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**How to tips for surfing beginners!**

**By Fred Riehl at [www.BraveSurf.com](http://www.BraveSurf.com)**

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Surfboards and You:

Surfboards are made to float on the water. They have a natural center of gravity. If you were to lay any surfboard in a swimming pool, it would come to rest the same way every time. This is what we want to do when you lay on a surf board. That is to have the board remain in the same relation to the water as it was without your weight on it, just a bit lower in the water. A good tip is to find this balance point and lay on your board then make, a mark right at your chin. This is a spot is best made with a bit of wax or a magic marker. It is a reference point that enables you to put your chin on the same spot every time so the board will react to your weight the same way every time.

If the board's nose digs into the water it is called pearling and you must move the location of "your chin" back. To adjust, just slide back an inch from the mark and make a mental note.

Too much weigh in the back and the board will cork the board. This is a common mistake amongst beginners. You cannot catch a wave if you are corking your board. Move up an inch at a time till the board lies in the water naturally. This will provide you with the maximum hull speed and minimum drag from the water displacement that you are causing with your weight.

Do not paddle with both arms simultaneously because this will cause the board to speed up and slow down in the water and you will not be able to maintain constant hull speed through the water.

Always paddle with the crawl stroke; one arm and then the other alternatively. This will provide you with a constant speed so you can catch that wave.

Ok, so now we know how to lie on the board and paddle the board. Now it's time to learn how to sit on the board. The first time try this you may be quite wobbly. The key to doing this well is being calm, or trying to be still. The less movement that you make the easier you will find it is to do this. All the other skills of surfing will improve as you learn to be "calm" while surfing.

Now it's time to learn how to stand up. This is something you have been doing all your life. Lie on your chest, your head up, looking ahead. Put your hands on the board beside your shoulders palms down like you were going to do a push up. Push your upper body up while at the same time you sweep your feet under you, laying them on the stringer, the line down the middle of the board, so your weight is centered along the stringer.

When you come up, remember to keep low. If you stand erect you will fall. Assume a position of a sumo wrestler. Press your feet shoulder width apart and "grip the board in your feet", opposite of the

## How to tips for surfing beginners!

way you would press your thighs together on a horse. Have your hands a bit higher than your waist and just in view of your vision. Always look up! If you look at your feet, you will fall down. I promise! Practice this for hours. Have someone watch you and have them critique your performance. Practice jumping up without making a sound on the floor. Calm and controlled is the smoothest way to approach this so practice doing it quietly. If you have a surfboard, lay it on a large bed or in the sand and do this exercise. This is a way for you to judge your ability to be controlled.

### Safety:

Never have your board between yourself and the coming waves!

To avoid collision with others, keep a safe distance, say fifteen feet or the length of you, your leash and board combined.

Beginners should always wear a leash or leg rope tied to their surfboard.

Every beginner surfboard should also have a safety nose guard to prevent dangerous impacts with the surfboard nose.

Beginners should always surf with a buddy for safety, plus it is cool to share your surf experiences with.

Never push your board through the water fin first. The fin or fins were made to keep the board pointing nose first. Pushing the board fins first can be quite dangerous because the board wants to go the other direction.

Beginner surfers should consider wearing a vest, rash guard or tee shirt to avoid the rubbed rash they will get on their stomach and chest.

When you fall off your board, cover the back of your head with your hands, with your wrists over your ears and your elbows together. Stay under water for a moment longer than necessary. There are companies that make helmets and this is another alternative.

When you come up, try to be facing the oncoming waves and look for your board's location immediately. Loose boards in the ocean are very dangerous objects for swimmers.

### Surfing etiquette:

the first standing surfer that is closest to the breaking wave has the rite of way on that wave. Anyone paddling for that wave must quit. There are repercussions to not following this rule and it can be very dangerous.

Most known surf spots have locals who surf that spot every day and some believe that they "own the beach". We all know that this is not the case. Having said that, the stranger, no matter their ability, should endeavor to show some respect for these social dinosaurs.

The surfer riding the wave has the right of way and the paddlers who are paddling out must yield. This means that the paddlers must paddle out of the way whenever possible, even if it is into the breaking wave or behind the rider. If you are paddling for a wave and someone is paddling out toward you, make eye contact with that person and indicate your intentional direction in reference to them. A nod in the direction you are going can work.

### Conclusion:

Every situation is different so practice being nice in the water. It will make you feel good, I promise.

Hooting for a good wave or encouraging someone is good too. Remember, you will get what you give.

Fred Riehl has been surfing and working with Brave New World surf shops for 18 years! The Tube Quest Continues at ... [www.bravesurf.com](http://www.bravesurf.com)

## **The art of surfing**

**By Jakob Jelling**

Since its hey day in the 1960's, surfing through the ocean has become a popular past time. Riders love to pound the surf with their waxed boards and ride large waves into the shore. As like any sport, there is risk associated with surfing. Surfing implies that a rider can successfully use their arms and legs to maintain balance upon a surfboard as the wave begins to swell and crest.

Most beginners will enjoy this sport because the cost of getting into surfing is relatively low. A good board can cost \$200 – \$ 1,000 depending on the material it's made from. Many beginners can buy a good board used and can take up the sport at a nearby beach. Before you begin, there are several things you should learn. How to keep your board nearby should you wipe out How to swim out towards an incoming wave What to do should you collide with another surfer What conditions are right for surfing and which ones are dangerous

Surfers should know how to swim. It's the basic necessity to keep you afloat should you go out too far or if you lose your board on a wipe out. Most surfers start out on their boards flat on their stomach and begin to kneel into a crouching position as they approach a wave. Upon reaching the swell of the wave, they should be in a upright position heading into the ebb or top of the wave. As soon as they reach the top they begin to navigate through the remainder of the wave using their feet to steer into the cresting tide. Usually most surfers ride a wave from right to left.

There are times when a surfer can get closer to another surfer and collide. Try to remain as far away from swimmers as possible and keep a clear 180-degree view as much as possible to avoid dangerous situations. Know exactly how far you are from the beach at all times. There are times when surfing is at its premium right before a storm or when currents are at their strongest. During this peak time, it is good to exercise caution for your own personal safety. Depending on how warm the water may be you may have to be concerned with sharks. Although a shark attack is considered rare, there is always a possibility in some regions.

Surfing has become so popular that there are various spin-offs of this sport including windsurfing and kitesurfing, which allows the user to reach heights of 20' above the ocean. Depending on the location wave swells can grow upwards of 15–20' high; so the more experience you amass the more challenges you will seek. All beginning surfers should take at least one or two lessons to get the basics down. In no time at all you will be hunting the monster waves and hanging ten with the best of them.

Surfs up!

Jakob Jelling is the founder of

. Visit his kitesite for the latest on

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kitesurfing equipment, kiteboarding lessons, places to surf and much more!

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