THE
ADVENTURER'S
GUIDE TO FISHING
The Ultimate RPG Fishing Mechanic

For Use with Roleplaying Games

The Adventurer's Guide to Fishing:
The Ultimate RPG Fishing Mechanic

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ABOUT THE BOOK

The Adventurer's Guide to Fishing is the ultimate fishing mechanic for roleplaying games and so much more!

This book serves as an extensive underwater bestiary of real-life fish and marine animals, containing descriptions of hundreds of freshwater and saltwater creatures. These pages are also full of mythical creatures, magical items, treasures, and plot hooks meant to be compatible with a variety of fantasy roleplaying games, such as Dungeons & Dragons and Pathfinder.

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INTRODUCTION

The Adventurer's Guide to Fishing is the ultimate fishing mechanic for roleplaying games and so much more! This book serves as an extensive underwater bestiary of real-life fish and marine animals, containing descriptions of hundreds of freshwater and saltwater creatures. These pages are also full of mythical creatures, magical items, treasures, and plot hooks meant to be compatible with a variety of fantasy roleplaying games, such as Dungeons & Dragons and Pathfinder. With some minor modifications, this book can also be used along with games set within science fiction, historical, and realistic genres. It can even be used as a standalone fishing game (see "**Solo Play**").

What follows on these introductory pages are the rules or, as a GM would call them, "suggestions" on how to use this guide to create a rich and interesting fishing experience within your game. Further into the book, you will find five sections based on the d100 principle, including the following: 100 common outcomes for freshwater fishing, 100 rare outcomes for freshwater fishing, 100 common outcomes for saltwater fishing, 100 rare outcomes for saltwater fishing, and 100 items of flotsam and jetsam, which include lots of floating junk plus some pretty cool magical items. The result is over 500 possible outcomes every time an angler's hook hits the water.

RULE ZERO

As always, Rule Zero is **make it work and make it fun**. This guide contains a simple and exciting fishing mechanic that should provide players hours of enjoyment. Fishing can be a way for characters to make a living when they're not adventuring, a fun pastime during a short rest, a quick method to secure extra rations, the catalyst for an exciting creature encounter, or anything in-between.

However you decide to use fishing in your game, this guide is a great place to start. But remember that ultimately the GM is in control of their world and should feel free to modify this guide to fit the needs of their world and their players. As Stan Lee wrote, "With great power, comes great responsibility." The success of this mechanic, like so much of the game, rests on the shoulders of the GM. We encourage modification and remind you that a GM must always be ready to think on their feet: How big does a mudpuddle have to be before an angler can fish in it? This is totally the GMs call. How did a river shark end up in a farmer's pond two-hundred miles inland? Magic? Extreme weather events? Human interference? A portal to an interdimensional pirate bay? We don't know how the GM will explain it, but we know they will, and we trust that it will be fantastic.

We have spent hundreds of hours developing this mechanic and the accompanying bestiary, but we know that much of the hard work of bringing this guide to life still rests in the hands of the GM. Where information is missing, it is the GM's prerogative to fill it in, or if they wish, a quick internet search will often provide you with an appropriate stat block.

We encourage you to create on the fly and above all else, have fun!

CLAVIS

Angler—In this book, this term is used interchangeably to mean the player or the character attempting to catch a fish.

Bait—Food or other items placed on a hook to lure fish. It can also refer to the process of placing the bait on the hook.

Cast—In real-life fishing, casting means to throw your baited hook or lure into the water. In this mechanic, you simulate this by rolling a d20 survival check.

Cut the Line – After identifying what has been hooked, you may not wish to reel it in. If you cut your line, you will lose your hook, but in some cases, it may prevent you from confronting a dangerous beast or harming a gentle creature.

Gamemaster — This is the person at your table who controls the rules of the game and the world in which it exists. They have the responsibility of adapting this mechanic to your game in a way that makes sense.

GM – Abbreviation for gamemaster. (See above.)

Hook—If a creature eats your bait and is snagged by your hook, it cannot escape unless you fail to land it.

Land — Once you've hooked something, you must reel it in if you wish to harvest it. You accomplish this by winning a contest. Anglers will use their strength modifier or dexterity modifier, whichever is lowest, and the creature will use the modifier listed in its description.

Line — Special string used for fishing. The hook is tied to the line, and the line is used to reel in a fish if it is hooked.

Lure — An item used to resemble something that would attract fish to strike, such as an insects or other fish.

Harvest — Once you have landed a creature, you can harvest the fish to eat or sell. The maximum amount of fish you can harvest is determined by the harvest weight and how much your party can carry.

Harvest weight —This is the portion of the fish you can actually eat or sell. In this mechanic, the harvest weight is half of the total weight unless otherwise specified.

Release — You may prefer to let a fish go after you have landed it, rather than harvesting it. You may release it by removing the hook and placing the fish back in the water.

Reel In — Once a fish is hooked, you must pull it in until you can reach it from your boat or the shore. In this mechanic, reeling in your catch is considered part of the landing process.

RPG — Abbreviation for *roleplaying games.*

Rod — This mechanic assumes the use of basic old-fashioned fishing tackle, including a simple wooden rod. If you would like to upgrade your rod, see "**Upgrading Equipment**" and then discuss your options with the GM.

Spear — Some players may wish to employ a long sharp tool to fish, such as a javelin, gig, or harpoon. These tools are referred to generically as spears, but which tools can and cannot be used is ultimately something to discuss with the GM.

Strike – When a fish bites your hook.

Trip – A single fishing trip takes one in-game hour and is limited to the results of one cast and any bonus casts.

Total weight — The weight of the fish before removing scales, entrails, and other unsavory parts.

HOW TO FISH

In the box below, you will find the basic steps used in the fishing mechanic. These steps are discussed in greater detail later in this section. As always, the GM has final say on how rules shall be applied in any given situation.

BASIC STEPS

1. **CAST** The angler rolls a d20 survival skill check to cast.
2. **IDENTIFY** If the cast is successful, the angler rolls a d100 to see what they have hooked.
3. **LAND** The angler attempts to reel in their catch by participating in a contest of strength or dexterity, using whichever modifier is lower.
4. **WEIGH** If they successfully land the fish, the angler rolls to check the weight of their catch.
5. **HARVEST** Finally, the angler decides whether to harvest the fish or release it.

CASTING

To cast, the angler rolls a survival skill check to see if they hook anything. See "**FISHING CONDITIONS**" for details.

IDENTIFYING

If their cast is successful, the angler should roll a d100 to see what they have hooked.

The GM should share all appropriate information with the angler, but there will be times when the GM wishes to withhold some information for dramatic effect. We have italicized some such information in the creature descriptions which the GM may not wish to share with the angler before they have landed, harvested, or eaten a fish, or before a success on some kind of intelligence or wisdom check.

For instance, some unusual fish may have multiple effects on an angler who touches or harvests them. The GM would likely want to wait to reveal these possible outcomes or at least require a check before deciding how much of the description to reveal.

There may also be times when it would be unlikely that the character would know much about the fish or even have difficulty identifying it properly. In this case, a survival, wisdom, or intelligence check may also be appropriate.

After all, it is the player, not the character, who is in possession of this guidebook.

NOTE: The size ranges in this book (e.g., tiny, small, etc.) refer to relative size in the fishing world, and as such, do not necessarily conform to size categories used in specific roleplaying systems.

FISHING CONDITIONS

The GM will determine the DC of the ability check based on location, weather, and so on. GMs may wish to use the following guide:

Prime conditions	DC 5
Above average	DC 10
Average conditions	DC 15
Below average	DC 20
Poor conditions	DC 25
Terrible conditions	DC 30

A natural 20 does not guarantee that an angler hooks a fish, but should earn them a bonus cast.

Rolling a natural 1 when casting results in the loss of hook or lure. Rolling a natural 1 while landing results in the breaking of the rod.

LANDING

Once the angler identifies what they have hooked, they must either cut the line, which results in the loss of the hook or lure, or attempt to reel it in by participating in a contest.

Because this task requires both strength and dexterity, the angler will use whichever score is lower, their strength modifier or their dexterity modifier. The fish will use the modifier in their stat block, which may be based on a variety of factors, including strength, size, cunning, and tenacity.

If the angler wins the contest, they bring the fish aboard their boat or onto the shore where they are standing. If the angler fails the contest, the fish escapes into the water with the bait, but the hook or lure is left behind.

On a tie, roll gain.

Some fish are easy to land and it is just a matter of reaching down into the water and bearing them aloft. Others may have more tricks up their sleeves or surprising treasure to reveal. Follow any additional directions regarding landing the fish as you bring your catch to the surface.

Anglers may not gain advantage by having other party members help reel in a fish unless otherwise stated in the fish's description or granted as an exception by the GM.

In most cases, anglers will want to reel in even the fish they don't plan to harvest so that they can safely remove the hook. But if they have hooked a large fish that they fear may damage their boat or if they've hooked a monster that they are hoping won't choose to attack, they may want to release them as soon as possible. If an angler decides to cut the line, they lose whatever hook, bait, lure, etc. they were using, but may avoid potentially dangerous encounters.

WEIGHING YOUR CATCH

Once a fish is landed, an angler rolls to determine the weight. Even if no precise instruments are available, the angler will be able to accurately estimate the weight of the fish.

KEEPING A SCOREBOARD

It is recommended that you keep a scoreboard to keep track of your party's fishing exploits. This adds an additional element of competition and may especially appeal to adventurers who do not necessarily desire to harvest the fish.

This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. The most common is to keep track of the largest fish of each type that is caught by recording the name of the angler, the type of fish, the total weight, and the date. Using this system, the first person to catch each type of fish will automatically set the record.

A few more simple approaches include tracking the record for the largest fish caught overall, tracking the record for most fish caught in a single trip, and keeping a running tally of the number of fish caught by each angler.

The GM may wish to reward anglers who break any existing records with a bonus cast, coinage, experience points, cool fishing gear, or the ability to use an epic fishing tale to earn charisma bonuses when told to fellow travelers.

HARVESTING

Once a fish has been landed and weighed, you may choose to harvest it or release it back into the wild.

Total Weight vs. Harvest Weight
You will roll for a creature's weight based on the stats provided in its description. When you roll, you are determining the fish's total weight, but often only part of a fish can be eaten. In this mechanic, the harvest weight—the weight of the fish you can actually eat or sell—will be half of the total weight unless otherwise specified. A 250-pound tuna, for instance, would have a 125-pound harvest weight.

Preparing Your Catch
You have 48 hours to prepare your catch to prevent spoilage. If you sell the fish, it requires no additional preparation.

However, if you plan to cook, dry, or otherwise preserve the fish, you will need to allow for time to clean and cook it. This process takes a minimum of half an hour. Add one minute per pound for the total weight over 30 lbs. For instance, a six-pound pike will take half an hour to clean and cook while a 250-pound tuna will take 4 hours and ten minutes. If you have members in your party willing to help, you may be able to reduce the time. A party of five adventurers could clean and cook the same 250-pound tuna in just fifty minutes. This time does not count as rest.

Eating Your Fish
You may cook edible fish to eat immediately or dry them and convert them to rations so they can be eaten later. Two pounds of harvested fish equals one day's rations. To calculate, divide the total weight by four or the harvest weight by two. For example, a 250-pound tuna would provide 62 total rations.

Selling Your Fish
You may sell the fish at market at the going rate as determined by the GM. We suggest one silver piece for every harvested pound of fish (half the total weight). Under this system a 250-pound tuna would bring 125 sp.

Adapting Markets

GMs may choose to manually manipulate the market for fish and offer anglers less near fishing villages where the market is saturated or offer them more for fish in big towns further inland where demand would be higher or people could afford to pay more. They may also wish to let the market fluctuate randomly by rolling a d4: 1. Very poor market 1 cp per harvested pound 2. Slightly poor market 5 cp per harvested pound 3. Regular market 1 sp per harvested pound 4. Good market 2 sp per harvested pound.

Rough Fish

Some fish are labeled as "inedible" because they are potentially harmful to eat while those labeled "rough fish" may just be unpalatable or typically considered too bony or otherwise undesirable to bother harvesting. If a character chooses to harvest and ingest an "inedible" fish, we recommend that the GM provide reasonable consequences and require saving throws as needed. Anglers can eat most "rough fish" without consequences, but neither fish labeled "inedible" nor "rough fish" may typically be sold at market.

Transporting Fish

Remember to keep carrying capacity in mind when transporting fish to market. Some anglers may also have their catch limited by the size of their boats. While a wide variety of boats are likely for hire in your world, the guidelines in the box are meant to help you estimate the maximum carrying weight for johnboats of varying lengths and an approximate cost to buy such a boat. Remember when figuring weights to subtract the weight of adventurers and their gear before determining how much fish can be safely transported.

BOAT CAPACITY AND COST

Size	Max Wt.	Cost	Rental
8 ft. boat	200 lbs.	50 gp	5 sp per day
10 ft. boat	300 lbs.	60 gp	6 sp per day
12 ft. boat	400 lbs.	70 gp	7 sp per day
14 ft. boat	600 lbs.	80 gp	8 sp per day
16 ft. boat	1000 lbs.	90 gp	9 sp per day
18 ft. boat	1500 lbs.	100 gp	10 sp per day
20 ft. boat	1,800 lbs.	110 gp	11 sp per day

*Rentals may also include a 10gp bond to help discourage theft and negligence.

EQUIPMENT

What an Angler Needs
All a player needs to get started is this book and a set of standard roleplaying dice. This book is meant to be used as part of a larger RPG adventure, but it can be played as a standalone game with or without friends. See the "ALTERNATE RULES" section. Characters, on the other hand, will need fishing equipment and access to a body of water.

Upgrading Equipment
The descriptions within this book assume players are using basic fishing tackle. If you wish to use other gear, upgrade tackle, use a certain kind of bait, or craft a homemade lure, etc., it will be necessary to work out the details with the GM. We recommend the following:

- Buying special lures should cost around 5 gp and give the angler +1 on casts.
- Buying advanced fishing tackle should cost around 10 gp and give the angler +1 on rolls to land.
- Finding or crafting this specialized equipment may prove difficult and will likely take some time and effort on the behalf of the character.

Maximum Weights
The current world record for a rod and reel catch is a matter of some debate, but various sources place it between 2500 and 3500 lbs. It is unlikely anyone could catch anything even close to that size on a typical handheld rod and reel set up, but we have used this range to establish an approximate cap for the maximum weight of a fish that can be landed using this mechanic. For a more realistic experience, the GM may wish to make this maximum cap lower for all fish or just for fish caught with a particular type of fishing equipment.

Alternative Methods
If players wish to use spears, nets, or other improvised tools, they may do so, but the GM should make reasonable adjustments. The GM may also wish to limit the type and size of fish that can be hooked or reeled in using some methods. For example, you may wish to use the following altered mechanics for players using spears or nets.

STEPS FOR FISHING WITH SPEARS, BOWS, & NETS

1. **CAST** The angler rolls a d20 survival skill check with **disadvantage** to spot potential prey.
2. **IDENTIFY** If the sighting is successful, the angler rolls a d100 to see what they have spotted.
3. **LAND** The angler may attempt to make a catch by participating in a contest of **dexterity**. If the angler is not proficient with their tool, they roll with disadvantage.
4. **WEIGH** If they successfully land the fish, the angler rolls to check the weight of their catch.
5. **HARVEST** Finally, the angler decides whether to harvest the fish or release it.

STEPS FOR NOODLING OR BAREHANDED FISHING

The steps are the same as above, with the following additional caveats:
- The angler must be able to touch bottom in order to attempt to "cast."
- The angler may not land any creature more than 100 lbs. If after a successful catch, the total weight is more than 100 lbs., the creature is released.
- If they decide not to attempt to land or if they fail in an attempt to land what they identify, they may provoke an opportunity attack.

TIME

A fishing trip takes one hour. This includes one cast and any bonus casts and related actions. It does not include extended travel to and from the water, but can include movement in and around the water. Time spent fishing with basic fishing tackle is considered rest unless you make an attack, take damage, or become exhausted. If you use special equipment that requires more exertion or movement, your GM may not count your fishing trip as rest time. If you harvest a fish, it will take additional time to clean and prepare. See "**Preparing Your Catch.**"

Limiting Frequency
We recommend starting with just one fishing trip (one cast and any bonus casts) per player character per in-game day.

This may not seem like much, but a GM who has spent hours creating intricate dungeons and terrifying villains, probably doesn't want to spend four real-time hours fishing every time their group gets together, and at least a few of the players will probably feel the same. For this reason, we recommend discussing this with your group, keeping things simple, and starting small.

If your group unanimously decides they want to spend more time with a line in the water, then consider increasing the number of fishing trips per in-game day to three per player character.

If one fishing trip per day seems like it is just too much or if you are covering large blocks of time, we recommend reducing the number of fishing trips to one per player character per session.

On the other hand, players who just can't get enough fishing—and there's usually one at every table—may want to consider playing on their own or getting together for special fishing expeditions. See "**Stand Alone Game.**"

ALTERNATIVE RULES

Complex Landing Mechanic
This mechanic changes the way you "land" a fish and simulates the process of battling a fish. To use this more complex mechanic, anglers will participate in a series of contests against the fish.

If a fish is hooked, it will begin at a standard distance from the angler of 20 feet. The angler will then attempt to land the fish by winning a series of contests. Each time the angler wins a contest, the fish is reeled 10 feet closer to the boat. Each time the fish wins a contest, it moves 10 feet further away. If the fish reaches 0 feet, it is landed, but if it reaches twice the casting distance (40 feet), it breaks loose and swims away.

The disadvantage to this approach is that it takes more time, and while some players may find it more realistic and even more suspenseful, others—especially those not doing the fishing—may find it tedious. This approach is recommended only for smaller groups where everyone involved shows an interest in fishing.

Standalone Game
This book can be used to play a fishing-themed "one shot" or as the basis for a standalone game (i.e., not as part of a larger adventure). This is a great way to utilize this book outside your regular sessions, so that fishing trips do not become an intrusion on the main storyline.

For the standalone version, we recommend using a more realistic approach to landing. See "**Complex Landing Mechanic.**"

Each player should take turns casting and recording details for any fish they land, including species and total weight. We recommend that each angler take a total of five natural casts for a short game or ten natural casts for a longer game.

Each player receives a point for each fish they catch. In addition, the player that catches the most fish receives a bonus point, and the player that catches the largest fish receives three bonus points.

Anglers may earn extra casts on their turn, and they may collect treasure, but it does not count toward the trophy. Be sure to decide ahead of time whether or not rations, gold, and other items earned during these standalone sessions can be used later in the primary game with rest of the group.

If you are playing without a designated GM, it is a good idea to decide any questions by friendly discussion, but when reaching a stalemate, use a dice contest to solve any disputes.

For a quicker, more engaging approach, you may even prefer to have all anglers "fish" at the same time and then compare scores at the end.

Solo Play
You do not need friends to use this book. To play alone, simply play with the standalone rules. Instead of competing with your friends, try to see how many points you can earn in a single round of five casts. There is no bonus for catching the most or largest fish, but try to set personal records for number of fish caught in a round and the largest fish. You may want to keep your records in a notebook to compare for future games or with other solo players. You can also keep a record of the largest fish of each type you catch on your own scoreboard sheet.

FINAL NOTES

Realistic Gameplay

It may surprise you which fish in this bestiary are real and which have mythical origins, but it is worth noting that some real-life fish have magical effects applied to them. If you are playing a realistic game and an angler hooks a fish you know to be fictional, feel free to use the next available realistic fish on the list, use the descriptions of the creatures only, or ignore any magical effects.

Flotsam & Jetsam

The "**FLOTSAM & JETSAM**" section includes some fantastic rewards as well as some grim surprises. Whether deliberately thrown overboard to lighten a load, discarded to rid some ship's crew of a curse, or lost during a storm or a shipwreck, the seas and rivers are full of floating debris and sunken derelict. Occasionally, anglers will hook something of value. Occasionally, they will hook something that will haunt them for the rest of their days. But often when they feel that familiar tug, they will simply reel in the proverbial old boot.

GMs might be inclined to panic when they peek at the list of flotsam and jetsam, but keep in mind that the odds of an angler rolling flotsam and jetsam are one in a hundred (1:100), which makes the odds of landing any one of the specific options within—good or bad--one in ten thousand (1:10,000). Some of the more fantastic items are further buried behind another dice roll, as an option within a treasure chest, for instance. The odds of attaining those items are even lower. For example, an angler's chance of winning a certain treasure within a chest with ten separate options becomes one in a hundred thousand (1:100,000). The player is far more likely to be struck by lightning, the angler more likely to be devoured by a dragon.

Still, the GM should always feel free to reduce or remove effects as is appropriate to your game. If you want a game where magic is deemphasized or if you want to keep your players coin-poor or if you worry that an item might distract from your primary adventure, the GM should feel free to modify any item and any part of the description. This fishing mechanic is meant to be a supplement to enhance the game, not a disruption.

Where you find creatures that overlap with other RPG systems, please feel free to use whichever version you prefer, or as is oft a GM's method, a little of each. Any statistics, original creature names, or descriptions found herein have been generated independently and any replication of information from other sources or systems is inadvertent.

OTHER CREATURES

There are plenty of other creatures an angler may encounter in or around the water. Not only are there are plenty of land-bound creatures that may sneak up behind an adventurer while they are engrossed in fishing, but there are plenty of aquatic and semi-aquatic creatures that we have not included because of their strength, intelligence, supernatural nature, or size. An angler may anger them by encroaching on their territory; they may see humanoids as prey; or they just have a bad attitude. At any rate, GMs should keep these and other creatures in mind and possibly even roll for chance encounters with them as they navigate the waters and the lands adjacent to them. We have included a partial list (see "**OTHER CREATURES**") and have numbered them for this purpose. More information on most of these creatures can be found in other materials in print and online.

FEEDBACK

Feedback is always welcome. Please let us know when you find typos, factual errors, problems with gameplay, and so on. Your corrections, along with acknowledgements for the first reader to catch them, will be printed in subsequent editions.

Flotsam & Jetsam   1

Roll a d100 and consult the FLOTSAM & JETSAM section at the back of the book to see what you have hooked. It could be a valuable item, something magical, the beginning of an adventure, or just some old junk—but whatever it is, you can bet it won't be a fish.

Adonis Catfish   2

Small rough fish
Weight 12 (3d6+2) lbs.
Modifier +0

This armored catfish is covered in durable dark-colored plates decorated with white spots that fade as the fish ages. This territorial omnivore can grow to lengths over three feet.

Asp   3

Small rough fish
Weight 14 (4d6) lbs.
Modifier +0

The asp is a bluish silver fish with no relation to the deadly snake of the same name. Often considered too bony to eat, you may choose to release the fish or eat it and carefully pick around the bones.

Barramundi   4

Medium edible fish
Weight 92 (4d20+50) lbs.
Modifier +1

This migratory fish's name means "large-scaled river fish." It is green-to-brown in color, puts up a great fight, and makes a delicious meal.

Basa   5

Small edible fish
Weight 15 (1d20+5) lbs.
Modifier +0

This river catfish makes excellent white, flaky fillets. Also known as a "river cobbler," the basa has a sturdy, heavy body and a blunt snout.

Bayad   6

Small edible fish
Weight 31 (2d20+10) lbs.
Modifier +0

This piscivorous bottom-dweller has an elongated body and four pairs of barbels. It ranges from light green to dark gray with a lighter underside and dark red or violet fins. It may come into shallower water to spawn in late spring.

Biara   7

Tiny rough fish
Weight 3 (1d4+1) lbs.
Modifier -2

This member of the dogtooth family has a pronounced underbite armed with long, sharp canine teeth. Its blueish-silver body is long and streamlined, and it lives on a diet comprised almost entirely of other fish, though it might not be opposed to taking a finger or toe off an unsuspecting wader. Their long, bony bodies can grow to over two feet in length.

RARE FRESHWATER

Abaia Eel   1

Medium rough fish
Weight 175 (10d20+70) lbs.
Modifier +3

This giant eel abhors anglers. *If an angler fails to land this creature, the eel will attempt to pull them overboard and drown them. It has 3d10 hit points, a strength modifier of +1, and a swim speed of 40 feet.*

Ahuizotl   2

Medium creature
Weight 190 (10d20+85) lbs.
Modifier +4

The ahuizotl's body is part canine, part feline, and part primate, but its ambush behavior is more similar to a crocodile. It submerges itself under the water with only its snout visible and waits for its prey to come into range. It is a fabulous mimic and sometimes calls out to distant targets, luring them close enough to strike. If you've somehow hooked one, it is best to cut the line rather than risk a fight at the water's edge.

Alligator

Large creature
Weight 750 (100d10+200) lbs.
Modifier +4

If you can get him to shore, you can harvest the tail of this beast (1/4 total weight). If within 5 feet, it will attempt a bite (+3, 2d4+2). On a hit, targets who fail a DC 10 strength save are restrained and take 2d4 damage via a deathroll.

Alligator Gar   3

Medium rough fish
Weight 133 (6d10+100) lbs.
Modifier +4

The alligator gar can grow up to ten feet in length, and its scales are so tough that a saw is often necessary to butcher it. Due to its large size and sharp teeth, the alligator gar is capable of delivering a serious bite wound (1d6) to swimmers or fisherman. A DC 10 dexterity throw saves you from a bite when successfully landing this foul fish.

Alligator Snapping Turtle   4

Medium creature
Weight 130 (20d10+20) lbs.
Modifier +2

Once they bite down onto something, these aggressive snappers are unlikely to let go anytime soon. They can be over two feet long and hold their breath for nearly an hour. They can extend their necks nearly the length of their shell and their jaws are able to snap a broom handle. A DC 5 dexterity save prevents this beast from lopping off your 1d10th finger with a lightning-quick attack while attempting to land. If it bites (1d4+1), the victim must win a strength contest against it before it will let go. If the turtle is killed while still biting down, a strength contest must be won with disadvantage. The victim suffers 1d4 damage on each failed attempt.

SALTWATER

FLOTSAM & JETSAM   1

Roll a d100 and consult the FLOTSAM & JETSAM section at the back of the book to see what you have hooked. It could be a valuable item, something magical, the beginning of an adventure, or just some old junk—but whatever it is, you can bet it won't be a fish.

ALBACORE   2

Medium edible fish
Weight 45 (10d8) lbs.
Modifier +2

The albacore tuna has distinctively long pectoral fins and delicious white flesh that can be utilized in a wide variety of dishes.

AMBERJACK   3

Small edible fish
Weight 46 (3d10+30) lbs.
Modifier +3

The amberjack is a brown to green game fish with great stamina.

BARRACUDA   4

Medium edible fish
Weight 44 (8d10) lbs.
Modifier +2

The barracuda is a fearsome fish with tasty, sometimes poisonous flesh. Roll a DC 10 dexterity check to avoid 1d4 piercing damage from their toothy bite when taking it from the water. *If you keep the fish, make a DC 5 strength save to avoid becoming poisoned for 1d4 days.*

BAY SALMON   5

Small edible fish
Weight 27 (5d10) lbs.
Modifier +1

This largest type of salmon can survive in freshwater or saltwater. It makes a healthy and tasty meal.

BELUGA STURGEON   6

Huge edible fish
Weight 2824 (150d10+2000) lbs.
Modifier +6

These largest sturgeon have a hearty white meat that is appetizing to any adventurer, but it is the caviar produced by the female of the species for which it is best known. You may harvest 4d10 pounds of roe and sell it for 5gp per pound.

RARE SALTWATER

AMBROSIA BASS 1

Small edible fish
Weight 8 (1d4+6) lbs.
Modifier +1

These primarily coastal bass are so rare and sought after that anglers will often travel miles at the slightest insinuation that someone else has seen one. *The ambrosia bass cures an adventurer of all illnesses. If eaten at full health, it reduces the damage taken in battle by half for the next hour. It can also be used to create a healing potion that restores one to full health, even if they have dropped below zero hit points. It is believed that dining on ambrosia bass regularly could provide a path for immortality similar to the fountain of youth.*

ANDROMEDA CRAB 2

Tiny edible creature
Weight 1 lb.
Modifier +0

These crustaceans are difficult to pry from the rocks, but it is worth the effort. *Roll with disadvantage to land. If eaten fresh, receive +1 strength for 1d10 days. If dried and eaten later, receive a 1d6 bonus to your strength modifier for one day after eating.*

ARK FISH 3

Tiny edible fish
Weight 5 (2d4) lbs.
Modifier +0

These fish swim in twos. Roll again with advantage to catch its mate. *If both are caught, make a potion that provides a +2 boost in arcana that lasts until your hit points drop to zero.*

ASRAI 4

Small humanoid
Weight 40 (1d20+30) lbs.
Modifier +2

These translucent cousins to the merfolk are typically active only at night and are sometimes mistaken for ghosts. They quickly dissolve in sunlight, so they spend their days in underwater caves. *The genuine tears of an asrai may be harvested to make a potion that raises the dead if taken within 1 hour.*

BASS OF ATLANTIS 5

Small edible fish
Weight 9 (3d4+2) lbs.
Modifier +0

This delicious fish spoils if not eaten within 24 hours regardless of how it is prepared. You may sell it for 10 times the normal value if you can get it to market in time.

ABACUS   1

The abacus is an ancient calculating tool made of hand-carved wood and bone. It gives adventurers advantage on rolls regarding mathematical computation.

AMULET OF ALIGNAK   2

This two-sided pendant is blue on one side and white on the other. When the blue side is turned out, the waters are calmed. When the white side is turned out, the waters become rough and the waves rage. Its powers influence only lakes and seas—not ponds, rivers, or open oceans.

AMULET OF BOANN   3

The wearer of this amulet, which features a white stone engraving of a cow at its center, may touch another creature that has been dead less than a day and say "lifethu annan dag" three times to resurrect them. This does not work if the body has been destroyed such as by decapitation or piranha attack. It possesses three charges per owner, and once attuned, ownership may not be transferred until all three charges have been used or the owner has perished. The first time it is used, it costs the owner an eye and they have disadvantage with ranged weapons. The second time, they lose an arm and can no longer use two-handed weapons. The third time, they lose their leg below the knee, which can be replaced with a prosthetic, but they will thereafter move at half speed. This damage may not be restored while those who were saved still live.

AMULET OF DORA   4

The wearer of this amulet has advantage when fishing in saltwater environments. Requires attunement.

AMULET OF SARASWATI   5

The Amulet of Saraswati grants a +2 gain in charisma, but the wearer cannot knowingly speak a lie while wearing it. Requires attunement each time it is removed.

BAG   6

You hook a rumpled and wet leather bag which contains (1d6): 1. 1d6 drowned chickens 2. 1d6 pounds of coal 3. 1d6 necklaces worth 10gp each 4. six maps of local interest of which 1d6 are ruined beyond use 5. 1d6 vials of poison that deal 1d6 damage each 6. 1d6 vials of healing potion that restore 1d6 hit points each.

BAG OF A TRAVELING SCHOLAR 7

You find a leather bag with a book of local lore, a bottle of ink, a quill, 1d4 sheets of parchment, and a list of locations throughout the area with half of them marked off.

BALL OF LEAVES   8

You reel in an unremarkable wad of soggy brown leaves.

OTHER CREATURES

There are plenty of other creatures you may encounter in or around the water. For example, a landbound creature may sneak up behind you while you are engrossed in fishing or raid a riverbank camp at night. There are also many aquatic and semi-aquatic creatures that have not been included elsewhere in this book because their strength, intelligence, supernatural nature, or size would make them less likely to be caught on the end of a hook or caught up in an angler's line. An adventurer might anger one of these creatures by encroaching on their territory, or maybe they see humanoids as prey, or perhaps they just have a bad attitude. At any rate, GMs should keep the following creatures and others in mind. The following list has been numbered in case you wish to roll for chance encounters. More information on most of these creatures can be found in other materials online and in print.

1. aboleths
2. basilisks
3. bioluminescent plankton
4. blue whales
5. brain-eating amoeba
6. brine dragons
7. bristlemouths
8. bog hags
9. bullywugs
10. capybaras
11. cetus
12. chuuls
13. crabmen
14. cranes
15. darktentacles
16. deinosuchus
17. dragon eels
18. dragonflies
19. elementals
20. flesh-eating bacteria
21. fossergrims
22. froghemoths
23. frogs
24. giant salamanders
25. gogglers
26. hai nu
27. hippocampi
28. hippopotami
29. horseflies
30. killer whales
31. kopru
32. kraken
33. lacedons
34. laghathti
35. leviathans
36. Locathah
37. Loch Ness monsters
38. living bogs
39. living lakes
40. malenti
41. marel
42. marids
43. megalodon
44. merfolk
45. merrow
46. mind worms
47. mink
48. mist dragons
49. morkoths
50. mosasaurs

51. myrmyxicus
52. nereids
53. ningyo
54. ocean striders
55. oceanus dragons
56. oozes
57. pahari
58. puddings
59. pterodactyls
60. pythosaurus
61. rusalkas
62. sahuagin
63. sailfin dragons
64. sea cucumber
65. sea elves
66. sea hags
67. sea ogres
68. sea spawn
69. sea trolls
70. sea wraiths
71. sea zombies
72. shalarin
73. shen dragon
74. shrimp
75. sirines
76. sivs
77. skulvyns
78. skum
79. storm giants
80. storm titans
81. Styx dragons
82. suijins
83. swamp monkeys
84. tadpoles
85. takos
86. toads
87. tren
88. tritons
89. umber trolls
90. vodyanoy
91. water cobras
92. water drakes
93. water elementals
94. water lords
95. water monitors
96. water opposums
97. water shrews
98. water wisps
99. xerfilstyxes
100. yurians

WORLD RECORDS

You can use this sheet to keep track of the largest overall fish caught in your world.

TYPE OF FISH	WEIGHT	ANGLER	DATE

TYPE OF FISH	WEIGHT	ANGLER	DATE

TYPE OF FISH	WEIGHT	ANGLER	DATE

As you move carefully along the water's edge, your foot slips and dislodges a stone. You regain your balance, but hold your breath as you watch the small rock tumble toward the waterline. If it strikes the surface, it will send ripples across the pool to warn whatever creatures lie beneath. The stone comes to rest against a clump of river grass. A sigh of relief escapes your lips, and you continue down toward the water. Along the bank, the water is spotted with vegetation, but just a few yards out, a shelf of rock protrudes, then ends abruptly. The water beyond is a dark blue pool with a bottom obscured only by its depth. What will your time here yield? A hearty dinner? A hidden treasure? Another brush with death? Carefully you unshoulder your gear and take your fishing tackle from your pack. You bait the hook and cast toward the center of the pool. The bait splashes down twenty yards out. Slowly you begin to reel in your line. A dark figure moves beneath the surface. Your heartbeat quickens. Is it a great fish or the shadow of something more? Suddenly, you feel a tug at the end of your line….

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Adventurer's Guide to Fishing is the ultimate fishing mechanic for roleplaying games and so much more! This book serves as an extensive underwater bestiary of real-life fish and marine animals, containing descriptions of hundreds of freshwater and saltwater creatures. These pages are also full of mythical creatures, magical items, treasures, and plot hooks meant to be compatible with a variety of fantasy roleplaying games, such as Dungeons & Dragons and Pathfinder. With some minor modifications, this book can also be used along with games set within science fiction, historical, and realistic genres. It can even be used as a standalone fishing game for one or more players.

This guide provides a set of rules that help create a rich and interesting fishing experience within your game, but it also includes five sections based on the d100 principle, including the following: 100 common outcomes for freshwater fishing, 100 rare outcomes for freshwater fishing, 100 common outcomes for saltwater fishing, 100 rare outcomes for saltwater fishing, and 100 items of flotsam and jetsam, which include lots of floating junk plus some extraordinary magical items. The result is over 500 possible outcomes every time an angler's hook hits the water.