

Coastal Habitat Activities

Things you may need:

- Plastic bottles
 - Clingfilm
 - Sticky tape
 - Card
 - Notebook and pencil
 - Sand paper
 - Bucket
 - Long stick
 - Hand lenses
 - Rope/string
 - Tape measure
 - Stick markers
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- If visiting the coast remember to check the tide times. Tide tables are available for the area you are visiting or the local press should give you high and low tide times. Be sure to look out for warning signs of strong currents and dangerous tides when on the beach.

Rock pools

- Sometimes the reflections on the surface of the water can make it hard to see what lives in a rock pool. Make an underwater viewer to solve all your problems!
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- Cut the bottom off a plastic bottle.
 - Stretch some cling film across the bottom of the bottle and tape it to keep it in place.
 - Push the bottle below the surface of the rock pool and peep through the top.
 - Can you spot shrimps and small fishes hiding in the seaweed?
 - Make a flat grid out of pieces of card (like a trellis) that can be placed over the top of a rock pool supported by the surrounding rocks. Give children a piece of paper divided into a grid. They can then draw a plan view of the rock pool habitat and its species using the grid to help them with positioning and scale.

Beach

- After collecting a variety of empty seashells:
- What lived in them?
- The rings on seashells can tell you how old they were - who can find the oldest one? Take a spiralled shell home and rub it on a piece of sand paper, pressing hard. As the shell begins to wear away, look closely to see the lines that are made as the seashell grows.
- Hold the shell to your ear - can you hear the sea, what are you really hearing?
- Make a mini museum of shells in a box. Can you identify them and group them?

Strandline

- What can you find on the beach washed up by the tide? Look for shells, dried seaweed, feathers, crab bits, pebbles, mermaids purse, and egg cases. You will need a bucket, a hand lens, a notebook and pencil. Take a stick with you to move things, never poke fingers into any cracks! Record findings.

Other

- Make a transect along a beach (from high tide to low tide mark) using a length of rope/string with markers along its length at various points. Follow the rope down the beach recording what species touch the string at each of the points. Children could be given a section view of the sloping beach to mark the species on at specific points.
- Fossil hunts on pebble beaches

Marks on the mud: Look for signs of life through observing marks on the muddy/sandy shore like bird footprints or worm casts.