

# HOOKS SWIVELS SPLIT RINGS & SINKERS

*Terminal tackle* is the term for all fishing equipment, except lures, used at the end of the fishing line. Hooks, swivels, snaps, split rings, beads, leads/weights, floats and leaders are 'terminal tackle.'

## HOOKS

Hooks are the single most important piece of terminal tackle, Charlotte County anglers need only be concerned with a relatively small range of hook sizes and types. Although size is important, a range of hook sizes can be used to catch the same fish.



Long and short shank 'j' hooks

All hooks are either straight or off-set. For straight hooks, the shank, point, and bend are in-line. When placed on a level surface the hook lies flat. Place an off-set hook in the same position and the hook point will either jut up or down slightly. On some off-set hooks the shank is also bent. The bend causes the hook to rotate in the fish's mouth when set or bitten. Off-set hooks are believed to have a slightly better chance of hooking a fish than in-line ones.

Hooks may be finished in gold, bronze, nickel, blue, cadmium plated/tinned, and stainless steel. Blue hooks are used almost exclusively for freshwater fishing. Cadmium plated/tinned and nickel are both long lasting and used for saltwater fishing. Gold and bronze hooks rust quickly. They are considered 'fish friendly' because they can be left in a fish and will rust away in a short time.

Stainless steel hooks are primarily used on lures

although they can be bought loose and are popular with some saltwater fisherman since they do not rust and spoil the appearance of a tackle box. It is recommended stainless steel hooks be used on lures only since they do not rust if left in a fish.

Hooks carry size numbers of either one or two digits, or numbers separated by a slant. Numbers not separated by a slant decrease in size as the number gets larger, while numbers that are separated by a slant increase in size as the number increases. For example, 22 is a very small hook, and 9/0 is a very large hook. There is no 0 size hook.



Hook size: '1/0' not the same as 'size 1'

For saltwater fishing, a long shank off-set hook such as an Eagle Claw 66N in sizes 2 to 2/0 in a nickel finish works well. It can be fished either on the bottom or under a float. A fish will seldom swallow a long shank hook, and because of that they usually are easier to remove.

A short shank bronze finished hook works well for live bait in sizes 2 to 2/0. O'Shaugnessy and Aberdeen are types of in-line style hooks. O'Shaugnessy are made from heavier wire, should be used in sizes 3/0 to 9/0 with either live or cut bait, and can be fished either on the bottom or under a float. These hooks are good for heavy mouthed or slow biting saltwater and freshwater fish.

**Aberdeen hooks** are made from thinner wire and can be found in micro sizes. One advantage to using a thin wire hook is that it will straighten when snagged if pulled with a hard steady pressure. These hooks are usually used when the fisherman is targeting a particular size fish that matches the hooks capabilities.

**The Carlisle** is a long shank bronze off-set hook that is particularly good for large minnow and worm fishing. Its length helps prevent the fish from swallowing the hook.

**The Kahle** is a wide gap off-set hook that comes in bronze, nickel, and gold finish. It can be used for cut or live bait, bottom fishing or under a float. A fish seldom escapes from this hook. The best sizes for local waters are 4 through 3/0.