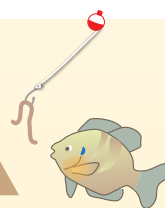


PIER NOTES

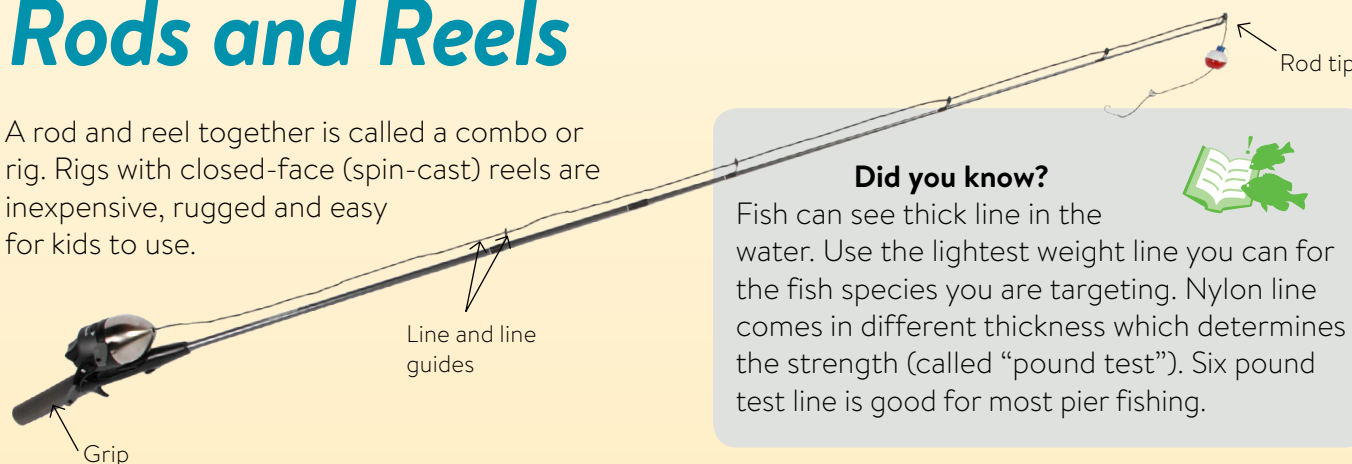
A take-along guide for fishing with kids



Rods and Reels, Rigging and Knot-tying, Bait and Lures

Rods and Reels

A rod and reel together is called a combo or rig. Rigs with closed-face (spin-cast) reels are inexpensive, rugged and easy for kids to use.



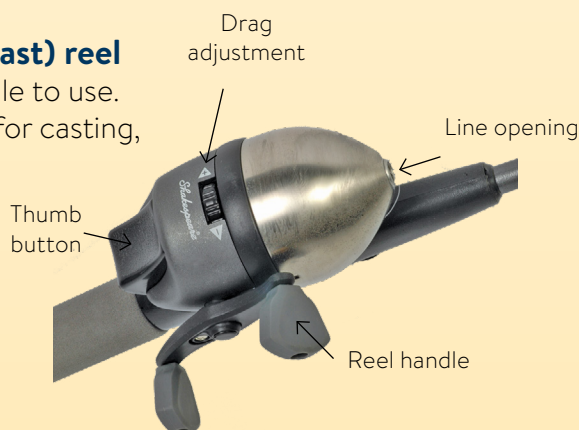
Did you know?

Fish can see thick line in the water. Use the lightest weight line you can for the fish species you are targeting. Nylon line comes in different thickness which determines the strength (called “pound test”). Six pound test line is good for most pier fishing.



The closed-face (spin-cast) reel

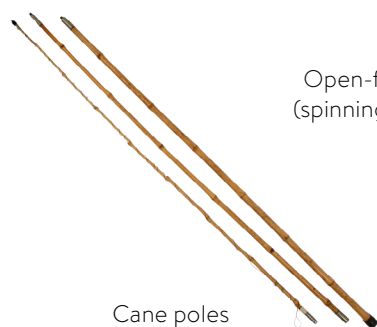
Closed-face reels are simple to use. The thumb button is used for casting, the reel handle brings the line back in, and the drag adjustment controls the tension on the line when a fish is pulling on it.



Dos and don'ts

Don't lay your rig on the ground where it can get stepped on or get dirt inside the reel. Do replace old line once a year, as it gets weaker with age. Recycle old line at your local bait shop.

Other types of fishing rigs



Cane poles

Open-face (spinning) rig



Bait casting



Fly-fishing rig



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For more information about rods and reels, see Chapter 5: Lesson 1 in the MinnAqua Leader's Guide, *Fishing: Get in the Habitat!* mndnr.gov/minnaqua/leadersguide

Rigging and Knot-Tying

Attaching the split-shot sinker

Attach a non-lead sinker a few inches up from the hook. Run line through the narrow opening of the sinker, then clamp down on it with a pliers.

Use the right number of sinkers to allow the bobber to float correctly.

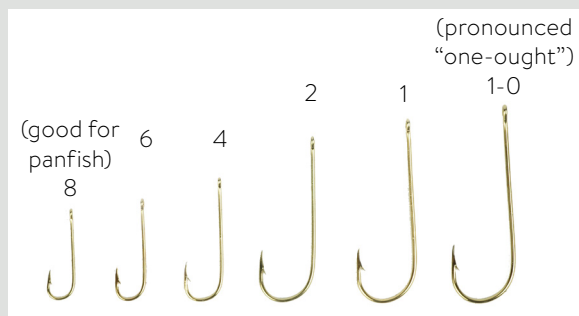


Attaching the push-button bobber

Attach bobber a foot or two up from the hook. Push in the blue button and run line under the brass hook at the red end. Now, push down the **edge** of the blue button and run line under the brass hook at the top.

Did you know?

Hook sizes go in reverse. The smaller the hook, the larger the number it is given.



Attaching the hook

There are many knots to choose from, but the *improved clinch knot* is excellent.

Improved clinch knot

Run line through the eye and twist line around itself about five times.



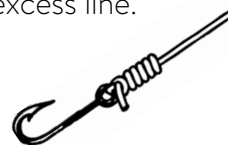
Run the end of the line through the first twist, near the hook.



Run the end of the line through the large loop that you have just made.

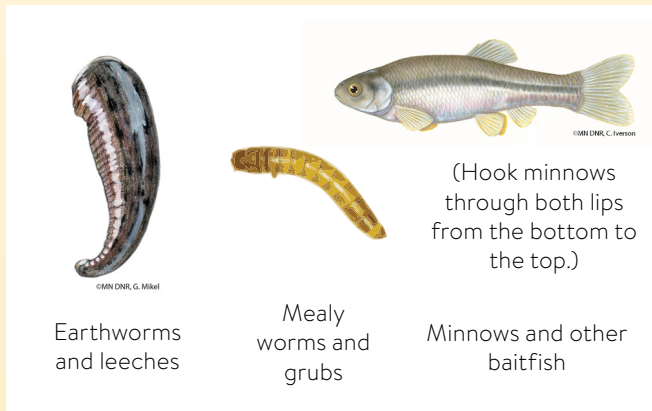


Slide the whole knot down toward the hook, gently tug on the end of the line, then trim the excess line.



Baiting Your Hook

From insects to leeches to minnows, live bait can be anything that a fish would eat in the wild. But, nightcrawlers are a cheap and effective bait that is easy to use and can catch a wide variety of fish.



Did you know?

Earthworms like nightcrawlers are un-American! Earthworms were not found in North or South America 200 years ago, but were brought here by settlers from Europe in the 1800s. They are not part of the native ecosystem and are harmful to our native woodlands. Earthworms break down important organic matter in forests, harming young saplings and native wildflowers. Dispose of unused earthworms IN THE TRASH and teach others about this surprising fact.



MN DNR, Steve Mortensen

How to bait a hook with a nightcrawler

Cut or tear off $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ of worm (you do not need the entire worm).

Hold worm in one hand and hook in the other.

Push the point of the hook through the end of the worm and thread the worm onto the hook.

Push the hook out through the side of the worm once or twice as you push the worm onto the hook.

When finished, most of the hook should be concealed and a small portion of the worm should be left dangling.



Collecting and storing live worms

Pick worms up off the surface of the ground after heavy rains, dig them from soil in your garden, or purchase them from vendors. Store them in a closed container with moistened shredded newspaper in the refrigerator.

Lured by Lures



Artificial lures have some advantages over live bait and are used by many anglers. When it comes to deciding on the right lure, there are really only a handful of basic lure types:



Jigs

Sometimes called a “jighead,” a jig is simply a weight with a hook molded into it. The round weight usually has eyespots and a tail of feathers, plastic, or hair to make the jig resemble an insect or small fish.



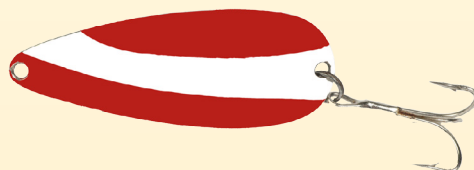
Plastic worms

A plastic or rubber version of the real thing, often infused with a chemical that gives the lure an attractive smell or taste (to the fish). Slide it onto a hook or jig and you’re ready to go.



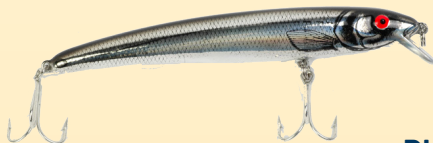
Spinners

Standard spinners, weight-forward spinners and spinnerbaits are all different versions of a similar idea. All spinners consist of one or two shiny metal blades that spin around a shaft as the lure is pulled through the water. The spinning blades produce flashes and vibrations that the fish can see, feel and hear.



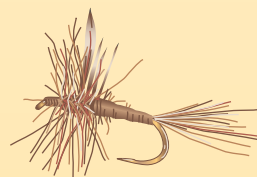
Spoons

A spoon is a single, curved metal blade that wobbles as it is pulled through the water. Usually shiny on one side and colorful on the other, a spoon imitates the shape, movement and colorful flashing of a small fish.



Plugs

“Plug” is a very generic term for any lure that looks like a small baitfish with hooks attached. There are many different kinds. Diving plugs (called “crankbaits”) usually have a plastic lip that causes them to dive and wiggle as they are pulled along beneath the water. Surface plugs float on the water’s surface. “Poppers” and “chuggers” are surface plugs with a concave front that makes a sound and splash when the lure is twitched across the water.



Flies

Fly anglers often use artificial lures that mimic the insects that hatch from rivers and streams. Some are designed to float on the surface of the water, while others are designed to sink. Flies are often used to attract trout, but work great for panfish too.



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For more information about artificial lures, see Chapter 5: Lesson 4 and Lesson 6 in the MinnAqua Leader’s Guide, *Fishing: Get in the Habitat!* mndnr.gov/minnaqua/leadersguide

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