NATIONAL FISHING GEAR ESSENTIALS GUIDE

FEATURED INSIDE:

• FRESHWATER VS. SALTWATER GEAR
• WHERE TO PURCHASE FISHING GEAR
• TIPS FOR ONLINE GEAR SHOPPING
Introduction

Why Anglers Should Have Fishing Gear

Freshwater Fishing Gear

Saltwater Fishing Gear

How to Select Your Fishing Line & Rod

Tackle Boxes

Fishing Gear Clothing

Where to Buy Fishing Gear

Tips for Online Fishing Gear Purchases

Factors to Consider When Getting Fishing Equipment

How to Maintain Your Fishing Equipment
INTRODUCTION

Quality fishing equipment tailored to your sportsman's needs plays a vital role in your overall fishing experience. With so many products and manufacturers on the market, both professional and novice anglers can choose the items that fit their fishing style best. In addition, they can adapt their fishing gear to either saltwater or freshwater fishing, and to the size and species of the fish.

Besides getting the proper equipment, anglers must also wear the appropriate clothes, which are specifically designed to endure harsh water or weather conditions. Although fishing is a popular hobby across the country, safety and precaution measures should be taken, such as wearing fully functional fishing gear. Anglers must also be aware of the quality of their gear, and learn how to clean and maintain it to prolong its lifespan.

Fishing equipment and other related essentials can be purchased either online or in person at sporting goods stores or large supermarkets. However, before buying any item, anglers, especially those who are just getting started, must do thorough research on the features, performance and strength of each product.

Compare prices to get the best deal as well. For example, you can join fishing clubs or organizations and learn important details about the hobby from fellow fishermen. To learn more about selecting the right fishing gear, as well as how to keep every item in perfect shape, explore the sections of this guide and let them lead you on your fishing journey.
WHY ANGLERS SHOULD HAVE FISHING GEAR

• Choosing a fishing rod
• Choosing a fishing hook and lure
WHY ANGLERS SHOULD HAVE FISHING GEAR

Every recreational angler who plans to fish for saltwater or freshwater fish must have a fishing license issued by the state department of fish and wildlife. Besides a valid fishing credential, anglers must also have the necessary equipment for the fish species they intend to catch. The types of rod, reel, line and lures play an important role in successful fishing, and anglers must be well acquainted with their fishing equipment to ensure their best performance. The right type of equipment on your fishing trip can also save anglers time, especially if they aim to meet a bag limit. To find out more about why all anglers should have fishing gear, read about the following:

- Choosing a fishing rod
- Choosing a fishing hook and lure
Choosing the Right Fishing Rod

Two of the most important pieces of fishing equipment are the fishing rod and reel. Choosing the right ones for your type of fishing is essential for getting a proper catch, and anglers must learn the basic characteristics of this basic fishing equipment before they plan a fishing trip. For instance, a high-quality fishing rod will have a cork or foam grip/handle for casting and retrieving. In addition, a rod must be both strong and flexible to be able to withstand a heavy lure, as well as fish strikes. If you choose a lighter rod, it may not be able to withstand larger fish.

The rod length is another crucial feature in terms of strength and power. Thus, if you are fishing for larger fish, you should use shorter rods, as longer rods are typically used for farther casting. The rod selection also depends on the bait you will use for your desired fish species. If you use a lighter lure, opt for a spinning rod. Similarly, slightly heavier lures, such as artificial baits, jigs and plugs, work better with casting rods.
Choosing the Right Fishing Hook and Lure

Fishing hooks must be selected based on the size of the fish. For instance, a small hook is more convenient for catching smaller fish species. However, the hook must not be too small to prevent fish from swallowing it. Thus, when selecting a hook, get acquainted with different hook sizes to successfully catch the fish for which they are intended.

Choosing the right type of lure for different fish species is of utmost importance, especially because different lures are used for saltwater and freshwater fishing. For instance, you can use natural bait such as crayfish, mussels, clams, dough balls, worms and insects for freshwater fishing. For saltwater fishing, use live baitfish, clams, mussels and cut fishing bait. Artificial saltwater and freshwater lures include jigs, spinners, poppers, plugs, plastics, spoons, etc. Many artificial lures are made to mimic live lures such as worms, insects or crayfish.

Anglers should have quality fishing gear, which must be carefully selected in accordance with their needs and the fish species. For successful fishing, anglers must first get familiar with their equipment’s features to ensure proper use.
FRESHWATER FISHING GEAR

- Freshwater fishing reels
- Freshwater fishing rods and poles
- Freshwater fishing lures
Anglers who fish in fresh state waters with the appropriate fishing license must also make sure to use the proper fishing equipment. Even though fishing is becoming increasingly popular as a recreational activity, and there are various fishing spots throughout the U.S., licensed fishermen must get acquainted with their gear, lures and fish species to ensure a good catch. To learn more about freshwater fishing gear and how to use it, read the sections outlined below:

- Freshwater fishing reels
- Freshwater fishing rods and poles
- Freshwater fishing lures
Freshwater Fishing Reels

When choosing a fishing reel, anglers must note the different reel types and sizes made for various fish species. In general, three main types of reels are often available:

- Open-bail spinning reel
- Bait-casting reel
- Closed spin casting reel

The open-bail spinning reel contains a mechanical pickup to easily retrieve the line. Spinning reels are typically made for lighter lures. Bait-casting reels are used with larger lures or baits because the forward cast momentum serves to propel the lure and rotate the spool. Usually they also have a level-wind mechanism used to prevent trapping of the line under itself, especially in the case of subsequent casts and rewinds of the line. Many such reels come with a special anti-reverse handle to prevent runs from larger game fish. Finally, the closed spin casting reel can be used with light baits and lures because the line is thrown from a fixed spool. The spin casting reel is placed right above the rod and fitted with an external nose cone to protect the spool.

Freshwater Fishing Rods

Choosing the right rod for freshwater fishing depends on the type of fish you would like to catch and the fishing location. Rods come in many lengths and widths, as well as with different flexibility features. The rod must be strong enough to sustain a fish on the line, yet flexible to absorb the running fish. Freshwater fish such as pike, bass, walleye and trout can be caught by using spinning rods. Other types of rods include bait-casting and closed-spinning (specifically made to hold a reel located above the handle), telescopic, fiberglass, carbon-fiber and ultra-light fishing rods.
Freshwater Fishing Lures

Freshwater fishing lures and baits come in various shapes, sizes and types, depending on the fish species and the size of the fish. For example, poppers are typically used to catch bass and trout and with spin-casting tackle. Jigs can be used to catch all types of freshwater fish, and many anglers attach a minnow or a small piece of pork rind to the hook to increase the chances of catching the fish. Spoons are artificial lures made to catch different fish species, depending on your preferences. They also come in a number of sizes and colors and are created to mimic the movement of smaller fish.

Other types of freshwater baits include:

- Plugs
- Spinners
- Surface
- Blade
- Crank
- Tube
- Vibrating
- Buzz lures

A special type of lures are snag hooks, which are used for snagging the fish on its body.
SALTWATER FISHING GEAR

- Saltwater fishing rods & reels
- Saltwater fishing lures
Fishing in salt waters may be a demanding and difficult activity, especially if you are not familiar with the proper fishing gear to use, as well as the typical conditions and techniques to use on your fishing trip. Thus, the equipment and the tools for fishing saltwater species must be strong enough to sustain the fish’s power and its size, as well as the corrosive power of salty water. As a result, anglers must be especially careful about the types of reels, rods and lures to use to catch quality fish. To gather detailed information about saltwater fishing gear, review the sections below.

- Saltwater fishing rods and reels
- Saltwater fishing lures
To ensure a quality saltwater fishing experience, alongside excellent catch, anglers must study the fishing equipment used on such trips. Some of the most important tools for saltwater fishing are the reel and rod, which must be chosen in accordance with the type and size of fish, as well as with other fishing tools and lures. When buying a saltwater fishing rod and reel, anglers must note the rod’s length, action and power. Namely, shorter rods have more power to hold fighting fish, but longer ones can cast farther. A rod’s action can be labeled as slow if the rod bends all the way to the handle, and as fast if it is not flexible. The rod’s power is determined by the weight of the catch a rod can handle. Saltwater fishing rods are typically made of fiberglass or graphite, and which one you use depends on the features you need for your type of fishing.

Fishing reels can be low or high speed, depending on the gear ratio. Thus, low-speed reels are those with a ratio of 4:1 or less, while high speed reels are those with a gear ratio greater than 6:1. Modern reels allow the angler to change speeds quickly and conveniently. When choosing a reel, anglers must consider the line capacity, stated in yards or feet on the reel’s body, as well as the type and weight of the lure used for specific types of fish.

Additional rod and reel types include:

- Spinning rod and reel.
- Baitcasting rods and reels.
- Trolling rods.
- Jigging rods and reels.
Choosing the right type of saltwater fishing lure and bait is directly related to the fish’s diet, as well as how they detect and recognize food. Thus, using a natural, and preferably live bait properly can almost guarantee a successful catch. Some of the best saltwater fishing baits include bait fish (halfbeaks, scad, anchovies), crabs (especially peeler and soft-shell and hard-shell ones), cut bait, clams and mussels, shrimp and squid.

Artificial saltwater fishing lures, on the other hand, are also popular because of their ability to mimic the appearance, colors and movement of a live bait. A few of the most commonly used saltwater fishing lures are lead-headed jigs, metal jigs, poppers, plug lures, spoons, spinnerbaits and soft plastic lures.
HOW TO SELECT YOUR FISHING LINE AND ROD

• Selecting the right rod
• Selecting the right line
Both recreational and professional anglers who would like to fish legally in state waters must have the appropriate fishing license, as well as the fishing gear to match the fish species and type of fishing. While fishing without the proper equipment is possible, having the necessary fishing essentials, tools and gadgets will make for a successful fishing experience. Two of the most important fishing equipment components are the fishing rod and line. Many different manufacturers have placed their products on the market, challenging anglers to carefully select the best fishing gear for their needs. To find out what to look for in a fishing rod and line, read the sections below:

• Selecting the right rod
• Selecting the right line
Selecting the Right Rod

When choosing the right fishing rod for your needs, first decide on the type of fishing you will engage in and the fish species you intend to catch. Note that larger fish require more power. Also, fish can be more easily caught by using special rods that cast the bait farther and with greater accuracy. However, when selecting a rod, you must be familiar with its main features, such as:

- Material
- Length
- Type

The rod’s grip or handle, which you will hold during casting or retrieving, is usually made of cork or foam, while fishing rods are made of fiberglass or graphite. Regardless of the material, the rod must be both strong and flexible in order to endure fish strikes and runs. Typically, strong rods are made for heavier, larger lures intended for catching larger fish. However, stronger rods may not be flexible enough for a lightweight line or sensitive to lighter fish strikes. In these cases, use a more flexible rod, especially for smaller fish.

The length of the rod is also essential to its functionality. A longer rod offers anglers the ability to cast farther, while shorter rods are made for catching larger fish or for trolling. When choosing the perfect rod, decide on which type of fishing you will be focused on, as well as the lures and baits you will use. Note that a casting rod is better for heavier jigs and plugs, as well as for most artificial baits, while spinning rods are made for lighter lures.
The fishing line serves to connect the lure to the reel and rod. It may be cast, paid out or thrown, depending on the type of fishing and the angler’s preferences. The line is an essential element of your fishing gear, as its quality, strength and flexibility will allow you to reel in the fish. The strength of the fishing line is measured in pounds and is called a test.

Usually, the line strength must be similar to the weight of the fish you intend to catch. The material of the line is also important for successful catches, and you can buy lines made of nylon, dacron or ultra-strong polyethylene fiber.
TACKLE BOXES

• Tackle box essentials
• Additional tackle box items
Using the proper equipment for your fishing trip, as well as choosing the best fishing gear pieces for the type of fish you plan to catch, is crucial for both experienced and novice anglers. A tackle box should contain fishing essentials, such as baits, hooks, bobbers and other items. Tackle boxes can be purchased as a whole, or anglers can create one from scratch to fit their individual needs. To find out more about fishing tackle boxes, explore the following sections:

- Tackle box essentials
- Additional tackle box items
Tackle Box Essentials

A fishing tackle box typically contains the most necessary fishing tools, as well as additional items to provide the angler a smooth and successful fishing experience. While every tackle box is different in size and the number of items it holds, almost all contain extra lines, sinkers, lures, bobbers, etc. For instance, every angler must make sure to bring an extra line on the fishing trip in case the original one tangles or breaks. Usually, fishing for larger fish species and in rough environments requires a stronger, more quality line. For calm and clear waters, such as lakes, bring a thinner line.

In addition to lines, anglers must also bring extra hooks in several sizes to catch different kinds of fish. Anglers select hooks according to their fishing goals. Hooks may be small (with number 32 being the smallest) or large (with number 19/0 being the largest). The tackle box must also contain a sinker to help the bait sink in order to attract the fish. Bobbers are another vital and extremely helpful part of the fishing equipment as they sink the very moment a fish bites the bait, thus informing anglers when it is time to reel in. Finally, a tackle box should never go without a couple of extra lures and baits, based on the fish you would like to catch. Once you catch the fish, you will need a pair of needle nose pliers to take off the hook from the fish’s mouth or to cut the line. These pliers are also used for all kinds of rigging.

Additional Tackle Box Items

Besides the most essential fishing tools, a tackle box must also contain additional fishing items and accessories, for the safety and wellbeing of the angler. Depending on the weather, environment and type of water, anglers should wear quality sunglasses, preferably polarized, and get special fishing clothing for comfort and freedom of movement. Anglers must also bring a first aid kit for smaller injuries, as well as insect repellent sprays and sunscreen. Some anglers even wear fishing gloves to protect their hands from blisters or fish bites.
FISHING GEAR CLOTHING

• How to choose the right fishing clothing

• How to choose wading boots
When planning a fishing trip, both recreational and experienced anglers must prepare properly by packing the most important fishing equipment and accessories. Additionally, wearing protective fishing clothing is crucial for protecting against environmental influences. Many anglers have chosen to wear special fishing clothing to increase the chances of catching fish. Additionally, fishing vests and shirts have many pockets for carrying smaller but essential fishing items and extras. If you would like to learn how to choose fishing clothing for you, find the answers in the sections below:

- How to choose the right fishing clothing
- How to choose wading boots
How to choose the right fishing clothing

If you decide to wear special fishing clothing, thoroughly research the market in order to decide which companies offer the best quality and deals. Some factors to take into account are the fabric of the clothing, its durability, whether it is waterproof and how it behaves in different weather conditions. While you may choose to wear regular clothes, in some cases, it may be more functional to choose a few fishing gear clothing essentials such as:

- A fishing shirt
- A fishing vest
- A fishing jacket

A quality fishing shirt must be designed well and be both light and comfortable. The fabric must be breathable and dry quickly. Anglers who spend a lot of time in the sun should wear shirts with a sun protection factor to prevent skin burns and damage. Some shirts come with built-in insect resistance to prevent mosquitos or ticks from biting through the material. Shirts should also have deep pockets for carrying tools and some sort of ventilation to prevent overheating.

A fishing vest is another must-have garment for anglers, as it comes with a large number of different pockets and is especially convenient for trout, salmon and fly fishing. Finally, a wind-resistant and waterproof fishing jacket that is breathable is the right choice for colder weather conditions. Usually, fishing jackets also come with a lot of pockets and are designed to allow freedom of movement while casting and retrieving. Jackets may also be coated with DWR (durable water repellency) as an additional waterproof layer.
How to choose wading boots

Another vital piece of fishing clothing is wading boots, especially when you need to enter the water in order to cast. Several types of wading boots are available on the market, depending on your needs and preferences, such as boot foot waders or stocking foot waders. The material for high-quality waders must be waterproof and highly breathable. However, there are many regular wading boots made of PVC, nylon or neoprene, which are generally cheaper and typically used by anglers who do not go fishing regularly. Neoprene, for example, is a durable material with good insulation, especially for cold weather. Nylon and PVC make for stiffer waders and are slightly lighter, as they are not insulated.
WHERE TO BUY FISHING GEAR
WHERE TO BUY FISHING GEAR

Anglers who have purchased a fishing license from their state’s department of fish and wildlife and would like to go fishing for saltwater or freshwater fish must first obtain the appropriate fishing gear and tools, based on the type of fishing and fish species. The fishing gear market offers a large variety of products for every angler’s needs, from beginners to professionals. However, prior to purchasing your fishing gear items, you must first compare their prices, quality and features. Additionally, depending on your fishing skills, you may also need to start with basic items and, as you make progress, move on to more advanced items. Some of the easiest ways to get your first fishing tackle box and other gear is through the following methods:

- Online
- In person
Buy Fishing Gear Online

The easiest and most convenient way to obtain fishing essentials is by shopping online. The internet is a popular purchasing option, especially because online stores offer discounts, deals and coupons, as well as delivery to your home. Many sporting goods stores with physical locations have established e-stores where customers can browse numerous items, compare products and prices, and view product feedback from other customers. Large supermarket chains have also expanded the fishing gear offerings on their online marketplaces. Thus, after buying a fishing license, you can immediately select what you need for your upcoming fishing trip with just a few clicks online.

Besides supermarkets and specialized sporting goods stores, fishing equipment can be bought from large electronic commerce retailers that offer products from different manufacturers, as well as express shipping options. Online stores are customer-oriented, and most of them have a no-hassle return policy in case the item you have received is damaged, different from the photos or simply not what you expected. Alternatively, anglers can purchase secondhand fishing equipment from specialized websites or online forums, where users can talk to sellers directly, ask questions about the equipment and view photos to see the item’s condition.
Select anglers prefer to visit a sporting goods store in person and see the fishing gear firsthand in order to inspect it for quality, feel, material and convenience of use. Additionally, they can get detailed information from sales assistants about the characteristics of a product and leave the store with the item in hand. Besides specialized outdoor goods stores, fishing equipment may be available at your closest supermarkets, many of which offer products with lower prices. Certain stores also have an in-store pickup option, which gives you the opportunity to order the fishing equipment online and then simply visit the store and pick it up in person.

Physical stores, much like online stores, offer a large variety of payment options, such as cash, debit cards or credit cards. You may also obtain special customer cards for discounts if you are a regular customer in a specific store.
TIPS FOR ONLINE FISHING GEAR PURCHASES

• Tips for purchasing fishing gear from online stores

• Comparing fishing gear prices online
One of the easiest and most convenient ways to purchase fishing equipment, tools and clothes is online, via e-commerce stores or store websites. Many sporting goods stores with physical locations are expanding their business and offer the same items online. Anglers who are not able to visit a store in person and would like to save time can easily buy the fishing gear items they need online in just a few minutes. For a more pleasant shopping experience, online stores even offer discounts for bulk items, seasonal sales and coupons, and free shipping for the purchased goods. However, before you buy your first online item, make sure to explore the sections below:

- Tips for purchasing fishing gear from online stores
- Comparing fishing gear prices online
Tips for Purchasing Fishing Gear From Online Stores

Anglers can easily find an online fishing gear store by performing a simple internet search. However, finding a legitimate, well-equipped store may be a challenge, especially if you are not familiar with online purchases and e-stores. For instance, if you have a favorite store in your area where you obtain all your fishing equipment, you can search for its website to check if it has an online store as well. The product prices online usually match the prices in the store. However, if you decide to buy online, you may be offered special discounts, coupons or promo codes to use during checkout. Additionally, many online stores offer free shipping for your items if you spend a certain amount of money.

Another method to find quality stores online is to look for websites of large supermarket chains. Many sell fishing licenses and fishing gear to offer their customers a one-stop shopping experience. Items in stores are almost always available online, and you may even come across great bargains.

If you follow fishing blogs or forums, you may be able to discover some quality fishing gear stores this way as well. Also, you can read product reviews from anglers who have already purchased and used a product in order to decide whether it is a good fit. Finally, anglers who prefer to find everything they need in one spot tend to use large e-commerce stores to obtain their fishing necessities.
Comparing Fishing Gear Prices Online

Before you buy your fishing gear online, research the stores and sellers and see which ones offer quality items for the best price. Reviewing the stores individually and then comparing one item to the next is a time-consuming task, which is why anglers use comparison websites. These websites serve as product aggregators, providing several different prices for a single product and enabling customers to choose the best store for their needs.

Additionally, if you are interested in discounts, you can visit coupon-aggregating websites where you will find coupons for fishing equipment, tools, clothing and other fishing-related products.
FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN GETTING FISHING EQUIPMENT
While getting the proper fishing equipment is an inevitable part of the fishing experience, with so many different products on the market priced differently, anglers often face difficulties choosing the best options for them. When picking fishing essentials for your fishing trip, you should consider a variety of factors. Even though fishing is considered a recreational sport, anglers must still work with the best gear for their type of fishing, level of experience and desired fish species. To learn more about choosing fishing equipment, explore the sections below:

- How to choose quality fishing equipment
- How to select fishing equipment according to the type of fishing
How to Choose Quality Fishing Equipment

One of the most important factors to consider when choosing your fishing gear and tools is quality. Different manufacturers offer different levels of quality, and it is up to the angler to make the final purchasing decision. Product quality plays an important role in the success of the fishing trip, in addition to the angler’s skills. Fishing gear of high quality is guaranteed to last longer and provide better results than lower quality items. Even though quality gear may seem more expensive at first, it saves money in the long run because it does not need to be replaced as often as a cheaper alternative. Anglers who would like to get quality fishing equipment for a lower price can always resort to purchasing second-hand products. However, they must pay close attention to the current condition of the item and how usable it is. On the other hand, anglers who do not intend to turn fishing into a full-time hobby can choose to buy less expensive gear that offers slightly lower quality.

To determine the quality of an item, especially if you make online purchases, check for product reviews or search for anglers who have used the item before. By doing so, you will gain a better insight into the product’s properties, value and quality before you make your first purchase.

How to Select Fishing Equipment According to the Type of Fishing

Experienced anglers select their fishing equipment carefully, especially because they are aware of the subtle yet vital differences between freshwater and saltwater fishing gear. Even though all fishing equipment and tools may look similar, the type of fishing you do, the environment you fish in and the fish species you intend to catch will determine the type of reel, line and lure you must use. For saltwater fishing, for instance, live baits are preferred, as lures must follow the feeding habits of the fish. Also, the angler must wear proper fishing clothes in accordance with the environmental and weather conditions.
HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR FISHING EQUIPMENT
When you plan a fishing trip, you must make sure to carry all fishing essentials such as your fishing license and fishing gear. In addition, you must also constantly maintain your fishing equipment and clothes to ensure proper functioning and good results. The fishing equipment consists of a variety of pieces and tools, and each requires special care and maintenance. Some of the most important items, such as the reel, may require a different type of care. Lines or baits, on the other hand, are replaceable items and do not need special attention. If you would like to keep your fishing equipment in its best shape, read the following sections:

- Cleaning your fishing equipment
- Maintenance tips for your fishing equipment
Cleaning Your Fishing Equipment

Whether you are a saltwater or a freshwater angler, your fishing gear must be properly taken care of and cleaned after each use. Depending on the type of fishing and frequency of use, some items may need more maintenance than others. For instance, saltwater fishing causes more wear and tear to fishing supplies due to the salty water, but freshwater fishing gear must be maintained as well. Anglers must remember to clean the following fishing gear items regularly:

- Reels
- Rods

The reels are some of the most delicate parts of your fishing gear and, as such, must be cleaned gently. To ensure smooth movements, reels should be wiped with a soft cloth and thoroughly dried after use. In addition, they should be opened from time to time and lubricated for further use. Reels should be maintained on a regular basis, rather than seasonally. Always use cleaning and lubricating products specifically made for reels.

For easy cleaning of rods, use a damp cloth, and then a dry cloth for a clean finish. However, rods are best maintained with regular checkups to ensure that all rod parts are secure and in good condition. Also, remember to let all items dry well before storing them for next season to avoid damage from moisture.
Maintenance Tips for Your Fishing Equipment

Fishing lines are a replaceable part of your fishing gear, but they should also be maintained and stored properly. If you choose to leave them on the spool, store them in a cool place and out of direct sunlight. Also, note that the line’s lifespan shortens with constant use, exposure to pressure and tension, and contact with the water and sun. Therefore, use a new fishing line whenever you set out on your next trip.

Finally, maintaining your tackle box is vital to the proper functioning of your fishing gear. Therefore, all items should have a proper place in the box, even those that are no longer usable, so you can remember to replace them. Also, the hooks and pliers must be regularly sharpened, and all perishable supplies must be restocked.