



Discover Flyfishing

What is fly fishing and why is it done?

- Macro-invertebrates are a significant source of food for fish and can make as much as 95% of a trout's diet.
- What is a macro-invertebrate? They are invertebrates (animals without a backbone) that you can see without using a microscope or magnifying glass. The most common are insects.
- Fly fishing gets its name from the lures used. They're referred to as “flies” because they're made to imitate small insects or prey that fish typically eat.
- The intent of fly fishing is typically **to fool a fish on any artificial fly that is made with animal or artificial materials** (feathers, hair, etc)
- Flies tend to be small and light weight.
- A most important thing to know is, **you don't cast the fly, you cast the fly line.**

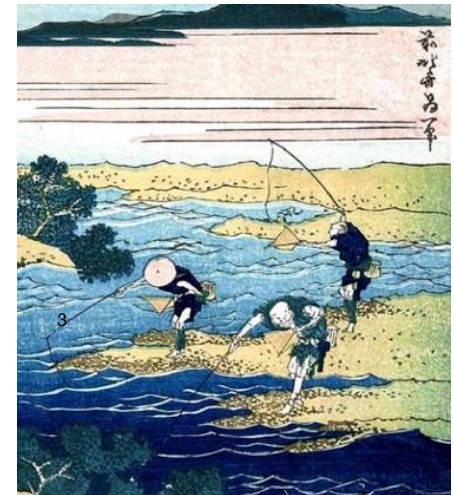
How old is Fly Fishing

Ancient Fly Fishing

- Fishing is a very old subsistence activity. The earliest known fish hooks date from around 20,000 BCE and were made from bone or shell.
- The origins of fly-tying are thought to date from the 1st or 2nd century BC in Macedonia, where brown-trout anglers attached feathers to their hooks to imitate the insect life in the streams.
 - [Roman Claudius Aelianus](#) - described the practice of [Macedonian](#) anglers on the Astraeus River (c. 175 - 235 AD)
- Fly Fishing continued with a pole (made from different materials) and a line attached to the pole with a fly-like lure attached to the end through medieval times in Europe. Mostly peasants ate fish as the upper classes ate meat.
- A method of fishing called Tenkara, meaning “fishing from heaven”, evolved a very similar pole and line approach in 15th century Japan.



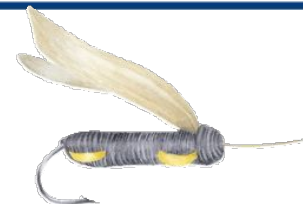
Norwegian bone hook
2000 BCE



Origins of Fly Fishing

Development of Recreational Fly Fishing

- The English led the evolving methods of fly fishing with books published as guides to the growing sport:
 - “*A Treatise of Fysshynge with an Angle*” in 1496 by Dame Juliana Berners
 - “*The Secrets Of Angling*” in 1613 John Dennys (a friend of William Shakespeare)
 - “*The Complete Angler*” in 1653 by Izaak Walton, available on Amazon
- Equipment evolved with guides being added to the pole/rods with various methods to hold the braided silk or horse hair lines. Chinese used the first silk lines.
- In the early 1800’s split bamboo fly rods were developed normally 6 sided.
- In 1874, Charles F. Orvis, invented the modern fly reel. Before that reels were not used and the line was just hand held.



Stone Fly Pattern
Fly Tier: Dame
Julianna Berners
ca. 1496



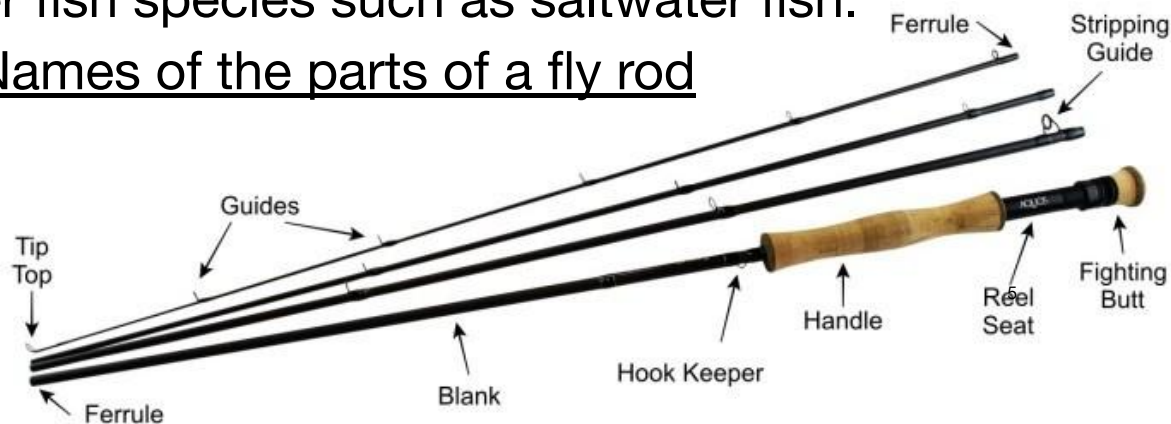
Modern Green Drake
Pattern

Fly Fishing Gear

Fly Rods

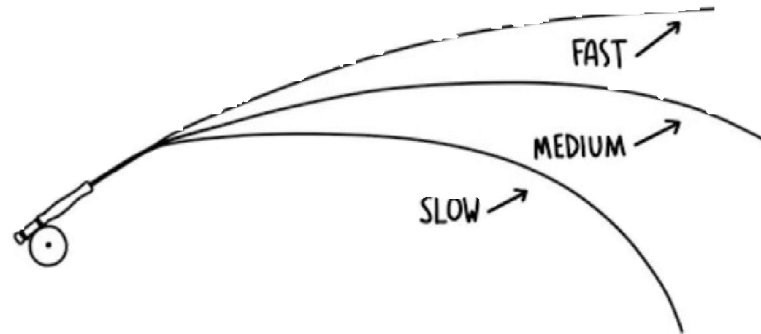
- Fly rods are usually very long and flexible.
- They can be made of bamboo, fiberglass, or composites in lengths from anywhere 6 to 12 feet. Handles are usually made of cork.
- Fly rods come in different sizes known as “**weights**” (wt.). Lighter weight rods are used for smaller fish species; heavier weights are used for larger fish species such as saltwater fish.

Names of the parts of a fly rod



Fly Fishing Gear

Fly Rod Action



- A fly rods “action” basically refers to how flexible it is.
- A **fast action** fly rod is a rod that is very stiff and primarily flexes and bends only in the upper 1/3 of the fly rod.
- A **slow action** fly rod is one that flexes and bends almost all the way to the handle of the fly rod, and is typically used for smaller fish in smaller streams.
- A **medium action** fly rod is one that will flex and bend primarily in the upper 2/3 portion of the fly rod. This gives you a balance between the fast action and the slow action.

Fly Fishing Gear

Fly Rod Weights

What do the numbers on a fly rod mean?

They tell the weight, length, number of sections as well as the necessary size of the fly line

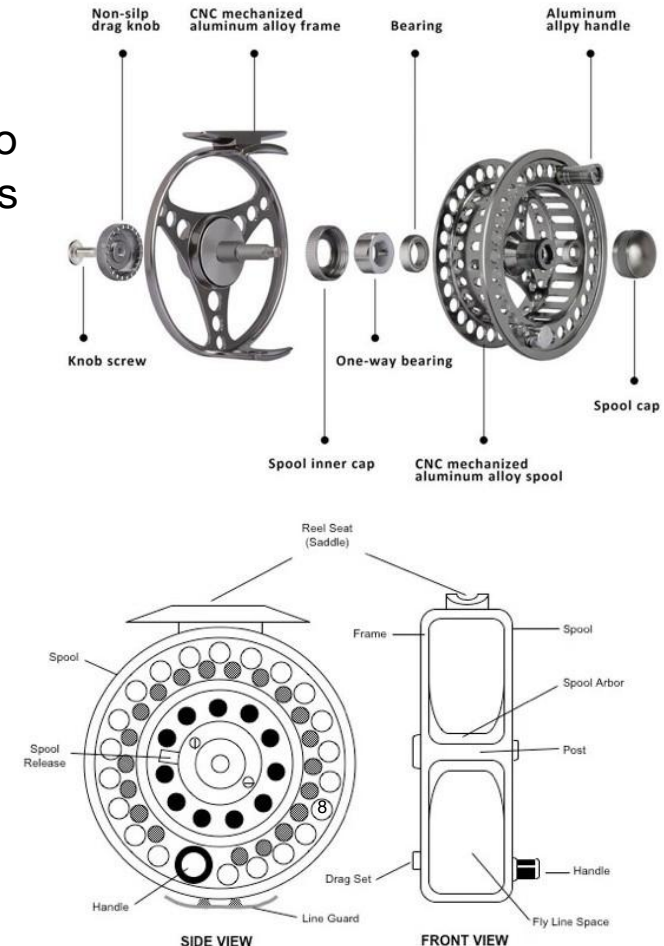


- The higher the number, the larger the flies and line and the smaller the number, the smaller the flies and line. (Important note; hook sizes are just the opposite)
- 2-3 weight rods are ideal for casting tiny flies at small trout in small streams referred to as “skinny water”.
- 4-6 weight rods are the most common rods for a trout angler using in streams or rivers and lakes. It can cast many types of flies without having to worry about switching rods.
- 7-8 weight fly rods are ideal for those larger freshwater fish.
- Fly rods are the delivery mechanism, matched to the fly line wt.

Fly Fishing Gear

Fly Reels

- There is an opinion that the fly reel is primarily just to **hold the fly line**, but they do have some characteristics that work while fishing.
- The central part of the reel holding the fly line is the **spool** and the center of that spool is called the **arbor**. Large-arbor fly reels provide for a faster line retrieve, which is why many anglers prefer them. Retrieve is when the line is being returned to the reel and that can assist landing the catch.
- The speed of the retrieve can be controlled by a function of the reel called the drag. The term “**drag**” refers to the braking systems used on **fly reels** to slow the rotation of the spool in order to control and apply pressure to a fish on the line.
- Left or right hand, and most reels are reversible, refers to the side with the spool handle which is usually opposite the hand casting the rod. This is so the rod can be held by the **casting hand** while turning the reel.



Fly Fishing Gear



Fly Lines

- Fly line is the **heart of fly fishing**.
- Fly lines come in different sizes known as “**weights**” (wt.). Lighter weight lines are used for smaller fish species, smaller streams, etc.; heavier weights are used for larger fish species, heavier flies, larger water
- Weight is based on the first **30 ft.** of the line
- Fly lines also come in different **types** such as floating, sinking, weight forward, double taper, level line. etc. that describes the characteristics of the line
- A 5/6 w

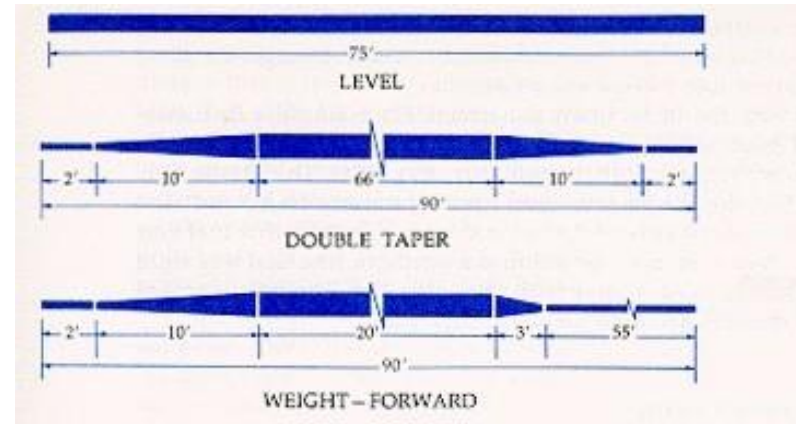
	2wt	3wt	4wt	5wt	6wt	7wt	8wt	9wt	10wt	++
Water Size	Small Streams				Large Rivers, Lakes, and Saltwater					
Fly Size	Small flies				Large Streamers					9
Fish Size	Small Fish - Trout and Panfish				Large Fish - Tarpon					

All-purpose Fly-line

Fly Fishing Gear

Fly Lines

- Typically a **fly line** is 80 ft. to 90 ft. long and is attached to the reel with 100 to 150 yds. of **backing line**. Backing is typically less expensive Dacron.



- There are several types of **fly lines** and modern lines are made with multiple layers of plastic with different shapes to the line called **tapers**.
- A **weight forward** taper to a line would be thicker at the front end and a **level line** would mean that it was the same diameter for the whole length. A weight forward is easier to cast.
- A **floating line** is the most common type of fly line because it is versatile allowing it to fish many types of flies effectively.
- The **sinking tip line** is a combination of the floating fly line and sinking fly line that can be useful for fishing flies below the surface.

Fly Fishing Gear



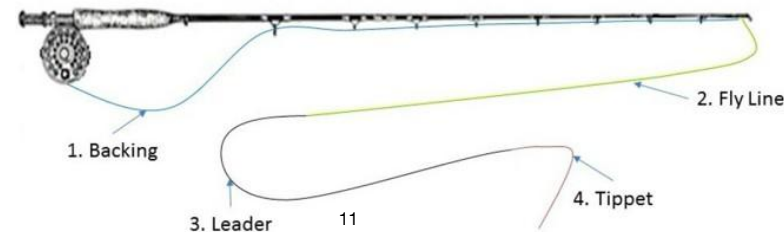
Fly Leaders and Tippets

A fly fishing **leader** and **tippet** are components of the overall fly fishing rig. Both are usually made from a thin transparent monofilament line typically nylon or fluorocarbon.

- The leader is tapered from thick (butt section) down to the tip and comes in 7.5' and 9' lengths.
 - The tippet is smaller (thinner) than the diameter of the leader and is cut from a spool of material to be the last 18" to 3' of the fly line.
- The size of the leader and tippet are given as an “X” rating which relates to diameter and breaking strength in pounds.

- It's important to remember that leader and tippet sizes are in reverse order, just like hook sizes. So, a larger number on the leader means it is a smaller diameter and has a lower breaking strength. Same thing with flies – so a size 22 fly is smaller than a size 8 which corresponds to the hook size.

- Tippet size should coordinate to the leader and hook size



Fly Fishing Gear

Tools



Brimmed hat



Polarized Sun Glasses



Landing Net



Tippet Holder



Dry Fly Floating



Fishing Forceps



Strike Indicator



Wading Staff



Split Shot



Fly Box



Fishing Nipper

Fly Fishing Gear



Wading

- Waders (sock foot, boot foot), Hip Boots, or wet wading
- Wading Boots

Gear Management

- Fishing Vest, Chest Pack, Sling Pack



Wading Boots

Chest Waders



Wading Pants



Sling Pack



Fly Fishing Hoodie



Fly Fishing Vest

Fly Fishing Knots



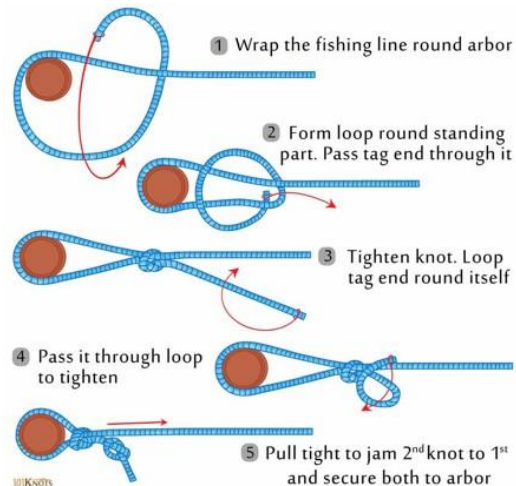
The knot is a critical link between you and the fish

- Knowing how to tie knots is an essential skill for a fly fisherman.
- Proper knots are needed for for attaching lines, leaders, tippets and flies.
- It is critical to your fishing success to know how to tie knots correctly as well as which knot to use in which scenario.
- There are two causes of knot failure: Slippage and breakage. Slippage can occur for two reasons: Tying the wrong fishing knot for the type of line used, or improperly tying the right knot.
- Breakage can be caused by the heat of tightening the knot weakening the line.
- Water has always been the go-to method for cooling down,¹⁴ and the same applies to fishing line. If you get your fingers wet as you tighten up, you'll also be cooling down your knot and counteracting the heat generated by friction.

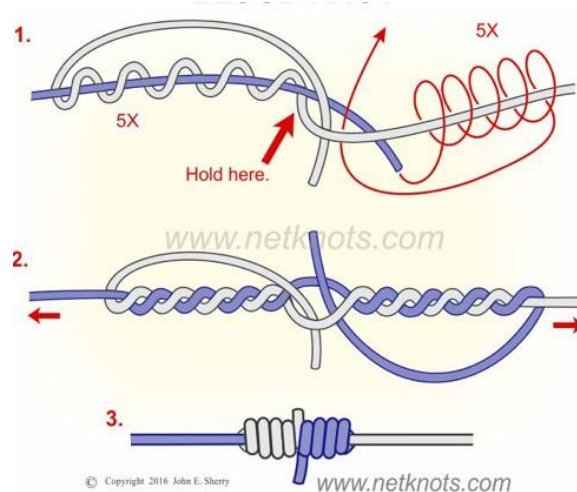
Fly Fishing Knots

There are a lot of fishing knots but only a few of them are essential.

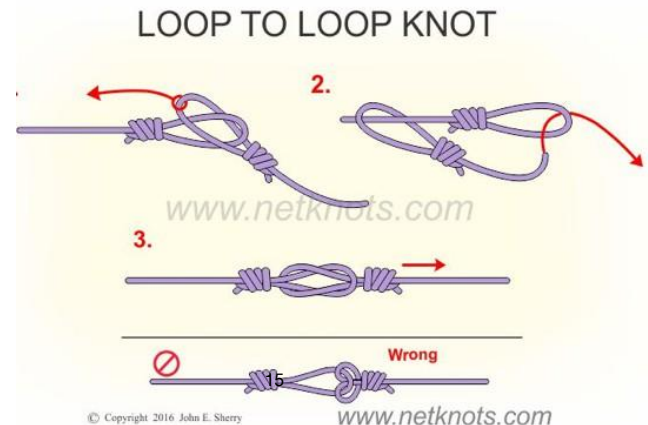
The **Arbor Knot** is used to attach the backing line to the “Arbor” or “Spool Center” of the fly reel.



- The **Blood Knot** is used to attach the backing line to the fly line.
- It is good for connecting lines of different sizes.



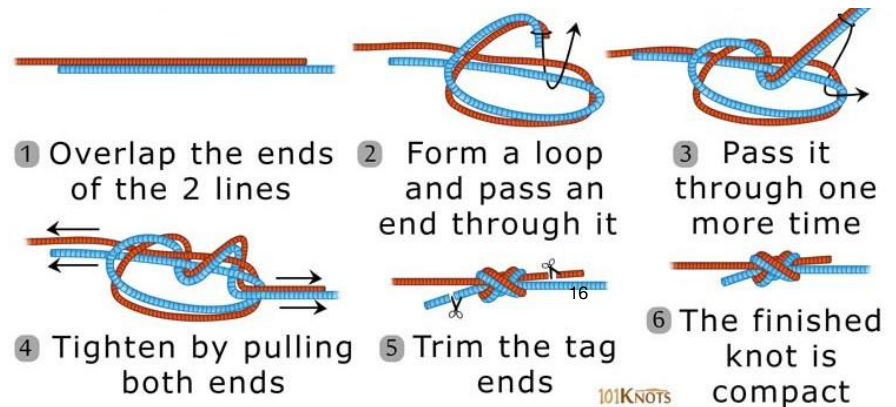
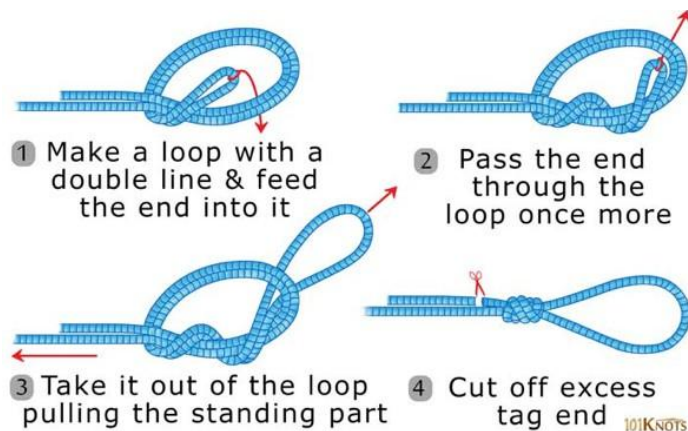
- The **Loop-to-loop Knot** is used to attach the backing line and leaders to the fly line when welded or tied loops are on the ends of the lines. It can also be used to fly line to leader loops are on the ends of the lines.



Fly Fishing Knots

Surgeon's Knot

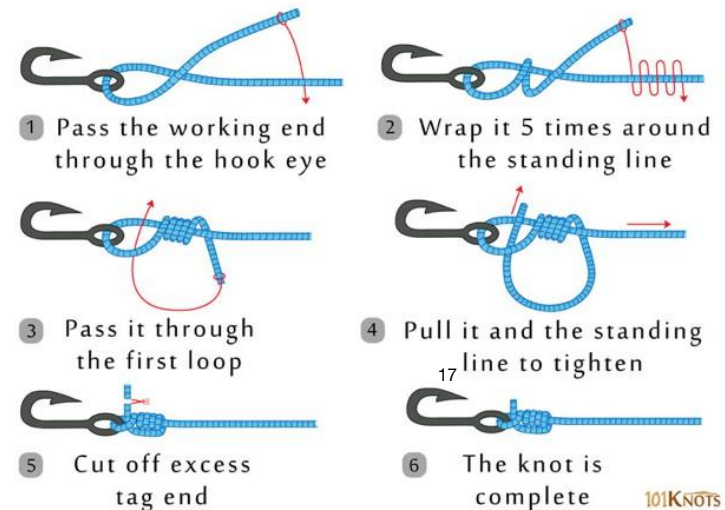
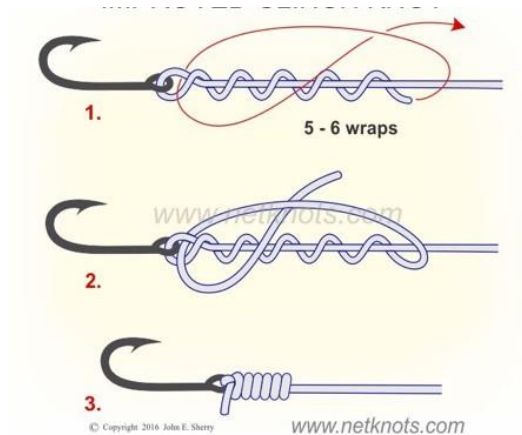
- The **Surgeon's Knot** is used to attach the tippet to the fly line when welded or tied loops are not at the ends of the lines.
- The **Double Surgeon's Knot** is preferred to tie tippet to leader for additional security.
- The **Surgeon's Loop** is used to make loop ends on any type of line so that a loop to loop knot can be used.



Fly Fishing Knots

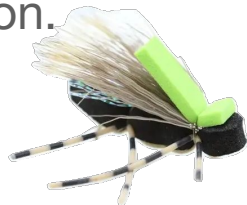
Clinch Knot

- The **Clinch Knot** is used to attach the tippet to hook of the fly. It can also be used to tie to tippet rings.
- The **Improved Clinch Knot** adds one more step to the tying.



Fly Patterns

- The name of a specific **fly pattern** rarely corresponds to a specific insect species, but rather to the general “look” of a certain insect group and life stage.
- Many names of fly patterns are fanciful and not very descriptive of the insect that they are supposed to mimic. e.g. the “Obi-Wan Chernobyl”
- The fly called the Pale Morning Dun can be used to mimic the adults of seven different species of Mayfly.
- Even an entomologist can seldom identify most aquatic insects to species without magnification.



Obi-Wan Chernobyl



Pale Morning Dun

Fly Fishing Gear

What are some of the types of Flies?

- **Dry flies** are fished on **top of the water** and mimic insect prey that hatches near or lands on the surface.
 - A dry fly is designed to land softly on the surface of the water without breaking it and becoming wetted.
 - To be effective dry flies need to remain on the surface so they are frequently treated with a **floatant**.
 - Typically, they represent the adult form of an aquatic or terrestrial insect, such as the **elk hair caddis**, a caddis fly imitation.
- **Wet flies** can be described as any type of fly that **sinks below the surface of the water**. The name comes from the fact that such flies are designed to sink underwater after being cast into the water.
 - Typically, wet flies have hackle that is angled back toward the tail of the fly.
 - Wet flies make excellent dropper flies on a dry-dropper setup or nymph rig.
 - The **Blue Dun Fly** is a classic wet fly pattern used for fly fishing. It is typically tied to imitate mayflies that are hatching (emerging).



Parachute Adams



Elk Hair Caddis



Blue Dun

Fly Fishing Gear



What are some of the types of Flies?

Nymphs or flies that imitate immature insects and are **fished underwater**, are meant to take advantage of the fact that there are always bugs subsurface

- Many types of insects spend more time in this nymph stage of development than the adult stage and make up a big part of a trout's usual diet.
- The most common insects that are eaten are nymphs (mayflies and stoneflies), pupa (caddisflies and midges), and emergers.
- Unlike fly fishing with dry flies, nymph flies are fished entirely beneath the surface of the water and are often weighted to help accomplish this.
- The **Copper John** imitates a variety of aquatic insects, including mayflies, caddisflies, and stoneflies.



Hares Ear Nymph



Copper John Nymph



Bucktail - Black Nose Dace

Streamers are **bigger sinking flies** that imitate minnows, crayfish, leeches, large insects, and even mice.

- Streamers are the fly-fishing equivalent of conventional lures.
- Streamer patterns are for fishing trout, bass, steelhead, and saltwater species.
- The **Woolly Bugger** and its derivatives are one of the most common streamer



Beadhead Woolly Bugger

Fly Fishing Gear

What are some of the types of Flies?

- **Bass bugs** realistically mimic food sources like minnows and big land bugs that fall in the water or swim on the surface.
 - Although a few are tied to imitate specific food forms, usually mice or frogs, most are very surreal, offering the impression of something living and outrageous.
- **Poppers** aim to simulate any sort of **distressed creature** that might be moving or struggling on the surface of the water (baitfish, frogs, and insects are the most typical imitations).
 - Poppers are designed to move water using a concave or hollowed nose.
- **Saltwater flies** are big and bold like redfish flies, and designed to catch fish that are way larger than those found in freshwater environments
 - Like streamers main saltwater patterns are intended to resemble bait fish.
- **Clouser Minnow** is probably the most popular saltwater pattern in the world



Deer Hair Diver
Swimming Frog



Green Popper



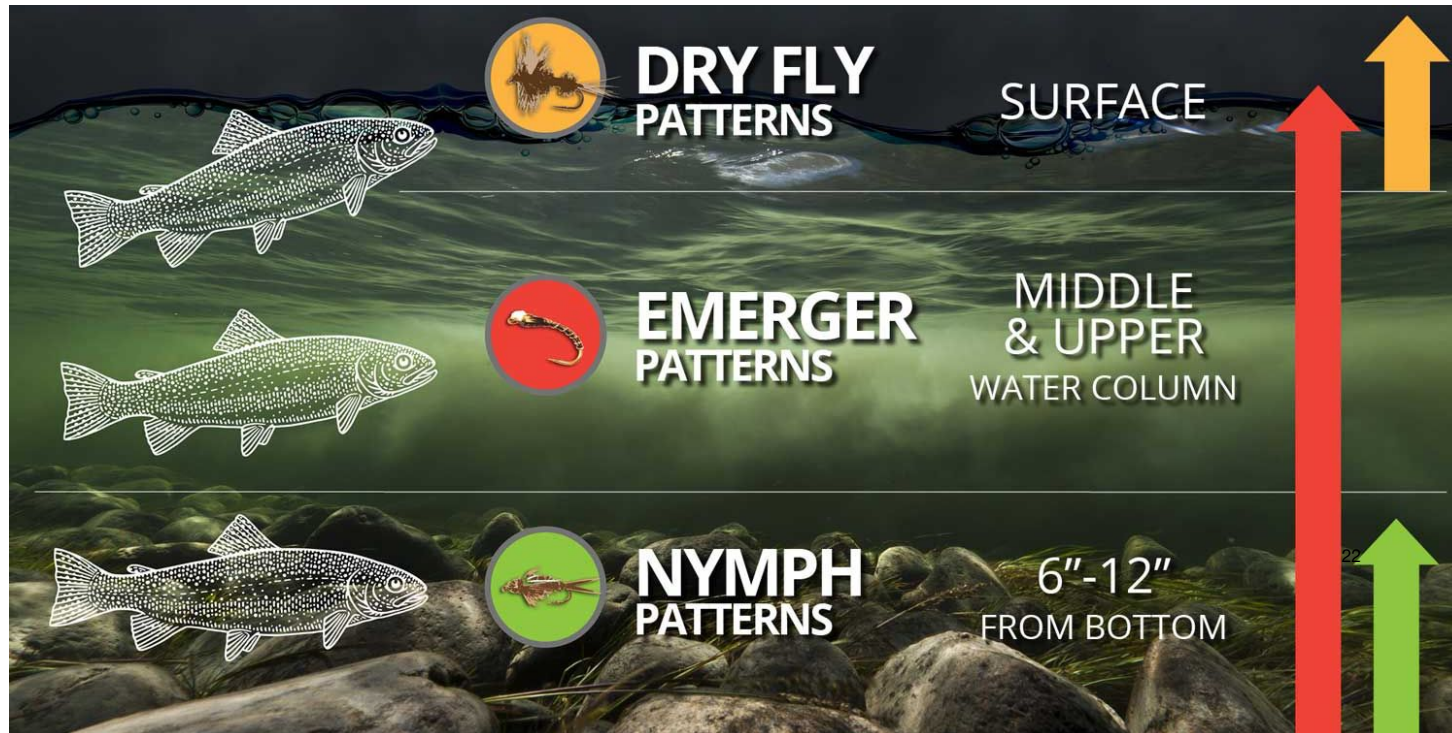
Pole Dancer



Clouser Minnow

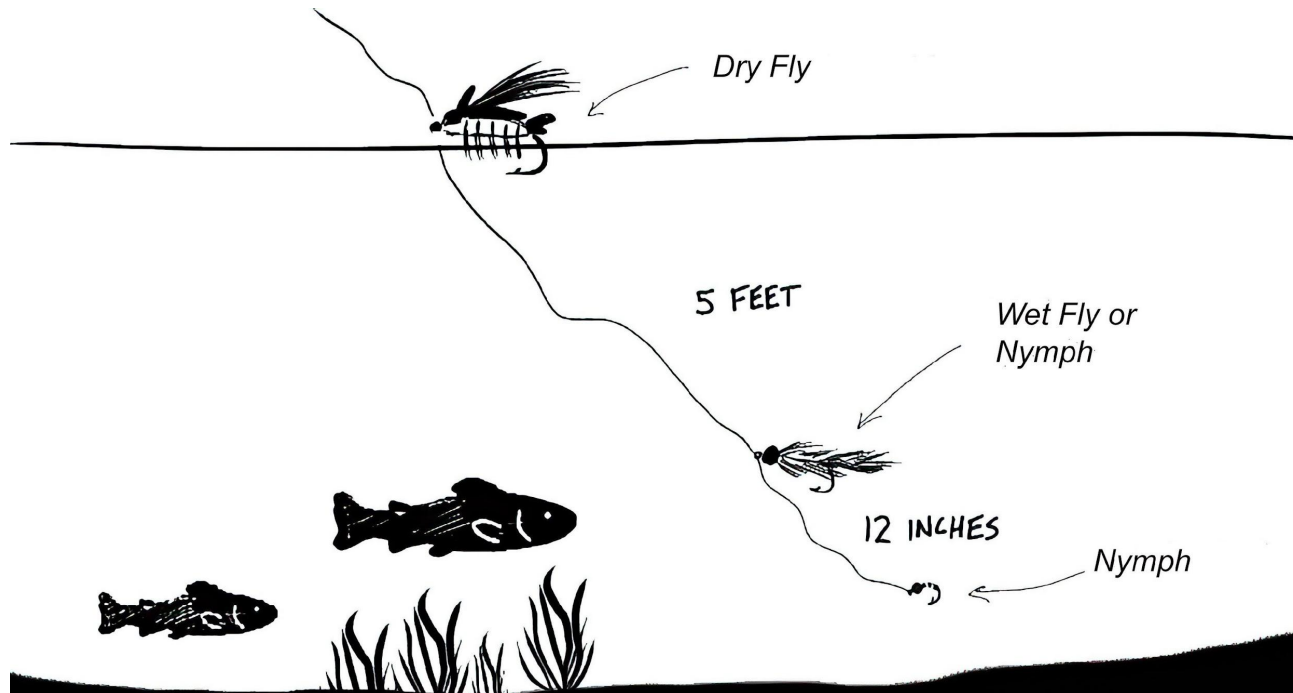
Fly Fishing Techniques

Fly pattern location



Fly Fishing Techniques

Rigging flies for fishing



Know the depth of the water.

Guess where the trout are in the water column.

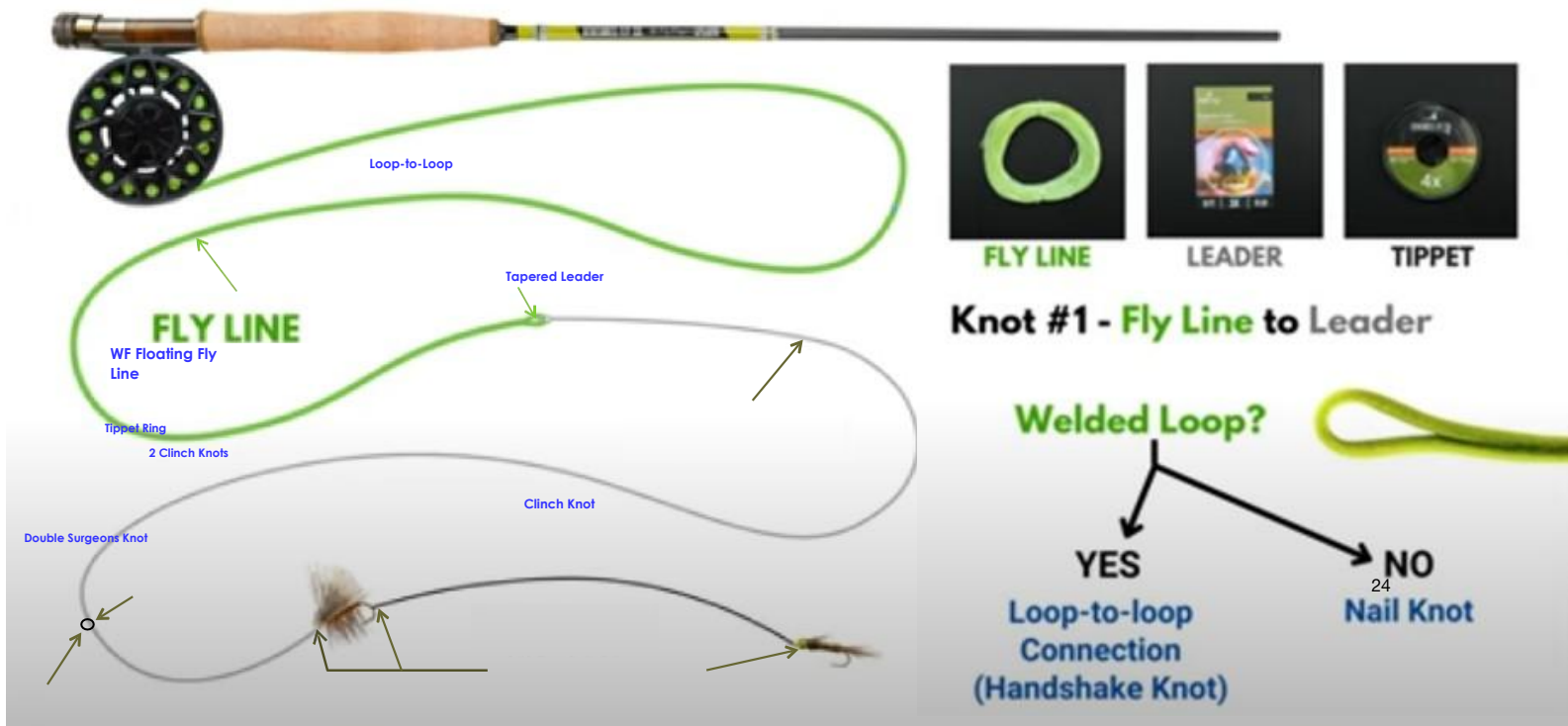
Choose a fly type for each depth.

What knot is used at each location?

Fly Fishing Techniques

Rigging flies for fishing

Dry/Dropper Fly Line System



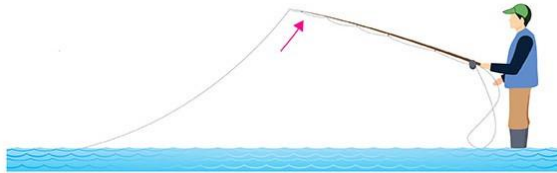
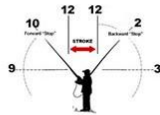
Fly Fishing Techniques

Learning and practicing casting



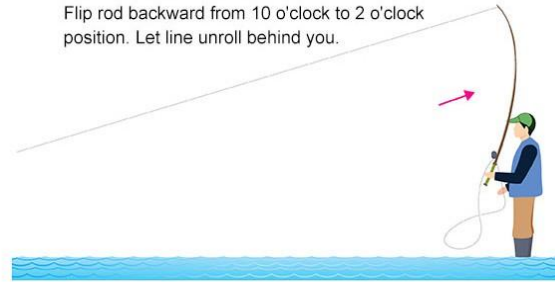
1. Pickup

With the rod tip near the water snapp wrist upright to 10 o'clock position.



2. Back cast

Flip rod backward from 10 o'clock to 2 o'clock position. Let line unroll behind you.



Casting a fly line

There are many ways to cast a fly line. You will become proficient over time by practicing.

Three basic casts to learn are the:

Overhead cast when the back cast is unobstructed.

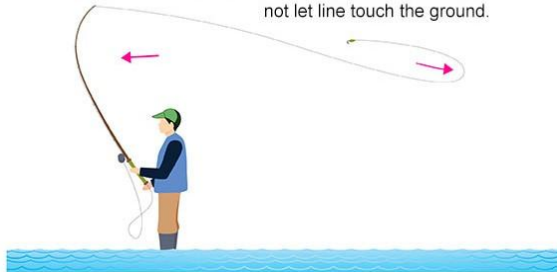
Roll cast when the cast has obstructions behind the fisherman.

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Flip cast when working on small streams and wanting to keep the line near the water.

3. Pause

Allow fishing line to stretch out behind you completely. Do not let line touch the ground.



4. Forward cast

Bring the rod tip forward to stop at the 10 o'clock position. Line will follow.



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Additional Information



Fly Fishing Techniques

Approach the water with **STEALTH** before fishing



Observe before you fish

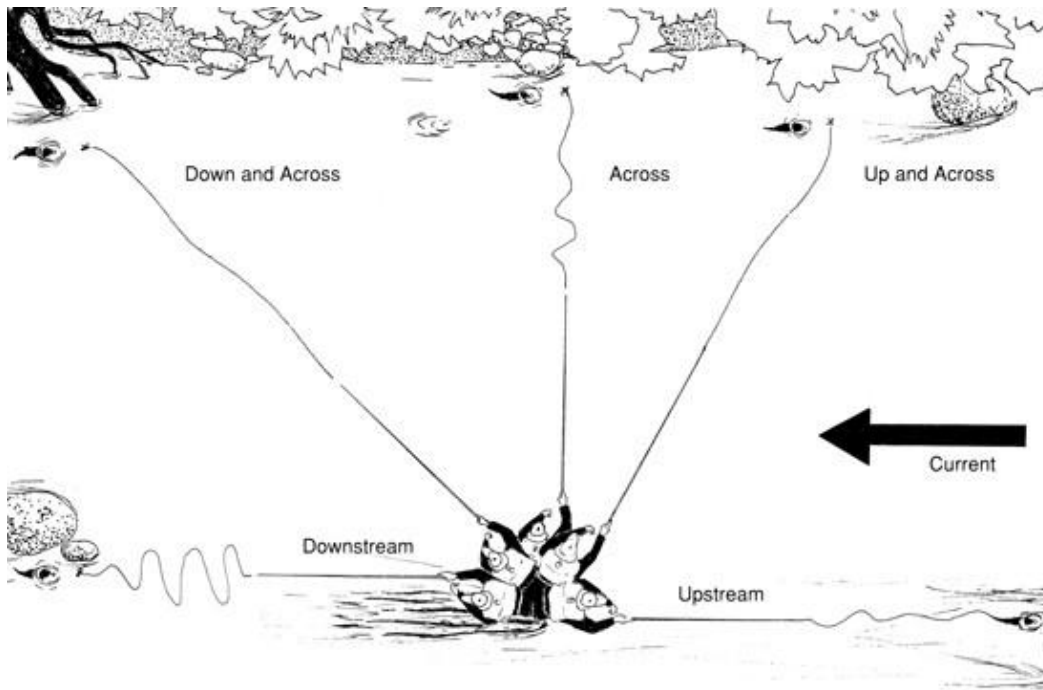
Trout have inner ears called otoliths that help them **hear clearly in the water.**

Trout do have a keen **sense of smell.**

Trout have **better low-light vision than humans**, and brown and rainbow trout can respond to a light level half of that required by brook and cutthroat trout. Trout must detect, recognize, and intercept prey drifting with the flow before the current carries it beyond reach

Fly Fishing Techniques

Casting for fishing



Wet Fly Fishing

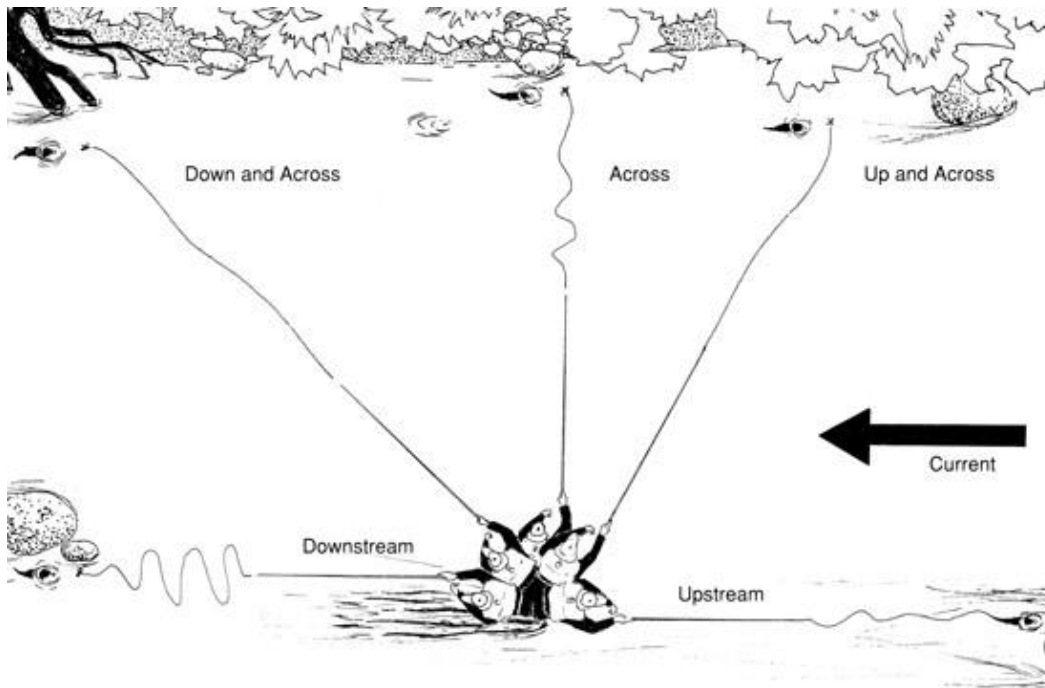
To fish traditional Wet flies, you'll frequently **cast across or downstream**, then allow the line to swing across the current before being tugged back upstream.

When fishing wet flies on rivers it is also important to '**mend**' the **fly line**. This involves using the rod tip to move the belly of the line or stripping line.

Swinging a fly ultimately means making a cast which gives your fly a chance to flow with the current, lift, and turn rising towards the surface.

Fly Fishing Techniques

Casting for fishing

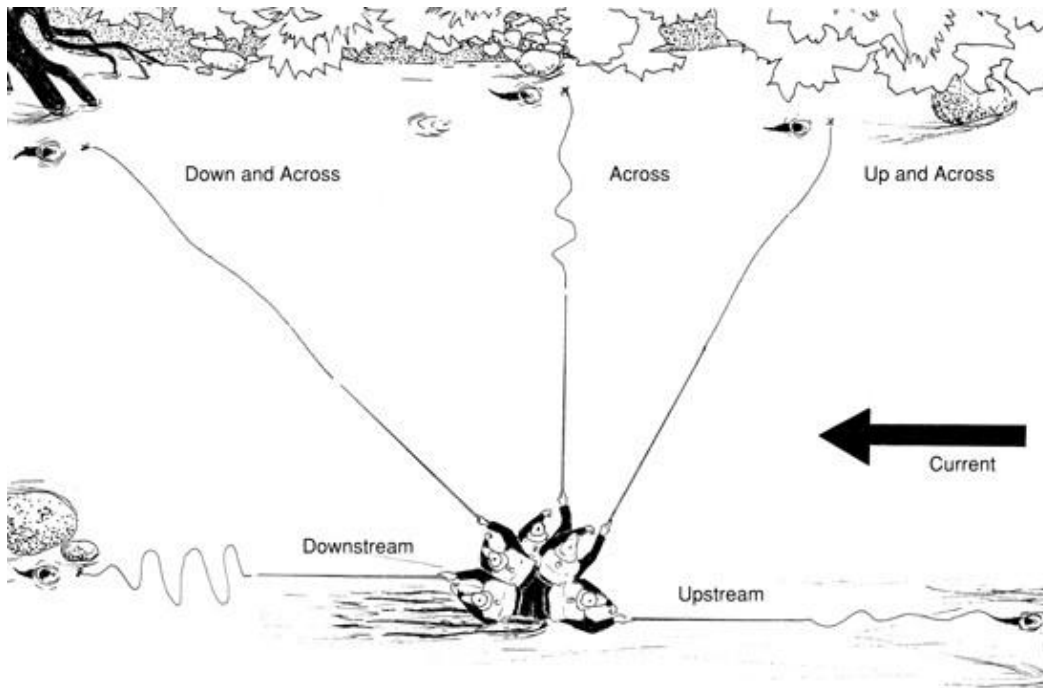


Dry Fly Fishing

The basic idea is to cast your fly **upstream of the fish** – just far enough that it can see and then easily intercept the fly as it drifts down over their head. As you see the fish take the fly into its mouth AND then turn back down to its holding depth, you **set the hook** by lifting the rod tip.

Fly Fishing Techniques

Casting for fishing



Nymph Fly Fishing

The **upstream** and **up-and-across** presentation angles work best for most nymph anglers most of the time because they keep the fly, weight, and indicator in a relatively straight line and therefore in similar current speeds, helping to telegraph the strike.

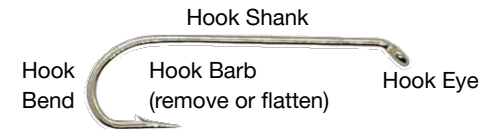
Adding an **indicator** to your nymph rig can often help you catch fish more successfully.

Fly Fishing Gear

What are Fly Tying tools and materials?

• Essential fly tying materials

- Nylon or polyester **thread** in various colors and sizes is the main material in making flies
- The right size **hook** is important to tying flies that appear realistic enough to fool a fish.
- **Feathers and hackle** from chicken, pheasants, etc. are the primary material for dry flies and streamers. (hackle is the group of feathers found along the back and side of the neck)
- **Dubbing** is a fuzzy natural or synthetic material that is wrapped, or “dubbed” around tying thread (hence the name) and used to shape the body of a fly.
- **Metal beads** can add weight or a life-like head to a fly pattern.
- Fine **metal wire** is useful for controlling the weight of a fly and building body segments.
- **Animal hair** is used to give fly patterns bulk or stiffness. (Elk and deer is the most common)



Fly Fishing Gear

What are Fly Tying tools and materials?

- Essential fly tying tools
 - A fly tying vise keeps the hook secured in a fixed position so that materials like thread, feathers or dubbing can be tied on.
 - A bobbin holder is used for holding the thread spool and for wrapping thread around the hook shank to tie in materials.
 - Unlike your ordinary household scissors, the scissors used in fly tying are generally smaller and should be razor sharp.
 - Soft hackle is a delicate material and a hackle pliers is used to hold the hackle while it is wrapped around the hook shank.
 - To complete a fly, you need something like a whip finisher to secure thread to the head of the fly with a knot.

Fly tying Vise



Bobbin



Whip Finisher



Hackle Pliers