

General information on fishing



Fair-play when fishing – for all

Fishing means the great outdoors, big challenges and plenty of fun – but also responsibility. As a good angler, you know how to catch fish properly, handle them carefully and kill them correctly. Never forgetting that fish are living creatures!

Animal protection laws set fair rules for everyone. The *Swiss Fisheries Act* provides the framework for sustainable fishing and regulates species conservation. But the main rules and regulations for people who catch fish are defined in the *cantonal edicts* (conservation regulations, protection of endangered species and breeds).



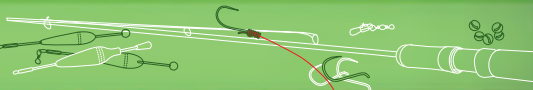
© Michel Roggo



Sporting, humane and competent

We show you here step by step how easy it is to fish humanely. You would do well to carry this flyer with your fishing tackle – it's often important and helpful to have the information to hand.

1. Choose your tackle and angling spot carefully



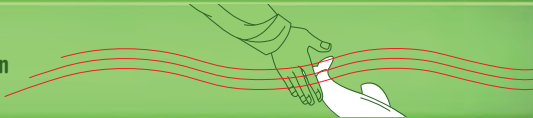
2. Biting, striking, playing, landing – the right response



3. Determining the species and size – making the good decisions



3a. Fish that are undersized (too small),
protected or caught outside fishing season
– Remove hook and release



3b. Large fish (not undersized)
– Stun and kill properly
– Make good use of them



Acting correctly is more important than a big catch

1. Choose your tackle and angling spot carefully

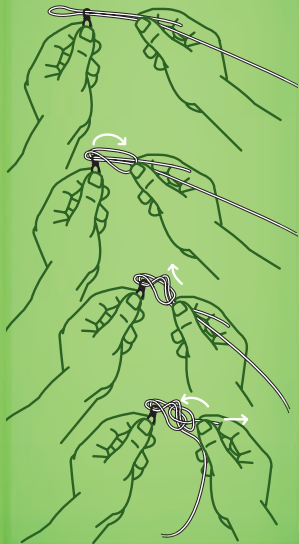
The more accurately you can adjust the hook size, bait, main/leader line strength and tools to match the expected size and species of fish, the better. This reduces the risk of breaking off, makes for a short reeling in and spares the fish. Plus, by using the right hook size you will reduce the risk of catching undersized fish.

To make sure they land and handle the catch in the best way for the fish, good anglers always have the following tools to hand: 1) landing net, 2) fish ruler, 3) priest, 4) knife, 5) pliers/hook-remover and 6) scissors.

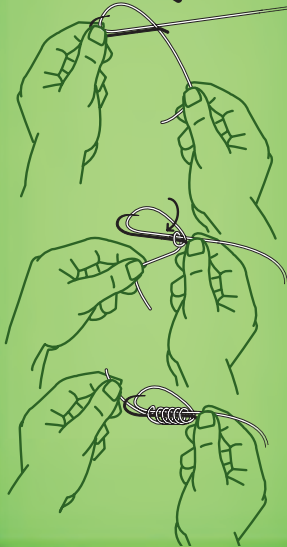


Knots must be tied properly so that they do not come undone again! Do not use any leader lines in which knots have formed (possible breaking-points).

World's Fair Knot



Uni-Knot



You must be able to land the hooked fish safely and gently at your angling spot. Bridges and steep banks are not suitable. Always have regard for plants and other wildlife, and never put yourself in danger.

No good angler fishes in places where it is likely that protected or undersized fish will bite. If this does happen, find a different place to fish.

Tight lines! Time to get serious.

2. Biting, striking, playing, landing – the right response

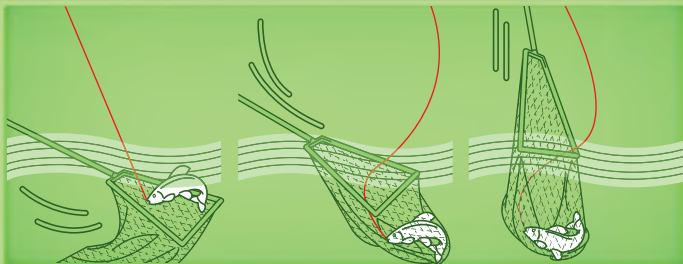
It hardly needs saying that you should never leave your fishing rod unattended.

A few basic rules: when fishing with natural bait, you will do well to strike immediately but not violently in order to prevent the bait being swallowed. You should only play the hooked fish for as long as necessary to ensure proper landing (so as to stress the fish as little as possible). The line should always remain taut while playing.

You can often cut the time required to play large fish by using a landing net. To do so, slide the completely immersed landing net underneath the fish and lift it in such a way that the fish hangs like in a sack.



© Daniel Luther



Always make sure your hands are wet before touching a live fish. This prevents disturbance of its protective mucous coating and loss of scales (risk of fungi growth). Never touch the gills or eyes!

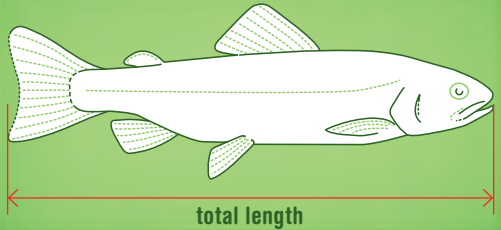
If at all possible, you should always unhook in water any fish that must be released.

If you don't know the different fish species, don't fish!

3. Determining the species and size – making the good decisions

Many fish are protected during the breeding season, and endangered species throughout the year. As an angler, you must be able to distinguish and identify the different species.

You should measure the fish (a measuring board is ideal) to check whether it is undersized or not. To determine the size of the catch, the fish should be measured from the forward point of the head to the tip of the naturally spread tail fin. Spare it the measuring if you can see with the naked eye that it is undersized.



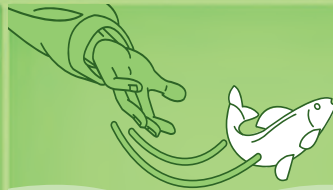
3a. Undersized or protected: release carefully

Carefully remove the fish hook using the pliers/hook-remover. It is best if you can remove the fish from the hook whilst it is still in the water, without touching it. If the hook is in too deep, take hold of the fish with a wet hand and without pressure on the internal organs (stomach in your cupped hand, fingers on the back). If the hook cannot be removed immediately, you should sever the leader line just above the hook and release the fish with the hook.

Fish can only survive if oxygen-rich breathing water passes over their gills. So work quickly and allow the fish to slide back into the water (do not throw it as this can cause internal damage). It is a good idea to work out how you are going to land and release the fish before starting out. Only carefully handled fish survive and can later be caught again as large fish.



right

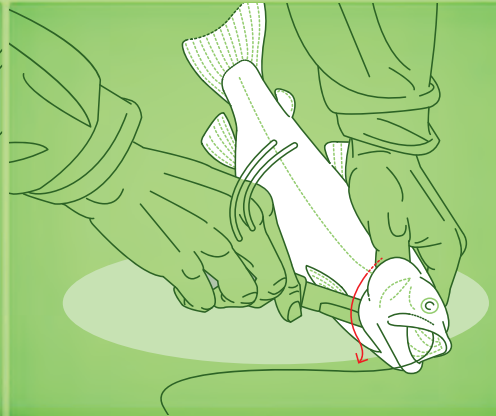
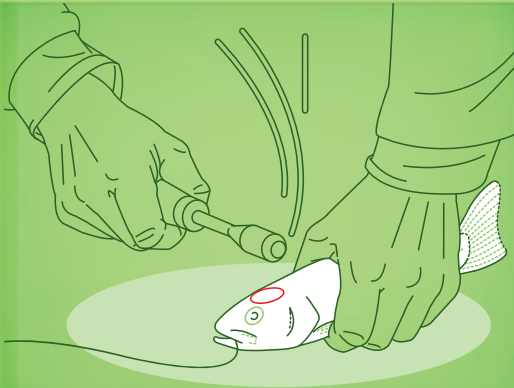


wrong

3b. Stunning and killing fish properly

If you want to take the fish home with you, you should never remove the hook from a living animal. You need to kill it first. Stun the fish immediately with the pikestun by striking one or more strong blows to the head behind the eyes.

The humane way of killing fish is to allow the fish to bleed to death immediately after being stunned. To do this, you should slit the blood vessels between the gills and the heart (located below the gills in the area around the throat) using a sharp knife. This gill cut runs along the back edge of the gill cavity.



Barbed hooks – and ban on retaining fish

Fishing with barbed hooks is prohibited as a rule. The same applies for retaining live fish. Cantons can allow exceptions in specific situations, but only for anglers who have followed an appropriate course.



Catch statistics – in everyone’s interest

Catch statistics give the fisheries office information about changes in the stocks of fish and allow for the best possible fishery management. Your catch must therefore be properly entered in a statistics sheet.



A place of honour in the kitchen as well

For anglers, it’s a matter of course that fish taken home must be treated as carefully as any other food. Stored in a thermos bag or a wicker basket (never in a plastic bag), it must be prepared, and enjoyed, as soon as possible.

Everything clear?

If you come across fellow anglers who are not behaving properly, you should calmly but clearly make them aware of better ways of doing things, by using this flyer, for instance. This flyer may be ordered free of charge at: FOBL, Distribution of Publications, CH-3003 Bern, Tel. +41 (0)31 325 50 50, Fax +41 (0)31 325 50 58, E-Mail: verkauf.zivil@bbl.admin.ch, order no. 810.400.036eng; Downloadable PDF file: www.environment-switzerland.ch/div-9506-e
This flyer is also available in German, French and Italian.

Want to know more?

Then why not attend a course near where you live. To find out about the times and locations of courses, visit our website: www.anglerausbildung.ch



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