# Open Water Swimming

## Safety Advice

· Check local tide times and be aware of local hazards and conditions
· Make yourself as visible as possible
· Wear a brightly coloured swimming hat
· Swim with a bright flotation buoy
· Carry an emergency whistle

## Respect

- Follow the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code**[1] (Scotland) or **The Countryside Code**[2] (England). These give invaluable guidance on how to respect those living, working or enjoying the coast and countryside. Addition advice for swimmers is given in the **Outdoor Swimmers Code**[3] produced by the Outdoor Swimming Society.

- Abide by any local rules and restrictions set by harbour or port authorities.

- Be aware of any local bylaws and restrictions effecting access, or protecting birds, seals or cetaceans. Look out for signage and always follow the guidance displayed or guidance given by site wardens. Remember that marine mammals and many birds are protected by law from reckless disturbance or harassment.

- Be aware of local fishing activity and don't interfere with buoys, pots, and pot markers.

**For more information, visit: www.swimming.org (search "open water")**

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## Protect

- Give space to wildlife and do not seek out encounters with marine mammals. A distance of at least 50m from rafting birds or from cliff nesting seabirds, and 300m from marine mammal is usually sufficient but be watchful for signs of disturbance and modify this if necessary

- Never land on a beach where there are seals or in protected wildlife sanctuary areas such as Coquet Island or the Farne Islands.

- Follow the **Check Clean Dry**[4] approach to reduce the possible spread of damaging invasive species: check swim gear for organisms after swimming, clean it in fresh water, and dry gear before using again.

## Enjoy

Wild swimming is an increasingly popular hobby and is a liberating way for competent swimmers to experience fantastic coastline of Berwickshire, Northumberland, and North Tyneside. Favourite local swimming spots include Tynemouth, Druridge Bay and Beadnell.

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1. www.outdooraccess-scotland.scot
2. www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
3. www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/outdoor-swimmers-code
4. www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm