



10 Fishing Methods for Survival Scenarios

So you find yourself in a wilderness survival scenario with a little fishing gear at hand. If you know some techniques and how to fabricate some gear in the field, there's hope to provide food for yourself at the nearest waterway. Take time now to practice some of these time-tested survival fishing techniques.

- 1. Hand fishing.** This is as primitive as it gets. Here you actually grab the fish from the water with your hands, so put on some gloves and wade into the murky water, because that's where the catfish are holed up.
- 2. Gill netting.** These nets are used to catch fish as they try to swim through the openings of the net and become entangled. Gill nets can be effective in different places at different times, but they yield the best results during a migratory fish run.
- 3. Dip netting.** Simply use a standard fishing net used for hook and line fishing to scoop up unaware fish in the shallows.
- 4. Spear fishing.** It's not always easy to skewer a moving fish, but spear fishing is still a worthwhile activity in most survival situations. Just make sure you compensate for refraction and aim below the fish.
- 5. Hand lining.** A simple hook and line, along with some bait, is really all you need to catch fish. Hand lines are usually handheld coils of line that are cast and retrieved by hand.
- 6. Gorge hooking.** Using a gorge hook is not the same as using curved steel hooks. The method here is to allow the fish to swallow the bait, which has a sharp thorn or bone shard sticking out of it. After you think a fish has swallowed the gorge hook, don't jerk the line to set the hook, just slowly coax it into a waiting dip net.
- 7. Striking iron.** One of the oddest fishing methods, this consists of stunning a large, slow-moving fish by striking it with a rod or slender bar of metal as the fish nears the surface.
- 8. Basket trapping.** A container with a funnel-shaped entrance are all you need to build an effective fish trap. Take into account the size and habits of the fish you hope to catch and build your trap to fit. Wooden slat traps for catfish are typically more than a yard long, with a large funnel opening wide enough to imprison even a fat blue cat. Minnow traps can be made from a soda bottle with the neck cut off and inverted inside the bottle.
- 9. Fish weiring.** A weir can be a wall, circular fence, or large funnel designed to direct fish into your trap. Some of the traditional weir construction styles of ancient times are still being used today. Why? Because they work. Weirs can be built of stone for permanent construction, or by driving stakes or posts into the mud or sand for semi-permanent installations. A weir can also aid your spear fishing and dip netting efforts.
- 10. Fish poisoning.** Only to be used in dire emergencies, fish poison has traditionally been derived from crushed plant materials that release compounds into the water and stun or kill the fish. Poison is typically used in still water and small pools, though this ancestral technique has been used in rivers and larger waterways.