

FISHING WITH KIDS



PACKING LIST

- Life jacket
- Fishing pole
- Bobbers and hooks
- Needle-nose pliers
- Rag or old gloves
- Bait in a cooler - nightcrawlers work great!
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Insect repellent
- First aid kit
- Snacks and water
- Hand sanitizer and wet wipes

FREE FISHING WEEKEND IN IOWA IS THE FIRST
FULL WEEKEND IN JUNE!



SEVEN ITEMS TO CONSIDER

1. **Location, location, location** - The goal for beginners is to catch as many fish as possible, so choose a well-stocked lake or pond. Find a quiet spot near restrooms. Watch the forecast. Mornings are cooler and fish bite better.
2. **Do I need a license?** Anglers aged 16 and over **MUST** have a valid Iowa fishing license. Those under the age of 16 can fish for free. Buy your license online or from various retailers: www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Buy-Your-License
3. **What kind of pole does my child need?** Simple, inexpensive gear is best when starting. Most start with a spincast reel. Choose a pole that's about as tall as your child and easy to hold. Many come with fishing line, hooks and bobbers. Leave your fishing pole at home so you can focus on the children.
4. **What happens when we catch fish?** We're so excited to catch fish that we sometimes forget to consider what happens next. There are two choices: release the fish or keep the fish to clean and cook. Have a plan, look for posted signs and know the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulations: www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing-Licenses-Laws
5. **Less is more** - Leave the children wanting more. A first fishing trip may last an hour or two, depending on age(s).
6. **Teach safety** - Water safety, life jackets, emergency procedures, fishing pole and hook safety, ethical catch and release - all offer lots of teaching opportunities. Fishing is a fun sport but also a responsibility.
7. **Make memories!** Pack special snacks and cold juice boxes, sports drinks or water. Ask silly questions: If you could eat any food for the rest of your life, what would it be? What superpower would you want? What animal would make the best pet? Finally, don't forget to capture and share a few photos. Remember to use **#99Parks!**

FIVE STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL FISHING TRIP

1. Choose a spot and set up the gear. Children should wear a well-fitting life jacket that is snug and does not ride up around their face.
2. Prepare the pole. Slide the bobber onto the line and tie the hook with a Trilene knot. Hook the worm several times. Help your child cast the line.
3. Catch a fish! Wait until the bobber goes underwater and then reel it in quickly.
4. Release or keep? Grasp the fish firmly with one hand and quickly use needle-nose pliers to remove the hook. Back the hook out the way it came in. If the hook is too deep, cut the line and gently return the fish to the water within 30 seconds. Better yet, release the fish while in the water. If you choose to keep the fish, place the fish in a cooler with ice and clean it as soon as possible. For more information on cleaning fish: www.iowadnr.gov/Fishing/Fishing-Tips-How-Tos/From-Hookin-to-Cookin
5. **Clean up after yourselves - Leave the site as clean or cleaner than you found it.**

HELPFUL HOW-TO VIDEOS FROM THE IOWA DNR

Tying a Trilene Knot - www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2MmSUjiEHg

Casting - www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEqRrV22Sak

Cleaning Fish - www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsRvGwny2MM

FAVORITE PAN-FRIED FISH

Easy and tasty!

Fish filets

1 egg

½ cup milk

Flour

Salt and pepper

Pinch of cayenne powder (optional)

Vegetable oil

Whisk egg and milk. In a separate bowl, mix flour with salt, pepper and cayenne powder. Dip a piece of fish in the egg mixture. Roll the fish in the flour mixture. Set aside and repeat with all fish pieces. Heat 2-4 tablespoons vegetable oil over medium heat in a heavy skillet. When the oil is shimmering and hot, pan fry each side of the fish 3-5 minutes until brown. Cut into a thick piece to check if fish is done; the fish should be opaque and flake easily. Remove from the skillet and drain on a plate covered with paper towels.

Variations: Add cracker crumbs or crisp rice cereal crumbs to the flour mixture. Or, skip the flour and substitute pancake mix.

99 PARKS

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Explore more of Iowa's county parks! Get ideas at www.traveliowa.com/99parks

Activities provided in partnership with Travel Iowa, Iowa's County Conservation System, Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and Next Step Adventure.

