

## What methods to use?

When using a Texas rig, begin by casting beyond your intended spot, letting the worm fall to the bottom. Slowly reel the worm in, jigging (lively jerking movements) it occasionally and keeping contact with the bottom. To jig, perform short lifts of the rod tip. Be sure to pay attention to your line while fishing. If the line goes slack, your worm might be in the mouth of a bass! To hook the fish, reel up the slack and set the hook by pulling the rod tip back sharply. Keep your line taught as slack line can cause the hook to dislodge. Be ready, these fish put up spectacular fights, characterized by leaps and runs, entertainment for any angler.

## What are the rules and regulations?

In NYS, a freshwater fishing license is required for anyone age 16 and over. Always follow the most current freshwater fishing regulations for your region. Log onto: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7917.html> for more information. Remember, if you do not plan on eating your catch, release it. Catch and release fishing can minimize your impact on local fishery resources.

## What are the health advisories?

Each year the New York State Department of Health (DOH) issues advice on eating fish that people catch in New York State waters. The general advisory states that you should eat no more than one half-pound of fish per week from any of the state's freshwaters, the Hudson River, the Upper Bay of New York Harbor, Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull, Newark Bay, Raritan Bay west of Wolfe's Pond Park, Harlem River, and the East River. Moreover, many waters have even specific, stricter advisories due to high contaminant levels. For more information or a free brochure, contact DOH at 1-800-458-1158 ext. 27815 or log onto: <http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/outdoors/fish/fish.htm>.

## Prevent the spread of invasive species!

Invasive plants and animals can impact boating, fishing, swimming, and the environment. When you leave a body of water be sure to:

- **INSPECT** your boating and fishing equipment for invasive species.
- **REMOVE** any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- **CLEAN & DRY** anything that comes into contact with water including boats, trailers, waders, livewells, and bait buckets.
- **DISINFECT** your boating and fishing equipment with a disinfectant such as a 10% bleach solution or let it dry in sun for at least 2 days.



For more information on invasive species and how to stop their spread log onto: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/50267.html> or <http://www.ProtectYourWaters.net>.

# Fishing Basics

# Black Bass

## What is a black bass?

Species of the genus *Micropterus* are known as black bass. Smallmouth and largemouth bass are New York State's two species of black bass. Found in freshwater, these predatory fish are the largest members of the sunfish family and have an elongated, robust body shape.



Largemouth bass

*Common Name:* Largemouth bass

*Description:* Streamlined body shape, greenish-brown in color with dark horizontal band on sides and white belly; upper jaw extends past the eye; no teeth present; deep notch where dorsal fins meet; slightly forked tail fin with rounded tips.

*Size:* 6 to 24 inches; up to 10 lbs.



Smallmouth bass

*Common Name:* Smallmouth bass

*Description:* Streamlined body shape, brown to green-yellow in color with 8 to 11 thin vertical dark bars on its sides; upper jaw does not reach beyond the rear edge of the eye; no teeth present; area where dorsal fins meet is slightly notched; stronger forked tail than largemouth.

*Size:* 6 to 22 inches; up to 6 lbs.

Images by Duane Raver



[www.ifishnewyork.org](http://www.ifishnewyork.org)

## Where to go?

When fishing for black bass, it's best to target their natural habitat. Largemouths can be found in warm lakes and slow moving water with dense aquatic vegetation as cover. Fallen logs , overhanging brush, and dock pilings are also good. In contrast, smallmouths prefer cool, clear areas of lakes and flowing streams with a gravel or rock bottom and moderate vegetation. Try fishing in deeper water or near dropoffs. For specific fishing locations, try: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7749.html>.

## When to go?

Black bass feed throughout the day and night. However, preferable fishing times are early morning and evening. A good time of year to fish is June through October, with peak fishing in June and September to late October.

## What bait to use?

You should select bait based upon a fish's natural diet. Because black basses are generalists, you can use a variety of natural baits, both live and dead. The bulk of the smallmouth diet consists of insects, crayfish, other smaller fish, and occasionally tadpoles and frogs. Largemouths tend to eat larger prey, as indicated by their name, feeding on crayfish, frogs, and fish. Earthworms and leeches are also excellent natural bait for both fish.

If you are interested in artificial baits, there is a large selection of lures to choose from: crankbaits, jigs, topwater plugs, and a variety of soft plastics. For information about these lures visit [http://www.rbff.org/uploads/Resources\\_section/Tip\\_Sheets/Fishing\\_Terminology.pdf](http://www.rbff.org/uploads/Resources_section/Tip_Sheets/Fishing_Terminology.pdf). Remember: black bass like vegetation, so topwater or weedless lures are best.

## What equipment to use?

Select a rod that matches the size of the fish you are targeting. Two categories are important: line rating and action. The line rating indicates what pound test the rod can handle, and the action specifies how much bend occurs in the rod. For example, if you are fishing in a very weedy lake, a medium-heavy action rod (less bend) is best to help pull the bass out of the weeds. If you are fishing in a less weedy lake, a light-medium to medium action rod is good because the greater bend in the rod acts like a spring to prevent the line from breaking. You can find the level of action inscribed above the rod handle. In addition, a high pound test of line is needed for catching larger fish. But be sure the drag is not too tight, or risk stressing the line and having a fish snap your line. A good check: you should be able to extract the line from the reel using a **firm** pull. If the pull is too easy, tighten the drag and if the pull is too difficult, loosen the drag.

### ***Beginner's Shopping List for Bass:***

**Rod:** 6-6 ½ foot pole; rated with 8-14 lb. test line; medium-light to medium-heavy action.

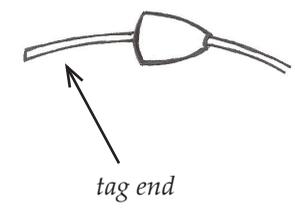
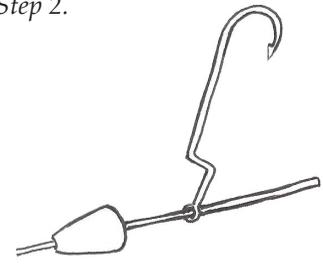
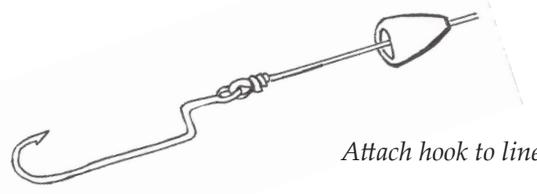
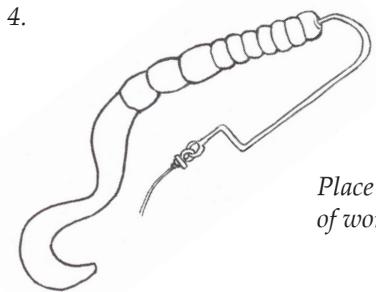
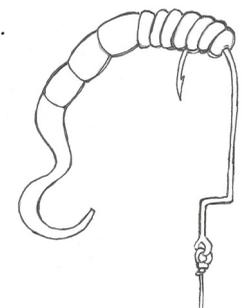
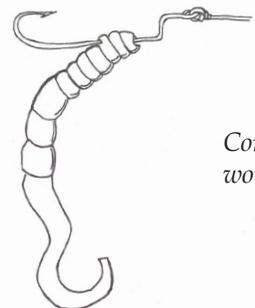
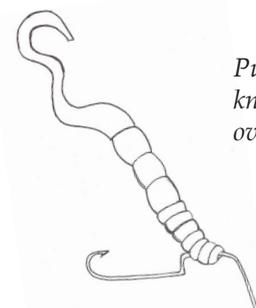
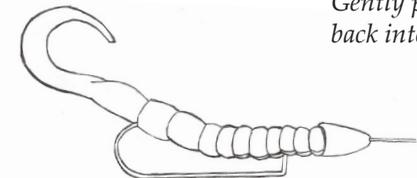
**Reel:** Spinning, spincasting or baitcasting.

**Line:** 8 to 12 lb. test.

**Hook Size:** #1 to #6 for natural baits.

## What type of rig to use?

There are a few different rigs that can be used when fishing for black bass. An example is a Texas rig with a live or plastic worm. One great advantage of the Texas rig: it's weedless.

<p>Step 1.</p>  <p>tag end</p> <p>Thread the tag end or working end through a 1/8 to 1 ounce bullet sinker</p>	<p>Step 2.</p>  <p>Use a round bend or weedless hook size 1/0 to 5/0</p>
<p>Step 3.</p>  <p>Attach hook to line</p>	<p>Step 4.</p>  <p>Place hook in top of worm</p>
<p>Step 5.</p>  <p>Thread worm on hook</p>	<p>Step 6.</p>  <p>Continue to thread worm to knot</p>
<p>Step 7.</p>  <p>Push worm over knot and pick up over hook</p>	<p>Step 8.</p>  <p>Gently push hook back into worm</p>

Images by Ann TeNyenhuis