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# Field Work In Marine Areas

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## A Checklist of Equipment

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In many situations, a bucket for each group, labelled, could be issued to groups or pairs. Each group is then responsible for returning the contents to the bucket and handing in the bucket at the end of the field session. Actual items depend on the types of field work.

### Checklist

- permit and regulations to collect or to undertake an educational activity if required in the local area (check with local authority, Fisheries Department or local National Parks office)
- any maps of the study area
- species lists if previously prepared or available
- blank paper (waterproof if possible)
- data sheets (waterproof if possible) or covered with a plastic bag clipped onto clipboard
- graph paper
- clipboard or equivalent to write on (perspex ones can be written on in pencil and cleaned afterwards with Ajax)
- a magnifying glass
- plastic viewing cone
- camera or video is useful but not essential
- tape measures or previously measured pieces of string, with cross ties of coloured string knotted at every metre to map the habitat or mark out large quadrats
- small plastic containers with lids (don't use glass)
- small quadrat frames of wood, metal or plastic
- pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, chalk
- tent pegs for marking positions of samples in soft soils
- clinometers or protractors
- floats for estimating drift
- bag to carry all the equipment
- appropriate shoes: sneakers with laces for the seashore - not bare feet or thongs
- small towel
- appropriate clothing: hat and rain jacket in summer; hat, rain jacket and jumper in winter
- sunscreen
- one small portable tape recorder (optional)
- water bottles, one for each student, plus spare larger container
- first aid kit
- in isolated areas, a mobile telephone is a useful safety addition.

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## Do

- Have sufficient supervision for both the number of students, the site, and the activities; ensure that these adults are correctly briefed before the field work as to emergency procedures, what the students will be doing, how the equipment works, time lines.
- Do preliminary site checks carefully, ensuring that the sites are suitable for the intended activities, are safe from physical hazards, and that students can work without being interrupted by outsiders. If you are using a coach, the coach driver usually can act as a general 'watch dog', and should not wander off leaving the coach locked with all the lunches in it.
- Be sensible – wear sensible clothes, hats and sun screen.
- Always gently turn boulders back on the seashore.
- Leave natural materials in place.
- Keep to tracks.
- Replace leaf litter.
- Get permission before entering private property.
- Carry a first aid kit; depending on the area, this may have to contain an ice pack (in an esky) for use on marine stingers (jelly fish, blue bottles etc); plus Betadine for coral and other cuts.
- Check that asthmatic students are carrying appropriate remedies including Ventolin sprays.
- Check that the school/institution/government department/organisation is covering field activities with public liability insurance.
- Check transport to, location and contact telephone number of emergency assistance such as ambulance, police, especially in isolated areas.
- Do pre- and post-activity checks of numbers and equipment, including personal items such as jumpers and cameras.
- Check that toilets, fresh water and shade are available.
- Do establish and put into place best practice.
- Do enjoy fieldwork.

## Don't

- Don't litter – take it home.
- Don't take anything home you didn't bring, except rubbish brought by others.
- Don't break the habitat apart.
- Don't remove natural materials.
- Don't permanently mark trees or rocks with paint or carvings, use chalk.
- Don't turn your back on waves; always have someone watching them.
- Don't put fingers where you can't see.
- Don't handle blue-ringed octopuses, cone shells, stinging corals, spine fish, or other dangerous marine organisms.
- don't enter the surf or deep water unless your group is accompanied by lifesavers and has the appropriate safety measures in place
- don't stay out too long: three to four hours is plenty for most secondary students.