

# Lesson 21: At the Beach

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*Listen to this conversation to learn phrases and vocabulary for describing a beach and talking about what you bring and what you can do there.*

**Marjorie:** Hey Joanna! You look like you got a tan.

**Joanna:** Yeah, I went to the beach this weekend.

**Marjorie:** Nice! What beach did you go to?

**Joanna:** Jones Beach. It was packed – we could barely find a place to sit.

**Marjorie:** Did you take your kids?

**Joanna:** Yup – they had a blast building sand castles and collecting seashells. We didn't go in the water though.

*have a blast = have fun, have a good time*

**Marjorie:** Oh, why not? Is it polluted?

**Joanna:** No, it's just that the tide was coming in, so there were huge waves. The lifeguard said the undertow could be dangerous, so the only people out there were some surfers.

*lifeguard = person who works on the beach or by a swimming pool, to help or rescue people if necessary*

**Marjorie:** Oh well. Jones Beach is usually too crowded for me. I prefer a deserted beach with no one around but me and the seagulls!

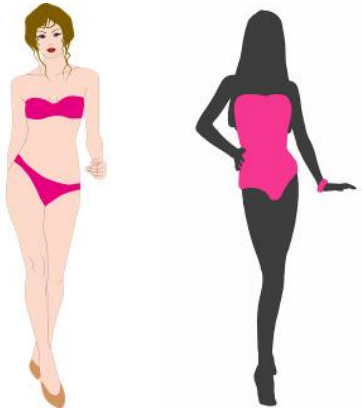
**Joanna:** I went to a beach like that in Aruba once – the sand was perfectly white and the water was crystal clear.

**Marjorie:** Sounds like paradise!

**Joanna:** It was great! We also went sailing and snorkeling there. I forgot my sunscreen though, and I came back with a really bad sunburn.

## Conversation Vocabulary & Phrases

Let's start with what you wear at the beach or to go swimming. The general word for it is **swimsuit** or **bathing suit** – these can be used for men's swimsuits or women's swimsuits. There are different words for specific types: women can wear a **bikini** or a **one-piece**, and men can wear a **speedo** or **swim trunks**.



*bikini and one-piece*



*speedo and swim trunks*

Here are some other things you can bring to the beach:

- **towel**
- **beach umbrella**
- **beach wrap** (*a beach wrap is lighter and thinner than a towel*)



- **sunscreen / sunblock**
- **goggles**



- **bucket and shovel**
- **flip-flops**



Now let's learn expressions for describing the beach itself. If there were a lot of people, you can say:

- **"The beach was crowded."**
- **"The beach was packed."**

If there were almost no people there, you can say:

- **"The beach was deserted."**

Practice these phrases for talking about the physical features of the beach:

- **"The beach is sandy."**

- **“The beach is rocky.”**
- **“The beach has some tide pools.”**  
*Tide pools form when water is trapped among rocks on the beach.*
- **“There’s a lot of seaweed in the water.”**  
*The word seaweed refers to the plants that grow in the ocean.*



*tide pools and seaweed*

- **“There’s a lot of litter.”**  
*The word litter refers to garbage/trash that people leave on the beach*
- **“We saw some seagulls/crabs/jellyfish.”**



- **“You can’t swim here – the water’s polluted.”**  
*This means the water is dirty and contaminated.*

Speaking of water, how can you describe the water of the ocean? Here are some phrases:

- **“The water’s crystal clear.”**  
*This means the water is perfectly transparent.*
- **“The water’s choppy.” / “The water’s calm.”**  
*The word “choppy” means agitated; the word “calm” means tranquil*
- **“There are big waves.”**



- **“There’s a strong undertow.”**

*The word “undertow” refers to the movement of the water back into the ocean after a wave falls on the beach. It can be dangerous because it can pull you out into the ocean.*

- **“It’s high tide.” / “It’s low tide.”**

*The tide refers to the general level of the ocean water on the beach.*



- **“The tide is coming in.” / “The tide is going out.”**

*If the tide is coming in, it means the ocean water is slowly advancing farther and farther into the beach. If the tide is going out, it means the ocean water is slowly going back.*

One of the most common activities to do at the beach is **sunbathing** – that means lying in the sun in order to **get a tan**. A “tan” is when your skin gets darker from the sun. If you stay in the sun too long – or if you forget to use sunscreen to protect yourself – you’ll **get a sunburn**.



Practice these phrases for beach activities:

- **“I got a tan.”**
- **“I played soccer/volleyball.”**
- **“I went...”**
  - surfing
  - fishing
  - sailing
  - waterskiing
  - snorkeling
  - scuba diving



*When snorkeling, your body stays on the surface of the water.  
When scuba diving, your whole body goes deeper under the water.*

- **“My kids...”**
  - flew kites
  - built sand castles
  - collected seashells





Finally, here's a useful phrase for when you go to the beach alone, and you want to go into the water but you don't want to leave your bag unattended. You can ask another person on the beach:

- **"Could you keep an eye on my stuff for a few minutes?"**
- **"Could I leave my bag with you for a few minutes?"**

You've finished Lesson 21! Now take the quiz to practice the vocabulary and phrases. This concludes the "Travel English" part of the course, and tomorrow, we'll begin our study of Social English.

# Quiz – Lesson 21

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- 1) "Many beaches in the Caribbean have \_\_\_\_\_ clear water."
- A. crystal
  - B. diamond
  - C. glass
- 2) "Could you \_\_\_\_\_ on my bag for a minute?"
- A. take a look
  - B. keep an eye
  - C. do a watch
- 3) "I got a great \_\_\_\_\_ in Jamaica."
- A. tan
  - B. burn
  - C. sunbathe
- 4) "We're going to the beach tomorrow - don't forget to bring your \_\_\_\_\_."
- A. bathing clothes
  - B. swimsuit
  - C. waterwear
- 5) "The beaches are all \_\_\_\_\_ due to an oil spill."
- A. drowned
  - B. sewage
  - C. polluted
- 6) "Let's go to a different beach. This one is \_\_\_\_\_; there's no place to sit down."
- A. occupied
  - B. packed
  - C. full



7) "There are some great \_\_\_\_\_ for surfing."

- A. waves
- B. tides
- C. shells

8) "Can you put some \_\_\_\_\_ on my back?"

- A. sunscreen
- B. sunburn
- C. suntan

9) "Low \_\_\_\_\_ is at 3:30 PM."

- A. seaweed
- B. tide
- C. breeze

10) "It's not a good beach for sunbathing - it's \_\_\_\_\_; there's not much sand."

- A. choppy
- B. rocky
- C. seaweed

## **Lesson 21 Quiz – Answers**

1.A 2.B 3.A 4.B 5.C 6.B 7.A 8.A 9.B 10.B