

A Complete Guide on How to Effectively Fish with **TROLLING SPOONS** FOR FRESHWATER SALMON, STRIPED BASS & TROUT

Trolling with spoons is a technique practiced and enjoyed everyday by thousands of fresh water anglers across the country. It's an easy-to-learn and use method which is particularly effective in lakes and reservoirs for large fish such as coho and chinook salmon, brown, cutthroat and lake trout, striped bass and several varieties of rainbow trout including landlocked steelhead and Kamloops.

Spoons are effective because they closely resemble and imitate the action of crippled baitfish . . . food which makes up a large part of the diet of predatory gamefish.

Anglers who employ trolling as their #1 technique and understand fish and their habits can out fish anglers using other techniques. The reason is simple: You cover a large area of water thoroughly in a short time, pinpointing concentrations of fish or scattered lunkers with minimum effort. Trolling allows you to cover more water faster, easier and more completely than any other fishing technique.

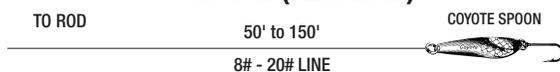
A spoon should wobble from side-to-side and will produce its best all-around, fish-catching action when trolled at speeds between the slowest that produces a wobble and the fastest darting action that does not cause the lure to revolve or spin. For fast trolling try the Krocodile.[®] Medium speed trolling spoons include the Coyote Spoon and Needlefish.[®] For general trolling at all speeds the Super Duper is an excellent choice.

The best trolling spoons are lightweight and thin which will provide the most erratic, darting baitfish action in the water. Spoons such as the Krocodile and Super Duper are manufactured in casting and trolling models and it is important that you select the lightest weight models. For example, one die may stamp several different thicknesses of a spoon, such as the Krocodile with sizes ranging from 1/6-oz. to 2 1/2-oz. models. For trolling, you would choose the lighter 3/4-oz. or 1-oz. size.

SPOON TROLLING RIGS

Following are several diagrams of proven ways to rig a spoon for trolling. Note that dodgers often are used as attractors in conjunction with spoons when fish are scattered or are in deep water.

SURFACE (FLATLINE)



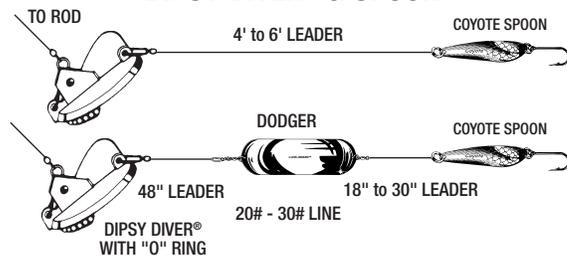
FLATLINE - With the surface or flatline technique, the spoon is tied directly, via its attachment device, to 8- to 20-lb. test main line. No additional weights are used or, at most, a small 1/8- to 1/2-oz. keel-type sinker may be placed 6 feet up the line from the spoon. The spoon is let out behind your moving boat 50 to 200 feet and the troll begun. This technique is particularly effective when trout, steelhead, stripers or salmon are feeding near the surface, especially during low light periods.

KEEL SINKER



SHALLOW TO MEDIUM - With the addition of a keel sinker 4 to 6 feet up the line from the spoon, shallow to medium depths can be trolled effectively. Sinker weights, depending upon the depth desired, usually run from 1 to 8 ounces with main line testing from 12 to 30 pounds. As in flatlining, let out 50 to 200 feet of line behind your moving boat and begin the troll.

DIPSY DIVER[®] & SPOON



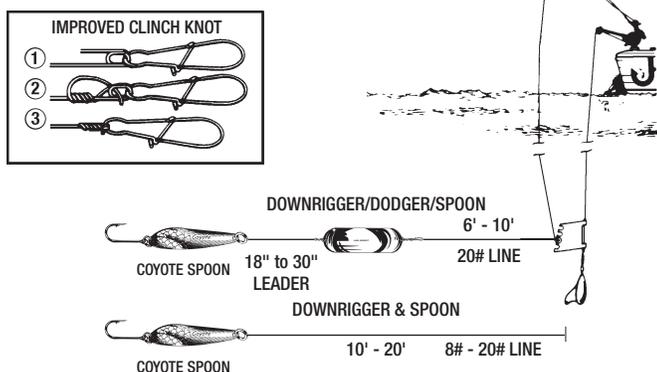
DIVERS - One effective way to get a spoon or spoon/attractor rig deep without lead weights is with a diving sinker such as the Pink Lady, Deep Six,[™] Double Deep Six,[™] Dipsy Diver[®] or Jet Diver[™]. The Dipsy Diver is particularly unique diving sinker as the lead weight in its base plate can be shifted in degrees to produce starboard, port or behind the boat running. With the Dipsy Diver you now can troll off to either side of the boat without interfering with flatlines or downrigger lines and cover an extremely wide swath of water. Divers also act as fish attractors due to their color and shape. Standard rigging with a diver is 4 to 6 feet of leader between spoon and diver and 20- to 30-lb. test main line to your rod.

You can attract more fish to your spoon and enhance spoon action by adding a dodger to your outfit. Dodgers should be rigged in-line, 18 to 30 inches from your spoon and 48 inches from your weight or diver. Use a larger size for bigger fish such as chinook, coho and lake trout and a smaller sized dodger for fish like trout.

DOWNRIGGERS - Spoons often are fished off a downrigger, either by themselves or in conjunction with a dodger or flasher. With a downrigger you will be able to work all depths and will have the added advantage of no weights between you and the fish once hooked. Anglers who troll spoons by themselves behind a downrigger, especially when seeking wary fish such as chinook or lake trout, often prefer 10 to 30 feet (some as much as 40 to 60 feet) between the line release and spoon.

Dodgers can be used as attractors in conjunction with a spoon behind a downrigger with good results. Allow 18 to 30 inches of leader between spoon and dodger. Shorter leaders produce more frantic and faster spoon action while longer ones result in slower action.

DOWNRIGGER SETUPS



Flashers are yet another kind of attractor that can be used with a spoon behind a downrigger. Flashers such as the Coyote or Abe & Al produce a deliberate, slow roll which often is favored by species such as chinook and lake trout. Because of the rotating nature of the flasher, spoons trailed behind must have more leader than with dodgers.

FISH PREFERENCES

Certain fish species, particularly larger fish, display specific preferences when it comes to trolling spoons and/or colors. The following species-by-species breakdown will provide valuable information you can apply immediately.

COHO SALMON - When the temperature is right in fresh water, coho salmon are surface or shallow water oriented and can be found, for the most part, at depths less than 50 feet. Coho especially like fast action spoons and the added action of a small dodger ahead of a spoon. The Coyote Spoon is geared for coho fishing.

CHINOOK SALMON - When compared with coho, fresh water chinook prefer deeper water. They often shy away from unnatural movements in the water so longer leaders often are used. Proven chinook spoons all have a deliberate, wobbling side-to-side action when trolled at medium to fast speeds. The Coyote Spoon is also a great Chinook lure. Because chinook are often found deep, blue or green-painted finishes are effective, as are glow-in-the-dark patterns. Silver or Pearl also are know chinook color favorites.

LAKE TROUT - Lake trout prefer slow, deliberate-action lures and/or attractors. The Krocodile® is a popular spoon for lake trout which generally lie close to the bottom or in the lower level of the thermocline.

BROWN TROUT - These fish are slow to react and very wary of any unnatural movement or noise. They often are boat shy so let out more line when trolling (100 to 300 feet). Their diet consists primarily of small fish so spoons are a natural when it come to fishing for them. Browns show a definite preference toward natural fish-finish spoons such as Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout. An excellent spoon to use is the Krocodile.®

RAINBOW TROUT - These fish and their cousins, landlocked steelhead and Kamloops, normally are fast-moving and are found scattered at different depths in lakes and reservoirs. They will concentrate where food and/or oxygen sources are located and frequently can be found feeding near the surface during low light periods. Both metal finishes and painted finishes such often produce strikes. Genuine Silver Plate is a finish which has proved irresistible to rainbow, steelhead and Kamloops. These fish strike at medium to fast trolling speeds with spoons such as the Krocodile,® Super Duper and Coyote Spoon are solid bets for success.

STRIPED BASS - Fresh water striped bass can be found in almost every state and their popularity among sport anglers continues to increase. Stripers are much like salmon and large trout in their eating habits, preferring to dine on baitfish such as shad or smelt. Stripers commonly are found in 20 to 40 feet of water during most of the day. They are constantly on the move during daylight hours and roam open water in search of baitfish schools. However, during early morning and late evening low light periods, stripers frequently will be in the shallows chasing schools of bait. Blues and greens in combination with Nickel (either hammered or plain) are proven striped bass colors for medium to deep water trolling.

TEMPERATURE AND OXYGEN

In large fresh water lakes and reservoirs time of day isn't nearly as critical as locating the preferred temperature level for the fish species you are seeking and the thermocline. Lakes stratify into three separate layers with the onset of warm weather and generally stay that way until fall. The middle layer of water, where there is a large concentration of dissolved oxygen, baitfish and therefore predator fish is called the thermocline and can generally be found from 10 to 80 feet down. This is not only an oxygen-saturated layer, but a temperature layer as well and fish relate to it as both a comfort zone and a zone where their body metabolism functions efficiently.

The peak feeding and optimum temperature for coho and chinook salmon is 55° with an active range of 44° to 58°. For lake trout, peak feeding and optimum temperature is 50° with activity from 43° to 53°. For steelhead trout, optimum temperature is between 50° and 55° with activity from 40° to 75°. Brown and rainbow trout have an optimum temperature preference between 55° and 60° with activity from 44° to 75°. Striped bass exhibit a range of temperature preference from 60° to 78° with the optimum temperature between 70° and 72°.

Fish rarely venture out of these preferred temperature zones, except to catch a meal and then will return quickly. One thing to remember when fishing temperature layers such as the thermocline is that it can change from day to day because of wind and/or wave action and you'll have to locate it each time out.

SPECIALIZED FINISHES

Fish definitely see color and/or shades of color and can be very fussy about it. One of the big advantages of trolling with spoons is the wide variety of specialized finishes available . . . there's a color to fit every angling situation.

METAL PLATE - Metal finishes are available in most spoons. This finish produces a highly reflective shine that simply reflects a much higher percentage of light, like a baitfish, under a variety of different light conditions and at different depths.

FISHSCALE - The natural, iridescent look of baitfish scales has proved extremely productive at all depths.

GLO FINISHES - The glowing effect is particularly effective in deep water. point and a knife-like cutting edge.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

One of the easiest things you can do to improve fishing results is to sharpen dull hooks with the Luhr-Jensen's Original Hook File. Simply hold the file parallel to the hook point and, with gentle one-way strokes, remove a small amount of metal from at least two sides of each point to make them sticky-sharp. If the hook is too damaged replace them with premium quality VMC Hooks.



You should always use a premium quality braided or monofilament line that has superior knot strength, small diameter in relation to pound test and is abrasion resistant.

Purchase a quality depth finder which will help in locating fish as well as prime underwater fish-holding structure which can't otherwise be detected.



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