

The **FUN**damentals of Fishing

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FUN

DAMENTALS



FISHING

*by
Jon Anderson*

If you're looking for a place for easy to learn how to, beginners, basic, first time, how do you, tips, skills, fundamentals and technique of fishing, then you've come to the right spot.

Don't know a thing about fishing?

In all reality . . .

You only need to put a small hook on the line, a small split shot just above the hook, and a bobber a foot or two above the hook with a wax worm or red wiggler imbedded on it.

Throw it out and wait.
If you don't get a bite in a few minutes,
raise the bobber another foot or two.

That's pretty much it!

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**You don't know what a split shot is or what a bobber is?
Wondering what the heck is a wax worm or red wiggler?
You'll learn by browsing this site!**

Now, I do not claim to be a "know-it all" on how to fish.
This site is a collection of methods that have been gathered from
different resources and has been successful for me.

**Regardless to what you read, Remember
this:**

*The best time to go fishing is whenever you can go
and
The best place to fish is where the fish are.*

There are tips throughout this site that I hope will make
everyone's experience last a lifetime.



or

Go to our Sitemap to see EVERY LINK within this Site





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Code of Conduct

The angling code of conduct is based on consideration for the environment and other people.

Only stupid anglers abuse the code -

Don't be one of them!

Code of Conduct is as follows:



Respect all plant and animal life

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Dispose of litter properly

Properly discard of his or her trash. Especially used monofilament fishing line, six-pack holders, plastic bags, and other plastics.

Fish and wildlife can be damaged if they eat or become tangled in these materials.





Follow local fishing regulations



Release fish you will not eat

Never leave edible fish or bait fish to die without intent to retain the fish for consumption or bait. The ethical angler will always treat fish and the aquatic environments they inhabit with care and respect.

When possible, he or she will return all unwanted catch to the water **alive**.





Do not disturb other anglers



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Camping and Fishing and Kids

Camping and fishing go together like peanut butter and jelly.

So, if you're planning your first fishing adventure with young children this summer while Camping then here are a few tips that I hope make everyone's experience last a lifetime.

Some simple tips:

First:

Do keep it simple for starters, and that's your best bet for a fun day.

HAVE FUN!

Don't worry about technique and don't be concerned about catching lots of big, trophy-size fish. To a young angler, a small bluegill or crappie caught with a simple hook and bobber is a major achievement.

For some children, a big fish might be scary.

Many campgrounds are situated on lakes or ponds or at least have a local fishing hole nearby that holds panfish.

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Panfish are pretty much your garden-variety sunny-bluegill deal.



These fish will eat nearly 24-7. A worm and bobber combination is about all you need. We'll get into specific equipment a little later.

What you need to bring is a heap of patience, because kids have never even heard of the word.

Don't force your child to fish for hours on end. Sometimes a child will be happy fishing for 15 minutes and then playing for an hour along the beach or woods, etc.

A child cannot be expected to spend long hours sitting and holding a rod. As the adult you should also not plan to spend long hours paying attention to his or her rod without keeping an eye on the kids.

Even so, there are ways to keep the children involved in fishing and enjoying the outdoors in general.

One way to keep the tyke focused is to let him or her do as much as possible, keep them involved, explain the gear, the procedures, show them how things work...promise a special treat on the way back to camp or explain how you're going to show the folks back at the campsite how to cook fish.

Another method is to fish for a very catchable species at a good time of year. Spring fishing for bluegill or crappie is a particularly good way to introduce children to fishing, because there can

be lots of action, which is more fun and interesting for the child.

Often children want to be able to move the rod around a lot and see how things look and work when they're underwater. There's nothing wrong with letting them do that, as long as they're not swinging the rod around and hooking each other. Children that want to bounce the rod around can be successful using small jigs for panfish, since the fish will often strike jigs worked in an erratic, vertical manner. Some anglers have their children catch baitfish for them, including threadfin shad, using a small golden egg hook with a red bead on it by jiggling it over the side of the boat.

Bigger children often enjoy casting and retrieving lures, especially spinners and topwater lures. If the only fishing available requires leaving a rod still with a baited hook, use rod holders and bells, so the kids don't have to be sitting still and chained to the rod. Sure, they'll miss a few fish, but the excitement of a ringing bell alerting them that a fish is interested in their bait will usually renew their interest.

Another way to keep children interested is to have a friendly competition with a very simple prize.

Perhaps the person who catches the first or largest fish should get the first or biggest candy bar or other snack. Even without a prize, a child can feel pretty excited if he or she can catch a fish before (or a bigger fish than) dad, mom, grandpa or another adult. The competition can be

for the first fish of the day, the biggest of the day, the first of each species, the biggest of each species, the first full stringer, the most fish total or the most of a particular species. There can even be a competition for the person who catches the most unusual or strangest-looking fish.

The BEST way to help children enjoy fishing is to plan a trip that involves more activities than just fishing, such as Camping, hiking, swimming, boating, canoeing, water-skiing, horseback riding or bicycle riding. This keeps the children in the great outdoors, learning about and enjoying the natural world around them, and fulfills both their enthusiasm and their short attention spans.

Some activities can even be combined with fishing. For example, fishing can be combined with snorkeling to add a whole new dimension.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Don't make your fishing outing a big production. Kids can only take in so much information at any given time. The more complicated you make it, the more frustrated they'll get. You don't need fancy equipment. You don't need a boat; fishing from a pier, dock or shore will do just fine. Keep it simple. After all, your child just wants to spend time with you.

As far as equipment goes, it need not be expensive.

[A basic spin-cast system, the push-button](#)

variety, is easy for kids to operate.

The old Zebco "capsule" reels

taught many of us how to cast.

Do not go for an open-faced spinning reel

or

baitcasting reel for first-timers.

Note: open-faced models go on the bottom of the reel seat, not the top.

Nowadays, you can find ready-to-go outfits in most major sporting goods stores that are made specifically for kids.

On that note, stick to the perch, bluegills, and sunnies for starters.

The occasional bass will be a bonus.

However, if you do want the youngster to get into decent fish, try a pay-to-fish commercial outfit.

Check the Internet or ads in local fishing publications. Nearly every state, or at least region, produces local magazines for anglers, and these people do advertise. The basic deal is that you pay an entry fee and so much per pound for fish caught. The upside is that you know the fish are there, the downside is that it ain't the real world. But if it's only a day-trip fun deal, it couldn't hurt much.

For saltwater excursions, hopping on a family-friendly party boat is a smart idea. The captains are in business to make people happy, and if it's a boatload of kids, some simple bottom fishing, not far from shore is just the ticket. Don't take a five-

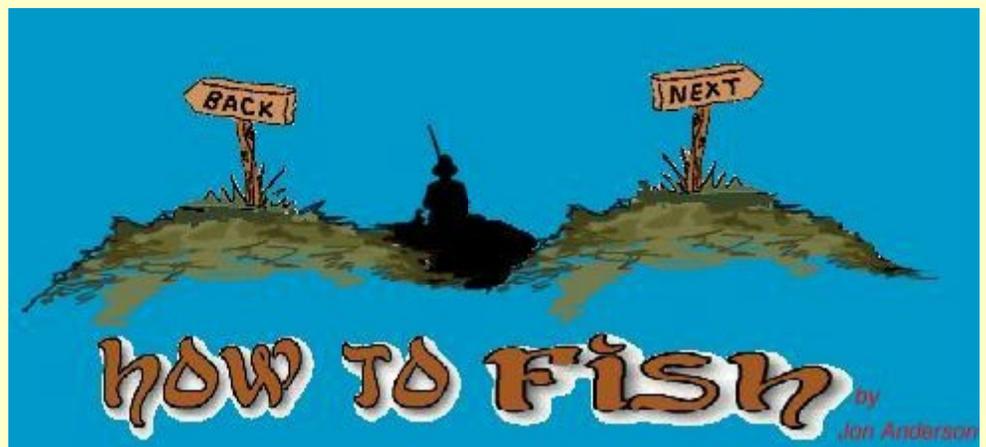
year-old out in search of mako shark or 12-pound bluefish when a few sea robins will make him or her happy.

Finally, be encouraging, supportive, take pictures and laugh a lot.

Help with the line tangles, netting their catch, and the like. But otherwise, let them have fun on their own. It'll work wonders for a "quality time" experience - and your blood pressure.

Despite all the planning, kids will be kids and they'll be too interested in the outdoors to focus on just fishing for hours on end. As long as they're having good, safe fun with a little fishing thrown in here and there, the children will be building good memories and good experiences that will boost their self esteem, their love for the outdoors and most of all the family's unity.

What you'll need to get started . . .



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Equipment Needed



Though fishing can become complicated with fancy lures, expensive reels, shiny boats, water-depth finders, and all sorts of other gadgets, all you really need to fish is a pole, some line, a sinker, a bobber, a hook, and some bait (all referred to as tackle).

Basic *freshwater* Fishing

for sunfish or panfish.

This type of fishing doesn't require a tackle box the size of a transport, nor do you need any type of degree. You need only a rod and reel, line, a bobber and hooks, just like in the good old days.

The only bait you really need are worms!
(or perhaps grubs, plastic worms, corn, bread or bits of hot dog for bait)

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Worms can be caught on a dewy night using only a flashlight and a tin can that has a bit of grass and soil in it. This keeps the worms alive.

They can be kept outside or in the refrigerator if it is especially warm. If you place worms in the refrigerator, be sure to put a waxed paper over the top, fasten it with an elastic and poke a few small holes in the paper to ensure the worms have oxygen. If possible, allow your child to help catch the worms. That is part of the fun.

So, let's organize what we need for a simple and successful fishing trip to your local pond.

Your line should be as light and inconspicuous as possible so that it does not frighten fish from your bait.

However, it must be strong enough to hold the fish you want to catch!

**Before you can fish and you are over the age of 18
you will need a fishing license!**

Be sure to purchase proper licenses!!!
In most states, licenses aren't required for children.

You'll also want to know the basic fishing laws and few simple things about [where fish live, what they eat, and when they are hungry.](#)

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Equipment

Youth Fishing Kits

They come with either closed face or open faced spinning reels, a rod, line, and one even had a small supply of artificial baits.

Add a small tackle box, some split shots, a couple of bass sinkers and supply of small hooks and your in business.

Total cost roughly \$25- \$30.

This equipment, when shown the proper care, will last for years.

Lets look at some of the major parts when it comes to shopping for a rod.

The 3 main parts are:

[Guides](#)

[Grip/Handle](#)

[Reel seat](#)

Guides- The ceramic o-ring looking holes that are attached to the rod are called guides.





The line is fed from the reel through the all the guides and then to the bait. Typically, they're attached using either thread, or tape. One more thing about guides, check them periodically to make sure they aren't chipped or cracked. Guides that are damaged can ruin your line.

If you do find a guide that is damaged, it can be simply replaced by using a Rod Tip Repair Kit.

DO NOT CUT THE TIP OF YOUR ROD OFF!!!

Take a cigarette lighter and as you heat the metal of the tip (do not put the flame on the rod just the metal of the tip) pull on the tip (with needle nose pliers) as you heat it up. This will melt the glue holding the tip on and the tip will pull off.

Most of your fish and tackle stores sales a rod tip repair kit with glue and various sizes of rod tips. The kit also gives instructions on how to take off the old tip and put the new one on.

Grip/Handle This is where you hold the rod. Typically, grips come in either cork or foam. Try them both and choose the one that is most comfortable. Handles come in various lengths. Be sure to consider the length of the handle and find one you like and is also comfortable.

Reel seat- This is where the reel is attached.



Simply place the reel into the reel seat and hand tighten (no tools are needed).
The reel is now attached.

Be sure not to over tighten!

What is a ferrule?

Manufacturers make various kinds of fishing rods. Some of them are a single piece, others are made up of two or more pieces that have to be assembled. To assemble the rod, connect the male and female ends together making sure the guides are lined up. This male-female connection is called a ferrule. With two piece rods, the ferrule is typically located in the middle of the rod and is covered by a piece of tape. Regardless of where the ferrule is, the connection is very simple. The pieces just slide together. You should be able to assemble the rod in under a minute.

You shouldn't need any type of lubricant. But, occasionally it may be necessary.

Use your skin as lubricant.
Rub the male end against the side of your nose.

You should not use any type of commercial grade lubricant to help make the connection. When you're done connecting the pieces together, make sure the guides are lined up. If not, simply twist one of the pieces until they're in line with each other.

Action

As you shop for a rod, I encourage you to hold and even slightly bend it. Get the feel of it. Notice how the rod feels in your hand. Does it feel comfortable? How does it feel when you cast? Be sure to find a rod you like and is comfortable. Remember, you'll be using it for a long time. One of the things you'll notice pretty quick is the rods' flexibility. This flexibility is called action. You'll know what type of action the rod has by looking at the information listed on the rod by the handle. Actions are typically defined as:

Ultra light -Typically used for Panfish such as Crappie and Bluegill

Light - Typically used for Perch

Medium - Can be used for Bass and Walleye and many other species of fish

Medium Heavy - Typically used for larger fish or used when casting larger baits

Heavy - Typically used for larger fish and larger baits

The more flexible the rod is, the more action it has. For example, there is more action (flexibility) in an Ultra light rod than there is in a Heavy action one. If you had to choose one action to use general, I'd suggest the Medium action because of it's overall versatility.

One more note about shopping for a rod, stick to the major manufactures such as Berkley, Shakespeare, Daiwa, Shimano, just to name a few. These companies have been around for a number of years and can be trusted. You won't go wrong buying from a major manufacture.

Pole- Almost any type will work.

In order to be most effective, almost all of the artificial lures should be used on certain kinds of store-bought fishing rods with reels attached. There are bait-casting rods for bait and plugs, fly rods for artificial flies and poppers, and spinning rods for spoons, jigs, and spinners. Different types of reels are made for each of these rods, but all of them hold a spool of line and allow the lure to be cast out into the water and reeled back in.

Rod- Almost any type will work. The basic fishing rod is 6 feet long and has a medium "weight" (which means it's a good all-purpose rod). A cane pole or even a long stick will work for crappies and sunfish.

A fishing rod is a long, straight, flexible pole that an angler uses to cast bait or lures into the water. Fishing rods can be made of bamboo, fiberglass, or graphite. Bamboo rods range from inexpensive cane poles without reels to finely handcrafted fly-fishing rods. Fiberglass rods are the most popular rods with beginners. They are relatively inexpensive, not easily broken, and require little maintenance. Graphite has become a popular rod material for experienced anglers because it is extremely light yet strong.

Rod length depends upon the fishing an angler intends to do-not only the type of game fish sought after, but also the type of water and the surrounding landscape. Short, flexible rods are often used in locations where overhanging tree limbs and branches limit an angler's casting area. Long, wispy rods up to 4 m (12 ft) in length may be used for long casts in moderate winds. Shorter, sturdier rods are used for pulling heavy game fish from the depths of large lakes or the ocean. The diameter of the rod determines its flexibility, which is the measure of how far it can bend without breaking when a fish is fighting hard. Thicker and stronger rods are used for bigger, more aggressive fish that would break medium and small rods.

The rod has a grip or handle made of high-quality cork or foam. Several small metal rings called ferrules are attached to the rod from the handle to the tip, including one on the very tip of the rod. These ferrules serve as guides for the fishing line. They help the line flow smoothly when the angler casts and retrieves, and the last guide helps control the direction of casts. Most rods also have a reel seat that secures the reel onto the rod near the grip.

Let's talk about the differences between casting and spinning rods.

Spinning rods



Only a Spinning (open face) style reel can be used.

Notice the reel sits on the underside of the rod.

The guides point to the ground

The size of the eyelets start large and become smaller closer to the tip.

Casting rods

Either Spincast or Baitcast reels can be used

The guides and reel sit on top of the rod

Many types of casting rods have a style of grip called a Trigger Grip. It'll help you determine where to hold the rod. Simply, place your forefinger around the grip to hold it.

*Both rods come in a variety of sizes and actions.
Chose the one that best suites your needs.*

What the rod does

The rod's job is to take tension off the line. When fighting a fish, you want the rod to partially bend, so it'll take some of the tension off the line. This is good, because if there was no transfer of tension, the line would break.

If you use a rod that isn't stiff enough, the rod will bend, but too much. When a rod bends as far as it can, the rod can't handle any more tension from the line. Something has to give, either the fish, rod or line.

If you use too heavy of a rod, the tension isn't transferred because there isn't enough force being applied by the fish. This puts all the tension on just the line. Once again something has to give; in this case it's either the fish or the line.

Using the right rod is important because it enables the rod to bend but not too much, absorbing the tension from the line, allowing you to fight the fish and win.

Shopping for a rod and understanding it how it works will be vital to your success as a fisherman. As you can see, it's not difficult at all.

Reel- The easiest ones to use and called spin-cast reels. Spinning reels are popular, but they are a bit harder to use.

If you use a cane pole or a stick, just tie the line to the end.

Fishing reels store line on a spool. An adjustable friction device inside the reel (known as a drag) helps the angler fight a fish. The drag creates tension on the line as it is pulled off the reel spool. When the fish pulls line off the reel, the constant tension tires it and keeps the line in order. Without a drag system, the fish would take out too much line, causing the line to tangle. The opposite situation-not releasing any line from the reel-would cause the line to snap. Most reels have adjustable drag settings depending upon the fish an angler wants to catch. Anglers can also disengage the drag to cast or do anything else that requires the line to release easily.

Reels are made in four basic categories: bait casting, spinning, spin casting, and fly.

Bait casting reels have a covered frame and a revolving, horizontal spool that winds in line when the handle is turned. One turn revolves the spool four or five times, bringing in several feet of line quickly.



Bait-Cast
Reel

[Click On Image
For More Detailed Information](#)

***Spinning reels** have a stationary spool set on the underside of the rod. A curved bar, or bail, acts as a guide on the outer lip of the spool. As the reel handle is turned, the bail also turns, winding line neatly onto the spool.*



Spinning
Reel

[Click On Image
For More Detailed Information](#)

*A variation of the spinning reel is the **spin casting**, or **closed-face, reel**. The spin casting reel has a cover over the spool and a hole through which line passes. This construction keeps the line clean and out of the angler's way. There is no bail inside of a spin casting reel. Instead, metal teeth attached to the spool gather the line in neatly.*



Spin - Cast
Reel

[Click On Image
For More Detailed Information](#)

Fly reels, which have few moving parts, are the most basic form of fishing reels. Most consist of a frame that holds a narrow revolving spool. The handle attaches directly to the spool and turns the spool one rotation at a time.

[Click Here to learn more about
Rods & Reels](#)

Fishing Line

As you stroll down the fishing aisles, there are many different types of line to choose from, and it can be very confusing to say the least. Hopefully after reading this, you'll have a good understanding of fishing line.

Most fishing line is made of nylon and is called "monofilament," or mono for short. It comes on spools of various lengths that are called "tests." Usually, a four-pound test line will hold up a fish weighing four pounds without breaking. The larger the test of the line, the thicker the diameter it is and the more it will hold. For your basic rig, try to find a piece of four-pound or six-pound test line that is eight to ten feet long.

Tie the line onto the end of your pole.

Now you're making progress!

Fishing line can be a complicated subject, but it doesn't have to be.

Let's start with a basic rule in mind:

When you're buying line or any equipment, match the gear to the conditions your fishing. With that said, you'll need to find out a few things before purchasing line.

What kind of fish are you after?

Are you after small ones such as Crappie, Perch or Bluegill ?

Or maybe you want a bigger fish such as Bass or maybe your after the ones with big teeth

such as Walleye or Pike.

What is the body of water like?

Does it have large amounts of vegetation, rocks etc?

With regards to this question, you may not know so you'll have to do some investigating, Still unsure? Then stick to a general fishing line from a major manufacturer, and you should be O.K.

By answering these questions you start matching equipment to the conditions. For example, if the body of water you want to fish on has lots of weeds, you will need a stronger line to get your bait through the weeds because a weaker line may break.

I tried to break them down into three basic categories. These are my own categories, some purists might argue with us, but we like to keep things simple.

A short introduction to the types of line

Monofilament

(Also called mono)



It's the most common type of line, and typically it comes in either clear or green. If you buy a pre-spoiled reel, chances are it was spooled with this type of line. One thing to keep in mind is memory. When line is uncoiled (by casting) it tries to maintain the shape of the spool. This coiling after the cast is Memory. It will wreak havoc on you in the form of not being able to cast, tangles, pure frustration etc. To avoid this, be sure to re-spool your line at least once a year. Monofilament is a great all purpose fishing line that can be used anywhere..

Monofilament is listed on the package, by terms such as mono or monofilament.

Super lines

These include Fusion and Braided type lines. Some of the more common ones are:

Spiderwire

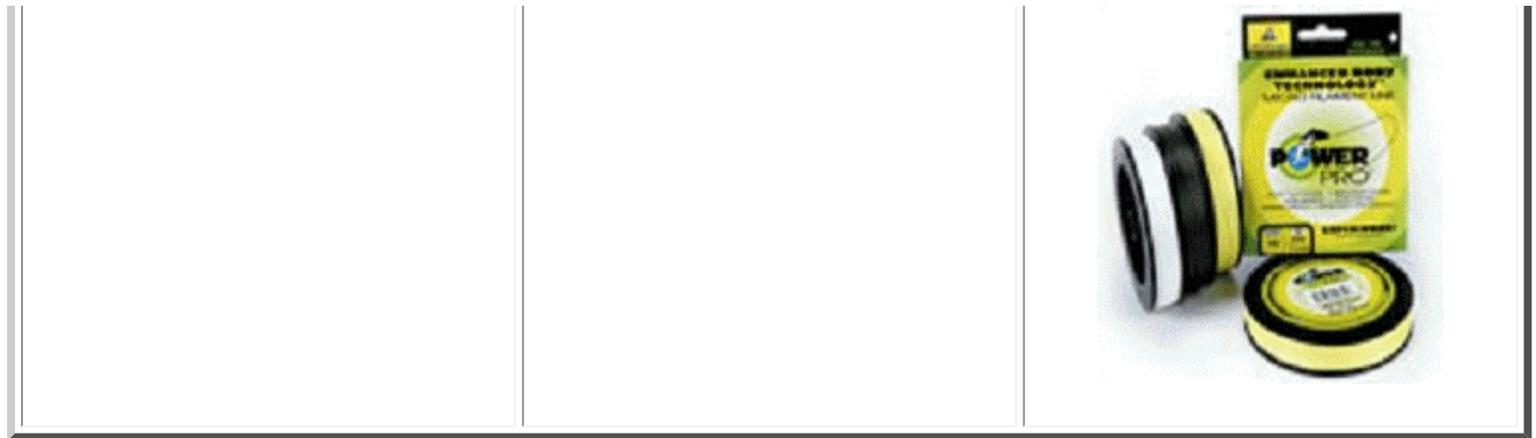


Fire Line



PowerPro





In this case, the materials are either braided or fused together to make a single strand of line. What's produced by the process, is a super strong line with a much smaller diameter than it's monofilament competitor. For example, if you were to purchase a 12 lb test monofilament line, the diameter would be listed. With super lines, the package might list 24 lb test line with 12 lb diameter. These lines tend to be more sensitive and have little or no stretch to them. we suggest using this type of line when you're going to be fishing heavy cover, or going after fish with big teeth. What's the downside you ask? You'll have to try it and see. We will say don't wrap it around your finger or hand while pulling on it. It'll cut into you. Take it from experience!

Listed on the box, you'll see such terms as "fusion", "braided", "ultra sensitive", or "minimal stretch".

Fluorocarbons

These lines look like monofilament but, are virtually invisible underwater. They have very little stretch which can lead to better hooksets. This type of line is best suited for the same conditions as monofilament.

Berkley's Vanish is an example of a Fluorocarbon line.



These types of lines do well in clear water and when there is heavy fishing pressure.

When it comes to comparing Monofilament to Fluorocarbon line:

Fluorocarbon has less stretch

Has increased abrasion resistance

Sinks faster than monofilament

Doesn't absorb water, therefore it retains 100% of its dry tensile strength

Is virtually invisible under water

Now that you know a little about the different types of line, the fishing conditions and what you're after, it's time to tackle the label. Listed below are several of the more common features that show up on the boxes of fishing line.

Understanding what the terms mean

Test Strength

This is the breaking strength of the line. Meaning, with how much force does the fish fight with before the line breaks. You'll see this listed right on the front of the box. This seems to be the first thing people think about when choosing a line. The label will say something like 12 LB Test or 6 LB Test. The larger the number, the stronger the line.

Oh, one more thing, test strength has nothing to do with the weight of the fish, only the amount of the fight.

When fighting a fish, make sure your rod tip is up and that the rod is slightly bent. When the rod is bent, the force of the fight is being transferred from the line to the rod. This is one reason people land big fish on light line. The object is to keep the fish's head up and the line taut. We don't want to get ahead of ourselves, if you haven't already seen the page how to fight a fish, [click here](#) after you're finished with this article.

Diameter

Is the thickness of the line. It affects the running depth of your lure. Remember, as you work your lure, you're also moving water at the same time. The larger the diameter, the more water is being moved. A thicker line moves more water than a thinner line. This means that your bait will actually run deeper with thinner line!

Diameter also relates to how much of a particular line your reel can hold. To learn about reels, [click here](#).

Stretch

Stretch is primarily meant for monofilament. If the line doesn't stretch, it will break. Super lines have minimal or no stretch, but typically don't break when fighting fish. They're so strong fish will break before the line does

The label will include terms like "*Low Stretch*", "*Controlled Stretch*" or "*Minimal Stretch*".

Abrasion Resistance

How tough is it? Can it withstand being dragged over rocks, stumps, bitten by fish and not break?

Words on the package might be "*High Abrasion Resistance*" "*Extra Tough*".

Unless you're going to be fishing heavy cover, such as rocks and submerged tree stumps, don't let abrasion resistance factor into your decision about what line to purchase.

Knot strength

Knots weaken the line, because the line is wrapped back on itself and tightened down. Certain knots can decrease line strength.

To learn how to tie some of the more common knots, [click here](#).

Advertising on the package will include terms such as "*Superior Knot Strength*"

Last but not least, stick to the major brands.

Brands such as Berkley, Spiderwire, and Stren.

You may pay more, but it's worth it. You've already spent hard earned money purchasing your reel, and possibly even your rod, why try to save money on the most important piece of equipment? The piece that connects you to the fish!

As you can see, there are many types of line on the market to choose from. Ultimately, you have to decide what is important for your type of fishing, is it test strength, stretch or another factor? We've said it before, and we'll say it again. When you're buying line or any equipment, match the gear to the conditions your fishing. No one line is the "right" line for all types of fishing. You may have to experiment with several lines to find the one you like best.

Bait & Lures

Bait- Bait is what you put on the end of your line to attract the fish, something a fish would love to eat. Just like people, all fish are not attracted to the same foods. Some baits work better than others for certain types of fish.

[\(see the fish food charts here\)](#)

Bait can be broken down into two major types:

- 1) live or natural bait,
and
- 2) artificial bait and lures.

Live and Natural Bait

There are a number of living creatures that many fish like to eat. For most fish, the best all-around baits are nightcrawlers, and half a nightcrawler, or worms - these include earthworms.

Earthworms are one of the most widely used forms of real bait. They can be used to catch almost any type of fish.

As a general rule when using worms, be sure to match the size of the worm to the size of the fish you're after. When going after small ones such as, Crappie or Bluegill, (sometimes called panfish) you'll want to use a small worm or even just a portion of a large one. Worms can easily be cut into pieces with a pocket knife. Be sure to put the unused portion back in the container, so it'll stay alive.

When fishing for larger fish such as Bass or Walleye, you should be using large worms, just be sure not to overload your hook. Remember, you want to give them a taste not the whole meal.

If possible, we suggest buying your worms at a tackle shop close to where you're going to be fishing.

Let's talk about storage for a moment. If you're fishing for the day, use the container they came in, keep them in a cool dry place and be sure not to keep them more than a couple of days. If you want to keep them more than a couple of days or want a quality container use a worm box.



Frabill ® Lil' Fisherman Worm Box

Insulated poly-foam worm box has dual fliptop lids for easy access to top or bottom. Holds 1-2 dozen crawlers. Includes bedding.

Minnows are probably the 2nd most popular type of real bait. They come in 3 sizes, small medium and large (also called chubs). Like worms, you have to match the size of the minnow to the size of the fish.

Minnows can be attached to a hook various ways:

Through the back in front of the dorsal fin and above the horizontal line

Through the lips (upside down) the minnow will try to "right" itself thus attracting fish with its movements.

Put the hook in the mouth and bring it out the gills trying not to cause any damage. Turn the hook over so it faces the minnow and insert the hook into the minnow above the horizontal stripe.

The minnow will try to "right" itself.

[Click here](#) to see how to hook other live baits

Storage can be an issue with minnows but, you have a couple of options. First, if you plan on fishing for an entire day, keep them stored in a minnow bucket.

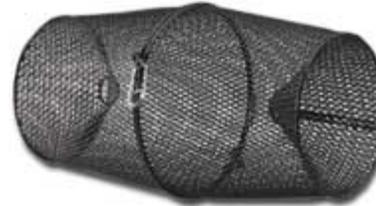


850 Bait Bucket

Bucket is designed to stay in water while trolling to keep minnows fresh and alive. Secure bait door and built in handle. Yellow. 10.75 " W x 8.5"D x 14.5"H.

Fill the bucket with lake water. Be sure to change the water at least every hour to keep the fish alive.

If you plan on fishing for a few days, you may want to bring along one or several minnow traps.



Economy Minnow Trap

Efficient, durable and easy to operate. Black vinyl coating blends in with underwater colors, providing superb camouflage. 1/4" mesh.

Minnow traps are designed to be submerged, and be attached to the dock or some other form of structure. The purpose of the trap is to catch minnows. We've found, if you cover the ends of the trap and put your minnows in the trap, they store just fine. Each morning, simply raise the trap, take the amount of minnows you'll need and put them in the minnow bucket (be sure to put water in the bucket first), secure the minnow trap, and put it back in the water.

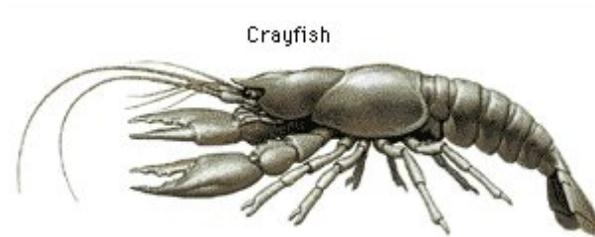
Minnows can die quickly so be sure to keep an eye on them and use dead ones first.

You may want to consider buying large (chub) minnows when going after small fish. You can cut the chub into 3-4 smaller pieces. That's 36-48 pieces for a dozen chubs compared to what you might pay for a dozen small minnows.

Live bait can be delicate.

I do not suggest casting and retrieving it like you would an artificial lure. Rather, fish it with a bobber or as bait on a rig (see the section for the [basics on rigs](#))

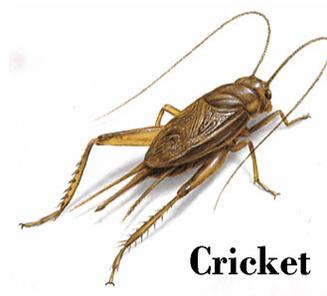
Fish also like crickets, grasshoppers, and cray-fish. All of these baits can be gathered for free. Worms can be dug in your garden, grasshoppers collected in grassy fields, crickets found in dark corners in the basement, crayfish found under rocks in small creeks, and minnows seined or caught in a minnow trap at a local pond.



Crayfish



Earthworm



Cricket



Grasshopper



Crappie: Minnows

White Bass: Minnows

Sunfish: Worms

Black Bass: Worms

Catfish: Worms or Stinkbait

Sunfish: Crickets

Trout: Salmon eggs

Waxworms work well for sunfish. To catch carp, try a kernel of canned corn. Catfish are partial to a piece of turkey liver.

Minnows are great fish-getters. Try tiny (1-inch-long) minnows for crappies and larger (2- to 6-inch-long) sucker and fathead minnows for walleyes and northern pike.

If you don't know what type of minnow to use, just ask the person selling the bait.

Take along a needle-nosed pliers to remove the hook from the mouth of any fish you catch.

Note: Worms, minnows, and nightcrawlers die easily, and when dead they will no longer attract fish.

Keep worms and nightcrawlers in a cool, moist place, out of the sun. Put minnows in a bucket with a few small holes punched in the sides and keep it in shaded water nearby. To keep water from spilling out, transport the bait bucket in a larger bucket.

Other Natural Baits

Other natural baits include corn kernels, pieces of hot dog, marshmallows, salmon eggs, cheese, and dough balls. Most of these can be found in your pantry or made from ingredients you have there. Salmon eggs can be purchased at a bait and tackle store. Not too many marshmallows grow in nature, but for some reason certain types of fish like them!

All of these natural baits can be used with your homemade fishing pole. Choose your bait based on the type of fish you are trying to catch ([see the fish food charts here](#)). Put the bait on your hook, toss it into the water, and wait for the fish to bite. If you just can't decide which bait to use, a worm is always a good bet for most types of fish.

Artificial Bait and Lures

In fishing lingo, artificial bait is usually called a lure.

If you've ever wandered down the fishing aisles, you'll know there are literally hundreds to choose from. I just want to give you just the basics. These are ones that should be in every tackle box. We think this will give you a good starting point.

Some lures closely imitate living creatures such as worms, flies, frogs, and minnows. Other lures attract fish by their movement and their sound or by tempting the fish's curiosity.

Artificial lures are designed to look and move like something a fish would eat, namely worms, minnows, grasshoppers, flies and other tasty morsels.

There are hundreds of different types of artificial lures, but many come under the basic categories of [Crankbaits](#), [plugs](#), [poppers](#), [spoons](#), [jigs](#), or [spinners](#).

There is no doubt you'll be dazzled by the variety!
There are even holographic lures that flash a 3-D view of scales or a small school of baitfish!
But don't let your piggy bank go broke.

Practice restraint or soon you'll need a tackle box bigger than your boat!
Start with a few carefully chosen lures to entice your favorite fish species and learn to use them well.

Plugs are designed to look something like a small fish. Some are made to float and some are made to dive down into the water. They shimmy, shake, gurgle, and splash in various ways to imitate something a hungry fish would like to eat.



Poppers imitate bugs floating on the surface of the water. When twitched along, they make a sort of "glub" sound that attracts certain kinds of fish.



Spoons look something like the eating end of a teaspoon. They are heavier than water, and imitate a speedy minnow flashing and darting under the surface as they are reeled in.



Spoons are mostly used for northern pike and muskies.

Of the hundreds of lures on the market, the most popular are spinners (such as Mepps or Rooster Tails), crankbaits (such as Rapalas), and jigs with feathers or rubber bodies (such as Mister Twisters).

Spinners have small blades or propellers that rotate around a center shaft. When you drag a spinner through the water, the blade spins and flashes, attracting fish by the motion it makes and the vibrations it sends into the water.



They are easy to use and will catch a wide variety of fish.

Use spinnerbaits with the lightest, brightest and shiniest blades on clear days and dark finishes on dull days or dingy waters.

Jig- This is simply small hooks with a lead ball near the eye of the hook. They are often decorated with feathers, artificial eyes, rubber legs, and tinsel. They are cast into the water and "jigged," or bounced up and down, to attract the fish. Retrieve a jig by bouncing it along the bottom of the lake or river.



Note: There are now alternatives to jigs. These alternatives are usually made of steel, ceramic or cement. If you loose your sinker, these alternatives are safer for water birds.

Crankbaits- More expensive than other lures, crankbaits are excellent for walleyes, pike, muskie, and bass.



These are lures that look like a small fish. They are cast into the water and retrieved by reeling (aka cranking) the line back in. There are 3 types: those that work the surface, medium divers (1-10 feet) and deep divers (10-20 feet)

As a general rule, you can tell a deep diver from a shallow one by the size of the lip. The larger the lip, the deeper it will dive. This rule is, however not set in stone.

Surface lures



Typically the face is pushed in to form a cup. The cup creates a popping noise when the line is pulled instead of cranked in.

Some have a propeller instead of a "cup" face. The propeller moves the water around the lure to get the fish's attention.

Minnow baits. They may rattle, but don't have any movement built into them unless it's done by the fisherman pulling the line in various ways. There is no lip attached.

Medium Divers

Appear to look the deep divers. Generally, I look at the lip size and the specs on the box to determine how deep it'll go

Deep Divers

These are going down no more than 20 feet.

Color is important, because fish may be biting on red lures one day and yellows the next. This is why you need so many lures.

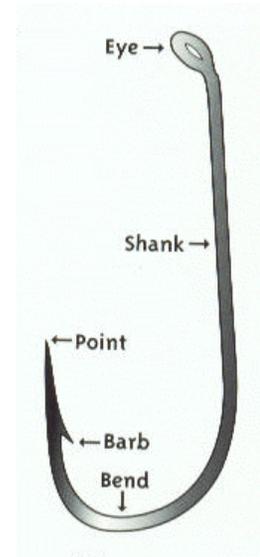
Colors on surface lures tend to be yellow- use on overcast days
white- use on sunny days
black- use for nights or dull days
Weight Size (length) Jigs

[Learn More about](#)
[Lure Fishing](#)

Hooks- Fishing hooks come in all shapes and sizes. They are probably the most important part of your fishing equipment, but luckily they are not very expensive. It's a good idea to have a small assortment of hooks for various fishing situations.



A basic fishing hook is shaped like the letter "j" and is made up of several parts. They are called the eye, the shank, the bend, the barb, and the point.



The eye is where you tie the hook onto your line. The point is what you use to put on the bait, and what penetrates the mouth of the fish when it eats the bait. The barb is shaped such that after the hook goes into the fish's mouth, it won't easily come back out. Many people who are fishing just for fun (not for the frying pan) make what is known as a barbless hook. With a pair of pliers, they mash down the barb. Though you don't always land as many fish, these hooks are a lot more "fish friendly," and they make it much easier to release what you catch.

Generally, large hooks are for large fish and small hooks are for small fish. You should choose a hook appropriate for the weight of fish you will be trying to catch. You might begin with a size 4 or 6, but if you are going for the big fish, you might need something larger. An experienced fisherman friend can give you some help with this.

The point of your hook should be sharp, for good reason: so you can hook the fish! If it gets dull or a little rusty, it won't catch as many fish. Get a file and re-sharpen it.

Any type of hook will work.

The smaller the number, the larger the hook. Look for hooks in sizes 4-10. Hooks with a long "shank" (the part between the eye and the barb) are easier to remove from fish with small mouths, such as sunfish.

Use a hook that fits the mouth of the fish you want to catch. Size 8 and 10 hooks are best for crappies, sunfish, and carp. Size 4 and 6 are good for walleyes, catfish, and northern pike.

Rigs

**Rigs are a productive and easy way to catch many different species of fish.
We suggest 2 types of rigs:**

Crappie Rigs

Bobber Rigs

Start by attaching the Crappie Rig



Double arms with fluorescent beads. Four popular gold Aberdeen hook sizes to choose from to your main line, and add about a 1/2 ounce casting sinker



to the bottom of the rig.
Simply add a minnow or piece of worm to the hooks and drop it over the side. Let the rig sink to the bottom and take up the slack in the line so the rig will stand up straight.

Bobber rigs

can be effective for Bluegill and are a great way to get kids started fishing.



any type will work for pan fish. First, figure out how deep you want your bait



off the bottom and tie the bobber stop knot on your line at that depth. Slip on the bobber stop bead and then the slip bobber and a hook. Put a good size split shot about a foot or two above it. Bait the hook and throw it all over the side. Make sure you have some slack in the line to allow the bobber to bounce up and down during a bite. You can fish a bobber rig next to the boat or toss it away from the boat. Bobber rigs work great if you want a relaxing day of fishing or for kids. If the bobber goes under water, set the hook, period. If the bobber continuously bounces a few times in a row, set the hook during the bounces. If after attempting to set the hook, you did not hook the fish, check the bait. If it's still there, get it back down quickly; the fish may still be interested. If the bait is gone, re-bait the hook and get it back in the water.

School is in session and a class maybe waiting for your worm to come on down!

Sinkers

Sinkers are lead weights used to cast light lures and to drop the bait quickly to the bottom of the lake or river bottom, where most fish swim.

Used in together with bobbers, they hold the line at a given point.

Sinking lures and jigs don't need sinkers.

There are many different kinds of sinkers, split-shot; pencil and bullet are just a few of the types you can use.

Store-bought sinkers are usually made of lead and come in many different shapes, sizes, and weights.

The depth of the water and the speed of the current will determine how much weight you need to hold your bait in front of a hungry fish.

You will have to experiment with the size to get the float to set right.

Only use one weight, fish shouldn't see any more than they have to.

One easy sinker to use is called a split shot.



It is a small round piece of lead with a slit in it. To attach the sinker, just slide your line through the slit and squeeze the lead together.

Use your fingers or a pair of pliers, but **DON'T** use your teeth!

Besides the possibility of damaging your teeth,

lead is poisonous

and shouldn't be put into your mouth.

Note: There are now alternatives to lead sinkers. These alternatives are usually made of steel, ceramic or cement. If you loose your sinker, these alternatives are safer for water birds.

For most shore fishing, pinch on one or two small weights the size of a BB, about 10 inches up from you hook. Use only enough to sink the bait. If the fish feels too much weight it will

drop the bait before you can set the hook.

Another kind of weight is called an egg sinker.



It is made of lead, shaped like a chicken egg, and has a hole through the middle. To use an egg sinker, run your line through the hole and place a split shot below the sinker to hold it in place. An egg sinker will attach more weight to the line, but when the fish takes your bait it won't feel the weight because the line slips through the sinker.

More on SINKERS (weights)

Bobber

It could be called a float, bobber, cork, etc.

Bobber fishing is one of the first methods we all learn when starting to fish.

A sinker takes your bait to the desired depth in the water, and a bobber holds it at that level. It will allow you to adjust the depth of your hook wherever you want.

Bobbers let you know when you've got a nibble. Button, pencil and slip bobbers are a few of the types available. When you clamp the bobber on the line, remember that the distance from the sinker to the bobber should not be more than the depth of the water.

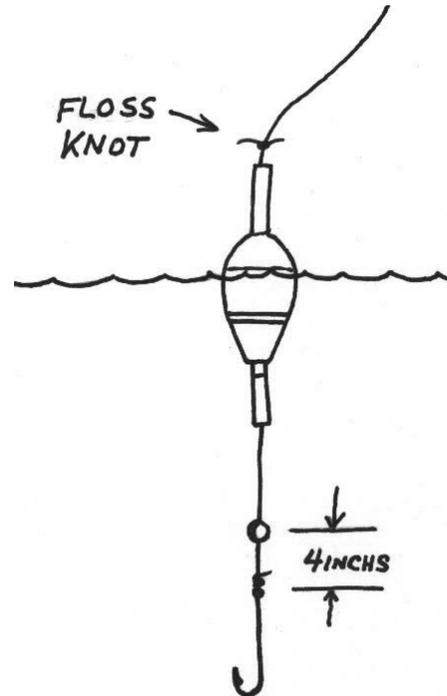
Bobbers come in various sizes to accommodate different sinkers and baits. They are usually made of red and white plastic and have a push-button spring attachment that makes moving them up and down your line easy.

Remember the smaller the better. Wind is your enemy in this case. If the float is too light, the wind will blow it back to you, too big and you will scare the fish off.



A Good Set Up of a Float

A wooden float has a hole through the center so that it can slide up and down the line. Tie a piece of dental floss above the float so that the float will stop where you need it to. The float should set up straight with only the orange section out of the water.



From the hook to the weight is about 4 inches. From the weight to the knot is around 48 inches. You will want to experiment with this depth. Though it's set up to around 48

inches, it doesn't mean that you necessarily fish that deep. Use that to see how deep that you are. Try using a long pole with a reel, and this rig will most of the time just under the end of the pole. When the float is in the water, the knot could be at any depth because the weight and hook are really hanging from the pole.

This set up will allow you to wind the tip of the pole all the way up to the hook when you get hung up under water. Once you have reeled up all of the line, you can punch it and normally the hook will break free.

Another advantage is the ability to throw it.

The float will slide to the weight and there is no wobble as everything goes through the air. When retrieving the rig from far away, the float will try to sit still in the water so that the hook and weight will almost come straight up. This helps to keep from getting hung up.

Try this trick,
remove the weight and floss and let the cricket float slowly down in a natural way. You will catch bigger fish especially if it can hit the bottom where the bigger ones feed.

The only problem here is that you sometimes have a fish and don't know.

More than often the small ones will get on your nerves.

The bobber has a second benefit.

When the bobber twitches in the water,. you know a fish is nibbling at your bait. When it goes under the water, you know a fish is serious about eating the bait and it's time to "set the hook" (give the line a little jerk).

Usually the smaller and thinner bobbers work best. But don't use one so small that the weight and bait sink it. When the bobber goes under the water surface, you know that a fish has taken your bait. A bobber also adds weight to the line to help you cast farther.

bobber basics:

Use a bobber just big enough to float the bait and weight

Wait for the bobber to go under before setting the hook

Make the leader light enough so fish won't be spooked by it

Make the leader long enough not to spook the fish
Use a bait that sinks
Sharp hooks
Adjust bait level below bobber so its close to the bottom but not on it

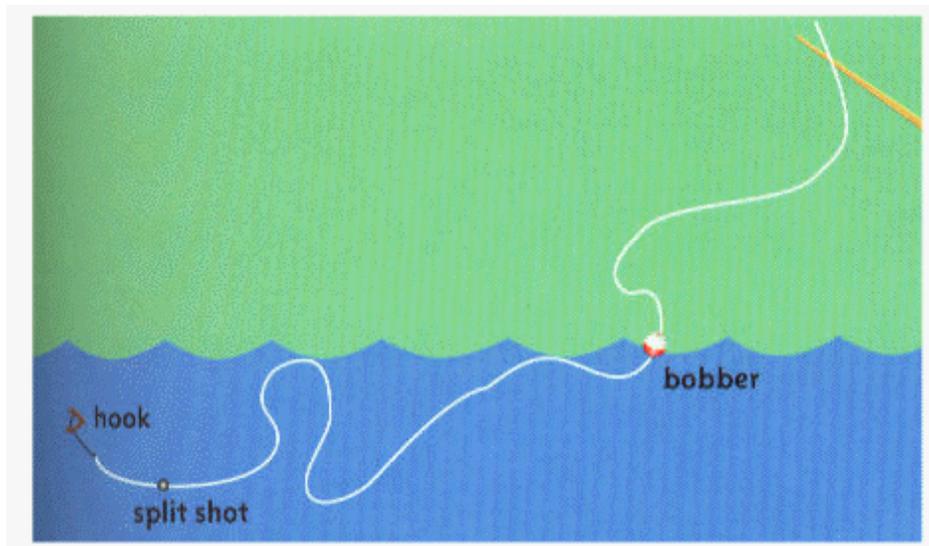
Swivels

Another piece of tackle called a swivel comes in handy if you are using bait (like a minnow) or a lure (like a spinner) that has a twisting or turning action that tends to get your line twisted. Tie a swivel between your bait and your line. This will allow the bait or lure to spin without getting the line all tangled up. Swivels are inexpensive and come in various sizes to match the hooks and lures you might be using.

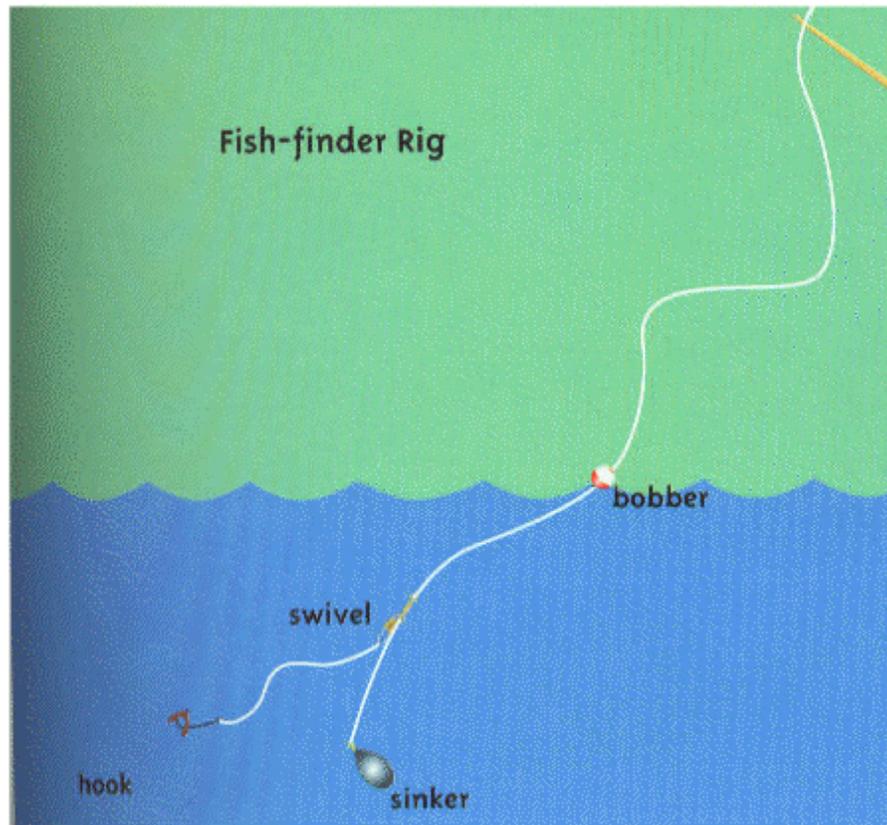


Rigging Your Pole

All that's left now is to put your pieces of tackle together, put on your bait and go fishing!
After you've tied your line onto the end of your pole, there are several ways to rig the other end. One way is to tie the hook onto the end of the line, come up several inches and squeeze on your sinker, and put your bobber on above that.



Another method, called a fish-finder rig, puts the weight at the bottom of the line with the hook tied off to the side on an extra piece of line. This kind of rig lets the bait float freely and naturally in the water (a better way to fool the fish) while the sinker holds it at the correct depth.



Once your pole is rigged, you'll need to decide what kind of food to put on your hook to attract the fish.

Look here!

Now we need something to keep all this fish gear in . . .

a Tacklebox - Most any durable box with a tight lid and a handle will do the job! It could be an old toolbox or sewing box.

Most sporting stores and department stores sell tackle boxes in a variety of styles and sizes.



When considering what size tackle box you wish to buy,
just remember,
fishing is a lifelong pursuit.
You will always be adding items to your fishing gear!

**Well,
that's about the basics as equipment needed for fishin'!**

**Then there's the broad category of other stuff:
a net, a stringer to hold the catch, line clipper, filleting knife, first-**

**aid kit, bait bucket, sun-glasses, a hat, lunch.
And SNACKS.**

Tackle Box Checklist

 A variety of hooks	 Knife
 Hook remover (disgorger)	 Weights (<i>various shapes and sizes</i>)
 Bobbers (<i>various sizes and styles</i>)	 Band-aids (<i>better yet, a first aid kit</i>) 
 Lures	 Sunscreen (<i>if needed</i>)
 Extra fishing line	 A spare reel wouldn't hurt
 Swivels	 Needle nose pliers

**One thing you DO NOT want to keep in your tackle box -
is bait!**

Trust me, the next time you go fishing,



your tackle box will smell worse than dead fish itself!!!!

[Read up on Tips for your equipment . . .](#)



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How To **Bait Your Hook**

Live bait should always appear to the fish to be alive.



Once you put them on your hook they will eventually die, so you need to make them look like they are alive!

When attaching the worm to the hook, you'll want to hook the worm more than once so it stays on the hook.

The less you handle the bait with your fingers, the more effective your bait will be.

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(learn how to hit, pitch, field, etc. How
to Coach, Parent info, Official Rules)

**Human hands have an amino acid that is an aversion scent
to fish,
so the less of this you deposit on the bait through handling,
the more effective your bait becomes.**

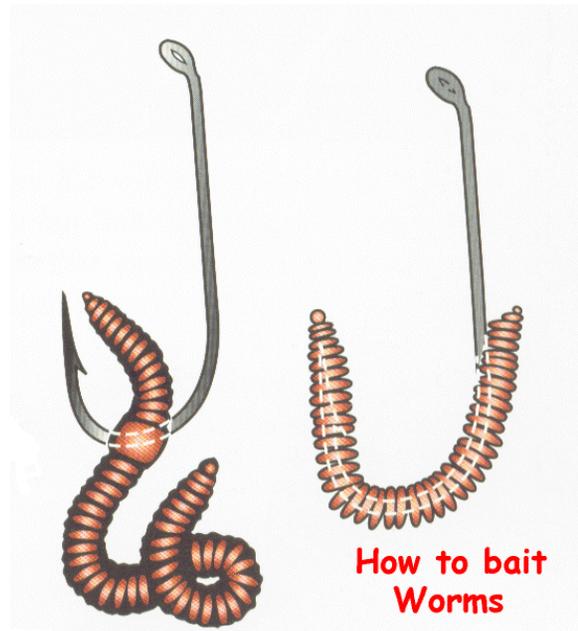
*There are small, syringe-like applicators that allow anglers to bait
hooks without touching the bait at all*

or

you can use disposable sterile gloves (they're cheap).



**See the diagrams below to learn how to hook different types of live
bait:**





How to bait

Crickets

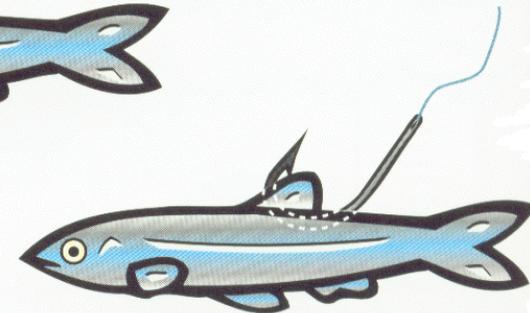


Grasshoppers



Baiting

Minnows



There are other methods of catching fish
WITHOUT
using live bait
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for

LURE FISHING



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About Rods & Reels

Reels

A reel is the mechanical device mounted to the handle end of the [fishing rod](#) onto which the line is wound.

They come in three types (further defined below), with more speeds and ball bearings than most sane people know about, much less worry about.

The most important point - when you turn the handle, it must feel "smooth."

Price ranges from affordable to obscenely expensive.

There's a wide variety of reels out there to choose from and there are quite a few manufacturers making them. They come in different sizes and shapes. Fishing wouldn't be very exciting if there weren't a wide variety of reels to fish with. You wouldn't want to reel in a Croaker with a [9/0 Penn big game reel](#), or try to catch a big "Smoker" Kingfish with a [Zebco spin cast reel](#).

There are 3 types of reels that most fishermen use to catch fish. They are:

[Spincast Reel](#)

(Also known as a Closed Face reel)

[Spinning Reel](#)

(Also known as a Open Face reel)

[Bait Casting Reel](#)

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Even though each kind is different, all reels share some major components:

Spool

This part of the reel holds the line. The spool is visible on the both

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the spinning and baitcast reels. On the spincast models, it's located under the cover. Spools vary in size and in the amount of line they can hold. As you look at each reel, you'll see a listing like, 12/160 or 8/250. This tells you how much of a certain pound test line the spool can hold. In the 2 examples, the spool can hold either 160 yards of 12 lb test or 250 yards of 8 lb test line.

Bail

The bail has 2 settings, open or closed. It's the mechanism that either prevents or allows line coming off the spool.

An open bail allows line to come off the spool

A closed bail- prevents the spool from letting line out.

When casting your line, one of the things you do is open the bail. After the cast is completed, the bail is closed by turning the handle. Sometimes you'll hear the bail click after you've just turned the handle. This click is the bail closing and is normal.

Handle

The handle is what's used to retrieve (more commonly called crank) the line back onto the spool.

Drag

The object of drag is to allow the spool to slip before the line snaps. This slipping of the spool allows the fish more line and also prevents it from breaking. When fighting a fish, the rod does its job by absorbing the shock from the line. The rod and the drag work together to prevent the line from stretching and possibly breaking while fighting.

Here's an example: Small fish in open water - you can tighten down the drag and just crank the fish in with little worry the line may break. With a big fish in open water, you may want to lighten the drag to let the fish run and tire out. Therefore, with every fish you hook, you should be aware of the drag "setting" and the environment you hook them in.

Adjusting the drag is done in various ways depending on manufacturer and model. Listed below are some of the more common ways:

A number system 1-10,*

An arrow pointing to the words **less** or **more** *

Located near the handle (called a star drag). *

* You'll want to look at the instructions for you're reel to determine how to operate the drag.

Drag is something you'll need to understand and know how to use.

Take some time and learn how to adjust the drag for your reel. Adjusting it will either make the fish fight harder or it will make it easier on him to pull line from the spool. We suggest playing with this setting so you'll get comfortable making the proper adjustment when the time comes. Keep in mind; it's something that may need to be changed several times a day depending on how the fish are fighting.

You may be wondering, "If setting the drag tires out the fish, why not just tighten it down all the way to begin with"? There are a couple of reasons why you don't want to do this:

It will increase the tension on the line causing it to possibly break
Adding too much pressure could cause the lure to be ripped from the fish's mouth during the fight.

Either way the fish is getting away from you.

On the flip side, if it's set too loose:

The fish will run taking your line around stumps, rocks etc. until it breaks.

The fish could simply shake his head, and because of the slack on the line, the lure comes free.

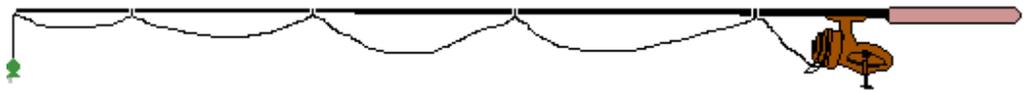
The line must stay tight at all times.

For more information about fighting the fish [click here](#).

Drag is something you'll learn to use over time, and unfortunately, the lessons can be heartbreaking knowing that one got away because it wasn't properly set.

Ball Bearings

Without getting into too much detail, the number of ball bearings determines the smoothness of the reel. Simply put the more ball bearings the better.



Spin Cast Reel

sometimes called "Closed Face" reel



The Spin Cast Reel is typically an inexpensive type of reel and by far the easiest reel to use! I recommend it for a beginning fisherman's first reel.



The set will give you a lot of trouble free fishing and is capable of holding what ever you catch.

Spincast reels have a pushbutton line release for casting and an enclosed "nosecone" where the line comes out of the reel. Spincasting reels are mounted on top of the rod and are used primarily by casual anglers, usually fishing for small to medium sized fish.

These reels are easy to use, inexpensive to buy and might be a good choice if you're not sure how much fishing you're going to do.

Plus it's not too terribly expensive if it's lost.

Spincast rods typically are 5 to 6 feet in length, have a short, "pistol grip" and small eyes. These rods are usually fairly limber in action and light in weight. Spincast equipment is fine for casting medium weight lures/bait. These don't usually work very well for heavy-duty fishing but some larger spincast reels have been designed for catfishing and are gaining some acceptance.

Spincasting reels typically are the easiest to learn but they have some failings. Typically, reels of this type don't have much line capacity, rendering them unsuitable for fishing that requires a lot of line or really heavy pound test. They also usually don't have a very

good drag system and the gears in these reels are usually cast plastic or white metal. The gear ratio for the line retrieve is pretty low also, making it difficult to work a lure that requires any amount of speed.

If casting accuracy is required, it is difficult with spincast equipment.

The better quality reels are fine for typical panfishing and casual weekend bobber watching but if you think that you're going to get fairly serious about fishing, you might want to consider the next 2 categories.

Just so you're aware, this reel requires a spinning rod because the reel attaches on the under side of the rod. For more information about rods, be sure to see [the rod page](#).

This reel is the easiest to remove tangles, because the spool is exposed. If there is a tangle, it's a simple matter of flipping open the bail and pulling line off.

[Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)
[Care of your spin cast fishing reel](#)

Open Face Spinning Reel



Next in line is the Open Face Spinning Reel. It is a little more difficult to use than the Spin Cast, but it comes in a wider variety of sizes.





It comes in ultra-light models for smaller tackle used to catch panfish all the way up to a big bruiser used to catch bigger gamefish such as "Bull Reds" in the surf. It's very useful for situations when a longer casting range is needed.

Spinning rods are usually more limber than baitcasting tackle. This limberness is one of the things that makes spinning excellent for casting light lures or bait, much more so than either spincasting or baitcasting. The other thing that allows spinning equipment to cast light lures far is the design of the reel. The line is allowed to peel off the spool on a cast, unimpeded by either the nosecone of spincast reel or the friction of a turning baitcast reel's spool.

Spinning rods come in various lengths.

The line capacity of spinning reels is much higher than that of spincast reels so fishing for salmon or trout is possible. "Most" spinning reels have a much smoother drag too, something that is required for finesse fishing and for long running fish. However, the qualities that make spinning great for finesse fishing also somewhat limit where it can be used.

[Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)

Bait Casting Reel



**Last, but not least,
there is the Bait
Casting Reel.**



Let me begin by stating that I do not suggest this type for your first reel. Maybe your third or fourth once you're proficient with the other two reel types.

It is the most difficult to cast with, but it comes in widest variety of sizes, and can handle a lot of abuse day in and day out. There are models for light-weight use, and bigger models for catching huge fish such as Marlin.

Baitcasting is used anytime heavy cover is going to be targeted. It's ability to handle heavy line, lures and fish is unmatched as is its strength to weight ratio. Baitcast equipment is NOT meant to be used with light lures; anything under ¼ oz. would be better fished with spinning tackle. Baitcasting tackle is the goto tackle when big fish and big lures meet thick, nasty cover. Also, because you control the cast with your thumb, pinpoint accuracy is possible. Once you become proficient with a baitcast reel, it's possible to drop a lure in a 6-inch circle at 50 feet, with hardly a ripple on the water. That kind of accuracy and "touch" is rarely possible with spincasting or spinning tackle.

Baitcasting rods too come in varying lengths and look somewhat like a spincasting rod. But that's where all similarity ends. Baitcasting rods typically have a lot more backbone than the other types of rods. It's this backbone that allows you to muscle a fish from thick weed growth or away from timber. It's also this backbone that allows you to cast heavyweight lures, work big jerkbaits and twitch crankbaits effectively. Try these tactics with most spinning tackle and you'll be exhausted.

The Bait caster Reel mounts to the top of a bait casting rod (this has smaller guides attached to the top side of the rod). This has more uses than the spinning combo - but requires more coordination to use.

The line comes off these reels from the top, so it doesn't twist, however, the angler's thumb is used to help control the speed the line unwinds off the reel when casting. Basically, if you forget to put your thumb down over the line on the reel, or don't use enough

pressure, the reel spins faster than the line can go through the guides, so it creates a big mess of snarled, tangled line called a backlash, or a "woof" or various other descriptive names.

A really good comparison is what happens to a lot of necklaces thrown into a jewelry box and shaken. Imagine that mess all tangled together with only two ends, one safely hidden by feet of unused line on the reel, and the other at least six feet away, threaded through the rod, with a very sharp object tied to the end. Backlashes are a calculated risk when using a bait caster, and your angler may use many colorful metaphors if one occurs on his favorite reel.

[Learn how to Cast this Rod & Reel](#)

Rods

A fishing rod used to be called a fishing pole.

Now fishing pole refers only to a bamboo or cane pole with fishing line tied to one end. This pole has its benefits. First of all there is no reel to stop working. No spool of line to make a birds nest with. If you can place the bait into the perfect spot in between the limbs of a fallen tree straight down from the tip of your pole, you can lift the bait straight back up with out getting hung up on the limb.

The rod and reel will have to drag across it and get hung up.

Fishing rods come in several lengths, strengths (called "action"), and can be affordable or almost obscenely expensive.

Rod and reel benefits. With the rod and reel you can fish farther away and use lures that have to moved through the water like a minnow swimming.

There are a wide variety of rods out there to choose from and there are quite a few manufacturers making them also. They also come in different sizes and shapes. Fishing wouldn't be very exciting if there wasn't a wide variety of rods to fish with, just like reels. They both get paired together to provide a variety of options for fishing for a variety of fish.

Short, stout rods are used mostly for trolling for big game fish. Longer rods are designed for longer casting situations such as surf fishing. You don't need to go to the sporting goods store and buy the

longest rod you can find. You need to be capable of handling your rod without tiring. I've caught plenty of fish within 10 feet of the shore.

I recommend a light action rod about 4 to 5 foot long for a beginning fisherman's first rod. It is ideal for smaller fish, it's lightweight, and can handle smaller terminal tackle very well. Plus it's not too terribly expensive if it's lost.

The most important thing, is to get equipment that is best suited for the type of fishing that you plan on doing. Get your parents or the person working in the local tackle shop to help you.

[More on RODS](#)

[Click Here](#)

Conclusion

The most important thing, is to get equipment that is best suited for the type of fishing that you plan on doing.

DON'T EVER

buy anything that is shrink-wrapped on a sheet of cardboard.

I guarantee that you will be frustrated and disappointed before the first day is done.

Get your parents or the person working in the local tackle shop to help you.

If you're going to go just a time or two each season, fishing for whatever is biting, mostly watching and waiting for a bobber to go down, then get a 5 ½ - 6 foot light action spincast rod and a matching reel, take the line off that comes with the reel (most spincast reels come prepackaged with junk line) and re-fill the reel with a quality 8 pound test monofilament line. Buy some assorted terminal tackle and other fishing equipment and you're in business.

You used to fish as a kid but haven't touched a rod in years. You know that you like to fish but until recently, you haven't had time. You want to catch bluegills and perch most of the time but you'd like to maybe try bass fishing or chase a walleye or two. You know that you don't want the ol' Snoopy Catchem Kit but aren't sure what to get.

My suggestion to you is to go find a 6 - 6 ½ foot spinning rod. There are many quality, mid-priced fishing rods available today. Look for names like Berkely, Shimano and Mitchell for decent mid-priced rods. A little higher on the spectrum are rods like St. Croix, Fenwick, Falcon, All-Star, higher yet, you start getting into G. Loomis prices and your "spousal unit" starts pricing lawyers.

A medium sized spinning reel to hang on the rod is needed. You want to make sure that the rod and reel are matched for size and balance. You'll know if they're balanced if you put the reel on the rod, and rest the rod, just in front of the reel foot on your index finger. The rod should balance out, if the rod tips forward, you've picked too small of a reel, tip backwards and you've got to pick out a smaller reel.

Spool this package up with 6 or 8 pound premium mono and you're in business for 90% of the fishing that most people will do. But what about that remaining 10%? You're in baitcasting territory now!

If you want to pick on toothy critters (muskie or pike) or start chasing bass in heavy cover, this is specialized tackle. For most bass and pike fishing, medium bass tackle will work well. At this point, you have to decide whether you want one of the newer, low profile type reels or do you want the traditional round reel. There are factions in the fishing world that will swear that one type or the other is the best. To be perfectly honest, quality reels can be found in both round and low profiles.

One of the reasons to get a low profile reel is if you have small hands. Many of my smaller framed clients really like this type of reel. It seems to fit their hand better and makes a day of fishing easier.

Other anglers think that the round reels are stronger, smoother, more traditional, or whatever. From an engineering standpoint, they are both equally strong and smooth. It's just a personal preference. So, which style is best for you? I don't know, my advice is to fish with someone who has both, try them and get whichever one feels better in YOUR hands.

Rod selection can be daunting. Look in some of the major sporting

goods catalogs and you'll see a wide array of baitcasting rods. There's specialty rods for crankbaits, jigs, plastic worms, flippin', walleye rods, bass rods, muskie rods?. What's a guy to get? I like a 6 - 7 foot fast action, medium weight graphite rod.

Again, just like the spinning rods, there are a wide variety of prices and sizes.

Getting started in fishing can be a daunting task, hopefully we shed some light.



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Knots to Know



There are many different skills associated with being successful at fishing. One of them is the art of tying good knots. Monofilament fishing line stretches and is kind of slippery, so using the proper knot is important if you want to keep your bait, lure, or fish on the line.

This section will show you how to tie all of the knots needed to properly assemble your gear. In order to tie effective knots, you must realize that neatness counts. If a knot slips, it will probably break. Therefore, it is essential you completely tighten all knots. This is accomplished by lubricating the knot before you tighten it down. You can use water, saliva, or silicone fly floatant.

One word of caution should be exercised here.

You should never put any part of your line into your mouth to wet the knot. Many Streams and lakes contain bacteria that can be harmful to you.

If you use saliva, drip or spit it on the knot instead.

When you tighten the knot, do so very slowly. What you are trying to do is tighten the knot without building up too much heat. If you tighten the knot quickly, friction will cause excessive heat, which in turn weakens the line. A smooth slow draw is best.

Here are a couple of knots worth learning:

**The one and most important knot to know is
The Clinch Knot or Cinch Knot
(or Fisherman's Knot)**

This knot is used for that most important place-where the hook (or the swivel or the lure) meets the line. A reliable knot here will save you lots of lost lures and fish!

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Menu of Knots

[\[Albright\]](#) [\[Arbor\]](#) [\[Blood\]](#) [\[Braid\]](#) [\[Barrel\]](#) [\[Clinch\]](#) [\[Double Surgeons\]](#) [\[King Sling\]](#) [\[Nail\]](#) [\[Needle\]](#)
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Albright Knot

The Albright Knot is most commonly used for joining monofilament lines of unequal diameters, for creating shock leaders and when Bimini Twist is tied in the end of lighter casting line. It is also used for connecting monofilament to wire.



1. Bend a loop in the tag end of the heavier line and hold between thumb and forefinger of left hand. Insert the tag end of the lighter line through loop from the top.



2. Slip tag end of lighter line under your left thumb and pinch it tightly against the heavier strands of the loop. Wrap the first turn of the lighter line over itself and continue wrapping toward the round end of loop. Take at least 12 turns with the lighter line around all three strands.



3. Insert tag end of the lighter line through end of loop from the bottom. It must enter and leave the loop on same side.



4. With the thumb and forefinger of left hand, slide the coils of lighter line towards end of loop, stop 1/8" from end of loop. Using pliers, pull tag end of lighter line tight to keep coils from slipping off loop.



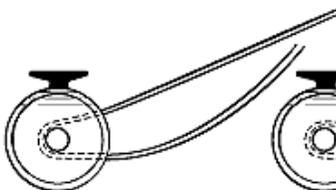
5. With your left hand still holding the heavier line pull on the standing part of the lighter line. Pull the tag end of the lighter line and the standing part a second time. Pull the standing part of the heavy mono and the standing part of the light line.



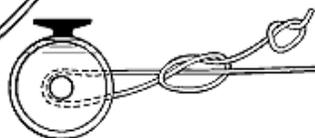
6. Trim both tag ends.

Arbor Knot

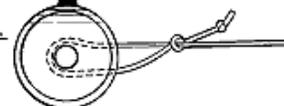
The Arbor Knot provides the angler with a quick, easy connection for attaching line to the reel spool.



1. Pass line around reel arbor.



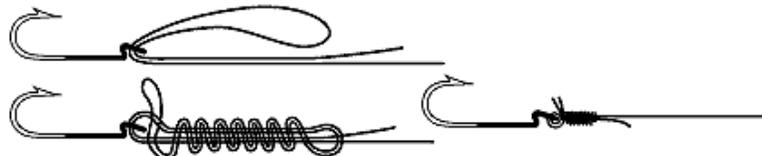
2. Tie an overhand knot around the standing line. Then tie a second overhand knot in the tag end.



3. Pull tight and snip off excess. Snug down first overhand knot on the reel arbor.

Berkley® Braid Knot

This special knot has been extensively tested by the Berkley R&D staff and has proven to be one of the best for use with the new braided lines.



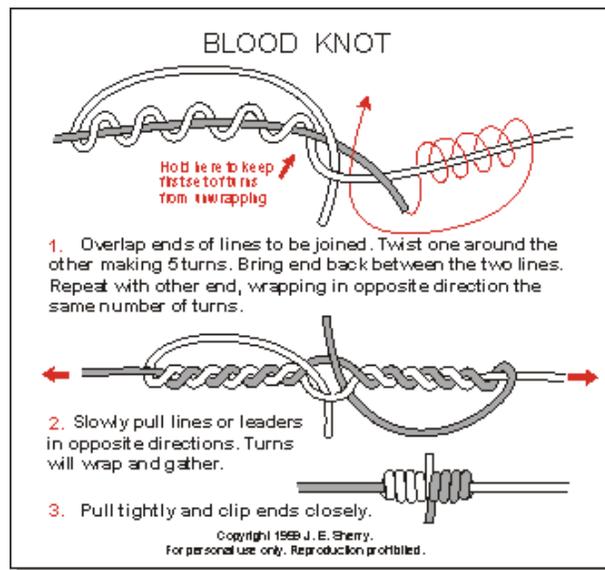
1. Run double loop through eye of hook or lure.

2. Loop around end of line and standing part of braided line 8 times. Thread double loop back between the eye and coils.

3. Tighten knot with a steady, even motion without hesitation. Trim double loop and end of braided line leaving about 1/4".

Blood Knot or Barrel Knot

This is a high strength knot to join two similar thicknesses of line. It's main advantage is it's low profile enabling it to run smoothly through rod line guides.

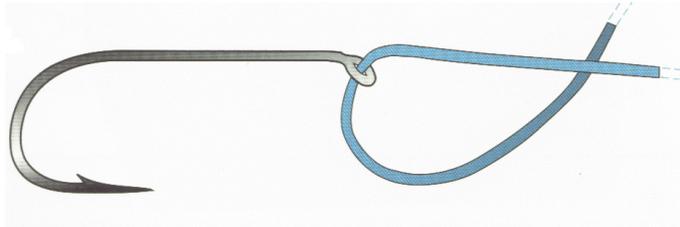




Clinch / Cinch Knot (*Fisherman's Knot*)

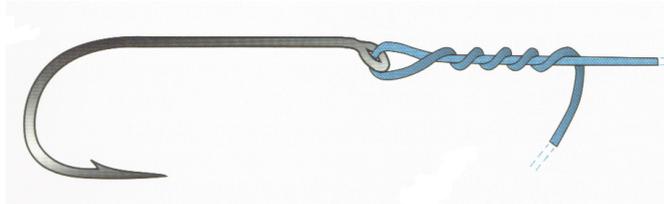
This knot is used for that most important place-where the hook (or the swivel or the lure) meets the line. A reliable knot here will save you lots of lost lures and fish!

1.



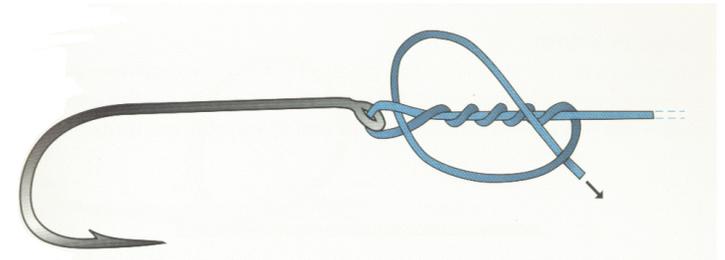
Run several inches of line through the hook eye. Don't be stingy here. Make it comfortable and easy to tie.

2.



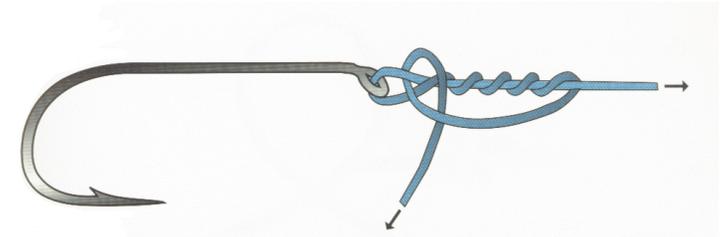
Wrap the loose end of your line around itself five or six times.

4.

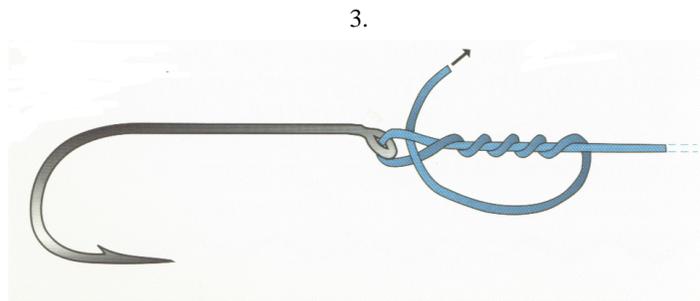


Push the loose end through the new loop you just created. Wet the knot with a little spit. This will lubricate the line and make your knot easier to tighten.

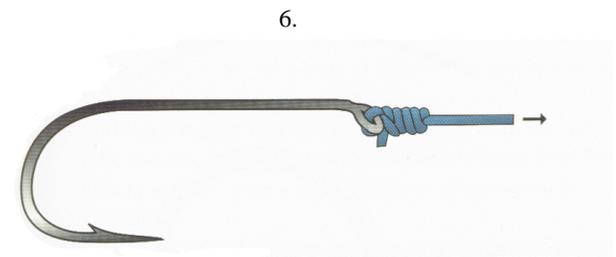
5.



Tighten the knot slowly by pulling on the line with one hand and the hook with the other.



Pass the loose end through the loop in the line next to the eye in the hook.

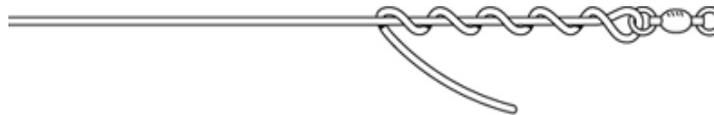


Trim off the loose end of the line with a pair of fingernail clippers.

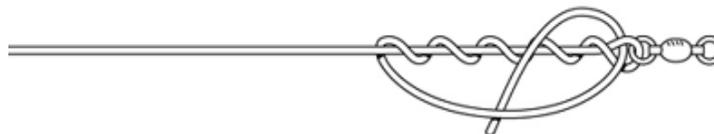
The Improved Clinch Knot

The Improved Clinch is very easy to tie, which is the main reason it's so popular for connecting monofilament to terminal tackle. It's most effective on lines under 20-pound test.

1) Pass the line through the eye of the hook, swivel, or lure. Double back and make five turns around the standing line.



2) Holding the coils in place, thread the tag end of the first loop above the eye, then through the big loop



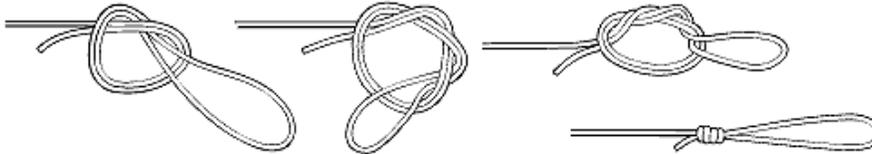
3) Hold the tag end and standing line while pulling up the coils. Make sure the coils are in a spiral, not overlapping each other. Slide against the eye.



4) Clip the tag end.

Double Surgeon's Loop

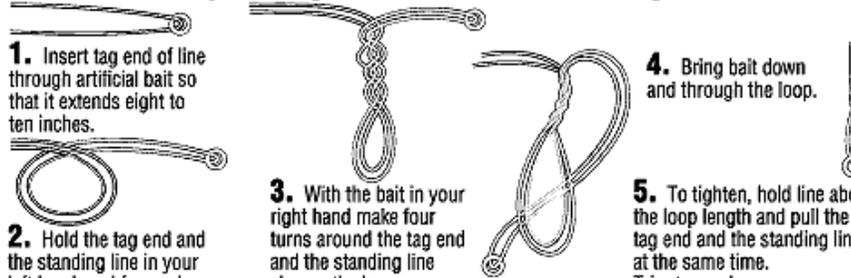
The Double Surgeon's Loop is a quick, easy way to tie a loop in the end of a leader. It is often used as part of a leader system because it is relatively strong.



- 1.** Double the tag end of the line. Make a single overhand knot in the double line.
- 2.** Hold the tag end and standing part of the line in your left hand and bring the loop around and insert through the overhand knot.
- 3.** Hold the loop in your right hand. Hold the tag end and standing line in your left hand.
- 4.** Moisten the knot in water and pull to tighten. Trim tag end to about 1/8".

King Sling Knot

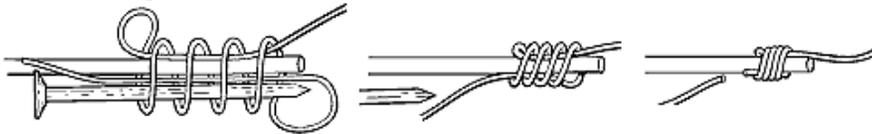
The King Sling Knot offers the angler an easy -to-tie end loop knot which is used primarily as a connection for crank baits. This knot allows the lure to work freely, making it more lifelike, and resulting in more strikes.



- 1.** Insert tag end of line through artificial bait so that it extends eight to ten inches.
- 2.** Hold the tag end and the standing line in your left hand, and form a loop.
- 3.** With the bait in your right hand make four turns around the tag end and the standing line above the loop.
- 4.** Bring bait down and through the loop.
- 5.** To tighten, hold line above the loop length and pull the tag end and the standing line at the same time. Trim tag end.

Nail Knot

The Nail Knot is generally used to attach fly line to fly line backing. This knot can also be used to attach a leader to the line. This makes a strong smooth knot that rolls out when casting. The nail knot is good for attaching two lines of different diameters.



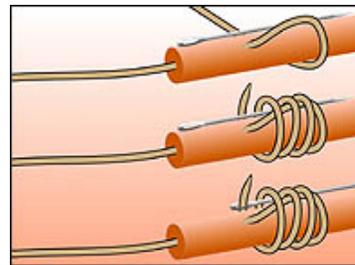
1. Hold nail or needle, tip of fly line and backing material between thumb and forefinger. Wrap backing 6 or 7 turns. Wind carefully for a tight, smooth knot. Stick end of backing between nail and fly line.

2. Remove nail. Holding coils carefully between thumb and forefinger, alternately pull both ends of backing with free hand to tighten.

3. Snip off excess backing and end of fly line.

Needle Knot

This knot can be used to attach permanently a thick length of nylon to the end of the fly line, to which, in turn, the leader is attached.



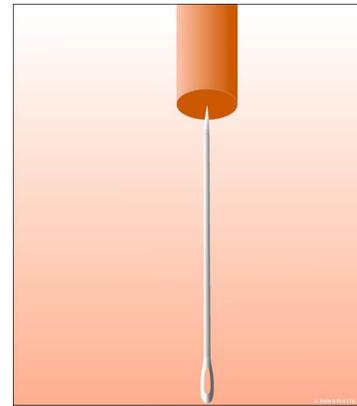
Use: Attaching backing to fly line.

Description: This is a good knot to use to attach the end of the backing to the fly line or a thick nylon leader butt. It can be tied with a nail or, more easily, with either a tube or a needle.

Tying:

1.

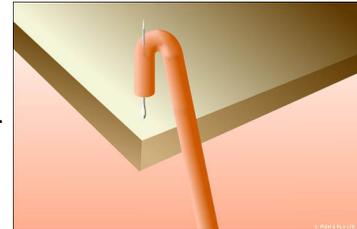
To tie this knot you will need a strong needle with an eye large enough to take the backing or nylon that you are using.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

2.

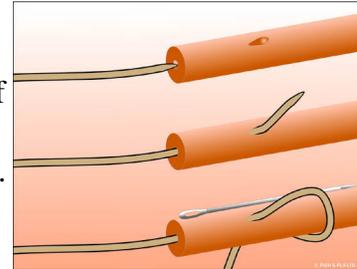
Push the needle into the centre of the core of the fly line and out through the side wall, about 5mm from the end of the line.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

3.

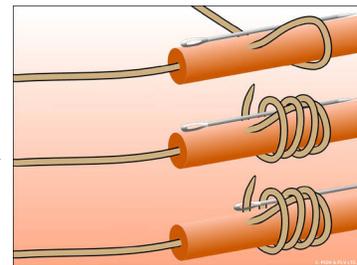
Thread the end of the backing or nylon through the eye of the needle and use the needle to pull about 100mm of backing or nylon through the fly line, out through the side.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

4.

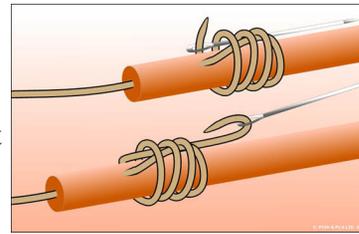
Now lay the needle against the fly line with the eye in line with the end of the line. Make three turns of the backing or nylon around the line and needle, working toward the eye of the needle. Thread the backing or nylon through the eye and withdraw the needle and nylon.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

5.

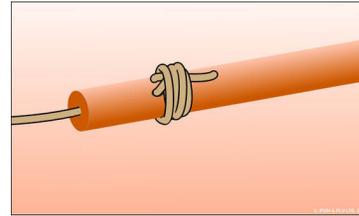
Remove the needle and carefully tighten the turns, taking care that they do not overlap. Do not over-tighten the knot as this can cause a dog-leg in the fly line.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

6.

Trim off the tag end of the backing or nylon close to the line.



[Click image for an enlarged view](#)

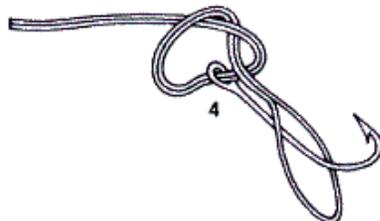
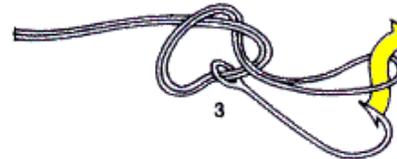
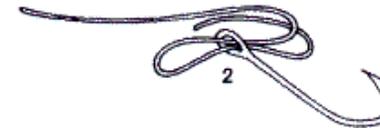
Palomar Knot

1. Start with plenty of line.

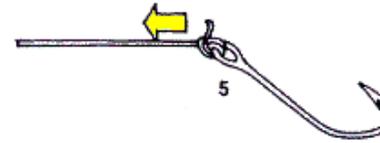
2. Double the line and pass the end through the hook's eye.

3. Tie an overhand knot (*like you were tying your shoe strings*) **but do not pull it tight yet.**

4. Pass the hook through the loop.



5. Pull the loose end of the line to tighten the knot.
Trim the end.
Leave at least 1/8 inch of your line at the knot.



Perfection Knot

The Perfection Loop knot is the perfect knot for the leader butt section when attaching fly lines to leaders with a loop to loop connection.

Although the illustrations seem complicated, the knot is a breeze to tie.

Step 1

With the standing end in your left hand and the tag end in your right form a loop. Make sure the tag end is behind the standing end. Hold the lines in place by pinching with your thumb and index finger.

Step 2

With the lines pinched in your left hand make a loop in front of the first loop with the tag end. Again, make sure the tag end exits behind both loops.

Step 3

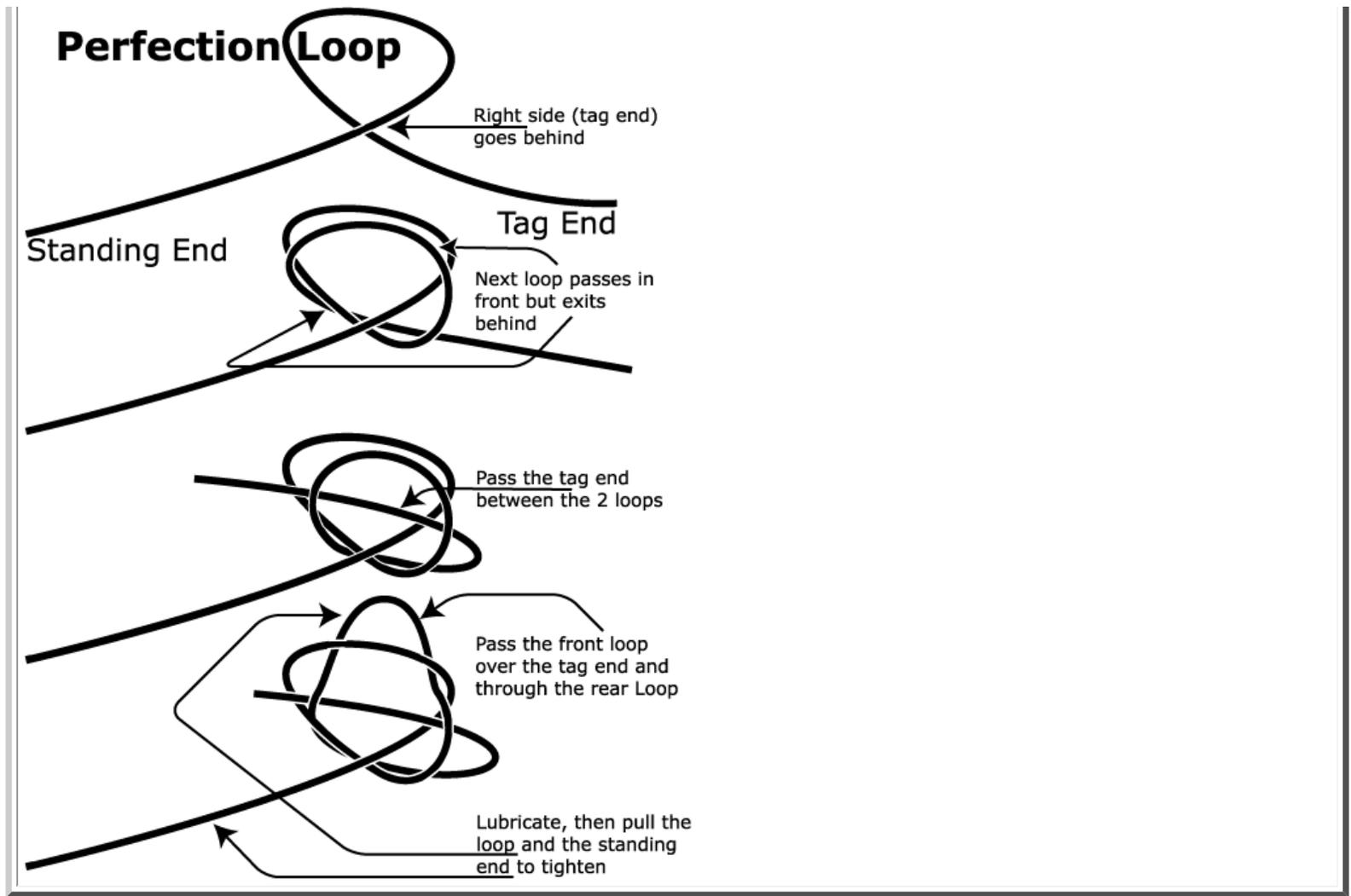
Pass the tag end between the 2 loops, continuing to pinch all lines with the left hand.

Step 4

Pass the loop closest to you over the tag end and through the rear loop.

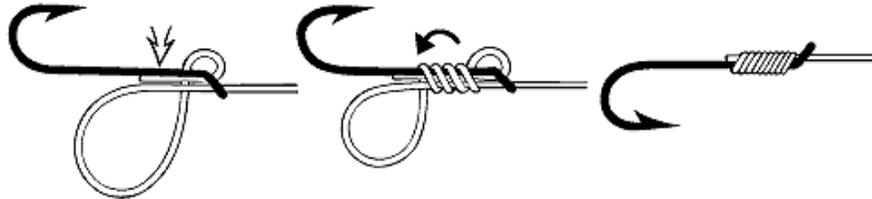
Step 5

As with all knots, lubricate before tightening. Pull the loop (the one passed through the rear loop) and the standing end in opposite directions and tighten down firmly.



Snell Knot

The Snell Knot provides a strong connection when fishing with bait and using a separate length of leader. You can only use a snell with a leader.



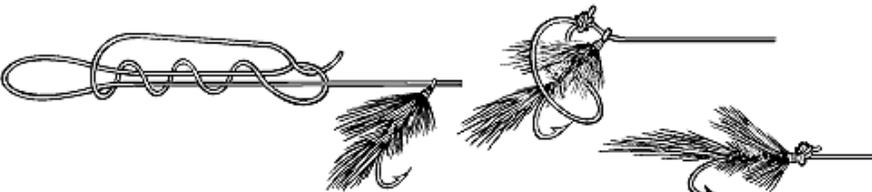
1. Insert one end of the leader through the hook's eye extending one to two inches past the eye. Insert the other end of the leader through the eye in the opposite direction pointing toward the barb of hook. Hold the hook and leader ends between thumb and forefinger of your left hand. Leader will hang below the hook in a large loop.

2. Take the part of this loop that is closest to the eye and wrap it over the hook and shank and both ends of the leader toward the hook's barb. Wrap for 7 or 8 turns and hold wraps with left hand. Grip the end of leader that is through the eyelet with your right hand and pull it slowly and steadily. Hold the turns with your left hand or the knot will unravel.

3. When the knot is almost tight, slide it up against the eye of the hook. Grip the short end lying along the shank of the hook with a pair of pliers. Pull this end and the standing line at the same time to completely tighten the knot. Trim the tag end.

Specialist Fly Knot

The Specialist fly knot is used to attach the fly to leader.



1. Place leader through fly eyelet and slide fly up the leader out of the way before beginning knot.

2. Make an oval loop and hold each end while wrapping the leader around the loop center 3 or 4 times.

3. Stick end of leader through loop closest to fly and cinch knot snug.

4. Trim tag end then place the fly through the loop and pull snug.

Trilene® Knot

The Trilene Knot is a strong, reliable connection that resists slippage and premature failures. This knot can be used in joining line to swivels, snaps, hooks and artificial lures. The knot's unique double wrap design and ease of tying consistently yields a strong, dependable connection.

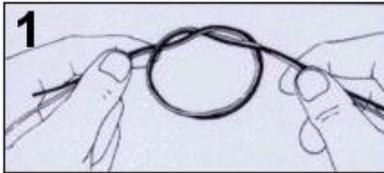


1. Run end of line through eye of hook or lure and double back through the eye a second time.

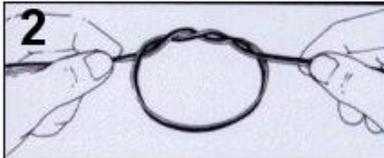
2. Loop around standing part of line 5 or 6 times. Thread tag end back between the eye and the coils as shown.

3. Tighten knot with a steady, even motion without hesitation. Trim tag end leaving about 1/4".

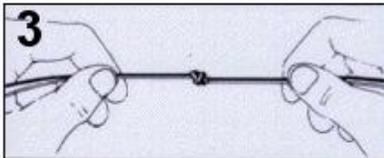
Triple Surgeons Knot



Cut off about 36" of leader. Lay the leader and Power Pro together overlapping about 8".

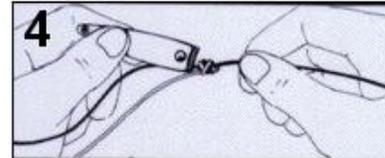


Form an overhand knot in this doubled section by forming a loop, bringing the leader and the end of the Power Pro around and through the loop (treat these two as if they were a single strand). Do not tighten the knot yet.



Go through the loop three times, then wet the knot and draw it tight holding both lines at one end of the knot in one hand and both lines at the other end of the line in the other hand.

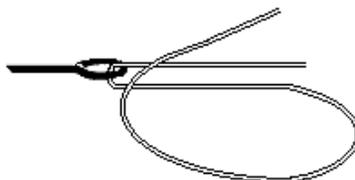
Trim the tag ends as close as you can without cutting the knot.



The Uni-Knot

1. Run line through eye of hook, swivel or lure at least six inches and fold to make two parallel lines. Bring end of line back in a circle toward hook or lure.

2. Make six turns with tag end around the double line and through the circle. Hold double line at point where it passes through eye and pull tag end to snug up turns.



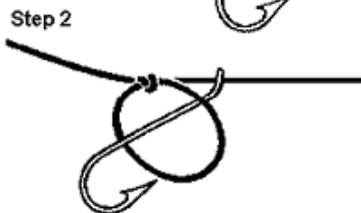
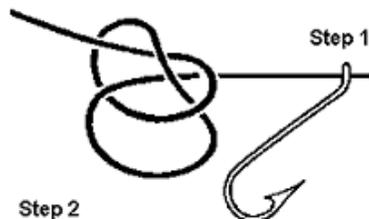
3. Now pull standing line to slide knot up against eye.

4. Continue pulling until knot is tight. Trim tag end flush with closest coil of knot. Uni-Knot will not slip.



Turtle Knot

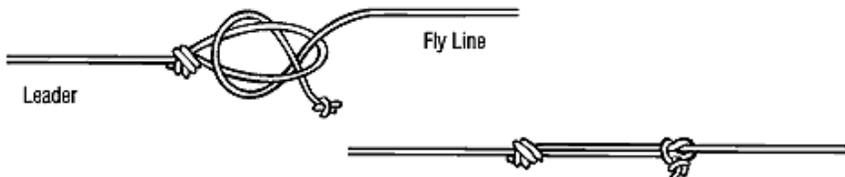
Also known as the Turtle Knot, and Major Turle's Knot, it is simplicity itself to tie, but is one of the weakest knots. It should never be used for light lines, and there are better knots for use with heavy ones.



1. Pass the line through the eye of the hook.
2. Make a simple loop.
3. Carry the end of the line on to make a Simple Overhand Knot upon the loop.
4. Pass the loop over the hook.
5. Draw up into shape.

Wedge Knot

The Wedge Knot is a general-purpose connection used in joining fishing line to a leader with a loop.



1. Tie a knot in the end of fly line.
2. Pass the fly line and knot through the leader loop and back around to form a simple knot.
3. Pull both ends to cinch up tight.



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Learn To Cast

**Don't know how to cast?
Fear not!**

**Using spinning or spin casting (closed faced)
takes all of about 2 min. for an adult to learn
the basics.**

**Ask the clerk in the store, they should be able to
teach you.**

The Spin Cast Reel Open Face Spinning Reel Bait Casting Reel

HOW TO CAST

The Spin Cast Reel

**Learning how to cast takes some practice, but is really pretty
simple.**

**Beginners will find it easiest to learn with a spin-cast outfit. (Note:
you can first practice casting in your yard by tying a small non-
sharp weighted object to the line.)**

**Get a feel for the equipment-Hold the rod out in front of you to
get a feel for how the spin-cast reel works.**

**Reel up the line until the bobber is about four inches from the tip
of the rod.**

Now, press down firmly on the release button and hold it there.

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Notice how the bobber stays in the same place.

Now let the release button go. The bobber should fall to the ground.

You have just learned how to release the line from the reel, a very important step in casting.

To prevent loops that can become tangles from forming in the line, carefully add tension to the line with your thumb and forefinger while reeling in the line.

You should hear a click when you start to reel-that is the pick-up pin of the reel being activated.

Now you are all set to wind line back onto the spool of the reel.

Remember whenever you are fishing to always reel in enough line after you cast to hear that click.

This will prevent excess line from coming out of the reel, and loose line can mean missed fish.

Final Check

Your line is ready and your hook and bobber are tied on.

Place your bobber 6-12" from your rod tip and make sure your line is not wrapped around your rod.

Before you cast, look behind you to be sure no one else is there.

Also, check for trees and bushes that can get in your way.

Casting

Face the target area with body turned at a slight angle, about a quarter turn. Aim the rod tip toward the target, about level with your eyes.

Press and hold down the reel's release button.

Swiftly and smoothly, bend your arm at the elbow, raising your hand

with the rod until it almost reaches eye level. When the rod is almost straight up and down, it will be bent back by the weight of the practice plug. As the rod bends, move your forearm forward with a slight wrist movement.



Next, gently sweep the rod forward, causing the rod to bend with the motion.

As the rod moves in front of you, reaching eye level, about the 10 o'clock position, release your thumb from the button.



The bend in the rod casts the bobber and bait out.

You have just made a cast!

If the plug landed close in front of you, you released the thumb button too late.

If the plug went more or less straight up, you released the thumb

button too soon.

HOW TO CAST **The Open Face Spinning Reel**

The best way to hold a spinning reel for casting is to slide your rod hand around the reel seat, with two fingers in front of the reel stem and two fingers behind it. This gives you a good casting grip and more importantly, leaves your forefinger free to trap the line as the casting swing is made.

A suitable amount of line is allowed to hang from the rod tip (between 15 and 45 cm should do it). The first finger of the reel hand is extended down toward the spool to pick up the line ahead of the bail arm and the line is then pulled back up against the rod grip, where the finger traps it. The bail arm is opened with your other hand and the reel is now ready for casting. It's important to get this sequence right. If you open the bail arm before you trap the line, line will spill from the spool and you'll get into a mess.

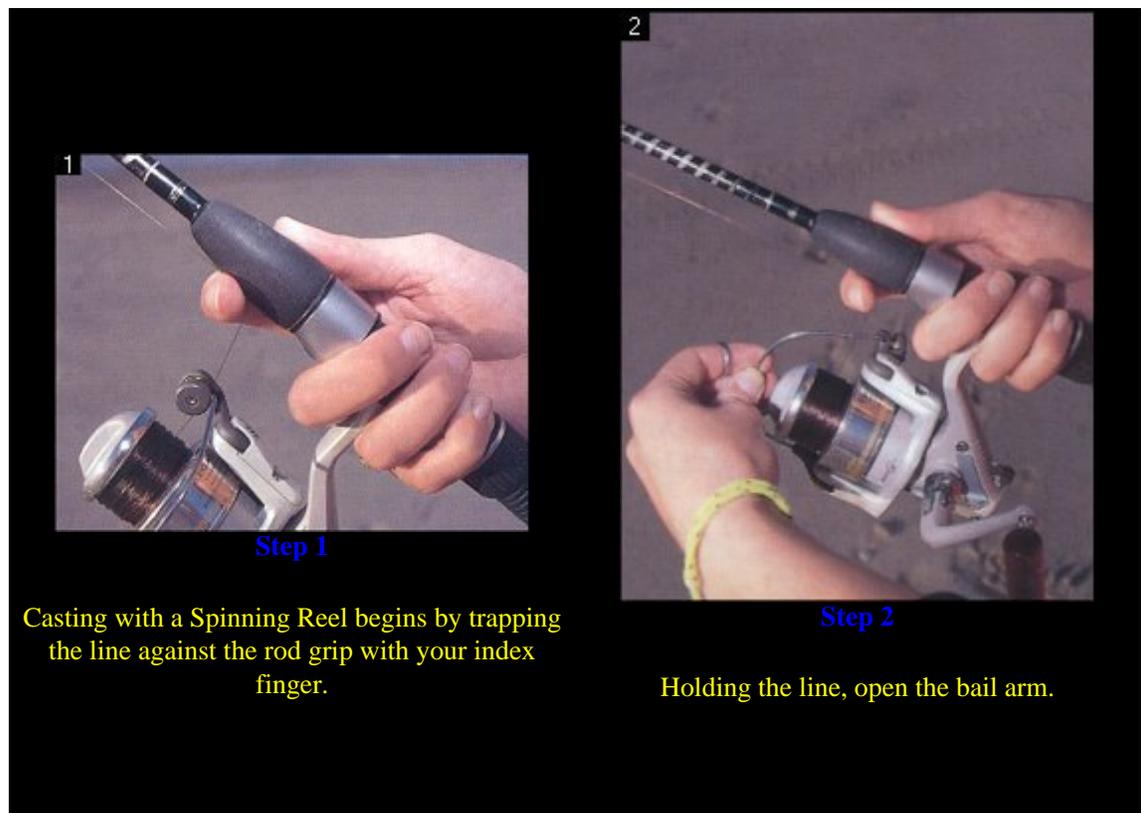
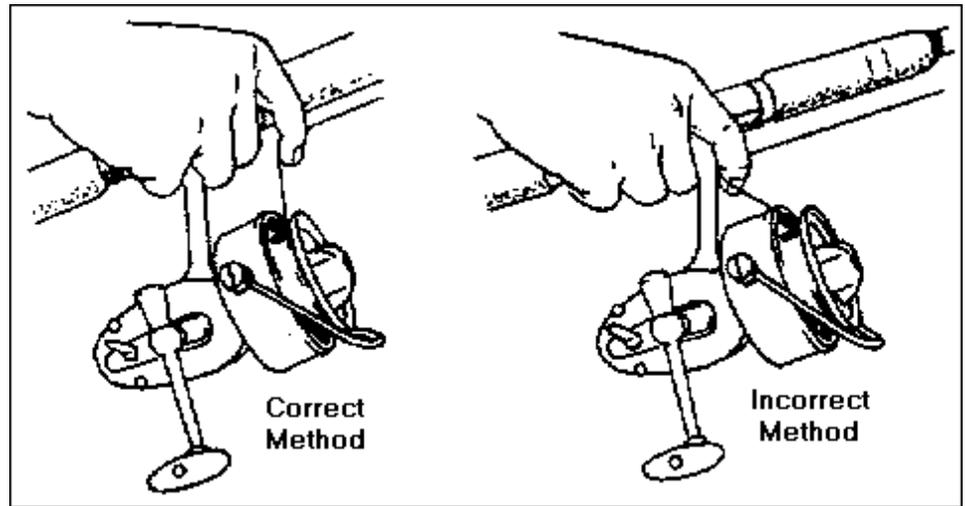
With the line trapped and the bail open, swing the rod back past your shoulder and then forward again in a swift, smooth arc. This forward casting stroke should start slow, accelerate, then finish by drifting forward so the rod points horizontally in front of you.

At the appropriate moment (while rod is still moving forward) the finger holding the line is straightened, and the casting weight is thrown forward, towing the line behind it. You need to get this release timed right though, as if you release too early in the swing, the bait will fly up into the air and land who knows where. If you release the line too late in the swing, you will know where the bait lands all right because chances are it will go into the ground or water by your feet.

A useful way to get the timing of this release right, is to swing the rod forward and as your casting arms begins to extend, point the line holding finger straight at your casting target. Most times, this will release the line at the correct moment and also direct the cast where it should go.

The technique works with short and light single-handed rods, such as you might use for trout, bass, bream and so on, and with big, heavy, two-handed rods, suitable for beach or rock-fishing. With the single-handed rod, your free hand and arm does not come into

play very much, but when casting with a two-handed rod, your other hand is needed, to anchor the rod butt and provide a fulcrum for the cast. During the cast, this other hand holds the butt down and in front of your body to act as a pivot point, while the reel hand swings and pushes the rod through the casting arc.





Step 3

The outfit is now ready for casting.



Step 4

Swing the rod in a smooth arc and release the line by pointing your finger at your chosen target.



Step 5

Casting with a double-handed rod and a large spinning reel is exactly the same procedure, except that the non-reel hand comes into play, providing a pivot point for the rod swing.

There's more than One Way
to Cast with the
Open-Face Spinning Reel

[Click Here](#)

HOW TO CAST

The Bait Casting Reel

Bait-casting describes a fishing technique and its associated tackle that originated in the early 1800s. It took its name from its initial purpose, which was to cast live bait. Modern bait-casting reels utilize a revolving-spool reel to cast artificial lures and live bait. Basically, the weight of the lure or bait pulls line from the spool until it reaches the intended casting target. The objective is to offer a tempting lure or bait to fish from a distance.

Bait-casting is one of four basic categories of fishing tackle. The other three are spin-casting, spinning, and fly-casting. They differ from one another in popularity, ease of use, fishing styles, spool type, and strength.

There are no great differences between the four casting techniques, with the exception of fly-casting, in which the weight of the line (not the lure) delivers a near-weightless fly. Spin-casting is probably the most popular because it is easily used by children and novices who do not want or need to spend much time learning to cast. Spin-casters are willing to sacrifice accuracy for ease of use. Spinning is also popular among beginners, though widely used by anglers at all levels of experience.

While bait-casting is similar to other casting techniques in its purpose and methods, it is a distinct and unique style of fishing. It is generally used for freshwater fishing, mostly large species like largemouth bass, catfish and northern pike. But bait-casting tackle is well suited to saltwater species such as tarpon and snook.

Why Bait-casting?

Beginners, or anglers with only spinning or spin-casting experience, may wonder why they should bother learning the bait-casting technique. The main strength of this technique is that, when mastered, it allows for a high degree of accuracy in the placement of a bait or lure. Conversely, it is more difficult to learn than other types of casting and requires a higher level of skill to achieve desired results. But learning and mastering the technique will make the angler a more complete fisherman.

For the freshwater fisherman pursuing any species larger than small trout or panfish, bait-casting gear is considered standard equipment. This is due to the tremendous versatility of bait-casting tackle. Lures such as crankbaits (plugs), large spinners and spinnerbaits, heavy jigs, large soft plastics, topwater and other lures are fished most effectively with bait-casting gear.

Expert and serious anglers prefer bait-casting because it offers the combination of high line capacity, cranking power and greater casting accuracy from both short and long distances. The mechanics of a bait-cast reel are strong, durable and less prone to failure than spinning or spin-cast reels.

While spinning tackle definitely serves a valuable purpose, especially when using small lures, light line (10-pound test or lighter) and/or live bait, bait-casting gear gives the

angler unmatched versatility for a variety of lures and fishing methods. Most experienced anglers have at least one, if not more, of both spinning and bait-casting outfits.

Casting a Bait Casting Reel

There sure is a fair amount of miss-information flowing around on baitcasters or overheads. Many fishing enthusiasts believe they are difficult to use, yet this is not really the case, because in fact they are easy to master. If you use the correct technique, and are prepared to spent a bit of time practicing so that it becomes a natural process, a baitcaster will become a dream machine to use.

A golf swing requires hours of repetitive practice to perfect. In contrast, an overhead baitcaster requires nothing like the time the golf swing needs. However, it does require a little repetitive training. For those prepared to put in the hour or two, the rewards will be fantastic and you'll find accuracy and distance with every cast. And you won't get those embarrassing line twists, or bird-nests.



To begin, hold the rod and reel tilted so that the handles are higher than the spool of the reel. (Left handers should have the handles facing down). The reel should be cocked to one side of top dead centre.

Secondly, the grip should be similar to holding a tennis racket. The "V" developed between the thumb and the index finger should be virtually at top dead centre. The grip should be relaxed.

You will find that in holding the rod as described in rules 1 & 2, the index finger is all that is required to stop the rod falling to the floor. The weight, or balance of the rod will cause the butt to push up into the palm of the hand. Actually it will be pushing up into the palm area beneath the thumb known as "the mount".

And last but not least, the area between the side of your thumb and the flat of your thumb should rest across the line on the spool.

**In other words, if you consider the rod to be pointing North, your thumb should be pointing
more
North West
than
North.**

These three rules of thumb are the basis for making overhead baitcasting a dream.

**Too many anglers attempt to hold the reel in the upright position. This forces the thumb to lie straight north south, and this in turn cause a whole host of problems which are sure to result in
over-runs**



(birdnests).

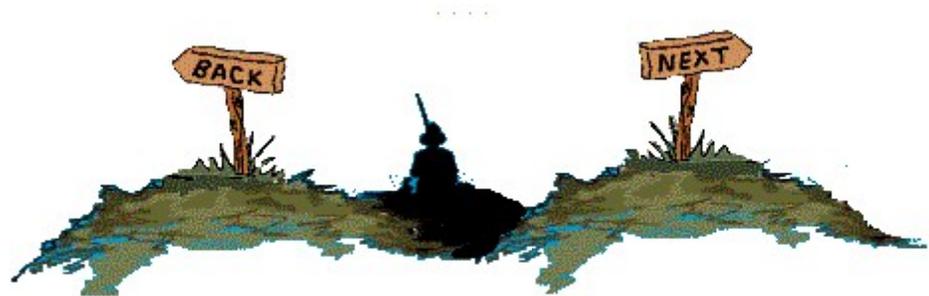
Upright Problems

The first of these problems is that you have to grip the rod too firmly, and use all your fingers. If you don't, the tip of the rod will fall away to the ground.

Secondly, you will find that as you bring the rod back to cast your wrist will lock. This, in turn, will force you to use more arm action, destroying the natural action of the rod, and resulting in less distance, less accuracy and the expenditure of more energy.

Thirdly, on the forward thrust, your thumb will want to lift off the line on the spool. This will occur as a direct result of the mount of your palm and your fingers fighting to grip the rod, to stop it leaving your hand. Once your thumb cocks up in the air as a result of this wrong grip, you can guarantee a back-lash. Your thumb will never get back down on the spool quickly enough to stop it.

By rotating the reel to the side, you no longer have to hold the rod with that vice like grip. You can now relax your grip, bring your fingers into the cast, and it becomes all wrist action, with a completely relaxed forearm. The forearm in fact becomes an extension of the rod's length, pivoting at the elbow, whilst your upper arm remains relatively motionless.



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Know Your Fish

[\[Perch\]](#) [\[Brown Trout\]](#) [\[Brook Trout\]](#) [\[Rainbow Trout\]](#) [\[Lake Trout\]](#) [\[Trout in General\]](#) [\[Cattfish\]](#)
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Perch



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Perch live in lakes and ponds with slightly deeper water; larger perch like depths of 10 to 50 feet.

Perch hang out together in schools, so . . .

Where there is one . . .

there are probably MORE!

minnows
worms
grasshoppers
crayfish
artificial spinners
jigs

Brown Trout



Where They Live

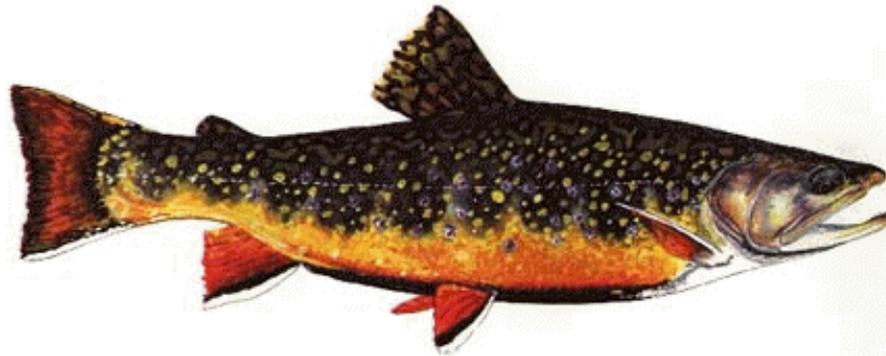
What They Eat

In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean.

They usually hide under a log or the stream bank. they are wary creatures that scare easily.

worms
grasshoppers / crickets
artificial flies
artificail spinners

Brook Trout



Where They Live

What They Eat

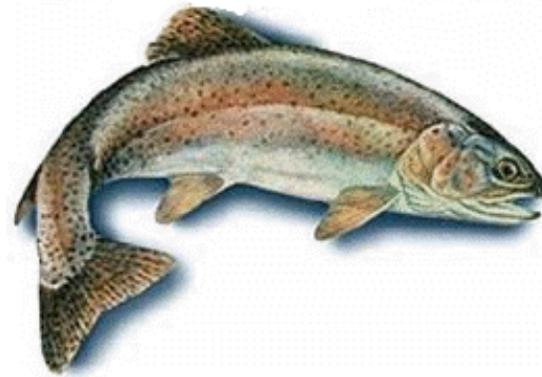
In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean enough for them to survive. They need cooler water than rainbow and brown trout.

these fish are usually small and fairly fragile.

They can be found hiding behind rocks, stick, and logs. You will have to sneak up on them!

worms
grasshoppers / crickets
salmon eggs
artificial flies
artificail spinners

Rainbow Trout



Where They Live

What They Eat

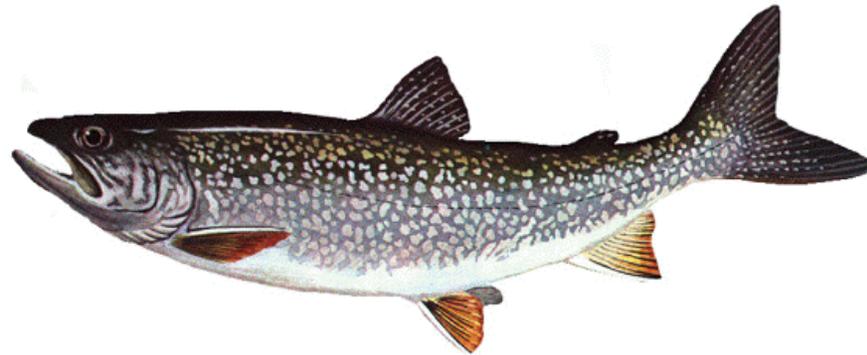
In Lakes and streams where the water is cool and clean.

In streams they will usually be found near the faster water in the cover of the rocks or logs.

Because of state stocking programs, trout streams will often be marked by signs.

worms
grasshoppers / crickets
salmon eggs
artificial flies
artificial spinners

Lake Trout



Where They Live

What They Eat

In the deep water of cold lakes, they may be very deep, so you will probably need LOTS of line on your reel.

In the spring, they spawn (*lay eggs*) in the shallow water and can be caught with artificial flies.

artificial spoons
artificial spinners
minnows
artificial flies

TROUT in General

Trout today can be found in cold water streams, rivers, lakes and ponds throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Most are best in spring and fall, with Rainbows active in the summer as well. Golden Trout, found in the High Sierras at altitudes above 10,000 feet, are best in summer.

Spring and fall runs concentrate the most fish in pools, behind rocks and other obstructions or current breaks and beneath falls.

Deep cuts on the outside of a river/stream bend are also excellent. Lake and pond dwelling trout often roam in schools along drop offs (10'-40') and move into the shallows during the spring.

Baits

In general, salmon eggs, spawn bags, worms, small minnows, wet or dry flies, 1-2" spinners, 1-2" crank baits, 1-2" spoons and bait rigs.

More specifically:

Brook Trout: Spring and fall with worms, small minnows, spoons and small plugs. Most popular method is wet flies, dry flies and streamers.

Brown Trout: Dry fly fishing, as these fish are active surface feeders. Wet flies and streamers are also good. Worms and minnows best in early spring.

Golden Trout: Best method is fly-fishing with wet flies, streamers and small spinners. In late summer, dry flies are best and the best natural bait is a small minnow.

Cutthroat Trout: Wet or dry fly fishing is best in streams or rivers. In lakes, bait casting, spinning or trolling with spoons, spinners or plugs is best with small minnows also being good.

Dolly Varden Trout: Best method is spinning or bait casting with spoons or spinners. Streamers and wet flies take smaller fish with the best bait being small, live fish.

Rainbow Trout: For streams and rivers, the best method is fly-fishing with wet or dry flies and streamers. Bait fishing with worms or salmon eggs is good with trolling with spoons or spinners are best in lakes.

Lake Trout: Deep trolling with spoons and wire line. Early spring and fall fly fishing and spinning a possibility. They go deep in summer, 100 feet, and feed in the shallows during spring and fall.

Equipment

There are a wide variety of trout, sizes, wild and stocked. In general, spinning and fly fishing gear are best. Larger fish may require 6# to 10# line or leader. Smaller fish only require 2# to 4# line or leader. HOWEVER, 2# to 4# line/leader are almost always required in crystal clear water regardless of fish size. **Lake Trout** are much larger and require a deep trolling rig (bait casting) and wire leader. Common fish sizes: **Brook Trout**, 1/4-2 lbs.: **Brown Trout**, 1/2-4 lbs.: **Golden Trout**, 1/2-1 lbs.: **Cutthroat Trout**, 1/2-3 lbs.: **Dolly Varden Trout**, 5-15 lbs.: **Rainbow Trout**, 1/2-8 lbs.: **Lake Trout**, 5-20 lbs.

Catfish



Where They Live

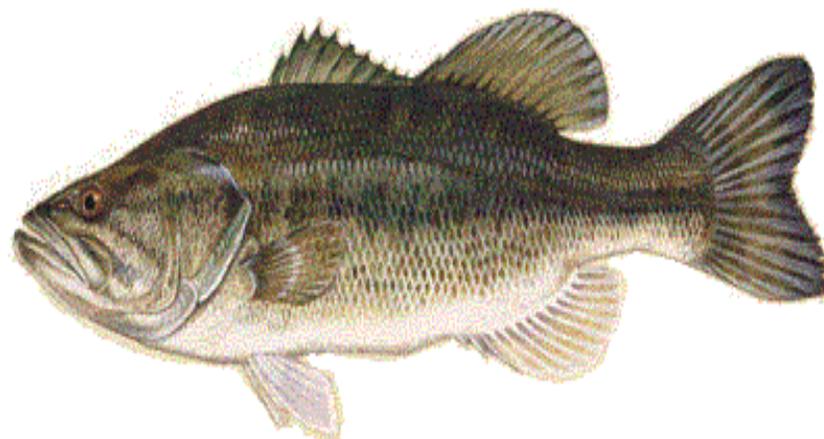
Prefer really warm, slow water in rivers and lakes. They can be found on the bottom, so a weight and bobber will work great! Catfish like to feed at night so they use a sense of smell and touch to identify thier food.

WARNING: The dorsal and pectoral spines on a catfish carry a toxin that will irritate your hands. Use gloves when removing them from your hook!

What They Eat

minnows
dough balls
cheese (especially Limburger)
crayfish

Largemouth Bass



Where They Live

In lakes with warmer water. Usually found near the shore in weed beds, under lilly pads or around sunken logs, trees and stumps.

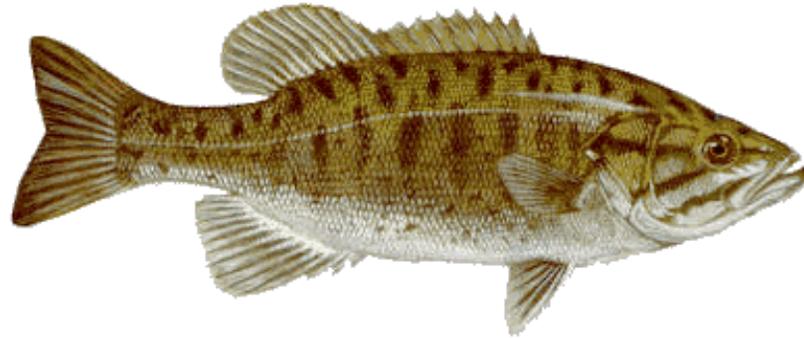
These fish are ferocious feeders, so when they take your bait they will give your rod a jolt!

What They Eat

worms
crayfish
crickets
surface plugs
artificial worms
popping bugs
artificial flies
plastic worms
spinners
bug shiners
and
shiner minnows

Fishing Methods: (Fly casting - Bait Casting)

Smallmouth Bass



Where They Live

In streams with water slightly cooler than preferred by their largemouth cousins.

They like to be around rocks and boulders and will chase your bait before they take it, so, be patient!

What They Eat

worms
crayfish
crickets
minnows
hellgrammites
underwater plugs
artificial spinners
popping bugs
artificial spoons

Walleye



Where They Live

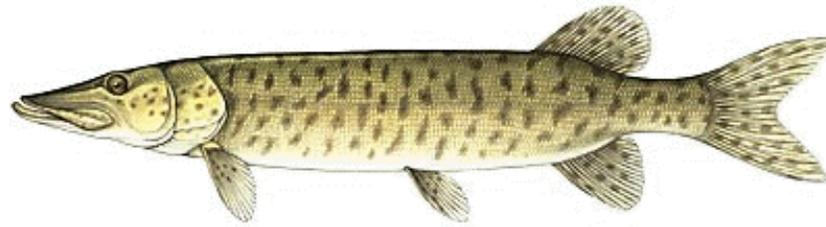
They live in large lakes with hard, rocky bottoms.

If you can find a place where the edge of the lake drops off into the deep water - drop your line right there at the edge, DEEP!

What They Eat

minnows
worms
spinners with worms
jigs with worms or minnows

Muskellunge



Where They Live

Muskellunge's spend most of their time in the deep water of lakes, but they like to feed in the weeds.

Most muskies are caught while trolling
(slowly pulling your lure along) behind a moving boat.

WARNING:
**Be very careful removing a Muskellunge
from your hook!**
Their teeth are very sharp!!!

What They Eat

minnows
worms
spinners with worms
jigs with worms or minnows

Northern Pike



Where They Live

What They Eat

A Northern Pike can be found in slow-moving streams and the weedy shallows of lakes, under logs and lilly pads and besides stumps. They are aggressive feeders and eat other forms of aquatic life. They even eat small ducks and muskrats.

WARNING:

If you should happen to catch a Pike, be very careful removing it from your hook. It's teeth are very sharp and can cut your hands.

minnows

frogs
(*real or artificial*)

large artificial plugs
(*underwater and surface*)

big spoons

Bluegill

Crappie

Flier

Sunfish

Red Breast Sunfish

Spotted Sunfish

Red Ear Sunfish Warmouth

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Lure Fishing

LURE FISHING is one of the most exciting ways of catching predatory fish. Pike, perch, bass, trout. . . there is an endless list of fish that will gobble these plastic, metal, or wood creations, mistaking them for real fish.

There are three types of lures. **Spinners** and **spoons** are usually made of metal and either wobble or spin through the water in the same way as real fish. **Plugs** are made of wood or plastic and work in a number of ways: along the surface of the water, in mid-water, or deep along the bottom.

When you are lure fishing, it pays to search the water and not stay too long in any one position. Big predators like slack water just off the main current, and some often lie right by the bank.

Pay attention to detail

Predatory fish are eagle-eyed, and a good plug should resemble a natural fish very closely.

Look for realistic eyes, scale patterns, and a shiny finish.

Working a lure

Never work your spoon, spinner, or plug in a mechanical, unthinking sort of way. Instead, try to make a big predator think that this strange wood, metal, or plastic creation is in fact a living, breathing, swimming prey fish! Look out for all possible hiding places under fallen trees, among weeds, or along the

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bank.

Cast carefully and accurately, and constantly move the rod tip around to create a change of direction.

Spinners

On a spinner, a metal blade rotates as the lure is pulled through the water. The rotation sends out vibrations and the blade catches the light, so the lure looks like a small fish. Sometimes tassels of plastic or wool are added to entice the fish further.



Plugs

A plug is designed to look and move in the same way as a small fish, which often swims in distress. Plugs can be used for any d of water. Work them slowly in areas that might contain big pre



The Hunter is a Pike lure,
designed to be fished slowly just off the bottom.

The Stingfish



dives rapidly when it is reeled in quickly.

The Heddon Torpedo
is a surface lure



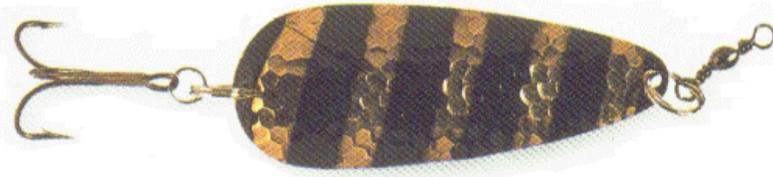
It's propeller whips up the water
when retrieved

Spoons

A spoon is a lure made of shaped sheet metal. When it is cast and retrieved from the bank, spoons wobble through the water and attract avid fish with their shiny finish and bright colors.

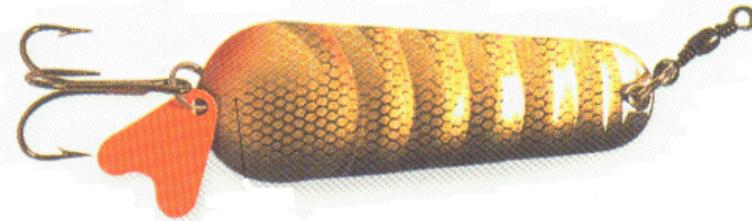
Their action depends on your style of retrieve, so wind in irregularly to make them look like fish in distress.

The Atlantic Spoon



Very effective when fished slowly.

The Abu Atom



This lure catches and reflects the light as it is pulled through the water.



The best lures.

Most fish will bite a lure that looks like a minnow, crayfish (crawdada), or other living prey.

Spinnerbaits, crankbaits, and plastic worms work best for bass. Trout, pike and saltwater fish will hit shiny metal lures.

Use a tackle box or a utility box to hold your lures. Remember the hooks are sharp.

Fishing heavy cover, where the bigger fish normally live, use a plastic worm or a "jig and pig" (leadhead jig with a pork frog trailer).

Cast into the thickest area of the cover, let the lure drop, then shake the rod tip gently to coax a bite.

Topwater lures are the most exciting to fish.

These lures float on the surface. When fishing with a topwater, cast near the cover, let it set for several seconds, then twitch the rod tip so the lure works on

the surface.

When done correctly you will experience a
KA- SPLOOSH
the surface explodes as the fish bites your lure.

When fishing is tough or slow, try using a smaller lure. A 4-inch worm is a good choice. Rig the worm on a 1/0 hook with a BB-size split-shot weight attached to the line about 18 inches above the hook. Cast the lure out and wait for it to settle on the bottom. Work or reel it very slow. The weight will bounce on the bottom, causing the worm to dart in different directions.



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Flyfishing

Intro

Flyfishing is so fabricated as being difficult making it reluctant for many anglers to even give it a fair chance.

With the appropriate equipment and proper instructions, you should be able to cast the line reasonably well within a few hours.

Another misconception is that flyfishing is just for trout.

Virtually all species of fish can be taken on a fly.

Trout, steelhead, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, striped bass, salmon, walleye, blue gill, crappie, you name it, all come readily to a well-placed fly. Rivers, lakes, creeks, brooks, farm ponds, bays, streams and the ocean offer infinite possibilities for you to catch every species of fish imaginable.

Now that we cleared that up, let's begin.

Since most people are familiar with spin-fishing, Analogies

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between flyfishing and spin-fishing will be used to help you better understand what flyfishing is all about.

When **spin- fishing**, you cast a lure attached to a very thin line with a spinning rod.

The lure has weight and this loads the rod to propel it towards your target.

The fishing line is just along for the ride.

When **flyfishing**, you cast a flyline attached to a leader and fly with a flyrod.

The fly is almost weightless.

The leader it is attached to, which is usually around 9 feet long, is very similar to standard spinning line. This is attached to a flyline, which is usually about 90 feet long. The flyline is made of a flexible plastic and is much larger in diameter than spinning line and much heavier. This attaches to the flyrod, which is usually between 7 and 10 feet.

When **flycasting**, the flyline provides the weight to load the rod and propel itself towards the target, with the leader and fly just along for the ride. It is very important to understand that you are casting the line, not the fly.

The line and the rod have to be matched to each other in order to work properly.

**In spinfishing there is a large tolerance between what works and what doesn't.
You could put 10 pound test on an ultra light and 6 pound test on a saltwater rod and they would both work.**

Flyrods and flylines have to be matched carefully, but we'll save these details for a little later in the section about [Equipment](#).

The whole purpose of all of this, besides the grace and beauty of it, is to cast almost weightless flies and present them in the most delicate manner.

It would be impossible to cast most flies with any other kind of gear, and to match the delicate presentations you can achieve with a flyrod would be just as impossible. This is why most people think of trout when they hear the word flyfishing.

The flyrod is the tool of choice for most trout fisherman, especially in streams. Trout in streams need to be fooled with realistic imitations of their usual diet. And most of their diet consists of small stream insects.

So now you might be wondering why you would want to use a

flyrod on something like a bass that likes a big meal. The flyrod can still be more productive in certain situations because of the delicate presentation, but most people do it for the challenge and the joy they get from using such a marvelous tool.



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Catch & Release

The future of sportfishing is in your hands.
Pass it on!

Practice Catch & Release



Some fish are far too valuable to be caught only once.
Many anglers now take only what they need for food and release the rest of their
catch unharmed.

This is called "[catch and release](#)" and it helps to keep enough fish in the rivers and
lakes for everyone to fish for.

**Here are several tips
for practicing a successful
catch and release.**

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1. After landing the fish, try to keep it in the water as much as possible.

Try to avoid removing the fish from the water.

Do not let fish flop about in shallow water, on the ground, or in the bottom of your boat.

2. Use wet hands or wet cloth gloves to handle the fish.

Fish have a slime coating, which seals out infection.
Rough handling can destroy this protection.

Keep your fingers out of and away from the gills and eyes.

Never squeeze the fish.

Fish can not remain healthy out of water for longer than you can hold your breath.

Picture running a 4-minute mile, then someone sticks your head under water and tells you hold your breath.

This is what a fish goes through after a fight at the end of a line.

3. Remove the hook from the fish's mouth. If the hook is deep in the throat and cannot be removed easily, cut the line. The hook will usually dissolve or fall out later.

4. Have your partner take a picture of you and your catch.

QUICK SHOTS

Make sure the camera is ready and film is loaded before boating the fish. Nothing puts more stress on a fish than "sunbathing" on the deck, waiting for a slow poke to ready a camera. When the camera is ready, then lift the fish from the water and snap the shots you need and release the fish immediately.

5. Release the fish back into the water -

never throw it.

Once a fish has been landed, quickly turn the fish upside down and more times than not the fish will immediately become disoriented and cease struggling. Removing the hook becomes a great deal easier and the fish is left in much better condition for the release to follow.

Point your catch into a slow current, or gently move it back and forth until its gills are working properly and it maintains its balance. When the fish recovers and attempts to swim away, let it swim from your hands.

Large fish may take some time to revive.

Watch your fish swim away.

It is a great feeling and you know others will have the opportunity to catch and have as much fun as you did!





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Introduction to Fishing

Fishing can be done in fresh water or salt water.

Fresh water fishing takes place in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams.

Fish in these waters include trout, bass, and many other species. They range in size, from fish as small as 5 lb bluegills to as large as 100 lb king salmon.

Salt water fishing occurs in oceans, estuaries, and tidal rivers.

Fish found in these waters tend to be larger than average freshwater fish. They include snappers, bonefish, striped bass, and tuna. Fish as large as 150 lb sailfish and tarpon, and 500 lb marlin, can be found.

The three most favored methods of fishing in both salt and fresh water are:

bait fishing

(the use of live or dead bait placed on a hook),

spin fishing

(the use of metal or plastic lures)

and

fly- fishing

(the use of feathered lures resembling either insects or small fish)

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In all three methods, a fisher chooses a rod, a reel, and line of an appropriate weight and strength.

Lures are chosen that imitate the game fish's prey.

Once the angler has walked, waded, or boated to an area where fish are found, he or she casts the bait, lure, or fly into the water and then reels it in.

If a fish attacks the bait, the angler attempts to secure the hook in the fish's mouth by **setting the hook** that is,

The second you feel a tap on the line lower the rod tip, reel up the slack and sharply jerk the rod upward lifting the rod in a quick, powerful motion so that the hook lodges in the fish's mouth.

The fishing rod bends and the reel releases line when the fish attempts to flee, but when the fish rests, the angler can bring it closer by reeling in the line. When the fish is brought close enough, the angler captures it with a net or other tool, such as a gaff.

Related Article:

[Fighting Your Fish](#)

If the fish is not to be kept for food, an angler will examine it for a few moments (always keeping it underwater), unhook it, and release it.

[see Catch and Release](#)

The best fishing occurs in spring and fall, when fish are most active, either searching for prey or reproducing.

Although they may be caught during winter and summer, fish are generally more sluggish then and less apt to chase an angler's lure.

Several other factors influence fishing.

Water temperature is important, as different species are more active at different temperature levels.

Also, if a fish's natural prey is nearby, that fish will be active.

Some fish, particularly in salt water, move to different areas depending upon the phase of the moon and the levels of the ocean tides.

Weather affects game fish activity, as fish are more likely to search for food before and after bad weather, when the water is disturbed.

Fishing Hot Spots

Normally fish will hide around cover.

Cover can be anything from weeds, trees, logs, and rocks.

Don't be afraid to cast into this good stuff. Most strikes will occur on the drop, when the lure passes by the cover, or bumps into the cover.

You may lose a few lures when fishing cover but you're bound to catch more fish.

Vary the retrieve speed to make the lure look more realistic.

Fish concentrate in key areas in the water. Fishermen call these honey holes. Below are some examples of places you may locate while fishing. You could stumble upon your own honey hole.

WEED BEDS - Bass, bluegills, walleye, pike and muskies all love weeds growing in the water. Weed beds provide protection and food. The weeds are also home to minnows, crayfish, frogs, or shrimp that the larger fish feed on. Weeds filter the water from impurities and add oxygen for the fish to breath.

Best lures: jig and pig, plastic worm, spinnerbait, and topwaters.

WOOD AND ROCKS - Wood (sunken trees, stumps, dock pilings, etc.) and rocks are found in most fresh water or saltwater fishing holes. Fish lurk around these types of cover for shelter and for ambushing prey. The slimy coating, or algae,

that grows on this cover attracts minnows and smaller fish.

Best lures: jig and pig, crankbait, spinnerbait, and plastic worm.

RIVER MOUTH - The area where a river or creek flows into a larger body of water can be excellent for fishing. The flowing water carries the food to the waiting fish. For many fish species, the river acts as their spawning grounds (reproduce). The fish will hold in this area in the Spring until the time is right to move upstream. Temperature differences between the river and the large body of water meet in this location, creating a perfect temperature condition for many fish.

Best lures: Spoon, crankbait, spinnerbait, and topwaters.

DROP-OFFS - Better known as a sudden depth change. These areas provide fish with a simple way to move from deep water to shallow water, or vice versa. This area can be a good place to find pike, muskies, bass and many saltwater fish far from shore.

Bait and fish tend to hold to an edge or ledge (under water) as food gathers in these areas.

Best lures: spinnerbait, spoon, plastic worm, and jig and pig.

Piers - Piers and various other types of structure, offer protection for all types of fish. Structure with weeds will also attract bait fish, which in turn attract larger fish.

Outside of Bends - Bends in a lake offer more shoreline and if there is a current, will carry fish.

Bends in a river offer fish an opportunity to get out of the current and wait for bait to come to them.

Underwater Weeds - Weeds offer food and protection for smaller fish. The smaller fish attract the larger ones.

Coves - Coves offer more shoreline, protection from wind to fish. Whenever possible, coves should be fished!

Treat coves and narrows as you would a point. After all, a cove is just the opposite of a point.

Lily Pads - Lily Pads are another great spot because bait fish eat the insects and proteins on the lilly pads. For this reason, larger fish are attracted to these areas. Lily pads also offer protection in the form of shade.

Boulders - Large boulders offer protection for all types of fish.

They also offer ambush areas as baitfish usually take cover in the rocks.

Shade - On hot days, try the shade. Fish may find this a more comfortable environment.

Overhangs - Overhanging tree limbs offers fish protection and shade.

Be sure to fish these areas well!!!

Cliffs - Cliffs offer deep water and protection

Sheer cliffs will probably continue down into the water. This causes the deep water against the cliff.

Points - Points are great ambush areas. Work both sides and the tip of these.

Points act as barriers to wind and current.

Steep Banks

Steep banks-Expect to find deeper water towards the shore. Banks may also offer cover in forms such as rocks and weeds. Look at the bank to get a good idea of what's under the water.

Islands

Islands are good spots to fish because they offer cover and ambush areas for predators.

**Be sure to fish around the entire island to see if they're concentrating on one side.
Use that information to guide you in fishing other structure.**



When is the Best Time to Go Fishing?

Anytime!

**Best times to fish are
6 a.m. to 10 a.m.
and
4 p.m. up to 6 p.m.**

But if you're looking for a particular fish, here are the months that these freshwater fish are easiest to catch:

CATFISH: Mid-April to mid-October. June and July are best.

CRAPPIE: March to May

LARGEMOUTH BASS: March to June

STRIPED BASS: All year...especially November to February and June to September

SUNFISH: May to June

TROUT: November to December and mid-February to mid-April

WALLEYE: Mid-February to mid April

WHITE BASS: Mid-March to May

When you arrive at the water, don;t just start fishing in the first place you find!

Some spots will be more likely to attract fish to feed than others.

Scout the area and look for signs of feeding activity.

A shallow weed-filled bay could be lurking with Pike.

A dead tree in the water may catch you some Carp or Perch

Lilly Pads and Weed beds are favorites of Bass

An island with overhanging trees could land you some Carp

Bubbles appear on top of the water could be Carp or Bream on the bottom

Bodies of water like rivers and even lakes have moving water. The crease is the area in water where the fast water meets the slow water. Look for the line on the surface that separates rippled water from calm water. The crease actually goes right down into the water.

It pays to remember that water is a three dimensional object. Fish often are found to swim in the calm water right next to a crease, facing in the direction of the water flow. This is so that they can conserve energy and pick up any food

that is brought past them in the fast flow.

**Always try casting near the crease when fishing.
You can often find some extra fish waiting there.**

When you have found a promising site,
set yourself up

QUITELY!

Fish can detect vibrations of your footsteps and clanging noises of tackle boxes,
etc.

Cast your bait out using the technique in [How to Cast](#).

Next, turn the reel crank forward until it clicks to prevent more line from coming out. To take up any slack in your line, reel the line in until the float begins to move.

Once you see the bobber move, or feel a tug on the line or your bobber goes underwater,

be sure to set the hook in the fish's mouth by giving the line a quick jerk that's hard enough to move the float and set the hook in the fish's mouth, but not so hard that you send the hook, bait and/or fish flying over your shoulder.

After you set the hook, keep the line tight and your rod tip up. Slowly reel in the fish until you can pick it up with your hand.

Now you need to decide what to do with the fish.

Is it large enough to keep? Will it be used for food?

First, check the fishing regulations to be certain the fish is legal to keep. If it's not, carefully [release the fish back into the water](#), being sure to handle it with wet

hands, and as little as possible. A fish that you catch and release carefully can be caught again someday when it is bigger.

Congratulations!



You are now ready to go fishing!!!!



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The ABC's of Fishing

Attraction - Be sure that the bait you're using is "attracting" to the fish you're after.

Baiting - when baiting a hook, bait it correctly! An incorrectly rigged lure or bait could cause the loss of a trophy fish!

Cast - Learn to cast properly! The more accurate and controlled your cast is, the higher your odds to cast in a big fish zone.

Disturb - Fish may not always be attracted to just a lure, you might have to give it some life, jerk it around and try new techniques!

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Equipment - When buying equipment don't just buy the cheapest rod, pick a quality rod and make sure it is right for the type of fishing you are planning to do.

Find - Before you catch any fish you have to know where they are, experiment a little bit and stick with one place don't keep switching.

Give - The fish has to have time to take the bait! If you pull or tug to soon the fish may loose interest in "the meal"
(remember fish go after the smaller weaker fish. If they know that what they are trying to catch is too strong the will immediately give up)

Home - Fish where the fish are! You must know where the fish are located, or where there "home" is. Fishing where there are no fish can be very time consuming and boring.

Identify - Learn to identify all the types of fish!

Judgment - When you cast, have good judgment. If you cast and the lure doesn't end up exactly where you planned it, reel it in and try it again.

Knots - An improperly tied knot is one of the worst things a fisherman could do, it causes the loss of a fish and a lure. So learn to tie good knots.

License - Never fish without a license! If you are caught without a license you can suffer major fines.
(Licenses do not apply to people who are under 16)

 **M**ap - Try and get a contour map of the lake you are fishing at, a contour map shows structure and structure shows the fishes "home"

N

oise - Keep the noise at a minimum. If you scare all the fish away you won't catch any!

The most common thing that scares fish away is when people drop anchor

O

bserve - Be sure that when you find a good fishing spot you observe where you are! You will probably want to go back to that spot the next time you visit that lake.

P

resentation - Be sure that whatever you are using to catch fish looks good to the fish. A lure that has weeds and gunk on it will not attract fish!

Q

uarry - Know what fish you are after, Make a decision of what fish you are after and choose the right lures and location for that type of fish.

R

ig - Make sure your rigging is correct! A bad rigging can cause the same problem as a bad knot.

(the loss of a fish and a lure)

S

tructure - Figure out where the structure is, most fish live in the structure of the lake or pond, you must find it to catch the fish.

T

emperature - know how warm or cool the water is and what type of fish like that temperature, then you will know what fish you should aim for that day.

U

tilize - Utilize new and proven methods. Don't be scared to try things, they may lead to a trophy fish!

V

ariety - have a variety of lures in your tackle box. If you lose your favorite one or just run out of stuff, you should always have backups and extras.

W

eather - always watch the weather and know what the weather will be like.

X

marks the spot - Mark an X on your map where you catch your fish,

then you will know where to return to the next time you come.

Yield - Know that fishing is always changing and yielding different results on different lures, techniques, and methods, so watch for the newest ones and try them yourself

Zone - know where the fish are! Fish live in a particular zone; you must find that zone to catch the fish.



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Safety First



Something over looked by many fisherman

Fishing isn't a dangerous sport,
however you should prepare to keep safe and comfortable in
the outdoors.

It is possible to get caught unexpectedly in bad weather,
encounter insects, spend too much time in the sun, or get
caught on a fish hook.

**Kids are adventurous, rambunctious, curious and fun loving.
The result is that they naturally love the outdoors, but
also have greater exposure to the dangers of the
wilderness than the average adult.
Most kids don't have the patience for fishing that many
seasoned adult anglers possess.**

**But with a little planning, preparation and patience on the
adult's part, a fishing trip with kids can be safe and fun.**

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Safety must be the number one concern an adult has for children who are learning to fish and to enjoy the outdoors.

It is important to try to foresee the potential dangers and plan for them.

Sun exposure, boating, water currents, slippery rocks, insect bites, snakebites, wild animals, fishhooks, poisonous plants, cliffs and weather are some of the dangers that provide adventure to the child and gray hairs to the parent. Some areas even have traffic dangers that might not be too obvious, especially on or near mountain roads with blind curves.

Sunscreen, good sunglasses,
life vests

(when boating or if poor swimmers are fishing on a dock or near swift current),
buddy systems

(everyone travels in pairs or groups),
safe insect repellent, emergency whistles, proper food handling and storage, adequate amounts of food and water, proper clothing, proper instruction, soap, a first aid kit and a watchful eye are all necessary to help keep an adventurous outing from ending in injury or tragedy.

Checking with the rangers or other authorities in the area

where you'll be fishing can provide priceless, but free, information about local dangers and how to avoid them.

The adult must know how to identify and avoid dangers in order to help a child avoid them.

The adult must also know how to provide first aid in case prevention doesn't work and the child is injured or exposed to poisonous plants.

A very useful item for snakebites and insect bites is a syringe-style snakebite kit.

These kits have a syringe-like suction device that draws poison out of the same hole that a snake or insect injected the poison through, without any cutting.

They are quite effective and some have been documented to remove up to 75% of a poisonous snake's venom if used within the first minute after a bite.

Stinging nettles can be treated using wet sand to scrub off the invisible stinging hairs, followed by wet moss packed on the area for cooling and soothing relief.

Poison oak and poison ivy reactions can be prevented by immediately washing the area with soap and water and by spraying on a cheap aerosol anti-perspirant

(deodorant alone doesn't have the right ingredients). Juice crushed or boiled out of elderberry leaves and dabbed on the skin is the best medicine available to relieve poison oak or poison ivy after the reaction has already started, but the area should still be washed first with soap and water to remove the poisonous oil.

With all of the safety and first aid products and information available, the most important thing for an adult to do is to be a good example of outdoor and fishing safety.

Watching one's step, wearing one's lifejacket in a boat, looking behind before making a cast, observing wildlife from a safe distance, wearing proper clothing, and other good examples all leave an impression on a child who is learning about the outdoors.

HOOKS

When baiting hooks, keep a firm grip on the bait. The movements of slippery worms or minnows can cause serious hook injuries. Handle lures having clusters of

double or treble hooks with special care.

When landing a fish, ease it out of the water into a net or onto the bank. Jerking a fish out of the water can result in wildly flying hooks, especially if the fish comes loose.

ON THE BANK OR SHORE

Stay with your rod or pole. Protect curious children and animals from painful injuries by returning loose hooks and lures to your tackle box. Watch your backcasting clearance: avoid trees, bushes and especially people. **Help**

prevent erosion:

protect grass and shrubs near the water's edge.

If you dig worms, go back away from the water to do so.

Be sure to level the soil and replace the sod afterward.

WADING IN LAKES OR STREAMS

requires special care.

Watch your footing. Look out for drop-offs, deep holes, slippery rocks, soft mud and quicksand. Always test the

footing ahead and keep most of your weight on the foot already on safe ground.

Avoid wading through bank fishermen's lines.

Shoes should always be worn whether fishing on shore, in a boat, or wading in the water.

Stray hooks, glass, sharp rocks, and other objects on shore and in the water could cut your bare feet.

In a boat, shoes designed to keep your feet from slipping in a wet boat could help prevent you from taking an unexpected dip into the water.

Watch the weather

In a storm, seek shelter on shore in a building or vehicle.

**DON'T FORGET,
ELECTRICITY LIKES WATER!**

Anything wet can conduct electricity, even your boots! A wet fishing line wrapped around a power line can kill you....the electricity can travel down the fishing line and through you. On shore or in a boat, avoid overhead power lines.



On the stream bank, don't cast near electric fences or power lines. Take a tip from the cows, stay away from electric fences! Watch sprinkling systems....those electric power users are another danger. Don't try to catch an animal in a pipe. Many people have been killed lifting the ends of pipes near power lines. If a rabbit, gopher, or snake crawls into a long aluminum irrigation pipe, leave it there. Don't try to dump it out. Never lift a metal pipe higher than your head.

Fishing from a boat

Fishing from rocky areas

Be SunSmart



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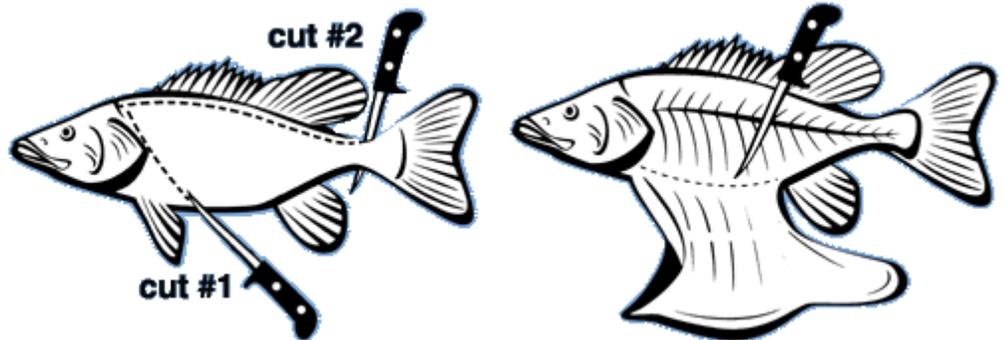


How To Fillet Your Fish

Cleaning Your Catch

Cleaning fish is best left to adults as it requires a very sharp knife. The most popular method of cleaning a fish is to fillet it. With a sharp, narrow-bladed filleting knife follow these steps:

1. On a flat surface, hold the fish by the head and make a cut just behind the gill cover from the backbone down to just behind the front (pectoral) fin, being careful not to cut the backbone.
2. Then run the knife along the length of the back bone cutting close to, but not into, the rib cage, pulling the meat away from the bones as you go.
3. Next cut down through the fish behind the rib cage to the vent and run the blade close to the spine, all the way out to the tail. To remove the skin, lay the fillet skin-side down on a flat surface. Hold the tail tightly, and then run your knife blade away from you, cutting between the skin and the meat, the length of the fillet.



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Fishing Terminology



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A

ABOARD - On a boat.

Action (1) The act of dragging a fly across the current and giving it an unnatural drift.

(2) When fish are biting - Getting a nibble

Adam's Special A general, widely used dry fly pattern to imitate an adult mayfly.

Adult The final phase of an insect's life cycle, most often occurring above water for aquatic insects.

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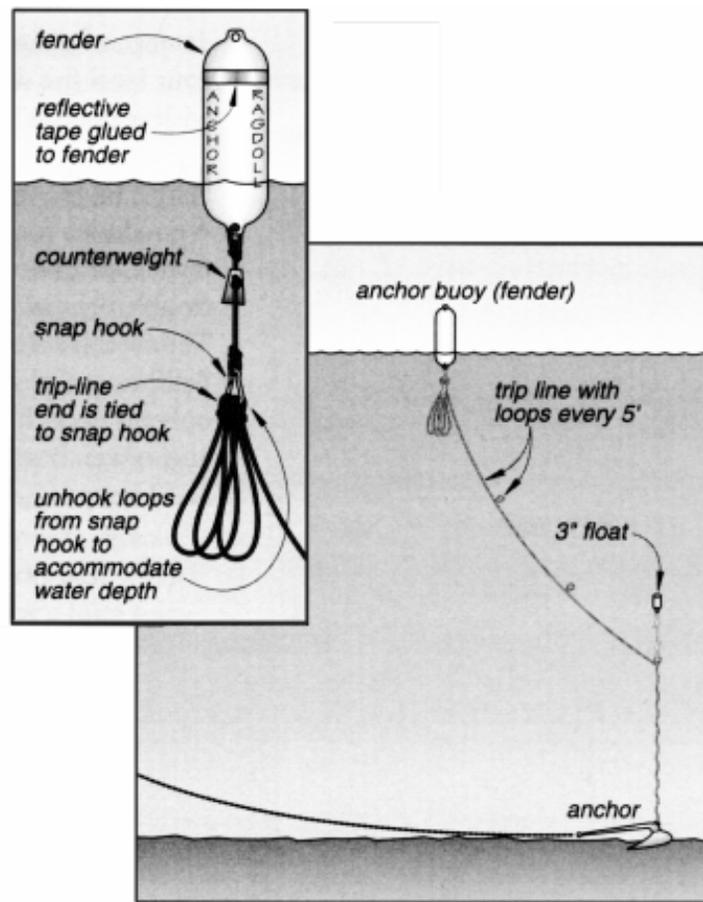
Alphabet lures Wide-body crankbaits that were originally fashioned from wood.

Modern examples include Bomber Model A and the Cotton Cordell Big O.



ANCHOR A heavy metal object that keeps boats from drifting.

Anchor buoy Usually a red plastic ball of at least 24 inches in diameter, with a large ring attached. Hook the ring on the anchor rope and heave the buoy overboard. Drive the boat upwind or upcurrent. Presto! The anchor is pulled up quickly to the buoy using horsepower instead of human power.



ANGLER - Anyone who fishes with a using pole or rod and reel.

Angling Usually refers to the recreational catching of fish by means of hook and line; sport fishing; game fishing

Antron A synthetic yarn material made of long sparkly fibers used for many aspects of fly tying including wrapped bodies, spent wings, and trailing shucks. Is also used for dubbing material.

Arbor The size of the spool of a fly reel. "Large arbor" reels have large-diameter spools, which helps prevent a fly line from curling.



AROMA - A very special smell that is easy to notice.

ARTIFICIAL LURE - A man-made bait used to fool fish.

Artificial Reef Any material sunk offshore for the express purpose of attracting fish. Old boats, concrete culverts, metal pipe, the list is endless. Most states now require a permit before dumping because non-practical material was being used, objects that rusted quickly, polluted or were a hazard to shrimpnets.

Attractor patterns Bright, bold flies that do not imitate any insect in particular, but many insects in general. Attractor patterns often provoke a trout's tendency to strike.

B

Back leads A small device used to force your line down to the bottom. It is a small lead weight that is tethered to a stick pushed into your bank. The lead has a small open clip at the top on which you push over your line. The weight is then dropped down under the water, pulling the line down with it. When a fish strikes, the line pulls up and out of the open clip.

Backing Thin, strong string that is attached to a fly reel to fill up the spool before attaching the fly line.

Backing down Driving the boat backwards (in reverse) while pursuing a fish.

Backing Line Nylon or dacron line tied between the fly line and the reel to act as additional line if a longer length than the flyline is required to play a fish.

BACKLASH - When fishing line gets tangled on a reel.

Baetis A small gray mayfly. [see Mayfly](#)

Bait little pieces of food you put on your hook to make fish want to bite it

Anything you use to catch fish. It can be a lure or a live minnow or a squirmy wormy, even a piece of ham will work.

BAIT BUCKET - A bucket used to hold bait.

Baitcaster Most common style of reel used in bass fishing, typically round or oval shaped and somewhat open construction. Also known as level wind reels.

[Click here for more info . . .](#)

Balao Pronounced "bally-hoo," this is the popular offshore bait used for trolling, most often for [billfish](#). The bait of choice for sailfish for many years. A pricey bait when used for other saltwater species.

Ball bearings Small metal balls added to the mechanical mechanism of high-quality reels to make the retrieve smoother. Normally the more ball bearings a reel has the higher quality.

BALLYHOO - A small shiny fish used for bait. [see Balao](#)

Balsa Type of wood several lures are manufactured from. This wood is very light,

yet highly buoyant. Gives the lure great action. Examples include Bagley's Balsa B, and Rapala Minnows.

BANK - The raised ground next to a body of water.

BARB - A raised burr on a hook to keep fish from getting off.

Barrel knot A knot used to tie two pieces of tippet together -- also known as a [blood knot](#).

[Click here to learn how to tie a Barrel Knot](#)

BASS - A very popular game fish; fun to catch and good to eat.

[Click Here for](#)
[More detailed info on a Bass fish](#)

BASS BOAT - A fast boat made for fishing on fresh water.

BATEAU - A small flat-bottomed boat, squared off on each end.

BEACON - A signal light used to help guide boats and airplanes.

Beads Glass, or plastic beads added to a Carolina Rig to enhance the noise, and protect the knot.

Bead Head A Bead Head fly uses a metal bead to simulate the thorax on a nymph or wet fly and to add weight to the fly. Typically gold or silver is used, but any color can be used. Often a bright color such as red can stimulate a fish into biting.

Beds Circular areas in the lake bottom that bass clear out in which to lay their

eggs during the spawn. "The bass are on the beds" refers to the fish actively spawning.

Bell sinkers Sinkers shaped like a bell, which are normally used on a [Carolina Rig](#). Also known as casting sinkers.



Belly The middle section of a fly line.

Belly strip A strip of belly meat from a baitfish. Cut and trimmed in a streamlined fashion, it can be trolled behind the boat, where it flutters in a fashion enticing to gamefish.

Billfish Any of several species of pelagic fish, including sailfish, spearfish, blue, black or white marlin, and swordfish.

A fish with long jaws.

Bimini Twist A specific series of knots and twists in a leader which acts as a springy shock absorber in the line, usually used when fishing for large salt water fish.

Biot The short thick barbs from the leading edge of the first flight feather typically from a goose or a duck. Used to simulate tails, legs, antennae and other parts. Can be found dyed in many different colors.

Birdnest A tangle that can occur using a level wind, a newbies nightmare



When you cast with a Baitcaster reel and you don't put your thumb on the line before the lure hits the water, all your line will get tangled and make a huge mess that looks just like a bird's nest. Getting a birdnest is just part of fishing with a Baitcaster, everybody gets them.

BITING - Time when fish are being caught on hooks.

Blank Fiber glass and graphic fly rods (which also have fiber glass) are produced by wrapping sheets of graphite and fiber glass around a carefully tapered steel rod (called a mandrel). The hollow rod that results from this process is called a blank. It has no guides, ferrules or reel seat.

Blood knot A knot used to tie two pieces of tippet together -- also known as a barrel knot.

[Click here to learn how to tie a Blood Knot](#)

BLOODWORM - A worm with red juice inside that is used for bait.

BLUEFISH - A kind of fish caught in saltwater.

BOAT - A small vessel that is moved by oars, sails or engine.

BOATHOUSE - A building to keep boats

Bobbin A tool for holding a spool of thread while fly tying which allows the thread to be dispensed with a controlled tension.

Bonk To kill a fish.

Boondoggle Drifting your boat at or about the same speed as the current so one cast runs the entire length of the run.

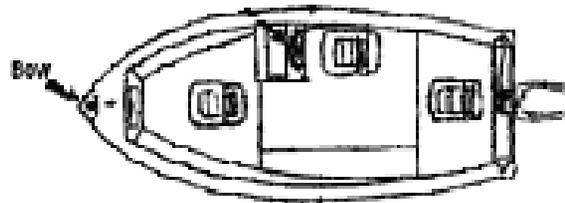
Boot Opposite of chromer. An old salmon or Steelhead. Well past edible, although often seen in the hands of a beek, claiming "this ones for the smoker".

Bottom fish Fish that spend most of their lives on bottom, such as cod, snapper and grouper.

BOTTOM FISHING - Fishing with the hook on the bottom

BOTTOM RIG - The hooks, weights and things fastened together for bottom fishing.

BOW - The forward (front) part of a boat.



BOW RAIL - The front railing on a boat.

Brackish Water that is mostly fresh, with some salt. The far ends of tidal creeks are mostly brackish, supporting sometimes fresh and saltwater fish.

Braided channel Usually found on freestone rivers, braided channels are ever-changing smaller channels that together constitute the course of the entire river.

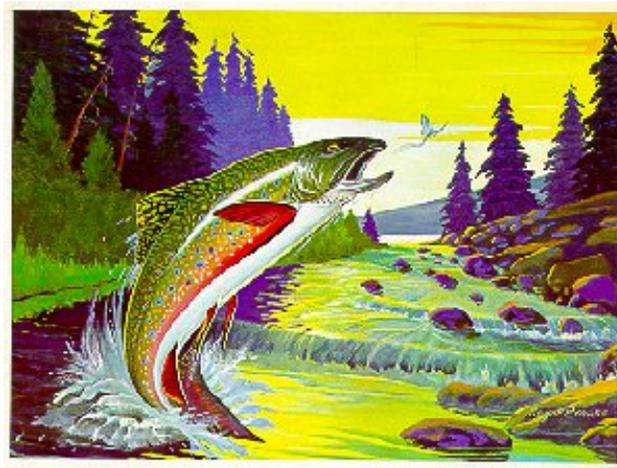
Brass Materials used to manufacture several products in the marine industry since it resists corrosion. Also refers to sinkers made of brass, which are harder and noisier than typical lead sinkers.

Brats Hatchery raised Steelhead

Brook trout Actually a member of the char family, small fish that inhabits the cold, clear waters of spring-fed streams and mountain lakes. Brook trout are popular as game fish because they are abundant and relatively easy to catch. Brook trout are greenish brown with red spots and wavy marks on their backs. Males have a red band on their sides. During spawning, the male develops a hooked jaw and a red belly, and his fins may turn deep orange with black and white highlights.

Brook trout are native to Southeastern Canada and the United States north of Georgia.

Brook trout feed on aquatic and terrestrial insects, occasionally supplementing this diet with crayfish. Large brook trout may eat small fish.



Bucketmouth - Largemouth Bass - A black bass, body green-shaded with a broad, continuous dark stripe along each side, belly white to yellowish, dorsal fin almost completely separated between spiny and soft portion and lower jaw extends past the gold-colored eye. Also called bigmouth bass, green trout, green bass

BUCKTAIL - An imitation bait with feather or hair and a hook.

Bullet Same as a chromer - A bright, fresh fish

Bullet Head Tool A tool with a plate with several holes which can be pushed over the eye of a hook to arrange material in a bullet pattern. The material is first tied in facing forwards beyond the eye symmetrically around the shank, and then pushed backwards by the tool to form the distinctive bullet shape.

Bump-troll Keeping a trolled bait mostly in one spot, by pointing the boat into the current/wind and "bumping" the engines in and out of gear, to hold position.

Buck Male fish

BUOY - A floating marker

Butt seat A seat that is shaped in a sort of half moon design, which anglers often use to lean against while fishing. Also known as "Bike" seats.

This small bottom cushion is popular among fishermen who fish long hours.



Bycatch Non-targeted sea life caught by commercial fishermen. Tuna longlines have a bycatch of turtles or mahi-mahi, for instance. Shrimp nets have a bycatch of at least a hundred species of fish and crab, discarded overboard.



Caddis A general name for the dozens of subspecies of caddis flies found in trout streams all over the world. Also known as a "sedge," they are characterized by a tent-like wing. Caddis have four stages of development, from egg to larva to pupa to adult.

CAMOUFLAGE - A way to hide things and make them hard to see.

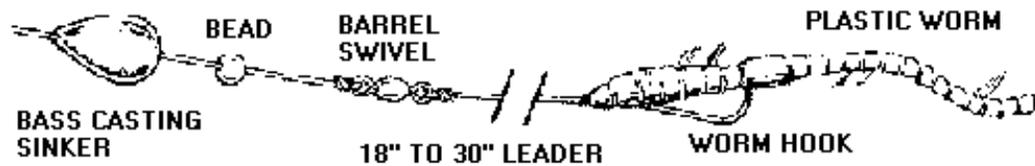
CANE POLE - A fishing pole made from a bamboo shoot.

CANOE - A long boat pointed at both ends that is easy to paddle.

Cape The skin off a rooster chicken's neck, which yields several hundred good

fly-tying feathers from a quality cape.

Carolina rig A rigging method designed to present a soft plastic lure along the contour of the bottom. This rig consists of a main line with a heavy sinker, bead, then swivel. The swivel has a leader (1-6ft) to which a plastic lure is tied. Best lures include lizards, centipedes and French fries.



CARP - A kind of freshwater fish.

Casting a technique using a rod to throw your line, hook and bait into the water

Cast net A circular net thrown by hand. The outer perimeter is lined with lead weights. Great for catching shrimp and baitfish.

Catch- and- release Term that refers to releasing the fish you catch so that they can live to fight another day, and thus insuring a productive fishery.

The ethic of returning fish to the water unharmed.



A conservation motion that happens most often right before the local Fish and Game officer pulls over a boat that has caught over it's limit.

[Read detailed info here on
Catch- and- release](#)

CATFISH - A kind of fish with whiskers.

[Click Here for](#)
[More detailed info on a Catfish](#)

Centipede Four-inch straight plastic worm used for [Carolina rigs](#).

cfs Abbreviation for "cubic feet per second," the term is a means of measuring the flow of a stream. A small stream might carry 40 cfs and offer good trout fishing, while a large river like the Colorado might reach 30,000 cfs in the Grand Canyon during flood stage.

CHANNEL MARKER - Used to mark the safe edges of a channel.

Char A trout-like species of fish whose subspecies include brook trout, Dolly Vardens, and arctic char, among others.

CHARTER BOAT - A boat you pay to go out on.

Chenille A yarn-like material for wrapping bodies which is in the form of a pipe cleaner (with thread in place of the stiff wire). Can be found in many colors and materials, and is a critical component of the Woolly Worm and Woolly Buggers patterns.

Chine The "running edge" of a boat. The chine is the edge made by the joining of the bottom and the sides of a boat.

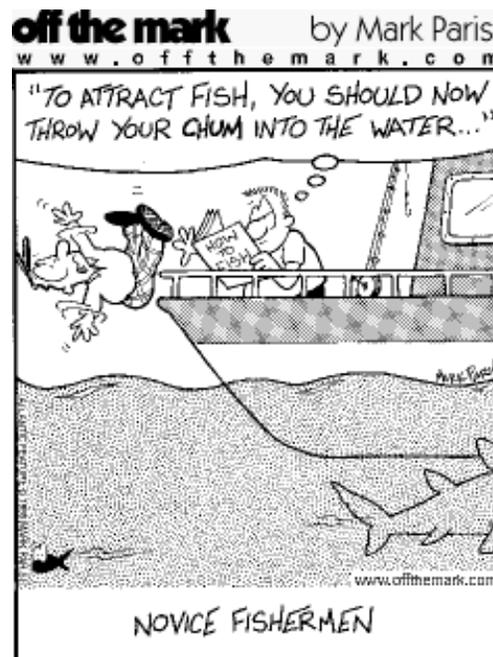
Chironomid Scientific name for the members of the Diptera family of insects commonly known as Midges. In the pupae stage they typically appear to be small aquatic worms.

Choked: Busted of a fish or did somethin dumb to lose your fish

Chromer: A bright, fresh fish - Also known as a **Bullet**

Chugger Topwater lure that "chugs" when retrieved, similar but smaller than a popper. Example, Storm Chug Bug.

Chum Chopped up fish, shellfish or even animal parts (for sharks), dropped overboard to attract gamefish.



Chum bag A mesh bag left hanging overboard, filled with chum. Trollers sometimes drag the bag alongside the boat. Smaller bags can be trolled deep while attached to downrigger balls.

Chunk Plastic or pork trailer commonly used on jigs.

Cigar minnows A yellow-tailed member of the scad family, sold most often as frozen bait in five-pound boxes, caught along the Florida Panhandle. Widely regarded for their firm texture and appeal to offshore fish. Cigar minnows can also be caught on tiny fly hooks, called Sabiki Rigs.

Cinch Knot (also known as Clinch Knot) A knot used to tie the tippet to the eye of the fly. A modified version of this, the Improved Cinch Knot, is probably the most

used knot for this purpose.

[See how to tie a cinch knot
along with other neccessary fishing knots
by clicking here](#)

Circle hook A circular hook up to 16/0 size, very safe to handle. The fish hooks itself with this one, and the harder they pull, the more firmly the hook imbeds itself. Ideal for releasing fish, since the circle hook is seldom swallowed.



This functionally-shaped fishhook results in more fish being hooked. Fishermen are learning that the Circle Sea is catching 60% more fish than conventional J shaped hooks, including a 95% lip hook rate so the fish cannot escape. The Circle Sea hook is scientifically proven to reduce fish mortality. Hook set is not required. This hook has greater holding power, more hookups, fewer drop-offs and it holds bait better. Ideal for all freshwater and saltwater fish species.

The trick is to let the fish take the bait, resist the temptation set the hook yourself, let the fish take it, eventually the rod will double and the fish will set them self. If you try and set the hook, the hook will not work properly and you will actually pull the hook right out of the fishes mouth. If you get too excited and set the hook you would pull the bait right out of the fishes mouth. You must resist as the reel screams out line...and the fish would hook itself.

Clacker A metal device added to certain brand buzzbait in order to make additional noise.

Clicker cork A thin Styrofoam cork, 3 inches long, mounted on an 8-inch wire.

Yanking on it produces a clicking sound that imitates shrimp snapping their tails underwater. These corks are great for suspending a plastic shrimptail jig above a grass bottom, and below troublesome floating grass.

Clinch knot One of 4-5 very useful knots. Very simple to tie, yet very strong. also known as CINCH KNOT

[Click here to learn how to tie a Clinch Knot](#)

Clouser minnow A streamer pattern that imitates baitfish, popular for many different species of fish, named after originator Bob Clouser.

Clown A color typically used mostly in hard jerkbait like Rogues. Consists of chrome body, with chartreuse back, and red head or face.

Coastal pelagic An offshore fish that migrates along the coastline, but isn't a true, ocean-going pelagic. Examples are kingfish, Spanish mackerel, cobia.

Coffee Grinder: [Spin cast reel](#)

Colorado Blade design used in spinnerbaits. Gives out a strong vibration. Blades are circular shaped.

COMMERCIAL FISHING BOAT - Used for fishing to earn a living.

CORK - Keeps a hook from sinking. Bobbles when a fish nibbles.

Cover Cover consists of weeds, trees, branches, tules, buck brush, stick-ups, rocks and man-made objects like docks, tires, etc

Crankbait plastic or wooden lure with a diving bill, that dives downward when retrieved or "cranked."



Crank Bait

CRAPPIE - A kind of fish that is fun to catch and good to eat. Freckle.

[Click Here for
More detailed info on a Crappie](#)

CREEK - A stream of water that is smaller than a river.

CREEL - A small basket with a carry-strap to keep fish in.

CRICKET CAN - Keeps crickets alive to use for bait.

Crawfish Small fresh water crustaceans similar to lobsters only smaller. A favorite food of bass. Also describes a reddish color used in all sorts of lures.

Crimp sleeve A metal tube, thin as two wire leaders together. When attaching wire or very heavy mono leader to a hook, one should use the crimp sleeve. A special, plier-like tool crimps the sleeve tight.

Cross chop Wind-driven waves and ocean swell colliding from two directions. Also caused by waves bouncing off a seawall and going back out, colliding with incoming waves.

Crystal Flash The trade name for a synthetic stringy material used in many streamer patterns to add flash and color.

Cul- du- Canard Feather In French, literally, "the butt of the duck," which is where these fine, downy, useful fly-tying feathers can be found.

Short wispy feathers taken from near the preen gland of a duck. Typically there are few of these feathers found per duck. These feathers add a significant amount of float to a fly due to the fact that they are soaked with natural preen oil. Use of floatant on these feathers will negate their floating qualities, actually causing the fly to lose flotation.

Culling Refers to releasing a smaller fish when you have a limit and have now caught a larger fish that will weed out one of the smaller ones. "This big fish will cull that small one&ldots;" is a phrase heard on The Bassmasters TV show often.

Culprit worm Although there are several similar worms, Culprit is the manufacturer of the original ribbon tail plastic worm, thus it is often referred to as a "Culprit "style worm.



Cut A narrow body of water cutting through land. For instance, a boat cut gouged through a barrier island, for boater access.

Cut bait Fish cut into chunks to fit the hook.

Cuttbow a rainbow/cutthroat hybrid, the cuttbow has both the rainbow's stripe and a cutthroat's "slash" under its jaw.

Cutthroat trout A native to many Rocky Mountain rivers, the cutthroat has a crimson "slash" under its jaw and black spots concentrated near the tail.

Cutting board Plywood surrounded by a lip of wood, sealed and painted. Or just an old piece of plywood. Used for cutting bait, and preventing knife cuts on expensive boat gunnels.

D

DAM - Used to hold water back. It usually makes a lake.

Dead drift A drift that imitates the natural action of an insect by floating directly downstream with the current.

Deer Hair Body hair from deer which is used in many fly patterns to supply body and floatation.

DEPTH FINDER - Measures how deep the water is under a boat.

Deep-drop Bottom fishing in deep water, from 500 to 1,100 feet and sometimes deeper. Usually, a sash (window) weight is required to reach bottom. [Circle hooks](#) are a necessity.

Delta Sediment deposited at the mouth of a major river, pushing shallow water offshore, as in the Mississippi Delta.

DIP NET - A net with a handle. Used to get fish into a boat.

DNR Department of Natural Resources

Dock lines Ropes used to secure the boat.

Doe Hen Steelies/Salmon

Do-nothing rig Western, clear water technique generally applied in deep water and on light line. Consists of main line with a small brass sinker, then a bead, and light wire hook. Baits are usually small 4-inch worms. The rig is dropped to desired depth and then just slightly jiggled or left to "do nothing."

Doormat Large flounder, roughly the length and weight of a doormat.

Double haul A casting technique where the angler pumps the fly line with the non-casting hand on the forward and backward segments of the cast. The pumping motion accelerates the line and gives the cast additional length. Double hauling is an essential technique for long casting.

Double-tapered fly line A fly line that is thicker on both ends and thinner in the middle. Double-tapered fly lines can be switched around as one end becomes worn.

Downrigger Used to slow troll most commonly for kingfish and grouper. Standard equipment on the kingfish tournament boats.

Downrigger ball Cannonball-shaped device with a fin, used to keep a trolled bait far beneath the boat.

Downstream drift The act of allowing the fly to drift past the fisherman and rise to the surface on the river below him, particularly on a nymph drift.

Drag When a fly line catches on a current, making the fly drift in an unnatural fashion.

Also the mechanical device on a fly reel that limits how fast a fish can strip line from the reel.

When you tighten the drag on your reel it makes the line harder for the fish to pull out and makes them get tired faster. But you have to be careful not to make it too tight or the fish can pull so hard your line breaks.

Dredging Retrieving a crankbait so that it continually digs or dredges up the bottom. This causes reflex strikes from fish.

Drift anchor Used most commonly in windy areas, by fishermen who drift all day. This anchor is more of an underwater kite that slows the boat's drift in order to thoroughly fish a productive area.

Drift boat Also known as a Mackenzie river dory, it's a river fishing craft ranging between 14 and 18 feet long with a flat bottom, upswept prow and rigid hull.

Drift fishing Drifting along with the wind and tide, casting repeatedly. Anglers working the grass flats off Florida, for instance, make one drift after another all day. Catch a few fish, and toss a buoy, to make an accurate drift through the same area. If Saturday crowds threaten to overwhelm the buoyed area, use a GPS to mark the spot for return.

Drift sock A large sock shaped like airport wind socks. This is dropped over the side of the boat to help control the boat in rough water.

Drip bag Very similar to an IV drip bag used by doctors, this device releases a constant drip of pogy oil over the side, attracting fish.

Drop shot rig Japanese designed technique in which the main line is tied to a sinker. The lure is tied to a leader which is tied above the sinker. This allows the lure to sit at the exact depth of suspended fish.

Dropper The secondary fly tied on the leader somewhere between the lead fly and the fly line.

Dry fly A pattern designed to imitate an adult insect, floating on top of the water.



Dubbing A wrapping to thicken the body of a fly, made by rubbing ground-up

muskrat fur, rabbit fur or other substance onto a waxed thread.

A primary body ingredient in both dry flies and nymphs, dubbing is a chopped-up fibrous material pinched and twisted onto the thread for wrapping onto the fly. Also refers to the process of applying the dubbing material.

Dubbing Rake Tool used to tease out dubbing on a fly to give it an enlarged appearance.

Dun Term used to describe an adult aquatic insect following emergence from the water.

E

EARTHWORM - A skinny worm that wiggles and makes good bait.

Eddy A calm spot next to a fast current, or in the case of a "back eddy," where the current switches direction.

Egg weight Egg-shaped lead weights of various sizes, with a hole drilled through the center. When a bottom fish runs with the bait, the line slides through the weight's hole, allowing little resistance and fooling the fish.

Electronics Commonly refers to the depth finders, and fish locaters used by anglers.

Elk Hair Body hair from elk which is used in many fly patterns to supply body and floatation.

Emerger An aquatic insect in the transition period from hatching off the bottom of the river to flying away from the surface of the water as an adult insect.

Often will have an attached trailing shuck which feeding fish may key upon.

Estaz Trade name for a chenille which uses colored fine plastic strips for the barbules. Can be found at many craft shops and yarn stores

Estuary Sheltered water, often with grass bottom or grassy shorelines, where juvenile fish have shelter, food and a chance to grow.

Evening hatch When many insects choose to emerge from under the water.

F

FADs Fish Attracting Devices were first used centuries ago. Any large, floating object like a tree that attracts pelagic fish. Some are anchored; others are allowed to drift.

False casting Casting ever-increasing segments of line, or casting the same amount of line, keeping the line aloft in the air without touching the water.

Fan cast To cast in a manner that resembles the arms of a clock. Thus the angler is attempting to cover as much ground as possible.

Fathom Six feet of depth. Many nautical charts are marked in fathoms, not feet.

Federation of Fly Fishers A non-profit organization dedicated to teaching the sport of fly fishing and the improvement of fisheries.

Felt soles Most wading shoes for flyfishing are soled with thick felt for good traction on slick rocks.

Ferrule The joint where different sections of a rod fit together.
[Click Here for MORE detailed information on FERRULE](#)

Fiberglass Material used to make crankbait rods. Glass makes the rod less sensitive and more flexible, and reduces the chance of pulling a crankbait from a fish's mouth.

FILLET - A piece of fish with the bones removed.

FIN - The wings on the top, bottom, sides or tail of a fish.

Finesse Commonly refers to slowing down and using smaller lures, line, and rods. Also a style of small lures used for this technique.

Fire tiger Color scheme that involves a lure with green back, chartreuse sides, orange belly and black vertical lines on the sides.

FISH - A creature that lives in water and has fins and gills.

Fish Hair Synthetic hair used in tying streamers and salt water flies.

FISHERMAN - Anyone who fishes with a pole, net, gig, or trap.

FISHING HOLE - A place known to be good for fishing.

Fishing line Fishing lines serve as the link between the angler's reel and the lure or bait. The most popular fishing line used for sportfishing is monofilament nylon line, which is strong and durable and has a certain amount of stretch, which helps when an angler sets the hook. The line comes in a variety of strengths, from 2-pound test to more than 100-pound test. (Pound test is the amount of pressure that can be put on a line before it breaks.) Most monofilament is clear, making it difficult for fish to see.

Braided lines, such as Dacron and braided multifilament lines, are frequently used for a style of fishing called jigging-where anglers lower the bait to near the water's bottom and then move it in an up-and-down manner in a steady motion. These lines also perform well when an angler trolls, or pulls the line from behind a slow-moving boat. Dacron and braided lines are often thinner yet stronger than standard monofilament lines. These lines also have better casting capabilities than standard monofilament because they are heavier and less likely to tangle.

Fly-fishing lines are woven synthetic strands coated with several thin layers of plastic. The weight and thickness of these coatings create three distinct types of lines: lines that float, lines that sink gradually, and lines that sink rapidly. The lines come in different shapes, for different types of casting situations. A double-taper fly line, for example, has a small diameter for its first and last 8 m (25 ft), with a larger diameter throughout the rest of the line. Using double tapers when casting small flies enables anglers to place the bait on the water without the line disturbing the surface of the water and spooking the game fish. Weight-forward tapers (preferred by most anglers) have a larger diameter in the front section than in the rest of its length. This enables anglers to make longer, more powerful casts because during the cast the heavy line in front pulls the lighter line that follows.

Because regular fly line is heavy and difficult to cast in a gentle manner, fly-fishers attach a short portion of monofilament line, called a leader, to the end of the fly line. The leader is much lighter and smaller in diameter than the fly line. This enables the angler to cast the fly onto the water without disturbing the surface. It also provides an almost invisible attachment to the fly, which makes the fly appear natural and more appealing to fish. Some other types of leaders used with monofilament lines are made of heavy monofilament or steel. These leaders prevent sharp-toothed fish from biting through the line and also protect the lure from being torn off by sharp underwater rocks and coral.

FISHING LICENSE - A permit to fish. You must have a permit if you are over the age of 18.

FISHING POLE - A pole with a hook and line used to catch fish.

FISHING TACKLE - All the things used to go fishing.

[Pole](#) [Rod](#) [Reel](#) [Fishing Line](#)

[Bait & Lures](#) [Live and Natural Bait](#)

[Artificial Bait and Lures](#)

[Plugs](#) [Poppers](#) [Spoons](#) [Spinners](#) [Jig](#) [Crankbaits](#)

[Hooks](#) [Sinkers](#) [Bobber](#) [Swivels](#) [Tacklebox](#)

Fish pass A cut dredged through a barrier island, created to allow better fish traffic and tidal flushing.

Flashabou Commercial name for a colorful synthetic filament material used in fly tying for adding flash to streamers as well as other patterns.

Flats Very shallow water, where water is still and easy to wade, usually with a sand bottom. This water is so thin, anglers equipped with polarized glasses can visually spot and cast to various fish, such as bonefish, redfish and tarpon.

Trout generally use flats only for feeding purposes because they feel vulnerable there. Also important for saltwater species such as redfish and tarpon that feed on baitfish and crabs.

Flies Artificial imitations of the aquatic and terrestrial insects found in and near trout streams. Flies are tied of many and various materials, such as feathers, fur, thread, tinsel, and even space-age materials. Patterns imitating minnows, baitfish and other fish and crustacean species are also called "flies."

Flipping Technique in which a short amount of line is pulled from the reel and raised vertically then lowered to the side of an object. Normally used in dirty water and in thick cover.

Flipping stick A heavy 7 ½-foot rod designed specifically for flipping. Normally these rods telescope down to a smaller size.

Float Style of lure that floats rather than sinks at rest.

Example: wooden crankbaits.

Float Fishing using floats help you catch fish that swim near the surface of the water

Float tube A one-man fishing floatation device for lake and slow river fishing that looks like an inner tube covered with a cloth mesh liner, seat, and back rest.

Similar to an inner tube in size and shape, a float tube is an inflated ring covered with a fabric structure with a seat and pockets for an angler to fish ponds and lakes. Also known as a "belly boat."

Floatant Material applied to flies and leaders in order to cause them to float on the surface of the water. Typically sold in liquid or paste form, although dry shake crystals have recently been found on the market.

A coating designed to keep a dry fly from becoming waterlogged.

Floss Material for tying flies.

Floater [same as float](#)

Floating worm Plastic worm used to catch spawning bass that actually floats on top of the water. Common colors include pink, yellow, and sherbet.

Florida rig A worm sinker that has a metal cork screw in the base so that the angler can screw in the worm. This keeps the sinker and worm together and

reduces tangles.

Flossing Using really long leaders to float thru lots of stacked up fish, trying to hook the fish on the outside of the jaw

Fluorocarbon New style of line that is often invisible below the water's surface.

Fly An artificial lure hand tied with "stuff" on hooks.

Fly Casting The process of casting a flyline out onto the water.

Fly Line A weighted line which is cast out onto the water to deliver the fly to the desired location. Can be found in many densities and tapers.

Floating Line A flyline design to float on the surface of the water along its entire length. Typically used for dry fly fishing and shallow water nymphing.

Sinking Line A flyline design to sink below the surface of the water for getting a wet fly or streamer down deeper. Can be found with different sink rates for different fishing styles.

Sinking-Tip Line A hybrid flyline design which is floating for most of its length except for a short section of sinking line at the end.

Fly Pattern Recipe used for tying a specific fly.

Fly Reel A reel used to store line, provide smooth tension, or drag, and to counterbalance the weight of the fly rod during the casting process. Can be found in many different weights and with different drag mechanisms.

Fly Rod The type of fishing rod used to cast the flyline to the desired position. Historically built with bamboo canes and fiberglass, but now almost exclusively with carbon graphite.

Fly Tying The process of building fishing flies using thread and various materials.

Flying bridge A permanent, raised steering cabin or platform on the bigger fishing boats. On the big offshore charter boats, the captain stays up on the flying bridge all day, while the deckhands below scurry about, catching the fish.

Flying gaff A detachable gaff, designed for big fish. The steel hook is attached to a strong rope. The pole is used to jerk the hook into the fish, detaches, and the fish is suddenly attached to the boat by a rope.

Football head Design refers to the shape of certain jigs that resemble a football mounted side ways. Normally used in very rocky locations.

Freestone river A natural river with an undammed channel that allows free movement of stones rolling down the river course over time.

French fry Soft-plastic worm about 4 inches long. Resembles a crinkle-cut French fry. Used often on Carolina Rigs.

Frog Soft, tough plastic lure that swims on top of the water. Often used in thick, scummy areas.



Gaff A steel hook of varying sizes, mounted on a pole or stick, used for snagging

worn-out fish that have been played to boatside by fishermen.

GAME WARDEN - A person in uniform (lwater police) who checks on fishing laws. Do you have a [permit](#)?

GAR - A long freshwater fish; not good to eat.

Gear ratio Retrieve speed of reel determines how much line is reeled in one revolution of the reel's handle.

German brown trout A native of the European continent, the brown trout has a golden sheen and black and orange speckles with white rings around them.

GIG - A spear with prongs used to catch fish. **GILLS** - Slits on the side of a fish's head used for breathing. **GREAT OUTDOORS** - Being out in Nature. **GRUB WORM** - A fat worm used for bait.

Golden rule Gold color aluminum measuring device used in tournaments to measure bass in order to easily determine the length of the fish.

Gong Show: Also known as the "**gong**". A term that refers to a spot where fisherman stack up, usually close to the road. Lines are getting tangled and there is a disproportionate amount of anglers wearing camo getups.

GPS Global Positioning Satellite, device used to accurately determine your location with in feet. Handy for finding your way on unfamiliar lakes.

Grand slam Some notable angling achievement, usually three popular species of fish from a certain area. A flats grand slam would be a tarpon, permit and bonefish. A billfish grand slam would be a sailfish, blue marlin and white marlin.

Graphite Material used to make rods. Good conductor thus graphite rods are sensitive.

Grass Vegetation catch-all phrase. Refers to green plants growing in the water.

Bass are attracted to the grass, which is home to prey.

Green Drake A large, green-bodied mayfly found in many trout streams, a particular favorite food for trout.

Grinder A device used to grind chum before tossing it overboard.

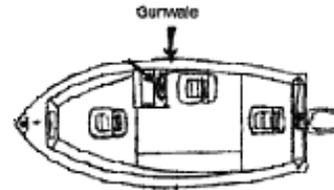
Grub

1. A plastic worm tail usually threaded onto a jig hook. In saltwater fishing, "grub" covers all of the basic plastic shrimptail brands, one of the first of which was the Boone Tout Tail. Or, it might be a plastic minnow tail, such as the Sassy Shad.

2. Small curl tail lure made of soft plastic.

GUIDE - (1) An eyelet. (2) Person who is paid to lead others.

GUNWALE (GUNNEL) - The top of the boat's sides. The rail.



Guts: Roe, eggs



Hackle Any soft-stemmed feather with non-adhering barbules.

The series of extended fibers right behind the eye of a fly.
The hackle is what allows a dry fly to float.

Typically used to refer to hen or rooster chicken feathers.

Hen Hackle Hackle feathers from a hen chicken characterized by soft, wide feathers. Since these feathers readily soak up water, they are usually used on nymphs and streamers.

Jungle Cock A type of hackle with prominent singular white dot patterns often used to suggest eyes.

Neck Feathers Feathers from the neck of the chicken which are shorter and tend to have a wider selection of sizes on a single skin.

Saddle Feathers from the back of the chicken which are longer and have thinner stems. Best choice for most dry flies.

Herl Feathers used for tying with long individual barbules each having short dense fibers. Typically from Peacock and Ostrich.

HADDOCK - A kind of saltwater fish that is good to eat.

Hair jig Old-style jighead with the skirt fashioned out of hair and/or feathers.

HALIBUT - A kind of fish that is good to eat. Flounder.

Hawg: A really big fish

Headboat A government fisheries term for partyboat. Basically a fishing boat for hire that carries more than six people. The average is more like 30 anglers, and sometimes more than 100. With that many lines, you mostly fish straight down with heavy tackle for bottom fish.

HELM - A tiller or wheel used to steer a boat

HELMSMAN - Person who steers a boat.

HITCH - A loop around an object then back around itself.

Hen: Female fish

High-sticking Holding the rod high to keep the line taut in a nymphing drift.

Hog line: Boats or bankies stretched across a river in a line

Hone To sharpen hooks or knives with a stone.

Hook - (1) A curved piece of metal; Pointed wire hook used to catch fish (hopefully).

The most dangerous part of fishing equipment. At least one of these is tied to the end of the line, or is attached to a lure. There are more brands, types and sizes than anyone could ever use, but all anglers have dozens of them. Some can be sharpened, some can't. But they all get dull, or bent, and have to be replaced more frequently than razor blades.

The size of the hook refers to the gap between the point and the shank. The length of the shank is referred to as 1XL for one extra long, or 2XL for two extra long and so forth. Assuming that the hook we are discussing is of regular

length, and the hook is between size 2 and 28: the higher the number the smaller the hook, the lower the number the larger the hook, and hook sizes are represented by an even number. After size two, we use both odd and even numbers, and after size one we add a slash and a zero after the hook size like 1/0 or 2/0, and the higher the number the larger the hook. So the hooks run in size from smallest to largest like this: 28, 26, 24, etc..., 8, 4, 2, 1/0, 2/0, 3/0, etc... For general trout fishing you will probably use sizes 6 through 20 the most. For panfish, sizes 10 through 16 are most common, however these are usually a little heavier and more wind resistant than trout flies. For bass you will use sizes 2/0 through 8 and these flies are even heavier and more wind resistant than most.



A clever advertisement to entice a fisherman to spend his life savings on a new rod and reel.

The punch administered by said fisherman's wife after he spends their life savings (see also, Right Hook, Left Hook).

Hoppers A good-sized live shrimp sold at the marinas, usually a white shrimp.

Horse: To force a fish in too fast..."he really horsed that one".

Hula grub Soft plastic curly-tailed grub, with a soft skirt type feature at the head of the grub.

Hump Section of the lake bottom that rises vertically toward the surface, or is shallower than the area around it. A submerged island would be considered a hump.



Improved clinch knot The suggested knot for tying a fly to the leader or tippet.

INBOARD - (1) Within a boat. (2) A boat with a built-in engine.

Incoming tide Water pushing inshore, generally caused by the moon's gravity pull. A strong wind blowing out to sea can somewhat negate an incoming tide, however.

Indiana blade Refers to a teardrop shaped blade used on spinnerbaits.

Indicator species A species of plants or animals that suffers when pollution or environmental stress begins, thus indicating environmental degradation.

Inlet A natural pass between ocean and bay. Unjettied inlets are more hazardous to boat traffic, because of shifting sandbars that can be a hazard.

Most inlets are now jettied with granite rocks, to protect against erosion and to save dredging costs.

In-line Commonly refers to in-line spinners where the blade, body, and hook are all in a straight line. Example is a typical Mepp's spinner.

Inshore A nebulous term that means perhaps within sight of land. "Let's head inshore" means moving the boat from offshore back towards land.



JACK - A kind of saltwater fish; fun to catch and good to eat.

Jack plate Device attached to the transom of a bass boat that allows the

outboard motor to be mounted farther back and higher than originally. Improves performance. Example, Rite Hite Jackplate. Also used for shallow-running flats boats. This device jacks the motor straight up and down, without tilting the lower unit, even while running.

Jacobson downdrift Feeding slack into the line as the fly emerges downstream to imitate an emerging insect.

Jerkbait There are two types: soft and hard. The soft style is similar to a baitfish profile and rigged with a large worm hook. Example: Slug-Go. Hard jerkbaits resemble more of a minnow baitfish. Examples are a Rapala or Smithwick Rogue. Both style lures are fished by twitching or jerking the lure forward, hence the name.

Jetties Granite boulders used to protect coastal inlets and passes from sand erosion. An inlet protected by jetties is much safer for boating traffic.

The rocks attract many species of coastal fish.

JEWFISH - A large saltwater fish; very good to eat. Grouper.

JIG - A kind of fishing lure used for jigging.

Jigging Working a jig. That means popping the rod tip up and cranking in some line with the reel, making the jig dart through the water. Very attractive to most fish species.

Fishing with short little jerks on the line.

Jitterbug Old wooden-body topwater lure with large metal lip. Makes a gurgle-type commotion when retrieved.

K

KEEL - The underwater backbone on the bottom of a boat.

Keel guard Handy device that is glued to the keel of a bass boat, so that it can be beached without damage to the bottom of the boat.

Keeper Any fish large enough to keep for eating.

Legal size bass. Example: In Missouri bass must be 15 inches long in order to be a keeper.

KELP - A kind of seaweed. Fish like to swim under it.

Kelt: A spawned out Steelhead on the way back to the Ocean, also known as a dropback, downriver

Kicker Larger, heavier bass that really helps out the total weight of a tournament angler's catch. Example; "I had a limit of 2-pounders, but was lucky and caught a 5 pound kicker."

KIDNEY SPOON - A fishing lure with an oval shape.

KING MACKEREL - A kind of saltwater fish; good to eat. Kingfish.

KINGFISHER - A kind of bird (waterfowl) seen around water.

Kite rig Fishing a bait with a kite. Fishing kites are different from land kites, usually flat and square. The live bait skips around on the surface, without the telltale line being visible. Used mostly on sailfish, but effective on other species.

L

Lace Hollow fine plastic tubing wrapped around a hook shank to supply a segmented body.

Lagoon Found mostly in the Pacific, lagoons are shallow, protected areas usually ringed by coral reef.

LARGEMOUTH BASS - Puts up a big fight and is good to eat.

[Click here more info on a](#)
LARGEMOUTH BASS

Larva The second, or "worm" phase of an insect's life cycle.

Sub surface stage of development of an aquatic insect.

LEAD - A heavy metal weight.

Leader Section of line used between the flyline and the tippet. Often purchased as a tapered section, but can be assembled by tying successively smaller diameter sections of monofilament.

A strong wire or string used between a lure and the fishing line.

1. The piece of clear, tapered monofilament line attached to the fly line, usually between six and 15 feet long.

2. In bass fishing, a short piece of line attached to a swivel when making a [Carolina Rig](#).

Lead fly The primary fly tied on the end of a fly line.

Leadhead Bare leadhead jig that is normally used to rig a grub body onto.

Leading the act of keeping the rod tip and strike indicator downstream of the drifting nymph.

Leech A bloodsucking worm that trout love to eat.

Lever drag The serious offshore reels designed for ocean fish now use a very smooth lever drag, as opposed to the older star drag.

Limit Legal limit of bass, or other fish.

Line [see Fishing Line](#)

Line memory When a fly line, leader, or tippet stays in the same position in which it has been bent, tied, spooled, or coiled.

Line weight The relative weight of a fly line. A "1 weight" rod throws a thin, light line, while a "10 weight" rod throws a very heavy, thicker line.

Lipless crankbait Shad-shaped crankbait that has no visible diving lip. The line attaches to the top of the lure. Example; Rat-L-Trap.

Lit up Pelagic fish such as the marlins, sailfish and wahoo have a tendency to "light up" with neon, powder blue colors when excited or hooked.

Live bottom Rocky bottom, sometimes very flat, where sponges and corals can find something solid to grow on. This attracts various bottom fish, such as grouper.

Lizard Soft plastic lures similar to a salamander. Used for Carolina Rigs, and fishing shallow water in the spring.

Locators Common nickname for depthfinders since they will often display images of fish as they pass over them.

Longliner As seen in the movie, *The Perfect Storm*, longliners are commercial fishing boats with a huge spool of heavy monofilament line on their back deck, up to 40 miles long. Used mostly for targeting tuna and swordfish.

Loop The candy-cane pattern made by a fly line as it is cast. The tighter the loop, the more accurate and powerful the cast.

Loop Connection A method of setting up a flyline/leader rig using loops tied in each section which can be interlocked for easy changing.

Lowholed: When someone steps in front of you as you move down a drift, or sets up their boat in front of you or your boat.

Lunker Big or large-size bass. Also known as Hawg or monster.

Lunker Lure Original designer of the buzzbait. Many anglers still refer to all buzzbaits as "Lunker Lures."



Lure

Lure retrievers Heavy devices designed to knock loose or retrieve snagged fishing lures.

M

Mangroves The only trees that grow in salt water. Mangroves protect tropical coastlines from storm surges, and their extensive root system attracts a variety of shallow water gamefish.

Matching the hatch Choosing the fly pattern that imitates the insects that are hatching nearby.

Mayfly The most beautiful of aquatic insects, the mayfly is characterized by an upswept wing and long, delicate two- or three-stranded tail. The mayfly goes through three stages -- egg, nymph, and adult -- then metamorphoses once again from a sub-imago adult to a spinner.





Meat Hole: A spot where "fisherman" gather because the fishing is so good, even the biggest fool can get fish at the "meat hole". Usually lots of guys ripping sides trying to snag fish.

Mending The act of lifting the fly line off the water and flipping it either upstream or downstream to eliminate drag and accomplish a more natural drift.

Merging currents A dead spot of calm water created where two currents come together.

Midge A very small species of aquatic insects found in trout streams. Many species of midges hatch into adults in the middle of winter. They have four stages of development, from egg to larva to pupa to adult.

Milk: To play a fish too long

Minnow - Any of several small fish less than a specific size and not considered gamefish.

Mojo rig Technique similar to a Carolina Rig except that it is rigged on a spinning

rod. Thus it is a finesse-type method. The sinkers are cylindrical or pencil-shaped to come through rocks without snagging.

Mono leader Leader made of monofilament. Mono leaders are of course heavier grade than the line on your reel. Standard mono leader for huge marlin, for instance, is 300-pound test, while line on the reel seldom exceeds 80-pound test.

Monofilament The clear style fishing line most commonly used by anglers.

Motor fish When fishing over a tiny spot that is deep, it is more practical to keep the engine running, attempting to "hover" the boat over the spot. For instance, the tiny rocks in the Gulf of Mexico, no bigger than a car, are often 200 feet deep. Anchoring here is impractical and time-consuming. Instead, you motor over the boat, while a couple of anglers drop their baits down.

Muds Created by a bottom-grubbing school of fish. For instance, a school of bonefish rooting on the bottom will gradually muddy the water in a large patch, easily visible on a sunny day.

Mysis A type of silvery freshwater shrimp found in cold mountain lakes and reservoirs.



Nail Knot A knot used to tie together two lines of significantly different diameters. See also Needle Knot

Nail Knot Tool A tool used to simplify the process of tying Nail Knots.

Nates: Native steelhead, not of hatchery origin

Nymph A general term used to describe the subsurface forms of aquatic insects prior to emergence. Also used as the name of flies imitating these insect forms.



OARLOCK - A U-shaped holder that keeps an oar in place.

OARS - A long pole with a blade used to row or steer a boat.

OUTBOARD MOTOR - A removable engine for boats.

OUTRIGGER - Long poles to hold trolling lines out to the side.



Palmer A method for wrapping a hackle feather over a section of the fly's body.

PAN FISH - The size fish that just fits inside a frying pan.

[Click here more info on](#)

PAN FISH

Peacock Sword A feather from a peacock with bushy herl-like barbules, commonly used for tails.

PERCH - A kind of fish, fun to catch and good to eat.

[Click here more info on a](#)
Perch

PDF Personal Flootation Device, aka, a life vest or life jacket

PIER - A platform that goes from the land out into the water. (dock)

PLASTIC WORM - A flexible, colored, plastic worm with hooks.

You fish these real slow, pulling your pole up and down waiting for a fish

PLUG - An artificial bait used to catch fish. A lure.

POINT - Where land sticks out into a body of water.

Point Fly The lead fly in a two fly rig. Usually a section of tippet is tied to the eye or the bend of the hook to connect to the dropper fly.

Poly Yarn A synthetic yarn made from polypropylene. Used in fly tying, often for parachute posts and wings on dry flies.

Pool cue: Stiff action rod, undesirable

Popper Artificial lure with a flat head and surface. Designed to run on the surface when retrieving or trolled which creates a lot of water surface distortion to attract predator fishes

PORT - (1) The left side of a boat when you face forward;

PORTHOLE - A small round window of a boat.

Practice plug A practice plug is like a lure without hooks. You tie it on your line and it lets you practice casting in your back yard or at the park so when you do go fishing you won't catch a bunch of trees, or your dad or other stuff that is not very good.

PREDATOR - Catches and feeds on other animals.

PREY - Something being hunted to be eaten.

PULPIT - A strong guardrail around the bow or stern.

Pupa Sub-surface larval stage of aquatic insect development.



REEF - An underwater ledge that sticks up from the bottom.

REEL - (1) A spool to wind line on. (2) Winding the line up.

RELEASE - Letting a live fish loose to swim away.

[See Catch and Release](#)

Ripper: Hard fighting fish, makes your reel "scream"

[see screamer](#)

Ripping Sides: Purposely setting the hook every ten feet during your drift with the intent of snagging a fish by the belly/ass/fin.

ROD - A fishing pole with eyes for line to pass through.

ROD TIP - The eye at the end of a fishing pole.



SALT WATER - Ocean water. It has salt and many other minerals.

School of Fish A school of fish is a bunch of fish playing together, kind of like all the kids in your class playing on the playground. But unlike the kids in your playground, all the fish in a school are going the same directions and when one turns, they all follow-like instantly!

I don't know how they know whose turn it is to change direction, but they seem to know.

Screamer: Hard fighting fish, makes your reel "scream"

Schmeg: The stuff an egg fisherman gets all over his waders, rods, reels, vest, rocks around him, trees around him, and all over the boat.

SCHOOL - A group of fish swimming together.

Scud Term used for freshwater shrimp.

Seine A large fishing net made to hang vertically in the water by weights at the lower edge and floats at the top

SET THE HOOK - Giving a quick tug so the fish gets caught.

When you feel a fish biting your lure you need to jerk your pole real hard, that is what setting the hook is.

This hooks the fish real good so he won't come off.

SHACKLE - A U-shaped metal fitting with a pin across the "U".

Sinkant A liquid applied to flies to make them sink.

SINKER - A weight made from lead attached to the rig to hold it in position due to strong current or used to cast the line out further. Commonly found types are bomb sinker, bullet sinker, ball sinker and split shots.

The maximum sinker weight for casting are usually specified on the rod.

Sinking Line A flyline design to sink below the surface of the water for getting a wet fly or streamer down deeper. Can be found with different sink rates for different fishing styles.

Sinking- Tip Line A hybrid flyline design which is floating for most of its length except for a short section of sinking line at the end.

Skunked: Failure to produce any fish on a given day

Slinky: Parachute cord filled with buckshot, used for weight.

Snagger: Can't get one the fair way, loves to set the hook at the end of every drift.

Snakes: Pink rubber worms

SNAP SWIVEL - A metal wire clip with a swivel.

Spinner A spent adult aquatic insect following laying its eggs on the surface of the water.

A small blade that spins when it moves through water.

SPINNING REEL - Usually used for casting and inland fishing. Unlike the multiplier, the spool does not turn unless a pulled with pressure on the line by a sizable fish. Line is reeled in by method of using a bale arm rotating around the spool which coils the line evenly.

SPINNING ROD - A rod made to be used with a spinning reel.

SPLIT SHOT - Small weights to squeeze onto a fishing line.

SPOON - Artificial lure originally made from a spoon with the handle cut off and attaching a treble hook to it. These metallic lures are now manufactured in various sizes and shapes, some designed like a fish.

SQUALL - A sudden storm with wind and rain.

SQUARE KNOT - A double knot. Also called a reef knot.

STARBOARD - The right side of a boat.

STERN - The rear part of the boat.

Stonefly Family of aquatic insects commonly imitated in fly fishing. Many species are found in western streams.

STRINGER - A cord or chain to keep caught fish on.

Sweet Jigging: Same as [ripping sides](#)

SWIVEL - Lets a line spin without twisting it up.

A strong connection between the mainline and the leader to eliminate line twist. Made from brass or stainless steel and comes in various sizes. It can be bought attached with a snap clip or on its own.



TACKLE - All poles, lures, and lines to fish with.

TACKLE BOX - A box to keep fishing things in.

TERMINAL TACKLE - The hooks and sinker on the end of a line.

Terrestrial Term used to describe land-based insects which are often food for fish.

Tighten the Drag When you tighten the drag on your reel it makes the line harder for the fish to pull out and makes them get tired faster. But you have to be careful not to make it too tight or the fish can pull so hard your line breaks.

Tinsel A metallic filament used in fly tying to provide flash and color.

Tippet The monofilament section of the fly rig between the leader and the fly.

TOP- WATER POPPER - A lure that floats and makes noise.

Trailer Hook When you are fishing with a spinnerbait or a buzzbait and you keep missing the fish, you need to put on a trailer hook. A trailer hook is a hook that you put on the hook that is on your lure and now you have two hooks to catch the fish instead of one. Sometimes, you can catch two fish at a time instead of only one.

Trailing Shuck A section of synthetic yarn tied to the back of a fly to imitate a case being shed from an emerging insect.

TREBLE HOOK - Three hooks made together.

TROLLING - Fishing behind a moving boat.

TROLLING LURE - A fishing lure used while trolling.

TROLLING MOTOR - A small, quiet, outboard motor.

Trout Unlimited Non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and improvement of trout fisheries, with an emphasis towards wild trout.

Tyee: Chinook over 30 pounds





Vise The tool used to hold a hook in place while tying the fly.



WALLEYE - A kind of fish that gives a big fight. Good to eat.

[Click Here for](#)
[More detailed info on a Walleye fish](#)

Weekend Warrior: They dress the part and flock to the rivers in their new waders and Sage rods on the weekends to 'escape' from the everyday stresses of a crappy office job, usually get skunked.

WET FLY - An artificial bait that looks like a fly and sinks.

Whip Finish A knot used to tie off the thread when finishing a fly.

Whip Finishing Tool A tool designed to make whip finishing quick and easy.



Y

Z

Zinger A retractable string clip used to connect tools to ones fly vest.

Zipperlip: Secret fishing hole.

Z- Lon Trade name for a synthetic yarn used in making carpeting. Can be used for many purposes in fly tying such as nymph bodies, spent wings, and trailing shucks.





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FUNDAMENTALS OF Fishing



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Fishing Links

[411Fishing.com](#)

Fishing directory with guides, reports and tips.

[Abc of Fishing Directory](#)

Directory containing links to information on all the most popular fishing searches.

[Active Angler](#)

Complete with fishing articles, tips, maps and recipes.

[American Fishing Guide Service](#)

Directory of state fishing guides.

[Angler Vista](#)

The fishing search engine for the coarse, game and sea angler.

[Anglers Passport](#)

Fresh and salt water trophy adventures coordinating guides, lodging and resorts around the world.

[Anglinglinks.net](#)

Directory of angling sites, both fresh and salt water.

[Atlantic Panic](#)

East coast US fishing directory.

[BassBoat Central](#)

Bass boat directory with manufactures, owners and reports.

[BigFishTackle.Com](#)

Fishing Resource center and on-line anglers community.

[Bootin Rayz Fishing and Outdoor Directory](#)

Fishing and outdoor links that help the avid angler tackle the big fish with classifieds, message board, e-mail, graphics, animations and a directory.

[Cal/North Marine Publishing](#)

[Safety and Fishin'](#)

[How To Cut and Clean
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[Baseball](#)

(learn how to hit, pitch, field, etc. How to Coach,
Parent info, Official Rules)

Boating, fishing and diving directory for Northern California.

[Canadagoes.com](#)

Canadian fishing.

[Charter Captains and Guides of the Great Lakes](#)

Fishing Wisconsin, Canada, Michigan, Illinois, New York, and Indiana.

[Charternet.com](#)

Directory of flyfishing, sportfishing, charters, powerboating, and sailing, along with listings for marinas and travel accommodations.

[Charters4Reel](#)

Directory of saltwater and freshwater charters.

[Combat Fishing](#)

Providing fun and information for the recreational angler.

[CyberAngler](#)

Articles, fishing reports, guide listings and tournament information for Florida.

[Discover The Outdoors.com](#)

Listings of all 50 states' regulations, featured lakes, tips from the pros, detailed species profiles and quality illustrations, numerous methods and techniques to improve your catch.

[European Online Fishing Network](#)

Fishing resource for techniques, freshwater fish species and all level of fishers.

[Find the Fish](#)

Includes charters and guide listings for all states, resources, forum, fishing web site design services, reports and resources for charter businesses.

[Fish Across Florida](#)

Features fishing guides, charters, and reports from across the state.

[Fish the Web](#)

Directory of angling related websites throughout the world.

[Fish the World](#)

Provides fishing reports and weather information worldwide.

[Fish-camp.com](#)

Directory of fishing guides.

[FishEyeSoup](#)

Fishing reports, articles, photos and trip destination information.

[FishHoo](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[Fishin' Report](#)

Covering the west coast and Mexico. Reports, weather conditions, fishing news and photos.

[Fishing - The Colorado Directory](#)

Listing of professional Colorado outfitters, guides & fishing areas.

[Fishing Destinations.ca](#)

A site designed for those planning a fishing trip.

[Fishing East Texas :: Guide to Fishing East Texas Lakes](#)

A Business Directory, Calendar of Events, Fishing Forums, News to keep you informed, Reviews, Personalized Weather for your area.

[Fishing for Charters](#)

Fishing charters guides for parts of North America and the Caribbean Islands.

[Fishing Guides Home Page](#)

Directory of fishing guides and charters for the United States, Canada and other countries. Links to State and Province regulations, licensing, weather, USGS Streamflow, and NOAA Tides.

[Fishing in the Northwest](#)

Covering all types of fishing in the Northwest, with information, links, message forum and fishing reports.

[Fishing Lodges Network](#)

Searchable database for lodges in the United States and Canada.

[Fishing Reports](#)

Search for and add salt or freshwater reports by area; also includes a directory of guides and news.

[Fishing Trip Planner for British Columbia](#)

Here you can find details of 300+ fishing spots, including depth charts, driving directions, fishing reports and even nearby accommodations.

[Fishing Works](#)

Fishing information resource with tackle, boats, tides, marine weather, search

engine, message boards and classifieds.

[Fishing World Network](#)

Information on the sport of fishing.

[Fishing.us](#)

Fishing portal for recreational and professional anglers, with articles, product reviews, fish facts, news, and directory.

[Fishing-Boating Online](#)

Directory of charter captains, tackle shops, manufacturers, and related information.

[FishingChartersUnlimited.com](#)

Your one stop shop for all your fishing.

[Fishingspots.net](#)

Resource for fishing and camping across the USA.

[FishingtheUSA.com](#)

Guide to the fishing Canada and United States, organized by region, with fishing reports and message boards.

[Fishing-The-USA.Com](#)

Directory of fishing guides, charter boats, bait and tackle shops, marinas, lodging and boat storage.

[Fishingtravel.info](#)

Features a search engine with links and articles about fishing in several countries.

[Fishresource.com - North America's Premier Online Angling Resource](#)

A complete and comprehensive online resource for freshwater fishing in North America

[Fishseekers.com](#)

Database of links for fishing, boating, diving, aquariums, and marine biology.

[Fishy Fishing](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[Fishy Links](#)

Listings for charters, guides, tackle, manufacturers, and just about anything else related to fishing.

[Fly Fishing Club Directory](#)

A simple fly fishing club finder for fly fishing enthusiasts.

[Free Fishing UK](#)

Directory of Free Fishing sites within the UK for coarse and game fishing. Fishing without paying for a day ticket.

[FUNdamentals of Fishing](#)

Features basics of learning how to bait, cast, and fish. Includes terminology.

[GiantFish](#)

Information and links on pike, bass, muskie, trout, walleye and catfish.

[Gorp Fishing Directory](#)

Resource for freshwater and saltwater fishing.

[Greatlakesfishing.com](#)

Information source for charter boat fishing on the Great Lakes.

[Guidefinder.com](#)

A database of hunting and fishing guides for trips all over the world.

[Hooklinks](#)

Angling Links, articles and photo gallery.

[Hot Spot Fishing](#)

Find good fishing spots in this fishing community with reports, forums, tips, contests and trip information.

[How To Fish](#)

How to fish, fishing tips and tricks and "how-to" articles.

[HuntFish.net](#)

Directory of guides, outfitters and related links.

[Internet Sportshow](#)

Search engine styled directory exclusive to hunting, fishing and outdoor adventure travel.

[IWantToGoFishing](#)

Directory of fishing resorts and lodges.

[Kayak Fishing](#)

Kayak fishing directory, classifieds and information resource for freshwater and saltwater fishing.

[Key West Outdoors](#)

Your Key West information guide for Key West fishing reports, flats fishing, offshore or deep sea fishing, diving, snorkeling, sailing, fly fishing, dolphin watch, kayaking and more.

[Lake Erie Sport Fishing.com](#)

Fishing reports, bait shops, boating needs, charter service, entertainment, food and lodging information.

[Land Big Fish](#)

Resource center for anglers in North America.

[MrRiver.com U.S. Fishing Information](#)

Current Fishing Reports and Information for rivers & lakes in the U.S. Find lakes & rivers, boat launches, marinas, tackle shops and more in your state. Fishing Equipment & Unique Quality Fishing Gifts also. Check us out!

[NETFISH.NO - Guide to sports fishing](#)

Internet portal for fishing. Features an eMagazine.

[North American Fishing Guides](#)

Categorized listings for guides and charters in North America.

[Northern Ontario's Outdoor Network](#)

A comprehensive listing of lodges, resorts, camps, and campgrounds in Northern Ontario. From Kenora to Red Lake down to Rainy River. Fishing reports by various lodges are also included.

[Online Fishing Licenses](#)

A sportman's portal for online fishing licenses and links to each state's Department of Conservation web site.

[Online Fishing Links](#)

Fishing links and websites.

[Online Lake Fishing Guide](#)

The Midwest fishing and lake informational site offering a lake database, fishing reports, articles, tips, and tactics. Now covering Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan and Ohio.

[OntheWaterFishing.com](#)

Fishing articles, forums, pics, tips and techniques, reseller, e-shop, movies, eGallery, and much more.

[Outdoor Resources Online](#)

A directory index of fishing related web sites.

[OutFishing.com](#)

Fishing directory featuring travel, guides, lodges, shopping and an extensive photo gallery.

[Pack Lite Pro](#)

Planning software and recipes for outdoors trips.
Offers a software program to help outdoors people plan their trips successfully and also has a collection of delicious recipes.

[ProudAngler.com](#)

Fishing resource for freshwater, saltwater and flyfishing.

[QuickBrochures Fishing Resort Directory](#)

Download brochures, maps, and rate information from fishing resorts and lodges in Alaska, Lower-48, Canada, and Belize.

[RBF Education Web Directory](#)

Directory of aquatic science, boating and fishing education resources for educators, natural resources professionals, and the general public.

[ReelCharters.com](#)

Search for fishing charters and guides.

[Resources for Anglers](#)

Fishing information and resources.

[Sporting Adventures](#)

Information source for hunting, fishing and outdoors tips and tricks.

[Sportsman's Resource](#)

A directory of fishing web sites for lodges, guides, outfitters, associations and charters.

[Take Me Fishing](#)

Guide for charter fishing.

[The Avid Angler.com](#)

Online resource for multispecies anglers in the Great Lakes region.

[The Fisherman's Guide to the Guides](#)

Provides a reference for saltwater and freshwater fishing guides and party boats available on the internet.

[The Fishing Directory](#)

Comprehensive database directory of tackle shops, charter boats, coarse fisheries, game fisheries, specialist suppliers and UK holidays.

[The Fishing Zone.co.uk](#)

Help and get help with fishing related subjects. Site includes fishing forum

[The Game Fishing Link Page](#)

Directory of fishing sites from the UK and around the world.

[The Guided Fishing Resource Center](#)

Directory for fishing guides, charters, lodges, reports and related topics in North America.

[The Hardcore Fisherman Fishing Directory](#)

Directory of links for fly fishing, bass fishing, deep sea fishing, etc.

[The Outdoors Page](#)

Outdoor news, fishing tips, links and bulletin boards.

[The Ultimate Fisherman Network](#)

Community for fishing enthusiasts includes fishing links and forums.

[The Weedbed](#)

Fishing search engine and directory.

[The Where to Fish Directory](#)

Fishing information service with details for the UK and abroad. Includes game, sea and coarse fishing, fishing search and classifieds section.

[TheFishFinder.com](#)

Fishing directory and search engine with recipes, pictures and articles.

[TheFishinGuide.com](#)

Directory of fishing guides, charters, lodges & marinas for the United States & Canada.

[Time4fishing.com](#)

Directory of charter boats on the Atlantic coast of the United States, classified ads, fishing services and weather.

[TrekOut's Fishing](#)

Fishing information including fishing guides, charters and lodges throughout North America.

[Ultimate Angling Ltd](#)

Ultimate Angling specialises in offering worldwide angling holidays.

[Up North Outdoors](#)

Features fishing equipment, tournaments, reports, guides, tips and techniques, chat, taxidermy, boats and electronics.

[US Charter Boats](#)

State by state listings of charter boats.

[USAngler.com](#)

Listing clubs, guides, resorts and fishing reports and reference materials.

[Waders On.com](#)

Angling and fishing guides.

[World Wide Fishing](#)

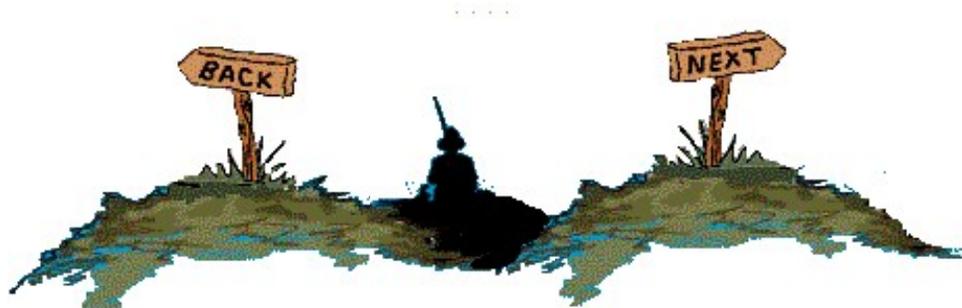
Directory of charters, guides, fly-fishing outfitters and lodges.

[Worldwide Fishing Safaris](#)

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[Wotzits](#)

UK fishing directory.





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Fishing In A Brook

Lawson Drinkard

Illustrations by Fran Lee



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Care of your spin cast fishing reel

Usually the water that sprays on your spin cast fishing reel while retrieving is not pure. Besides water residue and dust particles there are grease and oils from your hands that adhere to the reel. All these impurities should be eliminated by cleaning your spin cast reel.

To keep the outer parts of your reel clean try using a knuckle brush with clean tap water. An old tooth brush will reach the back side of the handle and knobs and a Q-Tip will clean the hard to reach places.

Before removing any of the parts of the reel select a flat working surface like the kitchen table where there is plenty of overhead light. Some people use a small tray for parts, others use an egg carton and some people use a clean white towel.

To clean a spinning reel you must remove the handle That happens when you turn the handle counter clock wise. Next take the screws from the protective plate. You can remove these screws with a small screw driver. Once you removed the plate you can inspect and clean the gears. At least once a year you should remove the old grease and oil and add new lubricants.

When adding oil and grease use a Q-Tip for grease. Make sure cover all the teeth on the gears with grease. Use a grease according to manufacturers' instructions and recommendations. Oil the outer parts of the reel like the handle, bail and anti-reverse lever.

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Learn to use your equipment properly and efficiently!

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DRAG SETTINGS:

The biggest mistake made by anglers is to have their drag set improperly. Most manufacturers recommend that your drag be set at one-third of your line's test weight. This means that a reel holding 15 pound test line should have the drag set to let out line at 5 pounds of pull.

To set your drag, run the line out through your rod's guides, tie a loop in the end, then use the hook on a fish scale (the tool, not the fish body part) to pull on the line. When the weight shown on the scale is one-third of your rated line weight, the drag should be letting out line.

If not, adjust the drag until it does.

SETTING CAST CONTROLS ON CASTING REELS:

There are 2 primary methods for adjusting the cast controls on casting reels. Try them both and stick with the method that works best for you and your reel.

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First method is to adjust the control so that it just barely stops the reel from falling when you push the casting button. To do this, loosen the cast control a little and push the button. The lure should start falling. Quickly adjust the cast control until the lure stops falling. Remember to make small adjustments.

The second method is to set the control so that there is no overrun when the lure strikes the deck. To do this, push the casting button and let the lure fall to the deck. If the spool keeps turning and lets the line overrun, adjust the cast control and try again. Make small adjustments until the spool stops the instant the lure hits the deck.

With either method, you will need to re-adjust the cast control when you change lures, especially if the lure is a different weight.

CASTING A CONVENTIONAL REEL WITH NO CAST CONTROLS:

Some people are afraid to try using a conventional casting reel with no cast controls because they fear that they will end up with bad line tangles. However, anyone can learn to cast a conventional reel with a little practice. Conventional reels are typically very rugged, simply made and have a lot of line capacity, so anglers targeting large, strong fish often use them.

To cast a conventional reel, push the casting button or lever drag, place your thumb against the line on the spool, swing the rod from behind you to about a 45-degree angle in front, let go with your thumb for a split second, immediately touch the thumb gently against the spool to keep the line from overrunning and tangling, and apply more pressure as the lure touches the water. The extensive use of the thumb has led many instructors to describe experienced conventional reel anglers as having an "educated thumb." Anglers who take the time to practice and educate their thumbs will broaden their skills and may find that they enjoy the strength, simplicity and line capacity of a conventional reel.

AVOID TANGLES ON YOUR SPINNING REEL:



Spinning reels often get bird's nests and tangles, which are usually caused by one of few mistakes.

1. The line is twisted (nothing a swivel tied to the end of your line can't fix)
2. The line is not tight against the spool
3. Putting the line on the reel improperly. The line should go onto the reel the same way it comes off the spool, taking advantage of the curve the line has memorized from being stored on the spool. Lay the spool **FLAT** on the ground (**do NOT hold it vertically**) and start winding the reel. If tangles begin, turn the spool over. The tangling should stop and your reel should be tangle free for the future, as long as you don't make the other two mistakes.
4. Mistakenly overfilling the spool. Spinning reels should never be filled past the front spool lip, or too much line will come out during casting and **-POOF!**- you'll have a big mess of tangles.
5. The most common mistake is to crank the reel while a fish is taking out line. While it's OK to crank a baitcaster while a fish makes a run, a spinning reel is not designed for such a mistake. During the fish's run, cranking a spinning reel literally twirls the line around and around, twisting it up like a rubber band and resulting in

lots of kinks and tangles.

Here are the steps to tighten the line onto the spool:

Go to a large field such as a school

Tie the end of your line to something stationary such as a light pole or small tree etc.

Open the bail and walk away. The line will come off the spool as you walk. Be sure to walk off all the line.

Once all the line is off the spool start cranking the line back on while keeping tension on the line. Make sure the rod has a small bend as you crank in the line.

FILLING CASTING AND CONVENTIONAL REELS:

Improper filling of casting and conventional reels can lead to tangles, just like on a spinning reel. Again, it is important to put the line on the reel the same way it comes off the spool. **This time, the spool of line should be vertical**, with the hole horizontal and perhaps with a pencil through it. The line should be coming off the top of the spool, **NOT the bottom**. Fill the spool to the fill line, which is a painted or etched line on the spool, and you're done.

POLARIZED SUNGLASSES:



All anglers will surpass protection to their eyes and be able to see fish underwater extremely well with good quality polarized sunglasses. Polarization cuts surface glare due to the alignment of particles in or on the lens, which can actually help an angler see underwater. Since polarization makes sunglasses special, glasses that are polarized usually bear a special label when they're on the rack. However, not all polarized sunglasses are created equal. The better polarized sunglasses have a ground-in polarization that results in a top-notch, optical quality lens with no distortions. Cheaper polarized sunglasses only have a sprayed-on polarized finish that results in lens distortions that will cause eyestrain and can even damage the eyes. Like polarization, optical quality lenses are special, so if they're optical quality there will usually be a special label or information in the accompanying tag or pamphlet that says so.





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Let's think like a fish!

Have you ever noticed that when you are on the bank, the best place to fish is out in the middle?

Then when you are in a boat the best place to fish is at the edge.

When we set out to match wits with a fish we are not starting out on a good foot.

Let's look at it from the other side for a moment as if we are being humaned for by a fish and see what would work.

You are sitting on your sofa watching TV when something the size of a hickory stump slams into the roof of your house. **SLAM!**

Now there is a big hole in the ceiling with a big rope hanging through with a big weight and hook on it. On the hook is a big ugly plastic Big Mac.

What is the first thing that you do?

It might be your living room but you are not going back for a while.

Now let's say you are walking across a parking lot and you see a twenty dollar bill.

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After you pick it up you see another and then another.
It will not be long before you are running around excited and help is
starting to come from everywhere.

Soon the National Guard is called in to control the crowd.
Then with little notice one of us is hooked and quickly pulled away.

Then another and yet another.
Soon we will catch on and run away. Now the fish has a stringer full of
humans and is ready to go home.

I hope that they don't ever get that smart and I hope we get just a little
bit smarter than we are.

The point is that if you will think like a fish then you stand a better
chance of catching one.

If you can get your bait to the fish without the fish knowing it
you will catch fish.





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Flyfishing

Equipment

It is very important that you choose equipment that is well balanced and suited to the particular fishing situation.

While a particular flyrod may be used in different fishing situations, its range of applications is far narrower than that of a spinning rod.

You can take a 6 1/2 foot medium action **spinning rod** spooled with 8 lb. test and catch just about anything. You could throw a small trout spinner or a large bass plug. It may not be perfect, but it will work just fine.

With **flyfishing** equipment, you have to choose the gear with a certain type of fishing in mind. Again, there is some freedom in the equipment's range of applications, but it is not as flexible.

For instance a flyrod used for trout couldn't throw one of the

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large bass bugs more than a few feet, and that's if it didn't snap in half first. Likewise, a flyrod used for bass could throw any trout fly, but the presentation would be very far from delicate.

When referring to equipment as being well balanced, we am not referring to the center of gravity, but the ability for all of the components to compliment each other and work as one.

There are six main components that compose a flyfishing outfit:

[fly](#)

[flyline](#)

[leader](#)

rod

[backing](#)

reel

Listed are the components in the order in which you should choose them. Your fly determines the flyline; the flyline determines the leader, and so forth. This does not mean that there is only one particular match for a certain fly size and type. You must also consider the species of fish, type of

water, will you be wading or fishing from shore, etc.

Flies

Now it's time to choose what sizes and types of flies you will be using.

There are two main categories of flies:

- flies that rest on the water (surface),
- flies that go below the surface (sub-surface)

The most common types of above surface flies are dry flies and poppers.

Dry flies are imitations of the adult stage of small insects, and usually suspend themselves in the surface film with the use of a feather collar or hackle. These flies are practically weightless, and are not too wind resistant.



Poppers can imitate anything from a frog to an injured baitfish, and are usually made of balsa, cork, foam, or spun deer hair.



These flies have much more weight and wind resistance to them; therefore they require much stronger tackle to cast them efficiently.

There are three main types of sub-surface flies: nymphs, wet flies, and streamers.

Nymphs and wet flies are very similar; they both represent insects in their aquatic life stage.



This stage comes before the adult stage (dry fly). While nymphs and wet flies may imitate slightly different things, the main difference is wet flies have wings and nymphs do not. These flies weigh a little more than a dry fly, and weight is often added to them in order for them to achieve the proper depth. This additional weight makes them a little harder to cast, but the good news is that there is almost no wind

resistance.

The final group is the streamer.



A streamer is usually tied to imitate a baitfish. They are tied on longer hooks and have long sloping wings to form the body of the fish. They are usually a little heavier than the nymphs, and the wind resistance can vary depending on the particular fly.

Flyline

Flylines are classified by weight, taper, and density (if they float or sink).

Flylines are categorized by weight into a number system, which runs from number 1, which is the lightest, to number 15, which is the heaviest. The lighter lines are more delicate in their presentation and they cast small flies well. The heavier lines are less delicate in presentation, but provide the power to cast large, wind-resistant, and heavy flies. Flylines in the 4 to 10 range are the most common.

Most trout fishing situations call for a line between 4 and 6. For bass, line weights between 7 and 9 should be ideal. Panfish rods fall between the trout and bass rod. For saltwater anglers, you will probably want to be in the 8 to 10 range.

This chart may clarify things a little bit for you, but please keep in mind this chart is just a generalization. It is to be used only as a rough guide.

Line Weight Summary				
	Trout	Panfish	Bass	Saltwater
Line Weight	Hook Sizes			
1-4	14-28			
5	12-24	12-24		
6	8-22	8-22		
7	6-18	4-14	4-14	
8			1/0-10	1/0-10

9	3/0-6	3/0-6
10-15		5/0-2

The density of flylines also differs. There are floating lines which are meant to always stay on top of the water's surface.

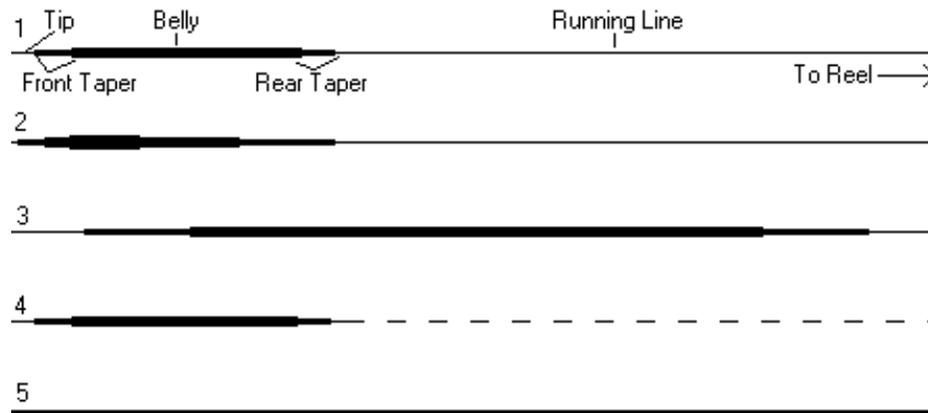
There are sinking lines which are meant to stay below the surface.

And there are lines that fall in between the two different categories.

Let's make this real easy for you right now; your first one should be a floating line. They are the most common, the most versatile, and the easiest to learn with.

The tapers also differ to suit different conditions. There are five main types of flyline tapers which are illustrated below in the following order:

- 1-weight forward,
- 2-bass bug/saltwater taper
- 3-double taper
- 4-shooting taper
- 5-level.



A flyline is usually around 90 feet in length. On a weight forward line; there is 60 feet of thin diameter running line, and a thirty foot section known as the head. The head consists of the front taper, belly, and rear taper. The combination of different tapers and different diameters of belly can greatly affect the line's casting characteristics. A weight forward line has a moderate front and rear taper, whereas a bass bug/saltwater line have a much more severe taper. The more severe taper transfers more energy into the tip of the line, which enables it to turn over the heavier and more wind resistant flies associated with this type of fishing. The double taper line has a more subtle taper to allow for a very delicate

presentation. This line does not have the weight concentrated in the head like the previous two types. Instead, the weight is spread along the whole length of line. Consequently, it does not cast as far as a weight forward line. There are some advantages though, the biggest being that the line is identical on both ends. This allows you to simply flip the line around when you wear out one end. In essence, this doubles the line's useful life. A shooting taper is simply the front 30 feet of a weight forward line. This allows the angler to add their own running line, which is usually monofilament. The extremely thin running line allows for extremely long distance casting. These lines are difficult to use, and should not be considered until you are a very proficient caster. The final type is a level line. This line is the same diameter from beginning to end. The only reason this line still exists is because of its low cost. It is very inexpensive to manufacture, and therefore to purchase. It casts poorly, and should not be considered at all. Many beginner combos come with this type of line, and I feel this is the worst thing a manufacturer can do. Do yourself a favor and stay away. If you buy a combo that has this line, then plan on purchasing an additional line. You will learn much faster if you use a weight forward line. When purchasing a flyline, you will need to know how to read the flyline abbreviations printed on the box. There is an abbreviation that lists the taper, the weight, and the density. The tapers are abbreviated as

follows: weight forward-WF, bass bug/saltwater-BBT or SWT, double taper-DT, shooting taper-ST, and level-L. The weight is simply the line weight 1-15, and the density is abbreviated as: floating-f, sinking-s, sink tip-st or f/s. Therefore, a weight forward line that is a 5 weight and floats would be WF5F. Manufacturer's abbreviations may vary a little, but generally they are easy to figure out.

Leaders

Now let's discuss leaders.

A leader is attached between the fly and the flyline. It is made of monofilament, and is tapered from front to back. The wide end is known as the butt, and this is what gets attached to the flyline.

The middle of the leader is called the mid-section. The narrow end is known as the tippet, and this is what attaches to the fly.

The leader keeps the large flyline away from the fish, and it also softens the flies approach to the water. Leaders are classified by an X system, which designates the tippet diameter for that particular leader. Every leader's X-Rating is

the same. Brand A's 3X and Brand B's 3X are both .008"; however the pound test does vary among manufacturers. It must be pointed out that there are leaders larger in diameter than the 0X listed. After 0X the leaders are then classified by there pound rating.

Here is a chart of the different X-Ratings and their corresponding properties.

Rating	Diameter	Approximate pound test	Recommended fly sizes
0X	.011"	12	1/0-4
1X	.010"	10	2-8
2X	.009"	8	6-12
3X	.008"	6	8-14
4X	.007"	5	12-16
5X	.006"	4	14-20
6X	.005"	3	16-24
7X	.004"	2	18-28
8X	.003"	1	18-28

Flyrods

Now for the Rod.

Flyrods come in all lengths, weights, and materials. Older rods were made of bamboo, and these are expensive collector's items today. Some rods are made of fiberglass, and these are usually of poor quality. They may say graphite on them, but the percentage used is minimal. You can spot one of these rods right away. If you look at the diameter of the blank right above the grip, it is very large compared to the same weight rod in a more expensive true graphite model. The most common material is graphite and this is the only one you should concern yourself with for now. It is much lighter than fiberglass, and also casts much better. More or less, you get what you pay for when it comes to flyrods. If you see a flyrod for thirty dollars, and it says graphite, you can bet it's really fiberglass. You don't have to spend a fortune either. True graphite rods start around fifty dollars and this should be your minimum. The weight of a flyrod is the manufacturer's suggestion as to which weight line it will cast the best.

Therefore, a 5 weight rod should use a 5 weight line. Rods usually have a marking on the [blank](#), just above the grip. It will tell you the length, weight, and sometimes the physical weight of the rod, the number of pieces it comes in, and the material it is made out of. It should look something like this: 8'6" 5, or 865. Both of these designate an eight and a half foot rod

which should cast a five weight line. It may also look like this G906, which is a nine foot rod for six weight line, and the G stands for graphite. There are many different actions or bending properties for flyrods, but you don't have to worry yourself with that for now.

The other consideration is length. A long rod generates more line speed, and its length helps to keep your line from hitting the water or ground on your backcast. A shorter rod is better suited to tight fishing conditions. Say you are fishing a narrow stream lined with bushes and trees. The shorter rod will be much easier to handle, and in a situation like that you will not have to make too many long casts anyway.

Backing

Backing attaches between the flyline and the reel. It simply adds length to your 90 feet of line without adding bulk and excessive cost.

It is simply there to allow a fish to make a long run while playing him.

If you were to make a sixty foot cast to a northern pike, you would definitely need more than thirty feet of extra line to play the fish. It is made out of braided Dacron and is similar in diameter to regular monofilament. It usually comes in 20 or

30 pound test. Twenty pound is most common for freshwater, and thirty pound is most common for saltwater.

The amount of backing you choose depends upon the fighting characteristics of the fish. For a fish that does not make long runs, 50 yards should be fine. 100 yards is the most common amount of backing used. For fish that are known to make very long runs, you may choose to have 200 yards or more.

One other reason to use backing on your reel is to increase the diameter of the spool where the flyline is wound. This helps prevent tangles, which can be caused by the line being wound into very small circles. The increased diameter also helps you retrieve more line with every revolution of the reel.

Reels

There are only a few different types of reels.

The most common being the single action, which is pictured below.



With this type of reel, the handle is attached directly to the spool. There are no gears to change the ratio. These reels usually have a spring and pawl, or a disc drag. The spring and pawl is a simple and inexpensive drag, and is satisfactory for most smaller species such as trout and panfish. The disc drag is smoother and more precise. This is the preferred drag system for bass and saltwater anglers, where you must control a very powerful fish.

Many reels have what is called an exposed rim. This is a very important feature to have. It allows the angler to apply drag directly to the spinning spool with the palm of their hand. You should insist on this feature when purchasing a reel.

There are also reels that have gears to multiply your input, and there are reels that incorporate an anti-reverse handle. These are nice things to have in certain situations, but they are specialized in their application range.

The last type of reel is an automatic reel. This reel has a large

spring inside to allow you to retrieve all of your line with just a push of a button.

**These reels are not very common.
They are heavy and do not store enough line.**

Your first reel should be a single action.

When shopping for a reel, you will want to see what the capacity for the particular reel is. For example, reel X might hold a weight forward 5 weight line and 120 yards of backing, or a weight forward 6 weight and 80 yards of backing.

Therefore, you should choose a reel that holds the line and amount of backing you chose earlier.

Conclusion

Remember that flyrods are specialized, and one outfit can not do it all. Therefore, you should choose an outfit that lies on the middle ground for the species you plan to pursue.

You can purchase the specialized outfits later.

A good choice rod for trout and maybe some panfish, would be an 8'6" five weight, with a WF5F line, 9 foot leaders between 4X and 6X, and between 50 and 100 yards of backing.

For bass, a 9'0" 8 weight rod with a WF8F bass bug taper line,

0X or 1X leaders of 7.5 feet, and between 50 and 100 yards of backing.

Saltwater rods can vary greatly, but it should be at least 9 feet and at least 8 weight for general applications.

Don't be intimidated by all of these variables.

Your local fly shop will be glad to help you set up a well balanced outfit. You should know what the basic variables are so you can convey what you want the outfit to do, and you can understand what the salesperson is telling you.

A decent outfit should cost you between \$100 and \$150.

If you can afford to spend more than this, by all means do so. Remember, you get what you pay for and a quality outfit is something you will get years of use and enjoyment out of.





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Flyfishing

Assembly

Proper assembly of your equipment is vital to its performance.

In this section, you will be walked through the proper steps to assemble and disassemble your tackle.

There are many knots used in flyfishing, and there can be many different knots that will work for one particular connection point in your tackle.

At each connection point, we'll mention the most common knots used for that particular connection. One knot recommend will be the hyperlink with tying instructions and illustrations. You can jump back and forth if you are assembling yor rod as you read this, or you may wait and learn all of the knots at once in the [Knots section](#) of this site.

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The first step is to decide which hand you would like to use for reeling. Most reels are capable of both a right-hand or left-hand retrieve. The 'Classic' method seems to lean towards reeling with your right hand; however there are many people who prefer reeling with their left hand. This is really just personal preference, and either method is acceptable. You may find it more comfortable to reel with your left hand if you are right-handed and have been fishing with a spinning reel for many years.

Some reels have the same amount of drag in both directions, but most have more drag in one direction than the other. If your reel has more drag in one direction, you will have to make sure it is set up properly for your chosen right-hand or left-hand retrieve. Take the reel in your hand and look straight at the side with the reel handle. For a right-hand retrieve, it should be easier to turn it clockwise and harder to turn it counter-clockwise. For a left-hand retrieve, it should be harder to turn it clockwise, and easier to turn it counter-clockwise. If your reel is set up for the other hand, you will have to reverse your drag setting. You should refer to your owner's manual for the proper procedure.

Most of the time, you just have to remove the spool and reverse the position of the two pieces that apply pressure to

the drag spring.

Now we can attach the reel to the rod. Since we are going to be loading line on the reel, it is best to just use the lower section of the rod so it is short enough to handle easily.

Simply insert the foot of the reel into the reel seat, and tighten the reel seat until it is snug. When you hold the rod in your casting hand with the reel hanging below the rod, the reel handle should be on the same side of the rod as the hand you intend to reel with.

The next step is to determine the proper amount of backing to use. Your owner's manual for your reel should tell you the amount of backing to use, with a certain weight line, to fill it to the proper level. It may state the capacity is 100 yards of 20 pound backing with a weight forward 5 line, or 75 yards of 20 pound backing with a weight forward 6 line. What you are trying to do is put enough backing on the reel so the line, which is a fixed length, properly fills the rest of the space. You want the line to be about 1/8" short of the spool's edge. This leaves enough room so you don't pinch the line between the spool and the body of the reel.

There is an alternative method if your reel did not come with

a capacity chart.

You can wind your flyline onto the spool first, and then wind on enough backing to fill to the proper capacity. Then cut the backing at this point, and remove the backing and flyline. You have now predetermined the proper amount of backing. If you use this method, be sure not to mix up the ends of the flyline. One end gets attached to the backing and one end gets attached to the leader. Unless your line is level or a double taper, the two ends are very different.

Take the backing and insert it through the guides on the lower section of the rod. Bring the backing down to the reel and tie an [Arbor Knot](#) to properly secure it. Now wind the backing onto the reel, and make sure that the line is coming out of the guide and onto the side of the reel that is away from the rod. Wind the backing as smooth and even as possible, by guiding it with your other hand. Leave a few feet of backing hanging out of the guides, so you have enough room to tie your next knot.

The next connection is from your backing to the 'reel' side of the flyline.

You can either use a [Nail Knot](#) or an [Albright Knot](#).

Take your time with this one and try to make the connection as smooth as possible.

A fish may take enough line out that takes you into your backing. If this knot is bulky and/or sloppy, it may get stuck in the guides and could cause the leader to break when the fish surges.

Now wind your flyline onto the reel, and try to keep the line fairly smooth by guiding it with your other hand.

It doesn't have to be perfect.

You just want to make sure that you have properly calculated the amount of backing.

If you did....great!

If you didn't,
you will need to remove the flyline from the reel, adjust the backing accordingly, and re-tie your connection.

Now it's time to attach the [leader](#) to the flyline. You have quite a few choices here, and all are acceptable.

The first choice is to attach the leader to the flyline using a [Nail Knot](#) or a [Needle Knot](#).

These produce solid connections; however you will not be able to replace your leader without having to tie a new knot. This

doesn't pose a problem if you are able to tie these knots without too much fuss.

If you would like an easier method, you can utilize a loop to loop connection. You will need to have a loop at the end of the flyline and the butt section of the leader. You can use a braided loop connector to create a loop at the end of the flyline. It is simply a hollow braided tube with a loop at the end. You slide the tip of your flyline into the connector, and then affix a small section of heat shrink tubing over the connector to keep the line from sliding out. These are very handy and work well. You can find them at most fly shops. If you use the braided loop connector, be sure to periodically check the connector for signs of wear.

They are somewhat fragile and can break at the most inopportune time.

Another way to add a loop to the end of your line is to make your own loop out of heavy monofilament line.

You can use a piece of heavy tippet material or standard monofilament fishing line. Just make sure the material you use is approximately the same diameter and stiffness as the butt section of the leaders you plan to use. This is usually around twenty to thirty pound test for most applications. Just don't go too light or you will create a hinge at the connection, and your leader will not turn over properly.

Tie one end to your line with either the

[Nail Knot](#) or [Needle Knot](#).

Now you have to create a loop with the monofilament, and this is best accomplished using the [Perfection Knot](#). You will also use the Perfection Knot to create a loop in the butt, or heavy, end of your leader. You can now utilize the loop to loop connection to quickly and easily change your leaders if necessary.

If you like, you may now add additional tippet material to the end of your leader. This is not really necessary on a brand new leader, but it does provide you with a few advantages. There are many different approaches to this, and it is really an ongoing debate among anglers.

Here is a common method among anglers.

If you decide that a 5X leader is appropriate for your particular fishing situation, you can purchase a 4X leader and simply add about twelve to eighteen inches of 5X tippet to the end of it.

In other words, buy a leader one X-rating stiffer than you plan to use. You could even add 6X tippet to make the leader even more delicate. With this configuration you will prolong the life of the original leader, and will be able to change between two or three different X-ratings quickly and easily.

Another advantage of this system is that the knot used to attach the extra tippet material also serves the purpose of holding your split shot at the proper distance from the fly when you are fishing nymphs. If you crimp split-shot onto a leader without such a knot, your split-shot will eventually move closer and closer to the fly. Since most nymphing is done with the use of split-shot, this can be very helpful. If you decide not to use this method, you will need to add tippet material after tying on a few flies. The rule of thumb is to add tippet material when the leader is 80% of its original length. A 7.5 foot leader has about 1.5 feet of tippet when it's new, and a 9 foot leader has about 2 feet of tippet when it's new. If you choose this route, I'd suggest you add tippet before your leader gets this short. By doing so, you will be able to replace the tippet section many times without losing the tapered section of the leader.

In either case, you can use either a

[Triple Surgeons Knot](#)

or a

[Blood Knot](#)

to make this connection.

Finally, assemble your rod's sections, and thread the leader up through the guides.

You can attach your fly using an [Improved Clinch Knot](#), [Palomar Knot](#), or [Turtle Knot](#).

That's it!
You're ready to go fishing.

One last note is to use caution when disassembling your rod's sections.

You should try to pull them apart in a straight line, and not apply excessive pressure to the ferrule area.
A rod can be easily damaged if you are not careful.



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Casting

Here is the basic outline of the cast and also helpful tips to keep in mind.

To completely learn how to cast, you are much better off learning from an instructor or from a good book.

Illustrations of both the forward and back cast are provided. These illustrations have large numbers around their edges that represent the numbers on the face of a clock. When you are practicing, you can think of the clock positions to help determine the proper rod positions.

There are two main parts to a cast,
the **back cast**
and the
forward cast.

The Backcast

The backcast can be broken down into three sections.

The first step is to begin moving the rod slowly upward in order to apply tension to the line.

The second step is to accelerate the line and then abruptly stop.

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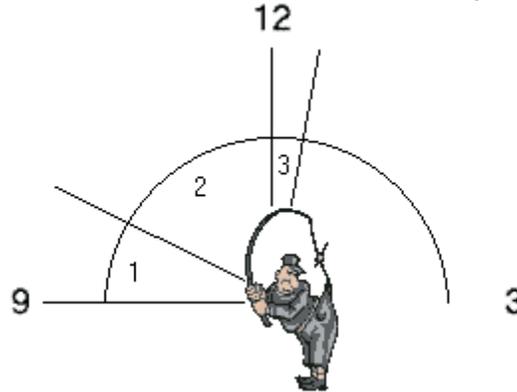
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The third step is to allow the rod to drift back slowly a little bit to prepare for the forward cast.

It is very important that you abruptly stop the rod at the 12 o'clock position. When you watch an experienced caster, you may not actually see the stop, but it's definitely there.



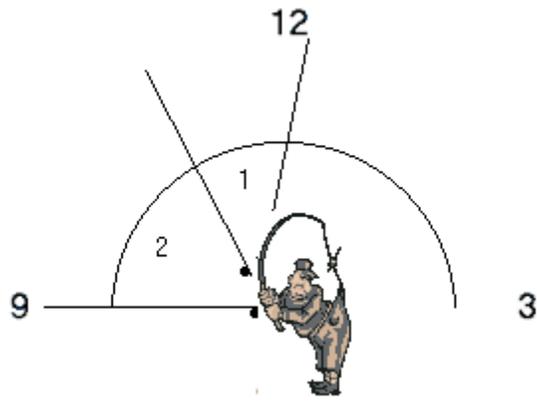
The Forward Cast

The forward cast can be broken down into two sections.

The first step is to accelerate the rod to an abrupt stop.

The second step is to follow through to a finish.

Again, the abrupt stop at around 11 o'clock is very important. The forward cast power stroke is very similar to a 'karate chop' or the cracking of a whip. The follow through just helps absorb some of the power to allow the line to land quietly.



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What Are Panfish

Panfish is a general term that includes a number of fish species that normally don't grow larger than a frying pan.

Panfish run in large schools in shallow water near the shore in spring and fall.

Technically, it includes fish like crappies, but black and white crappies attract such a following year-round that they command their own category of discussion among fishing circles. Instead, panfishing is usually understood to include small fish in the sunfish family—bluegills, redears, green sunfish, pumpkinseeds and related species. These are aggressive feeders, common in most waters, and easy to catch during April and May.

They can be found near lily pads, bull rushes, cattails, grass flats and debris man made structures such as boat docks and lifts. During the summer panfish will be found in water 10' to 20' feet deep. Even at these depths, they will be found around structure and drop offs. Bluegills, Pumpkinseeds and Longears prefer lakes and ponds but may occur in streams. Rock Bass are found in cool lakes and rocky streams. Warmouths like sluggish creeks while Spotted Sunfish and Redears like warm cypress lakes. Redbreasts prefer clear streams. Crappies prefer clear water although White Crappies will tolerate some silt with spring and fall being best.

In keeping with the name of this group of fish, many anglers stock their freezers with tasty panfish taken during the spring spawning season.

Fortunately, sunfish can thrive in almost any kind of water except for cold lakes and streams. They are abundant in farm ponds, natural lakes, slow-flowing creeks, large reservoirs and even drainage ditches having permanent water. Due to their popularity, sunfish are often stocked in urban fisheries. Because of this, they are readily accessible throughout most of the United States. Nearly anyone can experience the spring panfish bonanza close to home.

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Bluegills are the best known and probably the most sought-after panfish species, given their relatively large size and nationwide abundance. Their life history is typical for sunfish species, so knowing how to catch them is useful when fishing for any of the sunfish group.

Fortunately, panfish spawn in shallow water that's easily accessed from the shoreline. Boats or float tubes can sometimes be helpful but usually are not essential. Small sunfish may nest in water only a foot deep, but the trophy fish tend to nest 4 to 6 feet deep on sandy or rocky bottoms. Since it takes longer for deep water to warm to preferred spawning temperature, big fish tend to spawn later than their smaller relatives.

Water clarity and depth also affect timing of the spawn. Murky water absorbs heat and warms faster than clear water. Shallow impoundments warm faster than deep, bowl-like fisheries. Knowing these things helps panfish anglers extend their success by moving to different locations at appropriate times.

Generally, daily panfish limits are either absent or very liberal, due to prolific reproduction. In certain fisheries with heavy angling pressure, though, size limits may be imposed to help fish reach trophy proportions. This is especially true in stocked, urban fishing areas. Be sure to check regulations before fishing.

Whether you're a novice or a veteran,
a day of panfishing gets the angling year off
to a great start!

Baits & Presentation

A wide variety of natural baits are effective with panfish such as insects, worms, grubs, maggots, leeches and small minnows. Usually presented with a small, short shanked hook on a monofilament line with a split shot and float of some sort (bobber, bubble, slip floats). Suspend the bait at half the depth of the water and adjust up or down as feeding activity indicates. No more than one minute of inactivity in one spot. If they are there, they will bite.

Move it around until you get some action.

SPECIAL NOTE: panfish run in schools by size. I have seen one spot produce 4" fish repeatedly and as little as 2 feet to one side or the other, you will pull out one 7 incher after another. Fly fishing with wet flies, dry flies & small popping bugs are very effective. Crappies are best on small live minnows while still fishing or slow trolling. Fly-fishing and spin casting with streamers, spoons, spinners or jigs are also good methods.

Equipment

The most exciting ways of taking Panfish are ultra light action spinning and fly rods with 10-15' cane poles being most popular in some parts of the country. 2# to 4# test monofilament line is more than adequate for these relatively small fish. Throw in some bobbers, small, short shanked hooks and some split shot and you are ready to go. Common fish sizes are ¼-1 pound with some reaching as large as 3 pounds.

Here is a list of those that are considered to be panfish:

Click on one below and learn all about them including the best ways to catch them!



[WARMOUTH](#)

[BLUEGIL](#)

[REDEAR SUNFISH](#)

[REDBREAST SUNFISH](#)

[SPOTTED SUNFISH](#)

[BLACK CRAPPIE](#)

[FLIER](#)

[PUMPKINSEED](#)

[Click here for a list of other fish to catch!](#)



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Warmouth

(Chaenobryttus gulosus)



Common Names - warmouth bass, warmouth perch, goggle-eye, redeye and goggle-eyed perch.

Description - The warmouth closely resembles a bass or a bream. It has a stout, deep body similar to that of a bluegill or redear sunfish, yet has a large bass-like mouth. The red eye and large mouth are the first conspicuous field marks of mature warmouth. They vary from brassy to dark-olive green and often have a purple tint overall. Broad, irregular dark bars give it a mottled appearance. The soft-rayed portions of the dorsal and anal fins are marked with rows of dark

spots. Three or four conspicuous dark stripes radiate back from the eye across to the cheek and gill cover.

Habitat - Warmouths inhabit swamps, marshes, shallow lakes, slow-moving streams and canals with soft, muddy bottoms. They prefer to stay around aquatic vegetation, stumps, and snags and under the banks of streams and ponds. They have more tolerance for muddy water than most species.

Spawning Habits - Warmouths are solitary nesters that prefer to build their nest adjacent to some submerged object. Nests are found over a wide range of water depths. They often spawn more than once a year usually between April and August. Females may produce 3,000 to 23,000 eggs.

Feeding Habits - Warmouths are carnivorous. Crayfish, shrimp, insects and small fishes make up the bulk of its diet. Most of its feeding is done in the morning, as it seems to sleep at night.

Sporting Qualities - The warmouth is one of the more easily caught sunfish by anglers using cane poles and natural baits, spinning tackle with small topwater lures and shallow-running spinners. They strike hard, frequently breaking the surface of the water. The best place to catch warmouths is shallow water around trees, stumps, or vegetation.

Eating Quality - The warmouth are good to eat when caught from clean water. Like other panfish they are relatively small and bony. The flesh is usually prepared by deep-frying after rolling it in seasoned cornmeal.



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Bluegill

(Lepomis macrochirus)



- [\[Common Names\]](#)
- [\[Description\]](#)
- [\[Habitat\]](#)
- [\[Spawning Habits\]](#)
- [\[Feeding Habits\]](#)
- [\[Sporting Qualities\]](#)
- [\[Eating Quality\]](#)
- [\[Fishing for Bluegill\]](#)

Common Names

bream, blue bream, sun perch, blue sunfish, copperhead, copperbelly, roach.

Description

Bluegills have small mouths and oval-shaped, almost rounded, bodies. Body coloration is highly variable with size, sex, spawning, water color, bottom type, and amount of cover. In general, they are somewhat lavender and bronze with about six dark bars on their sides. Males tend to have a copper-colored bar over the top of the head behind the eyes. The breast is silver to slightly blue most of the year, with some yellow or orange during spawning season. Females are generally lighter colored than males. Two distinctive

characteristics are the prominent black spot on the rear edge of the gill-cover and a black spot at the base of the posterior portion of the dorsal fin.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

Habitat

Bluegills prefer the quiet, weedy waters where they can hide and feed. They inhabit lakes and ponds, slow-flowing rivers and streams with sand, mud, or gravel bottoms, near aquatic vegetation.

Spawning Habits

Bluegills are well known for "bedding" in large groups, with their circular beds touching one another. Bedding occurs in water two to six feet deep over sand, shell or gravel, and often among plant roots when the bottom is soft. Spawning occurs from April through October with the peak in May and June, when water temperature rises to about 78-80 degrees. A female may lay 2,000 to 63,000 eggs, which hatch 30 to 35 hours after fertilization.

Feeding Habits

Being the smallest fish around, they have to be willing to eat pretty much anything they can get!

worms
crickets/grasshoppers
hot dog
cheese
dough balls
corn
marshmallows
popping bugs
small spinners
artificial flies

Sporting Qualities

Because of its willingness to take a variety of natural baits (e.g., crickets, grass shrimp, worms) and artificial lures (e.g., small spinners or popping bugs) during the entire year, its gameness when hooked, and its excellent food qualities, the bluegill is one of the easiest fish to catch during the warm part of the year.

Fish have to eat in cold weather, but they don't eat as much and they tend to go into deeper water where they are harder to find.

During warm weather you'll find them in fresh water between six inches and six feet. Often they form large groups when they "bed".

If you see round sandy spots of something that looks like moon craters then you might have found bluegill on the bed. Bedding is referring to the time when the fish raise their eggs in the sand. The bigger fish will be in the center of the patches.

You can't lose when you find that.

Eating Quality

Excellent; the flesh is white, flaky, firm and sweet. They are generally rolled in cornmeal or dipped in pancake batter before frying. Many rank the bluegill as the most delicious of all freshwater fish.

Fishing for Bluegill

Bluegills congregate in schools and tend to live close to structure such as submerged trees, rocks or weedbeds, docks and even the shoreline.

Trophy fish are more solitary and usually stay deeper than their smaller kin. Though bluegills may sometimes be caught through the ice in late winter, they generally do not begin feeding actively until water temperature warms to 50 degrees F. They feed on insects, crustaceans and small fish, relying heavily on scent to help them verify prey items. Especially in cool waters of early springtime, the natural scent of live baits, or adding commercial scents to artificial lures, may increase the number of bites.

As water temperature approaches 60 degrees, bluegills begin feeding heavily in preparation for the spring spawning period. They move into shallow water where sunlight helps warm their environment and jump-starts submerged vegetation growth and invertebrate activity. At this time, bluegills can be caught with insect larvae such as wax worms, on 1/64th oz. jigs, or on wet nymph imitations using fly-fishing gear. Slow presentations are crucial, since the fish are not yet active enough to chase fast-moving lures.

Spawning occurs when water temperature reaches 69 degrees in water 2 to 3 feet deep. It is during spawn that all panfish are easiest to catch. Fish return to the same spawning beds year after year, so discovering a hotspot ensures fishing success every spring. Male fish sweep out circular depressions in sandy bottoms, and then fertilize the eggs when females visit the nests. Males guard the hatching fry for several days, and then leave the young to fend for themselves.

During the spawning period, adult males will attack any lure that comes near the nest. Some anglers use topwater popping bugs in shallow water to enjoy the action of surfacing bluegills. Better yet is the use of small jigs or spinners that work deeper through the nest zones. One tried-and-true method uses live crickets fished under a bobber. However one goes about it, the key is using baits or lures small enough for the tiny mouths of sunfish. When seeking trophy bluegills, minnows or minnow-imitation lures may be most productive.

Equipment need not be expensive. A simple cane pole with attached line has accounted for untold numbers of panfish. Spinning gear, open- or closed-faced, is adequate. Ultralight gear brings out the best battles with sunfish, and therefore is more fun to fish with, yet fly-fishing gear is also ideal. Large bluegills tend to be line-shy, so it's best to use 4-pound-test line (or lighter) that is invisible in the water.

When bobbers are used, small pencil models will outperform the plastic ball-shaped bobbers, though both will get the job done. Generally, hooks should be in the range of size 6 to size 10 for best success. Decent panfishing gear can usually be purchased at discount stores for about \$25

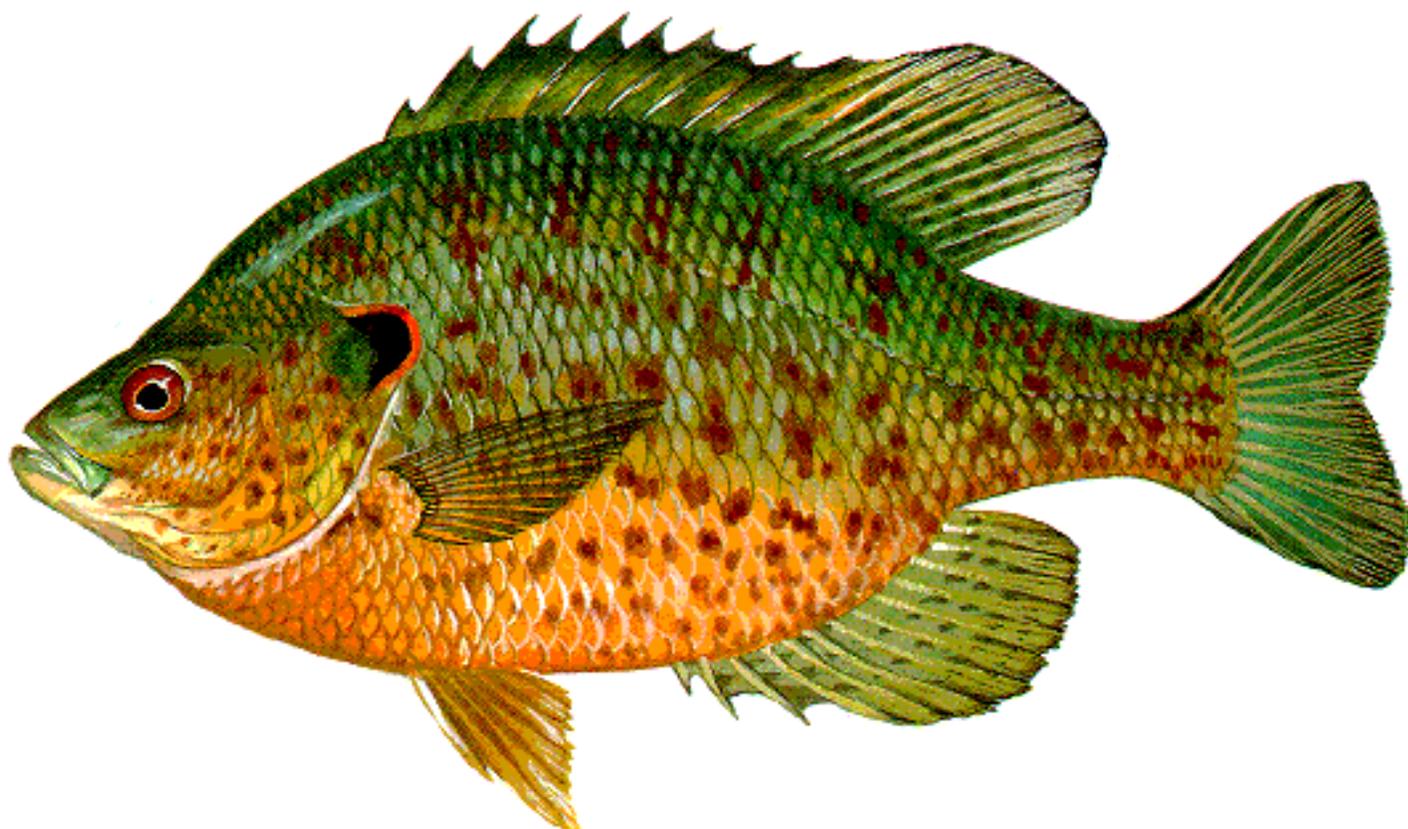


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Redear Sunfish

(*Lepomis microlophus*)



Common Names - Widely known as shellcracker because of its fondness for snails. Also called bream, yellow bream.

Description - The redear is similar in shape to the bluegill, but lacks the dark spot at the base of the posterior portion of the dorsal fin and has a red or orange border around the "ear" flap. The body coloration is light olive-green to gold, with red or orange flecks on the breast. The breast of a mature redear is typically a rather bright yellow. The body is heavily spotted and they have long, pointed pectoral fins. Five to 10 vertical bars are more or less evident on the sides, depending on the size of the fish. Males and females are similar in appearance, although the male is generally more colorful.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

Habitat - Redear are found in almost every freshwater aquatic system in Florida. They are typically found on sandy or shell-covered areas of ponds and lakes, and are often located near grasses. Redear spend a great deal of time offshore in open water, particularly in the winter. Other redear found in rivers prefer, quiet waters and have a tendency to congregate around stumps, roots and logs. They are common in lower, more slowly flowing reaches of rivers. They tolerate brackish water better than other sunfish. Like black bass and spotted sunfish, they may be abundant in tidal areas near the mouths of rivers.

Spawning Habits - Spawning occurs during May, June and July (March through August in central Florida) when water temperatures reach 70 degrees. They prefer water three to four feet deep, and a firm, shelly bottom, often near a dropoff. Nesting sites are often near aquatic vegetation such as water lilies, cattails, lizardtails, and maidencane. Breeding behavior is similar to other sunfish, with the males doing the nest building and guarding the young. A female may lay between 15,000 to 30,000 eggs during a spawn.

Feeding Habits - Redears are opportunistic bottom feeders, foraging mainly during daylight hours on a variety of invertebrates. Important food items include snails and clams which are crushed by grinding teeth in the throat; larval insects, fish eggs, small fish, and crustaceans. In some areas snails may be secondary to insects as a food preference.

Sporting Quality - Strong fighters, but more difficult to catch than most other sunfish. The redear does not readily take artificial lures but is easily taken on natural baits. Most fish are taken on cane poles with small hooks, corks, and split shot for weight. Favorite baits are worms, crickets, grubs, and shrimp fished in the spring and summer during the bedding season. Later in the season they move to much deeper water or into heavy cover, where they are difficult to locate.

Techniques - First of all you don't want to spook the fish with heavy line, don't use line over four pound test. Look at your summer fishing tackle and make everything smaller. Use smaller hooks with wax worms. You may want to use a small ice fly tipped with a wax worm. Experiment with colors of the ice fly until you find one that triggers a bite. Another way to trigger bites from inactive sunfish, jig your lure slowly and then allow it to sit still because the sunfish won't hit it when it is moving. And finally an important part beginners often overlook is bobbers. Don't use that clumsy red and white bobber. If you must use a bobber make it as thin and small as possible. Some people prefer sponge bobbers or slip bobbers but I like to use spring bobbers.

Eating Quality - Similar to that of bluegill, with white, flaky, sweet-tasting meat. Prepared the same as bluegill.

World Record - 5 pounds, 3 ounces.

Fishing for Sunfish

use ultralite tackle and light line (2-6lb test)

Most of the year sunfish stay in shallow water. Sunfish stay in shallow water throughout the spring and summer usually going no deeper than 20 feet deep.

In the late fall, winter and/or ice fishing season look for them in deeper water (9-30 feet deep).

In a lake that has a variety of other sunfish it is almost impossible to try to single out and catch one of the species. Sunfish will stick in the same areas and eat mostly the same food.

Often the most effective bait and rig for sunnies is a bobber or slip bobber rig with a #6 or #8 hook with corn, worms or a small leech. Make sure the bobber is small and sensitive, using stick like bobbers rather than round bobbers will improve your results.

Sunfish will also feed off the bottom, espically the larger ones. Use a small 1/8-1/4 oz. sliding sinker and a 12 inch leader of the same or lighter line, or use a few small splitshot and no bobber. This method is often more effective when the water is choppy and/or the fish are sluggish. Corn or worms are the best choices for this type of rig.

When aggressive enough, the leech is a better option, it will stay on the hook better and often discourages the smaller ones and entices the larger sunfish to bite it. Make sure it is small (about an inch in length).

Earthworms are also a good choice, they are less expensive and easier to get/keep than leeches and are better for sunfish when they are picky. It is easier for them to pick the worm off the hook and you will catch a lot of smaller ones this way.

Corn on a bobber or bottom rig works too. It is a good choice for larger sunfish. Not as productive as leeches and worms, but a lot more economical and easier to keep, it is often a good bait to use. Smaller sunfish have a problem getting the corn in their mouths, but its often not as effective as live bait. Canned sweet corn, or sweet corn off a fresh cob (make sure the corn is soft) usually works the best. Put 2-3 kernels on a bobber rig or bottom rig mentioned above. Frozen and field corn aren't generally very productive so try to avoid using them.

Crappie minnows can also work. Fish them much the same as you would for crappies. This bait will catch mostly bigger ones only.

For artificial baits, small tube jigs, flu flus and beetle spins are good choices for sunfish (1/32oz-1/8oz). Make sure you use an ultralite rod so you can cast these tiny baits and also feel when a sunfish strikes.

Sunfish are common and fun to catch through the ice. Use a very small jigging spoon (1/32 or 1/64 oz even) or small jig and tip it with a wax worm, maggots or a small minnow. Use a very small slip bobber much smaller than you would use for regular fishing. Set the hook earlier then you normally would, they aren't as aggressive and less likely to pull it as far under the ice. During ice cover they tend to stay close to the bottom; from a few inches off to about 3 feet. Also use extremely light line no more than 4lb test in the winter because they become very spooky and can see an notice heavier lines.

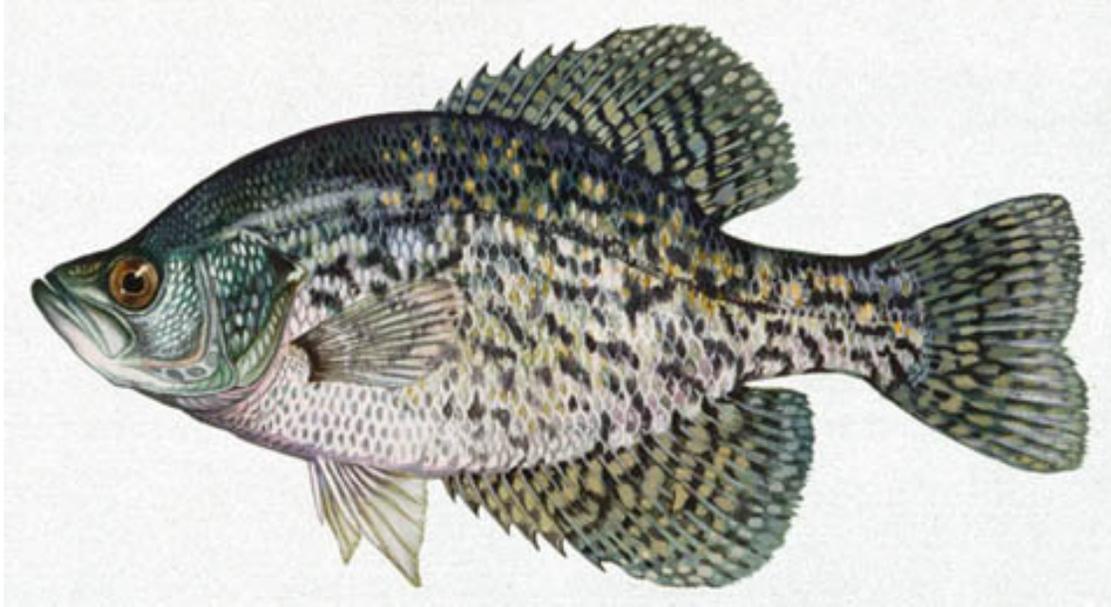
MAKE SURE IT IS MONOFILAMENT!



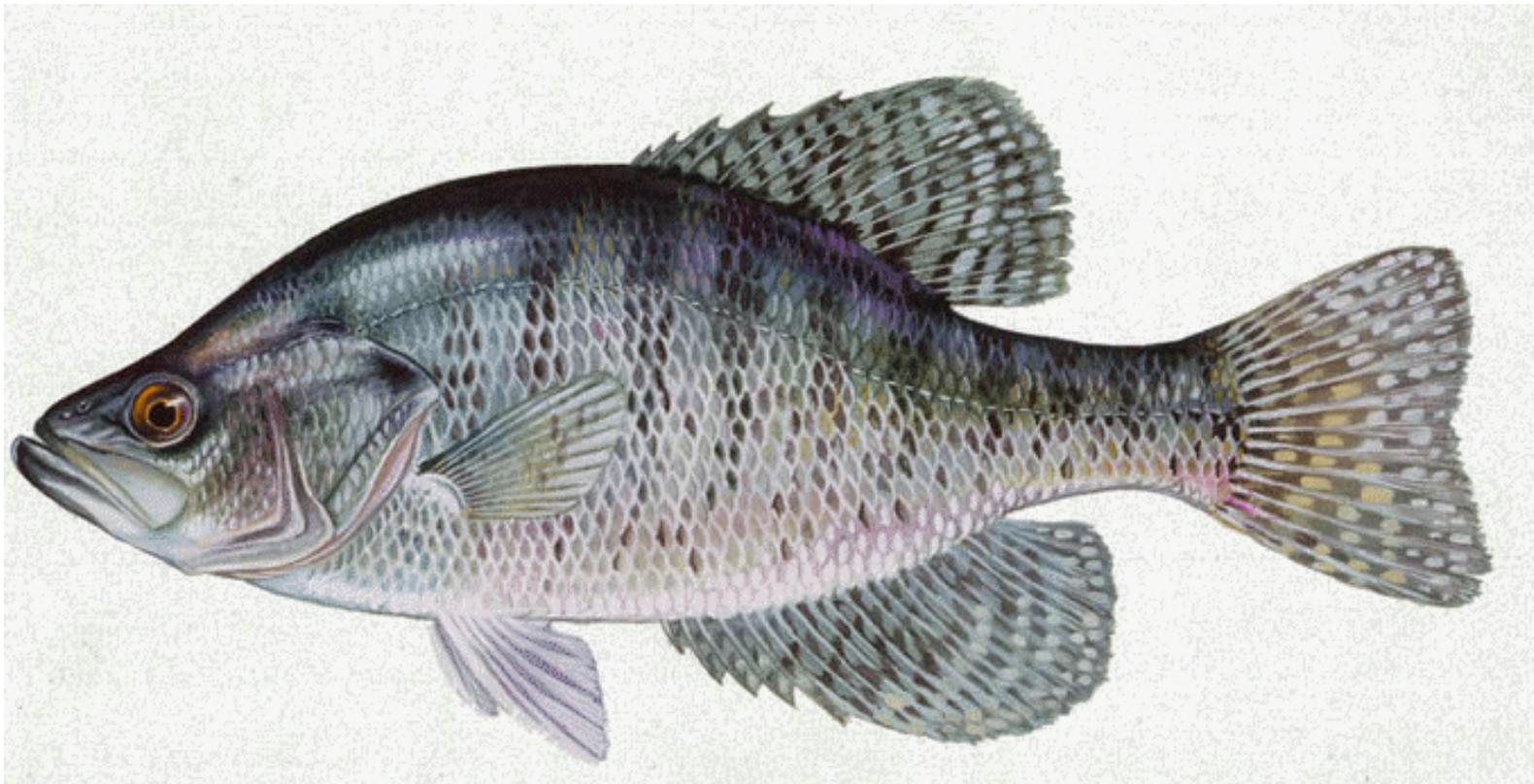
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Crappie



Black Crappie
Pomoxis nigromaculatus



White Crappie

Pomoxis annularis

The best way to differentiate these two fish are by counting dorsal fin spines, as the white crappie has 6 and the black crappie has 7 to 8. The white crappie is also the only sunfish with the same number of spines in both the dorsal and anal fins. The breeding white male grows darker in color and is often mistaken for a black crappie.

Black Crappie

White Crappie

[\[Common Names\]](#) [\[Description\]](#) [\[Habitat\]](#)

[\[Spawning Habits\]](#) [\[Feeding Habits\]](#)

[\[Sporting Quality\]](#) [\[Eating Quality\]](#)

[\[Common Names\]](#) [\[Diet\]](#) [\[Habitat\]](#) [\[Length\]](#)

[\[Identification\]](#)

Fishing for Crappies

Black Crappie

Common Names

speckled perch, specks, papermouth, bachelor perch, calico bass, strawberry bass, or white perch.

Description

The black crappie is a silvery-green to yellowish fish with large dorsal and anal fins of almost identical shape and size.

The sides are marked with black blotches which become more intense towards the back. The dorsal, anal, and caudal fins also are marked with rows of dark spots. Crappies have compressed bodies, small heads and arched backs. It has a large mouth with an upper jaw extending under the eye.

The Black Crappie is one of the largest and most popular panfish. They can reach up to 3 pounds in weight, and have an excellent flavor for eating. They are common in many lakes and ponds in the US and are sometimes found in small rivers and streams. They are also known as "paper mouths" because of their large thin lips. Like most panfish, they are a schooling fish and usually stay in schools of 5 to 25. In the spring in fall they come into shallow water and tend to stay in mid depth to deeper water during the summer. They are one of the most common fish caught through the ice, and are willing to bite through-out the year if you can locate them. They will often mix in with other schools of other panfish such as Bluegill and green sunfish. They are one of the few panfish that readily take artificial baits; tube jigs and flu flus are your best bet. At times crappie can be difficult to catch.

Habitat

(where they live and hang around)

Black crappies thrive in clear, natural lakes and reservoirs with moderate vegetation. They are also found in large slow-moving less turbid rivers, provided the water is not too murky. Crappies prefer water from 70 to 75 degrees but will tolerate water over 80 degrees. It is gregarious and often travels in schools.

Spawning Habits (where they lay their eggs)

Spawning occurs from February to April when water temperatures reach 62 to 65 degrees. They nest in colonies. Circular nest are fanned by males over gravel or soft-muddy bottoms and frequently around submerged vegetation in waters from three to eight feet deep. After spawning, males guard the eggs and fry. Females may produce between 11,000 and 188,000 eggs.

Feeding Habits (what they like to eat)

Natural baits include
crustaceans
aquatic insects
shiners
worms
small minnows
and small fishes.

Adults mainly eat small fish, particularly open-water forage fish, like threadfin shad.

Artificials include:

jigs
crankbaits
spinners
and flies

Sporting Quality

Black crappies are excellent game fish and are highly regarded by bait fishermen and artificial-lure anglers alike. They are easily caught during prespawning periods when the fish are congregated in large schools. Trolling with small, live minnows or a spinner-fly combination is very productive. They will also strike subsurface flies, small spinners, jigs, and tiny crankbaits. Crappies tend to suspend in midwater, so you may have to experiment to find the right depth.

The difference with crappie is that you will use minnows and you will not fish on the bottom. They will be suspended in brush such as a fallen tree. Also you will use a #2 wire hook with the minnow hooked so that it can stay alive and swim around for as long as possible.

A float sets the depth.

Eating Quality

Considered to be excellent eating by many anglers. The meat is prepared by rolling in cornmeal or dipping in pancake batter and deep frying, and can also be baked or broiled.

White Crappie

Other Common Names

Silver crappie, bachelor, white perch, sac-a-lait, newlight, strawberry bass, goggle eye, papermouth, tin mouth, bachelor perch, slab

Diet

(what they like to eat)

Feeds on fish and insects

You can catch Crappie with minnows, worms, jigs & artificial spinners

Habitat

(where they live and hang around)

Prefers clear water with aquatic vegetation, will tolerate some muddy water

Length

Average length is 6 to 14 inches

Identification

Silvery body that shades to green or brown on the back; several (7-9) dark vertical bars on each side and whitish belly; "hump-backed" with 6 spines in the dorsal fin; seldom exceed 2 pounds

Fishing for Crappies

use light line 4-6 lb test

The use of an ultralite rod is nice for getting some fight out of them and is necessary when using small jigs and baits.

The best live bait for crappies is small minnows, also known as "crappie minnows"

Crappies also take small artificial baits as well. Use a slip bobber rig you'd normally use for live bait but tie on a small jig hook (1/16-1/8 oz) and put a tube jig on it. This rig is especially productive with a little chop on the waves. Also jigging a small flu flu or tube jig off the bottom can also be productive.

In early spring look for crappies in medium water; about 12 feet deep or so. Crappies are one of the first fish to become active after the ice gets off a lake in the Northern US, and one of the first panfish to start spawning.

When spawning time arrives look for crappies in shallow water, this is when shore fishing is most productive.

Crappies are harder to find in the summer, they move into deeper water and their schools often scatter.

As the water cools in the fall, crappies will move back into shallow areas for a short period of time before the fall turnover when they will move into their winter positions.

For winter and ice fishing, look for them in medium to deep water. They still stay in schools in the winter, and ice fishing for crappies can be as or more productive than in the open water season.



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Flier

(*Centrarchus macropterus*)



[\[Common Names\]](#) [\[Description\]](#) [\[Habitat\]](#) [\[Spawning Habits\]](#) [\[Feeding Habits\]](#) [\[Sporting Qualities\]](#)
[\[Eating Qualities\]](#)

Common Names

round sunfish and millpond flier.

Description

The flier is a small sunfish that has a strongly compressed, deep, round body and small mouth. The coloration is greenish or silver green to brown on back and sides with a cream or yellowish belly with a brown dot on each scale giving the appearance of numerous rows of dots. Young fish have a large black spot surrounded by bright orange

in the soft rays of the dorsal fin. A dark vertical streak is present below the eye and extends to the lower edge of the operculum. The dorsal and anal fins are nearly symmetrical.

Habitat

They inhabit dark, acidic waters of coastal swamps, creeks, ponds, and canals. They prefer heavily vegetated water and are often found under mats of floating vegetation. Fliers can tolerate waters too acidic for other sunfish. They prefer water temperatures from 75 to 85 degrees.

Spawning Habits

Spawning begins in March when water temperatures reach 62 to 68 degrees. The male prepares a nest and the female lays from 5,000 to 50,000 eggs. Nesting may be solitary or in small colonies. Males continuously guard the eggs and recently hatched young.

Feeding Habits

Fliers are carnivorous in their feeding habits. They prefer insects, crustaceans, mollusks, worms, leeches, and small fish are supplemented with small quantities of phytoplankton.

Sporting Qualities

Although fliers fight well for their size, they are often too small to generate much interest among anglers. Fliers can be caught on dry flies, tiny poppers, worms, insect larvae and small minnows. Good fishing locations are around cypress trees and stumps, near brush piles, and at the mouths of small creeks and canals.

Eating Qualities

The flesh is sweet and excellent to eat. The same methods of cooking other sunfish apply for fliers.



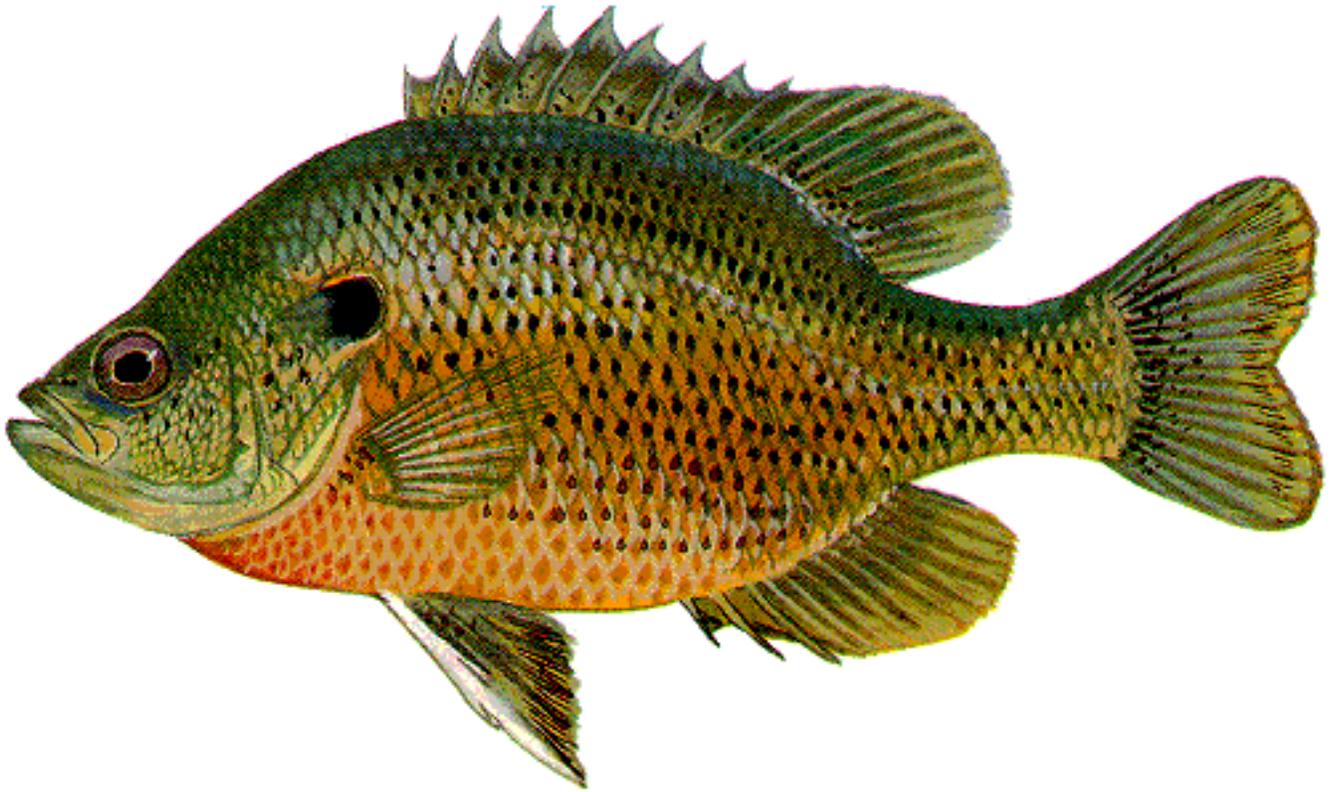
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Spotted Sunfish

(*Lepomis auritus*)



Common Names - redbelly, robin, yellowbelly sunfish, bream, river bream, longear sunfish, sun perch and redbreast bream.

Description - The redbreast is one of the brightest colored sunfishes. Males have yellow, orange or red breast, olive upper sides, blending into blue-tinged bronze on the lower sides and blue streaks on the cheek. Females are less colorful; their breasts are yellowish or pale red. The most distinguishing characteristic of this species is a long, narrow (no wider than the eye) extension of the gill cover. These flaps, which may reach a length of one inch or more, are entirely black.

The Bluegill and other species of the sunfish family make up some of the most common and fished for fish in the US. Although relatively small (usually less than ten inches, rarely over a pound) bluegills and other sunfish are easy and fun to catch. You will often find them in large schools, and can catch dozens of them. They have an extremely good flavor meat when cooked, and you can find them in just about any pond, lake, or river in the US. They are one of my favorite fish for their easiness to catch. Usually if I'm not catching much else I can still catch sunfish. Larger ones of more than 6 inches can be fun on ultralite tackle. Fishing for any species of the sunfish mentioned above is pretty much the same as the techniques mentioned for Bluegill below.

Habitat - Redbreasts inhabit sand-bottom areas as well as rocky areas of coastal-plain streams, rivers, and lakes. They frequently concentrate around boulders, limestone outcroppings, logs, aquatic vegetation, or in undercut tree roots.

Spawning Habits - They reproduce in typical sunfish fashion by constructing circular beds; but not clustered like bluegills, in water from one to three feet deep usually adjacent underwater objects such as stumps and snags. They often occupy beds that have been abandoned by other sunfishes. Spawning occurs from May through August when water temperatures range from 68 to 82 degrees. Males are the nest builders and guard the eggs and larvae for a short period after hatching. The number of eggs laid in a season ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000, varying with the age and size of the female.

Feeding Habits - The redbreast's diet is probably the most varied of any of the sunfishes. Principal food organisms are bottom-dwelling insect larvae, snails, clams, shrimp, crayfish, and small fish.

Sporting Qualities - Redbreasts are prized game fish and are caught on natural baits and artificial lures. They are good fighters and will bite

on flies and small spinners, as well as worms, crickets, grasshoppers and small minnows. Unlike most sunfishes, redbreasts bite well at night. Fishing from a drifting or slowly powered boat is the best way to catch redbreasts, although angling from the bank can be productive.

Techniques - First of all you don't want to spook the fish with heavy line, don't use line over four pound test. Look at your summer fishing tackle and make everything smaller. Use smaller hooks with wax worms. You may want to use a small ice fly tipped with a wax worm. Experiment with colors of the ice fly until you find one that triggers a bite. Another way to trigger bites from inactive sunfish, jig your lure slowly and then allow it to sit still because the sunfish won't hit it when it is moving. And finally an important part beginners often overlook is bobbers. Don't use that clumsy red and white bobber. If you must use a bobber make it as thin and small as possible. Some people prefer sponge bobbers or slip bobbers but I like to use spring bobbers.

Eating Quality - The sweet, flaky, white flesh is excellent eating. They are most often fried after dipping them in seasoned cornmeal or pancake batter.

Fishing for Sunfish

use ultralite tackle and light line (2-6lb test)

Most of the year sunfish stay in shallow water. Sunfish stay in shallow water throughout the spring and summer usually going no deeper than 20 feet deep.

In the late fall, winter and/or ice fishing season look for them in deeper water (9-30 feet deep).

In a lake that has a variety of other sunfish it is almost impossible to try to single out and catch one of the species. Sunfish will stick in the same areas and eat mostly the same food.

Often the most effective bait and rig for sunnies is a bobber or slip bobber rig with a #6 or #8 hook with corn, worms or a small leech. Make sure the bobber is small and sensitive, using stick like bobbers rather than round bobbers will improve your results.

Sunfish will also feed off the bottom, espically the larger ones. Use a small 1/8-1/4 oz. sliding sinker and a 12 inch leader of the same or lighter line, or use a few small splitshot and no bobber. This method is often more effective when the water is choppy and/or the fish are sluggish. Corn or worms are the best choices for this type of rig.

When aggressive enough, the leech is a better option, it will stay on the hook better and often discourages the smaller ones and entices the larger sunfish to bite it. Make sure it is small (about an inch in length).

Earthworms are also a good choice, they are less expensive and easier to get/keep than leeches and are better for sunfish when they are picky. It is easier for them to pick the worm off the hook and you will catch a lot of smaller ones this way.

Corn on a bobber or bottom rig works too. It is a good choice for larger sunfish. Not as productive as leeches and worms, but a lot more economical and easier to keep, it is often a good bait to use. Smaller sunfish have a problem getting the corn in their mouths, but its often not as effective as live bait. Canned sweet corn, or sweet corn off a fresh cob (make sure the corn is soft) usually works the best. Put 2-3 kernels on a bobber rig or bottom rig mentioned above. Frozen and field corn aren't generally very productive so try to avoid using them.

Crappie minnows can also work. Fish them much the same as you would for crappies. This bait will catch mostly bigger ones only.

For artificial baits, small tube jigs, flu flus and beetle spins are good choices for sunfish (1/32oz-1/8oz). Make sure you use an ultralite rod so you can cast these tiny baits and also feel when a sunfish strikes.

Sunfish are common and fun to catch through the ice. Use a very small jigging spoon (1/32 or 1/64 oz even) or small jig and tip it with a wax worm, maggots or a small minnow. Use a very small slip bobber much smaller than you would use for regular fishing. Set the hook earlier than you normally would, they aren't as aggressive and less likely to pull it as far under the ice. During ice cover they tend to stay close to the bottom; from a few inches off to about 3 feet. Also use extremely light line no more than 4lb test in the winter because they become very spooky and can see an notice heavier lines.

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Sunfish

Lepomis gibbosus

A cousin to the Bluegill, Sunfish are also called "Pumpkin Seed" because of their bright orange bellies.



[\[COMMON NAMES\]](#) [\[IDENTIFICATION\]](#) [\[WHERE THEY LIVE\]](#) [\[LIFE HISTORY\]](#) [\[FISHING METHODS\]](#)

COMMON NAMES

Pumpkinseed sunfish, Punkys, Yellow sunfish

IDENTIFICATION

Pumpkinseed are a very colorful, deep-bodied, slab-sided fish with a small mouth. Breast and belly are orange to yellow, with lighter colored sides in a variety of bright colors. The ear flap is black, but has an orange-red spot on the border.

Where They Live

They are found in shallow ponds and lakes in weed beds, under brush and around docks and piers.

LIFE HISTORY

Pumpkinseed sunfish are nest spawners with the male digging the nest in water as shallow as 6 to 12 inches. Spawning occurs in May or June and the males guard the nest until the eggs hatch. The female will lay between 1,600 to 2,900 eggs. Several females may lay eggs in a single nest. Adult pumpkinseed eat primarily larval insects, some adult insects, and occasionally larval fish. Pumpkinseed growth is

similar to that of bluegills.

FISHING METHODS

Fishing for pumpkinseed sunfish is similar to fishing for bluegill sunfish. The best method is to use natural baits, such as worms, with small hooks and light lines. In addition, small spinner baits and flies can also be used. Anglers should concentrate along the edges of dense vegetation or woody debris.

You can also use

crickets & grasshoppers

hot dog

cheese

dough balls

corn

marshmallows

popping bugs

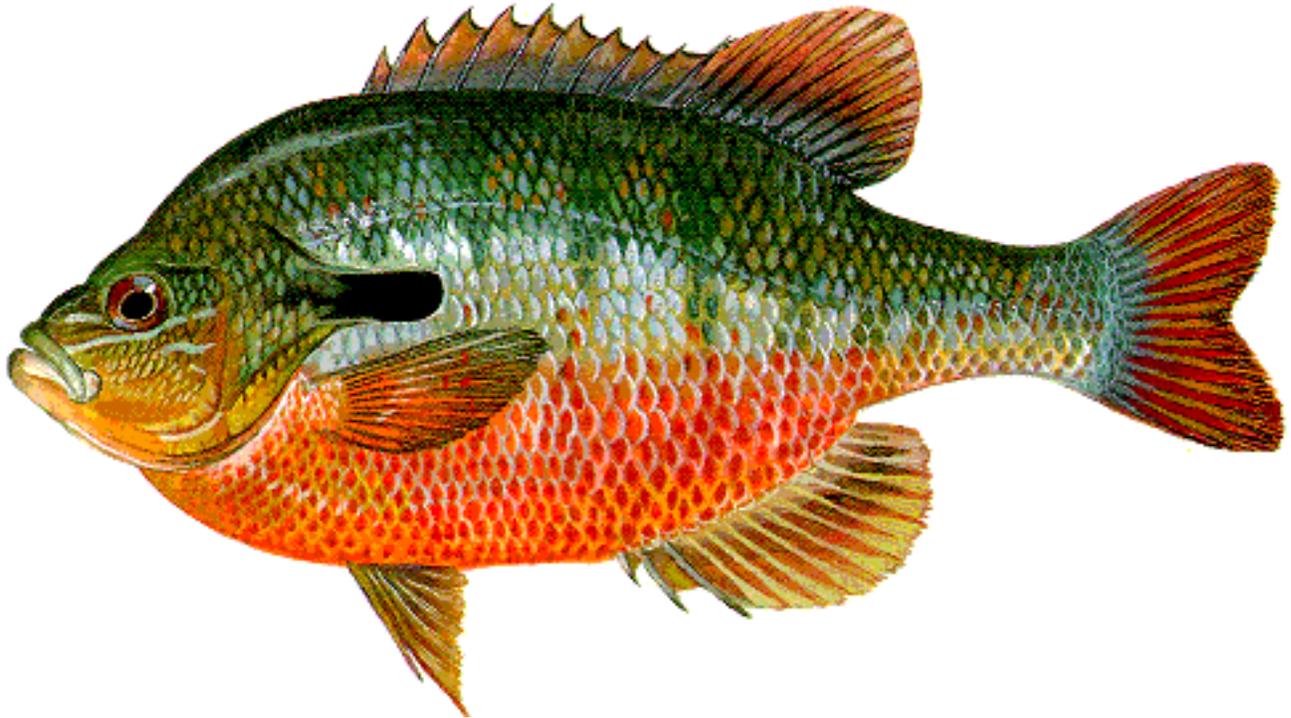


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Redbreast Sunfish

(*Lepomis auritus*)



Common Names - redbelly, robin, yellowbelly sunfish, bream, river bream, longear sunfish, sun perch and redbreast bream.

Description - The redbreast is one of the brightest colored sunfishes. Males have yellow, orange or red breast, olive upper sides, blending into blue-tinged bronze on the lower sides and blue streaks on the cheek. Females are less colorful; their breasts are yellowish or pale red. The most distinguishing characteristic of this species is a long, narrow (no wider than the eye) extension of the gill cover. These flaps, which may reach a length of one inch or more, are entirely black.

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Eating Quality - The sweet, flaky, white flesh is excellent eating. They are most often fried after dipping them in seasoned cornmeal or pancake batter.

World Record - 1 pound, 12 ounces, caught in the Suwannee River, Florida, in 1984.

Fishing for Sunfish

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Fishing from Boats



If you decide to try fishing from a boat, there is a lot to know before you go.

You need to know about:

The boat and how it handles.

The equipment on the boat and how it works.

The waters you will be boating on and any hazards such as submerged trees and rocks.

The weather conditions and emergency procedures.

The safety devices on the boat and how they work.

Your own personal abilities-how much you can do before you become too tired.

As the operator of a boat you are legally responsible for the boat and the safety of those on board.

You must also understand the rules of navigation and the courtesies of safe boating. Always complete a boater safety course prior to operating a boat for the first time.

Fishing from boats can be made safer through the following steps:

- * Have your boat and motor serviced regularly.
- * Boat sea worthiness and capabilities are important.
Update your boating knowledge
and
practise your skills.

Ask for local information if hiring a boat and pay attention to all instructions.

They could save your life.

- * Check fuel levels - work out what you might need, then take around twice as much.

Running out of fuel is one of the most common reasons for requiring emergency services.

Ensure that your fuel is fresh.

- * Always carry tools and spare parts like spark plugs. Spare fuel line, shear pins and propeller.
- * Keep bilges clear and ensure that there is no build up of fuel or fumes.
- * Always carry safety gear and ensure it is in good working order.
- * Make sure life jackets can be easily accessed - if you need them in a hurry they won't be much use to you if kept in a locked compartment or below deck.
- * **Children and poor swimmers should wear life jackets at all times**
- * Tell a responsible person where you are going and when you will be returning.
- * Twin motors offer a backup if one of the motors breaks down.
- * If possible, fish with someone else, so that if you are injured your partner will be able to call for help.
- * Do not attempt to fish on the whitewater wash zone

around rocks, shore, offshore reefs or other structures.

- * Regularly check weather reports through the local volunteer sea rescue facility, or the Weather Bureau on telephone.

- * If the weather looks threatening, head for home.

In an electrical storm, get off the lake and out of your boat.

Always follow the golden safety rule of fishing:

When in doubt, wait it out!

- * Small boats can be tipped over.

Put the load in the centre of the boat and don't overload.

When travelling, take waves on the forequarters.

- * Ensure your boat is positively buoyant and will float even if overturned.

It is generally better to stay with the boat if it does overturn.

Don't abandon ship

If your boat gets swamped, stay with it.

Most people overestimate their swimming ability.

Boats usually stay afloat and drift to shore.

- * If running a bar or reef gap, watch the swells carefully

for at least 10 minutes before attempting the run. It is preferable to attempt these crossings with another boat, but go one at a time.

- * Take special care when launching and retrieving boats, as crushing injuries are common.

- * Do not attempt to take large and underplayed fish into small boats. Sharks, tuna, marlin and others can cause significant damage.

- * Keep fluids up when fishing. Alcohol is not recommended because it can induce dehydration, impair judgement and may lead to prosecution for driving a boat under the influence if consumed in significant quantities. Carry spare water and food in case your boat breaks down.

- * Carefully store sharp implements such as knives and gaffs.

- * In an emergency use your radio, set off your EPIRB* and use your flares when appropriate.

Setting off an EPIRB will initiate a wide-scale search that could save your life. If you accidentally set off an EPIRB, advise the authorities immediately.

EPIRB = Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon



Fishing from rocky areas

Rock fishing is arguably the most dangerous sport in the world and lives are lost undertaking this activity every year.

Many of these deaths could be avoided if the following advice was put into practice:

- * No fish is worth your life.

Many accidents occur when people move to lower levels to land fish.

- * King waves are a myth. Wave dynamics have been studied around the world and although large waves can form, these are due to the combination of sea, swell and the formation from which the person is fishing. Large waves don't strike at random - fishers and others put themselves in a position where they are likely to be washed from the rocks.

- * While many dangerous spots are signposted, many are not.

If a safety harness is provided, use it.

- * Before fishing, watch the prevailing conditions for at least 10 minutes. Take note of which rocks are wet and whether the rock pools are encrusted with salt.
- * Select areas where the surface is not slippery or steep. These sites can be dangerous because they are difficult to climb should you accidentally fall or getwashed into the water.
- * When fishing from the rocks, look for an area that you can swim for should you be washed from the rocks. If there is a rip working, don't try to swim directly back against the rip or you will waste energy and may not be able to regain the land.
Swim diagonally across the rip until you are clear of it.
- * Have spare tackle and gear at hand so that snags can be cut off and lines repaired.
Do not try and retrieve tackle, especially in rocky, steep areas.
- * Wear shoes suited to the area you are fishing. Fishing from round, boulders can be dangerous, as they become as slippery as ice when wet.
Smooth or cleated shoes are dangerous in such conditions.
- * Wear shorts and other clothes that allow you to swim

should you get washed into the water.

Heavy, wet weather gear, long trousers and woollen jumpers can hamper your swimming ability.

- * Keep a flotation device in your tackle box and wear one in areas where the swells can be large.

- * Always fish with a friend.

- * If your partner is washed into the water, never jump in to save him or her.

A bucket with a rope, your fishing rod or the line can be used as rescue devices, but don't recklessly risk your own life.

- * If a large wave is coming and you are fairly certain you will be washed off your fishing platform, jump into the water.

While this may seem like odd advice, statistics show that many fatalities are due by head injuries caused by the fisher being bounced on rocks by waves as they roll in and wash back.

- * Always tell someone where you are going and when you will come back.

If you change your plans, tell someone.

- * If you are fishing with a handline, make sure you are not tangled with it should a large bite.

Fishing is an extremely popular and enjoyable activity, but it should also be a safe activity.

If you follow the advice on this page, you can enjoy your fishing and pass on your skills to your children and grandchildren.



Be Sun Smart

Be SunSmart - catch fish not skin cancer

Recreational fishing is great fun, but skin cancer isn't.

Unfortunately, fishing not only exposes you to direct ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun, but also reflected UVR from the water and other surroundings. It is now well known that cumulative sun exposure increases the risk of developing skin cancer and various eye conditions, such as cataracts. UVR has nothing to do with heat, so don't be fooled into believing sun protection is unnecessary when fishing in cool, cloudy conditions, as UVR will easily pass through cloud cover.

Being SunSmart when you are fishing is simple. The Cancer Foundation recommends the best way to reduce sun exposure when fishing is to:

- * Avoid peak UVR hours of the day (between 10am and 3pm).
 - * Wear sun protective Clothing such as:
 - * A long-sleeved, high-necked or collared shirt
 - * Trousers or longer length shorts
 - * A broad brimmed hat or legionnaire-style cap
 - * Close fitting polarised sunglasses
 - * Fingerless driving gloves to cover the backs of your hands.
 - * Wear sunscreen.

Sunscreen is a must when fishing

The Cancer Foundation recommends applying a broad spectrum, water-resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen 15 minutes before going out in the sun. It is very important to reapply sunscreen thickly at least every two hours - don't forget your face, ears, neck, and the backs of your hands and the tops of

your feet. To avoid getting sunscreen on your bait (from your hands), choose a roll-on sunscreen for easy application. Store your sunscreen out of the sun, below 30degrees Celsius.

SPF (Sun Protection Factor)



Early detection and treatment of skin cancer leads to a cure in over 95 percent of cases.

Get all skin irregularities checked immediately by a doctor.

FUNDAMENTALS OF FISHING



[Sitemap](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Kids & Fishin'](#)

[Basic Items of Equipment
Needed](#)

[How to Bait your Hook](#)

[A Little Bit About Reels](#)

[Learn to tie Knots](#)

[How To Cast](#)

[Learn your Fish
What Fish Eat What?](#)

[Lure Fishing
Fly Fishing](#)



Fighting The Fish

Probably the best part of fishing. The fight can be exhilarating and suspenseful, not to mention tiring.

How do you fight a fish anyway?

That's what this page is about. When it comes to explaining how to fight the fish, It's been broken down into 3 areas,

[Detecting the fish](#)

[Setting the hook](#)

[Fighting the fish](#)

How can I tell if a fish is on my line?

An expression used by fisherman when they believe something is biting the bait is: Nibble. A nibble can be a couple of things. We call them, "mouthing" or a "nip". Mouthing or chewing the bait is when the fish holds the bait (or part of the bait) in its mouth and is decides whether or not to eat it. It's hard to describe, but when you see the rod tip deliberately moving go up and down, or maybe the line moving around, and you know something is going on but not sure what, go ahead and set the hook. This is one of those areas where you'll learn to develop "feel" over time.

A nip is when a fish takes a quick, small bite from the bait. Perch and Walleye are notorious for this. They will nip at the bait right down to the hook until your bait is gone, wait for you to put out another piece of bait and do it again. You'll notice this nipping because you'll see the rod tip do a quick little bounce or two. Don't try to set the hook on

[Catch and Release](#)

[Safety and Fishin'](#)

[How To Cut and Clean Your Fish](#)

[Fishing Terminology](#)

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(learn how to hit, pitch, field, etc. How to Coach, Parent info, Official Rules)

these little "taps" unless the taps are in rapid succession. If a quick succession of "taps" doesn't happen, wait for the rod tip to quickly go down a little farther than normal. Then quickly set the hook.

If the fish keeps taking your bait but you can't get a good hook set, try changing to a smaller hook

When you think you may have a nibble, make sure you're holding the rod in your hand. Don't have it leaning against anything. By doing this you'll not only be able to see the nibble but be able to feel it, this will increase your odds for a better hook set.

When fish get real aggressive, they will strike your bait. There are a couple of different strikes. They may either inhale the bait completely or do what we call a nipping strike. If the fish inhales the bait, set the hook, and the fight is on. If the fish are just hitting the tail, or you feel a strike, but the fish does not inhale the bait they are nipping at it aggressively. That means they're interested but not motivated enough to really take it. You may want to change speed (slow it down) if your casting or trolling. You could also slightly change the color of the bait or the lure.

Once you feel the fish has the bait, do not pass go, do not collect you're \$200 and whatever you do, don't panic!

*I feel a nibble now what?
Set the hook!*

Setting the hook

Setting the hook has been discussed in the previous section, but what does it really mean? It means to apply the appropriate amount of force to imbed the barb of the hook into the fish's mouth. Please whatever you do, don't set the hook like the pros do. If you set the hook too hard, you could pull that fish out of the water and send him flying into the next

county! Seriously, a hookset that's too hard can damage its mouth, and you could kill it trying to get the hook out. Only use the force that's necessary.

A fisherman sets the hook by:

Either jerking the rod up vertically and back, or by jerking the rod to the side (do this only for surface bait, so you don't pull the bait into the air in your direction!)

Once the hook is set, you can fight the fish using the tips below.

Fighting the fish

Below are tips to help you get the fish in the boat:

Keep the line tight and the rod tip up.

Try to keep the rod at about a 45oangle. This forces the head of the fish up and doesn't allow the lure to be spit out

Keep the rod slightly bent.

You do this to transfer the tension from the line to the rod. If this isn't done, you run the risk of breaking your line, or having the fish work its way free.

Use the drag.

Be sure to adjust the drag before you start fishing for the day. You do this by giving your line a pull. You want the drag set with about 1/2 the strength of your line. For example, if you're using 4 lb test line, use your hand to pull off the line using 2 pounds of pressure.

You don't want to have the drag let off line when you set the hook. Keep in mind; you may have to adjust the drag during the fight. The reason you want to adjust this because the fish may be heading towards a rock pile or weedbed you don't want him to go. You may have to tighten the drag up at the risk of snapping the line. On the other hand, you may have a lot of line on your reel and if you're not worried about him getting into an area you don't want him to, don't risk the fish breaking your line, lessen the drag and let him

tire himself out. Be sure to check the drag periodically throughout the day.

For more information on drag see the reel page.

Do not try to crank the reel while the fish is taking off line. All you're doing is twisting the line. If you don't want him running with the line, then tighten the drag.

Horsing the fish-DON'T DO IT

Horsing the fish means, your fighting him too hard. You don't want your drag set too hard. You don't want to pull on the rod too hard. The object is to keep his head up and the line taunt, and let him tire himself out. Tiring him out is "fighting the fish" this is the best part of fishing!

Pump and Reel

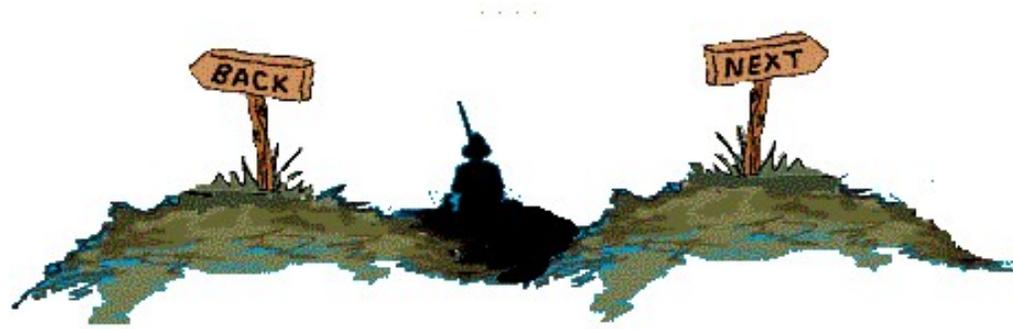
Here is a technique that can be used once you have the fish under control. Don't try this if the drag is letting the line out. Pull the rod up slowly to 12' o'clock. Then reel the rod back down to the 10o'clock position. We can't stress this enough, as you lower the rod, keep cranking the handle. It is extremely important to keep the line tight between you and the fish while the rod is being lowered. If you don't, you'll have slack in the line and the fish could spit the lure out. Once the rod is down (to about a 2 o'clock), slowly pull it up again and repeat the process.

Use a Net

This may sound simple, but it's amazing how many people don't use one. You'll want to have your fishing buddy get the net in the water at the last moment after you've gotten the fish up to the boat. Putting the net in the water too early could scare him and he may start thrashing about. Get the net under the fish and scoop him up all in one motion.

Fighting the fish is the best part. Don't rush getting your catch into the boat. Remember, you have all day to tire it out, so enjoy the experience. Just remember, keep the rod tip up, you're line taunt, don't horse him and don't panic! Fighting does take some practice, so

don't get flustered if you lose a couple in the beginning.





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There's More than One Way to Cast with the Open-Face Spinning Reel

by Stan Fagerstrom

Lot of fishermen who use open-faced spinning reels fail to realize there is more than one way to cast with them.

Observe carefully the next 10 anglers you see using a spinning outfit. I'd bet a generous chunk of next month's paycheck I could tell you exactly how they cast with it. They will open their bail and drape the line across their right forefinger. When they are ready to cast they simply straighten out the forefinger and the lure sails away.

There's nothing wrong with that method of casting. It's the one most manuals advocate. But it's not the only procedure useable with an open-face spinning reel.

Some readers will recognize the name Steve Rajeff. This confident casting expert has won more casting championships at the national and international level than anybody. Steve, now a key executive with G. Loomis Rods, is best known for his skills with a fly rod. He's just as good with a spinning outfit or bait casting gear.

If you ever have opportunity to watch Steve handle his open-face reel, observe carefully what he does with it. You'll see him drop his right

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forefinger, after he's opened the bail, to trap the line against the side of the reel's spool. He gets better control that way than he does casting in what's considered conventional fashion.



Here's the method I recommend for getting pinpoint accuracy with the open faced spinning reel. My left forefinger traps the line against the lip of the spool. When I want the lure to fly I out I simply release the line with the left forefinger. All the time the lure is in the air the line is flowing off of the spool under my left forefinger. The result is line control similar to that a caster experiences with his thumb on a level wind revolving spool reel.

"I get a degree of accuracy using my open face reel this way that's very close to what I enjoy with a level wind reel," Rajeff says. "It's the procedure I always use when I'm involved in casting competition."

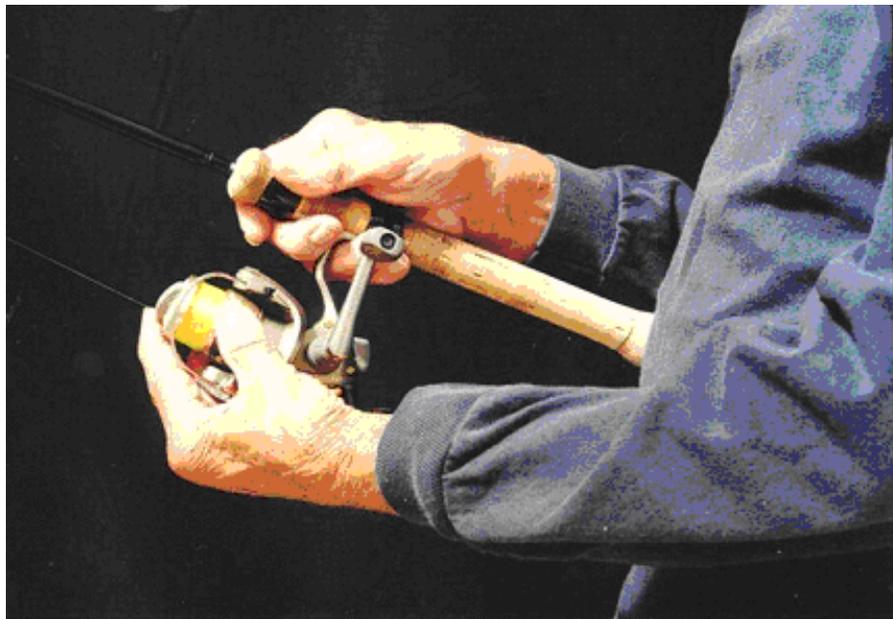
The key to any kind of casting is being able to stay in touch with your line while the lure is in flight. You've got to be able to slow the flight of the lure, but you can't do it in such a fashion the lure stops with a jerk.

If you've ever watched one of my casting demonstrations you know I utilize yet a third technique with spinning gear. I learned early on I couldn't get the kind of pinpoint accuracy required for demonstration work with a spinning outfit trying to feather my line with my right forefinger. I got reasonably good accuracy, but not consistently enough to feel comfortable when I had 500 people jammed around my casting area waiting to see if I could practice what I was preaching.

The procedure I worked out brings both hands into the act. I open the bail and trap the line against the lip of the front of the spool with my left forefinger. When I release pressure on the line with the left forefinger away goes the lure. All the time the lure is in the air the line is flowing off the spool immediately under my left forefinger. I find it a whole lot easier to feather the line with my left forefinger.



Here's a view of the positioning of the left forefinger as seen from the left side of the reel.



When I use the above procedure, I'm still casting with my right hand. All that left hand does is sort of steady things and provide that left forefinger out front to feather the line. Anyone who would like to study the technique might be interested in my newest hour-long video on casting. It details how the left forefinger is used. The charge for the video is \$19.95. It can be ordered from Stan Fagerstrom, 928 Island Drive South, Florence, OR 97439. Enclose \$3 for postage & handling.

We all know it's our thumb that controls things as line comes off the spool of a level wind reel. It's this constant thumb control that let's us achieve pinpoint accuracy with a bait casting outfit. The effect I get using the open-face spinning reel in the fashion I've outlined is much the same. The left forefinger does the same job on the line that my thumb does with my level winders.

Depending on how the spinning reel is constructed, it's sometimes difficult to slip your left forefinger under the bail wire to trap the line against the spool. This is particularly true of older reels. For years I got around that problem by simply removing the bail wire. I left the line roller in place, but removed

the bail wire completely. I used my right forefinger to get the line back on the spool when I began the retrieve. With a bit of practice it wasn't all that difficult.

Since I switched to Shimano reels, removal of the bail wire is no longer necessary. You can use my left forefinger technique with these excellent reels without messing with the bail wire. One of the Shimano reels I use for casting demonstrations and lots of my fishing is the Symetre. I've been using the Model SY-1000FH. This dandy little reel is a pleasure to use in the fashion I've detailed.

It really doesn't matter how I cast or how Steve Rajeff casts. The only thing that does matter is how much accuracy, enjoyment and satisfaction you are deriving from the method you're using for your own fishing. Nowhere is it written-in-stone that you have to cast as I do or that you have to follow the instructions printed in someone's manual.

Chances are the guy---or gal---who wrote that manual for your spinning reel hasn't spent half the time fishing you have. But I say again what I said in the beginning: How are you going to know if what you're doing really provides the most accuracy and enjoyment unless you give the other methods a try?

It's fun to practice with your spinning reels. It doesn't cost a dime and there are no rules involved. Controlling a spinning reel line with my left forefinger works for me. I've proven that in casting demonstrations around a sizeable chunk of the world over the past half-century. With a little practice the chances are great you can do the same.

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How To Cut Your Fish

After the catching, or even the buying, there are a few steps between the lake and your plate. While not for the eternally queasy, cleaning a fish is not as messy as one might think. And don't worry about the guts. It's part of the full fishy experience. Cover your work area with plenty of newspaper or heavy paper bags. Have a plastic bag handy for the guts, bones, etc. Make sure to seal them well before disposing.

Step 1: Prepare the body

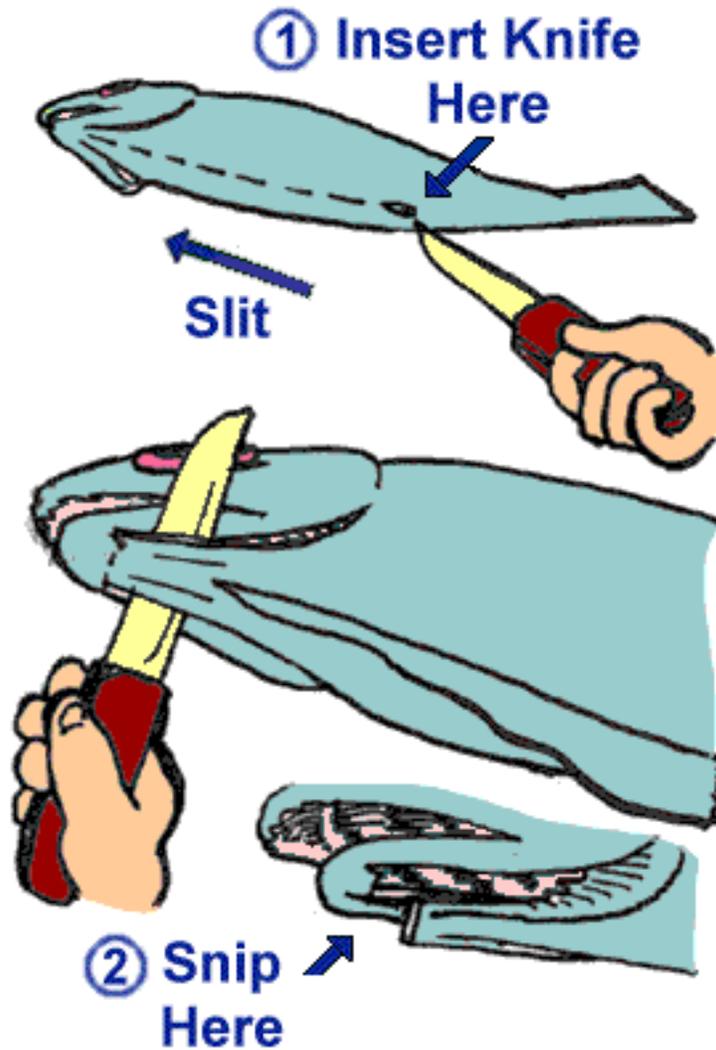
First, wash the fish in cool running water to remove any slime. With a sharp knife, cut off the pectoral fins on both sides of the fish. Not all fish need scaling. If you're not sure, run the blade of the blunt knife at almost a 90 degree angle to the body from tail end to head. If the scales are thick and come up easily, you need to remove them. Continue until the body is smooth.

Step 2: Gut the fish

Using the sharp knife, drive the blade point into the vent (small anal opening near the tail, where the body begins to widen). Cut right through the belly all the way to the gills. Remove the guts from the cavity. With the spoon, scoop out the dark reddish-brown kidney line that lies along the backbone.

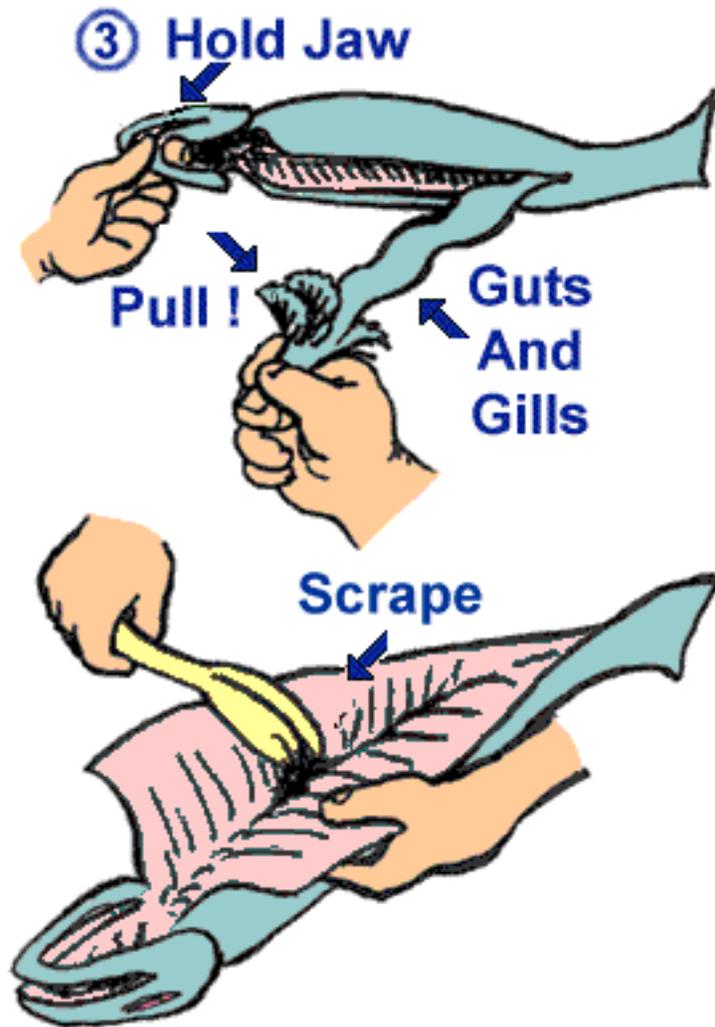
Important:

Cut out all parts of the gills.



Step 3: Remove Head and Tail

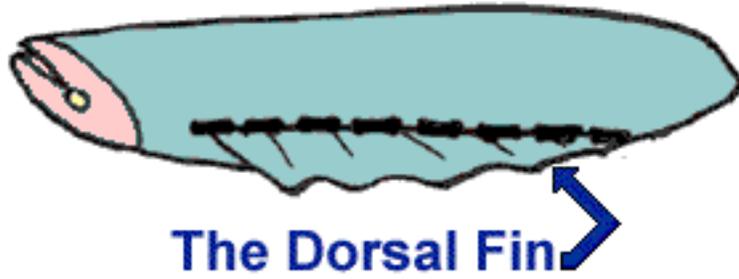
Cut the head off right below the gills. Cut the tail where it joins the body.



Step 4: Remove Dorsal Fin and Bones

Cut along the length of each side of the dorsal fin (top) of the fish. Remove the dorsal fin and connected bones by giving a quick pull from tail end to head. This step is not essential, but eliminates those tiny, annoying bones that can ruin a meal.

Don't Forget



How To Clean Your Catch at The Campsite!

