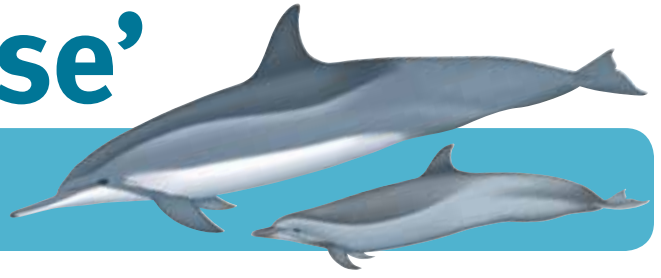


Be 'Dolphin Wise'

BEST PRACTICES DOLPHIN VIEWING GUIDELINES FOR OCEAN USERS AND BOATERS IN HAWAII



1. **WATCH OUT WHERE DOLPHINS MAY BE ABOUT:** Be cautious when boating: approach areas of known or suspected dolphin activity at low speed and stay alert, looking in all directions.
2. **APPROACH FROM THE BACK:** Vessels should approach only at the side rear of the pod's travel direction.
3. **KEEP IT SLOW:** A vessel's speed should be six knots or less and never faster than the pod's speed.
4. **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE:** Approach no closer than 50 yards from the nearest dolphin. (This distance is also advocated by the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and National Marine Fisheries Service).
5. **DON'T LEAP FROG:** Do not leap-frog ahead or cut in front of a pod's path. There may be young calves or older animals that are slower to respond to your maneuver.
6. **DON'T DRIVE THROUGH:** Do not drive your vessel through groups of dolphins to encourage bow riding or for any other reason.
7. **NEVER MORE THAN THREE:** No more than three vessels of any size or type should stop to watch a dolphin group.
8. **GIVE THEM ROOM:** Never encircle or trap dolphins between vessels or between your vessel and the shoreline.
9. **LIMIT YOUR TIME:** Limit your time observing an animal or pod to a half hour.
10. **BE PREDICTABLE AND RESPECTFUL:** Avoid abrupt or unpredictable movements or loud noises around dolphins.
11. **KEEP MOMS AND CALVES TOGETHER:** Do not separate mother/calf groups.
12. **AVOID CAUSING STRESS:** Move away slowly if an animal's behavior indicates it is stressed. Dolphins generally slap their tail on the surface of the water as a threat display (although this behavior can also be used in other circumstances). They also tend to dive when the boat or a swimmer approaches and re-surface a distance away. If this repeats every time you approach to 50 yards, give the dolphins more space.
13. **ANGLE AWAY:** When disengaging from a school, angle the vessel away from the nearest dolphin and depart at slow, no-wake speed.
14. **STEADY SPEED:** Should dolphins choose to ride the bow wave of your vessel, maintain your heading and speed. Avoid any sudden course changes.
15. **DON'T PROMOTE SWIMMING WITH WILD DOLPHINS:** Do not put people in the water to swim with wild dolphins. Never attempt to touch wild dolphins.
16. **NO FOOD PLEASE.** Do not use food to attract wild dolphins. Do not attempt to feed a wild dolphin. It is dangerous and illegal.

Please avoid swimming with dolphins!

Please don't attempt to touch, hold or swim with dolphins, even if they swim toward you. If you are approached by wild dolphins while you are swimming, remain calm, maintain your course, do not engage in sudden or unpredictable movements and calmly swim away from them.

Remember, millions of people visit Hawaii each year. Many dream of "swimming with" dolphins in the wild. However, if all people who see dolphins tried to swim with them or approach them closely, the dolphins would experience significant and ongoing daily disturbances. This may cause stress to their health or may cause them to flee to other areas where they may face increased dangers from sharks and other predators.

Humans may also transmit diseases or other pathogens when in close contact with wild dolphins. A wild dolphin perceives interactions with humans very differently than trained animals in a pool. There have been cases when interactions have resulted in injuries to humans. Do not underestimate the strength and power of a dolphin. Even an animal with the best intentions could harm you.

Need Help?

To report an injured, stranded, or entangled dolphin, please call the NOAA Marine Mammal Hotline: **1-888-256-9840**. Please report immediately and keep your distance, for your safety. Injured, sick or entangled animals can be unpredictable and dangerous.

To report a human related disturbance, call NOAA Enforcement: **1-800-853-1964**.



Protecting our oceans through science and advocacy