

Big Lake Bass Team

Rods / Reels



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Agenda

- Rods
 - Action
 - Power
 - Length
 - Guides
 - Lure / Line Weight
 - Casting / Spinning Rods
- Reels
 - Spinning Reel
 - Baitcaster



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BASS TEAM

Credo

I AM BIG LAKE BASS TEAM

I AM A STUDENT FIRST

I AM READY TO CATCH, RECORD AND RELEASE

I PRACTICE SELECTIVE HARVEST

I WILL CELEBRATE MY TEAMMATES CATCHES

LEAVE NO TRACE IS MY RESPONSIBILITY

I LIVE RESPECT AND TRUTH TELLING

I WILL CLEAN, DRAIN AND DISPOSE

I WILL ALWAYS PLACE THE TEAM FIRST

I AM BIG LAKE BASS TEAM

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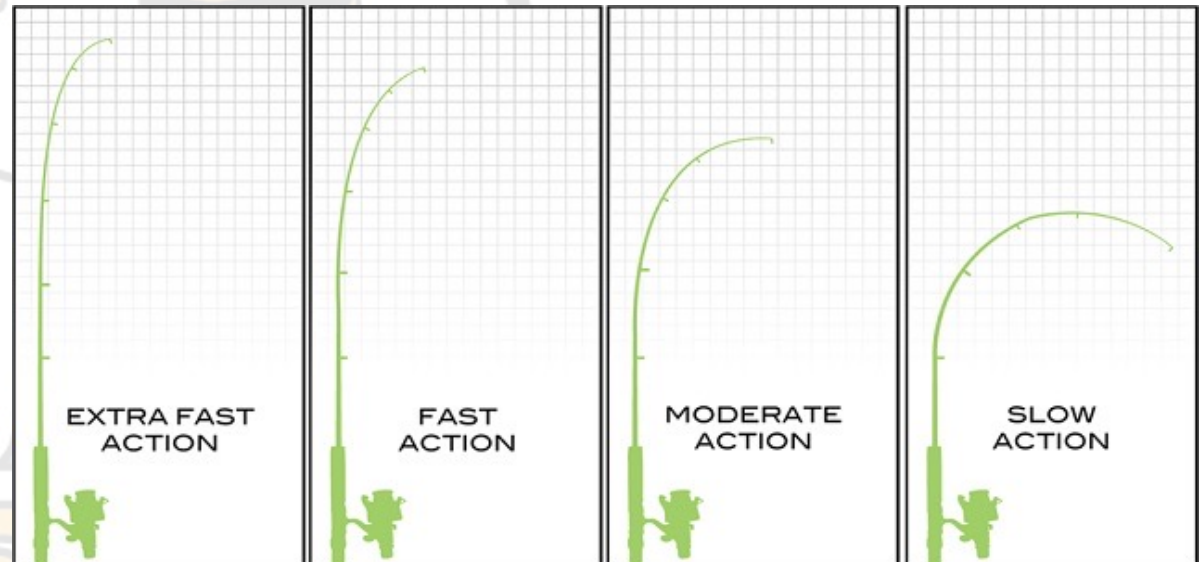
Rods - Action

Rod action is often confused with rod power, because they both describe the amount at which a rod will bend. The difference is that power is the bending action for the lower two-thirds or more of the rod and action is the measure of bend at tip of the rod, whatever length is remaining.

Action is measured as a level of speed, ranging from slow to extra fast. Slow action tips start bending at a lower point on the rod, and as the speed increases the bend starts closer and closer to the tip.

Here are all the rod action ratings you will see printed on bass rods.

- Slow
- Medium (Moderate)
- Medium Fast
- Fast
- Extra Fast



Rod - Power

Often confused with sensitivity, a rod's power (measured from ultralight to extra-heavy) is simply a measure of how strong it is, or how much weight will cause it to flex. Using too light a power will hurt accuracy and distance, and too heavy a power will cause backlash issues and decreased efficiency. The power rating is what translates to the line and lure weight ratings often found on the sides of rods.

Basically, it's a measure of how easily the rod will bend from the handle to about two-thirds of the way up the rod. You'll often hear anglers refer to a rod with a lot of power having "a lot of backbone."

While rods are made with a rating ranging from light to heavy, there are rarely times when you would use anything lighter than a medium power rating in bass fishing. Light power rods are mainly designed for crappie fishing, or fishermen just looking to have fun catching a bass with light tackle.

The majority of bass fishing is most often done with rods rated for **medium, medium-heavy, and heavy power.**

Here is a list of power ratings for bass rods:

- **Micro Light**
- **Ultra Light**
- **Light**
- **Medium-Light**
- **Medium**
- **Medium-Heavy**
- **Heavy**

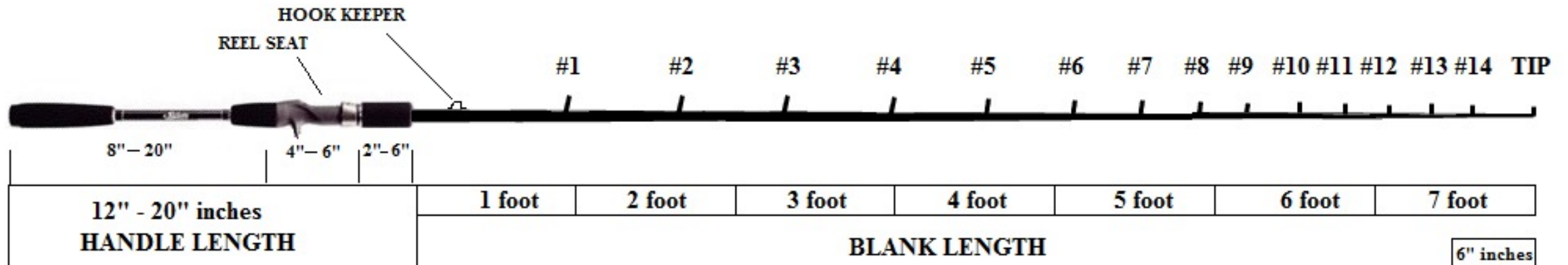
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Rod Length

Fishing rod length is the first identified when choosing a new piece of equipment. Rods can range on the tiny end from 4 feet to the gigantic end of 14 feet, but most bass fishing rods tend to run between 6 and 8 feet measured tip to butt. The general rule of rod length selection is this: shorter rods cast shorter distances, and longer rods cast longer distances.

Why does that matter? Well, shorter rods are great for fishing in close combat, when you don't need to cast a distance. The shorter body also allows less bend and stretch when you are fighting a fish, so some anglers hunting big fish prefer them. Shorter rods are also preferable for kayak anglers looking to save space or anglers trolling for walleye or other species.

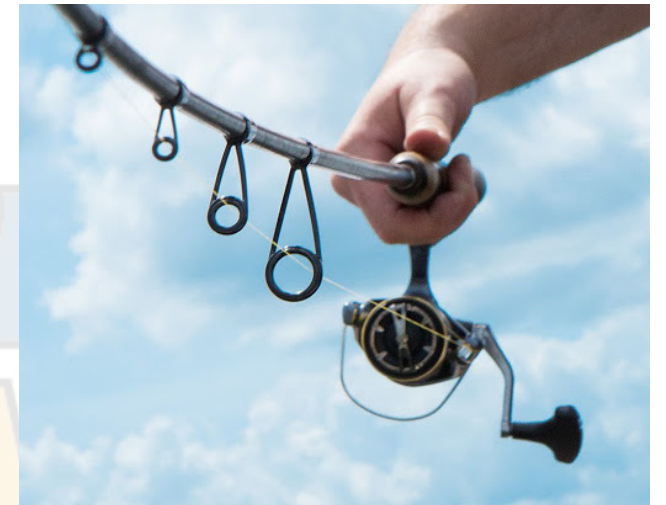
Longer rods are for covering more water and casting a great distance. They're great for walking baits, deep diving crankbaits, and other power fishing reaction baits. Saltwater anglers casting from piers or the surf commonly use longer rods. Bass anglers would use a longer rod to throw walking baits or anything else they are using to cover water quickly.



Rod - Guides

Most of the guides you will find on bass rods today feature a metal frame and a ceramic ring that the line glides on. Silicon Carbide offers a super smooth surface for less friction on the line during the cast and the retrieve. Less friction means longer casts and less heat, and heat kills when it comes to fishing lines.

A rod with more guides on it will generally cast better and cost more than the same rod with fewer guides. With more guides the rod will bend more consistently throughout its length, allowing it to utilize all the power for longer casts and fighting fish. The Fuji Concept Guide System is the best example of this development on rods today.



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Rod - Line Weight

A rod is also classified by the optimal weight of fishing line. Fishing line weight is described in pounds of tensile force before the line parts. Line weight for a rod is expressed as a range that the rod is designed to support.

It's really important to use a line that falls within the weight range that is recommended for the rod. Fishing line strength is rated by number of pounds, and the higher the pound capacity of the line the stronger the line is.

The weight of the line used with the rod is closely related to power rating of the rod. The more power a rod has the stronger the recommended line weight will be. Using too light of line on too powerful of a rod can easily snap your line on hooksets.

It's not just the lines strength you need to consider, but also the type line you plan to use. Different fishing lines stretch more than others, so before you select a rod you should know what kind of line you plan to use with it.

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Rod - Lure Weight

Most bass rods have a lure weight rating printed on the handle, which is pretty self explanatory. It's basically a weight range that tells you the lightest to the heaviest lure weight they recommend for that rod.

The weight of the lure you plan to use with a rod is actually really important. You need a rod that is going to handle the load. This can directly affect your casting, lure action, and your hook setting power.

But luckily, it's also very easy to abide by, since most bass lures have their weight printed right on the packaging. Even with that aside, as soon as you pick up a rod that is under or overloaded it should feel pretty obvious.

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Rod – Spinning

Spinning rods are ideal for novice fisherman, and of course are designed to be paired with spinning reels. Any bass angler just getting started should begin with a spinning combo. Although easier to use, a spinning rod can be equally as useful to even professional fishermen. They're especially known for the role they play in fishing finesse lures.

Spinning rods are simply better for handling lighter lines and lighter lures. Spinning rods work really well with the following lures, but preferably in **smaller sizes**. They also work really well for skipping baits and are a much easier option for someone learning to skip.

- Soft Plastics
- Finesse Jigs
- Poppers
- Walkers
- Jerkbait
- Spinnerbaits

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Reels – Spinner (Parts)

Many anglers refer to spinning reels as open-face reels. Another unique feature of a spinning reel is that it is mounted to the underside of a fishing rod. Spinning reels are great fishing reels for beginning anglers because of their easy use and due to their design, they are less likely to get tangles in the fishing line.

This reel type has eight main parts, they are:

1. reel foot
2. reel handle
3. reel body
4. anti-reverse switch
5. the bail
6. line spool
7. spool release and drag adjustment
8. line roller



Spinning Reel Parts

1. Reel Foot
2. Reel Handle
3. Reel Body
4. Anti-Reverse Switch
5. Bail
6. Line Spool
7. Spool Release & Drag Adjustment
8. Line Roller

Reels – Spinner (Size)

Choosing the correct reel size is as easy as determining the size fishing line you intend to use most often. The lighter the line you intend to use, the smaller the reel you should purchase. Ten-pound test line should be the highest strength and diameter used on a spinning reel. (This is not applicable for saltwater fishing or heavy trolling scenarios.)

For example, if you primarily jig for smallmouth bass and walleye, 8-pound test fishing line would probably be your average line strength. Therefore, choosing a medium-size reel rated for 6, 8 and 10-pound line would be your best selection.

To make sure that the reel you're buying is rated for the pound-test line you intend to use, check the line capacity information found on the spool of the reel, or, if shopping online, in the product chart.

The chart typically displays the middle line capacity, so if it says "6 LB/90 YDS," the reel is also well suited for 4 and 8 pound line.

Retrieve	Gear Ratio
Left/Right	5.1:1
Model Number	MCT 30
Ball Bearings	3+1
Max Drag	11 Lbs.
Reel Weight (oz)	10
Line Capacity	8/225
Recovery	24" Per Turn



Reels – Spinner (Gear Ratio)

Unlike casting reels, which have a rotating spool, the spool on a spinning reel is fixed, and a bail wraps the line onto the spool as you turn the handle. So when discussing spinning reels, gear ratio refers to the number of times the bail rotates around the spool with a single turn of the reel handle.

For example, on a reel with a 4:1 gear ratio, the bail rotates around the spool four times for every one single turn of the handle. A 4:1 gear ratio is considered a slow-speed reel because a relatively small amount of line is "picked up" during the cranking process (four wraps of line around the spool with each crank). The benefit is that these reels provide more torque for reeling in large fish. A 6:1 ratio is considered a high-speed retrieve. A high, low or medium speed retrieve should be determined by the style of fishing you intend to do.

If you can only choose one spinning reel, go for a medium speed model (5:1). However, if you can afford more than one reel, adding a high-speed and low-speed reel to your arsenal will allow you to best cover all situations.

"Line recovery" is a measurement in inches that's generally given for spinning reels. This measurement simply states the length of line that is wound onto the spool for each turn of the handle.

Reels – Spinner (Drag System)

The drag system on a spinning reel is another important aspect to consider. The drag is responsible for applying pressure to a hooked fish and letting out line during the fight. Without a smooth, high-quality drag the risk of broken lines and lost fish is a high probability. Always ensure that the reel you purchase has a smooth, non-constrictive drag. The line should pull out steadily, without hesitation, at whatever tension you set the drag.

There are two types of drag systems available on spinning reels: front and rear drag.

Basically, this refers to the location of the drag controls, but there are some additional differences between the two styles. Front-drag systems generally feature multiple, large drag washers that offer increased durability and performance in comparison to rear-drag models. Rear-drag controls are easier to access (especially when fighting fish) yet they don't stand up as well to large, hard fighting fish species.

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Reels – Spinner (Ball Bearings)

Spinning reels feature ball bearings or bushings placed within the body for smoothness, support and stability. Most spinning reels also contain a roller bearing within the line roller. Generally speaking, the greater number of bearings a reel contains, the smoother the reel will perform. (Sealed stainless steel bearings are preferable over bushings for added durability and control.)

Choose a reel with the most ball bearings that your wallet can handle. At the bare minimum, a reel with at least four ball bearings. There's nothing worse than having a reel that doesn't perform well, or isn't smooth on the retrieve, so try not to scrimp and save when it comes to this part of the reel equation.

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Reels - Casting

These rods are a little more advanced than spinning rods. They are paired with baitcasting reels and require a little more skill to use than a spinning combo. These rods are more heavy duty, designed for heavier lures and heavier lines. You typically wouldn't use lines less than ten-pound test with these reels.

If you're going to take bass fishing seriously you are going to own at least one baitcasting rod. These are the workhorses of bass fishing, built to handle bigger baits and heavier line.

In most cases, a bass fisherman will do the majority of their fishing with a baitcaster. Generally speaking, lures weighing three-eighths of an ounce and up are better handled with baitcaster.

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Reels – Casting (Profile)

Round vs Low Profile Baitcast Reels

Round: holds more line, used for heavier line, used to toss larger baits, used for long runs during the fight. **Species:** steelhead, salmon, muskie and pike

Low-Profile: most popular, used for palming, easier for wrist-action, more ergonomic. **Species:** Bass, crappie



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Reels – Casting (Gear Ratio)

All reels have a gear ratio. Simply put, it describes the speed of the reel. Common gear ratios in baitcast reels are 5.4:1, 6.4:1, and 7.1:1. But what do these numbers mean? The first set of numbers lists how many revolutions the spool makes for each turn of the reel handle. For instance, with a 6.4:1 reel the spool will revolve 6.4 times with one crank of the handle. The higher the number, the more line that can be retrieved within the same amount of work.

The most common reel on the market has a 6.4:1 gear ratio. This will allow you to work both fast moving presentations as well as slow. However, for certain techniques and applications, a very high or low gear ratio will often work best.

For instance, burning a spinnerbait or buzzbait is best done with a 7.1:1 reel. Working a crankbait, on the other hand, is more effective with a slower gear ratio, such as 5.4:1. Higher gear ratios are often better when fishing areas of small strike zones, as they allow your bait to get back to the boat in preparation of another cast quickly and effortlessly.

If in the budget, purchase one of each to cover all of the bases.

Reels – Casting (Braking)

Baitcast reels come equipped with braking systems. These adjust and slow down the rotation of the spool during the cast. Without this, the dreaded backlash would be forever happening. (For those unaware of the term, it describes the knotted mess of line you are left with when your spool continues to revolve after your lure has stopped moving forward.)

The spool tension knob is your first line of offense for adjusting spool speed. It is the large knob found on the reel handle side. Tighten this knob enough, so that when you disengage the reel, your lure will slowly fall to the ground. Once it makes contact, the spool should stop revolving almost immediately. The heavier the lure, the tighter the tension should be.

Centrifugal brakes are friction based and utilize pins inside the side plate of the reel to make adjustments. To engage the brakes, push the pins outward. For a six-pin system, always adjust pins that are across from each other. Both should be either on or off.

Magnetic brakes work on a more complicated principle but rely on the spool and magnets to decrease the spool revolution rate. They are also adjustable by the angler.

No matter what braking system a reel has, learning to thumb the spool correctly is still your best bet for trouble-free casting. Fine tune each time you're on the water with the various braking systems, but let your thumb do most of the real work.

Reels – Casting

Frames: Come in either aluminum or graphite, with the latter generally less expensive and lighter in weight but not won't withstand much abuse as aluminum. High-end reels are usually manufactured from one-piece aluminum frames.

Ball Bearings: Top of the line reels don't necessarily need to have a lot of bearings, just quality ones. Inexpensive reels packed with "10" bearings will often be of poor quality. Key words to look for are "shielded," "double-shielded" and "sealed bearings." These are the top players in the bearing game.

Spools: The majority of baitcast reels come with an aluminum spool. High-end reels are constructed from forged aluminum, whereas less expensive reels are die-cast. Forged spools are more rigid and harder to scratch. Spools with holes drilled in them are lighter in weight and are easier to stop and start spinning. Most, other than the most inexpensive reels on the market, have drilled spools.

Handle: Soft rubber knobs or those designed as oversized work better for many.

Line guides: These are made from either titanium or ceramic, with the latter being less expensive but can crack or break from alleviated abuse. High-end reels are usually manufactured with titanium.

Reels

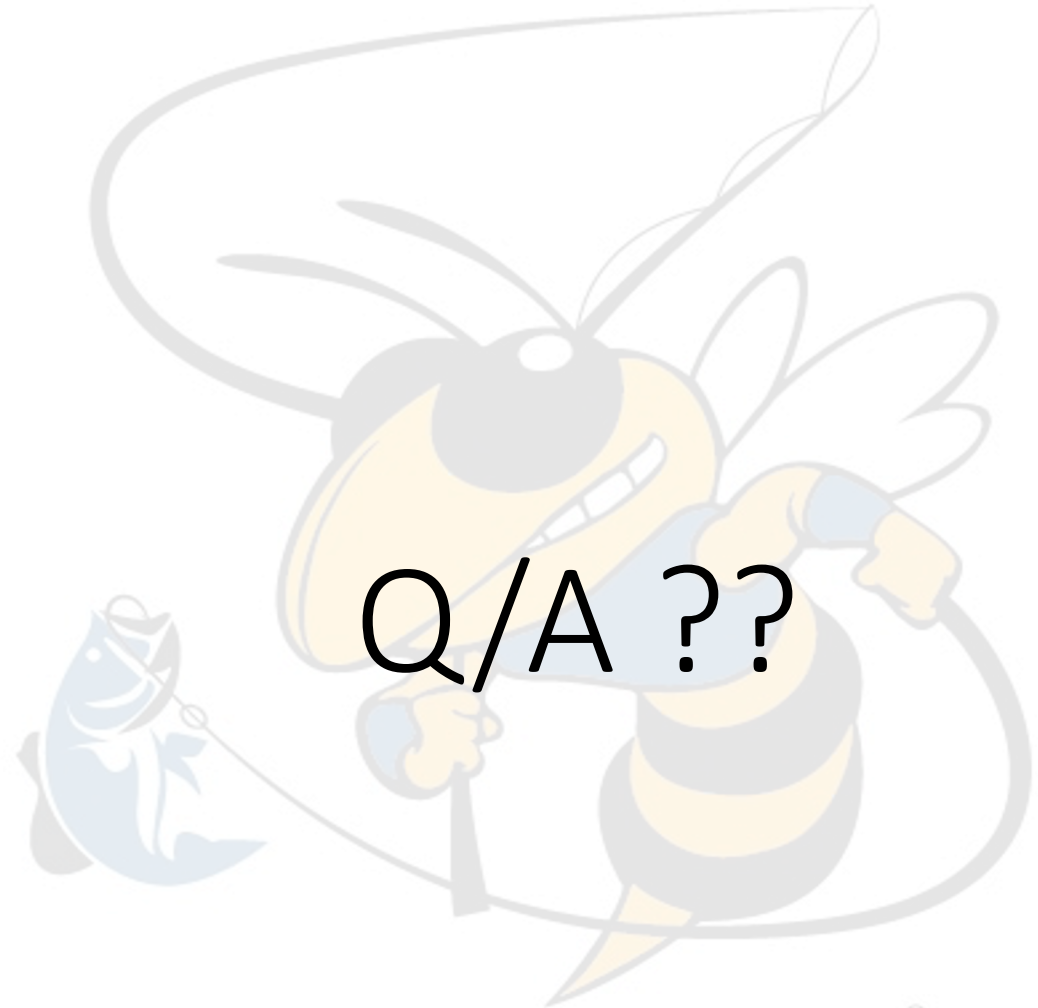
Spinning reels do work well for many applications.

But if you would like to try your hand at flipping or pitching, working heavy cover, chasing big game fish, or throwing heavy lures, then a baitcast reel is a **necessary** addition to your reel collection.

We promise. They really aren't as scary as you may think.



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