

Some general catch and release tips:

- Try to release fish as quickly as possible.
- Use barbless hooks or small barbed hooks whenever possible to minimise hook damage to fish and simplify hook removal.
- Use non-offset circle hooks when fishing with bait.
- Minimise the time spent to land the fish. Long fights on light tackle unduly stress fish and lead to lower chance of survival as a result.
- Avoid taking a fish from the water. If you can, release the fish while it is in the water.
- Use fish-friendly landing nets with soft knotless mesh to reduce harm to a fish's scales, skin, eyes and fins.
- If you do remove the fish from the water, handle it carefully. Use wet hands or a wet towel to minimise damage to its skin. A dry towel may damage its skin and will remove its protective mucus, this causes stress and makes the fish more vulnerable to infection. Be careful not to lay it on a hot, dry surface.
- Support the fish's body weight and minimise the length of time the fish is out of the water.
- Avoid dropping fish onto the bottom of boats or other hard surfaces as this can cause internal organ damage.
- A smooth, wet surface or vinyl-covered foam is the most suitable surface to place fish on in order to remove hooks.
- Always carry suitable unhooking tools - the use of needle-nosed pliers or other hook retrieving devices can greatly reduce the time fish are out of water.
- If a hook is located deep inside the fish, cut the line as close as possible to the fish's mouth. This is far better than trying to extract the hook, which could cause internal damage to the fish.
- Take care to revive fish upon release if required. This involves gently holding or pushing the fish upright through the water so that it obtains a good supply of oxygen over its gills.