



THE BASICS



ON A BOARD: Surfboards new and old, of all shapes and sizes and variety of fin, are available across the Sunshine Coast. There's bound to be one to suit you and your needs. PHOTO: IAIN CUNNINGHAM

Minimal equipment, maximum thrills

Surfing is one of the more intimate activities as it does require a lot of equipment. Buying a surfboard does have to be an expensive affair. There are plenty of options when buying a board to suit your budget. Surf shops along the coast sell new and second-hand boards. Private sellers are constantly selling boards online or in the papers. A friendly staff at XL Surf will gladly help with finding the right surfboard for you. The hard part will be to them to stop talking about surf equipment.

Two essentials:

- Wax** – Needed on the board for grip and traction
- Rash vest** – Protection against the sun and from the rubbing wax
- Surfboard varieties**
 - The Malibu** – Ideal for small waves, and good for beginners
 - Soft-top** – Beginner boards (softer material to allow for a few bumps/spills)
 - Shortboards** – For more advanced surf users
- Features of a surfboard**

A BEGINNER surfer needs to have an understanding of the surfboard – its shape, function and the

terminology for the different parts. This knowledge will assist in developing skills and help make a more-informed decision when buying a board.

The nose: this is the tip of the surfboard. Shorter boards will have a pointed nose while the bigger boards will have a more rounded nose. Beginner surfers will find a rounded nose more beneficial as it decreases the user's chance of "nose diving" (when there is too much weight on the front half of the board and the board sinks rather than travels smoothly).

The tail: This is the opposite end to the nose of the surfboard. Learners will

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benefit from having a wider tail on their surfboards, providing a more stable platform for novice surfers.

The rails: Rails are the curved sides of the board, the rails help direct the flow of the passing water. A beginner surfer would be better suited to soft, curved rails. This provides more

stability when the user is up and riding.

The fins: These are on the underside of the tail. The fins are what surfers use to control the direction they wish to travel. The number of fins on a surfboard is determined by the user's ability and how they wish the board to perform.

The legrope: This is a key feature of the surfboard. We attach the legrope to the board and our back ankle. Every fall the surfer has will not require a swim in as the board will pop up a few feet away and still be attached to the user's leg. Just remember: the legrope is not a life-saving device and can break, so it's a good idea to

check your leash for nick worn-out nylon rope near where it attaches to your board. The other thing to aware of is that with the power of the wave pulling your board away from you and the recoil it has when released, it can sometimes send the board hurtling back at you like a rocket. So it's a great idea after each wipeout to stay under water and count to three. Then come up with your arms covering your face, just to be safe. Nothing takes the place of being a competent swimmer with ocean knowledge in the surf.

TOMORROW: Surf awareness and etiquette