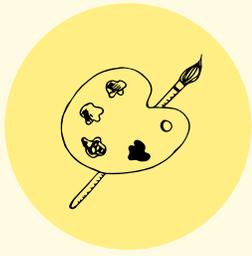
Observation log:



Activity 2

As you engage in these water explorations, have an adult or your big kid adventure buddy write down your observations in the log below:





Activity 3

Watercolor painting

Get inspired by creating a beach scene with watercolors.

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY



15
mins.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

Required by adult:



Level of prep required:



WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Non toxic water-based paint
(or crayons if you don't have paint and paint brushes on hand)

Printed worksheet or blank paper
(see page 10)

Paint brushes

Water

WHAT YOUR CHILD IS LEARNING:

- **Creativity!** How to create art that represents the waterways they see
- **Using water to blend and create different colors (if painting)**
 - Identification of animals and items near the ocean
 - Fine motor skills as they manipulate the materials



Activity steps on next page.



What you do: Create!

1



Print or trace the beach scene painting sheet on the following page to get colorful and creative.

Or, if your child is ready, have them paint a picture of the waterways in their community (think: stream, river, lake) on a separate piece of paper.

2



Identify the elements of the picture—waves, sand, shore, shells, fish and surfer!

Ocean, waves and beach vocabulary words:

WAVE

FISH

SAND

BOAT

SHELL

SHORE



Activity 3





These activities were created in partnership with KinderCare Education and The Surfrider Foundation.

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves and beaches for all people. With nearly 200 volunteer-led chapters and student clubs across the US, Surfrider advocates for policies that protect our ocean and coasts, educate and build awareness about ocean and coastal issues and provide an avenue for community members to get engaged and protect their local beaches and marine life. Together we have an appetite for adventure and a love for all things water and take action to protect our waterways, both upstream and at the beach.

For more information visit [Surfrider.org](https://www.surfrider.org).

Congratulations, you've completed the Junior Water Lovers Field Guide!



Print or trace and cut out the Grow Together Surfrider badge to honor your achievement.



Download and complete each Junior Field Guide at www.growXtogether.com to collect all Grow Together merit badges!

