

# Commonsense Rock Fishing Safety

There is a growing awareness that rock fishing safety is about rock fishers taking a greater responsibility for their welfare by anchoring themselves before commencing to fish. Many experienced local fishers now routinely tie themselves off to a rock or anchor. If a large swell catches them by surprise they may be knocked about when the swell goes but at least they are not swimming for their life

and potentially putting others at risk to save them. This poster has been prepared by experienced local fishermen Ray Walker. It is hoped that everyone will come to realise it is far better to guarantee personal safety by tying off rather than risking being rescued once washed in. The wearing of an inflatable vest while rock fishing should be an essential personal safety item.

## Further information:

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## In addition to tying off, apply these simple commonsense rules to save lives:

- Adults should always closely supervise children on rocks
- Never turn your back on the swell and keep well above swell line
- Use 'Rock Hopper' boots to get traction and warm feet
- Sit and watch the swell patterns for 15 minutes before commencing to fish
- Always fish in pairs
- Never be tempted to retrieve a fish or lure at the waters edge
- Even if you've travelled a long way to fish, don't if it's too rough
- Seek local knowledge before fishing a new area
- Check tide charts and weather forecast before leaving and fish knowing whether the tide is coming in or out
- Be aware of deteriorating conditions.



## Tying off is a potentially lifesaving procedure but it **MUST** be done correctly

- The length of the rope varies between sites and should be tight when you are in the comfortable fishing position - avoid sites where you can get washed over an edge whilst tied off!
- A 10m rope 8mm thick is enough for most sites
- Practice a knot that you are comfortable with that will NOT slip but can be easily undone after it has been pulled tight
- Use an anchor rope even under calm seas
- All DEC installed anchors have a tag attached indicating they have been load tested - avoid using any other anchor
- When on site and after watching the swell for 15 minutes, throw the loop (that is planned to go around the waist) to the site where you plan to stand - tie off the rope - then pull in the rope to step into it **BEFORE** moving to commence fishing.

Photos: (clockwise from top)

1 Ray Walker fitting anchors near Smiths Beach

2 Rock Hopper boots available at most tackle shops

3 Stainless steel anchor with test tag and two ropes tied off

4 Fishermen anchored while fishing off Wyadup rocks



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Environment and Conservation