



Watching out for Whales and Dolphins... Top 10 Tips!

1. Choose your site

There are great whale and dolphin watching locations with car parks, disabled access and even café's; others are off the beaten track and only accessible on foot; visit www.wdcs.org/shorewatch for ideas.

2. Check the weather

The best day for watching is a bright but cloudy day – high winds, heavy rain, mist, fog and bright sunshine make it hard to see what's on the surface of the water.

3. Make a day of it

Whales and dolphins are wild and free so don't always show up when we want to see them. Combine watching with another activity or choose a site to where you can watch for other wildlife whilst you wait.

4. Allow plenty of time

Expect to spend time waiting for them to show up – so dress warm in case the weather changes!

5. Remember your binoculars

At some locations it is possible to see the animals without binoculars but a good pair of 7x50 binoculars will vastly increase your chances of a good sighting.

6. Find a comfy spot and keep watching for tell tale signs

The following signs often mean that there are whales or dolphins in the area: feeding birds circling above a particular spot, areas of still water or oily slicks (footprint), breaking wave crests or waves moving in the 'wrong' direction, big splashes and bursts of spray (blow); anything that doesn't look like it should be there.

7. Scan the water

Slowly scan the water from shore to horizon for tell tale signs (see tip 6); alternating between your binoculars and your naked eye. Have patience!

8. Tell us what you see

To report your sightings, visit www.wdcs.org/sightings. This way you can help us find out where the animals are and help protect them for future visitors to see.

9. Watch Out for whales and dolphins!

We suggest land based watching as the best way of avoiding disturbance to the animals. Please watch carefully and give dolphins space especially if you are in the water or on a craft. Follow the Scottish Marine Wildlife Watching Code, for more information visit www.wdcs.org/watchoutfordolphins.

10. Report disturbance

If you see someone intentionally causing disturbance, video or photograph it, note down any details of the incident and report it to your local Wildlife Crime Police department.

The WDCS Shorewatch Programme is made possible through the generous support of Scottish Natural Heritage



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More information: www.wdcs.org/shorewatch; shorewatch@wdcs.org; 01343 820 339

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