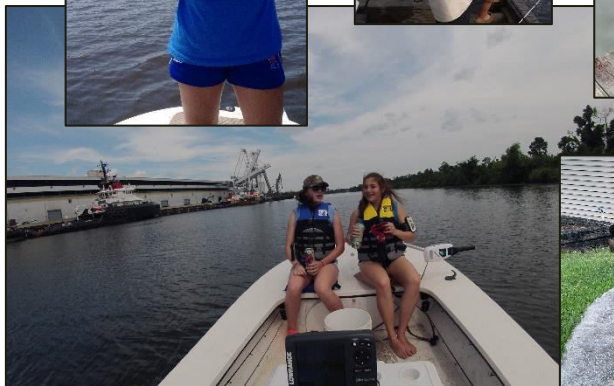
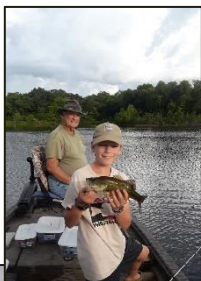




How to.....

Fly Cast Stream Side

Author & Illustrator: Keith P. Richard, MCI



Dedication

I could think of any number of people to whom to dedicate this book, my parents who taught me integrity, honesty and the sense of fair play, or my wife who stood by my side and tirelessly and unselfishly accompanied me throughout the US as I attempted to master the knowledge and insight to write this book. Then there are my children who continue to teach me about parenting and what's really important. I think, however, this dedication is to our grandchildren, Paige, Maddie, Isaac and Ian.

This book wasn't written in a day. Your lives will not be lived in a day. It took many twists, turns and countless redoes, much like your life. Just as in life, there are so few hard, indisputable facts in teaching one how to fly fish. There are as many methods as there are instructors. We all just do what we can and always remember that under most circumstances the best explanation for any question should begin with "It depends".

It's, also, dedicated to the true heroes of this country and of the world, the veterans who put themselves into harm's way for the mission of keeping this democracy free for the lives of God-fearing people everywhere to live without fear. God bless them all.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	3
Table of Contents.....	4
Welcome and Introduction.....	6
What is Fly Casting.....	8
Definitions.....	10
Loop Shapes.....	13
Rod Assembly.....	17
Grip & Stance.....	19
How to perform a:	
Roll Cast.....	23
Off Shoulder Roll Cast.....	27
Roll Cast Pick Up.....	29
Pick Up and Lay Down Cast (PULD).....	31
Slip vs. Shoot Line.....	37
False Cast.....	39
Trajectory/ Distance.....	43
Getting Unhooked.....	45
Setting the Hook & Fighting the Fish.....	47
Things to Consider when Practicing.....	50

Things to Consider Prior to Going Streamside.....	52
Importance of Looking at Your Back Cast.....	53
Knots Made Simple.....	54
Arbor knot.....	54
Nail knot.....	55
Loop to Loop.....	56
Perfection loop.....	56
Girth Hitch.....	56
Improved Clinch knot.....	59
Lefty Kreh Non-Slip Loop knot.....	60
Resources and Suggested Readings.....	61
Biography and Contact Information.....	63

Welcome & Introduction

The fact that you have purchased this edition of “How to Fly Fish Stream Side” is testament to you being a serious fly-casting student. Congratulations on your commitment to learning about this incredible and addicting sport.

Few things in life bring you in contact with such beautiful landscapes as well as generous and interesting people. You can fly fish anywhere there is water with fish in it. If there are no fish, no problem. You can practice without interruption. The types of fish you can catch on a fly rod has virtually very few limits and vary from grass carp when practicing on your backyard lawn to sail fish off the coast of Costa Rica. (Unless you want some weird looks from your neighbors, you will want to do your practicing in your back yard, not the front.) You can practice the mechanics of the casts almost anywhere AND you will hopefully as we have done, travel to some of the most incredibly beautiful and scenic places on the planet. You will, also, never stop learning.

As a student of fly casting you must first understand that no one style of casting fills every student's every need. For example, in one hour of fishing I may find myself needing long cast into the wind to short cast requiring a high degree of accuracy. Each requires a different style of casting to maximize efficiency. I then may decide to get into my kayak which requires another. The more you know the better equipped you will be to maximize your chances of catching that trophy.

While the mechanics of these styles vary greatly, they all, however, have in common at their core similar characteristics which enables each style to perform with similar and efficient results. To learn more about these core principles or essentials of fly casting, visit my website theCampFlyFishingSchool.com under the heading Loop Shapes part 1 and 2. Every topic discussed in this book is complemented by the videos in the website. I suggest you refer to it frequently with your phone or tablet while working on your casting. In closing I want to wish you tight lines and tighter loops.

My hope is that you will take this book with you to fly fishing fairs and workshops and take notes on its' pages. I encourage you to keep records of your casting progress.

Oh! BTW. Leave comments and questions on my website as well as tips for future topics and "Thanks" for your purchase. Keith Richard, MCI



What is Fly Casting

Simply put, Fly Casting is the process of delivering a seemingly weightless fly to an intended target by way of casting a weighted fly line with a fly rod. For those of you who have fished with conventional tackle, you propel a heavy lure to its' intended target while it pulls the line behind along with it. NOT so in fly casting. In fly casting the lures or flies are too light even to pull the lightest of line even inches off the reel. Since the end of WWII manufacturers have been able to develop extremely light and powerful rods to propel the fly lines. They are capable of throwing an array of fly lines which are themselves designed to deliver our morsels of temptation to the unsuspecting prey in a very specific fashion. Imagine, for example, a spring fed creek which is gin clear and has slow moving water. A magnificent rainbow is sipping on the 3/16 in. long midges as they float downstream on the surface. Slapping down a lure with a splash will likely send the fish and all his friends into hiding for the next 15 minutes. You tie on a size 20 midge hoping to approximate the size of the naturals to the 3 ft. long 4 lb. tippet. You make the perfect cast and the 4 wt. Ballistic Pro Performance fly line unrolls the leader a few feet above the surface and the fly gently lands on the water upstream of the trout with nary a ripple. It did so because the fly line and leader were designed to do just that. Had you needed to deliver a large popping bug to an elusive black bass, some modification would have had to be made to the fly line and/or leader to unroll the loop with the heavy plug. The previous set up just would not have had the mass to perform the task.

You've driven 1000 miles to catch one of God's most beautiful creations in some of the most pristine landscapes on the planet for that picture of a lifetime only to release the prize to be caught again. That's fly fishing.

Definitions

Casting Arc: the angle created by the position of the rod as it moves from the beginning of the cast to the end of the cast. See “B” in Fig.1 below

Casting Stroke: the cumulative effect of adding the stroke length and the casting arc “A + B” in Fig. 1 below

False Casting: the act of making multiple casting strokes prior to the presentation cast

Fly leg: that part of the loop attached to the fly “D” in Fig. 1 below

Leader : the monofilament or furled line which connects the fly line to the fly composed of the heavy butt section, mid-section and terminal section known as the tippet “H “ in Fig. 1 below

Leader Butt: that portion of the leader which attaches to the fly line “I” in Fig. 1 below

Loop: the candy cane loop shape of the fly line as it passes the rod tip “C” in Fig. 1 below

Presentation Cast: The final cast made which presents the fly to the intended target

Rod leg: that part of the loop attached to the rod tip “E “ in Fig. 1 below

Size of the Loop: the distance separating the fly leg from the rod leg “F” in Fig. 1 below

Stroke Length: the distance the reel moves forward during the forward cast or the distance it moves rearward during the back cast. "A" in Fig. 1 below

Tippet: that terminal portion of the leader to which you tie the fly "G" in Fig. 1 below

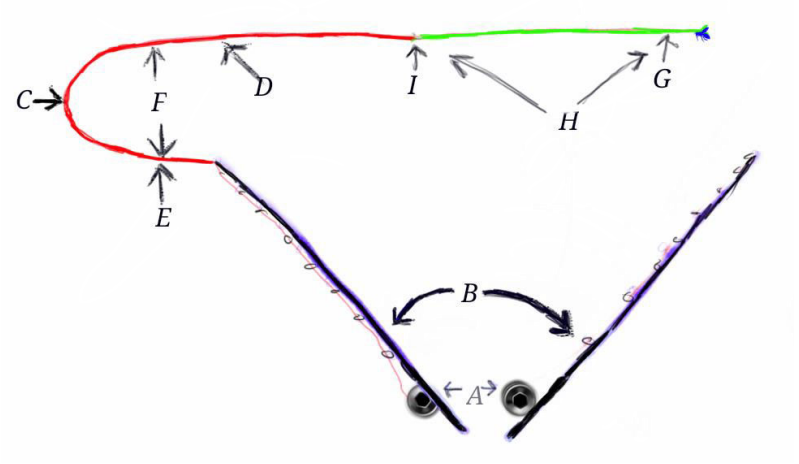
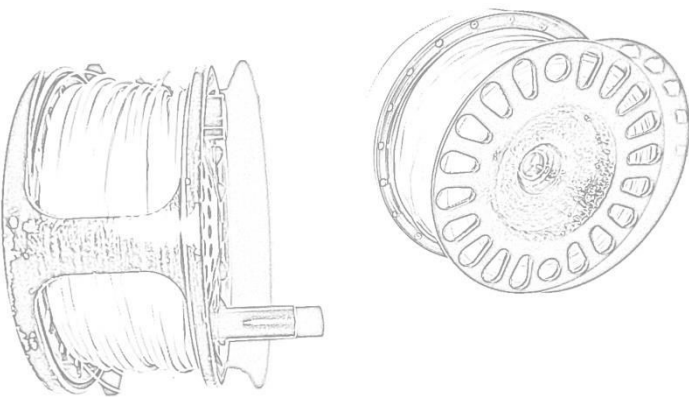


Fig 1

Notes

- Loop size less than 4 ft. is desirable for efficient cast
- Extremely wide loops are generally not desirable but sometime useful for casting around obstacles or producing a lot of slack on the water
- Appropriate casting stroke and power application help to produce efficient loops along with a firm STOP



Loop Shapes

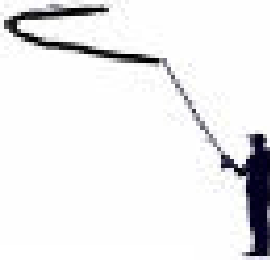


Fig 2: Direction of the cast ←

In Fig 2 we have an efficient loop 4 ft. in width or less usually desirable and capable of high degree of accuracy and distance. This is a result of the proper stroke length and arc as well as an appropriate application of power with an abrupt STOP of the rod tip for the amount of line being cast all while maintaining line tension.



Fig 3: Open Loop

In Fig 3 we have an Open loop: usually undesirable but sometimes used in making curve cast or presenting slack in the cast. Accuracy and distance suffer. Occurs from casting with a very wide casting arc or sweep of the rod tip. Note: rod tip stopped much lower than in Fig 2.

Notes

*Tailing loops are generally bad. They may cause knots in the leader which weaken line strength.

This is further evidence that the fly line mimics the path of the rod tip.



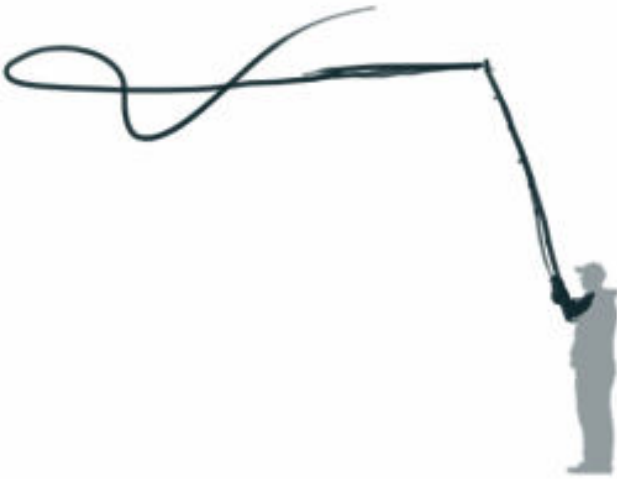
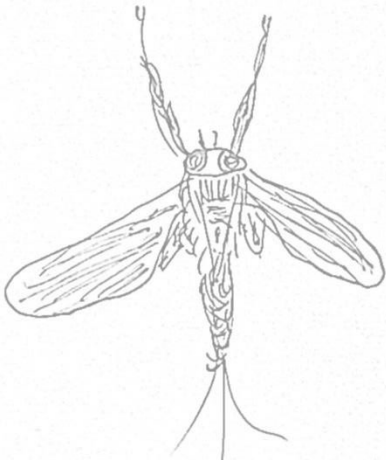


Fig 4 Direction of the cast-←

In Fig 4 we have a Tailing Loop: typically undesirable since accuracy and distance suffers and may tie knots in the leader weakening line strength. Occurs when the rod tip dips too far down in the cast causing the fly leg to drop beneath the rod leg. There are a multitude of reasons why this dip in the rod tip occurs, i.e., sudden or abrupt acceleration of the rod and too narrow a casting arc, just to name a few. The fly line mimics the path that the rod tip travels, therefore, as the rod tip dips and subsequently rises, the fly leg of the loop mimics that and you see a dip as in the illustration above. Note: the rod tip STOP is higher than Fig 2 reducing the casting arc. With the amount of power needed to keep that amount of fly line in the air and the narrow arc, it caused the rod tip to dip ultimately generating a tailing loop.

Notes

- Keep hands close together when assembling rod sections
- Protect reel from sand, etc. by placing hat on the ground and reel on the hat when passing line through the guides.
- When passing the fly line through the guides, double it over forming a loop. In this way, should you drop it, it will not slip back through all of the guides.



Rod Assembly

Once you have removed the rod sections from the rod sock, rub some paraffin or candle wax on the male portion of the ferrules prior to putting the rod sections together. If neither of these is available, you can use the oil on the side of your nose to coat the ferrule. Be sure to keep your hands close together when assembling and disassembling the rod sections. Twisting the rod sections of graphite rods damages and weakens the fibers which give the rod its' strength.

Begin by locating two sections which go together identifying the male and female end of the sections. Start off by inserting the male end into the female beginning with the guides on each section being offset by 90degrees. Again, with hands close together, insert the male ferrule by twisting it into the female snugly but not jamming it. When it is fully inserted the guides on the two sections you have just joined together should line up properly. Some manufacturers put colored dots on the sections, so you know when they line up. (Note: The male ferrules seldom insert fully into the female).

Once all the sections are together, check to see if all the guides line up in a straight line. If so, you are now ready to put the reel into the reel seat. At this time, you should be aware if the reel is a right or left hand retrieve. If it is a right-hand retrieve, the handle should be on the right side when you attach it to the reel seat. Obviously, it will be on the left side for a left side retrieve. It makes no difference to the fish which side you retrieve from (Choose whatever you are comfortable with). For me species such as bonefish and permit where speed of the

retrieve when a fish swims toward the boat is of the essence, then choose the side you can retrieve the fastest. In the future we will assume a right-hand caster. (Most reels can be changed in the field with relative ease by following the instructions in the reel's manual). Slip the front foot of the reel into the reel seat hole on the rod handle. Now slip the rear ring around the rear foot and secure it with the locking ring or rings. Be sure the reel is secure and is not loose on the handle. (Some reels are seated with rear hole on the end of the handle and are then secured with a ring on the frontal reel foot. These are generally on custom bamboo rods.

Now that the reel is securely fashioned on the handle, tighten the drag so that the spool does not free spin when you pull line from the reel. Upon disassembly remember to loosen the drag for storage. Pull out approximately 13 ft. of fly line from the front of the reel. Double the fly line and pinch it into a tight loop to slip the loop through all of the guides. Pull all of the fly line and leader out of the tip top guide. For a 9 ft. rod you will have approximately 4 feet of fly line out of the tip along with the leader. Grab the end of the tippet and pull on the line flexing the rod to certify that the fly line has gone through all of the guides. (When passing the loop of fly line through the guides, place your hat on the ground and lay your reel in your hat. This will protect it from sand and dirt.)

Grip & Stance

There are several choices of grips we can choose from depending on the purpose of the cast. One that serves most any situation is the Thumb on Top grip. Pretend you are picking up a suitcase or opening a screen door and grab your rod handle accordingly with the thumb $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the front edge of the cork handle and directly opposite the reel. Experiment placing your thumb more or less forward or rearward from that position to see what is most comfortable for you. Hold the rod tight enough so it does NOT rotate in your hand when casting but don't overdo it. If your knuckles are turning white, back off a bit.

Check out my website for alternate grips, but for now, use the one described above.

As with grips, the same holds true for stance. Various types of casts or styles of casting call for different types of stances. If you are right-handed, a stance with your feet shoulder width apart and your right foot forward is a Closed Stance and could be used for close and accurate casting. You may be more comfortable simply with your feet shoulder width apart and side by side. This is a Square Stance. Either stance is fine for close casts of 30ft or less. As your casts increase in length, consider bringing your right foot further back to allow some body movement forward and backward without rotating at the torso. This is the Open Stance. It will allow you to watch your back cast as well by turning your head without twisting your body. (Rotating at your torso to watch your back cast or for whatever reason will swing your back cast loops out of plane and ruin distance and accuracy)

Notes

- Use different grips for different casts
- Open stance for longer casts
- Have a stable and comfortable stance that will allow for NO twisting of the torso



Use whatever stance is comfortable for you while you are casting 35ft. or less.

You are almost ready for your first cast. Remember it is always better to perform 10 perfect casts than 100 bad ones so SLOOOOOOW down and think before you cast.



Fig 5 Roll Cast Initial Set Up

Frontal View

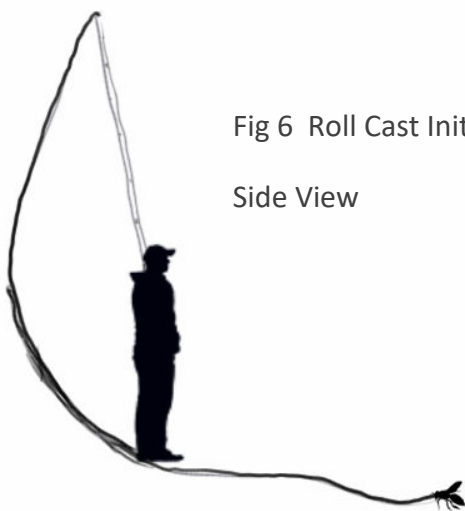


Fig 6 Roll Cast Initial Set Up

Side View

Roll Cast

OK. Let's review where we are. The rod is assembled, and you are streamside at the water's edge or possibly wading in the water. You have a hat, sunglasses and possibly sunscreen applied. In lieu of a fly with a hook, tie a 1 in. long piece of yarn to the tippet. (This is optional at this point.) To practice this cast, if there is a wind, make sure it is blowing from left to right if you are right-handed. Grip the rod with the Thumb on Top grip described earlier and drop the tippet in the water in front of you. Pull out approximately 30 ft. of fly line off the reel. With the rod tip near the water sweep the tip back and forth in 5 ft. sweeps in front of you. The water tension on the fly line will pull the loose fly line out of the rod tip. Now you have 30 ft. of fly line plus the leader out in front of you in loose coils.

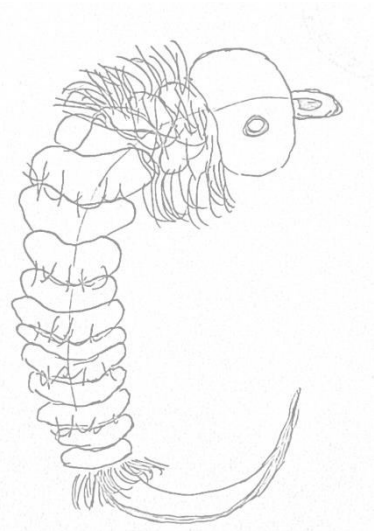
Facing your intended target with a comfortable square stance and the rod tip next to the water surface, slowly sweep the rod tip to the right and finally back behind you. Keep your rod tip near the water. You should perform this maneuver so slow as to NOT lift the fly line off the water. When you have brought the rod tip as far back as possible begin lifting the rod tip. Lift the rod until the reel is beside your ear as if you were answering the phone. The rod tip is directly overhead near the 12 o'clock position and tilted about 15 degree off vertical to your right. Stop for a moment and make sure the line has not wrapped around the rod. This will, also, allow for the fly line to stop moving rearward. See Fig 5,6

Notes

Reasons to roll cast:

- get rid of slack
- No room to back cast
-
-
-

When making a roll cast, SLOW Down



In your present position certify that the bottom of the reel is facing your target. Your thumb is directly behind the reel. Now make a quick flip of the wrist action stopping the rod tip ABRUPTLY at the 2 o'clock position in the direction of the target parallel to or to the left of the line layout on the water. As the loop rolls forward and the fly line drops to the water lower the rod tip to the water, so it ends up there at the same time as the leader lands on the water. If done properly with enough force, the fly line should fully extend and land straight towards the intended target. Congrats. You have just made your first roll cast.

Let's consider some of the reasons why we perform a roll cast.

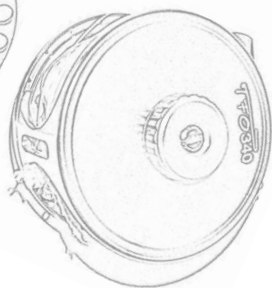
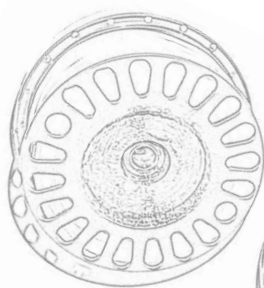
- To remove slack between the fly and the rod tip
- To perform a cast while avoiding obstacles behind us
- To pick up a sunken line to the surface
- To remove a hook from a floating object
- It's easy, fun and efficient at short to medium casts, i.e., cast under 60 ft. in length.

Limitations to making a roll cast:

- Limited to short and medium length casts
- In order to cast over the layout to the right, read on about Off Shoulder Roll Cast
- Should cast parallel to or to the left of the layout
- Can only change the direction of the cast by 45 degrees or less

Notes

- * Don't position the rod across the chest for off shoulder roll cast unless casting very short distance



Off Shoulder Roll Cast

It is possible to make a cast to the right over the layout of the fly line. When beginning the cast, you will want to bring the rod back low to the water on your LEFT side (not the right as before) reaching as far back as possible. Sweep the rod around slowly lifting it to the twelve o'clock position around 45 degrees off vertical over the LEFT shoulder. Now you can make the roll cast to the right of the lay out safely without tangling. Many people begin the cast by placing the rod across their chest. This is very limiting in the amount of

stroke length they can incorporate into the cast. It's better to have the rod positioned over your head in the initial position. Your right hand can be positioned in the area of your right ear, rod over your head canted approximately 45 degrees over the left shoulder. Now go ahead and make the cast starting at 12:00 and stopping at 2:00 while accelerating and stopping abruptly with about 30 ft. of line out of the rod tip.

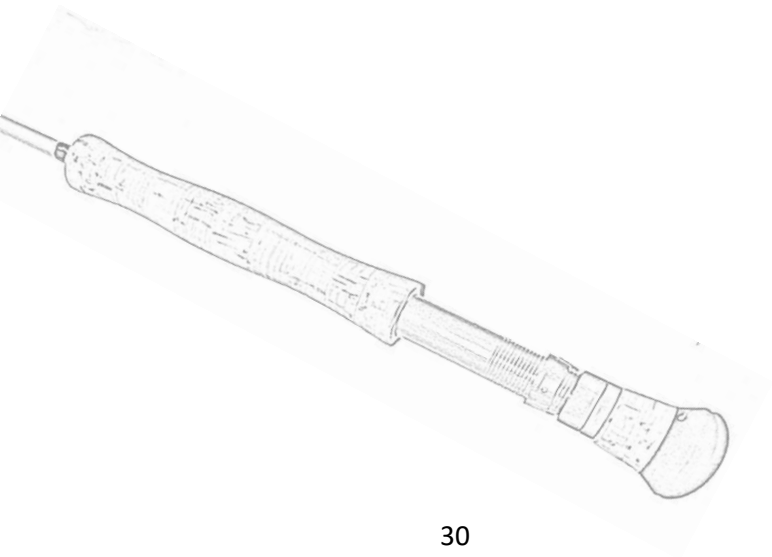


See Fig 7

Figure 7 Frontal View

Notes

- * Direct the initial cast trajectory several feet above the water surface to avoid the fly ticking the water surface as you make the back cast.
- * Avoid stopping the cast parallel to or the rod tip pointing to the water as this directs the line downward and doesn't allow full extension of the line forward.



Roll Cast Pick UP

In the event you wish to perform a roll cast and you also want to continue false casting, i.e., you want to dry off a dry fly which has become waterlogged, you could perform a roll cast pick up. It is performed just like the previously described roll cast with a few minor exceptions. You want to direct or project the loop a few feet higher than before. As the loop begins to unroll at the end of the line and BEFORE it starts to fall to the water, begin your back cast by moving your wrist rearward a few inches then flipping your wrist with enough power to project the fly line parallel to the ground behind you. If you wait too long before making the back cast, the fly will “tick” the water spooking the fish in the nearby area. Congratulations. You have just made your first roll cast pick up.

Some reasons to perform the roll cast pick up are:

- To continue with subsequent false cast to dry the fly
- To shoot or adjust the length of line
- To alter the cast to adjust for windage, change direction

Since you want to direct your initial cast higher above the water than you would with a conventional roll cast to avoid ticking you may consider beginning the cast slightly behind you (say 11 o'clock) rather than directly above and stopping the cast sooner (say 1 o'clock) rather than 2. This simply tilts the arc of the cast back projecting the cast higher in front of you.

Notes

Begin with rod tip inches from the water

- Begin by lifting the line slowly then accelerating to an ABRUPT STOP.
- Keep the wristing or flicking motion of the wrist to a minimum to keep the loop shapes 4 ft. or less. The more wristing and wider arcs created by the rod tip, the wider the loops become.
- Begin the cast with the reel opposite the thumb. Use the thumb to dictate the direction of the cast.



Pick Up & Lay Down Cast (PULD)

As with all other cast, the PULD begins with the rod tip in the down position just above the water. I mean inches from the water, NOT 3 feet above the water. Positioning the tip any higher has the propensity of introducing slack into the cast which is undesirable. See Fig 8



Fig 8, PULD Initial Position

Now look at your fly line lay out on the water and remove any slack before beginning the cast. You can reel in the slack or strip the line back to remove the slack. If you decide to strip the line back you should first put the line between your pointer finger of your right hand and the handle cork so your finger can pinch the line. Grab the fly line with your left hand and pull the line back through removing the slack. Be careful not to move or raise the rod tip as you perform this maneuver, or you will cause more slack to form.

Another option if you have a lot of slack is to perform a roll cast to get the line to land straight out in front of you.

Now that you have approximately 30 feet of fly line out of the rod tip with a relatively straight lay out, you are almost ready for the pickup. First grab the fly line near the reel with your left hand.

As you move the rod with your right hand the left hand will follow it. Never separate the left hand holding the line (line hand) from the reel by more than a few inches unless you are doing a haul. Hauling is an advanced casting technique. Check out the website for more details. This will be a topic for another book. By holding the fly line with your line hand, you will be ready should a fish hit your fly as it lands on the surface.

Keep in mind this is only one of several casting styles. This style is similar to what many professionals relate to as West Coast made popular by Joan Wulff, World Fly Casting Champion as well as Mel Krieger.

Begin with a square stance. Your right forearm is parallel to the ground and the rod hand holding the reel is approximately waist high. Fig 8. Perform the PULD by slowly but steadily lifting the line off the water by lifting your elbow and forearm. Your entire arm will be rotating at the shoulder. When the rod approaches 2 o'clock, Fig 9 flick the



Fig 9

wrist back stopping abruptly overhead with enough force to throw and straighten the fly line and leader above and

behind you. See Fig 10. Just as the fly line begins to straighten and BEFORE it begins to fall (See Fig 11) drop the elbow and end by flicking your wrist forward stopping the rod at about the 2 o'clock position. Follow the fly to the water with the rod tip lowering it as the fly falls to the water. If done properly with enough force the line will have completely straightened and the rod tip will be in a position to start fishing or make another cast. See Fig 8.

Consider tilting the rod about 15 degrees off vertical when you make the initial lift and throughout the casting cycle stay in that plane with the rod. It may keep you from having the line hit the rod on the pick up and subsequent forward cast if you are too vertical. You may wish to watch you back cast to get the timing just right as the line straightens behind you. If so open your stance so you can turn your head without twisting your torso. Another option is to have someone watch you back cast and tell you when to go forward.

Timing of the forward cast is critical. If you wait too long and the line fall towards the water, slack is introduced which will impede the accuracy and distance of the forward cast.

Tailing loops may result as well. Should you come forward too soon, you may hear a crack as the loop turns over breaking the sound barrier. If you are fishing with very light tippets you may lose your fly as it breaks off. Obviously, accuracy and distance suffer here as well.



Fig 10 After abrupt stop Loop proceeds behind caster

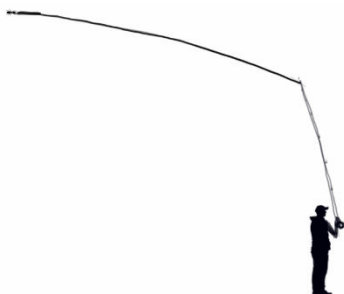
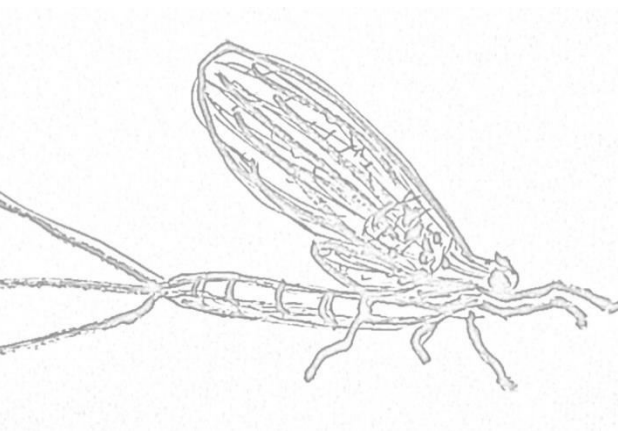


Fig 11 Timing of forward cast critical. Time to drop elbow to start forward cast

Notes



The trajectory of the forward cast should be just high enough to allow the loop to unroll completely just a foot or so above the water. Avoid throwing the cast too high which allows the wind to blow the fly away from the target. See Fig12

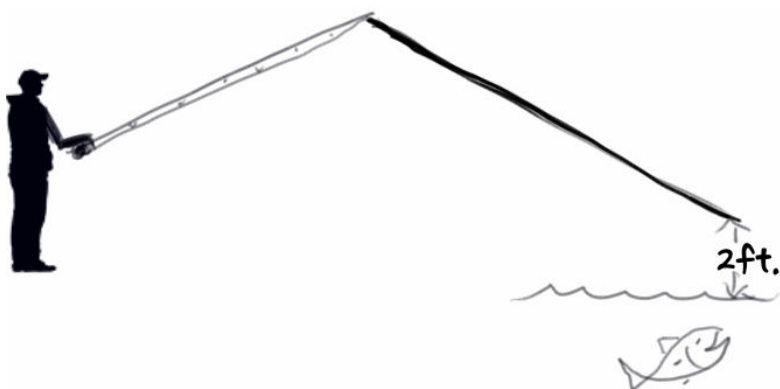


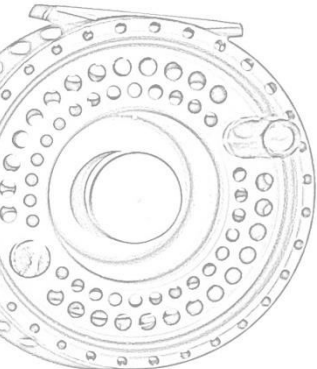
Fig 12

We perform the PULD because it is a great fishing cast with no false cast to possibly spook the fish. We do it when we don't have to make major corrections in windage or distance. Minor changes can be made, however.

Notes

Slipping line: short amount of line (inches) is allowed to be extended into the cast to adjust for minor changes in distance

Shooting line: More than a foot. May be several yards at a time allowed to shoot through the guides to allow for major changes in distance



Slip vs Shooting Line

Occasionally you will wish to add additional line into your cast. If you allow for a foot or so to slip through your line hand and be incorporated into the cast, this is considered slipping line. Adding several feet or yards into the cast is considered shooting line. There is no set amount to differentiate between the two. Try the maneuvers below once you are comfortable casting 40ft of line with well controlled 4 ft. loops.

Prior to beginning the cast, pull off 1 ft of line off the reel and let it sag between your line hand and the reel. Now perform a PULD. Immediately at the time of the forward Stop, release the line from the line hand by forming a circle with your left thumb and pointer finger and allowing the line to slip through the circle. If your timing is correct, it will slip through and allow the cast to reach an extra foot of cast.

It is important to release the line at the time of the Stop. Not before and not long afterwards. The line will not be incorporated into the cast if your timing is off. Practice slipping more and more line. You will find that as you want to shoot, say 5ft of line, you will also have to add additional power or speed into the forward cast so the line will have the momentum necessary to pull the additional 5 ft of slack.

The reason you form a circle with your thumb and finger and let the line shoot through is in the event you overshoot your target; you can pinch the line and stop the fly on the target. It, also, always allows you to maintain control of the fly line.

Now that you have the line out in front of you and you have successfully shot 5 ft. of line, put the fly line between your right-hand pointer finger and the handle cork and pull the 5 feet of line back in. If done properly you will have 5 ft. of slack between your rod hand and the reel ready to practice another shoot of 5 ft. Now transfer control of the line to your line hand. (release the line from your pointer finger of your rod hand) Competent casters can shoot over 50% of the line carried. For example, if you are false casting 40ft. you should be able to shoot an additional 20ft or more. Remember, these are advanced casters, not beginners. Just something to shoot for.

We shoot line for many reasons. Obviously, one is to increase distance to reach a moving target. Another is to maintain distance when we are attempting to mend or purposely add slack into our final layout. More on that later.

False Casting

What is it? Why do we do it? How many times should we do it? These are the questions which we will address.

False casting is the act of performing consecutive cast over and over without presenting the fly. We may false cast to allow us time to retrieve line to adjust for a moving target which is approaching us. We may as well need to extend by slipping or shooting line to a target moving away. Should our dry fly become saturated, we can dry it off by false casting as well. We may accommodate for windage too to help with our accuracy. Why we can, also, change direction altogether while false casting.

It is important to note at this time that should you be changing direction, as well as with all other cast, the final back cast should approximate a trajectory approaching 180 degrees from the forward or presentation cast. This will allow you to keep slack to a minimum and perform the most efficient cast possible.

Mechanics involved when false casting: When you perform a PULD or roll cast, you will make a forward cast as described in the previous pages. Prior to the line falling to the water, you will want to make the back cast by lifting the elbow and flicking the wrist back just as you did with the PULD cast. Throw the line back with enough force for it to straighten parallel to the ground. As the loop is nearly straight and prior to it falling, begin the forward cast by dropping the elbow. Repeat the mechanics of casting the line forward and then rearward.

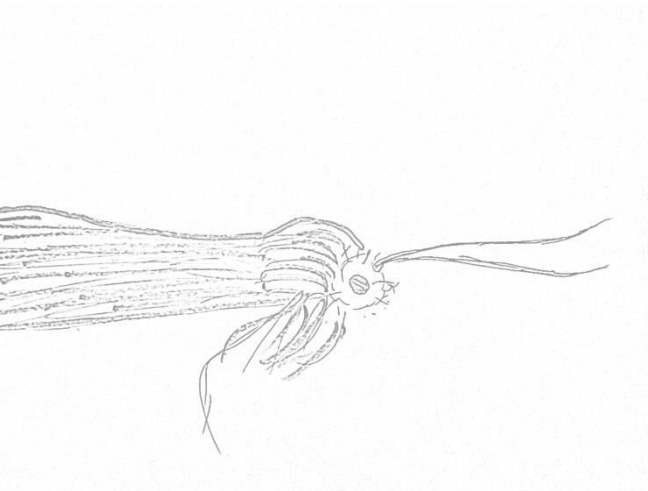
Notes

Reasons to false cast

- * dry off fly
- * change direction
- * strip in or shoot line
- * _____
- * _____

Keep false casting to a minimum!!!

When changing direction while false casting, make certain the back-cast approaches 180° trajectory from the upcoming forward or presentation cast.



When fishing, minimize the number of false casts so as not to spook the fish or lose control of the cast. Cast only enough times it takes to fulfill the need to false cast in the first place. For example, if you wish to dry off a saturated fly, 2 false casts are generally all that is required. So, you see that false casting is the act of one forward cast followed by a back cast followed by a forward cast, etc. until you are prepared for the presentation cast. Too many false casts and you may spook the fish or it may swim out of sight or casting distance. You may lose control of the cast as well. So keep it to a minimum.

Often times when false casting you will want to add more line. As you do so there are several items which will change. You, obviously, will have to add more power to keep more line aerialized. You will then need to add some stroke length and open the arc of the cast gradually as well. The pause on the back and forward cast will increase as you cast more line and the time for the loop to unroll increases.

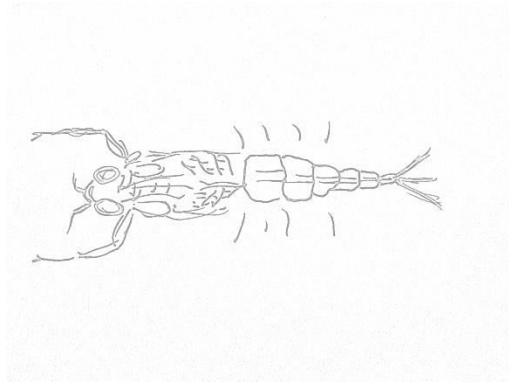
As you practice carrying more line, I suggest you add 1 ft. at a time. When you have casts this length 2-3 days with good control of the loops, add another foot. Don't jump 5 ft. at a time. You will be disappointed at the results and only be frustrated in the end. If you start with 30 ft. of line out of the reel, in a month you can be at 40 and in two months 50 ft. which is enough to catch most fish one wishes to catch. Once you approach 50 ft. with 4ft. wide loops routinely, you should then consider the addition of a "haul" in your casting. Seek advice of a professional instructor or refer to my website. This will help tremendously.

Notes

When adding line to gain distance:

- Add more power throughout the cast
- Come an abrupt stop
- Additional pause time may be needed between cast
- Add more stroke length
- Increase arc

180° rule involves direction and angle of the cast



Trajectory/Distance

Trajectory involves the angle of the cast, forward and rearward as well as the direction of the cast. Most efficient cast require that the back cast be 180 degrees from the upcoming forward cast. This pertains to the direction of the cast(left or right) and angle of the cast (up or downward trajectory).

For target at close range the: arc of the cast is narrow and created mostly by the wrist. See Fig 13

- * stroke length may be very little to zero in length

- * the closer the target the higher the back cast keeping it 180 degrees from the forward cast

- * the pause is very short and dependent on the speed and length of the cast

- * power applied may be minimal

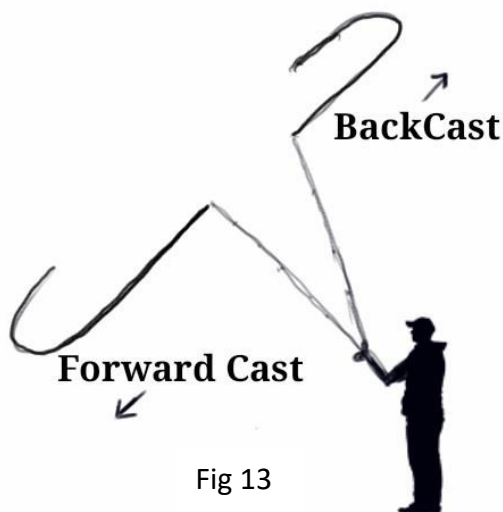




Fig 14

For targets distancing themselves from the caster: Fig 14

- Arc is opened to accommodate more power in the cast creating more rod bend
- Stroke length is increased to accommodate increase length of line being cast
- Trajectory is lowered on the back cast to be 180 degrees from the target which are some distance away on the forward cast
- Pause between the cast may need to be increased
- Power is increased to accommodate the additional weight of the increased length of fly line being carried in the air

As you increase distance, pay attention to your rod plane as it travels through the back and forward cast. This helps to keep the fly leg and rod leg of the loop in that same plane. This helps accuracy and distance. This may not be the case, however when casting curves and mends. This will be covered in another book, "How To Fly Cast Curves and Mends Streamside".

Getting Unhooked

Occasionally you may find your fly hooked to some floating debris. It could be a water hyacinth or floating log at or near the surface. Even a snag a few inches below the water line will sometimes break free and save you from losing a \$5 fly if the technique is done properly with the correct timing.

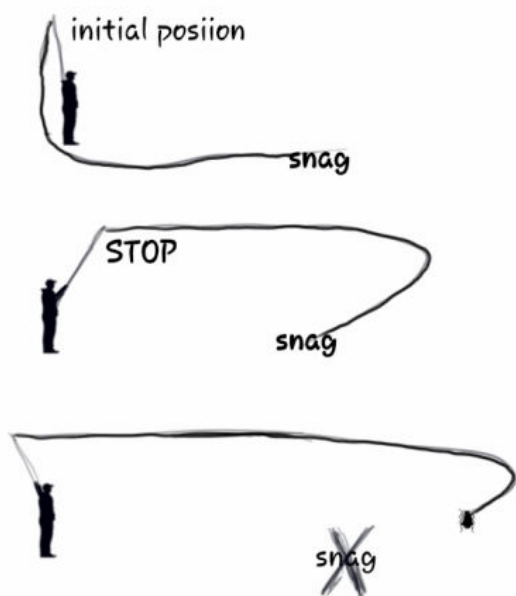


Fig 15

Begin by setting yourself up to perform a roll cast pick up. Perform the cast with a little extra power. As the loop passes the snag make a quick back cast and it should break free. With proper timing of the back cast the loop has passed the snag, the loop pulls the fly in the opposite direction away from you and breaking it free of the snag. It's really that simple. See Fig 15

Notes

Practice 15 min. at a time as often as possible.

Practice when it is windy

Don't practice when tired

Check out the FFI website for certified casting
instructors in your
area_____

Phone_____



You will want to perform the hookset in various ways dependent on the species of fish you are fishing. Each species has different mouth toughness that require different amount of pressure to be applied to the system to get the hook to penetrate. First of all be sure your hooks are sharp. Rusty or dull hooks tend to break, bend and not penetrate like a sharp hook.

Fish with tender mouths made mostly of skin and some cartilage like pan fish, crappie or white perch, and small trout call for a little more finesse or care not to rip the hook out of the mouth by a nervous fisherman. I will never forget my first hookset on a rainbow almost two decades ago now. I had 40 years plus experience setting the hook on black bass like there was no tomorrow. Not only did I lose the fish, I, also, broke my 4lb. tippet losing the fly as well. As I said, finesse the hookset. Light tippets are a major concern as well when hook setting and fighting the fish.

You should have considered the makeup of your rod as well. A mid flex or softer rod will absorb some of the shock or tension applied to the system by the hookset. These rods bend further down the rod towards the handle than their faster counterparts. By doing this they tend to be more forgiving of an over powered hookset.

So here is the maneuver you should perform. Upon feeling or seeing the strike, simply lift the rod from your fishing position (rod tip low to the water usually pointed at the fly) over head applying enough pressure to tighten the fly line and leader. Assuming there was little or no

slack in the system at the time of the strike lifting the rod to about the 10 o'clock position should exert enough pressure on the hook to get it to penetrate. If there was some slack you may have to lift the rod tip higher. If there was a lot of slack, you should strip the line in with your line hand quickly prior to or at the same time of the hookset. You only need a pound or two of tension on the line to penetrate.

Applying an excessive amount of pressure, over 4 lbs. can break light tippets. Be aware of the size tippets you are using and fight the fish accordingly. Allowing the tip of the rod to absorb the rigors of the fight by keeping the rod tip high, say 10 or 11 o'clock is recommended.

For those species which have a large amount of tough skin or cartilage or bone to penetrate like black bass, redfish, tarpon, permit require a different approach. You typically use heavier tippets for these species so you don't have the same concerns as with lighter tippets. In order to break a 20lb. tippet, for example, you really have to purposely exert that amount of tension.

Here is the proper way to set the hook on these species. At the time of the strike, point your rod tip at the position where the strike occurred while quickly stripping out any slack you have in the system. The fly line should have been trapped between your pointer finger and the cork of the rod handle at the time of a strike so you simply pull back with your line hand while continuing to allow the line to slip back through your pointer finger and the handle removing the slack. If you need to remove more slack grab the line next to your rod hand and continue to strip more back all while pointing the rod tip towards the fish. Position the rod about

15 degrees off to the side of the fish. With a firm grip of the fly line in your line hand and your line hand next to rod hand, pull back hard and quickly 2-3 feet allowing the rod to absorb some of the shock of the hook set. If you felt tension and feel you had a good hookset, simply fight the fish. If you do not feel like you got a good hookset, do the “strip strike” described above again. Tarpon will occasionally require 3 hooksets for penetration of their boney mouths.

These fish fished with tippet around and above 16 lb. test are hard fighters and need to have a firm amount of pressure to subdue and control them. Keep the rod pointed towards but not directly at the fish (around 15 degrees to the side). This will protect the integrity of the tippet while putting pressure on the fish. Should you point the rod directly at the fish, it is easy to apply enough pressure to break the tippet. Avoid doing so.

It is generally considered good form to pull to the right with the rod when fish makes run to left. Pull to the left if fish runs to right. Strip in line or reel in the line to keep line tight without allowing any slack during the fight. Most of all enjoy the fight while it last. For very light tippets, let your reel drag provide resistance until you gain experience to apply friction on the reel as fish runs and takes line off the reel.

As you hook and fight more and more fish you will develop a feel for how much pressure you can apply. Check out the website for more on hook setting and fighting your fish. Best of luck.

Things to Consider When Practicing

Practice with a singular purpose. For example, today I will make perfect back cast loops on my pick up for 15 min. Don't see how many you can do. 10 perfect cast are better than 100 bad ones.

Don't practice when tired. Tired muscles don't perform well and set you up for injury.

Don't practice when injured. Allow for ample rest time to heal properly.

Don't practice with more line than you can cast nice loops with. Remember that you have to crawl before you can run. If you can't make nice loops with 30 ft. of fly line out the rod tip, practicing with 40 is useless. Progress in 1 ft. increments. When you master 30 ft. go to 31 for a few days, etc.

Practice when windy and don't get discouraged. You will improve.

Leave a rod strung up ready to go near the door so you don't have an excuse not to practice.

Treat your line often with 100wt silicone, the kind used to oil treadmills. It will last years.

Recruit a partner to assist you in analyzing your cast.

Practice without a fly attached. This will help to improve your timing.

Never practice without eyewear and a hat.

Never use a fly with a hook to practice.

Practice with the reel, rod and line set up the way you plan to fish.

When practicing with a fly, cut bend of hook off.

When watching your back cast loops, open your stance to avoid twisting at the torso. Look at your loops often except when fishing.

Obtain advice from a certified casting instructor of Fly Fishers International, FFI. Avoid advice from well meaning fishermen who catch fish but don't know how to teach.

Learn different casting styles to use in different casting situations.

Check out the agenda of the FFI annual fair and attends sessions which interest you. Local fairs or conclaves can be of great value as well.

Check out the website thecampflyfishingschool.com to answer any of the questions you may have when practicing.

Things to Consider Prior to Going Streamside to Practice

What fish will you be pursuing? This question will help you to determine what line, reel and rod to practice with. You will need to answer questions like “What reel design best suits my needs? Salt or freshwater? What rod design should I pick? What tapered fly line suits me best?” If you are just getting started and wish to fish for panfish, then a 3, 4 or 5 wt. rod, reel and line will be in order. If you are getting started and will primarily be fishing for largemouth bass, a 7 or 8 wt. outfit might be in order with a line tapered toward the front to throw heavy flies. Check out my website for a thorough review of how to choose the correct gear. At the very least consult a certified casting instructor. These questions are crucial to getting started off on the right foot. Don’t short step this process. Visit the website.

Then there is the terminal tackle to deal with. What leader design best suits the flies and conditions I will be fishing in? Should you use fluorocarbon or nylon? What knots should you use to tie my flies?

Other questions you may consider: Do I need a lot of backing on my reel? What kind of backing? What accessories are really necessary?

I am sure by now you are wondering how you will ever get through it all. Do fret over it. Professional help is only a click or two away and it’s all free. That’s right. It’s all on the website thecampflyfishingschool.com

So what are you waiting for? Go get started.

Importance of Looking at Your Back Cast

I, honestly, look at every back cast I make when practicing. How else am I to know what is going on back there? The idea that one should not look at their back cast only holds water, in my humble opinion, when you are fishing. At ALL other times I recommend you watch them. The back cast is too important to ignore.

It is important to know what your loop shapes look like so you can, obviously, address the problem. So let's do a quick review of a few major problems and quick fixes.

Loops over 4 feet wide are generally caused by the beginner and advanced casters by stopping the rod too far back. Try narrowing the casting arc by stopping a little sooner and the loops should tighten.

Tailing loops are not generally seen in the beginner. They are the plague of those of us who are trying a bit too hard to get those few extra feet out of a cast. Use less power or widen the casting arc and the tail should go away.

Unable to control your loops? Shorten the length you are casting.

If you hear a crack on your forward cast you started the cast too soon. The line had not straightened out completely. Wait just a half second longer.

Fly line doesn't land straight? Check to make sure the rod travels in the same plane throughout the cast. Avoid twisting your wrist at the end of the cast.

Knots Made Simple

Now that I predominately fish with a fly rod, I have learned how to tie about 30 different knots. No brag intended. It's just something you learn when you learn to fly fish. Knots for making the fly sink faster. Knots for making the fly sink slower. Knots for large flies. Knots for small flies. Knots for really small flies. Knots for You get the picture. In reality you only need to know a small handful and if you let the fly shop where you bought your line and reel tie them for you you can skip most of them listed below and go straight to the tippet to tie fly knots.

Arbor Knot: To attach the backing to the reel arbor, first loop the backing around the arbor and tie an overhand knot incorporating the backing into the loop. Pull the tag end till the loop is tight. Now pull on the backing to cinch it against the arbor. See Fig 16 below for Arbor Knot.

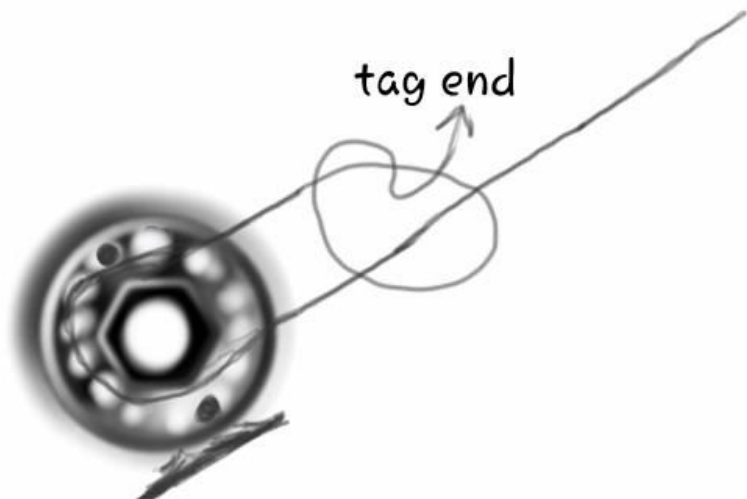
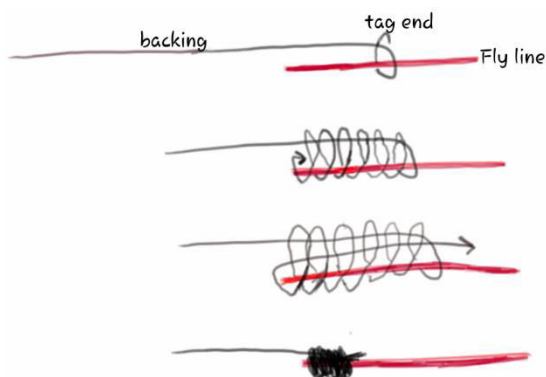


Fig 16

Nail Knot: This is one generally left to those who work at the fly shops. With a little practice, however, you can do it with or without a nail knot tool. It has several uses and can be used to attach the backing to the fly line and the fly line to the leader as well. If you have the nail knot tool, follow the instructions provided with the tool. If not, to connect the backing to the running line using about 6 in. of backing make a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. loop around the end of the running line about 1in from the end of the running line. Pinch the loops to maintain control. Now continue to make 4 to 5 more loops as shown in the diagram below. See Fig 17 for illustration.

Fig 17 Nail Knot Sequence top to bottom

Now pass the tag end of the backing through all the loops and pull on the backing and the tag end of the backing tightening the loops around the end of the



running line until it is tight. Pull on fly line and backing to make sure the knot does not slip off the running line. Trim tag ends. Don't worry if your loops overlap each other. While it looks pretty to have all the loops lay side by side, a stronger knot is made when they overlap. Many fly fishermen and women use the nail knot tool. It makes tying the knot easier, however, when I am fishing I never seem to have one handy so I have learned to do without.

Loop to Loop: Many fly lines today come with a loop on the tapered end of the fly line to make attaching a leader easier. These are fine for fish which don't make too much of a fuss when hooked, however, don't trust the loops to hold on fish like red fish, tarpon, permit, etc. For fishing those I cut the loop off and attach the leader with a nail knot. Should you wish to make a loop to loop connection for fishing pan fish here is how you do it. Purchase a knotless leader which comes with a loop or make a loop to the butt end via a Perfection Loop. The final loop should be no more than ¼ in. in diameter. Proceed as follows to make a Perfection Loop.

1. Make a loop by passing the tag end behind the leader butt.
2. Make a second loop ¼ in. wide. This loop will determine the final size of the loop.
3. Place the tag end between the two loops.
4. Pull the 1/4in. loop back through the first loop.
5. Pull on the tag end and leader to tighten the knot.
6. Trim off the tag end.

See Fig 18 for illustration left to right.

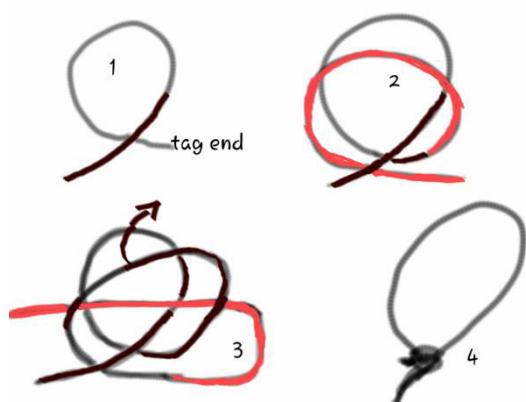


Figure 18

Loop to Loop (cont'd)

Now that you have a fly line with a terminal loop and a leader butt with a loop, you are now ready to join the two together.

1. Begin by passing the fly line loop through the leader butt loop.
2. Move the leader butt loop out of the way and pass the tippet through the fly line loop. Pull the tippet all the way through to tighten the two loops. See Fig 19 for illustration top to bottom

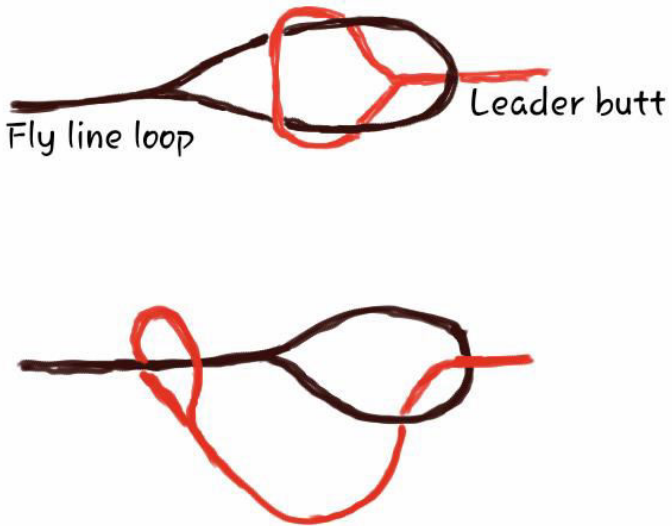


Figure 19

Loop to Loop (cont'd)

Fig 20 The end product should look like this.



Fig 21 If it look like this



you have made a girth hitch which will weaken the connection. Try to reposition the leader butt loop. When you pull on the tow ends and the girth hitch returns, the leader butt is not heavy enough to form the proper loop. You will need a heavier leader butt section.

Now you need to consider tying the fly to the tippet. I suggest you learn these two since they will serve you well 99% of the time.

Improved Clinch Knot:

Pass the tag end of the tippet through the eye of the hook, Make at least 8 twists with the line. Now pass the tag end through the hole directly above the eye of the hook and then through the loop you just created. Pull the tag end tight. See Fig 22 for illustration left to right.

This knot is used for a direct connection to the fly and allows for a slower sink rate of the fly. Minnow imitation flies tend to stay more horizontal in the water column as they are retrieved.

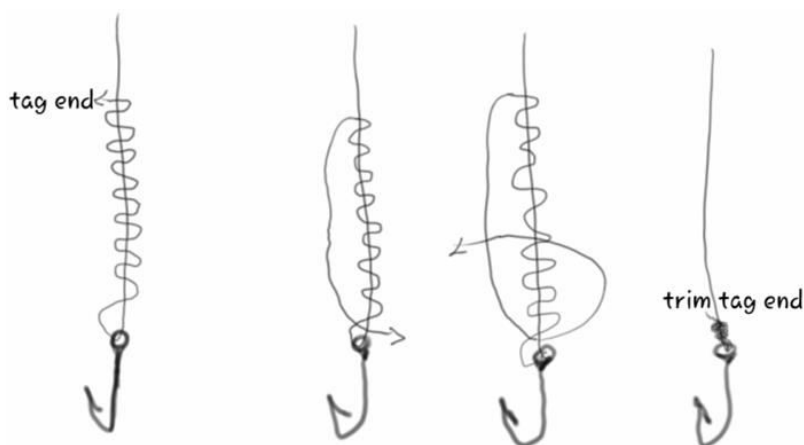


Fig22

Improved Clinch Knot has excellent breaking strength. Be sure to tighten all knots snugly after wetting them with spit or water. This will allow the knot to tighten without overheating which weakens knot strength. If the knots are not tightened they may simply untie when pulled upon by a fish.

Lefty Kreh Non-Slip Loop knot:

Make an overhand knot and then pass the tag end through the eye of the hook. Now pass the tag end through the overhand loop, then 6 twists around the main line. Now double back the tag end and go back through the overhand loop and pull tight.

This knot is used for a permanent loop connection to the fly allowing for a natural appearance and faster sink rate. I personally use this know 99 % of the time. Now let's go fishing. See Fig 23 for illustration left to right.

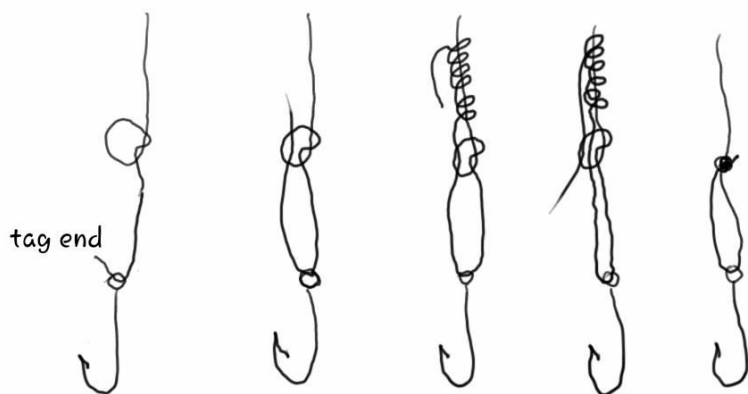


Fig 23 Lefty Kreh non slip loop knot

Resources & Suggested Readings

theCampFlyFishingSchool.com by Keith Richard, MCI

FlyFishersInternational.com

“Modern Fly Lines” by Bruce Richards

“The 5 Essentials” by Bill and Jay Gammel

“Presentation” by Gary Borger

“Orvis Guide to Better Fly Casting” by Al Kyte

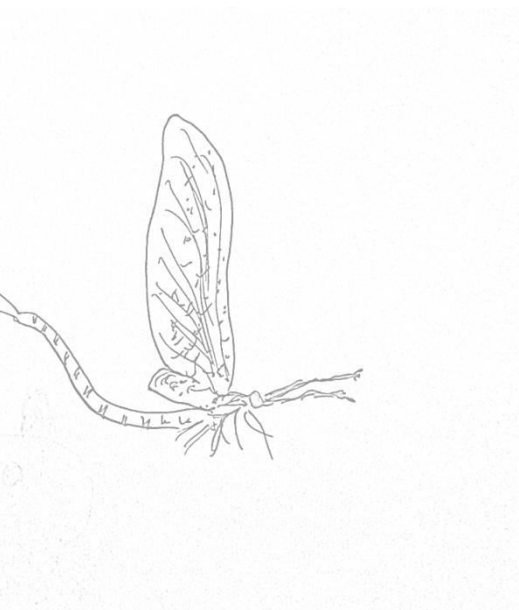
“Accuracy” by Joan Wulff

“Casting With Lefty Kreh” by Lefty Kreh

“How To...Fly Cast Curves and Mends Stream Side” by Keith Richard

“How To...Design Fly Casting Leaders Stream Side” by Keith Richard

Notes



Biography & Contact Info

Keith Richard, recipient of FFI Jay Gammel Award for lasting contributions to the teaching of fly casting education and native of Breaux Bridge, LA is the owner of the Camp Fly Fishing School. Having obtained his first certification by FFI in 2005 and his Master certification in 2009 he then served 3 years on the FFI Casting Board of Governors. Presently he maintains his L2 status which certifies him to test candidates who wish to become instructors. Currently he enjoys traveling throughout the U.S. performing workshops and casting instruction at the FFI annual fair and Regional and local Conclaves. He is the author of the fly fishing website, theCampFlyFishingSchool.com and can be reached at krichardthecamp@yahoo.com



Recipient of the Fly Fishers International
2019 Jay Gammel Award for long
lasting contributions to
fly casting education



Look for other books from my How To...Stream Side series:

“How to.....Fly Cast Curves and Mends Stream Side”

“How to...Design Fly Casting Leaders Stream Side”