



Module 5: Selecting Proper Equipment

Selecting proper equipment for fishing is a daunting task but important to the success of your fishing activity. Several factors should be considered when selecting the proper fishing equipment.

1. Age, skill, and knowledge of the youth in the use of fishing tackle.
2. Type of water (salt, fresh) and the species of fish you will be targeting.
3. How much are you willing to pay for fishing equipment?

There may be more questions to ask, but this will get you started.

Following are several rods and reels to consider:

1. Bamboo pole with no reel—a great inexpensive rod about 6-7 feet in length. The line is normally the length of the pole. Attach a simple bobber, spit shot and hook. This pole is ideal as first-time fishing equipment for catching blue gill or small pan fish off the shoreline or in a small pond. The tip of the pole may become u-shaped over time, and it may need attention after the last session is completed.
2. Rods—A 6-foot to 7-foot medium-weight rod or ultralight graphite rod with an open face, close face, or bait-casting reel. These make great all-around combinations on lakes and streams. I recommend that young people use a close-face reel to reduce line tangle.
 - a. Perch, crappie, blue gill, and small trout are best caught on light or ultralight rods and reels using light monofilament line up to 4 pounds. The most popular freshwater bait is earthworms.

- b. If you take Scouts out to catch larger lake fish, such as walleye, salmon, steelhead trout, or lake trout, a 7-foot medium rod with a monofilament line of 8 to 10 pounds will do. Your bait can be live or artificial.
 - c. For salty, backwater fishing, a good, medium-heavy, one-piece carbon rod of 6 feet to 6 feet, 6 inches with a saltwater spinning reel with about 10- to 12-pound line weight is plenty.
3. Bobbers—The traditional red and white type is best. Remember, it is used as an indicator that a fish is on the hook. Bobbers should not be so large that they tangle the line as it is being cast.
 4. Sinkers— Use sinkers to get the line out some distance into the water. The size of sinkers does matter when casting.
 5. Hooks—They vary in style and type. When fishing for pan fish, use smaller hooks like 6, 8, or 10. Big fish require big hooks.

Additional guidance can be found at your local bait shop or in the *Fishing* and *Fly-Fishing* merit badge pamphlets found at your local Scout shop. Fish On!