

Fishing Checklist

By Campbell Rodriguez

Preparation

- Lessons** There are places that give fishing lessons and guided fishing trips. The best lesson is practice, practice and more practice!
- Experience** This goes along with lessons and just hanging out experimenting with bait and hooks and lures. Lots of practice will get you the experience you need to be a good fisherman (or woman).
- Equipment** There is quite a bit of equipment to buy if you intend to be serious about fishing, so start out simple at first, and see if you will stick with it.
- Clubs** Fishing clubs are fun, and you can pick up tons of great information there, and lots of friends, too.
- Permission** Check and make sure you have permission to fish from the owner of the area if it is not public.

If Fishing from a Boat

- Oars/Paddles** Depending on the type of boat you use, make sure you have some of these on hand.
- Rope** This is necessary for any boat, so stock up - you may need to pull yourself into a dock, tie up, or throw a life preserver or someone in the water.
- Anchor** Having the boat stay in the same place while you're fishing lets you take advantage of schooling areas where fish are plentiful.
- Life jackets/PFDs** These are required no matter where you fish at, so have at least two per boat.
- Seat cushions** For people who prefer to be comfortable while sitting down fishing, cushions do make it easier.

Fishing Equipment

- Tackle Box** This does not need to be fancy, but it does need to hold all of the lures, bait and other things you will use.
- Fishing License** This is an absolute must, because if the local authorities pull you over, and demand to see this, you have to have it.
- Rods** Make sure that your rods are well taken care of, and inspect them on a regular basis.
- Lures and Bait** You will need a variety for the different types of fish you may want to catch.
- Hooks and Sinkers** Again, a variety will be needed for different types of fish.
- Knives** You will need both a fillet knife and a pocket knife for different uses.
- Weighing scale** This is needed to make sure that any fish you catch is legal to take home with you - you may have to toss it back in the water.
- Tape Measure** This is to check the size of the fish.
- Hook Remover.** This is to take the hook out of the fish's mouth

Wet Weather Items

- Boots** Preferably rubber boots, top keep your feet dry.
- Rain hat** This will help keep your head dry.
- Poncho** This goes over everything else to keep wind and rain off.
- Rain suit** If you are an avid rainy day fisher, invest in a suit for extra mobility and comfort.

Safety Tips

- Keep hydrated** Drink water, and plenty of it, on a regular basis.
- Life vest.** Wear it, don't be a fool!
- Communication** Have at least a two-way radio, or cell phone available if you need help.
- Set a going back time** Agree on a time that you'll go back in, if you're in a group; that way, no one gets lost. Make sure people know where you are going and when you should get back.
- Search and Rescue** Know who to contact, and when the appropriate time to do so is, should there be a problem.