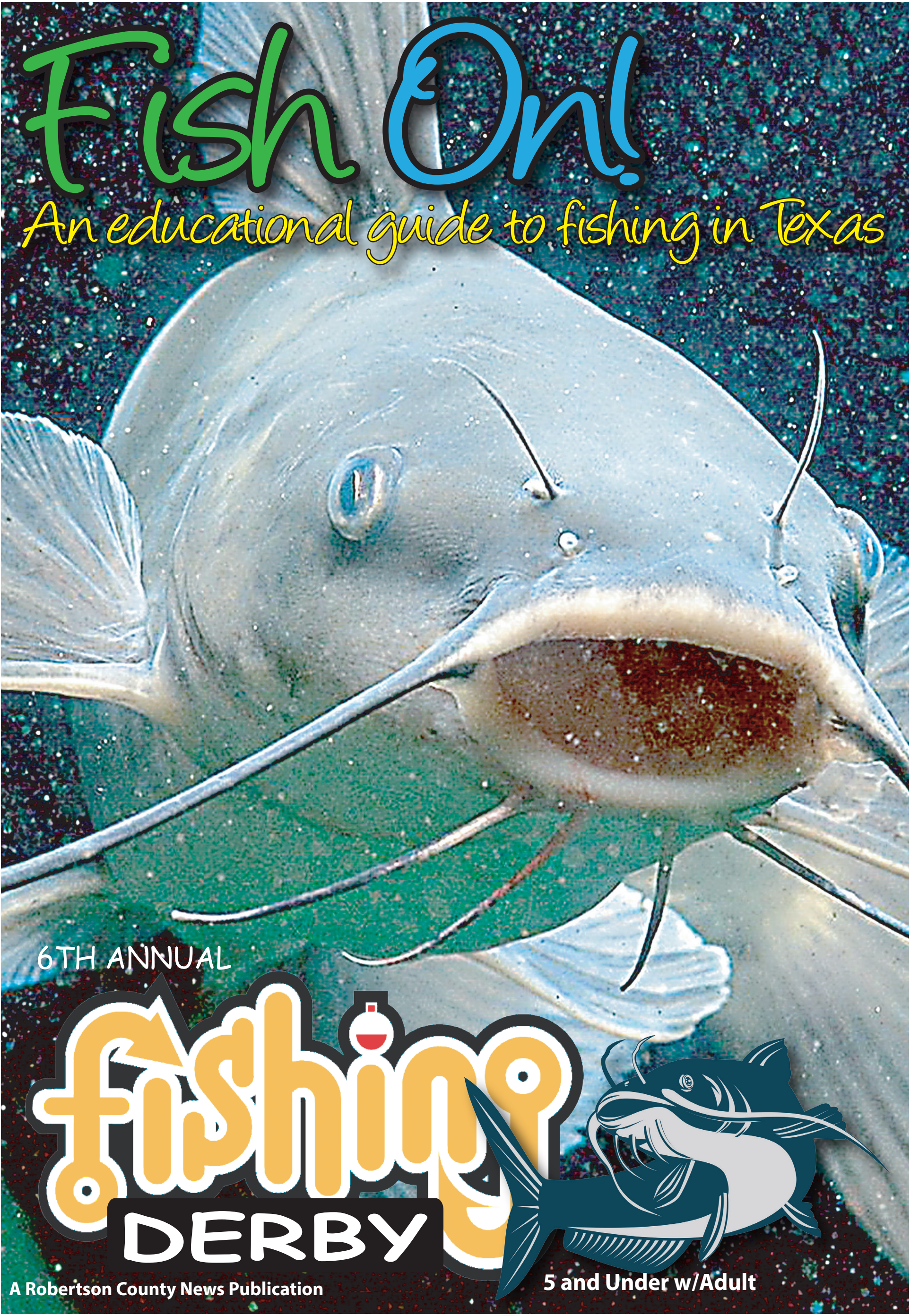


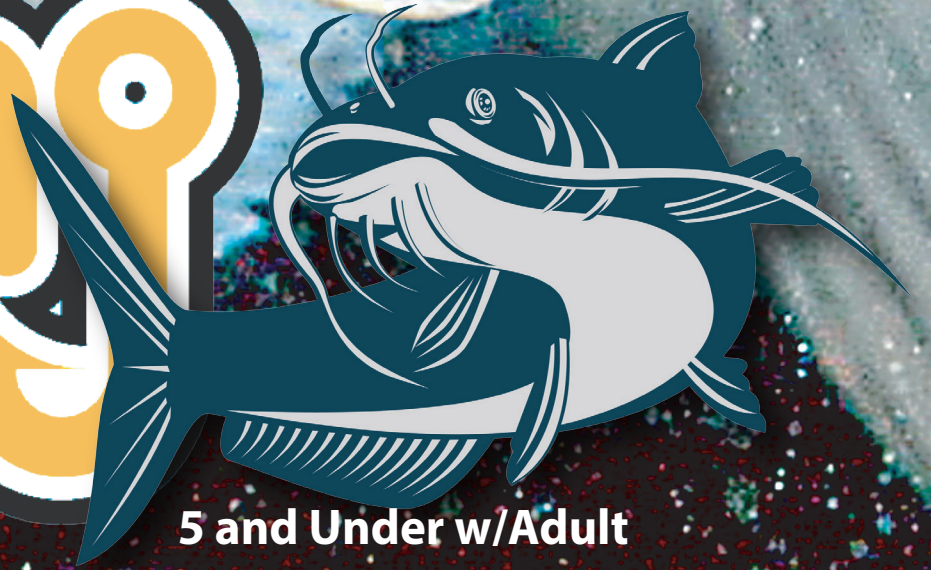
Fish On!

An educational guide to fishing in Texas



6TH ANNUAL

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A Robertson County News Publication

5 and Under w/Adult

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*** PLACE 3 ***

BASIC FISHING TACKLE

Hooks

Hooks come in an assortment of sizes and styles and must be kept sharp to be effective. If you plan to release your catch, bend down the barb to make it easier to remove the hook. Choose the size of hook for the species of fish you are trying to catch and the type of bait you are using. Ask a seasoned angler or a bait and tackle dealer for suggestions.

Line

Fishing line comes in pound-test, (the line size or strength). The larger the line size the stronger it is. Six-pound test line is more flexible but is not as strong as 12-pound test line. Match your fishing line to your rod and reel capability and the species of fish you want to catch. Using heavier line or higher pound test than needed may reduce the number of hits or strikes you get because heavier line is more visible to fish.

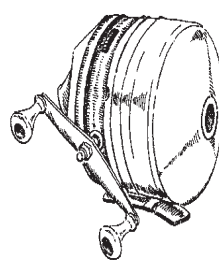
Sinkers

Sinkers are weights used to cast your bait, take bait to the bottom, hold bait in place, or keep your bobber upright. Sinkers are designed in several different shapes and sizes and are used for various types of fishing techniques. They range in size from BB split shot to five pounds, something short of a cannon ball. In many cases, you will place your sinker 4 to 8 inches above your hook to allow live bait to look natural to the fish.

Bobbers

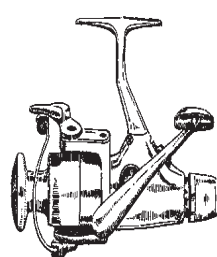
Bobbers, floats and corks are used for three reasons. They keep your bait where the fish are biting, keep bait off the bottom, and they tell you when you're getting a bite or strike by bobbing up and down. Bobbers come in various shapes from round, to pencil or quill, to popping, and oblong. Most bobbers are spring-loaded and attach to your fishing line with a clip. Some are tied directly to your line or allow the line to slip entirely through for slip-cork fishing.

FISHING REELS



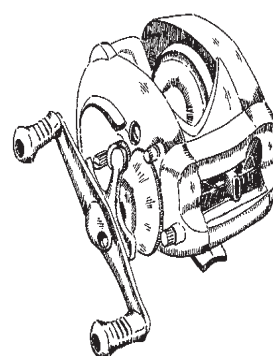
Spincast

This popular reel is ideal for beginners. Known as a "closed-faced reel," it's the easiest reel to use.



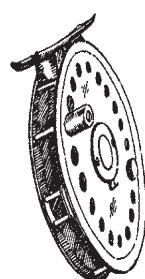
Spinning

This "open-face reel" mounts under the rod. Fishing line spools off quickly allowing longer casts. This reel is able to cast lighter baits and lures.



Baitcast

Baitcast tackle is suitable for all types of fish and fishing. The spool turns when you cast, however, and can entangle the line if not properly adjusted. You'll need to practice with this model.



Fly reel

The fly reel is designed to allow fluid movement of the fishing line. This reel is mounted on the bottom of the rod.

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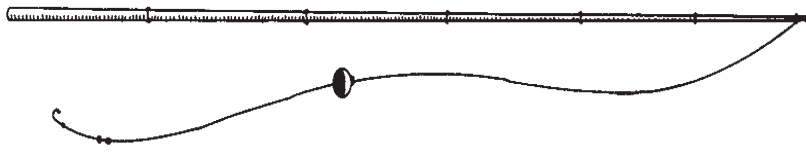
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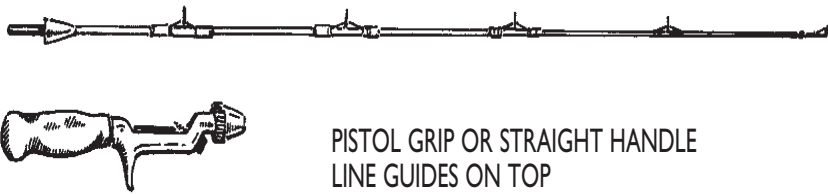
FISHING RODS

Rods come in several varieties, each with its own advantages. Choosing a rod is a personal choice. You can fish with a can and string or a fancy rod and reel. One of the simplest and easiest fishing rods is the cane pole.

Cane Poles



Cane poles are simply a pole or straight rod with a fishing line tied on to it. Use cane poles mainly for shoreline fishing since you're restricted to depth and distance you can reach. Cane poles can be made of bamboo, fiberglass, graphite or even a straight tree branch. Cane poles work, are easy to use and are inexpensive.



PISTOL GRIP OR STRAIGHT HANDLE
 LINE GUIDES ON TOP

Spincasting and Baitcasting Rods

Casting rods have "spincast" or "baitcast" reels and line guides mounted on top. Spincasting rods are easy to handle and perfect for beginners. These rods have straight handles and small line guides. Spincast tackle is the most popular. Baitcasting rods have either a pistol-grip or straight handle. The baitcast rod with its more complex reel is more difficult to control and is better suited for an experienced angler.

CASTING TIPS

Spincasting

A spincasting reel has a button that you push with your thumb to release the line.

1. Grasp the rod's handle or pistol grip with one hand. Push the reel's thumb button down and hold it in.
2. Face the target area with your body turned to a slight angle, about a quarter turn. Aim the rod tip toward the target, about level with your eyes.
3. 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.
4. When the rod reaches eye level, release the thumb button.

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.



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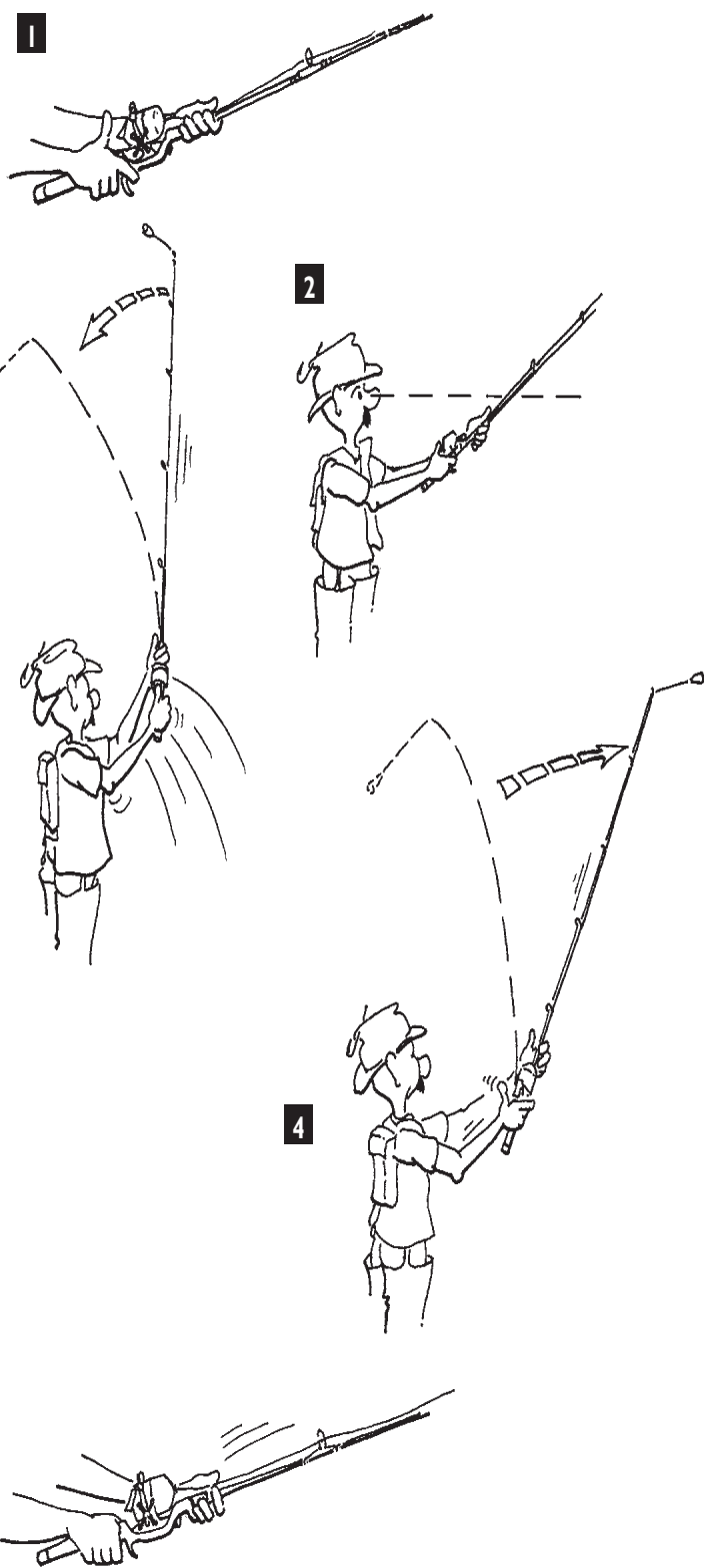


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CASTING TIPS

SPINCASTING



CASTING TIPS

Spinning

With a spinning reel, you use your finger to release the line.

1. Grasp the rod's handle, placing the reel "stem" that attaches the reel to the rod between your middle fingers. Extend your forefinger to touch the spool cover. Open the reel's bail with your other hand.
2. Face the target area with your body turned at a slight angle, about a quarter turn. The arm holding the rod handle should be closest to the target. Aim the rod tip toward the target at about eye level.
3. Swiftly and smoothly, using just one motion, bend your casting arm at the elbow and raise your forearm so that your hand is almost at eye level.
4. When the rod is almost straight up and down, it will be bent by the weight of the practice plug. As the rod bends, move your forearm forward with a slight wrist movement.
5. When the rod reaches eye level, straighten your forefinger to release the line.

If the plug landed close in front of you, you straightened out your index finger to release the line too late. If the plug went more or less straight up or behind you, you straightened your index finger too soon.

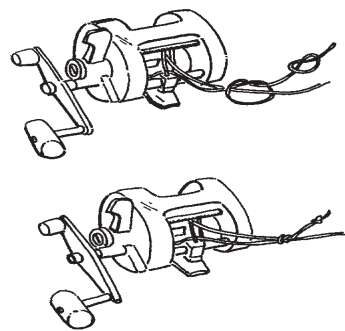
KNOT TYING

Arbor Knot

Quick, easy connection for attaching line to the reel spool.

1. Pass the line around the reel arbor (spool).
2. Tie an overhand knot around the main line.
3. Tie a second overhand knot in the tag (loose) end.
4. Pull the knot in the tag end tight and clip off the excess line.

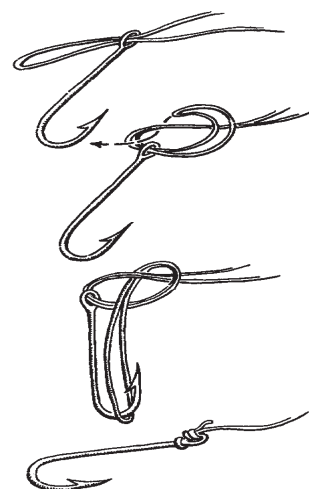
Snug down the first overhand knot on the reel.



Palomar Knot

The easiest to tie and the strongest knot known to hold terminal tackle.

1. Double 4 inches of line to form a loop and pass the loop through the eye of the fishing hook. Let the hook hang loose.
2. Tie an overhand knot in the doubled line. Don't twist or tighten line.
3. Pull the loop far enough to pass it completely over the hook.
4. Wet the line.
5. Hold the hook carefully, and pull the loose end with the standing line slowly to tighten the loose end.



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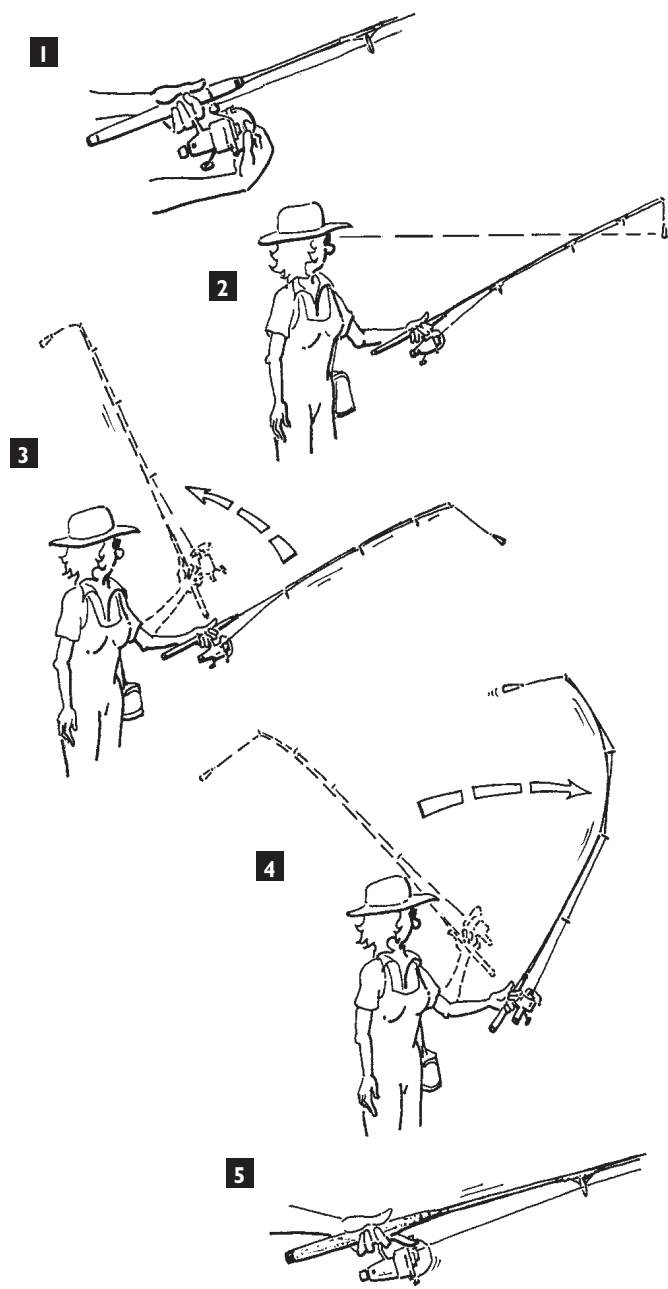
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CASTING TIPS

SPINNING



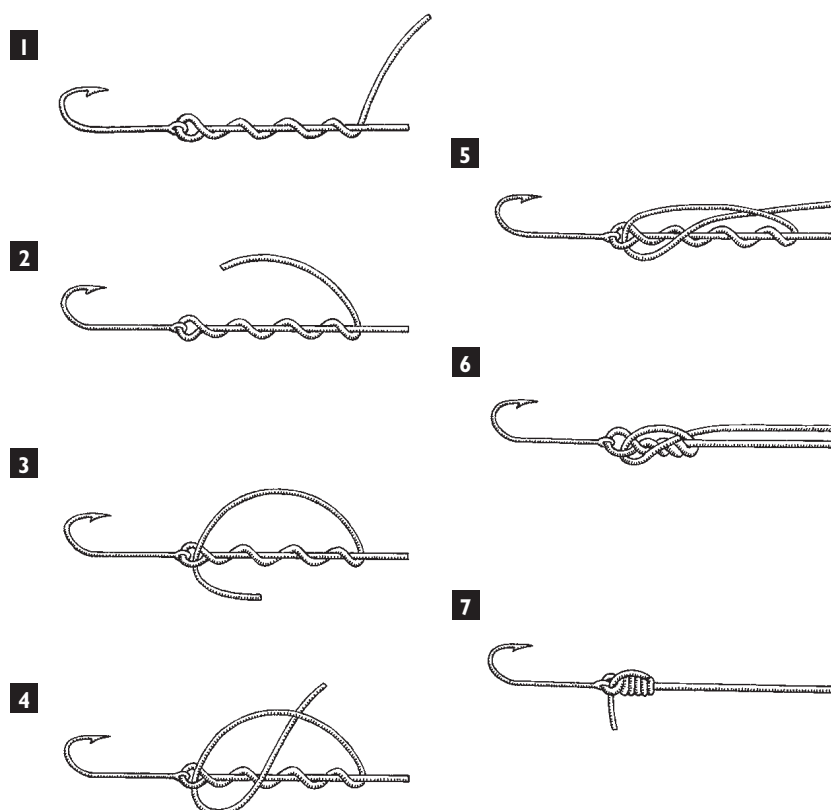
KNOT TYING

Improved Clinch Knot

An "old standby" known as the fisherman's knot.

1. Pass the line through the hook eye and, with the tag end, make 5 turns around the standing line.
2. Insert the loose end of the line between the eye and the first loop formed.
3. Bring the end through the large second loop formed.
4. Wet the line and tighten the knot slowly while holding the loose end of the line end between thumb and index finger so the knot is partly closed before it's secured against the eye.

Clip the loose end of the line.



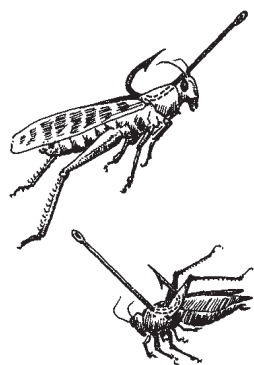
NATURAL AND LIVE BAITS

Always check current fishing regulations to make sure your choice of bait is legal.

COMMON FRESHWATER BAITS

Crickets and Grasshoppers

These are excellent choices for sunfish, bass and catfish. Both of these insects can be caught by hand or with an insect net. Look for them in thick, tall grass or at night under lights. Laying a cloth, towel, cardboard or newspaper on the grass will attract crickets. You want to use small hooks for sunfish (#6-#10) and medium-sized hooks for bass and catfish (#1 or #2). Make sure the point of the hook is completely covered to increase bites.



Worms

Whether it's an earthworm, red wiggler or nightcrawler, worms are a favored choice for the majority of freshwater fish in Texas. You can either raise your own in a compost pile, dig them from your garden or purchase from bait shops and fishing tackle stores. Remember to cover the point of the hook when fishing for sunfish to keep them from pulling the worm off the hook. Store live, leftover worms in the refrigerator for the next time you go fishing.



NATURAL AND LIVE BAITS

Minnows

Varieties of minnows are used to catch both fresh and saltwater fish. Keep minnows in an aerated minnow bucket and don't crowd them. Remember to change the water often to keep the minnows lively. Hook them through the lips or under the dorsal fin. Avoid hooking through the backbone because this will kill the minnow.



Crayfish

Crayfish, known as crawfish, crawdads or mudbugs, are used for catching large-mouth and smallmouth bass, white bass, catfish and freshwater drum. They can be caught in small ponds, roadside ditches or where depressions hold water frequently and usually after a rain. These can be fished either live, dead or using just the tail. Hook through the underside of the tail so the point protrudes through the top. Catfish and freshwater drum don't mind if it's live or dead. Grasp the crayfish, and pull the tail away from the head, threading the hook through its tail or both sides of body. Freshwater drum prefer crayfish to any other type of live or dead bait.



PREPARED BAITS

From homemade concoctions to commercially-made baits, these are primarily used for catching bottom-feeding fish like catfish and carp. Your choices include canned corn, stink bait, cottonseed cake, hot dogs, dough balls – the list goes on with this type of bait. Fishing with treble hooks works best to keep the bait from being flung off during casting.

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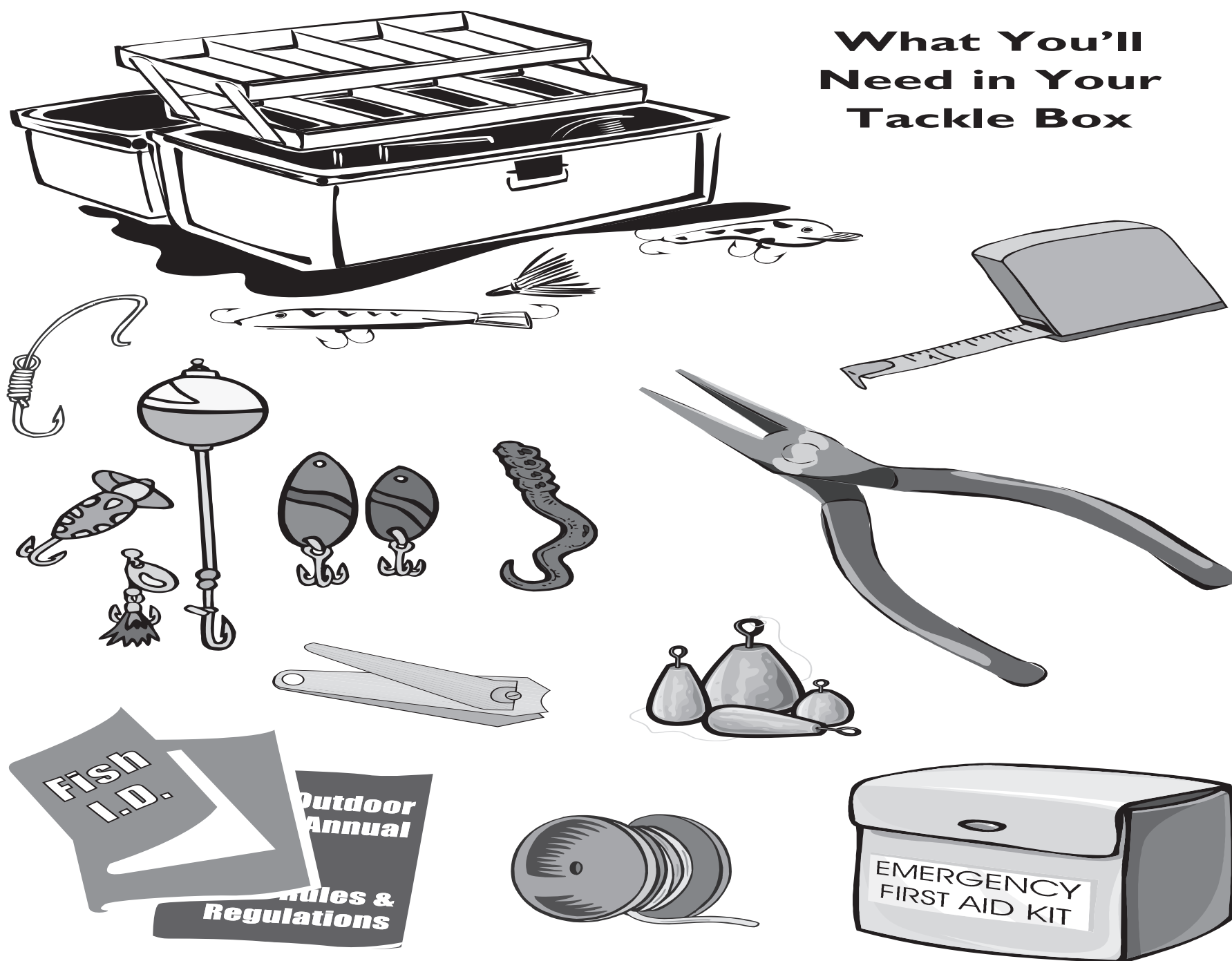
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What You'll
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Tackle Box



WHAT GOES IN THE TACKLE BOX

Pliers

Nail clippers (to clip line)

Small first aid kit

Hooks (various sizes, depending on the type of fish you are targeting)

Bobbers

Weights (sinkers)

Snap swivels

Artificial lures

(plugs, spinners, spoons or soft plastics)

Stringer for keeping fish

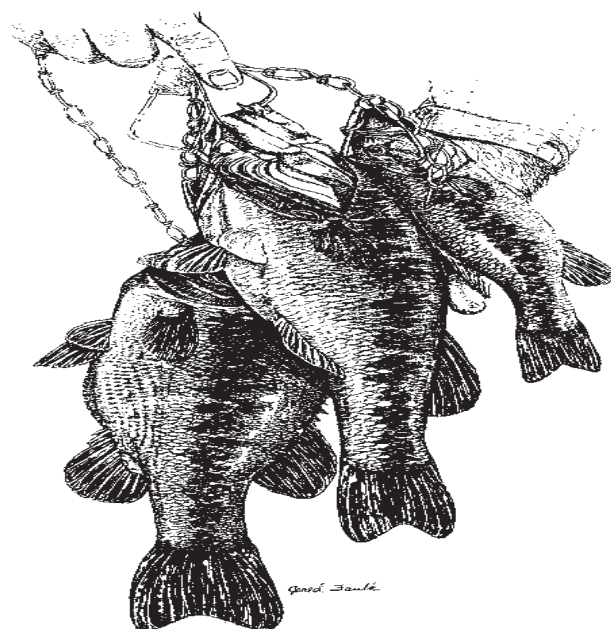
(only if you plan to keep and eat the fish)

Measuring tape

Outdoor Annual – Rules and Regulations

Fish identification card or booklet

Small spool of monofilament fishing line
and oil for lubricating the reel



Selection of artificial lures will depend on what fish you are targeting. When selecting artificial lures, it is wise to choose lures that are designed to fish at different water levels, such as top water poppers and diving plugs.

Other items to take along with you on your fishing trip:

- Camera
- Small can of bug repellent
- Cell phone

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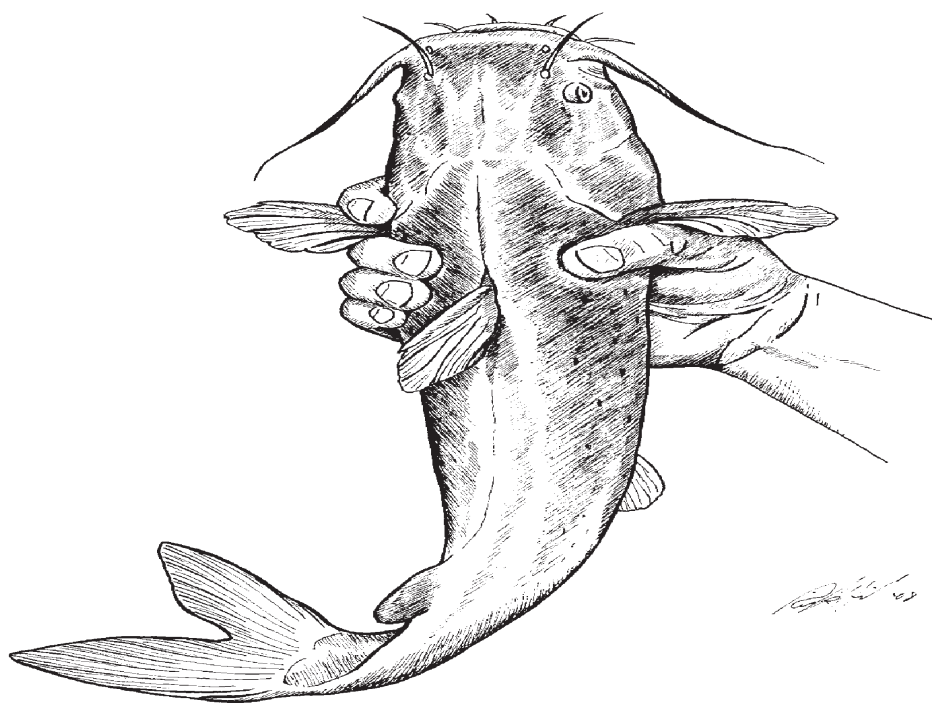
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HOW TO HANDLE FISH

Handling fish properly protects both you and the fish. Some fish have sharp fins or teeth that can cut you if you don't hold them correctly. Thus, different fish species need to be handled in different ways. Hold some fish by the jaw, such as bass or trout, and others along the body, such as a catfish. Learn by watching an experienced angler, but keep the following rules in mind:

1. Always wet your hands first before handling fish. Wet hands are less likely to damage the protective coating of mucous on the outside of the fish. This slimy layer helps protect the fish's skin from disease and makes it glide easily in the water.
2. Don't allow fish to flop around on the bank, the dock, or the floor of the boat. If keeping fish, put them on ice or in a bucket of cool water.
3. If you are not keeping the fish, take the fish off the hook as soon as possible. Gently lower it into the water until it begins to swim away. If it isn't ready to swim, you may need to slowly swish it in the water first. Remember, no fish is a "junk" or "trash" fish. All fish play important roles in the aquatic ecosystem.
4. If you are not keeping the fish, using barbless hooks can make it easier to take the fish off the hook.

CATFISH



FISHING SAFETY

1. Youth should only go fishing under adult supervision.
2. Keep at least one rod's length between you and the next angler before, during and after you cast.
3. Look behind you and to the side before casting to avoid hooking anyone or anything.
4. Consider fishing with barbless hooks or have an adult bend the barbs down with pliers. If you hook yourself, anyone else, or a fish, a barbless hook will be easier to remove.
5. Wear a properly fitting life jacket and fasten it securely. Eighty-five percent of drowning victims would be alive today if they were wearing a life jacket.
6. To rescue a person who falls into the water: **Reach** the person with something they can hang on to; **Throw** a flotation device to them; **Row** out to them if you are in a boat; and then **Go** – for help! Don't jump in and risk drowning yourself.
7. Use the "buddy system" when fishing. If something happens to you like slipping down a bank, your buddy can help.
8. When fishing in hot or cold weather, protect head, eyes, hands, feet, and skin from exposure to wind and sun. In hot months, wear light-colored clothing, hat, sunscreen, and take plenty of water with you. In cold months, wear layers of clothing, gloves, a knit hat and water-proof shoes.
9. If your line gets snagged when you have cast it out, gently jiggle your line back and forth and from side to side to loosen it. If you pull too hard, the hook and line could come loose with such force that it could fly back at you and hit you (or someone else).
10. When cleaning a fish, always use safety glasses and gloves to protect eyes and hands. Always cut away from your body when using a knife. The regulations booklet has good fish-cleaning tips for you.

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