

Bass Fishing Tips

First, bass fishing was a way of life, a means of providing food for survival. Later, people took to bass fishing as a relaxing hobby and a great way to spend a lazy afternoon. These days, bass fishing is big business. Countless people are hooked on the trend, and bass fishing has been elevated to proper sport status. Hungry corporations have been quick to jump on the opportunity, and there is no shortage of specialized tackle, gear, boats and even exclusive resorts ready to cash in on your passion for bass fishing.

More and more men, women and kids are jumping on board, learning the sport and finding out exactly what the buzz is all about. Bass fishing is no longer just about catching a fish. It's evolved into one more opportunity to be the kid on the block with the biggest, shiniest toy. Many of today's anglers fancy themselves as boss fishermen, with their eyes on those prized big bass.

Newcomers are the lucky ones. They can simply enjoy the sport and appreciate all of the nuances that make bass fishing such a wonderful and relaxing experience. Like any sport, bass fishing requires the right equipment, the right technique and a wee bit of skill.

Lure Them In

The first step to fish bass successfully is to understand the different types of lures, and how each of them are used. A survey taken among pro bass fishermen showed that plastic worms, spinner baits and crank baits are among the top three most successful bass fishing lures. However, the bait you choose is certainly not limited to these three options. Your choice of bait is determined by a variety of factors including they depth of water, the type of cover (fallen trees, weed beds), and the actual fishing area you will need to cover.

Worms, both real and artificial, may not be the daintiest bait, but bass find them absolutely irresistible. If the bass are schooled over an underwater structure, such as a fallen tree or rock bed, worms are ideal for seducing them out. A problem with fishing with worms is that sometimes, the angler can't tell when he or she has a strike. If the sinker is too heavy or the line is too thick, your rod won't react properly to the strike. Variable buoyancy worms coupled with lead strip sinkers can help solve this problem in several ways:

- * There is no moving lead on the line to dampen the feel of a gentle strike
- * You can apply the precise amount of lead required to deliver necessary worm action
- * The bass can inhale the worm more easily
- * It's easier to shake snags loose
- * In shallow water, you can suspend the worm right over the bottom of the lakebed
- * Hook setting is easier

To tell how much lead (sinker) strip is needed, wrap one strip around the baited hook. Drop the hook, with worm and lead strip sinker in place, into the water and watch it sink to the bottom. The entire package should sink gently, barely settling to the bottom. If your tackle sinks too fast, you'll need to choose a lighter lead strip. Be sure that the line you're using is no heavier than 8-pound test. In bass fishing, 6-pound test line is preferred.

Put a Spin on It

Spinner baits add some real excitement to your bass fishing experience. When you use a spinner bait, you cast and then retrieve it in any combination of ways. You can retrieve the bait quickly across the surface of the water to imitate the swimming action of natural prey, like a frog. You can cast and bounce the bait on the bottom or off of a tree limb, and move it any which way to stimulate strikes. Don't be afraid of scaring the fish away. Bass are watching and ready for lively prey, and sometimes need to be stimulated into action. Spinner baits ideally have tangle-free construction, but snagging on a branch is a simple hazard of bass fishing. Countless anglers have lost prize lures in their attempts to land big bass, so make sure you bring extra bait.

Crank Them In

The sole purpose of crank bait is to cover a lot of water in a hurry. These lures are cast over distances and then quickly retrieved, so you can use them to check out several options from your boat without moving around or spending too much time in a bass-barren part of the lake. Use crank bait to locate fish that may be scattered. When you find the fish, you can concentrate your efforts on that particular spot.

The key to success with any type of lure is making it easy for the bass to strike. You need to know where the fish are located, and literally drop the bait right in front of them. Scientists have proven that bass will calculate the amount of energy it will take them to go after prey. If it's too much work, they may not bother.

Time of day can also make or break your fishing success. Dawn and dusk are definitely the best times to fish for bass. Remember, bass are natural predators that hunt baitfish like minnows and smaller varieties of fish. These baitfish are most active in the early morning or evening, and if you see bait fish in active movement you'll know that bass are close by. Bass love to hide under covers and ambush baitfish, so keep this in mind when searching for your fishing spot. If the sun is just rising or beginning to set, you'll need to adjust your strategy to compensate for the poor light. Use a

steady pace to retrieve your lure, making it easier for the bass to locate and grab the bait.

Finally, don't bother fishing for bass if the temperature of the water is below 50 degrees Fahrenheit. This temperature wipes out certain aquatics and terrestrials, essentially nullifying the natural food chain. If there is no natural prey available, there won't be any predators either.

Bass fishing is a fun and exciting sport. Half the fun, however, is choosing the bait. There are literally thousands of different bass fishing lures on the market, so choosing the best ones can be confusing. Ask a seasoned angler for advice or shop at a sports outlet that offers specialized service geared toward fishing. Choose your bait wisely, try your luck and you'll soon be hooked on bass fishing.