

Fishing With The Family



The Philosophy

Your Attitude



Your attitude is the biggest factor in determining the success of that first trip. If you are an experienced angler, you might want to consider leaving your own equipment at home. When taking youth for their first fishing experience you are the guide.

They will need your undivided attention- there will be plenty of tangles and snags to keep you busy.

Always keep a positive attitude even if the child is not doing everything correct. If they want to practice casting on their own, offer encouragement. The most important thing is that the child enjoys the fishing outing. The investment in time is invaluable and will lead to a lifetime of enjoyment and great memories.

Involve your kids from the beginning

Kids enjoy feeling included, and what better way to instill some responsibility in your children. Depending on their age, give them small things for which they are responsible, such as ensuring that everyone has a hat or sunglasses, or teaching them what's in the tackle box.

Teach them new skills that will last a lifetime

Being on the water provides an excellent opportunity to teach kids about their environment, fishing and safety skills. Try to incorporate these teachings into fun activities and gradually introduce your kids to new things as they are ready. For example, you might want to create a game that teaches aquatic terminology such as pool, riffle, run and eddie. Once your kids master this terminology, help them learn how to safely hike along the river or pond, how to identify a bird, or cast a fishing line. A fishing outing can provide unlimited learning—learning that lasts a lifetime.

Plan family outings and include others

Use this time to gather as a family and create lifelong memories. Plan short outings such as letting the kids find a new creek or lake on a map and plan a picnic at that destination. This creates a sense of adventure and allows valuable family time together. You can let your kids invite a friend or relative along to share in the fun!

Tips for Fishing with Kids

A good first location

When choosing a place to fish, think of the youngster. Choose a safe lake or pond with plenty of hungry fish! The sizes of the fish are not important. Water bodies full of panfish are perfect locations for those first trips. Remember the attention span of a young child (under 10) is pretty short, so pick angling experiences that will have other activities in close proximity. The big fun of the day might be skipping stones or exploring the shallow areas looking for aquatic critters. This is not time wasted, it's an investment in the future by creating a fun first experience.

Avoid the kid's stuff

While the "Snoopy" and "Barbie" style poles hold an appeal to kids, they are not usually well made and should be avoided. An ultra-light spinning or spin casting rod and reel combo are easy for kids to use and will be more durable over time.

Small hooks = big catches

Avoid hooks larger than size 10 (hook sizes run backwards—size 12 is smaller than size 10). Fish won't readily take large hooks unless they are feeding voraciously.

Most of the time, a subtle presentation is needed to catch wary fish. Tiny hooks also allow small fish to "inhale" the bait, rather than nibble at the hook. If a fish swallows the hook and you want to return it to the water, simply cut the line as close to the hook as possible and release the fish.

Lighten up your line

Light line will do the job, preferably 6-pound test line or less. Unless you're targeting monster sturgeon or marauding salmon, light line is your best bet.

Bag the big bobbers

Bobbers (or floats) are used to suspend your bait in the water and alert you when to set the hook. The harder the bobber is to pull under, the harder it will be to hook a fish. Small floats will help convince the fish to take your tasty bait and run. "Slip" bobbers work well for kids. Slip bobber rigs cut down on the amount of line needed at the end of the rod and are easier to cast. Small ice fishing bobbers can provide a light touch any time of year.

Sink it with shot

Sinkers help get your line down to the fish. They can also create "zero buoyancy." Ideally, you want your bobber to just barely float on the top of the water. Squeeze small lead free BB-sized split shot sinkers onto your line one at a time until your bobber nearly sinks from the weight. Since there is very little resistance when the fish takes the bait, it is more likely to bite the bait and run.

Great big gobs of worms won't do

There's no need to use whole whopping-big, writhing night crawlers on your hook. Keep the bait approximately the size of your hook. Live bait such as red worms, grubs or crickets work best. Cut the bait to fit your hook. Artificial baits (such as Power Bait) can be a good alternative to live bait. They are easy to work with, come in lots of kid catching colors and are very effective.

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