

Effectively Fishing Each Spot

by Captain Devin from [Louisiana Fishing Blog](#)

Part 1: Boat Positioning

You have probably seen it before:

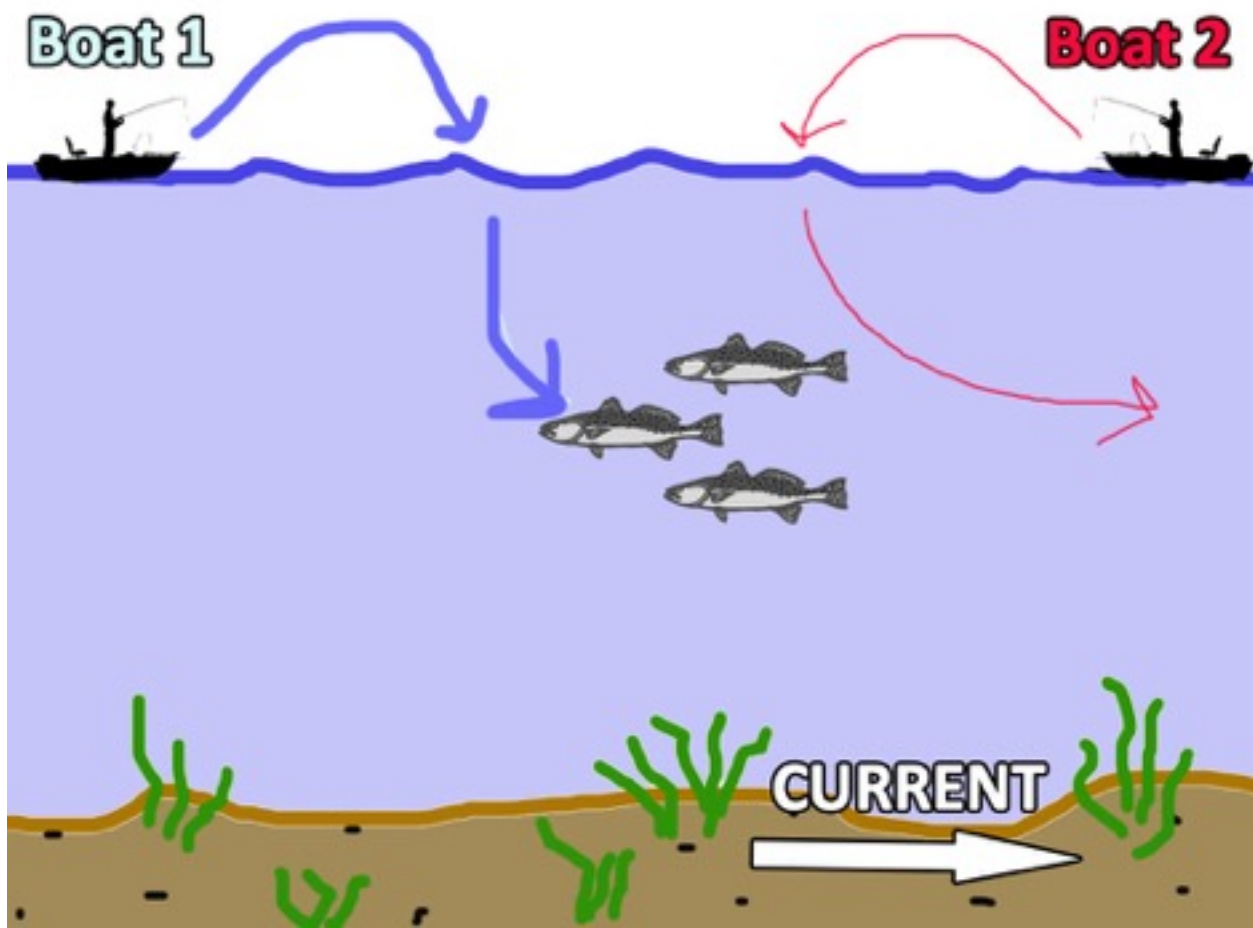
You and one other boat are fishing a spot. In your boat you may be catching a few fish if any at all.

You are experiencing frustration, especially since it is a completely different story in the other boat.

They are whacking the fish right after another, cast for cast. So what's the key difference?

The difference is how the boats are positioned.

Take this graphic as an example.



Both boats are casting at the same spot and using the same bait. Boat 1 is catching fish while Boat 2 has no luck at all!

Note the direction of the current.

The angler in Boat 2 is not positioned correctly. He can cast all day long, but the current will sweep his bait away from the fish, rather than towards them.

The angler in Boat 1 is positioned correctly in relation to the fish and current.

The angler in Boat 2 can change weights and lure colors until he is blue in the face and it will never make a difference because the fish are never going to see them due to his poor boat positioning.

What is boat positioning?

Boat positioning is the art of putting your boat in the right place, in relation to biting fish, while accounting for factors like wind speed & direction and current speed & direction.

Why is boat positioning important?

If you do not have good boat positioning you will never be able to properly present your bait to the fish and they won't see it.

If they can't see it they can't eat it. That's what happened to Boat 2!

How do we position the boat correctly?

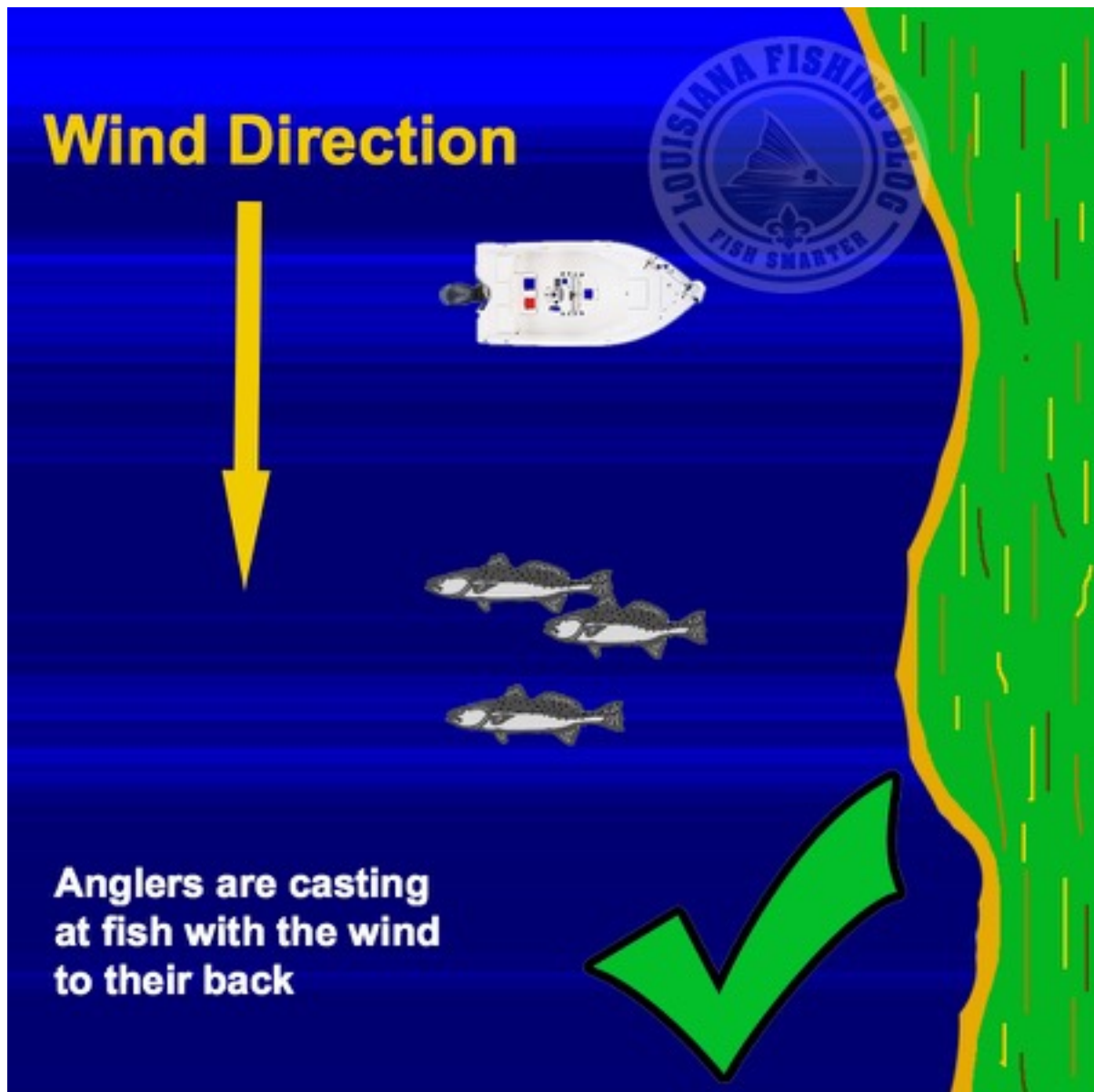
There are two factors you want to consider when positioning the boat:

- Wind speed & direction
- Current speed & direction

Both of these forces act on you and the boat. If the wind is blowing hard you don't want to be casting against it.

This is difficult to do and fighting the wind is not very smart. You want to have the wind to your back so it is helping you cast.

The graphic below shows a perfect scenario where the wind is to your back, making casting easy.

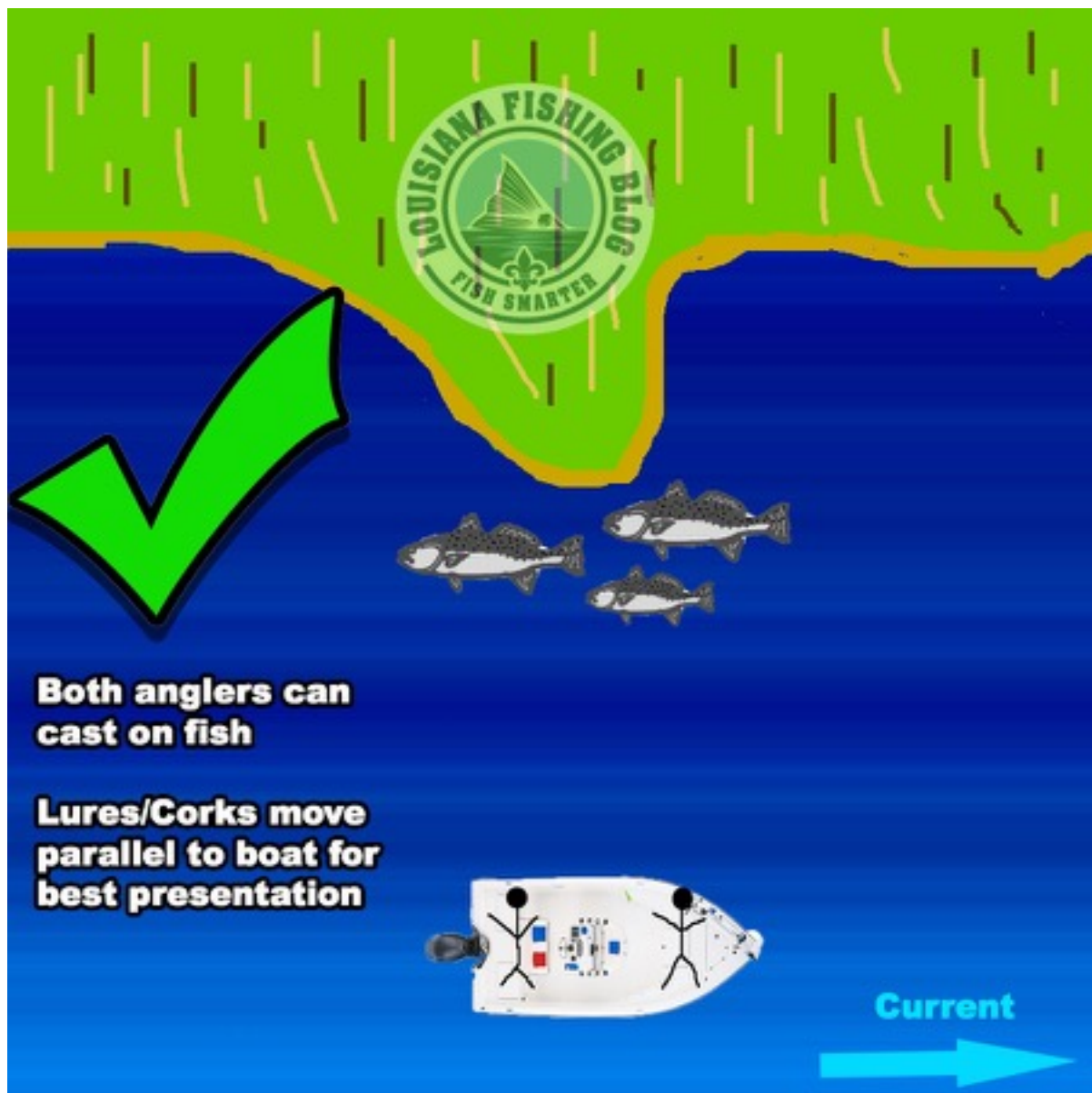


Paying attention to the current is also important because it affects how your bait is presented underwater.

You always want to position your boat so that you are casting slightly perpendicular to the current direction.

Ideally, you will cast a little upstream into the current and let the current drift your lure parallel to the boat.

The graphic below shows how a boat needs to be positioned in relation to the fish and the current.



You want to cast just a little ahead of where the fish are facing and let the bait drift to them with the current. This is a perfect setup.

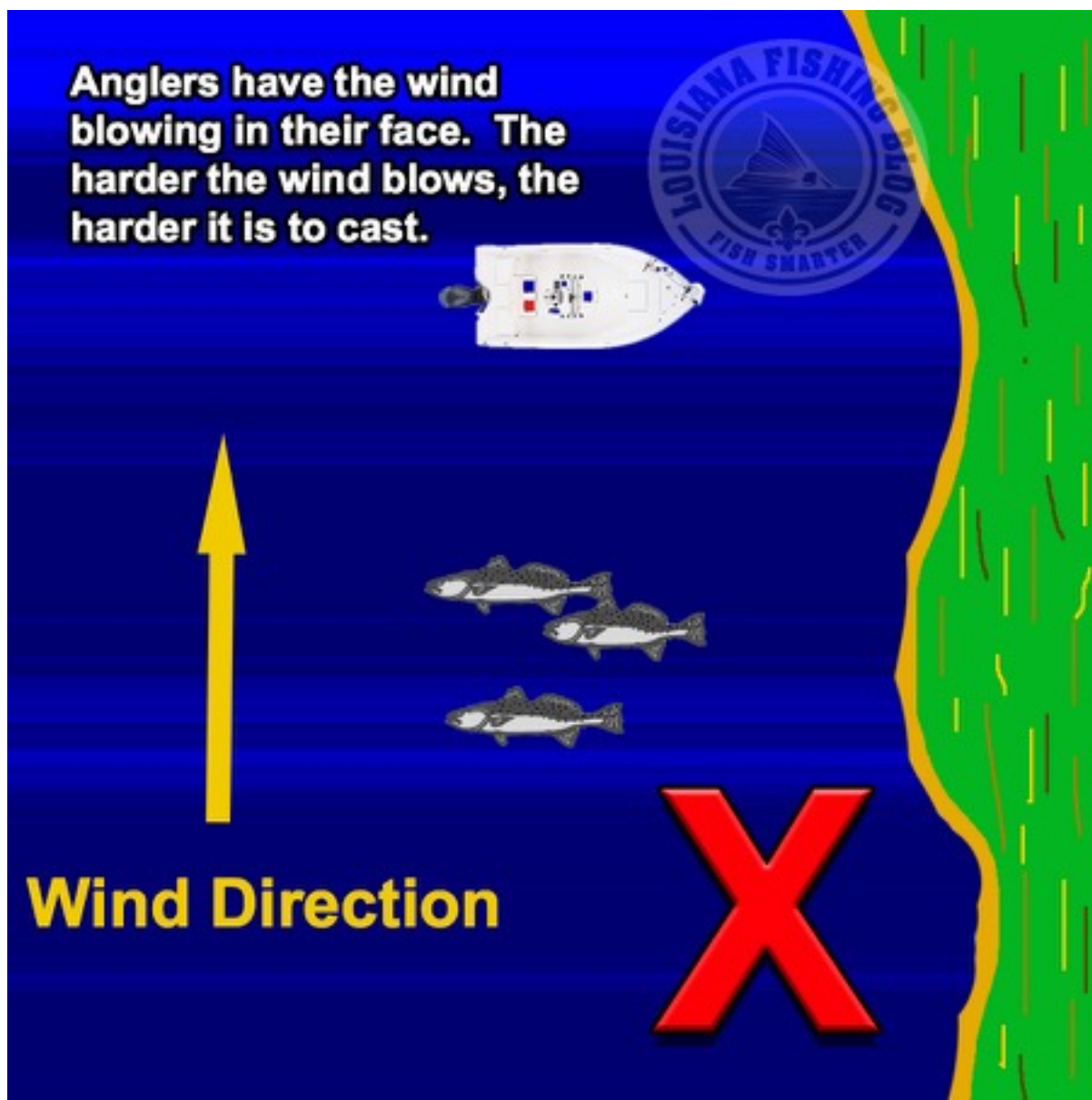
You don't want to cast directly upstream or downstream to the fish.

Casting downstream into current won't allow the bait to sink and present itself to the fish.

Casting upstream to the fish will knock slack into your line and possibly cause you to miss bites.

Look at the graphic below.

This is not how you want to position your boat. You never want to be casting into the wind.



It is better to take the time to achieve a better angle so the wind is to your back. Struggling to cast is leaving fish on the table.

Do you get it now? See how wind and current affect your bait and ability to cast?

Now let's add them together. This graphic shows perfect boat positioning in relation to the wind and current.



It obeys the principles that you always want to be casting perpendicular to the current and with the wind to your back.

This allows for the easiest fishing and best bait presentations.

Hopefully now you understand how important boat positioning is! Without this knowledge an angler will unwittingly set himself up for failure.

Part 2: Fan Casting

What to do when you get to your first fishing spot?

After you achieve good boat positioning (as described in my previous email) you will want to fan cast around your boat.

What is fan casting?

Fan casting is a term that describes casting in a fan around you. This technique is useful when fishing new spots because you can cover more water faster.



It helps you locate fish in that spot.

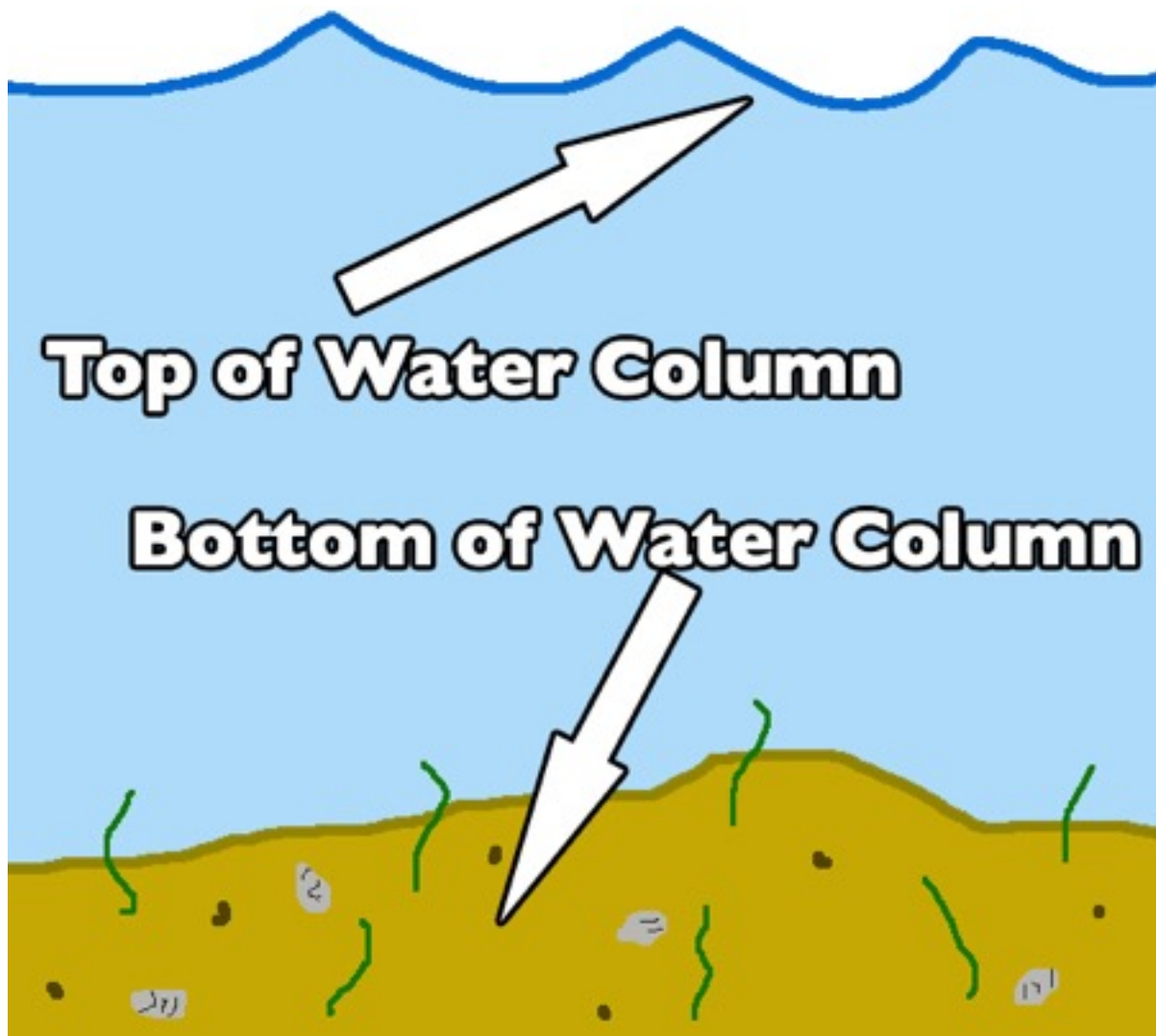
Understand that if you do catch fish, you may have to re-position the boat to catch them more effectively.

What is the water column?

The water column includes the entire depth of water from the surface to the seafloor. The top of the water column is the surface and the seafloor is referred to as the bottom.

When you fish the location you selected you want to fish it thoroughly before making the decision to leave.

It is important to fish the top and bottom of the water column.



This is because fish may be holding to either end or they may only want a certain presentation.

It will happen that you can cast a jighead into the water all day and the fish won't touch it, only to annihilate the first thing to suspend from a popping cork.

Effectively Fishing the Bottom

Fishing the bottom of the water column is more difficult than fishing the top.

At the top the popping cork is doing all of the work, but when fishing the bottom there is a balance you must strike with the sinking weight of your lure or rig.

Part 3: Weight Selection

As mentioned in the previous chapter you want to effectively fish the top and bottom of the water column.

Fishing the top of the water column is easy and really only requires the use of a popping cork, but fishing the bottom is a little trickier.

You don't want too much sinking weight on your rig or lure. You don't want too little either! Let me explain.

What is sinking weight?

Sinking weight is that weight of your lure or rig that actually sinks in the water column. For example, a cork has weight to it but it does not sink. A 1/4 oz egg sinker is all sinking weight and will not float at all.

It is denoted as being a "1/4 oz" because the egg sinker is made up of one quarter ounce of lead.

What is the right amount?

When it comes to fishing the bottom of the water column, the goal is to have the right weight that will get the bait there and let it gently roll with the current.

- If the water is moving very fast and is 20ft deep, a 1/4oz jighead will never get to the bottom.
- If the water is not moving at all and is only a few feet deep, a 1/2oz jighead would be overkill.
- For a faster current and deeper water you want to use a heavier weight, like a 1/2 oz.
- For shallower water and slower current, you want to use a lighter weight, like a 1/4 oz.

Generally, you want to use this chart as a guideline:

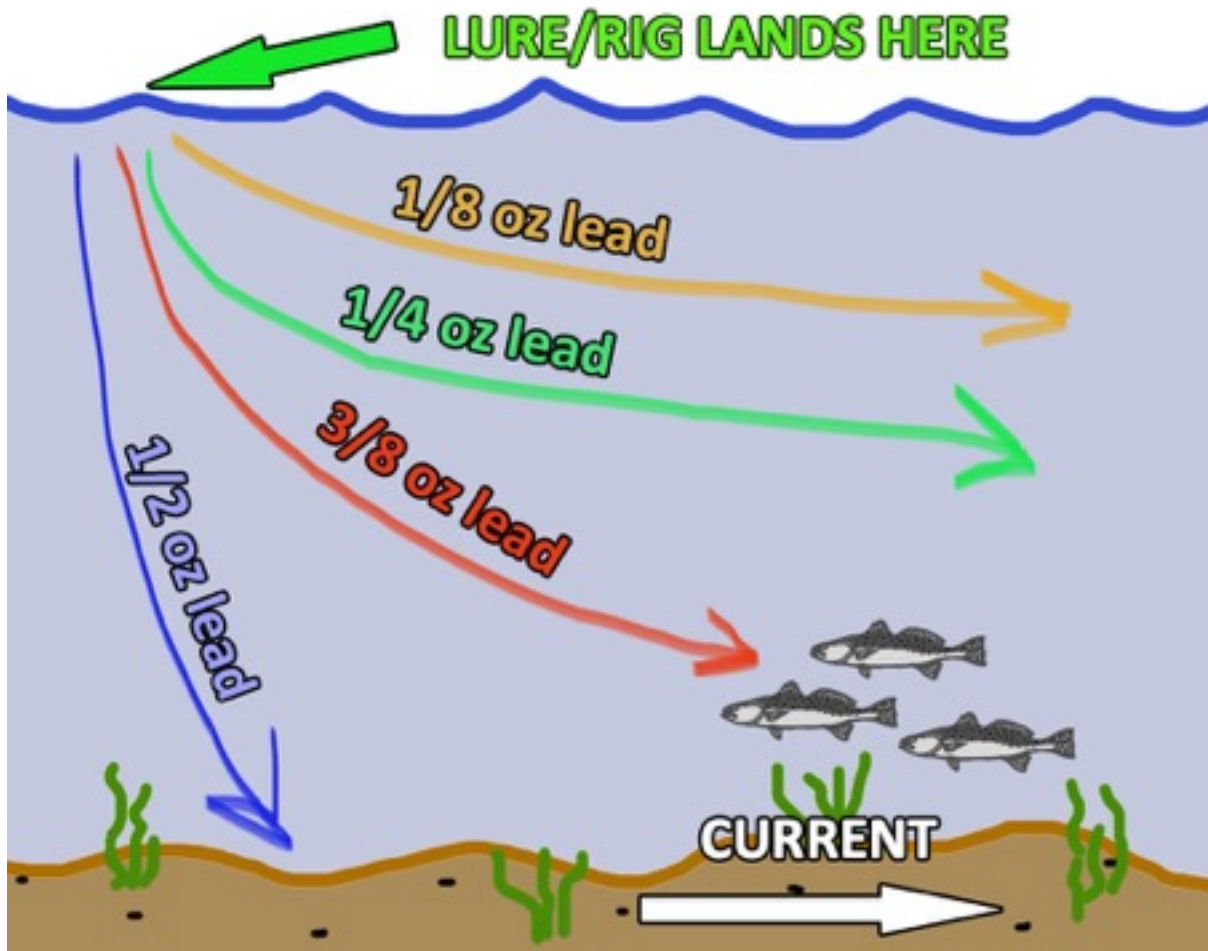
- 1/2 oz 10-25' of water
- 3/8 oz 8-15' of water
- 5/16 oz 4-10' of water
- 1/4 oz 1-6' of water
- 1/8 oz 0-2' of water

The 1/4 oz, 3/8 oz and 1/2 oz weights are just about all you need, but the 1/8 and 5/16 oz weights are nifty once you get a feel for them.

Check out these illustrations to get a better idea of what it is I am talking about.

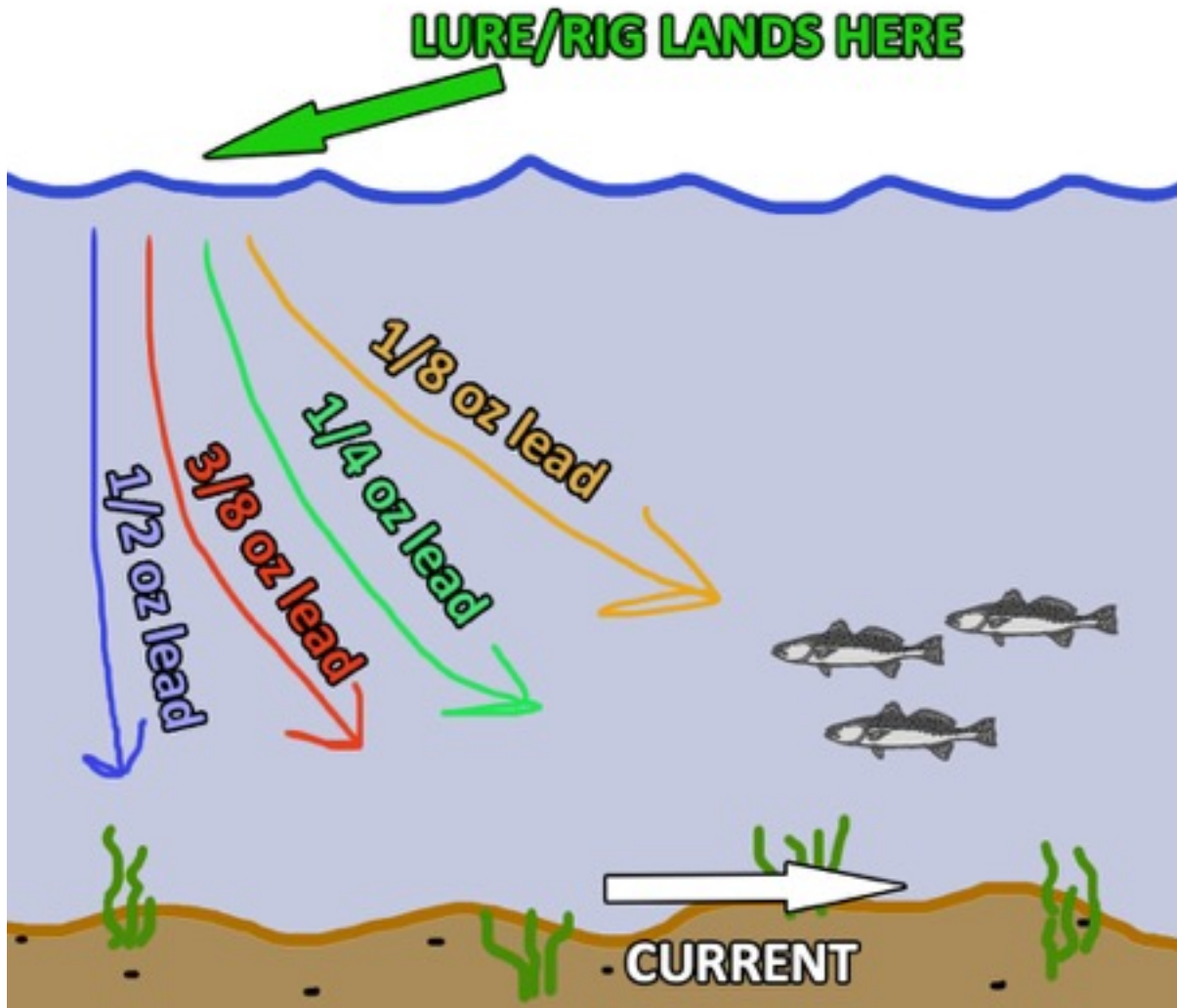
In the below illustration the 3/8 oz egg sinker is the winner. Everything else is either too light or too heavy. The current is moving quickly and an 1/8oz egg sinker would simply get swept away.

WEIGHT SELECTION IN **SWIFT CURRENT**



In this second illustration we see that the 1/8 oz lead is the winner. The current is moving more slowly and requires a lighter jighead.

WEIGHT SELECTION IN SLOW CURRENT



Hopefully now you understand why we use different weights.

They are all for various scenarios.

No single one is better than the others, but is unique to the scenario it was made for.

So remember, effectively fishing each spot boils down to these elements:

- good boat positioning
- fan casting and fishing the entire water column
- using the right weight to fish the bottom

But what do you do if you don't catch fish?

Since you effectively fished that spot, you know there are not any fish there.

It's time to use what you learned at another location. Keep going until you find fish!

Finding fish is like solving a puzzle.

Some of the pieces are in this guide, but all of them are in Inshore Fishing 101.

Don't let the name fool you, it is not a beginner's course.

It is the solid foundation to inshore fishing upon which all other knowledge is built.

Preview Inshore Fishing 101