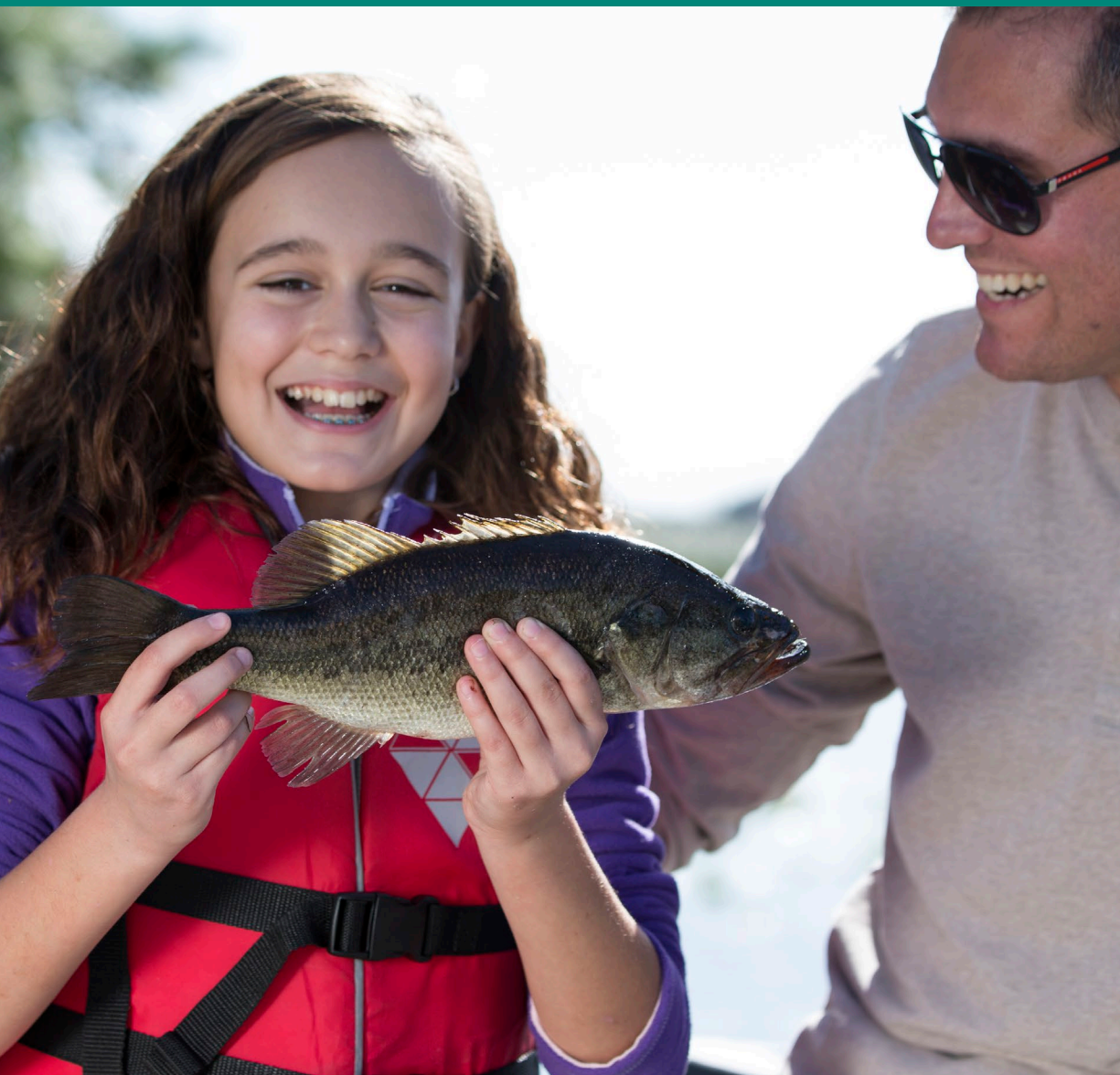


Bass Fishing

Quick Guide



TAKEMEFISHING™.org

Tailored Tackle®
Fishing Kits & Combos

License & Registration

One of the most important items any angler needs before they go fishing is their fishing license. Each state has their own regulations and offers daily, short-term, or annual licenses. [TakeMeFishing.org](https://www.takemefishing.org) has a great tool to find out where to buy a fishing license, the types of fishing licenses available, age requirements, fishing regulations and online purchasing.

1 Click the button below

GET YOUR FISHING LICENSE

2 Select your state

3 Review the best licensing options to fit your fishing needs

LICENSE INFORMATION BY STATE

Alabama	Illinois	Montana	Rhode Island
Alaska	Indiana	Nebraska	South Carolina
Arizona	Iowa	Nevada	South Dakota
Arkansas	Kansas	New Hampshire	Tennessee
California	Kentucky	New Jersey	Texas
Colorado	Louisiana	New Mexico	Utah
Connecticut	Maine	New York	Vermont
Delaware	Maryland	North Carolina	Virginia
District Of Columbia	Massachusetts	North Dakota	Washington
Florida	Michigan	Ohio	West Virginia
Georgia	Minnesota	Oklahoma	Wisconsin
Hawaii	Mississippi	Oregon	Wyoming
Idaho	Missouri	Pennsylvania	

North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania

Virginia
Washington
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming



TAKEMEFISHING.org [Learn To Fish & Hunt](#) [Where To Fish & Hunt](#) [Aids & Info](#) [Get Licensed](#)

[Home](#) [Registration](#) [Licenses](#) [Fishing License](#)

Get a Washington Fishing License

Purchase a fishing license in Washington, then spend a day fishing for crappie with the kids at Pulhodes Reservoir or testing us prods out at Lake Stevens. Fishing creates an opportunity to teach kids about how to follow rules and identify different types of fish. Buy your license, read the fishing regulations, and take a kid fishing in Washington.

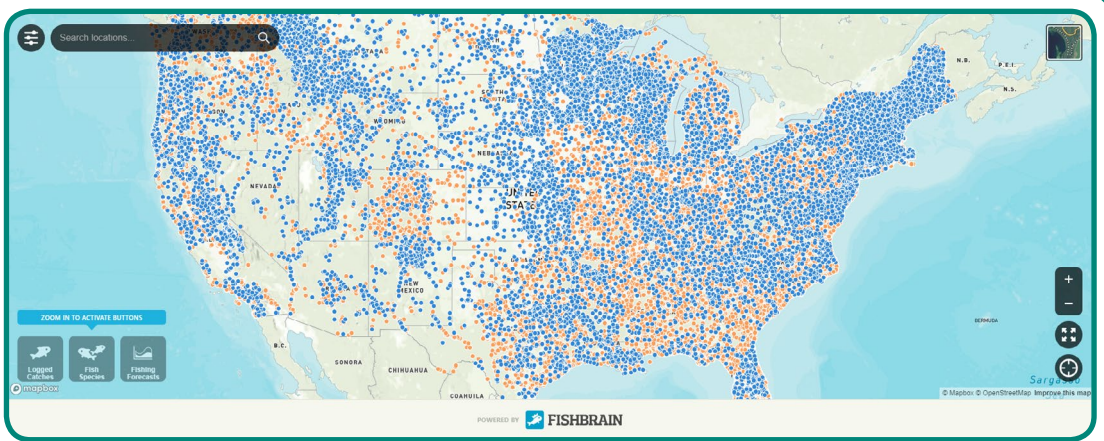
GET A WASHINGTON FISHING LICENSE



Your state's profile has links to resources where you can review the state **fishing regulations** and browse different types of **fishing licenses** available in your area. Many states allow you to purchase your license online and print out a temporary license to go fishing the same day. Remember to review the **age requirements** as children, seniors and veterans often receive discounts and unique opportunities for open fishing.

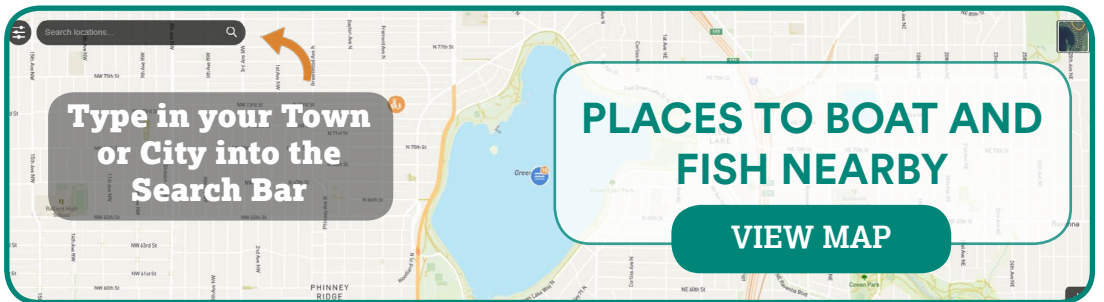
2

Places to Boat & Fish



Ready to get out on the water but not sure where to start?

Click the [VIEW MAP](#) below to find [Places to Fish and Boat](#) across the United States.

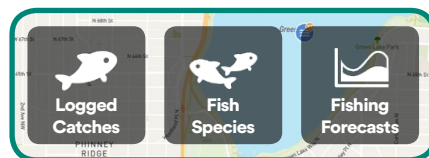


- Body of Water to fish and boat on
- Best Place to Fish and Boat with family-friendly amenities
- Boat Ramp to launch your boat
- Marinas, moorings and supplies
- Bait Shop to buy fishing bait & lures
- Fishing License Vendors
- Charter & Boat rentals
- Fishing Gear & equipment vendors
- Fly Fishing shops.
- Fish Refuge or Hatchery Facility
- Multiple Places of Interest

Use this list of **Key Symbols** on the map to find places to fish, bait shops, and hot fishing bites!

Click on a blue Body of Water icon on a fishing spot near you to:

- Review Logged Catches
- View Photos of Fish Caught
- Filter Fish Species in the Area
- Read Fishing Forecasts
- Get Directions to that Location



Bass Lure Quick Sheet

Fall

Water Temp: 40-70 Depth: 10-15 Ft
Location: Muddy and Grassy Flats

Spinner Bait

5/8 Oz - Green / White

Great for windy & sunny days. Swim deep, kicking up bottom.



Paddletail Swimbait

3/4 Oz - 4" Golden Shiner



Swim through schools of shad and shiners feasting on mayflies.

Carolina Rig

Bounce or pull along the bottom with your sinker leaving the worm dragging behind about 1 foot off the bottom.

1/4 Oz Worm Weight - 6 MM Bead - #7 Swivel - 2/0 Worm Hook - 4" Tube



Winter

Water Temp: 40 and Below Depth: 15-25 Ft
Location: Deep Structure

Lipless Crankbait

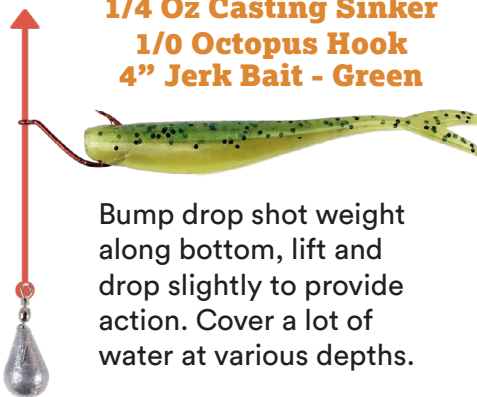
1/2 Oz - Crawdad



Jig and rip up through various depths, prioritizing rocky bottoms and mid-lake structure like humps.

Drop Shot Rig

**1/4 Oz Casting Sinker
1/0 Octopus Hook
4" Jerk Bait - Green**



Bump drop shot weight along bottom, lift and drop slightly to provide action. Cover a lot of water at various depths.



Jig and Grub

**1/4 Oz Plain Jig Head
3" Curl Tail Grub - Brown / Black Flake**

Cast and retrieve, or drift this bait. Bounce the grub along the bottom across mid-lake structure. Ideal for rocky bottoms, and good year round.

Bass Lure Quick Sheet

Spring

Water Temp: 50-70

Depth: 2-4 Ft

Location: Shore Line Transition

Squarebill Crankbait

5/16 Oz - Shad Blue



Steadily retrieve across shore-line transitions and newly emergent vegetation. Great for ponds.

Wacky Rig

1/0 Red Octopus Hook-
O-Ring - 5" Stick Bait
- Green Pumpkin



Drop wacky rig on top of spawning beds, falling in place to trigger aggressive reaction on the wiggle.

Summer

Water Temp: 70+

Depth: 6-12 Ft

Location: Shady Cover

Skirted Jig

5/8 Oz - Brown/Green

Pitch & flip under shady cover like docks, branches, and hard to reach spots.



Texas Rig

1/4 Oz Bullet Weight
3/0 EWG Worm Hook
6" Finesse Worm - Green
Pumpkin



Thump against the bottom, bouncing over logs and punching through brush piles. Great all year!

Pitch into lily pads & exposed vegetation, popping the frog by driving down 2-4" on the retrieve. Let bass hit twice.

Topwater Frog

5/16 Oz
Green / Yellow



Top 10 Bass Tips

1) Top 10% Rule

On average, the majority of bass will be found in 10% of the lake. Not a specific location that makes up 10%, but a specific combination of characteristics that make up 10% of the water body.

2) Characteristics Over Location

It is not about finding a spot, but finding a combination of factors which is often spread out in pockets of the lake. Finding the right combination of depth, structure, cover, water temp and clarity is more valuable than a general location.

3) Stay Mobile

Cover a lot of water to find the 10%. Larger bass often form in pods of 2-3 or go it alone. Duplicate a succesful situation over more water to keep catching fish.

4) Think Deep

Larger bass are typically deeper. Big bass need more oxygen, and they move less frequently. It is difficult for them to maintain stasis in shallow water that often shifts in temperature, clarity, and light penetration.

5) Sound & Sight

Bass have strong vision, alert hearing, and sensativity to virbation. These characteristics drive bass to predatory reactions when they come into contact with lures that manipulate these traits.



Top 10 Bass Tips

6) Strike Short

Bass are muscular not speedy, so quick strikes vs. long pursuits are more common. Bass bite when provoked, their preferred strategy is to sit and wait until prey is in close range. Consistently hit specific targets vs. endless expanses.

7) Light Conditions

Most predators prefer shade and at least semi-darkness. Bass consume more oxygen than their prey and their strong vision makes for light sensitivity. Target smaller areas with cover that provides shade on sunny days. Target cover on structure. Fish greater areas when clouds or weather conditions provide greater shade.



Largemouth Bass

8) Feeding Moods

Target underwater cover such as boulders, logs and stumps by rolling a snagless setup like a spinnerbait over and onto the sides of cover. Make sure to really thump against obstructions and let your lure roll over them. Rolling over the shady side opposite the sun is particularly effective.

9) Daily Movement

Early morning and late evening drive bass to move shallower based on light conditions. This allows a more predictable target area, and an easier way to approach bass from the shore or on a dock.

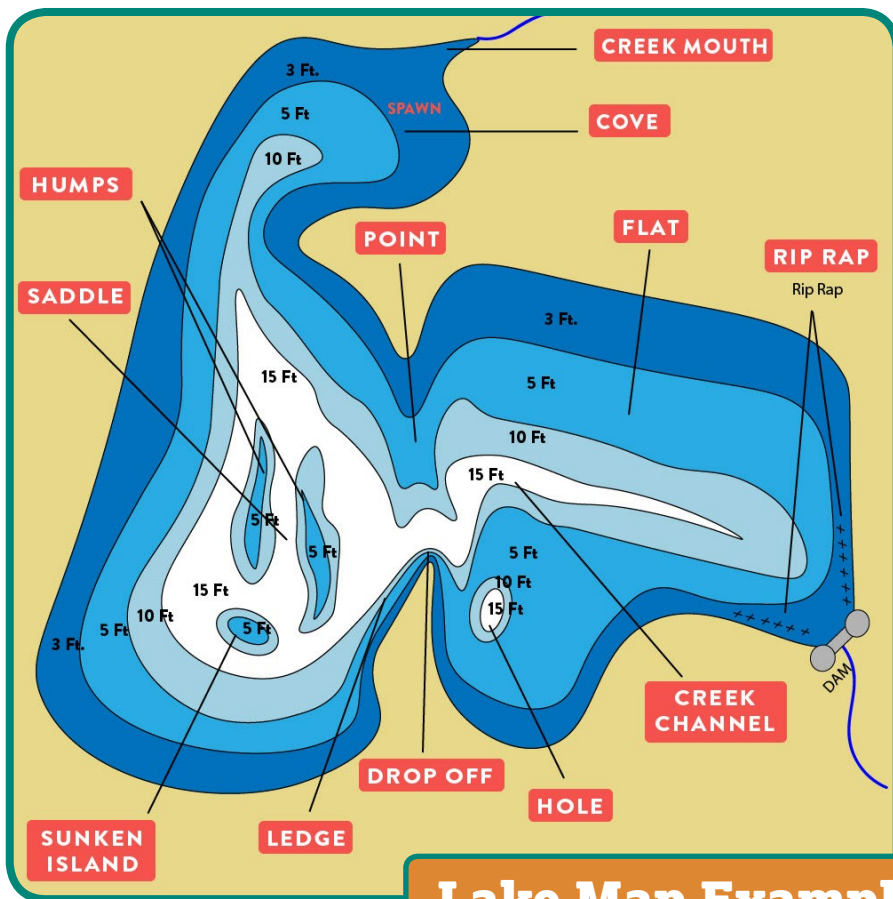
10) Action for Reaction

Outside of feeding hours, bass strike lures that question their dominance. Get your lures to provide action right in front of a bass during off hours to antagonize a reaction.

Locating Bass

Structure

Bass hold to it, particularly where transitions in structure occur. Changes in depth or bottom consistency are the general markers of structural change. Common structural features that support these changes are creek channels, points, humps, holes, and drop offs.



Lake Map Example

Mapping Structure

Creek channels are an ideal starting place because their s-turns and sloping framework cover long expansions of water that serve as underwater highways for bass and baitfish. Seconded by points and drop offs, these structures relate to the surrounding topography and corral fish along the greater outlay of the water body. Humps, holes, and sunken islands serve as an oasis drawing in fish from the greater expanse. Use a lake map or an app to get a general sense of your lake's layout. If fishing from a boat, electronic sonar will best assist you in identifying deeper water structure.

Locating Bass

Cover

Bass use cover to find shade and ambush prey. Cover is made up of natural and man made features that provide ideal characteristics for bass to feed. Examples of cover are docks, weed beds, boulders, logs, sunken trees, and lily pads.



Identifying Cover

Docks and overhang structures are easy to fish cover as they do not require electronics and are accessible by boaters and shore anglers. Boulders and brush piles require the use of electronics to target effectively and are typically less accessible from shore. Lily pads and thick vegetation shelter bass in shallower waters where deeper, cooler water is scarce.

Structure & Cover

Your goal is to position yourself on structure (where bass are holding) and target areas that supply cover (where bass are primed for striking). An example of this would be at the end of a dock that has a steep transition in depth. Bass will often position themselves along the changes of a drop off, and the smaller area where the dock provides shade is an ideal position for a bass to feed along that drop-off while they benefit from the shade.

Feeding Habits

Bass naturally feed twice a day, often in the morning and evening. Light conditions and moon cycles kick bass into high gear as they roam from their inter-day sanctuaries to forage heavy shallows. Early morning and late evening feeding hours are typically the best bass fishing. However, bass will still strike with reaction in-between these times.

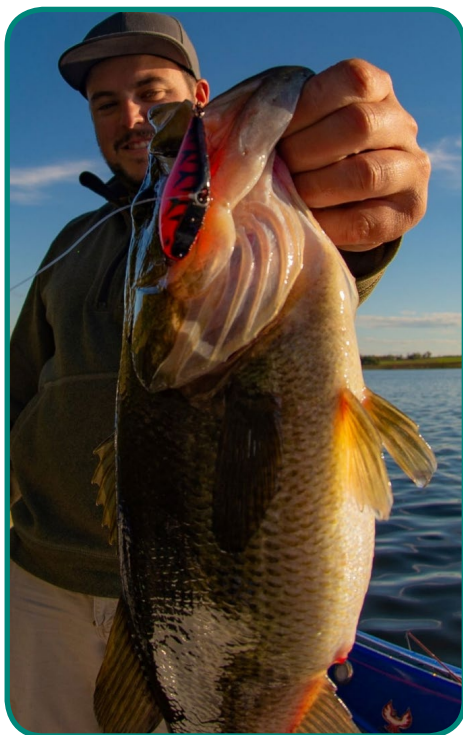
Bass Spawn

Spring when water temps reach 65 degrees

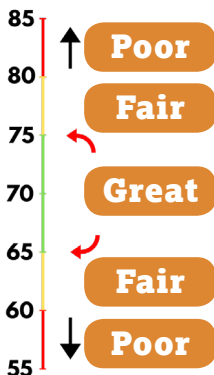
South = March/April

North = May/June

Bass spawn in 3-5 ft of water in sheltered bays.



Bass in spawn are not actively feeding but both male & female can be provoked into bites. Spawn is a popular time of year to fish because bass spawn in condensed areas of calm, shallow water forming easy to spot spawning beds. These beds are 1 ft diameter circles cleared of debris. We highly stress catch and release during this time and to be conscious of your disturbance to the spawning beds.



Ideal Bass Temps

Ideal Bass Temps: 65-75 Degrees

Sudden Drop of Temp = Bad (Cold Front)

Sudden Rise in Temp = Good (Warm Front)

Above 80 or Below 60 is Mediocre Fishing

Popular Techniques

1) Working Bottom

Fish off the bottom. Bounce your soft bait rigs or jigs along the bottom, alternating between dragging steadily and then lifting and dropping your bait with pause.

2) Edges

Cast along the edge of a structural transition vs. across from it. This tactic targets the correct area longer. Cast along the edge of cover like weed lines as well. Bass are not usually deep in the weeds but off to the side where the shade is cast. Let your bait cover the water column from the top edge of the weeds to the bottom, then primarily work your bait off the bottom on its way back.

3) Rolling

Target underwater cover such as boulders, logs and stumps by rolling a spinner-bait over and onto the sides of the cover. Make sure to really thump against it and let your lure roll over, particularly to the shady side opposite the sun.

4) Pitching

Pitch your lures to target confined areas and overhanging structure quietly. Let your line out the length of the pole and grab your lure (typically soft bait), loading up your rod tip by pulling the bait to your side. Aim at your secluded target and release the bait letting the rod sling your lure gently to the zone.

5) Flipping

Similar to pitching but with heavier baits, flipping gets crankbaits and jigs into the tough to reach targets. Let out about 10-15 ft of line, pulling it to the side between your reel and the first rod guide. Pinch the line above your reel and pendulum swing the bait towards the location releasing your pinched line at the end of the pendulum swing.



Fundamental Lures

1) Spinnerbait

Popular for the rolling technique, bump spinnerbaits against logs and boulders rolling them over the cover. Commonly used to cover grassy bottoms at a steady pace, spinnerbaits are best applied when windy and clear water lets the blade reflect light and stand out.



2) Crankbait

Crankbait's cover a lot of water fast and should be worked around cover to avoid hang-ups.

Lipless crankbaits are best for deeper structure like humps and drop offs. Rip the sinking lure up from the bottom to trigger a rattling vibration. Then let the lure waggle back down like a wounded baitfish.

Shallow diving, squarebill cranks should be used on near shore cover and the edges of weed beds. A steady retrieve lets the lure do the work. Alternatively, a hard crank and pause will let this lure dive down and slowly rise to mimic a wounded baitfish.

Many other cranks have there place in-between these two styles but most structure can be worked by alternating the Squarebill and Lipless Crankbait.

Squarebill Crank



Lipless Crankbait

3) Topwater Frog



Topwater lures should be used sparingly for ideal circumstances. Topwater Frogs are best for shallow water ponds and sloughs where

bass are using thick cover like lilly pads and mil-foil to seek shade without deeper options. Popping the frog down into the water and letting it float back up over small openings is effective. Pause and let the bass hit 2 or 3 times.

4) Bass Jigs (Weedless Skirt)

Weedless, skirted jigs are the staple for flipping under overhanging branches. Skirt jigs can punch through heavy cover like brush piles and weeds. The first fall down is a primary driver for bass bites. Mimic sweeping lifts and pauses. For a more finesse bite, tip with a grub and jig 1 ft off the bottom. The plastic will float upwards so your jig presents a tasty tail.



5) Swimbaits

The paddling thud of a swimbait mimics the cruising nature of a baitfish. The swimbait design offers a baitfish profile to target big bass during their peak feeding hours. A swimbait should be worked where schools of baitfish are present to match the forage and add a little incentive with the thumping paddle tail. These larger profile baits can be intimidating and should generally be reserved for visibly active schools of bait.



Always maintain a diverse selection of lures in various colors for success. The fundamental lures in the Tailored Tackle [Bass Fishing Kit](#) are a great way to get started.



Rigging up Soft Baits

1) Texas Rig + Finesse Worm

Use the Texas rig to punch through weeds and knock against timber. Bounce the rig off the bottom and pause to let the worm wiggle above the weight, or roll the rig over rocks and stumps where vegetation is sparse. The Texas rig is versatile and can be pitched year round in various habitats.



2) Carolina Rig + Tube Bait

The bottom dragging option for heavy cover like weedy or mucky bottoms. Bounce or pull along the bottom with your sinker leaving the worm dragging behind about a foot off the bottom. Use a 1-2 ft leader of fluorocarbon leader.



3) Wacky Rig + Stick Bait

Cast the Wacky Rig into shallow spawning beds and let the stick bait wiggle its way down lifting and dropping around a dialed in area.



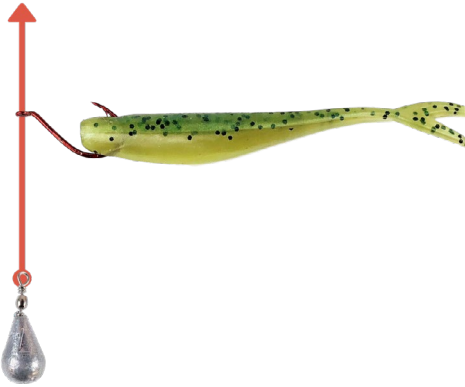
Rigging up Soft Baits

4) Jig & Grub

A versatile tactic that works for multiple species, the jig & grub is a go to tactic year round. Jig it along the bottom on deeper, mid lake structure throughout the cold months. During the warm months, swim it along shoreline transitions and weed lines for a mixed bag of species.



5) Drop-Shot Rig + Jerk Bait Shad



Tie your hook leaving 1 ft of line as the tag. Thread it back through your hook's eye and tie on a 1/4 oz casting weight. This rig will get your bait into deep structure like drop offs and mid lake humps. You can drag along the deep bottom with your bait in the strike zone and avoid snags.

6) Skirt Jig & Grub

Tipping your skirt jig with a grub provides an upright target while your jig is digging into the bottom. This mimics a retreating crustacean to trigger bites.



Tip with a Brown Grub

How to Use a Baitcaster

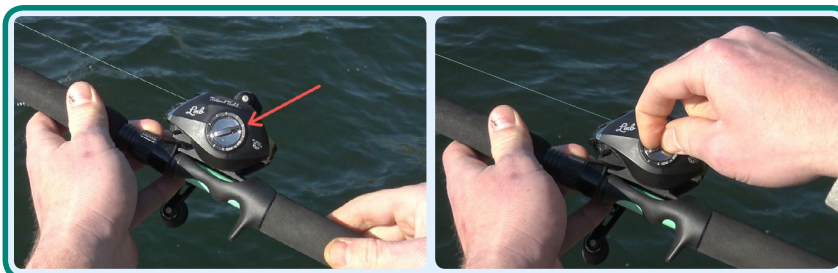


Step 1 - Adjust the Spool Tension

Adjust the Spool Tension every time you tie on a different lure by turning the knob above the reel handle. Turning clockwise will tighten the tension, counter-clockwise will loosen it. Hold the rod at 10 o'clock and loosen the tensioner until the lure drops slowly to the ground. Softly shake the rod to get the lure to fall from the tip. Turn back once or twice after it is set.



Step 2 - Adjust the Brake System



The brake system controls how fast line will stop at the end of a cast. A setting of 9 will slow the spool down faster than a setting of

1. A setting near 4 is what most avid anglers prefer, but start out at 9 until you are comfortable casting. Then as you improve, try lowering the settings slowly to help avoid backlashes.

Step 3 - Adjust the Drag System

The drag system controls how fast your line feeds when engaged with a fish. Tighten the drag by rotating the wheel clockwise, and counter-clockwise to loosen. You should be able to give your line a steady pull and have line leave your reel with some tension.



Step 4 - Holding the Rod & Reel

Place your right hand around the rods pistol grip, with your index finger clutching the trigger and your thumb positioned over the line and the release button. Grip the butt of the rod with your left hand for casting. When reeling in, switch your hands so that your left is pistol gripping the rod and your right is reeling in the handle.



Casting a Baitcaster

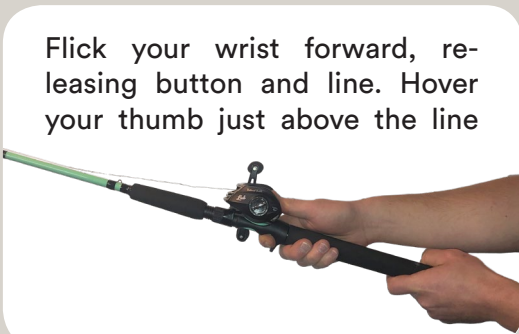
Thumb pushed down on button & line, rod out straight in front of you



Maintain pressure, lift rod up and slightly over shoulder



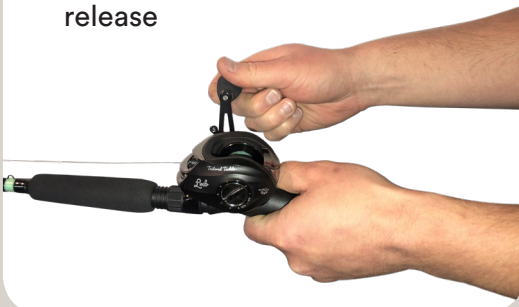
Flick your wrist forward, releasing button and line. Hover your thumb just above the line



As the lure slows down, stop the line with your thumb, just before the lure hits the water



Reel the handle forward to lock in spool and turn off the release



Mastering the steps to baitcasting is a challenge and requires practice. Beginner focused baitcasters like the Tailored Tackle [Bass Baitcasting Combo](#) is a good place to start as the features are friendly to new anglers and the Pop-Out-Spool makes tangles easy to fix.

