

# Seal Watching CODE OF CONDUCT



**Dorset  
Wildlife Trust**



**sea-changers**

Both grey seals and harbour seals are spotted around the Dorset coast. Encounters with seals are exciting but remember they are wild animals and protected by law, so their wellbeing is the top priority.

If you spot a seal, you can avoid disturbance by following this code:

## ON LAND

Seals need to come ashore to rest, however they are more vulnerable on land. Disturbance can cause them stress, to waste precious energy & even lead to injuries.



Observe from a distance of 100 metres.

*Be quiet and try to remain out of sight.*



Use binoculars and limit your viewing time to 10 minutes.

*Use a zoom lens for photography.*



Never touch or feed a seal. Seals have sharp teeth and a nasty, infectious bite requiring medical treatment.



*Keep children and dogs well away.*



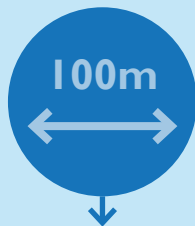
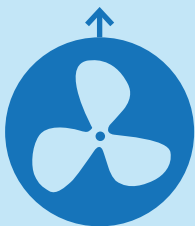
Make sure the seal has a clear access route to water.



## IN THE WATER

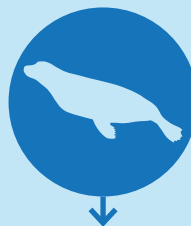
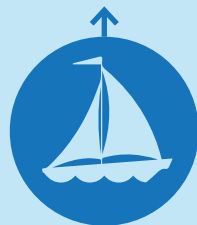
Seals are much more agile in the water than they are on land but care still needs to be taken as they can be startled or injured.

*Motorised vessels - if a seal appears close by, slow down or stop to avoid propeller strikes.*



Keep your distance, at least 100 metres.

*Explore in small groups (maximum 2 vessels). Do not crowd, chase or intimidate the seal.*



*Juveniles can be inquisitive and may come closer - let them decide how close. Remain calm and don't swim with them or touch them.*

*Keep noise to a minimum and move away after 10 minutes.*



Protecting  
**Wildlife**  
for the future

Please report seal sightings including photos to Dorset Wildlife Trust

01929 481044 or [Kimmeridge@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:Kimmeridge@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk)  
[seals.dorsetwildlifetrust.net](http://seals.dorsetwildlifetrust.net)

If you are concerned about the welfare of a marine mammal contact British Divers Marine Life Rescue  
01825 765546 or 07787 433412 (out of hours)