

A Complete Guide for

CASTING SPOONS & SPINNERS

IN LAKES & STREAMS

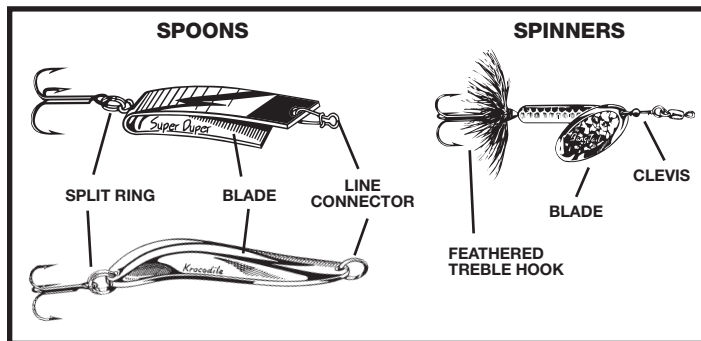
Casting weighted spoons and spoons for trout, bass, salmon, pike and other gamefish is an art practiced by hundreds of thousands of anglers throughout the country. It is a challenging, exciting and productive fishing technique that can easily be learned.

Whether a beginner or a more experienced angler, this Luhr-Jensen Tech Report can help you become even more successful using this technique.

The greatest joy that comes from "hardware" casting is being able to use light tackle. This both magnifies strikes and allows a more direct confrontation between you and the fish. Spinners and spoons, however, are fished differently in lakes than in rivers and there are also differences in how each type of lure is most effectively fished. The following information is designed to provide you with many of the proven tips and techniques utilized by successful anglers.

In learning to master hardware casting, the most important aspect is to become completely familiar with the feel and action of individual lures under a variety of water conditions. A clear water lake or pond, or a quiet, deep hole in a river are excellent spots to study the action of a particular lure, creating a visual of lure action in relation to rod vibration. An angler with a solid understanding of a lure's vibration and action can, by watching the rod tip, determine the necessary retrieve speed and judge whether or not the lure is working properly.

Start by making a short cast and then begin a slow, steady retrieve, constantly keeping your eyes on your rod tip. A vibrating tip means the spoon or spinner is working. As the lure approaches you, note what it is doing underwater and couple that with the rod tip vibrations and the "feel" you are getting. A spoon should swim with a side-to-side wobble while a spinner should have a constantly-revolving blade. If your spoon is spinning, you are reeling too fast. If the blade on your spinner is not constantly revolving, you are reeling too slowly.



SPINNERS vs. SPOONS

Spoon actions are determined by their shape. Generally, the longer a spoon is in relation to its width, the tighter it will wobble and the more retrieve speed (or current speed in rivers) it will tolerate. Examples of longer, oblong style spoons include the Krocodile®, Super Duper, Cast Champ and Hus-Lure. Wider spoons, like the Blue Fox® Pixee® Spoons generate more pronounced wobbling actions at slower speeds.

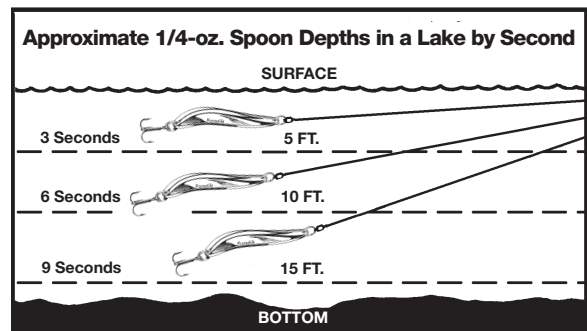
Target water depth is often a critical element in spoon selection. Narrow, longer spoons generate less water resistance, sinking faster and fishing deeper than wider spoons, especially in strong river currents. Wide spoon styles generate more water resistance, which keeps them running shallower.

In all cases a spoon should be attached to your line via a rounded attachment device, whether that's a welded ring, split ring or Luhr-Jensen Duo-Lock Snap because sharply pointed or V-shaped snaps or snap swivels destroy the action of most spoons.

Though the vibration produced by spinners is completely different than spoons (wobbling blade versus revolving blade), spinner actions are also determined by the shape of the spinner blade. Similar to spoons, the longer and narrower a spinner's blade is: the tighter to the shaft it will spin, the less water resistance it will generate, and the faster/deeper it can effectively fish. A 1/4-ounce Shyster® will fish faster and deeper than a similarly sized shorter wide bladed Bang Tail or Blue Fox® Vibrax® spinners. However, the shorter wide blade produces wider revolutions and generates greater water resistance producing more flash and vibration.

All spinners produce sonic vibrations under water. Some produce more than others, depending on the shape of the blade and how it is attached to the shaft. Spinners should be chosen by target depth, along with the speed and vibration fish respond to. With both spoons and spinners, it's outstanding when fish respond to fast moving lures like a Shyster because you are able to cover water quickly and catch more fish as a result. Realize, however, that fish will respond differently at different times and altering your lure choice to slower-moving, higher-vibration lures like a Bang Tail will be necessary at times. This is where an understanding of their actions becomes pivotal as you try different selections.

If a line attachment device such as a barrel swivel is not already on the spinner, you will need to attach a snap swivel to the eye of the lure. Spinners, because of their action, should be fished with a snap swivel to prevent line twist. One spinner, the Shyster, does not require an additional swivel as it features a keel-type wire shaft which helps prevent the lure from revolving or twisting. Your line may be tied directly to its eyelet if you choose.



LAKE FISHING

In lake fishing with either spoons or spinners, fish will be found at different levels, depending on the location of food sources, the time of day, degree of sunlight penetration into the water and the level of the thermocline. River fish, on the other hand, generally tend to be found close to the bottom unless a major insect hatch draws them to the surface.

If casting a spoon or a spinner into a lake, you should try to vary the depth of each retrieve until the fish-holding level is found. Then mentally mark that depth so you can go right back to it on the next cast. A standard quarter-ounce spoon or spinner on a tight line (they sink faster on a

slack line) will sink roughly one foot-per-second. You can count the number of seconds it takes to reach bottom (the line goes slack) and then make your first retrieve slow and close to the bottom. On each successive cast, subtract two seconds of sinking time until you have covered every foot of depth in a particular area.

If fish appear finicky and hard to catch (they follow the lure but won't strike it) the probability is that your line is too visible. By switching to a smaller diameter line which fish can't see as easily, your success rate should rise. For trout and other fish up to five pounds, line of four- or six-pound test is recommended.

For larger fish, try 8- to 10-pound test line. However, remember that the heavier your line, the easier it will be seen by fish and the harder it will be to cast lightweight lures. Heavier line will also create friction in the water and your lure won't run as deep as it does with lighter lines.

Lure finishes are best chosen by conditions. On dark days, or at periods of low light, such as early morning or late afternoon, a Brass or Copper finish will work well. On bright days, or in clear water, most successful anglers choose Nickel finishes. Brass or Copper also work well when water is brackish, murky (tea-colored) or deep.

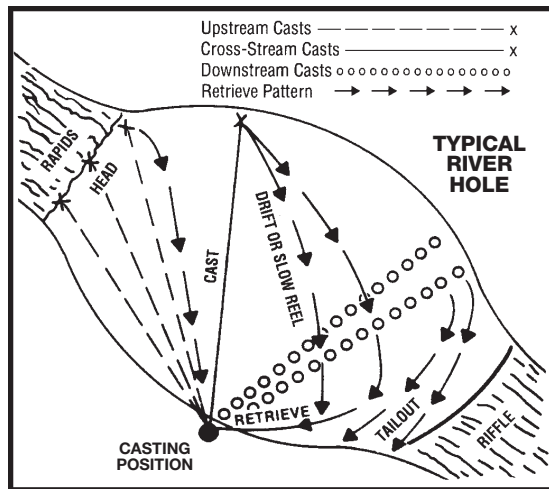
Color patterns should be matched as closely as possible to the natural foods available in a lake. Minnows can be represented by metallic finishes, particularly those with red heads. Frogs can be represented by a green/black-and-yellow spotted finish. Natural color rainbow trout and brown trout finishes work well for predatory species such as pike, bass and lake trout.

A FEW LURE ACTION TIPS

Do EVERYTHING you can to prevent a lure from running at a constant speed and in a straight line. Twitch the rod tip every few seconds, speed up and then slow down the retrieve, stop the lure dead in the water and then start it up again, reel extremely fast for a few seconds, and so on. The more variety in speed and action you impart to the lure, the better your chances are of enticing a strike.

SPOONS IN RIVERS

Rivers, unlike lakes, have variable currents which make it more difficult to present a spinner or spoon properly. There are three basic kinds of casts used to fish rivers. When fishing spoons, the most common cast will be straight across the stream or just slightly upstream, allowing the spoon to sink a moment or two before beginning a retrieve. As the spoon works downstream and catches the current, you should slow your retrieve. As it works across the stream, back toward your position, stop reeling altogether. Once the lure has reached quiet, soft water and has begun settling toward the bottom (vibrations at the rod tip will fade), it's time to reel slowly in and make another cast.



Tailouts are natural resting and feeding places. They are generally are from 1-4 feet deep. Food being swept along the bottom or along the surface concentrates in a tailout and that's why fish are there.

Tailout areas are favorites for feeding, resting and holding fish. These areas are at the end of a hole or drift where the water shallows and picks up speed. Because they're shallow, tailouts are hard to fish with cross-stream casts and are best covered with downstream casts. Position yourself above the tailout and cast across and downstream. When the spoon or spinner hits the water, take a few turns of your reel handle and then let the current do the rest of the work, pushing and activating the lure as it crosses the river back to your bank.

Deep holes and/or fast water require yet another kind of casting technique called "upstreaming". The lure is cast upstream and then allowed to settle toward the bottom as you quickly reel in loose line. Moving with the current, this presentation allows a lure to achieve maximum depth. Once it reaches a position across from you, it should be near the bottom and then can be slowly reeled in until the current catches it. At this point, the cross-stream technique is used.

Depending on depth and current speed, spoon styles are chosen for each cast type to produce a fishing depth near bottom. **NOTE:** Hardware should not be bounced along the bottom like drift tackle. Although some anglers catch fish by accident this way, it does not allow the lure to obtain the fish-enticing action needed, besides the fact it will often result in snagging up and losing the lure. If you feel a tap now and then from rocks or the bottom, you are fishing the correct depth and reeling at the correct speed. If you feel a series of taps, speed up your retrieve. No taps — slow down the retrieve. A hard tap (strike)... set the hook!

SPINNERS IN RIVERS

Spinners can effectively be used in rivers with all three casting methods previously described — upstream, cross-stream and downstream. With wide-blade shapes the upstream technique can be particularly deadly and is best accomplished with a high-speed spinning reel. Cast the spinner out and immediately begin reeling to start the blade in motion. As soon as the blade begins turning, you will feel vibration while also seeing it in the rod tip. If you feel steady ticks from the spinner blade, the lure is too close to the bottom and you should reel faster. If you don't feel a tap once in a while, slow down as the lure isn't working close enough to the bottom. You should use a retrieve speed that causes the spinner blade to nick a rock or touch bottom every few seconds. **TIP:** Most anglers try to fish spinners too fast, even though the most effective method has proven to be a slow-moving lure, fished near the bottom... an easy meal for fish.

For cross-stream and downstream casting you'll find different blade styles suitable for different river situations. Bang Tail spinners are extremely versatile under a variety of river currents. A Shyster excels when its narrow blade is called upon to track deep in swift water.

Colors and patterns of spinners closely resemble those recommended earlier for lake fishing. You will also find contrasting color combinations best, such as a Nickel Blade/Black Body, Brass Blade/Red Body with black spots, etc. Single hooks are also available for situations where they are required by law or where weeds or moss are a problem.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

One of the easiest things you can do to improve fishing results is to sharpen dull hooks with the Luhr-Jensen's Original Hook File. Simply hold the file parallel to the hook point and, with gentle one-way strokes, remove a small amount of metal from at least two sides of each point to make them sticky-sharp. If the hook is too damaged replace them with premium quality VMC Hooks.



You should always use a premium quality braided or monofilament line that has superior knot strength, small diameter in relation to pound test and is abrasion resistant.

Purchase a quality depth finder which will help in locating fish as well as prime underwater fish-holding structure which can't otherwise be detected.



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