

Catch & Release

Circle Hooks

Why use circle hooks?

Fishing with circle hooks is likely to improve the survival rates of returned salmon and sea trout after being caught.

How do circle hooks improve fish survival?

Circle hooks tend to hook a fish in its mouth / lip and are less likely to deep hook a fish so reducing damage to vital organs and blood vessels.

What type of fishing reduces survival?

Compared to survival rates of fish caught and released on fly and spinner (using single or double barbless hooks), worm caught fish using a traditional 'J' hook are likely to have a lower rate of survival because of the increased risk of deep hooking and the damage it can cause.

How can I keep worm fishing and improve survival?

Worm fishing is popular on many Welsh rivers and simply switching from a 'J' hook to a 'C' hook will help improve survival of returned fish.

What type of circle hook should I use?

Studies (*Cooke SJ & Suski CD, 2004) have concluded that lip or mouth hooking is more likely when non off set circle hooks are used (see picture). This is when the point of the hook is inline with its shank.



Will I catch less fish with a circle hook?

This needn't be the case if you make sure the hook point is exposed and avoid striking into the fish but slowly tighten into the fish instead.

Will circle hooks deep hook?

Even with circle hooks there is a chance of deep hooking. If this happens cut the line as close to the hook as possible and do not attempt to remove the hook.

How can I help improve the knowledge on circle hook use?

We want to improve the advice we give to anglers and are keen to hear your views on

circle hooks. Please send any feedback to: rob.evans@environemnt-agency.gov.uk

*Cooke SJ & Suski CD (2004). Are circle hooks an effective tool for conserving marine and freshwater recreational catch-and-release fisheries? *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems* 14, 299-326.