

Fishing – Spincasting



Winneshiek County Conservation Equipment and Recommendations:

- **Who:** 3rd grade and up
- **What:** 32 poles, staff trained in Fish Iowa! programming
- **Where:** Lake Meyer Park, Silver Springs Park, Trout Run Park, Trout Run Trail fishing access points. See *Resource - Winneshiek County Fishing Guide* or call 563.534.7145 for more information.

Introduction

Fishing is enjoyed by more than a ½ million Iowans as a form of recreation. Perhaps its popularity is due to its versatility as an activity. A person can choose from several kinds of fishing: spincasting, bait casting, fly fishing, ice fishing, and more. Locations for fishing are as varied as the style – lakes, streams, rivers, oceans, and private ponds just to name a few. Fishing can be done in any season, and it can be as simple or as complex as the person participating desires. Those who consider fishing a serious hobby have probably spent quite a bit of money on equipment. However, if a person is just getting into it, one only needs a stick, a short piece of line, a hook, and a worm to be successful.

Spincasting is the easiest and most commonly taught type of fishing for beginners. It can be fun, rewarding, and exciting for any age. It is also a good opportunity for multi-generation interaction. Start with these basics to get beginners off to a good start!

A Brief History

Fishing was one of the early ways people obtained food, using clubs, spears, nets, traps, and hooks made from bones, thorns, wood, shells, and stone to catch fish. Excavations in Iowa have uncovered fishing hooks made from the toe bone of a deer or a bison rib at sites where communities existed between 900 and 1400 AD. Some people around the world still fish mainly to obtain food, rather than for fun, a practice known as *subsistence fishing*.

As cultures advanced and tasks were subdivided, *commercial fishing* came into being. Although commercial fishing is concentrated in coastal areas of the United States, the Mississippi River also supports commercial fishing. The yearly average commercial catch along Iowa's border from the Mississippi River is almost three million pounds of fish.

Recreational or sport fishing is the most recently evolved form of fishing. It was established during medieval times when people started fishing for pleasure. Today, nearly 60 million Americans fish for recreation.

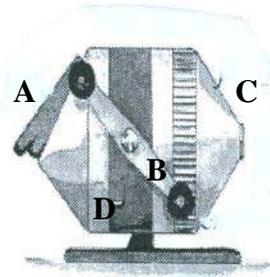
Equipment/Supplies

- Spincasting poles (rigged with bobber, sinker, and hook for beginners)
- Bait (commonly used: worms, minnows, crickets, grasshoppers, leeches)
- Tackle box with basics (needle nose pliers, bobbers, sinkers, hooks, line)

Parts of a Rod and Reel

Basic parts of a spincast reel include:

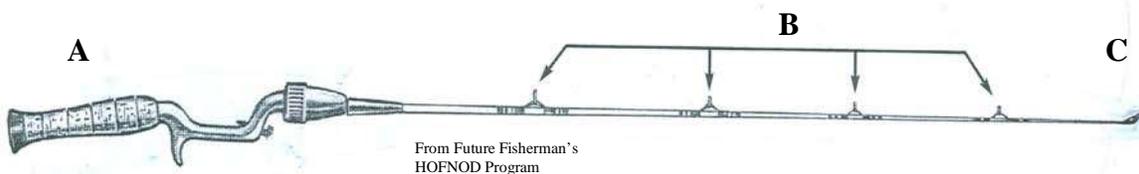
- A. thumb stop
- B. crank handle
- C. front cover
- D. drag adjustment



From the Fish Iowa!
Teaching Module

Basic parts of a rod include:

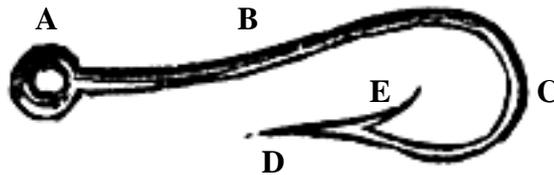
- A. Grip
- B. Guides
- C. Tip



From Future Fisherman's
HOFNOD Program

Basic parts of a hook include:

- A. Eye
- B. Shank
- C. Bend
- D. Point
- E. Barb



Regulations

Fishing regulations in Iowa are set by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. For a complete list of rules, refer to the Iowa DNR website or the current Iowa Fishing Regulations.

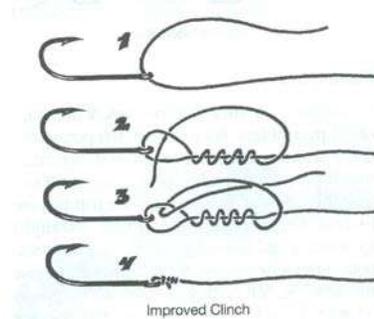
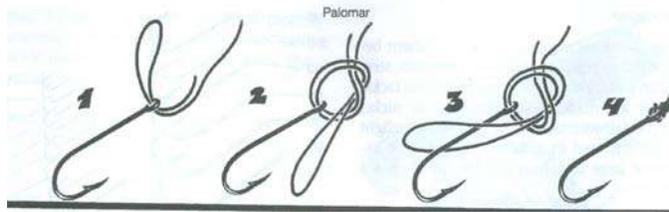
A few of the basic rules include:

- A fishing license is required for any person age 16 and older
- You must carry your license with you when fishing
- Check length and daily limits for the body of water you are fishing
- When fishing by hook and line, you may not use more than 2 hooks per pole and 2 poles per person
- Make sure the bait you are using is legal for the body of water you are fishing
- Ask permission to fish on privately owned ponds and stream banks

Skills & Strategies

Knot Tying

It is important to use an actual fishing knot. Other knots may result in lost terminal tackle because the knot slipped or the line broke. Keep in mind that line becomes weaker at the point of the knot. The palomar and improved clinch knots are both used to tie terminal tackle to the end of a line. Other knots are used for other purposes. For example, the blood knot is used to splice together two pieces of line. For written instructions and animated views of several fishing knots, visit www.animatedknots.com.



Images from Future Fisherman's Sport Fishing and Aquatic Resources Handbook

Baiting the Hook

Putting the bait on the hook properly helps keep the bait secure while casting, makes the bait more appealing to fish, and prevents fish from easily stealing it. Ways to put common bait on a hook include:

- Nightcrawler: put the point through the worm's nose and thread the worm onto the hook until the hook is covered
- Minnow: Hook through the lips from the bottom, through the tail, or through the back below the dorsal fin
- Insect: Hook through the back (thorax) or belly (abdomen)

Casting

This skill is not about distance, but accuracy. Accurate casting allows the angler to put the bait where the fish are. The following steps are for an overhand cast. However, there are other methods to cast a spincasting reel.

1. Use two hands to cast; use only the wrist and forearm, rather than the entire arm.
2. Grasp rod grip with one hand, place the other hand in front of the reel.
3. Face target, then turn body about a quarter turn with arm holding rod grip being closer to the target. Aim rod tip toward target about level with your eyes.
4. Press in the thumb stop and hold down.
5. Swiftly and smoothly, bend your casting arm at the elbow, raising your forearm until your hand reaches eye level. When the rod is straight up, change direction of rod by moving both forearms forward slightly.
6. When rod reaches eye level, release the thumb button to let line release.

Troubleshooting:

- Lure flies straight up: thumb stop released too soon
- Lure lands right in front of you: thumb stop released too late
- Line will not come off pole: line tangled at rod tip

Setting the Hook

Setting the hook pulls the point of the hook into the fish's jaw so that the fish will be secured on your line and can't spit out the hook.

1. While waiting for a fish to take your hook, keep the rod tip low and reel up slack line.
2. Once a fish has taken the hook, quickly and firmly snap the rod tip back toward you using primarily your wrists and forearms (elbows should stay near your body).
3. Keep the rod tip up and slightly bent with the line tight as you reel in the fish.

Troubleshooting:

- No fish on the hook: give the fish longer to take the hook into the mouth
- Fish swallows hook: pay close attention so you can set the hook sooner

Safety

- Watch for obstructions when casting (overhead power lines, trees, and snags).
- When casting, be sure there is no one standing behind or beside you that could get snagged with a hook.
- Wear a cap and sunglasses to protect your eyes from flying hooks.
- If eating your fish, be sure the waters where you caught do not prohibit consumption due to contamination.
- Line hardens and becomes brittle with age. Replace occasionally so it doesn't snap unexpectedly.

Extensions

Natural Sciences: Stream studies, water cycles, water quality and pollution, watersheds, habitat, aquatic ecosystems, invasive species, population management

Physics: trajectories, momentum

Math: population studies, graphing, percentages

Resources

- Fish Iowa!: Teaching module developed by Iowa DNR Aquatic Education Program providing training, diagrams, activities, and lessons.
- Future Fisherman Foundation: Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs: Provides information on fish biology, human dimensions, and life skills.
<http://www.futurefisherman.org/f3programs/hooked-on-fishing-not-on-drugs-hofnod/>
- 4H Fish Iowa Responsible Angling Guide: Received as part of Fish Iowa! Training. Contact the Winneshie County Extension Office at 563-382-2949 for more information.
- Sport Fishing Aquatic Resources Handbook: Available from Future Fisherman Foundation.
<http://www.futurefisherman.org/resources/>
- Project FISH: Activity ideas, educational supplies and equipment. <http://www.projectfish.org/>
- American Sport Fishing Association. www.asafishing.org
- IOWATER: Volunteer water quality monitoring program. <http://www.iowater.net/>