

ICE FISHING TIPS

Things to Take on Your Trip

Minimum You Should Take:

- Fishing rods, **DUH!!!**
- Reels- Micro-spinning reel
- Line- 4-8 lb test ice-line, use 1 size smaller than what you would use in summer
- Bait: check local regulations for what you can use
- A 5 gallon bucket to sit on or to transport your catch home
- Hand and foot warmers
- Needle nose pliers
- Fishing License
- Proper I.D.
- A compass
- Fingernail clippers
- Ice scoop
- Jigs and spoons and hooks, make sure your hooks are sharp
- Ice fishing equipment if going alone: **not recommended**
- Ice auger
- Sled for auger or vehicle if the ice is thick enough.
- Mouth spreader
- Hook sharpener
- Bait bucket
- Small shovel
- Ice picks, store bought or homemade

Preferred ice fishing equipment:

- Fish Finder, bear in mind these are not fish catchers!
- Ice Fishing Shelter
- Propane heater
- Spud bar (for checking ice thickness)
- Camera , **to verify your tall fishing tales**
- Ice cleats
- Ice Anchoring System
- flashlight.
- Lantern
- Matches or Lighter , **how else are you going to light your heater?**
- Tip-ups
- Leaders for tip-ups
- Bait for tip-ups: check local regulations for what you can use
- Cell-phone, **maybe you can get a pizza delivered!**, make sure battery is fully charged
- GPS unit, make sure batteries are fully charged

Luxury Ice Fishing Equipment:

- Underwater camera
- Two-way radios to talk to your buddies
- Ice Fishing House
- Strike sensors for tip-ups

Optional Ice Fishing items:

- Food
- Drinks
- Hand Towel, **give to your buddy if he**

is crying about the cold or inability to catch as many as you!

- Sunglasses, **gotta look cool, even if you are freezing!**

Ice Fishing Safety

"Better to lose all of your fish and equipment, than your life"

- Never Go Alone If Possible
- Let your friends know exactly where you are going and when you will return.
- Wear Layered Clothing
- Make sure you know how to dress for cold weather by using a layering system. By layering you make it easier to remove or put clothes back on if you are getting too hot or too cold.
- Your initial layer should be thermal underwear that draws away moisture.

- Your next layer should be insulating like fleece, wool or flannel . Your last or outside layer should be windproof and waterproof, your jacket should be a down-filled coat with a hood.
- Remember to wear a warm wool, fleece or knitted hat. Avoid cotton because it does not hold heat well, especially when wet.

Hands and Feet

- Boots should be insulated, waterproof or rubber boots.
- Wear liner socks plus a pair of thick wool or non-cotton socks.
- Wear your boots loosely fitting to avoid cutting off circulation of blood to your lower extremities.
- Make sure to wear neoprene or waterproof nylon mittens to protect your hands from the icy water as you land the big catch.

Items to Carry

- A small bag of sand or kitty litter to sprinkle around your ice hole for better traction.
- An additional set of dry clothes and socks in case you get wet.
- High energy snacks and warm drinks to fuel you through the cold day.
- Rope to use in case your friend falls through the ice.
- First aid kit in case you need to treat a minor injury.
- Matches stored in a waterproof container or 35mm film canister in case you need to start a fire.
- Home-made ice awls carried in an easy to reach outer pocket.
- PFD seat cushion to use as a seat or flotation in case you fall through the ice.
- Hand and foot warmers.

Watch Where You Are Going

- Never fish in an area where the ice is less than 4 inches thick.
- Avoid areas where there are feeder streams and springs.
- Stay away from areas that are dark, honeycombed or porous ice.

You Fall Through the Ice!

- If you fall through the ice, don't panic, remain calm.
- Use your ice awls to pull yourself up onto the safe ice.
- No ice awls? Try "swimming out," which lets your body rise and allows you to get onto firm ice.
- Use your legs to kick behind you to keep from going under.
- If you can't get to safety, call for help. Yell as loud as you can.
- Slip your "loose boots" off to make treading water easier.
- Keep your clothes on as they will insulate you from the icy water.
- Once on the ice, remain low and ensure you distribute your weight over as much of the ice surface area as possible.

Know When Enough is Enough

- If you become wet, immediately change into your dry clothes and

seek out warmth .

- If you feel cold, it's because you are cold. Head for home .
- Keep an eye out for frostbite (pale skin on exposed flesh). Seek medical assistance.
- Watch out for signs of hypothermia (shivering, loss of judgment). Treat it with warm fluids, dry clothes, a blanket and warm shelter.
- Stop fishing if you become tired or cold. Remember that there will always be plenty of other days to go ice fishing.