

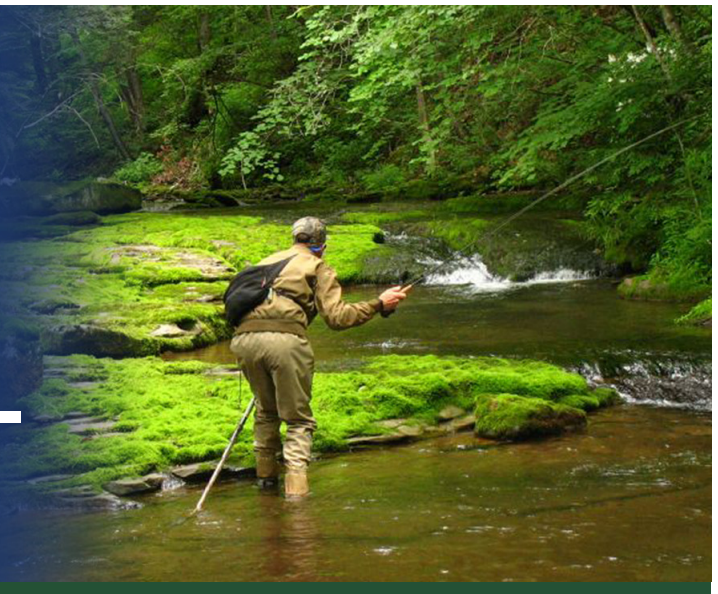


Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

I  NY GUIDE TO

# TROUT FISHING

IN STREAMS



There are thousands of miles of streams across New York State, many of which provide excellent trout fishing opportunities. Each year, DEC stocks over 3,000 miles of streams across the state with brook, brown, and rainbow trout. Many of these streams also support wild trout populations. DEC provides Public Fishing Rights Easements (PFR) that allow anglers access to the water on a number of these streams.

## TROUT SPECIES



Brook Trout



Brown Trout



Rainbow Trout

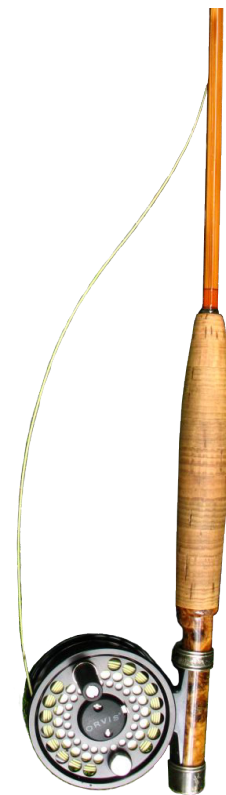
## EQUIPMENT

### Spin Fishing

Light and ultra-light spinning rods from 4½ to 8½ feet work well. Shorter rods are easier to use near overhanging trees found along most trout streams, but can make hooking and playing fish more difficult. Longer rods are usually better for hooking and playing fish but can be hard to use in heavy cover. Match the rod with a small- to medium-sized spinning reel spooled with 4- to 8-pound test monofilament line.



Spinning Rod



Fly Rod

### Fly Fishing

A 4- to 6-weight, 7½- to 9-foot rod is good for stream fishing. Spool 50 yards of 20-pound test fly line backing and a weight forward floating line matched to the rod weight onto the reel. Tie a 7- to 9-foot tapered leader with a 5-7X tippet to the end of the fly line.

## LURES AND BAITS

### Lures

Small spinners, spoons, stick baits, jigs and soft plastics work well. If using spinners or spoons, a small ball-bearing snap swivel will help avoid line twist.



### Flies

Good starter flies for fishing streams are:

- **Dry flies** (sizes 12, 14) – Adams, Elk-Hair Caddis
- **Wet flies** (sizes 10, 12, 14) – Royal Coachman, Black Gnat
- **Nymphs** (sizes 10, 12, 14) – Pheasant Tail Nymph, Prince Nymph
- **Streamers** (sizes 8, 10) – Muddler Minnow, Woolly Bugger



## Natural and Synthetic Baits

Natural baits such as worms, fish eggs, and grasshoppers are all effective trout baits. When hooking worms, leave a tail to help attract fish. If trout keep nipping off this tail section, try a smaller piece of worm. Use hooks ranging from size 6 to 10, depending on the size bait being used. For those uncomfortable using worms or other live baits, synthetic baits are available that mimic the taste, smell, and look of natural baits.



## FISHING TECHNIQUES

When fishing for trout in streams, it's best to work your way upstream against the current whenever possible. Trout usually face into the current as they wait for food to drift to them and will be less likely to see you approaching from behind. Try to avoid wearing bright-colored clothing. Move slowly and disturb the water as little as possible. Polarized glasses will aid you when wading and allow you to see fish better.

### Drift Fishing

Drift fishing is a common bait fishing technique that presents a bait in a natural manner just off the stream bottom. Use as little weight as possible so your bait just ticks the bottom. Carry a few different sizes of small, removable, lead-free split shot weights so you can make adjustments.

## WHERE TO FISH

When fishing streams, target fish-holding areas such as pockets, pools, and runs.

- **Pockets** are small areas of calm water behind rocks that provide shelter for fish. To fish pocket water, cast your bait upstream of these areas and allow your bait to drift along the edge of the slack water. After working both edges, fish in the slack water area.
- **Pools** are areas where the water is slower and deeper than other areas in a stream. Actively feeding fish are usually found at either end of a pool. Fish often hold near structure such as logs, rocks, bridge pilings, or overhanging vegetation in pools.
- **Runs** are areas where stream flows narrow and quicken. Spinners, spoons or streamers generally work well in these areas. Bait will also work drifted through the run, but it is often tricky to get the right amount of weight for a good drift. As with pools, fish will often hold near any structure in the run.



## STREAM ETIQUETTE

At times, a number of anglers may be fishing nearby, and stream etiquette can help make everyone's day pleasurable. Elbow room to fish is a common courtesy. Wading up to another angler could disturb fish, and no one appreciates this.



## CATCH AND RELEASE

If you plan on releasing the fish you catch, use the following methods to help improve the survival of the fish:

- Use barbless hooks; they cause less damage to the fish.
- Play a fish no longer than necessary.
- Wet your hands before touching a fish. Dry skin will remove the mucous coating on trout. Avoid touching the gills.
- Use a landing net.
- Gently push the hook out and cradle the fish in your hand, underwater and facing upstream.
- After a moment, allow the fish to swim free. If the fish turns upside down, catch it and revive it as above.
- If the fish is deeply hooked, cut the line as close to the hook as possible.

## REGULATIONS

Be sure to know the regulations before you head out fishing. Some waters have special regulations that may restrict fishing with bait or only allow catch-and-release fishing. For current regulations for the water you are fishing, consult the New York State Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide. The guide is available where licenses are sold and online at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7917.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7917.html).

## MORE INFORMATION

Contact DEC at [fwfish@dec.ny.gov](mailto:fwfish@dec.ny.gov)

Visit the DEC Fishing webpage at [www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html)

