

Fishing with Bobbers, Floats and Balloons.

These buoyant pieces of angling equipment that float on the water are called a variety of names according to their purpose. They are called bobbers, floats, corks, etc. They are simple and inexpensive but a highly effective tackle box asset.



Floats and bobbers come in all colors, shapes and sizes.

As you can see, they are available in an array of colors, shapes and sizes. To help take the guesswork out of which one will be best for your fishing mission, here are the basics!

Top Five Uses for Bobbers

1. To **suspend** the bait at a pre-determined depth
2. To **MAKE NOISE!!!** These popping corks work great for shallow and deep water fishing
3. To **float** the bait to inaccessible areas by drifting in the prevailing current
4. To act as a bite or **strike indicator**
5. To help you keep track of your bait's **location**
6. To give you casting distance (extra weight)



When using light tackle, a float can help you cast a bit further.

Most Popular Types of Bobbers

There are lots of different kinds of bobbers. Some we use all the time, and some are used in other parts of the country. You can use whatever bobber works best for you, but we have our favorites. We like cigars for the bottom (to float a bait on a fishfinder rig), popping corks for open water and balloons both in close and open water situations. They're great under docks and to cover a lot of ground on structured flats

Ball Bobbers

Also known as a strike indicator because they go under or get pulled hard in an unnatural direction when a fish is on the line. For example, a bobber moving into the wind or current at about two knots is a good indicator there's something on the hook. Made famous by the red-and-white color.



[Eagle Claw Snap-On Floats Assortment, 12 Piece, Buy Here.](#)

Popping Corks

Have a concave shape that make a popping noise that entice fish. They're particularly well-suited for fishing on grass flats. A variety of natural and artificial baits fished in combination will produce fish because of the top-water noise (pop) the float makes. Some anglers swear by live shrimp, others like imitation soft-plastic products.



[DOA Deadly Combo Oval Float w/Clear Gold Shrimp - Buy one here.](#)

Slip Bobbers

Designed to travel up and down the line and can be fished at any depth. They are ideal for deeper water and won't interfere with landing your catch. They are often used to float a bait and assist in the ability to cast it further too.



[Thill Pro Series Slip Bobber Rig - Pick one up here.](#)

Balloons

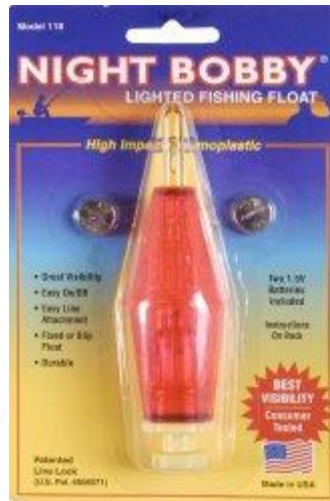
Balloons are a remarkable way to keep a bait on top of the water or in a specific place in the water column. They float well, they're environmentally friendly (despite a lot of news to the contrary) and they're an outstanding way to cover a lot of ground. We're caught all kinds of fish fishing with a balloon. The ones we use most of the time are from a company called BalloonFisherKing.



[Balloon Fisher King 401 Multi-Clip Pro Pack with 9-Inch Balloons - Buy one here.](#)

Ten Other Types of Bobbers, Floats or Corks

1. Weighted floats
2. Oval floats
3. Cigar shaped floats
4. Slotted floats
5. Pegged floats
6. Pencil floats (also called controllers)
7. Balloon floats (inflatable to any size)
8. Bubble float (a clear bobber with a removable plug which can be filled with a little mineral oil or water)
9. Natural cork bobber (a bass fisherman favorite)
10. Glow-In-The-Dark Bobbers (night fishing)



[Bobby Lighted Fishing Float - 4-1/2-Inch -Red or Yellow. Get one here.](#)

Tips for Fishing with Bobbers / Floats

The most important factor to remember about using any float is to select the right one for the kind of fishing you are doing. When suspending a bait from a float, the float must float just enough to prevent it from being pulled under by the weight of the bait. When a fish takes the bait he should feel almost no resistance. If he tugs at the bait and feels some resistance from the float, he will let it go and most of the time not come back for the bait.

Rigging a Ball Bobber

Align up to 30 inches or less from the hook. If fishing deeper water, place the bobber higher up the line. Hold the bobber and press the spring-loaded button on the top. A small hook will pop out of the bottom side of the bobber in which you will make two wraps with your line. The bottom portion of the bobber should face the hook. This double-wrap ensures it will stay in place. Release the top button and allow the bottom hook to retract, while you maintain a tight grip on the line. Next, press on the sides of the top button on the bobber. Make one wrap around the top catch with your line. The bobber is ready to fish!

Rigging a Popping Cork

The tapered end faces downward. Lay your line through the cut on the side and re-insert the rod. Make one loop in the line over the float to ensure that it will not slip. See below for tips about fishing with a popping cork.



Using a popping cork is a unique and clever fishing method.

Rigging a Slip Bobber

(SEE VIDEO BELOW) A slip bobber setup employs the use of additional tackle called a bobber stop, and also uses a bead. To rig, put the line through the tubing inside of the stop. Adjust this to the appropriate depth and then slide the tube out so that only the string stop remains. Pull both ends of the stop-knot until it's tight on your line. Trim the loose ends. Next, attach a bead of appropriate size. If you don't use a bead, the float can slide right past the stop. After attaching the bead, run the line through the slip bobber. Select an appropriate weight to use based on conditions, which will go below the bobber. You may try a couple of slip shots a few inches from your hook. Another way is to slide your line through a sliding sinker and then tie the end of your line to a swivel.

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Round Ball Bobber –

This all-time classic fishing bobber suspends bait and provides an indication to the angler when a fish bites by ducking under the surface. This is a great tool for people both young and old that are learning to fish, and it works for veterans as well. Ensure that the bait and bobber are set a proper distance apart and that the bobber is securely attached.



The classic bobber -- The badge of The Online Fisherman.

Popping Cork -- The sound of the popper cork is particularly enticing to fish. These corks are well suited for fishing on grass flats or areas where fish may be widely dispersed. They're also great for fishing in darker water or areas where the visibility is diminished. You can use a variety of natural and artificial baits with great results. Make your cast and allow the disturbance to settle down. When the rings disappear, snap the tip of your rod and the cork will pop, bubble and splash. Let the rings settle down and pop it again. There are times when it's more productive to pop it two or three times before letting the water settle. Like any technique, try different speeds, force, or lack of force to change the disturbance. Try adjusting the depth at which the bait is positioned for varying results.

Slip Bobber -- Bait up and make your cast, and the slip bobber will rest in a more or less horizontal position as your bait sinks and your line slides through it. As soon as it contacts the stop knot, it should assume a vertical position. The length of time that this takes depends on how deep you are fishing and how much terminal weight you are using.



Many fish have been caught when the traditional cork popped.

Hopefully with a little practice, the proper choice and use of bobbers, corks and floats will help make your fishing experience more productive and most importantly, fun!

[Watch this easy to view video on how to set up a Slip Bobber.](#)