

Fishing Gear Checklist

The old saying “A good workman never blames his tools” (*because he has checked them thoroughly before use*) applies to fishing as well.

When an angler suffers a case of gear failure it often happens at the worst possible moment. It can result in the loss of a prized fish or may lead to discomfort due to leaking waders or other problems with clothing or gear. Many of the unfortunate happenings are avoidable and need not spoil a good day if a little homework prior to the start of the new fishing season (on October 1st) is under-taken.

Some anglers fish year round but many of us do very little winter fishing and that break is a good time to check and maintain your gear. Here is a checklist that may help to rapidly check over your gear and avoid disappointment at a later time, when out fishing.

Gear Checklist		OK	REPLACE
Rod	Rod eyes, joints, handle, reel seat, rod blank		
Reel	Check for loose parts, grease, drag mechanism		
Fly Line	Clean and check for cracking, backing line		
Leaders	Check and replace as necessary		
Tippet	Change old spools for new.		
Waders	Check for leaks and signs of wear		
Boots	Soles, inner lining for nails, laces, studs if any		
Net	Net fabric for tears, clip, scales?		
Backpack	Straps, zips, pockets		
Flies and box	Replace damaged flies, check box hinge		
Fly vest	Pockets, zips, attachments		
Polaroids	Damage, scratched lens		
Clothing	Damage, zips, pockets		
Licence	Buy a new season licence		

Rod – check the eyes for damage. Rough or worn spots will damage your expensive fly line. Replace damaged eyes. Check joints for cracks/damage, this must be repaired before use. Wax the spigot lightly with beeswax (available from club).

Check reel seat and handle for alignment. Movement (wobble) in the reel seat is annoying and should be fixed. Cork handle can be sanded to restore grip. Check rod for cracking or chips on the blanks (usually tip section) and these should be repaired with epoxy glue and binding if necessary or speak to your tackle specialist.

Reel – clean and lubricate reel with approved grease. Check for loose screws/fittings and repair. Check drag mechanism for correct action.

Fly Line - clean and check for damage/cracking. Reversing a double taper line may extend its life.

Leaders – check for condition and knots, replace where necessary. Change tippet material.

Tippet – Old tippet material may be degraded by exposure to UV. Keep away from sunlight. It pays to replace old spools with new (mark date of purchase on spool for

reference). Old spools of tippet material should be marked "OLD" and put aside for other use.

Waders – check waders by trying them whilst wearing light coloured jeans or pants that will show wet spots. Repair damage before the season.

Boots – check for comfort because you may be wearing them all day. Check laces.

Net – check net fabric for damage. If a weigh-net then calibrate against kitchen scales by weighing plastic milk bottle of known weight (fill with water, check 1kg + 2kg).

Backpack – check condition of zips, straps, pockets etc.

Flies and Fly box – renew and sort flies as necessary. Check box for damage/wear. Write phone number on box, it may be returned if lost.

Fly Vest – check pockets, Velcro, zips, attachments and clips.

Polaroids – look for lens damage, loose screws etc. Replace if necessary

Clothing- Look for damage to zips, pockets etc. Should it be waterproof?

This list should take you a little while to work through, but when completed you will be ready to get out there and catch fish without needing to use the excuse that your gear let you down.