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50 Tips & Techniques to improve your Fly-Fishing experience

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Fishing Gear Tips

- Don't buy the most expensive and don't buy the cheapest. Price is only an issue in the absence of value.
- Research what best fits your interests (warm water vs. cold, local vs. travel, small quarry vs. large)
- Take comfort, fit & function over image & appearance.
- Try different fly lines & sizes on various rods- it may be easier than changing your casting stroke.
- Have the proper tool for the job.

Clothing and Accessory Tips

- Polarized lenses are mandatory- various colors can help also. Try to block side glare as well.
- Drab clothing colors are preferred. Plenty of sun & bug protection exist today- it's worth the cost.
- Plan ahead, wear and carry for the elements. A small day pack is very useful.
- Wading staffs, different wading boot bottoms, knee pads, light weight gloves help prevent injury.
- If you evolve into a minimalist, vet pockets, durability, Velcro and zippers before making purchases.

Casting and Line Control Tips

- It doesn't matter how good or expensive your gear is if you can't get the fly to the target-PRACTICE!
- Learn a number of casting strokes- they will help you in the wind; for long casts; with obstacles behind you; with overhead objects and different size flies and gear.
- Strengthen and try to use the correct muscles, especially before a trip.
- Understand when to have the fly line low and on the water vs. high and off the water.
- Learn loop control and release points.

Flies and Fly Tying Tips

- Use high quality (sharp) hooks and proper, clean tying materials.
- Tying flies can be very fulfilling and also often helps sharpen your 'bug' knowledge.
- Perfect specific patterns which increases your confidence level. Fish your 'confidence' patterns.
- Learn different ways to weight flies as well as different ways dry flies sit on or in the water.
- Modify patterns to adapt to conditions- light levels, wind for casting or drifting, soft water vs. rough.

Presentation Techniques or Tips

- Use shade to your advantage by standing in it and casting into it.
- Try fishing water near the banks and try casting back away from the bank.
- Understand how the wind might be moving food sources and use it to your advantage.
- Put wind and sun behind you when you can.
- Break larger water down into smaller segments.
- Understand how “dropper” systems work at different lengths for dry and wet presentation.
- Add movement to your fly- under most circumstances, it can be a primary trigger.
- Try laying your fly line on dead water or objects (streambank) for proper drift.
- Use the loop in your fly line as a strike indicator and as a tool to add movement to streamers.
- Keep your line tight and lead the fly slightly in currents – under most scenarios.

Rules to Fish By

1. Don't leave rising fish.
2. A fly on the water, stays on the water.
3. Move your fly before you start your cast.
4. Have a plan to land a big fish..... you don't expect to catch.
5. Fish your way into a stream.
6. Don't strike too soon.
7. Keep a low profile.
8. Have patience, listen, and watch – it's called fishing not casting.
9. Foam is home.
10. Trout eat a 'drift'.
11. Know how to fight a fish and release a fish.
12. Bad things begin to happen when you have a lot of line out.
13. Don't cast farther- get closer to the fish- it's surprising how close you can be to most fish.
14. Have a plan “B”! (broken gear, lost luggage, bad weather, crowds, etc)
15. Fish aren't smart.....but you can easily insult their “instincts”.
16. Take a child fishing.
17. Teach others about fly-tying and fly-fishing so you can learn what you don't know.
18. Hire a guide. Let your guide fish- it benefits both of you.
19. Invest money to take fly-tying and casting lessons.
20. Have fun and ask yourself- “is it really about catching the fish”?