

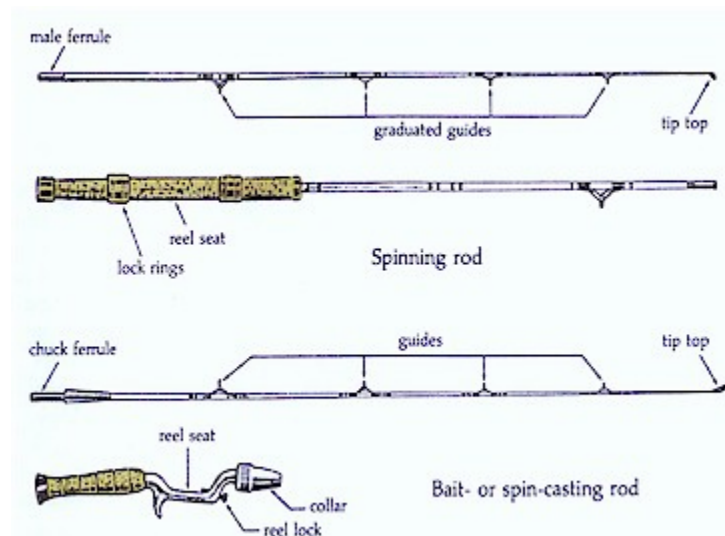
To fish, you'll need a few items: a pole or rod and reel, some line, hooks, bobbers, sinkers, lures, bait ... and fish. (Fish make fishing much more pleasant. You'll learn how to find them later.)



Reels

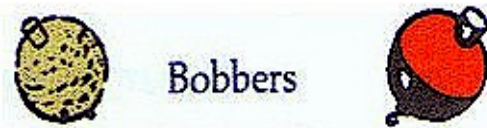
A **cane pole** is inexpensive and easy to use, but the **rod and reel** allow you to cast a greater distance from the shore or boat. Sporting goods stores carry a selection of rods made with fiberglass, bamboo, graphite and other materials, as well as closed (spin casting), open (spinning) and free-spool (casting) reels (which are used mostly for bass and big deep-sea fish.)

Check the rod for sensitivity by holding the handle and placing the tip gently on the voice box of a friend or willing salesclerk. Ask the person to softly recite the alphabet or a favourite story; if you can feel the vibrations from their voice in your hand, the rod will give you a good feel for fish! Rods are classed as ultralight, light, medium, and heavy action.



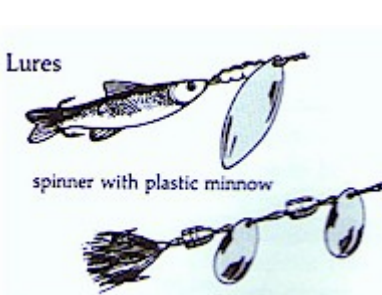
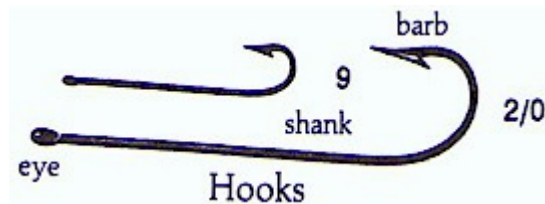
Monofilament fishing line - so-called because it is made of one continuous fiber - is ranked by the amount of weight the line will bear without breaking, though the line can withstand more than the set pound limit. Unless you plan on hooking Moby Dick, you'll want to have four to 10 pound test wound on the reel's spool. On a cane pole, the line should be as long as the pole plus your arm's length; tie the line to the guide at the end of the pole. With a rod and reel, wind the line to within one-eighth inch of the spool rim, then thread the line straight through each guide on the rod. "Mono" isn't the only kind of line. Dacron and other woven lines, for instance, are used for catching muskellunge and other large fish. "Leaders" made out of wire or heavy line are tied to the end of the line before the hook or lure is attached to foil fish with raspy mouths (lots of little razor-sharp teeth) like northern pike and muskellunge.

Sinkers are lead weights used to cast light lures and to drop the bait quickly to the bottom. Used in combination 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.



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.

Hooks are numbered according to size - generally, the smaller the number, the larger the hook - and come in the variety of styles. Hooks hold the bait until a fish takes the bait, and then, if you're lucky, the hook holds the fish. Barbless hooks* are useful for "catch and release" fishing. A snelled hook is a hook with a leader already attached. Get an assortment of hooks and you'll be ready for whatever comes along underwater!



Artificial lures are designed to look and move like something a fish would eat, namely worms, minnows, grasshoppers, flies and other tasty morsels. No doubt you'll be dazzled by the variety - there even are holographic lures that flash a 3-D view of scales or a small school of bait fish - but don't let your wallet be led astray. 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.

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, sunglasses, a hat, lunch. And cookies (Don't forget those!). Anglers unable to resist the "lure" of technology may want to add electronic depth and fish finders or lure color selectors to pinpoint precise lake locations to their fishing gear. These devices come with warranties, but no guarantee that you'll catch fish!