Easy Angling in Central Oregon
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There are so many great places to fish in Central Oregon it’s hard to know where to begin – especially if you’re new to fishing or are looking for a place to take the whole family. So we have asked our local fish biologists to list some of their favorite entry-level places to fish.

The lakes, ponds and streams described in this booklet have been selected with families and newcomers in mind. These locations:

- Are close to cities and towns and easy to reach by car
- Offer a good chance to catch fishing using simple fishing techniques
- Often have some comfort amenities (restrooms, picnic tables)
- Have relatively simple fishing regulations

In addition to listing places to fish, we’ve also included some basic information about HOW to fish. This includes a list of recommended gear and tips for how to use it.

Now it’s up to you to gather the family, pack the lunch, and go experience the joys of fishing in Central Oregon.

Still have some questions about how to get started? Contact your local ODFW office in Bend at (541) 388-6363.

NOTE: Be sure to check the current ODFW Sport Fishing Regulations before you make your first cast.
Central Oregon Fishing Region

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Shevlin Pond - Bend

Shevlin Pond is a small, half-acre pond located among aspen trees in beautiful Shevlin Park. It is open year-round but often freezes in the winter. There is a casting dock and good bank access around the pond making this a great place to teach a young child how to fish. Shevlin Park also has hiking and mountain biking trails with scenic picnic areas throughout the park. Open to juvenile anglers 17 years but only youth between 14 and 17 must have a juvenile fishing license. The daily limit is two trout with an 8-inch minimum length.

What to fish for: The pond is regularly stocked with rainbow trout from April to August, though fishing can be good through November.

Fishing tips: All standard trout fishing techniques are effective including baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, and fly-fishing.

Facilities: Restrooms are across the road. Wheelchair accessible bridge and dock.

Getting there: Shevlin Park Pond is four miles west of Bend via Shevlin Park Market Road. Shevlin Pond and Aspen Hall are on the north side of the road.
**Bend Pine Nursery Pond**

This two-acre pond is open to anglers of all ages. There is good bank access with a trail and a casting peninsula. It is open to fishing year-round but by midsummer water levels may be low and submerged vegetation may make fishing difficult. There is a two fish per day limit and an 8-inch minimum length for trout. Pine Nursery Park also has fitness trails, an off-leash dog area, and soccer and baseball fields.

**What to fish for:** Rainbow trout are stocked in spring and fall when the water temperatures are cooler. Warmwater fish such as bluegill and bass are biting during the warm summer months. Bluegill are naturally reproducing in the pond.

**Fishing tips:** Baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, fly-fishing.

**Facilities:** Pit toilets, wheelchair accessible.

**Getting there:** This park is located in northeast Bend between Purcell, Deschutes Market and Yeoman roads. From Hwy 97, take Empire Blvd Exit, head east on Empire Blvd for 1.5 miles, turn left on Purcell for 1500 feet and turn right just before Ponderosa Elementary School.

**Facilities:** There are two National Forest campgrounds, restrooms, boat ramp, swimming beach, wheelchair access.
**Reynolds Pond - Alfalfa**

Reynold’s Pond is a small, 12-acre pond on BLM land. A 0.75 mile trail circles the pond making the entire shoreline available for bank fishing. Motorized boats are not permitted. Canoes, kayaks and float tubes are allowed but will have to be carried from the parking lot to the pond. There is a five fish daily limit on bass and no limit on sunfish, crappie and bullhead.

**What to fish for:** Reynolds Pond has naturally-reproducing red-ear sunfish, largemouth bass, crappie and brown bullheads.

**Fishing tips:** Baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, and fly-fishing can all be effective.

**Facilities:** There are no facilities at the site.

**Getting there:** From Bend, drive 14 miles east on Alfalfa Market Rd. Turn right on Johnson Rd. At one mile bear left at transfer station. The pond is 0.6 miles past the landfill on an unimproved sand rd. Not recommended for passenger cars with low clearance.
**Prineville Youth Pond**

This small one-acre pond was built in 2009 in order to provide a convenient fishing opportunity for local kids. This is a great place to teach a child how to fish. The pond is open year-round to youths 17-years-old and younger, but only youths between ages 14 and 17 need a juvenile fishing license. There is a two fish per day limit and an 8-inch minimum length for trout. Water levels may be low in August and September.

**What to fish for:** During the cooler spring and fall months anglers should target stocked rainbow trout. As the waters warm up in the summer, largemouth bass will become the primary target.

**Fishing tips:** Baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, fly-fishing.

**Facilities:** Currently there are picnic tables but no restroom facilities or shelters at the Prineville Youth Pond.

**Getting there:** The Prineville Youth Pond is located in Rimrock Park at 843 Main St in Prineville. The pond and park can be reached by turning south off of 3rd Street in Prineville onto Main Street. Parking is available on the west side of Main Street after passing Lynn Blvd; or directly next to the Crook County Christian School and across from the Crook County Fairgrounds. To get to the pond, use the iron bridge to cross the Crooked River in Rimrock Park.
Walton Lake – Ochoco National Forest

Walton Lake is a popular 25-acre public reservoir in the scenic Ochoco National Forest. The lake is open to fishing year-round, but because of its location at 5,150 feet the lake often freezes over in the winter. Walton Lake has plenty of shoreline fishing. Boats with electric motors are permitted, but canoes and float tubes are a more popular choice. There is also a wheelchair accessible platform with a paved path.

What to fish for: Walton lake is frequently stocked with catchable rainbow trout from May through August, and some of the best fishing can be in early summer or late fall. Bullhead catfish were eradicated from the lake in 2009 and this should allow the trout to flourish.

Fishing tips: Baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, and fly-fishing can all be effective.

Facilities: There are two National Forest campgrounds, restrooms, boat ramp, swimming beach, wheelchair access.

Getting there: Walton Lake is approximately 35 miles east of Prineville. From Prineville take Hwy 26 East (Ochoco Hwy) for 15 miles, bear fight on USFS Rd 12 and travel 13 miles to Ochoco Ranger Station. From here the lake is 7 miles northeast of the Ranger Station on USFS Rd 22.
Fireman’s Pond - Redmond

Fireman’s Pond is a three-acre impoundment in a small park in an industrial area near the airport. The city of Redmond owns the pond and the water is used for irrigation so water levels may be low during drought years. The City of Redmond has opened the pond to kids 13 and younger, and to disabled anglers.

What to fish for: Firemen’s Pond offers warmwater fishing opportunities in the town of Redmond. The pond has naturally reproducing bluegill, bullhead, crappie and bass.

Fishing tips: Baits suspended beneath a bobber, casting lures such as spinners and spoons, and fly-fishing can all be effective.

Facilities: There are picnic tables, but no restrooms at this site.

Getting there: The pond is approximately ¼ mile east of Hwy 97 and ½ mile south of Hwy 126. To reach the pond from Hwy 97 (north or south), turn east on SE Veterans Way; then turn north on SW Lake Rd and follow it to the pond.
Sprague Pond – Deschutes National Forest

This two-acre pond is an old gravel pit fed by annual snowmelt and underground percolation from the Deschutes River. It has a maximum depth of 10 feet at full pool. There is ample bank access although some bank areas are steep. It is open to anglers of all ages. It is an undeveloped site with no facilities.

What to fish for: Sprague Pond is regularly stocked with rainbow trout from late spring to fall. In poor water years, the lake may not be stocked because of low water levels and high water temperatures. Contact the ODFW Bend office at 541-388-6363 if you have questions about recent stocking.

Fishing tips: Fish from the bottom with floating bait, or fish from the top with bobber and bait. Casting and retrieving wet flies and nymphs can also be productive. If the fish aren’t biting here, you can try your luck at the nearby Deschutes River.

Facilities: There are no facilities at this site; however, Cow Camp Campground is one mile south on the Deschutes River.

Getting there: Sprague pond is located in Deschutes National Forest, approximately one mile southeast of the intersection of USFS Rd 40 and USFS Rd 46 (Century Drive). The pond is about ¾ mile north of Crane Prairie Reservoir. To reach Sprague Pond from Hwy 97, turn off at Sunriver and follow that road for approximately 21 miles (it turns into USFS Rd 40). Turn left at Cow Meadow sign and then left again at the first dirt road intersection. This last turn will take you into the parking area for Sprague Pond.
Century Pond – Deschutes National Forest

The pond is a gravel pit that fills with water from annual snowmelt. It is about three-acres in size when full and maximum depth at full pool is 15 feet. It has plenty of shoreline fishing and both Century and Sprague pond are great places to teach someone how to fish. Century Pond is open to anglers of all ages.

What to fish for: Century Pond is regularly stocked with rainbow trout from late spring to fall. In poor water years, the lake may not be stocked because of low water levels and high water temperatures. Contact the ODFW Bend office at 541-388-6363 if you have questions about recent stocking.

Fishing tips: Fish from the bottom with floating bait, or fish from the top with bobber and bait. Casting and retrieving wet flies and nymphs can also be productive.

Facilities: There are no facilities at this site.

Getting there: Century Pond is located approximately 46 miles southwest of Bend in the Deschutes National Forest. It is ¼ mile west of the junction of USFS Rd 46 (Century Drive) and USFS Rd 4635.
South Twin Lake – Deschutes National Forest

South Twin Lake is a great lake for family fishing, swimming and picnicking. South Twin is 99 acres with 1.5 miles of shoreline. A trail encircles the lake and offers many opportunities for bank fishing. Also, try fishing at nearby North Twin Lake, which also has plenty of fishable shoreline. Open to fishing from the fourth Saturday in April to Oct 31.

What to fish for: Stocked with catchable rainbow trout from May to June. The best fishing is usually in June.

Fishing tips: All lake fishing techniques can be effective here. PowerBait is popular, but spinners, small lures and flies all catch fish. The best fishing is within 30 feet of the shore and in the top 30 feet of water. Larger fish may cruise shallows in the early morning and dusk. Natural forage includes damselflies, caddisflies, midges and leeches. This is a good lake to practice float tube fishing.

Facilities: There is a National Forest campground with boat ramp, drinking water, picnic tables, fire grates and flush toilets. Twin Lakes Resort has rental cabins and apartments with kitchens, RV park with full hook ups, showers, laundry, restaurant, fishing guide service, and rental boats.

Getting there: From Bend, head south on Hwy 46 (Century Drive). Take Wickiup Reservoir turn off (County Rd 42) east. The road to Twin Lakes is one mile past the Deschutes River crossing.
Three Creeks Lake – Deschutes National Forest

This alpine lake at 6500 feet is a great place to canoe and enjoy spectacular scenery while wetting a line. There is also plenty of fishable shoreline. Motorized boats are prohibited.

What to fish for: The lake is stocked with 8 to 12-inch rainbow trout and holdovers from the previous year can reach 20 inches. There are also naturally-reproducing brook trout. Three Creek Lakes offers good fishing all summer long.

Fishing tips: Fish from the shoreline or non-motorized boat. All lake fishing techniques can be effective here. From the shore, cast spinners near the dam at the northeast end of the lake or try your luck with bait in deeper water at the south end. Because the water is very clear it is best to fish in mornings and evenings.

Facilities: There are two National Forest campgrounds with pit toilets and picnic areas. Three Creeks Resort has boat rentals and a small store. There is also a swimming area at the south campground.

Getting there: From Sisters, turn south onto USFS Rd 16 (Three Creeks Lake Rd) for 15 miles. The road is paved to within ½ mile of the lake and the last half mile is rough, gravel road. The road opens in mid-June or later in years with a heavy snow pack.
The best fishing is in the 7 miles of canyon immediately below Bowman Dam. This stretch of river supports robust trout and whitefish populations, with good fishing year-round -- though the best fishing is from September to mid-May. Trout average from 10 to 13-inches with larger fish occasionally caught. The river is murky from dam-releases sediment, but fish target dry flies and very small nymphs. Fish are found close to the banks.

There is excellent access from day-use sites and campgrounds with trails following the river closely in most places.

What to fish for: The area immediately below Bowman Dam provides excellent habitat for native redband trout and whitefish due to cool productive waters in this reach. Whitefish are abundant in this area and near record fish are often caught. The Crooked is one of the few places in Central Oregon that provides good winter fishing.

Fishing tips: This is a wonderful river to fly fish, with good backcasting room and lots of natural insect life. Blue-winged olive mayflies, midges and scuds are the natural forage in winter. Mahogany dun (mayflies) and caddis are present in late summer, and nymphs of many species are present year-round. Fishing spinners also can be effective, as can bait when regulations permit. Target trout in the fast water, and whitefish in slower stretches and deep pools. This a good place to practice wading techniques since the river isn’t too big or too powerful.

Facilities: Nine BLM campgrounds and three day-use areas with picnic tables and pit toilets; drinking water at Chimney Rock Campground only. Wheelchair accessible fishing dock at Lone Pine Day Use Area.

Getting there: From Prineville, follow Hwy 27 toward Bowman Dam (do not follow signs toward Prineville Reservoir). From Bend, take Hwy 20 east approximately 2 miles, turn left at Powell Butte Hwy 0.9 miles. Turn right on Alfalfa Market Road and travel 20 miles. Turn left on OR-27/ Crooked River Hwy and travel 1.4 miles. After crossing the Bowman Dam the road parallels the river with several access points.
Tackle and techniques

Tackle for fishing
The list of necessary fishing gear and equipment can be very simple. A rod and reel, and a small selection of lures, bait hooks, bobbers and artificial bait is enough to go fishing just about anywhere you might find fish. A good shopping list to get started might include:

- A lightweight 6-foot spincasting or spinning rod with matching reel and 4-6 pound monofilament line
- A handful of 1/16 oz. spinners
- Package of size 8 bait hooks
- Couple of red/white bobbers
- Jar of PowerBait or PowerEggs
- A package of #5 lead split shot
- Worms

Fly fishing is another popular way to fish, especially for trout. It requires more specialized equipment and tools, but a good starter outfit could include:

- Graphite 5-weight fly rod, nine feet long
- Matching fly reel
- Weight forward, 5-weight fly line
- Tapered monofilament leaders, 4X 7.5 feet long
- Spools of 4X and 5X tippet
- Assorted streamside tools

Improved Clinch Knot: An old standby known as the fisherman’s knot.

Palomar Knot: The easiest to tie, a good choice to hold terminal tackle (hooks, swivels and lures).

Fishing techniques for lakes and ponds
There are lots (and lots) of ways to fish, but three of the easiest ways to fish in lakes are:

- Suspending bait under a bobber. Start with a piece of worm or a little PowerBait or similar product on a bait hook. Attach a small lead weight just above the hook to help the bait sink, and add a bobber 1 ½ to 3 feet above the hook. Cast out to a likely spot and wait for the bobber to wiggle, dive or jerk. This is a good technique when fish are cruising nearer the surface or when you want to keep your bait and hook suspended above a weed bed.

- Fishing with bait off the bottom. Sometimes fish are in deeper water and the bait needs to be down deep where the fish are. In this technique there is no bobber to suspend the bait. Instead the lead weight is attached about 1 ½ feet above the baited book and cast out. The lead weight will sink, but the bait will float up and hover 1 ½ feet above the bottom of the lake.

- Retrieving a spinner or weighted fly. Spinners and weighted flies mimic small minnows, leeches and other favorite fish food. When fishing a spinner or fly, cast it over “fishy” looking water. Let it sink for a minute then begin reeling it in (retrieving). Vary the amount of time you let the spinner or fly sink and the speed of the retrieve until you find the combination that catches fish.

- Casting a dry fly. Dry flies can mimic adult aquatic insect emerging from the water, or terrestrial insects such as ants or termites that are blown off nearby vegetation into the water. Cast out a dry fly and wait. If a fish doesn’t take the fly after the first few minutes, pick it up and cast it again to a new spot.
**Fishing techniques for rivers and streams**

In moving water it is the current, instead of your retrieve, that will effect how your lure moves in the water. Some good fishing techniques for moving waters include:

- **Casting a spinner or spoon.** Beginning by casting the spinner or spoon slightly upriver and reel in any slack line. As the current carries the spinner down river, hold as much fishing line off the water as you can to achieve a natural “drift.” Once the spinner has swung toward the shore and is straight down river, begin a moderate retrieve.

- **Drifting a worm or artificial bait (PowerBait, for example) with enough split shot to get within a few inches of the bottom.** Sometimes adding a bobber will help keep track of where the bait is drifting.

- **Casting a wet fly.** The easiest way to fish a wet fly is the wet-fly swing. Cast downstream at a 45-degree angle and let the fly line (and fly) swing across the stream until they are directly down river from you. Count to 10 before you recast – flies are more likely to take a fly hanging above them than to chase one whizzing by in the current.

- **Casting a dry fly.** Cast the fly upstream at a 45-degree angle and let it drift back with the current. Take in the slack fly line as the fly drifts toward you. Cast again when the fly begins to move faster than the current or starts to skate across the top of the water.

**NOTE:** Where a river slows and deepens into a pool with very little current, you can use many of the same fishing techniques you would use in a small pond or other stillwater.

Wherever you go, be sure to check the Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations for the daily bag limits, bait restrictions or other fishing guidelines for the specific lake, river or stream you’ll be fishing.

**More helpful information from ODFW:**

The ODFW website at www.dfw.state.or.us has a lot of how-to and where-to information for the anglers, including:

- **Trout Stocking Schedule**
  A list of which waters will be stocked and when

- **Warmwater Fishing in Oregon - Central Area**
  Describes a variety of bass, bluegill and other warmwater fishing opportunities

- **ODFW Weekly Recreation Report**
  Weekly updates on fishing conditions on lakes, reservoirs, rivers and streams throughout the state

- **Spring Fishing Guide**
  Published every April, it previews the upcoming fishing season on hundreds of water bodies throughout the state.

- **ODFW Sport Fishing Regulations**
Easy Angling in Central Oregon is brought to you by ODFW's Fish Restoration and Enhancement Program with assistance from the Salmon Trout Enhancement Program. For more information about these programs, please visit www.dfw.state.or.us.