

Advice on Catch & Release

Tackle

- Use a barbless hook (or flatten the barbs with pliers)
- Single hooks only.

Playing the fish

- Bring the fish in firmly and quickly to reduce the likelihood of severe exhaustion
- Use a heavy breaking strain of line or cast that will permit this
- Move the fish out of fast currents if possible

Handling the fish

- Handle the fish as little as possible.
- Keep the fish in the water if possible; fish should not be brought out of the water on to the bank if possible.
- If a landing net is used, it must be knotless. Avoid abrasion of the scales — NEVER beach the fish.
- You must wet your hands before touching the fish.
- Be gentle, do not grip the fish tightly — and take extra care with fish during warm weather, when they are most vulnerable.
- Remove the hook gently — forceps can help (always take a pair of long nosed forceps with you when you go salmon or trout fishing)
- If the fish is deep hooked, cut the line as close to the hook as possible better to lose a fly than a fish.
- Never hold up by the tail or hold up by the wrist.

Reviving and releasing the fish

- Do not weigh the fish — estimate the weight (the weight of a fish can be calculated from an estimate of the length of the fish: tip of nose to centre of tail. Details of length/weight relationships are available from web sites etc)
- For photography — stand in the water if not too deep — gently cradle the fish using both hands — and just lift the fish above the water surface for a few seconds.
- Support the fish gently and steadily in a current, facing upstream. Do not hold the fish too firmly.
- Be patient, and wait for the fish to recover.
- Let it swim away on its own when it is ready.

Will the fish live?

Radio tracking of released fish has shown that over 90% of salmon and trout, if carefully handled, survive to spawn successfully, and 10 % could have been taken by the fishes natural predators. So if handled properly the fish have a great chance.