

Basic tackle for freshwater fishing

By AZNIR MALEK

The magpie syndrome

Fishing is one sport where you never seem to have enough tackle (equipment). You may start with one rod and one reel, some line and a couple of hooks, but before you know it, you start buying specific tackle as you learn specialised fishing methods. After a few years, you suddenly find yourself with two dozen rods and as many reels!

Well, let me assure you that this is more out of want rather than need! Really, even if you practise the various methods of fishing like legering, float fishing, lure fishing and fly fishing, you will need only about five or six rods at most.

Getting equipped

OK, so you are a new angler, about to start out on your first fishing trip. Chances are, it will be to the nearby fishing pond or disused mining lake. So what should be your first set of fishing tackle?

For a start, you should get something for general freshwater fishing. This first set of tackle should last you for the first few years of your fishing "career". Later, you may want to get different sets of tackle for more specific fishing methods.

This basic set of fishing tackle should preferably be a light one; something for you to fish for the smaller pond species like tilapia, lampam and various carp. So here's my advice:

Rod: Get one of 1.8m to 2.1m length, rated for 3.6kg to 6.3kg lines. It should be of two sections. Thus, when broken down, it will not be longer than 1.1m.

This means that it is easier to stow in your car boot, or strap to the side of your motorbike. A rod of this specification will allow you to fish the ponds (and the rivers for bigger fish)6.

The rod should have at least six or seven guides (line rings), preferably lined with ceramic or harder material. This minimises friction and wear on your fishing line.

Do remember that a rod should last you a lifetime provided you take care of it. Thus choose your first rod carefully.

Reel: The reel should match your rod. There are various types of reels in the market, but I recommend a spinning reel (also called a fixed-spool or threadline reel).

The reel spool should accommodate at least 100m of 5kg nylon fishing line (also called monofilament line). You need this amount just in case a big whopper takes your bait to the other end of the pond!

There are many good quality yet cheap reels in the market. Ask for one with about 4cm-5cm diameter spool, with reliable drag (brake or clutch), and preferably with good gearing. The shopkeeper should be able to understand your needs.

Line: Start with nylon (also called monofilament or mono). Buy 300m of line. Use 100m to 150m

to fill the spool of your reel. The rest is backup. When you have used up a significant amount of line from the spool, replace with the extra line.

Buy a small spool (say 100m) of slightly thicker line (say 6kg rated). Use small lengths of this as your leader (connecting your hook to the swivel).

Good gear shops

Tightlines Sportfishing, Bandar Sri Subang, Petaling Jaya, ask for Uncle Bob, (03) 5637 2682

Tacklebox Adventures, SS14, Subang Jaya, ask for Nick Ooi, (03) 5637 0268

Syarikat Kepong, Jalan Kepong, Kuala Lumpur, (03) 6274 0460

Anglers World, 63, Jalan Teluk Sisek, Kuantan, ask for Asri, (09) 5178004

Perniagaan Alam Sejadi, Kluang, (07) 7734573

TCE Sports, 234 (2nd floor) Penang Road, Penang, (04) 2638 700

Fish Hunters, 15, Jalan Maharaja Lela, Kuala Lumpur, (03) 2480730