

LEADERS & FLOATS

To catch a fish an angler must put the bait where the fish is, and when the fish is hooked, the line must be strong enough to resist the teeth or bony jaws of the fish so it can not break off. A variety of leader material and floats are available to help the angler place the bait at the appropriate depth and resist the fish's efforts to get loose.

There are two basic uses for leaders: to make the connection between the line and the bait invisible, and to have the strength to resist the teeth or boney jaws of fish. It is difficult to achieve both purposes.

TYPES OF LEADERS

There are four types of leader: monofilament, fluorocarbon, single strand stainless steel, and cable twisted wire

Monofilament & fluorocarbon: Today the most common leader material used is fluorocarbon because it is nearly invisible to the fish. Leader should be at least double the test weight of the primary line. The Surgeon's Knot is recommended for attaching the leader to the line. (see section on knots)

Single strand stainless: Used mostly in trolling situations, the wire comes in a coil and is rigged using a Haywire Twist. How to tie this knot is clearly illustrated on each package of coiled wire. The fundamental disadvantage of single strand wire is it can kink which severely weakens it.

Cable twisted wire: This material is actually many small strands of wire twisted together. It is much more flexible than single strand stainless and can be bought in either coil or pre-rigged. It comes in a wide range of test weights. The material comes either nylon coated or non-coated. The coated wire is subject to scarring and may need to be replaced more frequently than non-coated.



FLOATS

Most floats are made from plastic, plastic foam or wood and have two fundamental uses. First, floats place the bait or lure at a controlled depth, and secondly, they serve as a visual strike indicator to the angler.

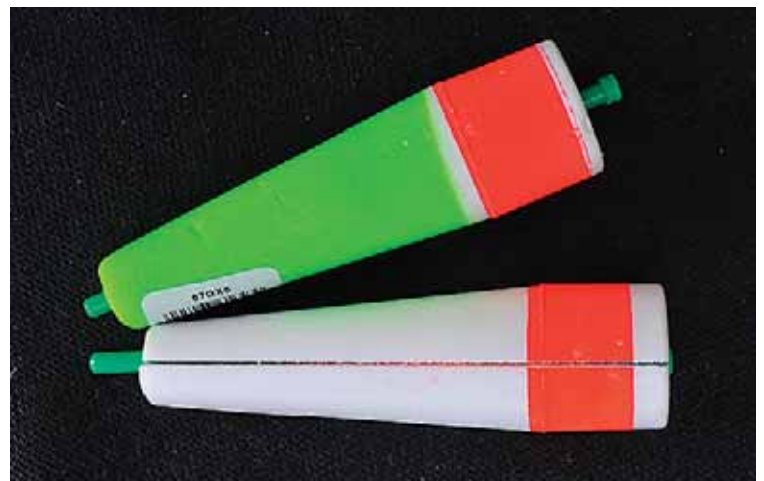
There are a variety of floats that can be used in local waters, and include: pencil or quill, fixed, sliding, popping cork and balloon.

SALTWATER FLOATS

The two most popular saltwater floats are the popping cork and the sliding float. Both floats are made from plastic foam, come weighted or unweighted, and slit or unslit. The only advantage of using a float with a slit is that it can be put on and off the line quickly. The disadvantage is they sometime fly off when fighting a fish.

The poppin cork has a cupped top which produces a popping sound when the angler snaps the fishing line tight with a sharp pull of the rod. The sound serves as a fish attraction. These floats also come with a rattler.

A rattler is a bullet shaped glass or metal pod that encases steel pellets and makes a noise when shaken.



Poppin' Corks. You pull out the 'pin' lay your line in the slot and slide the pin back in on top of tyhe line to hold it in place.