INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING
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Contents

Introduction ................................................................. 3
Know your tackle ............................................................ 4-5
Preparing to fish: Setting up the rod and reel ................. 6-7
What you are trying to catch – Fish Species .................. 8-9
Choice of Bait ............................................................... 10-11
Get Fishing! ................................................................. 12-13
The good angler – Fish care and handling, environment ... 14-15
What Comes Next – Different Disciplines of Angling ...... 16-17
Summary ................................................................. 18

Introduction
Fishing is the largest participant sport in the UK, with the latest estimate showing that around 3 million people regularly make trips to the waterside. Coarse Fishing relates to the branch of the sport where all freshwater fish are caught with the exception of Trout, Salmon or Grayling. Popular coarse fish include Roach, Bream, Barbel, Tench and Carp, although there are many other species that can be encountered in our rivers, canals and lakes! Most importantly, in coarse angling all fish are returned to the water after capture alive and unharmed.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

Know your Tackle
Your fishing set includes all the basic items of tackle you need, and when used correctly it will catch you lots of fish!

The rod
The rod allows you to “play” a fish by absorbing the movements and lunges of a hooked fish and, used in conjunction with the reel, also allows you to “cast” to your intended fishing spot.

The line
This is wound onto the reel and is the direct contact between the angler and the fish through the rod. The float, shot and hook are attached to the line. The line supplied is strong enough for the vast majority of fish you will catch.

The reel
This is called a “fixed spool” reel and is fitted to the handle of the rod. The reel holds the angler’s line. Line is released from the reel when you “cast” and also retrieves the line when you hook a fish, or just want to remove the tackle from the water.

The landing net
This is used to lift a hooked fish from the water onto the bank side without straining the line and tackle, and without damaging the fish.

The keepnet
This is used to temporarily retain fish that have been caught. It is made from soft, fish friendly material to prevent any damage to the fish. Some anglers prefer to return fish to the water immediately after capture, and on some waters keepnets cannot be used.

Float
This is the angler’s “bite” indicator. When the float is pulled under the water it usually indicates that a fish has taken the bait – in angler’s terms... “a bite”! The bright tip helps visibility.

Hooks
These hold the bait and are used to “hook” the fish. Modern hooks are designed to do minimum harm to fish but are very sharp, therefore care must be taken when handling them to avoid being pricked. Barbless hooks are safer and should always be used. To make them easier to use the hooks are tied to short lengths of fine line. Be careful when unwinding the line to avoid knots.

Disgorger
The most important item in your tackle. This is used to remove the hook from the mouth of a fish without causing any distress or damage.

Split shot dispenser
The Split shot in the dispenser are used to give your float casting weight and also to help get your bait to the bottom. The shot has a split which is used to fix it to the line. Small shots are made of lead and must not be swallowed. Lead Shot for use in the UK has to be bigger than size 8 and non-toxic due to legal requirements.

Plummet
This is attached to the hook at the beginning of the session and used in conjunction with the float to find the depth of the water.

Some of your tackle may look different to this but the way it is used is exactly the same.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

Preparing to fish: Setting up the rod and reel
Follow these simple instructions and you will be ready to catch fish within minutes! You may find it difficult the first time but you will very quickly learn how to set the tackle up.

Transfer the line to the reel
1. Open the bail arm of the reel (the wire loop in front of the spool).
2. Tie the line onto the spool of the reel and close the bail arm.
3. Turn the handle of the reel slowly and the line will begin to fill the spool of the reel.
4. Continue with this until all of the line is on the spool or close to the lip of the spool, as in the picture.

Set up the rod
1. Push the sections of rod together firmly ensuring that the eyes on each section are lined up in a straight line with each other.
2. Attach the reel to the base of the rod with the screw fitting on the handle.
3. Open the reel’s bail arm which will allow the line to be pulled off the reel spool. Thread the line through all of the eyes of the rod.
4. Pull around one metre of line through the bottom ring on the float. Lock the float into place with a split shot either side of the float – the line is pushed into the groove and the shot squeezed to fix to the line. You will need to use the correct amount of shot to make the float sit in the water correctly – some trial and error may be needed to fix the correct amount of shot needed. Add three or four small shot down the line, spaced out at equal intervals, to make the bait fall through the water.
5. Remove one of the hooks from its packet and carefully unwind the line. Tie the line from the reel to the loop in the line attached to hook. The hooks are very sharp so take care not to be pricked.

You now have a fully assembled rod and are ready to catch some fish!
WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO CATCH – FISH SPECIES

There is a wide variety of fish in the waterways around the UK and this is partly what makes coarse fishing so exciting as you never really know what you will catch next! Here’s a summary of the most common and popular species of fish:

Barbel
A very hard fighting fish that is mainly found in fast flowing rivers. They are almost torpedo shaped with an under-slung mouth surrounded by several distinctive barbules which look like whiskers. In recent years they have become increasingly popular and are now also found in some still waters. They grow to over 6kg but a 1kg fish is a good catch.

Bream
Characterised by their broad oval body and plenty of slime! The bream is mainly a bottom feeder and is most commonly found in slow or still water in rivers, lakes and canals. A specimen sized fish is over 5kg but even fish of this size are slow fighters. Often nicknamed “skimmers” when small, and “dustbin lids” when large, due to their shape.

Carp
The most popular species of fish in recent years. There are several different strains of carp, including mirror, common and ghost carp. They are found in all man-made commercial fisheries and many rivers, lakes and canals. They are hard fighting, feed most of the year round and grow very big – in excess of 25kg! Even a 1kg fish will fight very hard and give plenty of fun.

Chub
Primarily a river fish that will eat just about anything they can fit into their big mouths! Chub are nearly always found near cover such as overhanging trees, bridges or weed. They are a slender, silver coloured fish with a reddish tinge to their fins. A large chub would typically weigh 2kg or more.

Perch
This is the first fish that many anglers catch and can often be the fish that turns a person into a lifetime angler. The perch is a greedy fish and particularly loves to eat worms. It is almost prehistoric in its appearance and has a large spiky dorsal fin that gives it a menacing look. The record for the perch is over 2kg, although a 1kg fish is a large one.

Roach
Probably the most common fish in the UK. The roach is likely to be found anywhere and will give the angler some sport at all times of the year. They are usually found in big shoals, therefore if you catch one roach more are likely to follow. They have a silvery body with red fins and are one of the most attractive coarse fish in the UK. They grow to 2kg but a 1kg fish is a real giant.

Tench
Often referred to as a “bar of soap” due to their thick layer of slime that makes them almost impossible to grip. They are particularly distinctive due to their olive green colour and bright red eyes. A widespread fish that has very impressive fighting qualities. Is often found close to cover, lily pads being a favourite. Tench are warm weather fish and are mainly caught from April to October. Grow to 4kg but fish of 1kg are more common.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

Choice of Bait
Different fish prefer different food so it is important to match the bait to use to the fish you are trying to catch. Below is a selection of the most popular baits for each fish.

Barbel
Cubes of luncheon mean, fishmeal pellets, maggots, casters and worms.

Bream
Cubes of luncheon meat, bread, pellets, maggots, casters, worms and ground bait.

Carp
Boilies, cubes of luncheon meat, bread, pellets, sweet corn, maggots, casters, worms and ground bait.

Chub
Cubes of luncheon meat, bread, cheese, maggots, casters and worms.

Perch
Worms, casters and maggots.

Roach
Casters, maggots, pinkies (small maggots) and bread.

Tench
Cubes of luncheon meat, bread, pellets, sweet corn, maggots, casters, worms and ground bait.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

Get Fishing!
Before setting foot on the bank side it is important to remember that you must obtain an Environment Agency rod licence before fishing. These are available from Post Offices or online and are sold as daily or annual licences. You will be liable for prosecution if you are caught fishing without a licence.

Although there is lots of freshwater in the UK, it is important to remember that you cannot just fish anywhere you choose. Many waterways are controlled by clubs or associations, or are commercial businesses therefore you will generally need to buy a club ticket or day ticket before starting to fish. However, most areas of the country will have some waterways that are free to fish – but you will still need a licence.

The best place to get advice on where to fish is your local fishing tackle shop. Tackle shop owners are friendly and helpful and will be able to help. You will also be able to buy bait and any extra tackle you may need. The Internet is also a useful source of information on every aspect of fishing.

When on the bank side it is crucial to keep noise and movements to a minimum, after all fish are wild creatures and anything that scares them will ruin your chances before you even start to fish. Keeping reasonably quite is also good fishing etiquette – other anglers will not be pleased if you scare their fish away!

Safety is also a key factor to consider before fishing. Some things to remember are:

ATTENTION:

- Never fish within close proximity of over head power cables as carbon rods are an excellent electricity conductor and the consequences could be fatal.
- Always let someone know where you are going fishing and when you are expected to return.
- Ideally you should be able to swim, and it is always preferable to go fishing with a friend just in case you get into difficulties.
- In winter always wear plenty of warm clothes, it can be very cold at the waterside.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

The good angler – Fish care and handling, environment

All good anglers know that it is their duty to look after the fish they catch, and respect the environment and other anglers around them. We all want to be able to return and catch these fish again and again, fish in pleasant surroundings, and enjoy the company of other anglers. Follow these few tips to maximise your enjoyment and minimise and the discomfort to the fish:

1. Use barbless hooks whenever possible. These hooks are much easier and quicker to remove and cause no damage to fish’s mouth.

2. Use your landing net on all but the smallest fish. Lifting fish out of the water on the end of the rod is not kind to the fish and can damage your tackle.

3. Return fish to the water as quickly as possible, there really is no need to spend a long time admiring your catch. If you want to take a photograph make sure that you have your camera to hand before you start fishing to speed the process up.

4. If you are fishing for large fish an unhooking mat is an essential piece of equipment. It is unacceptable to put a fish on a hard surface like mud or gravel. Wet grass is better if no unhooking mat is available.

5. Never hold a fish using a towel, even if it is wet, as it will remove the fish’s protective slime. Wet hands are kinder to fish. If you find it difficult to hold the fish lay it on an unhooking mat or hold it through your landing net.

6. Remember that the bank side is home to many animals, birds and various insects. Always minimise disruption to plants and trees as these could be home to animals and nests. Do not fish near nesting birds as you will disturb them.

7. Never leave any litter, including unwanted tackle, lengths of line and old hooks, at the waterside. These can cause damage to wildlife, spoil the countryside and give angling a bad reputation. Take everything home with you and dispose of it correctly.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

What Comes Next – Different Disciplines of Angling
The sport of Angling has many different branches and many anglers decide to specialise in a certain area, often depending on what type of fish they prefer to catch.

Specimen Angling
Many anglers decide they would like to catch fish of bigger than average size. In the case of a Perch that would mean a fish of 1kg upward, whilst a specimen carp would be a fish in excess of 10kg in weight. To achieve this anglers target specific venues and use very specialised tackle and baits to achieve their objective. A high degree of patience and determination is required with this form of angling; however the rewards can be substantial.

Pleasure Fishing
This is fishing in its purest form and, as its name suggests, is fishing for the pure enjoyment. Many people see angling as an ideal way to escape the stresses of everyday life, with the added benefit of being close to nature. A pleasure angler will generally be happy to catch whatever pulls their float under, no matter what species or size!

Match Fishing
This is the competitive branch of the sport, where groups of anglers not only compete against the fish but also against each other. Generally competitions are fished for five hours and the angler with the biggest total weight wins. Often there will be cash prizes for the top competitors. There are some big prizes to be won, with some events offering £25,000 to the winner.
INTRODUCTION TO COARSE FISHING

Summary
Your fishing set will enable you to join the huge number of people that enjoy fishing as a sport and hobby. Like all new things, you will need to be patient and gradually learn the skills needed. There is lots of information available in books, magazines and on the Internet.

As you become more experienced you will want to try other forms of fishing. However, the basic skills of patience and perseverance will always be the same. Don’t be concerned if you don’t immediately catch a fish! Visit your local tackle shop and don’t be afraid to ask other anglers for advice. When you do catch your first fish you will be hooked for life!

If you want to learn more about fishing and see a wider range of the tackle available, visit our websites www.browning-fishing.com and www.zebco-europe.com. You also can view some very exciting, entertaining and informative video clips at www.zebco.tv. Take a look!

See the full range of Hybrid products and much more on our website www.browning-fishing.com.

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MATCH ANGLER, SPECIMEN HUNTER OR "JUST FOR PLEASURE"?

The Hybrid tackle range has been specifically designed for the bigger than average fish now common in commercial fisheries.

“Stepped up” tackle for match anglers – “stepped down” tackle for specimen anglers – and just perfect for the rest!

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5 types, all with powerful but progressive actions

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BETTER THAN AVERAGE TACKLE FOR BETTER THAN AVERAGE FISH!
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