

RULES FOR EFFECTIVE SALMON FISHING

RULE #1

Watch your rod! We all get mesmerized by the beautiful BC coastline and the Humpback whales, but it's important to constantly watch your rod for the first strike. We often experience those reel screaming strikes we all love, but many times the first strike will be subtle; seeing the first strike allows us to get ready for the take which will often follow. Upon seeing the first strike, get ready.

RULE #2

Pay close attention to the tides. Flood tides carry salmon as they migrate and Ebb tides force them to hold in areas that provide relief from tidal currents. Big tides or strong prevailing winds cause the baitfish and salmon to seek refuge in the relative calm of kelp beds, coves, seams or shoals. Look for eddies and slack water for Salmon during peak Ebb tides.

RULE #3

Fish hard during the peak times, one-hour before, during and after tidal changes. Early morning and late in the afternoon are peak times due to the diminished light. Tides are posted at the tackle shop daily. Coho turn on and off; keep working (with the tide) until you find active fish

RULE #4

Use all the information you can obtain. Examples include lodge information, guides, maps and charts, electronics, etc. Watch for jumping salmon and bait fish hitting the surface. Birds, especially in open water will almost always be on top of bait.

RULE #5

Fish with or across the tide flow, never against it. Move towards shore and away from it. Salmon face into the tide flow and have a better look at your bait as it moves towards them. Change the depths of your baits if you are not finding fish (both deeper and shallower). Fish tend to go deeper as the sun gets stronger. Fish see up, not down, so you always want your baits slightly above the salmon. Turning your boat accelerates the outside bait and drops the inside bait, often leading to strikes.

RULE #6

When putting on a new bait, place the weight and bait it in the water carefully, making sure the bait has a nice "tight roll" at your targeted mooching speed. If the bait does not have a "tight roll" adjust the tow hook (12:00 position should provide a tighter roll), test the roll in the water with the boat moving. If the bait still does not have a tight roll, try a quick jerk to the bait with the rod tip, if this does not have the bait rolling properly, change the bait!

RULE #7

Check your bait every 15 -20 minutes. If you get a strike, check your bait after sixty seconds. Many fish are hooked while reeling in to check the bait (your bait is moving quickly up through the water column causing fish to strike). When checking your bait, reel in with bursts (7-8 turns) and stop. Reel – stop – reel stop. You'll be surprised at the outcome.

RULE #8

When you get a strike, don't hesitate, get the rod out of the rod holder and get ready. When the fish takes the bait, reel down until you feel the fish firmly, setting the hook. Once hooked be prepared to let the fish run (that's why they are called knuckle busters!) The reel has a drag, so the best thing you can do is let the fish run against the drag. Don't attempt to boat the fish until it is tired. Salmon are too strong, let them run against the drag and reel when they slow down. Keep your rod tip high, with a nice bend in the rod at all times, keeping tension on the fish and making the fish fight the rod. Keep the rod in front of you, following the fish as it changes directions. When fighting fish, they often head for the back of the boat, you need to anticipate this and beat the fish there to clear the line around the motor if necessary. Believe me, it happens all the time!

**RULE
#9**

When your fish is at the side of the boat, and your partner is trying to net the fish, you need to keep your line tight (no slack). The trick is to look at the leader to make sure it is tight and not depend on “feel” as you are holding 4 to 6 ounces of lead at the end of the rod making it feel like you have pressure on the fish. You Don't! Look at the leader, keep your rod tip as high as possible and keep the slack out of your line. You can see the fish when it is in the boat!

**RULE
#10**

When netting a fish, the fish's head must go into the net first, never the tail. The fish will make one last effort for freedom, so you want him to swim into the net, not out!

**RULE
#11**

This is a team sport! When your partner hooks a better fish they will need your help quickly. Reel your line in, lock the weight under the reel, wrap the leader around the reel and put your rod in the “stand-up holder out of the way. Do not lay the rod down; put it in the stand-up rod holder!! Get the net ready; be careful not to get the netting caught on the boat cleats or other objects in the boat. Remember.....head first!

TIDES:

A little knowledge of tides will make a big difference in your salmon fishing success.

There are two types of tides; the Flood tide is where water is coming in (up), and the Ebb tide is where the water is going out (down). There are two Flood ties and two Ebb tides each day with slow moving transitional water between each, called Slack tides. There is a difference in how salmon relate to the two tides.

Salmon ride the Flood tides home to their natal streams and will seek refuge from the peak of the Ebb tides. Big fish don't get their size from swimming against the currents! When the tide is going out, look for Chinook in areas which provide relief from the tidal flow. These areas include: back eddies, coves, seams created by leading points, outcropping along the coastline or behind mounds on the ocean floor. All of these areas will provide relief from tidal currents and provide an area where a fish can lay and let food come to them without expending much energy.

Seams are created by leading points, shoals or outcroppings along the shoreline, (think of a large boulder in the middle of a stream, you can envision how the water moves around the boulder, providing relief from the current behind the boulder. The seam is found on the lee side (down current) of the point, and is the edge of where the moving water meets the slack water. Salmon will hold at the edge of the slack water waiting for bait fish to pass. The same situation is found on the lee side of an underwater hump. Watch your fish finder to see if there is bait holding on the lee side of a hump; most likely the salmon will be present in the same location as they are getting relief from the tide and are orienting on the bait.

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