



Fishing Terms and Definitions

Some of the best fishing in the world can be found in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) and Quetico Park. To make the best of your fishing while on your canoe trip, you need to choose the tackle you use carefully. Most of the tackle we recommend are the good old standbys that fishermen have used for many years. The following are descriptions of some of the more popular lures used in our area.



WEIGHTED JIG HEADS - various sized weighted hooks. Usually 1/8 ounce to 1/4 ounce sizes are preferred for walleye and smallmouth. Use 1/16 ounce and 1/8 ounce for panfish.

SOFT JIG BODIES - plastic molded bodies which resemble worms, grubs, frogs, lizards, leeches or crawdads. The most popular style is the grub body. Use a 2 to 4 inch body for walleye and smallmouth. Use a 1 to 1-1/2 inch body for panfish. White, black, yellow, motor oil, and pumpkin seed are the most productive colors for our area.

RAPALAS - brand name for top water and subsurface lures. Rapalas come in many shapes, sizes and styles. Rapalas in the 3 to 4-1/2 inch range will work the best. Perch, black & gold, black & silver and crawdad are our top color picks.

SPOONS - oval shaped metal with a hook on the end. The best sizes will range from 3 to 4 inches in length. Solid silver, red & white, black & white, and yellow with red diamonds are productive colors.

SPINNER BAIT - any variety of lures that consist of a rotating blade or blades. The two main types are a straight shaft (i.e. Mepps Spinner), and safety pin type spinner bait. These lures are most commonly used for bass and pike.

CRANK BAIT - generally any plug type body with some type of lip on the front of the lure. These lures take on many shapes and sizes, and the length of the "lip" will determine how deep the bait will run when "cranked" in.

SPLIT SHOT SINKER - a small ball of weight, typically partially split which can be placed directly on the fishing line to add weight and depth to lures.

BULLET SINKER - used in combination with a slip shot or weighted jig head. The bullet sinker slides loosely on the line that allows for variation in depth and extra weight.

STILL FISHING - the method of fishing that usually involves the use of a bobber to suspend live bait at a certain depth. Two techniques that are commonly used are a fixed bobber (simply clipped on your line) and a slip bobber.

TROLLING - moving at any pace across a body of water trailing a lure (frequently a spoon plug, crank bait, rapala or spoon). Extra line should be let out to allow for greater depth.

SCULLING - technique using a canoe paddle in a figure eight motion to slowly propel or control the speed of the canoe. Most commonly used while fishing.

REEF - submerged rock piles that vary in size and depth. Preferred by walleyes during the warm summer months.



POINTS – spits of land that jut out into the lake from a larger land form. Smallmouth frequent these landmarks throughout much of our season. Walleye tend to locate near points in the spring.

NARROWS – areas where points come together and create a restricted water flow. Walleye sometimes prefer these areas during the summer when reefs are not available. Late evening and nightfall fishing in these areas produce fantastic walleye.

WEED BEDS – large growths of weeds that provide cover and cool oxygenated water, primarily for large northerns. Dead and dying weed beds will not be productive. Small weed beds may produce some panfish (crappies, bluegill or perch).

One of the best fishing tips that we can give you is to go through your tackle box and see what you already have before you go out and buy anything new. The biggest factor in being a successful fisherman is knowing how your lures work. Chances are you probably own many types of lures whose action you are very familiar with and which could work in our area.

When we fish for walleye and smallmouth, we use **LIGHT ACTION** rods approximately 5-1/2 feet in length. We prefer open-faced spinning reels as opposed to closed-faced reels because many times the line becomes tangled under the cover of closed reels. Fishing line in the 6 to 8 pound test range is most desirable.

MEDIUM ACTION set-ups are most well suited for northern and lake trout. A stiffer rod about 5'6" to 6' in length works well. Again, an open-faced reel is preferred. Use 10 to 12 pound test.

Some experienced fishermen will use **BAIT CASTING RODS AND REELS** to fish with. While they work well, learning to use them on a wilderness canoe trip is not a desirable situation. Bait casting reels can be very touchy, backlashes are common, and it is inevitable that the urge to throw them in the lake will enter your mind at one point or another.