

Bass Fishing # Secret Tips

Learning to fish for bass requires time, effort and above all, patience. Those lucky enough to spend time with seasoned anglers will have learned the tips and tricks firsthand. Everyone else must rely on research, second hand advice and a great deal of trial and error.

Bass fishing is not a sport that you can excel in with just a few days of practice. It can take many seasons of perfecting your knowledge and honing your skills before you can consider yourself a true master angler. Ask any experienced angler, and he or she will agree that there are three basic steps that you need to follow to become skilled at bass fishing:

- * Examine your conditions, and be able to assess whether the fishing hole will bring success
- * Ask for tips from other anglers. Seek advice from people who are familiar with fishing the waters
- * Experiment # a lot. You'll have to try many different lures and bass fishing techniques before you find the combination that works best for you

The following guide to bass fishing will cover some of the basic points you'll need to become a better angler:

Technique:

If using drop bait, such as a worm and sinker, you'll need to let the bait slowly sink to the desired depth, and then gently shake the rod tip. Do this for about thirty seconds, and then try shaking the rod again for two to three second intervals. Stop and slowly pull the bait up about six inches. Again, let the bait drop slowly back down and repeat the process. This technique is known as "doodling". If you know there are fish in the water but they're not biting, you might be agitating the bait too quickly. You want to get the bass' attention, without overwhelming them. If you are fishing for bass using lures, there are a certain techniques that must be used in relation to the type of lure, the depth of the water and any nearby structures like weed beds or rocky areas.

Tips:

- * Fish "uphill" in springtime. Position the boat in shallow water and cast into the deeper water. Use a 1/8 ounce weight.
- * Fish "downhill" in fall. Anchor in deeper water and cast toward the shallow spots.
- * Sharpen your hooks. Your chances of success are infinitely greater if a bass strikes a nice, sharp hook.
- * Try using Texas rigs to prevent snags when fishing with worms.
- * Fish out the worm, and keep it suspended 90 percent of the time.
- * When doodling, it's critical to keep the presentation natural by downsizing your hooks to 1/0 or lower. Fish are the meat, not the platter. Make sure that your bait is hooked nice and straight to maintain a natural presentation.
- * Crystal clear waters with sandy lakebeds can be tough. Be sure to keep a little slack on your line at all times. The secret to fishing with worms is to shake the bait rather than dragging it. Shaking the rod and agitating the bait gives your grub, worm or reaper amazing lifelike action that bass can't resist.

When to Fish:

The cool temperatures associated with spring and fall will create great bass fishing conditions, but you must be mindful of seasonal limitations. On glaringly hot summer days, you'll want to limit your fishing to early morning and late afternoon or evening. Night fishing is typically practiced when the water temperature reaches about 65 degrees Fahrenheit or warmer.

Where to Fish at Night:

Many anglers love night fishing, but they're not sure exactly where to find the bass after the sun goes down. In most situations, bass don't move great distances. In particular, smallmouth bass love to stay put. As summer wears on, the bass may move deeper into the water and many won't come up to shallow waters, even at night. Successful night anglers will have bass available with a twenty-foot area.

Guide to Bass Fishing With Lures:

- * Once you've found where the bass are hiding, position yourself only as far away as the water clarity dictates. Stay close enough to be able to obtain consistent accuracy in your casting.
- * Try to make the lure land on the water with as little noise as possible, and cast beyond the target whenever you're able.
- * In windy weather, put tension on the line just before the lure lands. This helps to straighten out the line, and keeps it from blowing across obstructions.
- * Learn casting techniques that permit a low trajectory. Pitching, flipping, sidearm and underhand casting are great techniques.
- * Don't try to fish for bass using poor quality equipment. Make sure that the rod and reel are matched to the weight of the your tackle. It's easier to cast using rods with a stiff blank and relatively fast or flexible tip, than to cast with a rod that's extremely stiff or uniformly limber.
- * Cast with your wrist, not with your arm and shoulder.
- * Lower your lure a few inches below the rod tip before casting to give your cast extra momentum.
- * On the back-cast, be sure to "load" the rod tip, causing it to bend backward. Then, smoothly whip the rod forward.
- * Regardless of the type of reel you have, fill the spool to within 1/8 of an inch of the lip. Do not overfill the spool, or you will be spending your day untangling reams of line, rather than hooking big bass.

Tips on Flip-Casting:

- * Use your wrist, not your arm. This is the golden rule and the key to success.
- * Concentrate on the spot you want to hit, not on what you want to miss. If you're looking straight into a bramble bush on the shoreline while you're casting, there's a good chance you'll land the lure right in the middle of it. In other words, keep your eyes on the prize.
- * Stick to basic jig colours, like black and blue, brown, or black and chartreuse. These colours have been helping anglers catch bass for years.
- * Try using commercially sold scent. This acts as a lubricant and it can help penetrate thick cover.
- * If inactive fish won't respond to your bait, try using a plastic worm with a glass bead between the worm and the weight.
- * If you think you've had a strike, lower your reel until the rod is in better position to set the hook, and then check.
- * For better hooksets, try tightening your drag. Just remember to loosen it a little when reeling in, so your line doesn't become overly taut and snap.
- * You can perfect your casting and flipping finesse by using 10 to 14-pound test line with spin tackle. Heavier weight (17 to 25 pound test) line should be reserved for bait casting and more rugged conditions.

Understanding how bass live in their natural environment is essential to establishing your own personal technique. Study the habits and habitats of the bass. Know where they can be found at any given time and under any conditions. Have a plan in mind before you head for the lake. Every fish you catch is a clue as to what else is available. So don't despair if you land a tiny perch; it's telling you that there's a big bass lurking below that's just waiting to snag that perch for dinner. When the action slows down in your particular area, find another spot that meet the same criteria.

Fishing for bass is a very personal experience. There are so many techniques to try and so much tackle available, it really does take a great deal of trial and error to find what works best for you. Remember, our ancestors caught plenty of bass using a simple string tied to a stick.