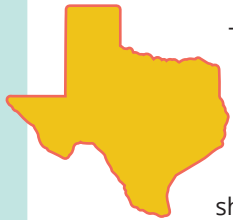




HOW TO AVOID HARMING Sea Turtles While Boating



The Texas Coast is home to 5 different species of sea turtles. Some sea turtles live offshore, while others live in the bays year-round or for short periods of time. Sea turtles have lungs and must swim to the surface to breathe air. ***Sea turtles can be hit by boats and their propellers as they swim at the surface of the water.***

It is illegal to deliberately harm, harass, capture or kill sea turtles because they are protected by federal and state laws, ***but if you accidentally collide with or hook a sea turtle while fishing, DON'T PANIC! You will not get in trouble.*** See the other side of this flyer for recommendations if you accidentally collide with or hook a sea turtle.



PRACTICES TO PREVENT COLLISIONS

- 1 Wear polarized sunglasses** to reduce glare so you can see turtles in the water.
- 2 Have a designated wildlife spotter** to look for sea turtles and other animals.
- 3 Stay in deep water** whenever possible.
- 4 Avoid boating over seagrass** beds and shallow waters.
- 5 Follow all slow speed** and no-wake zones.
- 6 Give sea turtles space** by keeping your boat at least 50 yards (~150 feet) away.
- 7 Do not follow,** pursue, or entrap sea turtles.



IF YOU FIND YOURSELF LESS THAN 50 YARDS FROM A SEA TURTLE

- **Use no-wake speed** and put the engine in neutral
- **Move away slowly** and **DO NOT** expect sea turtles to swim out of the way!
- **Ensure the turtle is safely away** from your boat before engaging the propeller



**Call the Sea Turtle
Hotline for Help
1-866-TURTLE-5 or
1-866-887-8535**

***If you accidentally
collide with a turtle***

IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY COLLIDE WITH OR HOOK A Sea Turtle While Boating

PRACTICES TO PREVENT HOOKING

- 1** Inspect your gear before you begin fishing to reduce line breaks while fishing.
- 2** Use barbless hooks to reduce injury to sea turtles.
- 3** Use non-stainless steel hooks that will eventually corrode.
- 4** Use artificial bait which is less attractive to sea turtles.
- 5** Never leave fishing gear unattended for any length of time, and check your bait often.
- 6** Don't discard bait or fish scraps in the water because this will attract sea turtles.
- 7** Never intentionally feed sea turtles.
- 8** Put used fishing line in a recycling bin. 
- 9** Put all other trash in trash cans. 
- 10** Report sea turtle sightings using the iSeaTurtle app for Android or iPhone. 

**If you accidentally hook a turtle, are you
able to contact the Sea Turtle Hotline?**

YES

**Provide your contact
information** and location
as well as the turtle's size
and condition. Remember,
DON'T PANIC!

Follow instructions
provided by the
Sea Turtle Hotline

NO

**Gently reel in the slack-
line, keeping the turtle
above water to breathe.
DO NOT tug or pull
on the line; minimize
injury by applying steady
pressure on the line**

Cut the line as close to
the turtle as possible to
release it