ELICATE, accurate and sensitive pole fishing brings you a host of massive advantages. It is the most simple and effective way of catching fish and has won me multiple World Championships! In this booklet I’m going to pass on some of the knowledge and experience I’ve gained through many years of “fishing the pole”.

It doesn’t matter if you’ve never picked up a pole before or you’re a regular, I’m sure I’ll suggest things to help you catch more fish.

To begin with I’m going to show you how to elasticate a pole properly. An awful lot of people I coach get this critical bit wrong and it will then affect the way they use the pole.

I’ve spent many years fine-tuning the best way to elasticate a pole and you won’t need an engineering degree to follow it!
Pole School

Know your Pole...

Before I dive head-long into cutting back the tip I want to cover the pole terminology and how they are supplied.

From the manufacturers I have there’s no difficulty getting a grip on the terminology but you may find manufacturers use its a complete jumble of different names. Here’s a typical pole package:

1. This is a Browning Xitan Z2 Carp Master pole. This model comes with a 1.27mm bore bush. You must be careful when you discard the No.1 section when fitting a carp elastic so the bush often fits straight on. There are many methods of fitting strength to elasticate a match kit and a carp kit as there are subtle differences.

2. The sound of splintering carbon is also the sound of pound notes leaving your wallet!

3. However, to keep these poles so light very thin carbon is used so they aren’t very strong. Hooked up on strong line and elastic it’s likely that your pole will split or even smash the pole.

4. So there’s always a slight compromise over what we’re going to use, they are more robust than traditional match poles that have been made for lightweight match fishing.

5. Match poles are very light so they are actually held at 1 ft 11in or less at all times. They are also very stiff and perfect for hitting skinny fish from little tackle. However, to keep these poles as light as possible carbon sections are used so they aren’t very strong. Bead the bush very as a snug fit and elastic and it’ll probably crush the pole.

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7. To begin, cut back the tip section and fit the bushes to act as a buffer between the pole and the elastic. You need the elastic you’re going to use, superglue, the bushes and a needle file.

8. Wipe away any excess glue to leave you with a snug fitting bush – snug without sticking – as this will stop water flooding inside the pole tip.

9. Select the correct bush diameter for the size of elastic you’re using. To begin, I’ve got to elasticate a match kit with a solid No.3 elastic so a 1.27mm bore bush is ideal. The elastic should be a snug fit for the back – snug without sticking — so this will stop water flooding inside the pole tip.

10. The tip of your top kit will be too thin for the bush to fit properly so you must cut it back until it’s just snug. Cut the tip with needle file, not a hack saw. Some manufacturers supply a thin plastic cap which you can use to hold the tip.

11. Once you’ve got a neat fit chamfer the edge of the carbon with a fine needle file. It is common to discard the whole of the No.1 section when fitting a carp elastic so the bush often fits straight on to the No.2 section.

12. Push the bush on a little way, blob the pole with glue and push it home. Wipe away any excess glue.

13. Fit the bush but don’t push it all the way in. Dab it with a blob of glue and push it home.

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19. Push the bush on a little way, blob the pole with glue and push it home. Wipe away any excess glue.

20. Here’s the fine bore match kit fitted with an internal bush (left) and the carp kit with a large diameter external bush (right).
HOW TO ELASTICATE A POLE... (CONT)

1. To elasticate a top kit you need small and large bungs, a fine elastic, diamond eye threader, scissors and elastic connectors.

2. Bungs come in different diameters to fit carp and match kits. Push the bung into the base of the top kit and mark with a pen where it stops.

3. Place the bung about a centimetre above the mark. This is three or four steps up the bung. Push the bung through the bung, reducing its diameter.

4. Use a bung extractor rod to push the bung into the top kit. It should go in 7-8 inside so that when the next section is pushed in it doesn’t hit the bung.

5. To elasticate a match kit with fine elastic slide the diamond eye threader into the tip and slide it down until it comes out the other end and tie an overhead knot.

6. Run your elastic through the wire diamond eye. If you’re using elastic rated number six or less, tie an overhead knot in it (small) to stop it sliding out of the wire loop.

7. Pull the wire to drag the elastic into the tip and through the top two sections. For a match kit with light elastic you only run it through No. 1 and No. 2 sections.

8. The knot will have slid up to the loops as you pulled the elastic through. Snip it off.

9. Put the elastic through the small hole on the end of the bung.

10. For a solid elastic only (hollow elastic needs a different knot which I’ll show you later). Create a normal overhead knot.

11. Pull the elastic loops to partially close the knot but don’t fully tighten it.

12. Ease your knot down to the top of the bung. Pull both ends of the elastic to tighten it. The coils of elastic actually hits into each other and forms a vice-like grip.

13. Turn off the tag end to form a neat knot on the connector and give the elastic a fixed tag to make sure it doesn’t slip.

14. Throwing bungs have a window section to hold extra elastic. Wrap six turns on weasels, thread elastic through it and run it on the top of bung and push into pole.

15. Place the elastic half a centimetre above the mark. This is three or four steps up the bung. Hardwaste through the bung, reducing its diameter.

16. Pull the elastic loop to partially close the knot but don’t fully tighten it.

17. Ease your knot down to the top of the bung. Pull both ends of the elastic to tighten it. The coils of elastic actually hits into each other and forms a vice-like grip.

18. Get a mini connector that’s suitable for using with fine lines and light elastic. Slide the bottom sleeve section on to the elastic.

19. Now put the elastic through the hole in the bottom of the top section of the connector.

20. Tie an overhead knot in the elastic (the same as used to attach the bung) but don’t pull it tight.

HOW TO ELASTICATE A CARP KIT

21. Face the knot down to the connector and pull both ends to fully tighten the knot and pull it to the connector.

22. Trim tag and slide connector sleeve to cover knot. There should double blossom into place to stop rolling on of connector slipping when you hook a fish.

23. Elastic should pull back smoothly into the tip. If it snaps back hard or it flappies and doesn’t pull back into the tip you need to alter the tension.

24. Use the bung extractor to remove the bung and wind more elastic on to it to increase the tension, or several small hocks to release the tension.

FITTING HOLLOW ELASTIC TO A CARP KIT

Hollow elastic has one great advantage when you are pole fishing for carp – the extra stretch it provides is far better at absorbing the power of the fish and ensures you don’t break them.

While it isn’t good when you’re fishing up to snags like lilies (the extra stretch helps big fish reach sanctuary) in open water situations size 10-20 rated hollow elastic can’t be beaten.

However, there are a few subtle differences you need to note about elasticating a pole with hollow elastic.

1. The key thing to note is you must use different knots with solid and hollow elastic.

2. Elastic through runner on the top of bung and extra elastic. Wrap six turns on winder, thread Browning bungs have a winder section to hold elastic through the top two sections. For a match kit with light elastic you only run it through No.1 and No. 2 sections.

3. If you are using hollow elastic rated number six or less, tie an overhead knot in it (small) to stop it sliding out of the wire loop.

4. Run your elastic through the wire diamond eye. If you’re using elastic rated number six or less, tie an overhead knot in it (small) to stop it sliding out of the wire loop.

5. Pull the wire to drag the elastic into the tip and through the top two sections. For a match kit with light elastic you only run it through No. 1 and No. 2 sections.

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TIME is precious, and fishing time is even more so. It therefore makes sense to do whatever you can to avoid wasting it.

To help you achieve this I’m going to show you how to tie the perfect pole rig at home.

There are two reasons for doing this.
For a start you will tie a better rig when you’re sat comfortably indoors than you will on the bank, especially when the wind’s blowing and it’s raining.

Second, if you tie a rig at home with a body of water to hand – use a tall pasta jar or glass vase – you can create a rig that is perfectly shot on the second you drop it in your swim on the bank.

If you’re not wasting time setting up your pole rig by the water you’ll have more time to catch fish.

Here’s my guide to how I make up a rig at home proving it’s easier to be a precision-made pole angler than you might think...
MAKING A POLE RIG

This step-by-step sequence shows you a foolproof way to tie the perfect pole rig – the process I use for every rig I ever use.

Time-wise it won’t take you long to tie a rig – a few minutes once you’ve got the hang of things – but it will make a huge difference to your fishing as your hookbait will spend a lot more time in the water.

I know some newcomers to pole fishing will think that the idea of shooting up a rig at home is crazy, a step too far in dedication to fishing.

All I can say is that it will make your actual fishing time more pleasurable and more productive so it’s surely worth what little effort it takes.

In these photos you’ll see my test tank. This is a plastic tube I’ve had for years, I can’t remember where I got it from!

A simple alternative to this is a tall pasta jar, the type used for storing flowers when you’re not using it!

Set two pieces of micro diameter silicone tubing running through the olivette

Put the float in the winder and add a loop in the centre section of the winder

Attach a soft rubber pole anchor to the loop in the end of the pole rig

Now that you’ve tied a rig you’ve got to store it without it getting damaged. This means putting it on a winder of which there are several types. Here’s how to safely store your rigs

STORING A RIG

Make sure the winder is long and deep enough so the float doesn’t overturn it

Ensure the split shot or olivette isn’t wrapped around the end of the winder. This can knock the shot off the line or damage the mono

Some winders don’t need a pole anchor thanks to a sliding device that holds the rig loop

Check the size of the float capacity and select shot or an olivette slightly less than the capacity.

As a general rule my float choice is governed by the depth of water I’m fishing multiplied by 0.1 gram. So, in a five foot swim I use a 0.5 gram float. For a 10 foot swim choose a 1 gram float. If the float I choose has a capacity over 0.5 gram I use an olivette as the main weight, they’re neater and less prone than a string of shot (see my guide to shot on page 22)

The shot/olivette should be on the line in the centre

The shot/olivette should be on the line in the centre section of the winder

Some wingers are fitted with a key which you can use to unscrew the olivette or shot from the winder running through the loop

Sheath the float and shot on the line then slide off the float when the shot is placed to ensure damaged

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Use the figure of 8 knot to put a loop in both ends of the line then attach a hooklink with the loop to keep head. The rig is finished and just needs to be stored
SHOTTING UP A POLE RIG

One of the biggest differences between pole and float fishing is the size of the shot used and the total loading applied to the line.

Because a pole float is lowered into the water rather than being cast like a waggler float, there’s no need to use a large float carrying a heavy casting weight to propel the rig.

Although small sizes of round split shot can be used different types of tiny shot are also available that make fine-tuning of pole rigs easier.

To avoid confusion here’s a guide to what types of shot are available and what they weigh.

Any shot larger than a No.8 (0.06gram) up to 1oz (28.35gram) must be made of non-toxic material rather than lead or you could be fined £5,000!

SPLIT SHOT

Round with a central split cut into it, this is the classic type of shot. To shot a pole rig you need small ‘dust’ shot between size 11 and 8.

OLIVETTE

These are streamlined bulk weights that are threaded on to the line so the nylon runs straight through the weight or is pinned to the outside of it by rubber sleeves.

Available in sizes from 0.3gram to 12gram they are used to ‘bomb’ the hookbait to the bottom, usually in water at least five foot deep.

STYL

This long thin, barrel-shaped weight was designed by continental European anglers to allow fine-tuning of very delicate pole rigs.

Available in sizes so they allow the rig to fall through the water slower than comparable sizes of round shot, the downsides is they are fiddly to attach to the line and are not often used by the majority of pole anglers in the UK.

However, many pole floats still have their shotting capacity stated in styl weights so it is necessary to know what these weights are.

Style are classified in the reverse of split shot, the higher the number the larger the shot. Lead styles from No.12 to No.20 are illegal in the UK.

No.7 = 0.01g, No.8 = 0.017g, No.9 = 0.025g, No.10 = 0.035g, No.11 = 0.048g

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You can see the full range of Browning poles and pole accessories used by Bob Nudd plus lots more fishing and tackle tips from Bob Nudd and our other expert anglers at www.browning-fishing.com.