THE PULL OF A RIP
STOP AND THINK
STAY TOGETHER
FLOAT
CALL 999/112
THE PULL OF A RIP
In the UK, the majority of RNLI lifeguard incidents involve rip currents. They are a major cause of accidental drowning on beaches all across the world.
Rips are strong currents running out to sea, which can quickly drag people and debris away from the shallows of the shoreline and out to deeper water.

They tend to flow at 1–2mph but can reach 4–5mph, which is faster than an Olympic swimmer.

Rips are especially powerful in larger surf. They are also found around river mouths, estuaries and man-made structures like piers and groynes.
THE PULL OF A RIP

STOP AND THINK
STAY TOGETHER
FLOAT
CALL 999/112
Rip currents can be identified by a smoother channel of water between sets of waves. They can be very difficult to spot and move around as the tide goes in and out.

Even the most experienced beachgoers can be caught out by rips, so don't be afraid to ask lifeguards for advice. They will show you how you can identify and avoid rips.

The best way to avoid rips is to choose a lifeguarded beach and always swim between the red and yellow flags, which have been marked based on where is safer to swim in the current conditions.
IF YOU DO FIND YOURSELF CAUGHT IN A RIP:

- Don’t try to swim against it or you’ll get exhausted.
- If you can stand, wade don’t swim.
- If you can, swim parallel to the shore until free of the rip and then head for shore.
- Always raise your hand and shout for help.
- If you are surfing or boarding do not let go of your board.

If you see anyone else in trouble, alert the lifeguards or call 999 or 112 and ask for the coastguard.