

Idaho Fish & Game News

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So You Wanna Go Fishing? Here are Some Good Ideas

By David Parrish

Fishing is an age old sport. Ancient pictographs track anglers' successes; biblical references note the importance of fishing; classic novels describe battles between anglers and their prey.

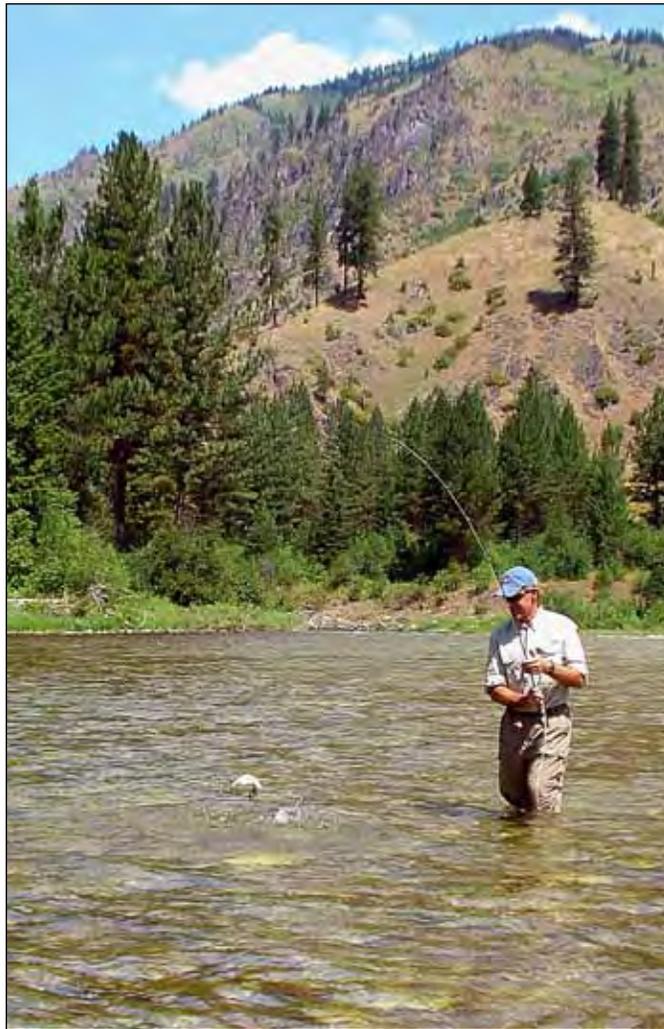
Yet people still struggle to learn the basics of how to catch a fish.

The first thing to understand is that fishing is more than just catching a fish. It spans a range of emotions – from frustration over “the lack of bite” or when you hook and lose “the big one,” to being outdoors or in awe and amazement over “catching the big one.”

For new or veteran anglers, Idaho Fish and Game and local sports shops offer several resources to help anglers get the most out of fishing.

First thing: A fishing license is required for fishing on all public waters within the state and on most waters along our borders. The price varies with age and residency, but a general fishing license is good for the calendar year. More important, fishing licenses pay for fish management in Idaho, and management is key to providing angling opportunities without over-harvesting the resource.

When buying that license, anglers should also ask for the latest fishing rules. The rule booklet includes a list of waters with special rules or seasons, general bag limits, maps of popular waters and pictures that



Fishing is a great way to get into some beautiful scenery. IDFG photo

identify the game fishes of Idaho. Waters not listed in the rule booklet are open to fishing. Rules can also be found online at www.fishandgame.idaho.gov, and rule apps are available from most cell phone providers.

Fish and Game's colorful brochure, “Go Fish Idaho! – An Anglers Guide to the Gem State,” is a one-stop guide to popular waters, types of fish found in those waters and site amenities. It is available at vendors and Fish and Game offices.

Next: There are several ways to find a place to go fishing. Anglers can ask the person behind the counter, who often are also a great source on fishing poles, reels, bait, lures or other gear you may need. Or contact the local Fish and Game office at the numbers listed in the rule booklet.

Anyone with Internet access can start at the Fishing Planner on Fish and Game's website or e-mail Fish and Game at the website link to ask about types of fish, locations and skill level. Fish and Game experts will share their local knowledge of the latest fishing conditions and tips on fishing gear. Fishing workshops also may be available to teach the basics of angling.

Look for Fish and Game's colorful fishing trailers at local ponds. YouTube videos on the latest fishing gizmos, gadgets and techniques may also be helpful.

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Free Fishing Day is June 9

Saturday, June 9, is Free Fishing Day in Idaho, and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game invites veteran and novice anglers of all ages, residents and nonresidents alike, to celebrate the day by fishing anywhere in Idaho without a license.

Though fishing license requirements are suspended for this special day, all other rules remain in effect. These include such rules as bag and length limits or special fishing regulations. Rules brochures are available free at local sporting goods stores.

Free Fishing Day provides a great opportunity for novices to give fishing a try and perhaps develop a life-long pursuit. Parents are encouraged to bring their children out for a day of fun and excitement at this annual event.

To help beginning anglers, Idaho Fish and Game sponsors a number of fishing clinics around the state. Fish and Game personnel will be on hand to answer questions and help beginning anglers learn about tackle, casting and fishing techniques, and fish identification. Some fishing tackle and bait will be available for persons who don't have their own gear.

“Free fishing day provides a great opportunity for novices to give fishing a try and perhaps develop it into a life-long pursuit,” Fish and Game regional fish manager Jeff Dillon said. “Parents are encouraged to bring their children out for a day of fun fishing excitement.”



A young angler shows off her free-IDFG Photo fishing-day catch.

Lack of fishing experience is no excuse. At special locations around the southwest region, equipment will be available for use, and fishing experts will be on hand to help novice anglers learn the ins and outs of fishing. In addition, all these locations will be stocked with

hatchery rainbow trout before the special day.

Nationwide, the number of anglers is increasing. But the percentage of the population that fishes is decreasing. This is attributed to a number of factors including a decrease of leisure time, parents with little time to fish or limited knowledge of fishing, urbanization, complicated regulations, and loss of “fishing holes” to development.

When a lack of money for licenses or equipment, or a lack of knowledge, experience or a place to go are part of the reason for not fishing, Free Fishing Day is the ticket to a day of outdoor fun. The Fish and Game sponsored clinics will help new anglers learn fishing skills with tackle provided.

Each year hundreds of Idahoans and visitors attend the clinics and thousands turn out statewide to fish without a license – legally. So give fishing a try on this special day. All it will cost is the gas or pedal power to get to an Idaho lake or stream. You may find yourself “hooked for life” on fishing.

Enjoying Your Catch

It can be daunting at first, but nothing beats outwitting a fish, reeling it in and having freshly caught and cooked fish for dinner.

The late Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, an avid outdoorsman, contended that a freshly caught trout should be cleaned and cooked immediately, preferably in butter over a small campfire.

A lot of anglers would agree with him, but there's a long list of other ways to prepare your catch. Smoked, pickled, dried, poached, barbecued and marinated are just a few of the ways to bring out the best in your fish.

Start with something simple. Most community fishing ponds are stocked with fish trained to bite on a beginner's hooks. Nothing is more encouraging than to be out on the bank and next to you is a small child reeling in an eight-inch trout.



Victoria caught this crappie. IDFG Photo

Fishing for panfish – bluegill, crappie, and perch – is also a great way to initiate youth or novice anglers to the sport. These fish tend to be plentiful, and when the “bite” is on, fishing can be fast and furious. Springtime afternoons are the best time to jig or throw bait to catch bluegill and crappie.

As anglers become more experienced, fly-fishing is the next evolutionary step. This type of fishing will require some knowledge of fish habitat, of insect hatches, and the coordination to deftly drop a fly in just the right spot. They say, “the greater the challenge – the greater the reward.” This is especially true for anyone who masters the art of fly-fishing.

People fish for many different reasons. Whether it's for subsistence, pleasure or competition with nature; one thing is for certain – memories gained in the pursuit of fish will last a lifetime.

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'Take Me Fishing' Trailers, Coming to a Pond Near You



Fully stocked with fishing gear, Fish and Game's "Take Me Fishing" trailers visit local ponds around the state. *IDFG photo by Evin Oneale*

Stocked with fishing tackle, Idaho Fish and Game's "Take Me Fishing" trailers will soon be on the move again and coming to local ponds across the state.

They're hard to miss, wrapped with vibrant fish illustrations developed by Eagle artist Ward Hooper.

But the important stuff is inside the trailers.

For anyone who doesn't have their own, fishing equipment and bait can be checked out free during the scheduled

times listed. Reservations are not needed and equipment is checked out on a first-come, first-served basis.

Participants who register at the trailer can fish for free without a license during the hours of scheduled events, but all other rules, such as size and species limits, do apply.

Idaho children 13 years old and under can always fish for free. These events give their parents, older siblings and friends the opportunity to try fishing

without buying a license.

"The goal is to get kids excited about fishing," said Evin Oneale, Fish and Game conservation educator. "We've got a serious situation around the country right now where kids are not

getting outside as much as they could, and fishing is a great way to get kids introduced to the outdoors."

Getting youths excited about fishing will help build a new generation of anglers. The only thing children and their parents need to do is show up.

For a complete list of trailer dates, visit the Idaho Department of Fish and Game web page: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/fish/?getPage=80>.

The Take Me Fishing trailers aren't just for children either. Anyone can check-out the equipment from the trailer and receive all kinds of fishing help, from baiting hooks – to casting – to reeling in a catch.

It is Fish and Game's hope that this travelling trailer will recruit new anglers, especially youths, and perhaps reconnect one-time anglers with a pastime they forgot they enjoyed.



Idaho Fish and Game Policy

Idaho wildlife management policy is set by seven volunteer commissioners. The Idaho Fish and Game Commission's policy decisions are based on research and recommendations by the professional staff of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and with input from the governor's office, the state Legislature, hunters, anglers and the public.



Rules Allow Public Access to Streams and Lakes

You can see the water, but how do you get there?

Many streams flow through private property, thus it is important that anglers know their rights and responsibilities when fishing in such waters.

Any stream that is capable, in its natural high-water condition, of being navigated by paddle-, oar- or motor-propelled small craft for pleasure or commercial purposes, is considered a public transportation corridor.

The public has the right to use such a corridor, provided they enter and exit the corridor at a public right of way and remain within the corridor.

When fishing in navigable streams bordered by private property:

- You must stay within the normal high-water marks of the stream, unless you have landowner permission to get out

on the bank, or have no other means of getting around an obstruction in the stream, such as a fence or diversion dam.

- When getting outside of the stream to go around an obstruction, take the shortest, most direct route around the obstruction to get back in the stream.
- Do not allow pets or children to trespass on adjacent private property without landowner permission.
- You may enter and exit navigable streams at other public rights of way, such as county road bridges.
- Always get landowner permission before crossing private lands outside of a public right of way.

Fishing in boundary waters:

The holder of a valid Idaho or Utah fishing license may fish all of Bear Lake in southeast Idaho, except in areas closed to all fishing by the respective states. Anglers are subject to the rules and regulations of the state in which they are fishing.

The holder of a valid Idaho fishing license may fish the Snake River where it forms the boundary between the states of Idaho and Oregon or Washington, subject to the fish and game laws of Idaho. But they may not fish from the shore on the Oregon or Washington side, including wading or in sloughs or tributaries. Any angler who fishes on the Snake River or any other water forming an Idaho boundary is entitled to have in possession only the limit allowed by one license regardless of the number of licenses in possession.

Private property and trespass rules apply to anglers looking for a way to get to a lake to go fishing.

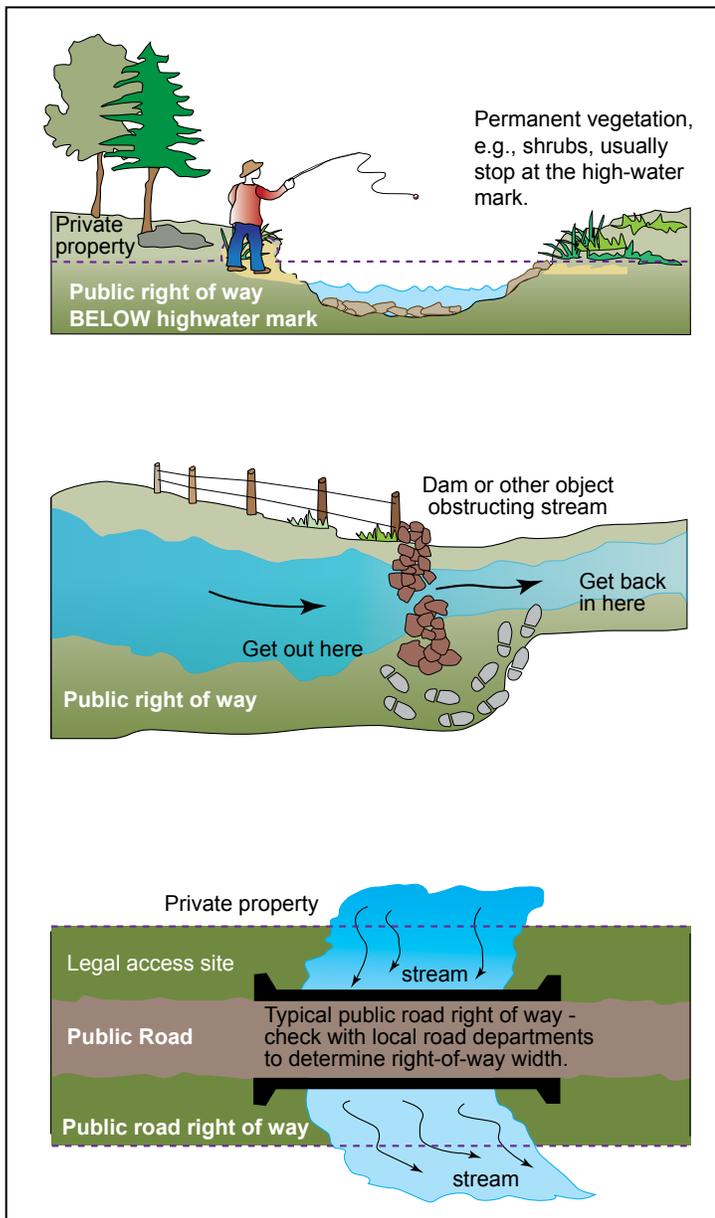
Heed private property postings, and ask landowner permission before crossing private land or fishing in ponds and lakes posted as private.

Straying onto posted private property can cost the errant angler a mandatory one-year loss of fishing privileges. In addition, federal law prohibits unauthorized trespass on Indian-owned reservation lands for hunting, fishing or trapping.

An angler would need permission to cross or fish from land that is either cultivated or posted with legible "No Trespassing" signs every 660 feet. An alternative to signs is a minimum of 100 square inches of fluorescent orange paint on fence posts, except metal fence posts must be completely painted fluorescent orange.

If the geography of the property is such that entry can reasonably be made only at certain points, such property is posted sufficiently if signs or markings are clearly visible at access points.

But it is illegal for anyone to post public land that is not held under an exclusive control lease.



The Idaho Department of Fish and Game adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap. If you feel you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, or if you desire further information, please write to: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, Idaho 83707 or The Office of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240