

CATCH AND RELEASE

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

1. KEEP ON POINT

Barbless and circle hooks drastically decrease the damage caused to the fish and increase its chance of survival.



2. AVOID EXHAUSTION

Fish can die from over-exhaustion, so reduce the fight-time by using an appropriately sized line class and release them in a stronger condition.



Photo by Marco Frascchetti

3. PROTECT THE SLIME

The slimy coating found on fish is its main deterrent against infection and disease. Removing this coating can leave a fish susceptible to infection. Use wet hands, or wet gloves when handling fish to prevent the loss of its protective slime.



4. HANDS OFF EYES AND GILLS

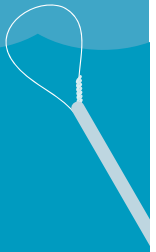
Keep fingers and hands clear of fish eyes and gills. Fish gills contain fragile blood vessels which are easily damaged by human hands.



5. USE THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB

Tangle-free rubber nets are best used to reduce the damage done to a fish's body.

When billfishing, using a 'snooter' to loop the fish's bill will help maintain safe control of it while removing the hooks, taking photos and reviving the fish.



6. SNAP YOUR CATCH SAFELY

Billfish should not be removed from the water for a photo. It is difficult to support their large bodies out of the water and it can cause fatal damage to a billfish's organs and skeletal structures. Use a 'selfie stick' for great photos, while keeping the fish in the water and minimising the stress on the fish.



7. SWIM, REVIVE, RELEASE THEM ALIVE

Revive the fish by swimming it next to the boat while in gear to keep water flowing over its gills.

Release weights give fish with barotrauma the best chance of survival.



More info: recfishwest.org.au/fishing-for-science



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