

REEL TALK MAY 2024



Official newsletter of the Surf Casting and Angling Club of WA (Inc)



Surf Casting and Angling Club of WA (Inc)

Reel Talk – May 2024 Contents

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LIFE MEMBERS

Ian Cook
Mal Head

Peter Osborne
Terry Fuller

Bob Henderson

Deceased life members

Vic Davis
Noel Knight
Jim Strong

Doug Edward
Les Shand
Eric Parker

Lloyd Dunn
Ron Kildahl
George Holman

Dudley Brown
Bob Klein

CLUB COMMITTEE

September 2023 – August 2024

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MAY GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 8th May, 2024

Location: Croatian Club in Wishart Street, Gwelup

Doors open no earlier than 6:45PM

Meal at 7.00PM with General Meeting at 8.00PM

Please RSVP to secretary for catering purposes by Noon On Sunday 5th May.

May Birthdays



Malcolm Harris	3/5
Robert Pekaar	11/5
Thomas Wearmouth	29/5
Victor Tomazin	30/5

Competition Year May 2024 – April 30, 2025.

Field day dates for the 2024 / 2025 Competition Year have been set and Long Weekends have been noted

DATE	VENUE	BOUNDARIES
11 th – 12 th May 2024	Black Rock to Sandy Cape	Mandurah to South Mole
22, 23 & 24 June 2024	Rottnest & Open	North Mole to Yanchep
13 th & 14 th July 2024	Open	Mandurah to South Mole
3 rd , 4 th & 5 th August	Rottnest & Open	North Mole to Yanchep
21 st , 22 nd , & 23 rd September	Bowes River to Murchison River Mouth King's Birthday L W E	Mandurah to South Mole
October 12 th & 13 th	Yanchep to Moore River (incl Moore River)	North Mole to Yanchep
November 16 th & 17 th	Cape to Cape Location to be decided at General Meeting	Mandurah to South Mole
December 14 th & 15 th	Preston to Dawesville Cut Including Peel Estuary	North Mole to Yanchep
January 25 th 26 th & 27 th	S Bend to Dongara	Mandurah to South Mole
February 15 th & 16 th	Cervantes to Jurien Bay	North Mole to Yanchep
March 1 st 2 nd & 3 rd	Reef Beach to Bremer Bay L W E	Mandurah to South Mole
April 19 th 20 th & 21 st	Bluff Creek	North Mole to Yanchep

Standard weekends

Lines down Saturday 0600

Lines up Sunday 0900

Long weekends and Rottnest

Lines down Saturday 0600

Lines up Monday 0900

ROTTNEST FIELD DAYS 2024

The scheduled dates for club field days on Rottnest for 2024 are:

June 22nd 23rd & 24th & August 3rd 4th & 5th

The initial cost for each is \$170 per attendee, which includes accommodation, bus transportation, and ferry crates.

Note that this does not include your food, bait or transport costs to or from the island

Members can travel in a group to Rottnest or make their own way over.

For details of club and group arrangements and payment of a deposit please contact Peet Wessels.

DRY CASTING

DRYCASTING REPORT APRIL 2024

A gentle easterly breeze coming from behind, a beautiful presentation of a casting area and we were off enjoying our casting capabilities (well some of us are limited). Gary well on song during the distance events will 141 m in the 56 g, 116 m in the a/bait and 149 m in the 112 g event, winning each division. Moving over to the d/handed event we watched as Gary cast truly and trounced us all with 169 points. Got to admit it has been a while since the "can rang" but today, Gary, Mark and I had bullseyes. Mark was smiling when informed he had won the s/hand event with 25 points.

Newcomer Vince is "slowly" getting the hang of it and improves with each cast, except for the "Jesus" casts. You know, when a call goes out J..._.s "were did that go". Another enjoyable morning with fellow club members.

All are welcome to join us, it is a good social morning.

DCO Bob Henderson

Dry casting is held once a month at Perth Polo Club Meadow St Guildford WA 6055

Please contact Bob Henderson if you are interested in joining in

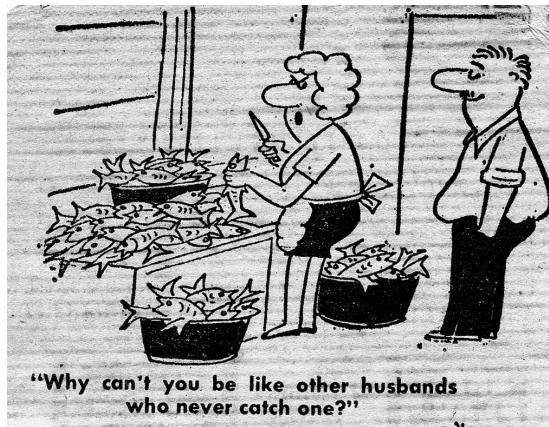
Results

Name	DHA	H/C	SCORE	SHA	H/C	SCORE	TOTAL
Gary Gildersleeves	169	0	169	12	5	17	186
Bob Henderson	115	10	125	13	1	14	139
Mal Head	131	35	166	21	9	30	196
Mark Hansen	118	29	147	25	3	28	175
Vince Tomazin	50		50	3	-	3	53

NAME	56 g	H/C	SCORE	ART/BAIT	H/C	SCORE	112 g	H/C	SCORE	TOTAL
Gary	141.88	11	152.88	116.20	9	125.20	147.64	15	162.64	
	126.92	11	137.93	113.53	9	122.53	149.73	15	164.73	1070.91
Bob	119.28	12	131.28	103.42	15	118.42	132.20	15	147.20	
	112.82	12	124.82	113.98	15	128.98	130.13	15	145.13	961.83
Mal	96.85	50	146.85	70.29	39	109.29	87.76	52	139.76	
	85.51	50	135.51	72.19	39	111.19	94.01	52	146.01	998.61
Mark	74.48	32	106.48	82.04	34	116.04	108.83	41	160.83	
	97.12	32	129.02	90.64	34	124.64	101.30	41	142.30	968.31
Vince T	37.43		37.43	49.16		49.16	51.75		51.75	
	47.72		47.72	52.55		52.55	58.02		58.02	349.63

Note: Vince has yet to have a handicap allocated.

Overall, Winner with Handicap: Gary Gildersleeves.



KINGFISH CEVICHE

For members going to Rottnest to tangle with yellowtail kingfish.



Prep 20 Mins; No Cooking Required; Serves 6

Ingredients:

300 g semi firm fish fillets, skinned
 ½ punnet heirloom cherry tomatoes (see note)
 1 small white onion, finely chopped
 ½ teaspoon flaked salt
 1 tablespoon white vinegar
 ½ cup chopped fresh coriander leaves
 1 fresh green jalapeno chilli, seeds and membrane removed, finely diced

¼ cup fresh lime juice
 1 small green capsicum
 ½ teaspoon dried oregano
 ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
 1½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 Corn chips, to serve

Method:

Check the fillets for any bones and remove. Then slice fish along the grain into 2 mm slices and cut into dice. Place the fish into a medium non-reactive bowl (see note). Add the lime juice and toss to coat fish in juice. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour to allow fish to 'cook' in the lime juice; stir twice. You will notice the flesh begin to change to a white cooked colour.

Meanwhile cut the tomatoes into eighths. Halve the capsicum and deseed then finely chop and place into a large bowl with the chilli and onion. Cover and place into the refrigerator.

Add the fish to the bowl with the tomato and peppers. Add the oregano, salt, pepper, vinegar and olive oil. Gently stir the mixture to combine ingredients. Check salt to taste.

Return bowl to refrigerator and allow the mixture to stand for 10 minutes before serving for better flavour. Stir through coriander and serve. Ceviche is best served very chilled and eaten within 2 hours of being made.

Notes:

Non-reactive bowls include glass, ceramic or stainless steel that will not react with the large amount of acid in the lime juice in this recipe.

Do You Enjoy Exploring WA? - You Can Help Support The RFDS – Donate via the Link Below.

**Flying
 Doctor
 15 May
 2024 Day**



This Flying Doctor Day we are raising money to purchase vital medical equipment to help our patients.

[Donate now](#)

Donations made on or before 15 May will be DOUBLED thanks to our Matched Giving Partners until we reach our first goal.

FISH FINGER SANGA



Serves: 4; Prep time: 15 minutes; Cook time: 15 minutes.

Ingredients

600g Whiting fish fillets – cut into fingers
1 cup plain flour
8 slices of bread
tartare sauce and butter, to serve

2 eggs, whisked
2 cups breadcrumbs
8 butter lettuce leaves
olive oil spray

Method:

Making your own fish fingers is super easy! In separate bowls set out the flour, eggs and breadcrumbs. Coat the fish in the flour, then the egg, and then the breadcrumbs. Place the crumbed fish fingers onto a lined baking tray, spray with olive oil and cook in 180° C pre-heated oven for 15 minutes.

Bread, butter, tartare, fish, lettuce, bread. Repeat.

Serve with sweet potato fries.

AVOIDING HANG UPS

Getting caught up in timber, weeds, rocks or crevices is part and parcel of fishing. Casting and retrieving baits and lures around structure invariably results in becoming frustratingly snagged. Whilst unavoidable at times, you can minimise the chance of losing your lure or rig by employing a few techniques to snag proof your offering. Shielding hook points is the basic premise behind a snag free offering with a number of variants possible depending on the hook and lure combination being used. Once the inevitable occurs you will need to figure out how to best approach freeing your lure or whether you just pull as hard as you can and hope for the best! Read on for a few tips and rigs on how to fish around snags.

Weedless presentations

The main way to rig your soft plastic in a weedless fashion is to use a wide gape worm hook and embed the hook point flush with the lure body so that the hook does not protrude and catch on an obstruction. An alternate presentation is to employ the use of a weed guard which is a thin filament of nylon, steel wire or even an elastic band which extends from the eye of the jig head to the point of the hook. With the hook point hidden or shielded to avoid the snags, you might find yourself missing a few fish or having to strike harder to ensure the hook point is driven in when a fish bites. Treble hooks on hardbody lures can be made more snag free by tying bristles or feathers to the shank; the stiffer the material used, the more effective it will shield the hook point!

Trailing and sacrificial weights

Sinkers naturally sink quickly and are prone to getting fouled and stuck beyond rescue. In rocky and snag laden territory, minimising the amount of weight you use is the first step in reducing the chances of your sinker getting caught up. A trailing sinker rather than a leading sinker will also help minimise snags; what I mean by this is that the weight trailing behind the hook will lessen the chances of your hook and leader getting caught up than if it was in front of the hook and dragging your leader down into the obstruction. Trailing rigs include the paternoster rig and lend themselves to the use of elongated and streamlined weights, like snapper sinkers which, are less prone to getting caught up. When using any weight in a trailing rig, you should always tie the sinker sacrificially using a lighter leader which will break well before the mainline does.

Use less hook points!

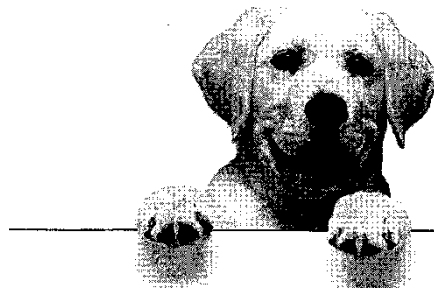
Treble hooks are notorious for catching on tree branches and weeds. As indicated by their name, each treble has three points that are likely to catch on an obstruction with minnow lures having two or more sets of trebles the likelihood of the lure becoming fouled or stuck is elevated. Removing the body set of trebles and leaving only a set on the tail can help decrease the likelihood of snags. Adding feathers and weed guards with further enhance their ability to dodge a stray branch or piece of foliage. Continuing with this theme, replacing trebles with single hooks can

further improve your lures snag resistance; ultimately the less hook points you use, the lower the chance of becoming snagged.

Light touch and snag retrieval

That dreaded moment when you come tight and realise you're stuck solid is an all too familiar feeling for many anglers. Fishing around snags, especially softer snags from trees and shrubs, requires a light touch and almost finesse like approach the moment you feel contact. Pull too hard or try to brute force your lure out of the snag risks driving barb of the hook into the structure making in almost impossible to retrieve. The alternate and recommended approach is to lightly tension the line and release with a flick to slingshot your lure backwards. Alternatively, another successful method is to alter the direction you pull by positioning yourself vertically above your lure or reversing back past it then applying gentle pressure. If a treasured lure is stuck firmly you can send down a lure retriever. These devices are designed to catch onto the swivel or hooks of your lure and allow you to apply extreme pressure to release the lure by either ripping it off the snag or sacrificing the hooks by straightening them. There are many variants of the lure retrievers them with some on poles that allow you to poke and prod at the snagged lure to jolt it free. If all else fails and you are stuck tight, the last-ditch approach is to exert maximum force and break away your sacrificial weight, straighten your hooks or otherwise rip the lure away from its captor. A pair of gloves and a few wraps on the line is one way to pull your rig free, alternatively you should point your rod at the snag, hold the spool and then pull the rod away from the snag until something gives!

Canine Life Rules



If dogs could teach us, we would learn things such as:

- when loved ones come home, always run to greet them
- never pass up the opportunity to go for a joyride
- allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy
- when it's in your best interest - practice obedience
- let others know when they have invaded your territory
- take naps and stretch before rising
- run, romp and play daily
- thrive on attention and let people touch you
- avoid biting, when a simple growl will do
- on warm days, stop to lie on your back on the grass
- on hot days, drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree
- when you are happy, dance and wag your entire body
- no matter how often you are scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout ... run right back and make friends
- delight in the simple joy of a long walk
- eat with gusto and enthusiasm. Stop when you have had enough
- be loyal
- never pretend to be something you are not
- if what you want lies buried, dig until you find it
- when someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently

Applying the above lessons to your life should make it a little less RUFF!

Remember the Boy Scouts Motto – Be Prepared !
When going fishing remember to pack **ALL** of your fishing gear.



Apologies to Pat McKeown who got caught short at Floreat.

From the archives somethings will always come back to bite you.

10 THINGS YOU MUST DO WHEN TRAVELLING SOLO

By Glenn Marshal, Downloaded from 'Unsealed4 x 4 8/4/24

Travelling solo on remote tracks is quite literally taking your life into your own hands.

You can't always travel with friends so for those times when you're travelling solo in remote areas you really need to take extra precautions. Here are 10 things you need to do.

There have been too many tragedies where even well-seasoned travellers have come unstuck in remote areas and perished, and no matter how prepared or experienced you are, things can happen that will end your life. As a solo traveller, I am aware of the risks I take. And you need to realise that no matter how much you think "she'll be right mate", sometimes it's not.

1. Know your limitations

I am a solo a solo adventurer, and have been for years. I prepare to the 'nth' degree and carry the provisions and tools to keep me alive if I get stuck. I'm confident in my abilities and that of my vehicle to get me where I want to go but I also know my limitations. Do you know yours? Reduce the risks. Is it worth trying to cross a raging river instead of finding another route? Is there a way around that claypan? Will your vehicle be badly damaged if you tackle that rocky slope?

Having an amazing adventure does not mean you have to risk your life or your vehicle to get from A to B. Knowing what your body can handle is important too. Few of us have the cardio ability to work hard and fast on recovering a bogged vehicle. When was the last time a doctor had a good look at you? I can tell you from experience that when I had a heart attack, I certainly wasn't expecting it. Had it occurred when I was on a solo adventure, I would be dead.

2. Tell someone where you're going

Australia is one hell of a big island, and the majority of it is remote. You can make life extremely difficult for search parties to find you if they have no idea where you are. Never head off without advising someone of your intended route. Tell your partner, a family member, a mate or even the police; just let at least one person know of your plans. On long trips, it is good to keep people updated on your progress because if you don't reach your destination and contact that person, they can raise the alarm sooner rather than later, and send the search party in the right direction. This may save your life.

3. Essentials – food and water

In normal conditions, you can survive for more than three weeks without food, but water is different. At least 60% (up to 75% in children) of our bodies are made of water and every living cell needs it to keep working. It lubricates our joints, regulates our body temperature and aids in flushing waste. Without water, you will be lucky to last a week in cool conditions and hidden from direct sunlight. In hot and humid conditions, three or four days maximum is how long you would last. An adult must consume a minimum of four litres per day to stay alive. When conditions are extreme, an adult can sweat 1-1.5 litres per hour and if this fluid isn't replaced you are in danger of becoming dehydrated. If not reversed, it is life-threatening to lose more than 10% of your body weight due to dehydration.

4. Communications

Having the ability to communicate with others is critical. In remote places like the Kimberley, your mobile phone is nothing more than a camera. A UHF is more useful as your voice can be heard over good distances, especially if repeater stations are utilised. If all you have is a handheld, it must be a 5W unit, not one of those cheap plastic radios that are great for the kids playing in the backyard. Better yet, carry a satellite phone. These are getting cheaper and the network coverage is improving all the time.

A satellite communicator is like a satellite phone, but rather than make audio calls it can be used to send text messages. Two examples are the Garmin InReach Mini 2 and the Zoleo. Some can be connected to your phone via Bluetooth and using an app you can send texts from anywhere on earth.

5. EPIRB or PLB?

What are they and how do they work? Well, they both work the same way by sending a coded message via the 406 MHz distress frequency. This coded message should include your GPS coordinates and they are relayed via a global satellite system. Having GPS capabilities will make locating your position faster and more accurate. EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) are generally installed on marine craft as they are larger and have a longer battery run-time than a PLB (Personal Locating Beacon). PLBs are smaller and better suited to be carried by an individual. Once activated, they will transmit your location for a minimum of 24 hours before the battery runs out. In my book, having a PLB on you is the best solution for surviving a life-threatening situation.

The Australian Government has a website that explains everything you need to know about beacons, [here](#).

6. Survival techniques

You've broken down or are badly stuck. The first rule is to not panic, the second rule is to NEVER leave your vehicle. If you can raise the alarm, do so; know where you're located. Open your awning to provide shade (it also gives you a larger footprint to see from the air), set up your swag to give you somewhere to sleep, look at the amount of water and food you have left and start rationing it straight away.

Collect wood for warmth and check out your surrounding environment during the coolest time of the day. Is there any bush tucker about? Do you know what is edible and what is not? I carry [Les Hiddens Bush Tucker Field Guide](#) as it's pocket-sized and very useful. Carry some large plastic bags so that you can collect water by wrapping them around the leaves on a tree or make a solar still. Set a signal fire with wood and green leaves that will create smoke; make sure you can light it easily. During the hottest times of the day, rest in the shade and keep cool; you will burn less energy and sweat less. Keeping hydrated is critical, but sip, don't guzzle. Nibble your food and eat less; this will reduce your thirst. At night the temperatures can drop to freezing, so keep warm.

7. First Aid

If travelling remotely, carry at least one decent first aid kit and a second compact one and know how to use them. Complete a first aid course and do refreshers. Make sure you have the gear to handle a snake bite, toothache, fish hook extraction, splinters, a compound fracture, burns and so on. Carry hydralytes to replace the electrolytes you lose when you sweat. Make sure your first aid kits are easily accessible so that anyone can find them if needed. One of my greatest concerns when adventuring solo is getting bitten by a snake, as most of them are venomous and I am a long way from an anti-venom. The way I dress reduces the chances of being bitten but there is still a big chance, especially at night.

8. Accurate navigation

Knowing exactly where you are is important if you ever need to relay that information to anyone. Electronic maps are brilliant, especially if they show GPS coordinates, and handheld GPS units are great too. Paper maps are still the most important means by which to find out where you are. Learn how to read a map and carry a handheld compass too; they are lightweight and take up next to no space but are handy not only in working out where north is, but they can also be used to help guide you to a point on a paper map that may be important. Paper maps and a compass don't require batteries either.

9. Trackers

Not all GPS trackers are equal; you don't want one that only works on 4G/3G networks – it must have satellite connectivity like the Spot Gen3. This is a subscription service that tracks your movement and updates it online, so family and friends can see where you are. It also has an SOS feature that sends your GPS coordinates to emergency services (000 in Australia) and allows you to check in when you are out of mobile range.

10. Self-extraction

Not only should you be carrying the required recovery gear, but you need to be able to use it, by yourself, if you are travelling solo. That doesn't necessarily mean carrying a sand anchor (although they would be handy in the desert), but it does mean that you can extract yourself without too much blood, sweat and tears. It is always better to boil the billy and have a cuppa before the recovery even starts, that way you have time to relax and clear your mind

before the challenge begins. Minimum requirements for a solo adventurer are a long-handle shovel, recovery tracks, a winch, shackles, a snatch block, rated recovery points and a winch extension strap.



STILL LIFE

HERRING ROASTED WITH LIME LEAVES AND CHILLI

serves 1 - 2

Ingredients

6 fresh herring fillets
small pinch ground turmeric
8 kaffir lime leaves
coconut oil for frying

1 teaspoon sea salt

1 lime, thinly sliced

6 bird's eye chillies

Nam jim dipping sauce

3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon sea salt
2 teaspoons fish sauce

4 coriander roots, chopped

2 teaspoons palm sugar

1 small bird's eye chilli, deseeded and chopped

For serving

rice noodles cooked to packet instructions, shredded wombok (or Chinese cabbage), Thai basil leaves, roughly torn and crushed salted peanuts

Method

To make Nam jim sauce:

Place garlic, coriander, salt, palm sugar, fish sauce and chilli in a food processor and blend until finely chopped. Set aside. Preheat oven to 200 °C. Wash herrings in sea water and pat dry with paper towel. Mix sea salt with turmeric and rub generously both inside and outside of each fish. Place lime slices inside the belly, then tie up the fish with string so the slices do not fall out. Preheat an ovenproof dish with enough coconut oil to cover the base.

When oil is hot, add lime leaves and chillis, then return to oven and cook for 1 minute to release their flavour. Add fish and return to oven for 15 minutes or until golden and cooked through.

Serve with rice noodles, wombok and Thai basil tossed with Nam jim sauce and peanuts.

Keeping it clean

If you've used your recovery gear more than once, chances are it's going to be cake in mud, dirt and dust. Before you pack it away, it's a solid idea to clean it up beforehand. A wash down with the hose, and hang it up (out of direct sunlight if possible) to dry for a day. This will ensure it will last longer, and you're working with nice clean gear when you need to use it next time.

The old saying 'look after your gear and it will look after you' is the trick here.

Help your gear help you

Wherever you can, make the snatch recovery easier. Where possible, get your wheels straight, so they offer the least amount of resistance, and clear out as much mud, dirt, rocks, whatever from in front of your tyres. Yep, this will require getting the shovel down, and doing a bit of manual labour, but making the recovery as gentle as possible limits the amount of risk of using the strap in the first place. You can also dig a little trench to your recovery point for the strap to sit in, so it's as straight-line as possible to your recovery point; reducing the loading of the strap so it's as straight line as you can make it.

Not only will you reduce the loading on your strap, but also your recovery points – remember everything is rated, and wherever you can reduce the amount of strain on things, the longer they will last you, and the less chance there is of something going proper pair-shaped.

Rated recovery

USE RATED RECOVERY GEAR! There... I said it. That includes your recovery points, your straps, your shackles, the works. This will keep you safe, and hopefully, stop anything going skew-whiff on you.

The ratings are something you'll need to keep in mind too. Sure, you've got a nine-tonne strap and five-tonne shackles, and your four-wheel drive only weighs three-tons, all good right? Not so much. When you're using a snatch strap, you're going to be shock-loading all of the recovery gear. It's impossible to work out specific weight loadings when recovering someone, simply due to how badly they're bogged, suctioning into the mud, weights of vehicles, angles, the works; but it's a lot higher than you'd imagine. Always err on the higher side of ratings when you can.

Using properly rated gear can and will save your life. Rated recovery points, shackles and recovery gear should be clearly marked with their working load limits; and if you're uncertain, don't use them!

Lessen the load

Next on how to use a snatch strap safely, look at halving your weight on a recovery point. Recoveries put huge amounts of stress onto all the recovery components being used, through the sheer force placed onto both the moving vehicle and the stationary vehicle being recovered. One way to lessen the stress upon the recovered vehicle is through the use of an equaliser strap. The equaliser strap does exactly as its name suggests by spreading the load across two recovery points, dramatically reducing the likelihood of component failure through the shock of the recovery.

You can get specific equaliser bridles and straps; however a tree trunk protector will work in most cases; especially as they're usually rated even more than your snatch strap, and because they're a short static strap. There's no stretch or rebound in them. Connecting this between two front recovery points will halve the strain on those points.

Steady as she goes

Who has seen recoveries where the recovering vehicle takes a run-off and blasts full-tilt forward with all four wheels spinning at a great rate of knots? This type of recovery attempt places unbelievable force on both vehicles as well as the recovery gear ... and the truth is, most recoveries can be achieved through a 'steady as she goes' approach.

Start off slow, and take up the slack of the recovery strap to see if a more gentle recovery attempt works first of all. Leave a metre or two of slack strap on the second attempt, before progressively getting quicker if the first couple of efforts don't work.

Interestingly enough, a lot of the time, you can get someone out (so long as they're able to drive forward as you pull), just by 'leaning on them'. Take up the slack of the strap, and just try to drive off; it'll usually get you there.

The Don'ts

Never join two recovery straps with a metal shackle. If either the shackle or one of the straps breaks, the shackle then becomes an airborne missile that starts life directly between each vehicle. If a strap brakes with a metal shackle attached to each vehicle, it's only the length of strap flying.

Be careful snatching out of really deep mud. The mud can often act like a vacuum around the vehicle's wheels and chassis, creating a situation that is better suited to winching rather than snatching. Recovery tracks can often be a better option here, too.

Never, ever, ever recover off a tow ball. We shouldn't need to say this, but we're still seeing it being done! They are simply not designed to withstand sudden sideways shock forces and can very quickly become metal missiles.

Unfortunately, there have been numerous instances of serious injury and death in Australia and overseas through broken tow balls.

Recoveries are not a spectator sport. They can be dangerous. Therefore, don't allow people to stand around watching the action. This can be done politely by asking people to stand at least two lengths of a strap away from the action and preferably to the side.

The Do's

How's about some 'Do's' of using a snatch strap safely? Make sure your recovery gear is in good working order. Straps should be whole and not torn or frayed. If in doubt, throw it out!

Always use a strap or winch dampener in the middle of the strap or winch rope in order to reduce the recoil, should something fail in the recovery. Don't have a dampener? Even an old jumper or a couple of beach towels will work a treat.

Relax! Stress does nothing to create a safe and secure recovery. If you find yourself stuck, then take the time to think things through. Have a cuppa; sit down and consider which recovery technique might work best.

A day out in your 4 x 4 should be fun for everyone... and from time to time, you may well get stuck. Recovering your vehicle can be part of a great day out if executed correctly and safely. Take your time, do it right and enjoy it!

Never snatch in reverse

Sure, it'll be a pain in the ass turning around on a tight track to pull a mate out, but if you like having teeth on the crown-wheel and pinion of your diff, don't snatch in reverse! See, the teeth on your crown-wheel and pinion are cut a certain way; where there is the most amount of contact when you're going forward – most of us drive forwards more often, right? So if you're snatching in reverse, the load up is against a smaller contact area, so there is more physical force on a smaller area – ergo, a greater chance of snapping teeth.

And this, is how you use your snatch strap, safely.

SPOOLING UP

Sam Omari - Nov 23 - Fishing World Magazine

If you have ever tried replacing the line on all of your reels at the end of a long season you will soon realise that it can be an arduous task. There's more to spooling a reel than meets the eye and it's not a matter of simply tying the line onto the spool and winding; spool knots need to be secure, line needs to be tensioned and the amount of line accurately metred to avoid inefficiencies and issues when casting. I often spool my reels on my own and have found a few tips and gadgets that makes the job of spooling one or many reels less of a chore.

Fixing the line to the spool

The first step in the spooling process is to tie the line to the spool. Some overhead and bait cast reels have a lug on the spool that you can tie to directly making the process easier. Regular spin and overhead or centrepin reels without a lug need the line tied directly to the spool with the line secured so it does not spin on the spool. To do this, I start off by wrapping the line around a few times then tying off with a uni knot that is tightly snugged down. For added security I use some electrical tape to tape down the knot and wraps of line. I see many people recommending the use of tape first however I have found that a few winds with a tightened uni knot is difficult to turn and once you tape it down, you still get the advantage of the newly wound line bedding into the tape whilst the tightened knot tied directly to the spool will be further secured by the tape that is now under a reasonable amount of pressure from the line wound on top.

Solo spooling

One of the most frustrating rigging tasks to complete on your own is spooling a reel. Having a friend holding the spool is ideal but if help is not available, there are a number of ways to combat the frustration so solo spooling. Threading some twine or rope through the spool then tying off to the handles of a bucket is a simple method that I

have used many times over the years. Filling the bucket with water gives the added advantage of adding a slight amount of tension to prevent an overrun on the spool and also allows line that might be hygroscopic an opportunity to react to the water before touching the reel. A screwdriver through the spool and then secured in a vice is another easy method of solo spooling. Specific line spooling devices are the best option as they not only hold the spool of line but can be adjusted for tension. If you don't have a line spooling device, you can still tension the spool in a number of ways. The two methods I've relied on over the years are to place some masking tape on a screwdriver as close to the handle as possible and build it up to thick enough so that the spool needs to be forced on. You then stick the screwdriver horizontally into a vice leave a few millimetres so that the spool doesn't touch the vice but also can't fall off the tape. The second method is to use a cloth gardening glove and tension the line with your hand. You can add a reasonable amount of tension simply by running the line through your fingers and clenching your hand your hand or pinching the line between your index finger and thumb for added tension.

Top shotting and amount of line required

Top shotting line has been around for years and involves having a base line that is well below the spool's maximum capacity that is topped up by another line, the "top shot". The challenge with top shotting is knowing how much base line and top shot will optimally fit on the spool. The easiest way is to first tie on the top shot then finish off by attaching the base line using an FG knot or similar and final winding on the base line till the spool is filled. Many spin reels have two spools so it's easy enough to do this on one spool then wind it onto the spare spool so that the top shot is at the top again. If you only have a single spool, you then need to reverse the line twice before being able to wind the base line back on the reel first. The easiest way I've found to do this is with a couple of spare empty line spools that I force onto a Phillips head screwdriver that with masking tape near the handle to tension shim and the spool. Placing the screwdriver into a drill (hence the Phillips head), you can quickly wind the reel off the reel and onto the spool. Repeat the process with another spool to reverse the line so that the baseline is wound on first and the top shot wound last. Whether you're top shotting or filling with a single line, you generally want to fill your line so that it's within a couple of millimetres of the spool lip.

Recording line

I have multiple outfits with identical reels making it tough to differentiate which line class is on which reel. Using a sliver of masking tape and a fine permanent marker is a simple yet effective method. Secure the tape to the underside of the spool or to the reel seat. The key point here is to use a consistent naming convention or to add units of measure to make it easy to remember. I always use pounds when recoding line so my three identical 2500 reels have markings for 6 and 8 and 10 lb line.



Helpful DIY tools

You can easily make a couple of DIY tools that will help with the line spooling and despooling processes. A simple line spooler can be made using some timber, a long bolt, some hex nuts, wing nuts, washers and a spring. The basic idea is the timber makes an L shaped frame with the horizontal side used a base to secure to a bench and the vertical side used for holding the spool. Drill a hole in the horizontal size, thread the bolt on the secure it with a hex nut. Place the spring onto the bolt, then a washer, then place the spool onto the bolt. You then place another washer and a wing nut on the bolt and tighten till it pushes the screw onto the spring. Adjust the tension by tightening or loosening the wing nut then finally thread on a hex nut to lock it all into place. The easiest and most effective way to unspool a reel is to drill a hole through a one litre water or soft drink bottle cap then place a bolt through the underside of the cap. You secure the bolt to the cap with a hex nut threaded on from the top side of the cap. Screw this onto any old bottle, fasten the line to the bottle with a knot or some tape and use a drill to spin the bottle and unspool the reel. You can then simply throw the entire bottle and old line into the recycling bin.

TAILOR AND MULLOWAY FROM THE BEACH

If you want to catch tailor and mulloway from the beach, three rules to remember;

- fish when they want to eat,
- be in a good location and,
- use the right gear.

Fishing from a surf beach can be one of the least expensive and most rewarding means of salt water fishing - if you're at the right place at the right time! Unfortunately, most anglers don't put enough thought or effort into the sport, and, since they rarely catch anything worthwhile, come to the conclusion that it's just not a very viable method of catching good fish.

For most anglers, tailor and mulloway are the main targets of beach fishermen. In Western Australia they are sought from the surf beaches from west of the Nullarbor cliffs east of Norseman, right up to Carnarvon. It's likely that no other stretch of surf in the world produces finer angling for two such high-quality fish.

Tailor populations have gone down from the historically high numbers of the 1960's and 1970's. Though their population remains quite healthy, their abundance close to shore isn't nearly what it was, and bag limit catches of tailor are more occasional than routine. Both mulloway and tailor migrate along the West Australian coastline each summer and winter, providing a long season. For instance, anglers fishing the southern metropolitan beaches may start catching mulloway in October, and should continue until February or March. As summer progresses they move north and into the estuaries of the Peel Harvey and the Swan and Canning rivers. They also continue to move north along the metropolitan coast to locations north of Yanchep and Two Rocks. They are also caught from the beaches between Dongara and Kalbarri and further north.

Winter tailor arrive a bit later, usually around the beginning of April / May, on metropolitan beaches and are generally larger in size than their summer counterparts. They can be found along most of our metropolitan beaches all year round, but winter fishing appears to be better. The vast majority of fishermen tend to use mulies or pilchards as they are known in the eastern states, on a simple surf rig. With improvements in rod, reel and line technology, a lot more anglers are starting to fish for them using lures rather than bait.

Fishing with lures has to be even more specifically attuned to the first rule of surf fishing outlined at the beginning of this article – being at the right place at the right time. A bait soaking in the surf might be gobbled up by a single lazy fish if you're lucky, but success with lures usually requires a quantity of actively feeding fish.

Dawn and dusk are generally the best times to fish the surf with lures, especially if the tidal situation is right. Some beaches may be too shallow at low tide, while others are best at such tides due to deep cuts that allow fish to safely get at concentrated baitfish that may be too hard to pin down at higher tides.

The best bet when fishing a new area is to scope it out at the extreme tides. Low tide is the first priority, as the holes, gutters and other beach formations such as reefs and rocks, etc., will be easier to recognize. The same place at high water may lose all distinction, especially in calm seas, but you'll then know which areas are most likely to hold fish.

In point of fact, tailor and mulloway could be anywhere along the beach. However, a knowledge of the beach structure will enable you to work the most likely areas hardest. A gutter cut though the outer bar that forms a relatively deep water channel, creates an ideal low water situation, as fish should be concentrated within that gutter. The edges of the bar on both sides of the gutter deserve special attention. That same area could be productive on higher tides, but now your effort should be directed to the white water on the bars and in adjacent gutters, as long as it's deep enough to hold the size fish you're seeking.

Foam covered water is ideal for fish that have an advantage under such circumstances in chasing down baitfish. These fish are also easier to fool with an artificial when the visibility is a little off. Crystal-clear waters may look good, but often aren't desirable when working lures. Waters that are just a bit off-colour, such as a couple of days after a storm, or have a bit of wave action caused by a sea breeze, are normally ideal. Flat still calm seas are not productive waters if you're fishing for tailor or mulloway. Experienced anglers won't fish on days where the wind is down and there is no chop on the water to provide a bit of cover for the predatory tailor and mulloway.

Catch them up close:

Everyone wants to cast as far as they can, although that's not always the key to catching fish in the surf. By all means cover everything within range, but don't speed up your retrieve during the last few yards just so you can fling another cast to the horizon. For the same reason that the edges of bars are productive, the wash is often the best

spot of all. Mulloway especially like to patrol the drop-off to pick up crabs being washed off the beach, as well as baitfish tumbled in the wash.

Always retrieve your lure properly until it hits the sand (I've seen mulloway almost beach themselves as they've hit a lure in the curl of a wave) and you'll often find that the majority of your catch will be made within a few yards of the beach. In addition to the fish feeding there, any following your lure in will be forced to make a decision as they near the wash.

As previously noted, dawn and dusk are almost always your best bets for working lures in the surf, though there are lots of exceptions to that rule, especially during the periods of migration. Tailor are primarily daytime feeders and usually don't hit lures well at night in the surf, even if bait fishermen continue to catch them after dark. On the other hand, mulloway are active nocturnal feeders and will hit lures and baits at any time.

Use The Right Tackle

Match the hatch!. To be successful, try to match the size and shape of the bait being consumed. Small lures will catch more tailor than large ones, but your tackle must be scaled down in order to fish such lures properly. Many new anglers have visions of casting lures out with 10 foot rods, and figure that's all that they need. Actually, relatively light tackle is suitable for most beach fishing with lures. Anglers along the metropolitan shore generally use a medium-action, two-handed eight to ten foot spinning rods with reels capable of holding 200 yards or so of eight to ten foot rod with 6 kilo mono in order to cast lures weighing an ounce or less, jigs from $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce or one to two ounce metal lures and poppers. Though most anglers will expect to mostly catch choppers and 'soapies', some very large mulloway have been landed with such gear. Most importantly, the tackle doesn't wear out the angler so they can often cast comfortably for hours - which is often the key to being at the right place at the right time! It's a different story if you're casting from rocks or groynes, but even in those areas there are nearby spots where the light tackle is appropriate and a lot more comfortable to handle. Large poppers or stick baits are routinely fished by anglers working these areas known for big tailor or mulloway. The ability to catch larger specimens using such lures from beaches is usually restricted to periods when large baits such as mullet, garfish, herring or other baitfish are present. Many anglers specifically fish for scaly mackerel to use as either a live bait or a fillet bait for big tailor or mulloway.

Though not always necessary, those traditional 12 to 14-foot rods with big spinning reels are a good bet for fishing in the surf so that you can keep the line out of the swells in locations where big baits must be cast well offshore.

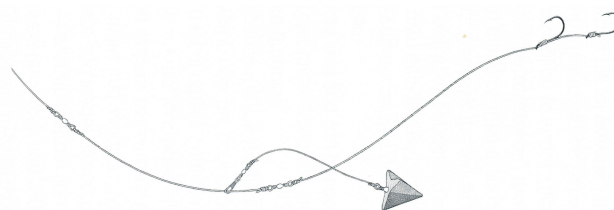
Though you'll get a lot farther with big rods, keep in mind what I said about the closer wash. Kids with short rods catch legal sized mulloway and tailor from the surf while only casting a bait a few yards out into an inshore gutter. In the meantime, the 'experienced' angler is casting baits which are sitting 100 – 120 metres farther out, and may be doing nothing because they've ignored the most obvious potential hot spot which is right at their feet!

Best Baits:

If you're strictly looking for a trophy fish, use a herring, a scaly mackerel or a whiting or a small legal sized tailor, either as a live bait or as a filleted bait, but be prepared to wait and fight off crabs. Keep your bait off the bottom away from the crabs or a stingray. This is readily achieved by using a cork fitted to the rig close to the hooks.

Big tailor also like both live and larger dead baits or fillets and if there are tailor around you may have to use a short length of wire leader in order to avoid being bitten off. I personally don't use wire unless I'm using snooded hooks to avoid being bitten off by a tailor. Generally a gang of hooks will provide sufficient distance between the bait and the mono leader to avoid bite-offs.

Catching mulloway and tailor on the beach is no easy matter, but it's very satisfying and can be reasonably productive if you're willing to put in the time when the fish want to feed rather than when it might be convenient to give it a try. Pounding the beaches at dawn and dusk, especially in the Spring and Autumn months, will surely get you into fish with some regularity.



Rig for mulloway using a slab bait such as herring, tailor or mulloway.

Most successful beach anglers have an additional edge in terms of contacts. Get friendly with those regulars who haunt the areas you plan to fish and share information with them. That may well result in a call "to get down here right away" whenever mullet or tailor suddenly show up. Patronizing tackle shops is another good idea for getting that all important information that others read about after the bite is over! Beach fishing for tailor and particularly mullet, may not be the easiest way to catch them, but it really isn't as difficult as most anglers imagine. Get out and give it some consideration and put in some hours as then you will learn and start to get a handle on the techniques.

SHINKEI-JIME AND IKI-JIME

The Art Of Destroying Nerves To Extend Freshness

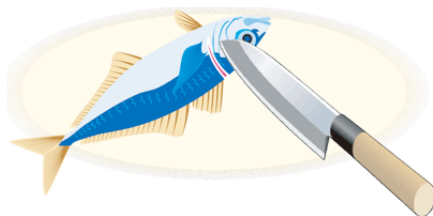
Shinkei-jime is very effective in blue skinned fish and red fleshed fish, but does not work well on flounder.

The Process

1. Put on thick gloves to prevent a live fish from getting burned by the heat of hands. If you don't have gloves, towel or pot holder can be used.
2. Place a fish on sponge mat to avoid damage from bruising. If fish moves violently; it causes overheating and the meat gets bruised. Adenosine Tri Phosphate* will be exhausted very quickly and the pH of the fish flesh drops and it becomes acidic and deteriorates.

(* Adenosine triphosphate (ATP) is the source of energy for use and storage at the cellular level.)

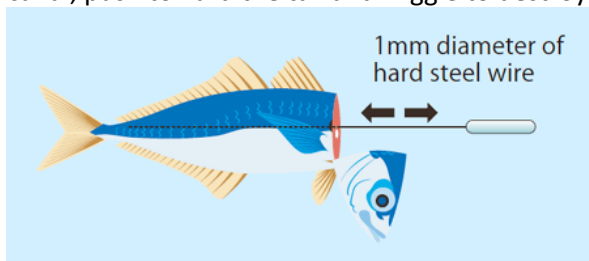
3. IKI-JIME



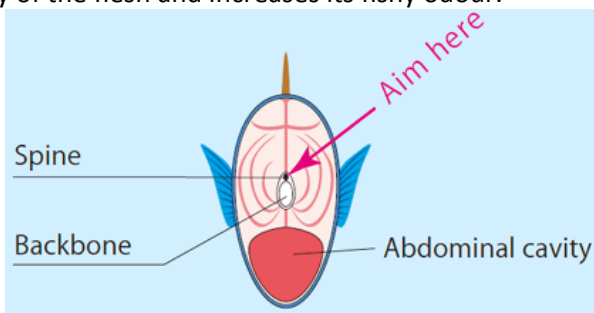
Cut the spine and blood vessels at the neck. Even after you disconnect the brain from the nervous system, the spinal cord is still alive and consuming ATP. At this point, fish's heart is still beating and it makes bleeding smooth.

4. SHINKEI-JIME

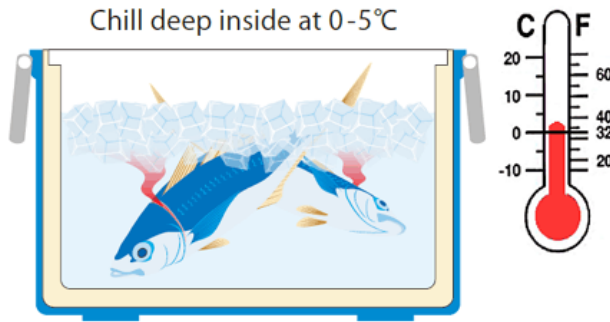
Insert a steel wire into the neural canal, push toward the tail and wiggle to destroy the spinal cord entirely.



If the spinal cord is not destroyed, it will mistakenly continue to send electrical impulses to muscle for about 30 min after severance. Impulses make dead fish flex due to muscle activity and this causes blood to seep into the tissue. Blood decreases the transparency of the flesh and increases its fishy odour.



5. After death, biochemical reactions which progress in the body, damages fish flesh in a few minutes. To stop these reactions, put the fish into iced seawater immediately for 5 - 10 minutes to chill and wash away any blood. Ice also has the effect of giving salty seawater a moderate osmotic process.



6. Keep the fish at 5 - 10 degrees Celsius in a cooler box for producing "Umami". (Umami means "delicious savory taste" in Japanese, and its taste is often described as the meaty, savory deliciousness that deepens flavour). To prevent the excessive icing, do not leave the fish touching the ice directly. Once Umami is enhanced, a lower temperature close to 0° C can keep it palatable longer. When stored at 0° C degrees or less, micro-ice crystals growing inside the cell will cause damage to the texture of the flesh. (This is because as water chills from 4° C to 0° C it expands and causes the fish flesh to go 'mushy' when it is thawed).

THE TOOLS USED IN THE PROCESS OF SHINKEI-JIMI



AGING PROCESS OF THE FISH FLESH.



WAYS TO AVOID LINE TWIST, SNARLS, AND TANGLES

Line that has been wound too loosely on the spool when first put on, or that later forms a loop, will cause casting problems

The hallmarks of spinning tackle include versatility, a short learning curve to casting proficiency, and comfortable use thanks to a reel that sits under the rod handle. But this equipment – whose reel features a stationary spool around which line is wound - can be problematic when it comes to some aspects of casting and retrieving. Here are twelve ways to cut down on issues, particularly line twist, which is mainly caused by improper use of equipment.

Don't Turn the Handle When the Drag Is Slipping

This is a sure way to quickly put twist in a line, and is especially problematic with spinning reels.

Put Line on a Spool Correctly

Here's the proper way to put fishing line on a reel. If you can't get the hang of it, have a tackle shop do it for you.

Use a Swivel With Lures That Spin

A lure or bait that spins or rolls over causes line twist. You must use a swivel ahead of this, most likely a small brass rolling swivel to which the lure is directly tied. Often to prevent line twist a second swivel is needed.

Small rolling swivels work far better than big swivels that don't turn readily.

Use Newer Model Spinning Reels With Large, Revolving Line Rollers

In older reels, line twist can occur by the simple act of line passing over the line roller on the bail arm of the reel when the handle is turned. The roller moves line from the spinning reel bail to the spool but may cause it to turn over (twist) in the process. Newer and better reels have sharp roller slopes, grooves in the roller, and larger surface area, which helps eliminate slack line movement on the roller surface and help keep the line in such a position that it doesn't turn over.

Remove Twist As Soon As It Occurs

If a lure or bait starts to spin when you dangle it from the rod tip, let it keep spinning until it stops to remove minor twist. Figure out the cause and address it (see numbers 1 through 4 above). To really eliminate twisted line, attach a small swivel to the end of the line and have someone walk the line up an open beach. Use a bait needle in the eye of the swivel to help hold the swivel and allow it to turn freely. Wind the line back onto the reel under slight tension to prevent loose loops forming.

Watch for Errant Loops on the Spool

Snafus can occur when an errant loop gets on the spinning reel spool and is overwrapped by line. These loops often occur as a result of momentary slack from angling technique or because of backward movement of the reel bail. Let out enough line to get to the loop and re-spool with tension on the line.

Don't Reel Over a Tangle or Cast With One

That will make the problem worse. Stop immediately and pick apart the strands.

More Tension Equals Fewer Problems

Some angling activities, like a semi-slack slow retrieve of lures that have a minimal water resistance (light jigs or jerk baits, for example), don't provide constant line tension and may be likely to cause twists or loops, especially if some of the aforementioned issues that affect line twist exist. Be aware of this tendency and do your best to keep tension on the line as it is retrieved.

Stretch a Problem Nylon Line

When you've had twist and snafu problems with nylon line, you may avoid reoccurrence by stretching it. Catching a huge fish will stretch it, but more likely you'll need to hook the line to a firm object and pull on it by hand (wrap the line around a hard round object). The shorter the length of problem line the easier this is to do.

Pre-Soak a Nylon Line

Pre-soaking a spool of line in warm water before winding it onto a spinning reel spool helps relax line memory. The resulting reduction in coiling can help improve casting and minimize line-related problems.

Make Low Trajectory Casts into the Wind.

This helps keep baits and lures, especially long slender plugs, from tumbling and getting their hooks caught on the line, which totally ruins a retrieve. Sidearm casts, where possible, work best.

WOOD vs CHARCOAL:

What's best for cooking in the bush?

Downloaded from UnSealed 4 x 4: 12/03/2024 Words and images by Gary Tischer

Wood vs Charcoal: We answer the question once and for all: What is the best way to cook while camping?

I admit to being a sceptic when it came to using charcoal. I've been around long enough to see a lot of fads come and go, and this seemed to be just another one. What was wrong with using a traditional wood fire to cook and then sit by it to warm the bones while telling stories into the night? So let's talk about wood vs charcoal for cooking.

Not being one to stick my head in the sand, a mate and I had a cook-off against each other using the different fire methods. As it turns out, charcoal emerged from the coals to be the winner in many areas. That's not to say a traditional fire doesn't have its place.

So, what is charcoal?

Charcoal can be made of many different materials but for this comparison, we are using lump charcoal. Basically, lump charcoal is wood without the water and other volatile components, and is created by heating wood in the absence of oxygen. By doing this, charcoal will burn to higher temperatures than wood and has very little smoke or residue. Not all charcoal is the same though, as different types of wood can be used.

Time

Wood requires starting a fire to burn down so coals can be used to cook on. This will require thicker pieces of wood and preferably hardwood to give good cooking coals. This took around 45 minutes in the cook-off.

Charcoal has already been prepared prior to purchase so it only takes around 10 to 15 minutes before the coals are ready to use for cooking.

The ability to vary the heat

Wood has a lot of dependencies, including the type of wood, how many coals, if it's wet and how big the fire is.

These will all effect the amount of heat available.

Charcoal is simple as the charcoal is a known factor, so you can decide how many coals and vary the height above the coals to control heat.

Availability of your cooking fuel

Wood grows on trees so is pretty easy to get, right? Not necessarily. If you are in a national park you will not be able to collect firewood so you will have to bring your own from somewhere else. You may be able to collect it from the side of the road depending on where you are, but not always. You can always buy some at Bunnings or numerous other places and take it with you.

Charcoal won't be available everywhere so you have to plan ahead. Bunnings and other places that sell BBQs will sell it, as well as many good camping stores.

Weight and bulk

Wood can be quite heavy, particularly hardwood, which is better for cooking. If collecting from the side of the road, you will need to cut it into pieces to fit on the roof or wood rack. Wood will be quite bulky and heavy whichever way you go.

Charcoal is very light and doesn't take up nearly as much space as wood for a given energy requirement.

But how much?

Wood is free, right? If you collect your own, yes, it is. If you get it from Bunnings, it's not free. It will cost around \$15 per 20 kg bag

Charcoal has to be bought so will cost you. Good quality charcoal will cost around \$26 for an 8 kg bag but you will need less than the equivalent weight in wood to cook a meal.

Cooking equipment

Wood doesn't require any fancy equipment. You could just throw the food into the fire and you're done. It's worked in Australia for 50,000 years so I can't argue with that. Most people will, however, use a BBQ plate at least, but they are cheap (the BBQ plates, not the people).

Charcoal requires some special equipment to get it started and to cook on it. I have seen meat thrown on the burning charcoal but this is not for everyone. Like most things, there is a large range, from cheap and nasty to expensive and very nice. In the videos, we are using Snow Peak grills and fire-pit, which are at the expensive end of the market, but well worth it.

Taste

Wood will add flavour to the food, depending on what wood is used. This flavour will get into the food via the smoke that is produced.

Charcoal will not add much flavour on its own as it produces very little smoke. Different types of wood chips may be added to give additional flavour.

So, how do you add the flavour?

Wood is pretty easy. Get some wood with flavour by using different types of wood. Many of the woods recommended for getting flavour are North American, which are hard to get in log form here. Some good local woods include ironbark for red meats, fruit woods such as apple or cherry for pork, chicken and sausages. Avoid pine and cypress. Eucalypts are so varied that it would be hard to recommend or identify one from another. Some are quite smokey. If you don't like the smell of the smoke, you probably won't like the taste it adds.

Charcoal creates no real smoke of its own so wood chips are the best way to add a smokey flavour. Local and imported wood chips are easily purchased from many BBQ stores and will be labelled. Hickory is a go-to for pork but

also will be good for chicken or beef. Mesquite is perfect for beef. Fruitwoods like apple, cherry and even peach will add a more subtle flavour to fish and chicken. It will be best to soak wood chips for at least 30 minutes before adding to the charcoal otherwise they burn too quickly.

Then there's the socialising

Wood is great in a fire to sit around and chew the fat (so to speak), but someone will invariably get smoke in their eyes.

Charcoal is more social while you sit around the grill and all cook together rather than everyone going to their camps to cook on gas and return to the fire later.

National Park rules

But how about the ruling for wood vs charcoal? Wood fires are often not allowed in national parks or have to be in provided BBQs or fire rings. When fires are allowed people will often create their own fireplace a few metres away from an existing one ... grrrrr! This is a good way to get fires banned altogether.

Charcoal is normally used in specific equipment such as the Snow Peak fire-pit. This will mean that it is normally off the ground and will be allowed to be used as it may be classed as a fuel stove rather than a wood fire. Best check your local authorities on this as it may differ from state to state.

Verdict

For wood vs charcoal, I am a convert to charcoal. Even when travelling alone, I have used the charcoal and fire-pit to cook on then sit around watching the stars. It is easier to set up, cook on and pack away than a traditional fire, or a combination of fire and gas stove. And there is less washing up.

4 x 4 SOLO RECOVERY TIPS

<https://www.unsealed4x4.com.au/4x4-solo-recovery-tips-dont-leave-home-before-you-read-this/>

Bogging your vehicle when you're in the bush on your own can be a little scary.

Keep calm and read this guide to 4 x 4 solo recovery tips.

It's true that whether you're alone or with a group, a winch is a winch and a shovel is a shovel. But that doesn't mean to say being alone is the same as with a group. I think there's major differences between the two, and that starts with the golden rule of recovery.

You should also think about your 4 x 4 system. Modern vehicles are complex and have all sorts of traction aids. It's impossible here to discuss them all and how they work in all sorts of situations; you'll only gain that skill with lots and lots of experience and training. However, what I can say is that just about every 4 x 4, including soft-roaders, has different ways you can use the drivetrain. That might be selecting different drive modes – did you know rock modes are great in some sand situations, and often snow mode is hopeless in deep snow? It might be using, or not using cross-axle locking differentials, low range or not. You might even put a car into 2WD, as I've done to spin the back end around. And the first thing you should check is that the car actually is in its best 4WD mode, for example, locking the centre differential (if it has such a feature), or selecting 4WD (again if applicable), or locking the hubs – again, coming back to the mental point, it's easy to forget the basics you think are in place.

One golden rule is;

DO NOT leave your vehicle unless you are absolutely, 100 per cent certain you can easily walk to safety, both distance and direction.

And in the case of the Outback in the hot sun, just don't even think about it. Many people have died trying to walk out. You can survive overnight in a car without water or food, but your chances are much reduced if you're sleeping unprotected in the bush. Your vehicle is easy to find and offers protection from the elements, so stay with it.

If you need to contact people, try SMS which is typically more reliable than Internet access, and you may find reception by moving uphill, or even waiting for a different time of day. But don't rely on mobile phone access in the bush, ever. It is also a myth that a mobile phone can somehow send an SOS signal via satellites when it can't get reception.

Finally, you should avoid travelling solo because it's far more risky than group travel. But if you do, pack extra recovery gear. You should have space for it, given there's only you. An example of something I'd like to take when travelling solo is my Tirfor-style winch, because there will be nobody to pull me backwards. Yes it's slow, but it's reliable, and that's the way you need to think when you're miles from anywhere, stuck by yourself.

My very strong advice, having been solo bogged more than a few times, is to get out of the vehicle, chill, relax and consider the situation for a solid five minutes or more. You then need to follow the standard 4 x 4 recovery process,

but very methodically, and slowly because of all the reasons above – safety, not making it worse, and limited options.

The first thing to do is to figure out why you're stuck, and where you need to go. You may be hung up on your diffs or underbody, unable to drive up a hill...take a long, hard look at the car from all around. Don't think about solutions just yet. Simply absorb what you see.

Next, figure out what gear you have. Obviously things like winches, traction ramps and Bog Outs may be useful. And you'd think no way would a snatch strap be of any use...but don't put it out of your mind entirely. When you're solo bogged, everything is an option. Your vehicle's jack, floor mats, even camping gear might all be useful, as can be a chainsaw which can be used to make wood tools, or remove undergrowth. Make an inventory of the car and contents.

With your gear inventoried, you're then at the point where you can start to figure out recovery options. In an article like this, I can't be very specific as there's just so many different ways to get stuck and recover, but I can offer some general advice from experience.

Tyre pressures.

You were probably at 20 or above when you were stuck. In almost every case, dropping down to 15 or to 12 PSI or so will help. The exception is when you really need clearance, and traction isn't a problem such as hard rock, but even then, lower is probably better.

Dig and move.

Most of the time, a 4 x 4 can be de-bogged by lots of digging or earthmoving. You've got a spade, so use it.. No spade? Can you use a stick? Lack of proper digging means you may not get out, or make it worse. If it takes two hours, so be it. Solo recovery is typically slower than group recovery.

Give up early.

It's tempting, but don't sit there spinning wheels as that just makes things worse, increasing the time it'll take to get out.

Evaluate what's happening.

Is it helping? Is there a chance of success? This is hard to do when solo, as there's nobody else to tell you otherwise. Here's some out-of-the-box ideas which I've used in the past or heard of being used – empty small mud bogs of water so you can see what you're doing. Wait for the ground to dry. Lighten the vehicle, or shift weight – jerrycans are great for that. When a wheel is spinning, build up under that wheel to give it traction – but sometimes, if you have a locking differential, giving one wheel traction is all you need. If you can go backwards and forwards up a hill a little, then go up the hill far as you can, stop, attach a snatch strap, and back down – use the elasticity to help launch yourself. Drop the spare wheel, and use it for clearance. Disconnect a sway bar or two.

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Here's some solo-stuck examples from my experience:

Example 1 – Stuck On A Beach

The title shot is my Ranger Beach on a remote beach in Western Australia. As you can see, the sand was soft and off-camber. I could feel the car losing traction and sliding, and guessed it would be only a matter of time before we were

bogged. And then...we were. I was careful not to jam the brakes on or try and wheelspin out, both of which would have slewed the car towards the sea – that’s the “give up early before you make it worse” approach.

We stopped, dropped pressures down to 12 psi, and used recovery boards. We could launch off the recovery boards and maybe get another car length before we were bogged again, but that was enough. After six or seven cycles of that we were out.

What saved us – having four recovery boards, lowering the pressures, giving up early, working as family team, and not trying too hard each time, just taking what progress we could get.

Example 2 – Stuck In Thick Mud

The mud turned even softer than I thought it would, and suddenly turning around wasn’t possible, so on we went. Winching was the only way out but we dropped tyre pressures first. We drove-and-winched which some say not to do but it’s actually a good idea provided you don’t overrun the winch cable and cause a shock load. There’s no chance of that here. The other thing to not do is drive the wheels so fast they dig in. You want enough rotation speed to reduce the winch load, but not enough to dig in. It was a long winch, but we were careful not to winch for more than 30 seconds at a time, as recreational winches aren’t designed for continuous heavy-duty winching.

What saved us – a power winch.

Example 3 – Stuck On A Hill

Found an interesting track, but then it got very steep and a little slippery. So I parked, got out and went for a recce. Decided not to try it, and tried to turn around. Didn’t work, ended up sliding into a dozer push. Tried to back out, couldn’t. Solution was to drop pressures to 12 psi, and use recovery boards. You see here that there are recovery boards in front of the wheels and behind. The reason is that I rolled onto the front recovery board and used them as a launch to get the back wheels onto the other set. That worked, sort of, but there was a fair mound of soft dirt between front and back wheels which killed progress.

The plan was to start the long task of digging that out when other cars arrived and offered a winch backwards, so I accepted their help. Could also have placed the recovery boards in different configurations too, but didn’t get that far. If I had my Tirfor-style hand winch then it’d have been an easy pull back of the couple of metres we needed to go...but it was at home in the shed. I also had some Bog Out straps in the back but completely forgot they existed...they would have been ideal, but I just didn’t think of it.

What saved us – well, the winch backwards, but in lieu of that more digging would have eventually done the trick.

Example 4 – Track Barred By A Tree

Not stuck, but a tree across a track barring progress. No chainsaw this time. So we carefully found the points where the tree could break, sawed, and used a winch to do the final breakage and moving. This is about the fourth pull, and we also used chains and other snatch blocks – pictured is a lifting strap around the tree.

What saved us – sharp high-quality bowsaws, thinking through the problem, a drag chain, and a power winch.

Example 5 – Stuck On A Dune

The Discovery 4’s stability control decided that it’d kill my momentum part-way through this fun, and rather show-boat turn on a dune. And as the engine killed power, we sank in. Yes, it was in sand mode with ESC off, but it still happened. The Discovery raised itself into Extended Mode, and I put it into Super Extended by holding my foot on the brake pedal, and holding the Up button on the air suspension control. Then, I put the Disco into Rock Mode which helped lock the rear diff and increase traction control sensitivity. Very, very, very slowly I straightened the wheels, and tried to drive forwards. The back end started to slide, so I turned up the hill, and little by little, the back end swung around to the point where I could back down the hill. I was also prepared to try the opposite technique of loosening the front wheels so the car faced down the hill. If the Discovery had been part-time 4 x 4 then I would have considered putting it in 2WD and spinning the back that way, assuming the rear wheels wouldn’t simply dig in and not slide. And of course there was the option to dig out, but I thought I’d try just driving first.

What saved us – knowing how the Discovery’s systems worked, and very patient, careful throttle control.

In all cases...

Every vehicle you see above was equipped with a first aid kit, emergency box containing shelter equipment, sat-phone, plenty of water and food. However good you are at recovery, sometimes you can’t get out and need help, or need to overnight, so always take enough equipment to make unplanned stays possible. Never go off-roading assuming it’ll all go to plan.

7 TIPS TO INCREASE YOUR FUEL RANGE

BY [EVAN SPENCE](#) *Unsealed 4 x 4 magazine*, downloaded 29 April 2024

In Australia the average motorist punches out roughly 18,350 kms over the space of 12 months. Just around 350 km a week. That's probably on the low end for most 4 x 4 owners but let's work with it for now. You'll have to excuse us here but we're going to take a few liberties. It's important to set a baseline on why little changes are so important when you're trying to cut down on fuel consumption. If you're averaging 15 L per 100 km, also low, you'll chew through 2,752.5 L of fuel in a year; assuming you're sticking to 350 kms a week and not setting off on any 4 x 4 trips which could easily see you do the same distance in a day.

Now bump the consumption from 15 L/100 km to 17 L/100 km, a minor difference, less than most people see just by fitting a few accessories. This will see the fuel usage jump from 2,752.5 L up to 3,119.5 L, factor in a modest \$1.50/L and that's an increase in fuel usage of \$550 straight out of your pocket. Every year. And that's assuming you drive very little each week. Throw in a couple of trips, or a longer-than-average drive to work, and you could be throwing \$1,000 a year in the bin for nothing. Starting to see why this is so important?

But wait, it gets worse. A study done by the NRMA in 2013, found we import 91% of our fuel. We'd run out in three weeks if the tap was turned off on imports. The flip-side of this is a lot of our fuel comes from countries like Saudi Arabia – one of the biggest fuel exporters in the world. So how do we fix it and cut down on our fuel consumption?

CUT THE FAT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States did a study (in 2022) a few years back on weight and the effect on fuel consumption. The results were for every 50 kg of dead weight removed, fuel consumption improved by 1 - 2%. A seemingly minor number, until we do the maths again. 2% of 3,119.5 L is just over 62 litres a year. By pulling 50 kg out of your 4 x 4 you're essentially getting close to a full tank of fuel, every single year, for free. 50 kg sounds like a lot if you're thinking in terms of concrete bags slapped on the passenger seat... but look at it this way. A second spare tyre will factor in about 30 kg, that's over half a tank a year just to look like you're off on an adventure, right after you're done getting some milk from the shops. Add in a few other bits and pieces that don't need to be on for daily duties, and it's easy to save two full tanks of fuel a year, just by not driving 'decked out' everywhere. Would you rather look like you're on an adventure, or have the money to actually go on one? Yep, us too, so maybe think about ditching the roof top tent and second spare when you're travelling around town or on day trips.

THE RUSTY NAIL PRINCIPLE

Engines use very little fuel per hour sitting on idle, they're also not overly affected by aerodynamics until over 80 km/h. That leaves a whole lot of fuel consumption being soaked up just by pushing the weight of your 4 x 4 around. Look at it this way. You have 10 km to travel, and two different ways you can accomplish this. Option A is to accelerate gently, reach the speed limit and then maintain a constant speed for the whole distance. Option B sees you accelerate a little more aggressively until you reach the speed limit, then you brake smoothly until at a stop, then start again. Stop-start for 10 km.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to work out which one will chew more fuel. So it goes to say that any deviation from Option A will be somewhere along the scale closer to Option B. Stop-start driving chews fuel due to the increased amount of acceleration, which puts the engine under more load. Sitting in the slow lane along the freeway with your speed rising and falling by 10 km/h constantly will chew more fuel than driving at a constant pace. The old saying is 'drive like there's a rusty nail sticking through the accelerator pedal'; slow and steady acceleration rather than mashing the go pedal on and off at every opportunity. I think it'd be more apt to say stop-start traffic sucks; don't cause it for yourself.

MAYBE JUST ONE CASE OF BEER

Right, we're all on the same page when it comes to excess weight being bad for fuel consumption. If you're trying to cut back on your fuel bill and buy a few less AK47s for the terrorists, it's best to leave your second spare at home when you're not using it. The same can be applied when you actually do need it, though. For most of us, heading off on a trip always feels like an adventure; off to battle the odds, man vs nature, creating fire with nothing but our beards.

Truthfully most of the time we're little more than a few hours from the nearest 24-hour Woolworths with a Kmart Tyre and Auto right around the corner. If you're out with a few mates, maybe share the tool kit rather than everyone bringing their own. If you're doing an overnigher you probably don't need 80 L of water just in case. Everything you need; nothing you don't.

MAXIMISING AERODYNAMICS

There's a reason land speed record cars aren't shaped like shipping containers, and a small percentage of that scales down to the real world too. It's a bit like a sliding scale, we're not going the sort of speeds they are so we don't need

to be as slippery; but in the quest for low fuel consumption every little bit adds up. In fact one of the big reasons manufacturers keep canning old style 4X4s is due to poor aerodynamics hurting fuel consumption and (as a result) emissions. With that in mind it doesn't make a lot of sense to go out of your way to make your four wheel drive less aerodynamic.

That five poster bull bar and 12-inches of lift alone are going to add more than 2 L/100 km. Near on \$1,000 a year for the privilege of looking like you're fond of your sister. It's the same principal as knocking speed off on the freeway. The difference between 90 and 110 km/h can mean as much as a 25% saving in fuel consumption, and that's a lot of rocket-propelled grenades.

THE RIGHT SHOES FOR THE OCCASION

Grab a bag of concrete and sit it on your shoulders. It's heavy, but not exactly a feat worthy of YouTube fame. Now get that same bag of concrete, and with the same arms you just picked it up with swing the bag of concrete around your head in a circle. That's the difference between static weight and rotational weight; and why bigger, heavier tyres aren't always a good thing.

Increasing the diameter of the wheel is a bit like swinging the bag of concrete in an even bigger arc. Now try and swing that bag of concrete in an arc while you're underwater. That's the effect of tyre pressures being too low and an increase in tyre width; more commonly known as 'rolling resistance'. The actual numbers come down to a lot of different factors; but unless you're about to compete in a strongman competition this should put a bit of perspective on oversized tyres and their effect on fuel consumption.

EXTRA FUEL

There's two ways to get a longer fuel range – either decreasing fuel consumption, or increasing the amount of fuel you carry. Long-range fuel tanks are a bit of a mixed bag. They're a literal necessity if you're doing long-distance travel, but can also hurt, too.

An average long-range fuel tank can add over 100 L to your carrying capacity. With 15 L/100 km that'd net you an additional 660 km before your fuel light comes on. Except you're now carrying close to an extra 150 kg of weight. That's 3 - 6 full tanks of fuel a year just to get better fuel range.

Leave them empty when not in use and make the most of them when you need them. They can also help you stock up on fuel when it's cheaper. An extra 100 L of fuel when it's 25 c a litre cheaper can save you \$25 in one hit.

ALL THE LITTLE THINGS

If you break down what you're really doing when attempting to save fuel, it all basically comes down to making things easier for your engine. If there's a way to put less load on your engine it'll give you improved fuel economy; it's the basic principle of most diesel tuning chips and their claims of improved fuel economy. It doesn't all need to be on a large scale though. It's estimated at speeds under 80km/h, having the air conditioning running can increase fuel consumption by as much as 10%. This is simply due to extra strain on your engine driving an extra pump.

Ironically enough, over 80km/h the drag of having your windows down is worse than having your AC on.

You can take this right down to the micro level.

Dirty oil is thicker, meaning an increase in friction and more power required to move. That's from your engine right through to your diff and even dodgy wheel bearings can affect fuel. Depending on your engine even a dirty or clogged air filter can cause massive restrictions. Each small component may only make a fraction of a percentage of improvement; but over 18,000 kms a year it's money in your pocket, not the bad guys' pockets.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL FISHING

Downloaded from Fishing World April 2024.

I've spent my entire fishing life taking various factors into account when planning a trip. Back in the '70' s and 80' s I think we looked at the nightly news on TV to get a weather report and probably a tackle store tide chart to get the tides or moon phase. Weather was and has always been the deciding factor and is, for most serious anglers. It's obviously dangerous to go rock fishing in bad weather.

You just don't go fishing from the rocks in a 3 metre swell or go fishing in 30 knot winds. But what other factors do you look at when planning a fishing trip? In the past several years I've put a lot more importance on several weather and lunar aspects. Let's look at a few these and some apps to explore them.

Now, most serious anglers use their smart phones to access all the information they need prior to a trip. I use a heap of apps. But believe it or not I have a mate who doesn't even have a smart phone. He hates technology so he uses the nightly news and a wall mounted barometer to get his weather.

My first consideration is what the weather is doing and the wind strength and direction in particular. The direction determines where we fish. The strength determines where we fish and if we even go at all. If the wind is less than 5 knots all day I'll probably stay away from the flats and fish deeper water or duck outside. I like a 10 - 15 knot breeze

for most of our estuary fishing so we'll sometimes put in at 10AM when a SW breeze has picked up. I've got spots all over the place that I can fish in any wind direction as long as it doesn't get over 20 knots.

I use the Windfinder app on my phone most of the time. It gives me wind speed and direction "predictions" for the week ahead, along with tides, swell and barometric pressure. There are a heap of weather apps out there but they all collect their data from the BOM and present it in a way that they think is easy to read or relevant to particular water sports. Most weather apps are free and the content is paid for by advertisers. They are not infallible and we've been caught out many times when they've been completely wrong as far as wind direction and strength go.

For the past several years I've been paying more attention to other factors in my fishing. These include barometric pressure, moon phase, tide size and moon set. All of these play a role in where and when fish feed and when it's easier for anglers to catch them. I use several apps to get all of that information and I try to make sense of it all. I write most of it down and collate it after every trip but I do keep various factors in mind that I know may have some consequence on the outcome.

I do know we catch more fish on a high barometer, less fish on a full moon and on the odd occasion we've had better fishing when the moon has set and isn't in the sky. It certainly pays to be aware of the above factors and know what's happening. One of my fishing buddies is very switched on to all of this and can tell you what the tide, moon, water temperature and barometer are doing on any particular day. He's very observant and always looking at the weather and how it changes during the day.

Another factor that I've just started to take into account is water colour, water level and salinity. I'm sure these all have a bearing on fish activity and feeding but trying to put it all together is a work in progress. I fish a couple of reasonably large estuary systems with limited tidal flow due to narrow inlets. The water level in these systems can rise and fall up to 450 mm due to spring tides and rainfall. When the water levels are down the flats are shallower and don't fish anywhere near as well. This can be during periods of no rainfall and neap tides. Tidal flow and rainfall also change the water salinity and clarity but measuring this is difficult for your average fisho.

Now, all fishing situations are different and some of the of the factors I've mentioned above may be completely irrelevant to your particular angling efforts but I'll put money on some of them being very relevant. My advice would be to think about the factors that play a part in what you fish for and where and try to at least take them into consideration when planning a trip or while you are fishing. You might just find that your results improve if you can work out what is actually happening when you have a good day. Google or search some apps that give you the information you need to help plan a trip – you may just find it makes a big difference in your results.

WINCHING FOR BEGINNERS

By [Scott Mason](#), Downloaded from 'Unsealed4X4 8/4/24



For the vast majority of us, a winch is one of those 'must have' items, one of the first bits of kit on the list along with a bull bar and decent tyres. Unlike tyres, which are used every time we turn the key, a winch generally does not see much use – but when it's really needed we are useless without one.

So with such little use it is easy to forget all the things we need to consider to get the job done safely and properly. Let's break it down and have a look at the important fundamentals.

So you're stuck, but do you even need the winch? In many cases, simply clearing around the tyres with the shovel or using rocks and timber to pack the track can eliminate winching completely. Even reducing tyre air pressure can get you out of a situation safely. If all this fails, then you should be doing these things anyway in order to assist the winch – remember the more strain on the equipment, the more potentially dangerous the operation is.

Do I have the required gear?

You have the winch; but do you have a good recovery kit? A lot of times you will need the ancillary equipment to connect safely to an anchor point. Is your tree trunk protector in good order (not frayed or damaged and complete with data tag); are the shackles rated (stamped with Work Load Limit or Safe Working Load); is your snatch block in good order; are you connecting to properly rated recovery points (if using another car as an anchor) and can you use

a bridle to share the load?); is your winch rope or wire in good condition; and do you have sufficient cable dampeners (or air brakes) for the job?

These may seem like simple things we are checking here... but it is amazing how easy it is to overlook the basics during the excitement of a recovery. Checking your equipment beforehand is the key (not later, after it has failed).

Planning the winch recovery

Setting up and planning the winch operation is the next important aspect. What are you planning to use as a safe anchor point? A tree, another vehicle? Will the winch cable reach the anchor? Will you need to use an extension strap or will you need to reduce the load on the winch by performing a double-line pull? Spend the time now to plan it carefully.

Performing the recovery

Before commencing, double-check your connections. Ensure you have shovelled/packed and done everything you can to reduce the working load; and that you've identified and mitigated any hazards. Ensure that you have placed your cable dampeners at each end of the cable (approximately two metres from each end, and on each leg of the cable if you're doing a double-line pull). Now for the really important bit before you hit the winch controller: Are all bystanders well clear? If you are not the one person in the vehicle operating the winch (or the person in control of the anchor point vehicle, if required) you have no place within the vicinity of the operation. As a rule, at least 1.5 times the distance away from the length of the recovery is the minimum safe distance for bystanders.

Once you have taken up slack in the cable, you may assist the winch by slowly applying gentle throttle in the stuck vehicle; but you must be very careful not to overrun the winch cable speed to create slack in the line. The resultant shock load when that slack is suddenly taken up again, if the vehicle suddenly rolls downhill or back into that mud hole, will likely overload the components and cause a breakage of some sort and potentially a very dangerous situation. If you are unsure of slack, do not turn the wheels and simply let the winch do the work.

Freeeedom!

So now you have successfully carried out the recovery and the vehicle is safe. When packing away your equipment, spend the extra few seconds to inspect all of the gear you have used – checking carefully for damage. Any questionable items should be discarded, without exception. By carrying out regular inspections with new equipment you will learn to recognise when suddenly your gear looks damaged.

Some of the best hard-earned you could spend to enrol yourself in an approved recovery course.

As a qualified instructor with Getabout Training Services, I know first-hand that this guide is only that – a small part of what you should know in a limited number of words. The simple fact is there is no substitute for the hands-on knowledge and experience you will get out of a one-day winching course with qualified trainers. In order to cover all you really should know, we would have to dedicate several issues focused solely on winching safely – which would not make the mag the awesome read that it is. Courses are available right across Australia; so don't just 'think' you know it all... there is no excuse – go out and learn it in a proper training environment.

Winching Safety

- Take the time to know your equipment. Know the ratings of each item and, yes, go and read that boring old manual that came with the winch.
- Watch a few recovery videos on the Internet and try to pick the errors – believe us there are a LOT of people out there doing it wrong!
- The loads and potential energy during any winching operation can be potentially fatal if something goes wrong. Take the time to plan the recovery; and ensure you inspect your equipment regularly.
- Use dampeners or 'air brakes' over winching ropes; multiple dampeners (two metres from EACH end, over joins and on each side of multiple-line pulls) should always be employed – a simple blanket or jacket can be used if required.
- Use only rated shackles and recovery points. Using a factory tie-down point or tow ball is a disaster waiting to happen.
- Never use a tow ball as a recovery point – it could fail and become a deadly missile.
- Keep bystanders away, at least 1.5 times the length of the recovery (three times the length is even better).
- Inspect your gear for damage before and after each use.
- Do not exceed equipment Work Load Limits (WLLs).
- Always use tree trunk protectors, if required.

If you would like to improve your skills and learn advanced techniques, book in for an accredited winch recovery course. You will seriously be amazed at what you will learn.

Handy Winch Tips

Ensure your winch control cable can't get caught up anywhere by wrapping it around your bar before placing inside the vehicle to operate the winch.

Don't forget to pack your normal recovery kit. Those extension straps, extra shackles, dampeners, tree trunk protector, bridle and snatch block come in very handy.

If you haven't used your winch for a few months it may have gathered internal moisture which can cause problems. Every so often, switch it on and run out half of the rope; then wind it back in. The running of the motor will create internal heat and help to evaporate any internal moisture.

Gently flow running water over your ropes or wires to remove the buildup of contaminants like mud. Do not use high pressure, as this will drive any muck deep into the structure where it will then act like internal sandpaper.

BACON AND FISH PIE



Serves 6

Ingredients

2 Tablespoon olive oil	2 onions -thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic	2 stalks of celery-finely sliced
2 rashers bacon - roughly chopped	1 teaspoon vegetable stock
3 tablespoons flour	1 ½ cups fish stock
2 cups milk and 1 cup cream – combined	1 kg fish pieces in a 2 cm dice, boned and scaled.
Salt and pepper to season	½ cup parsley
2 sheets puff pastry	1 egg slightly beaten

Method:

Pre-Heat oven to 220° C. Heat oil in a large saucepan and add onion, garlic, celery and bacon – stir until softened over medium - high heat. Add vegetable stock and stir through, cook for a further minute. Add flour and mix well. Add fish stock, milk and cream.

Stir - Simmer gently over med-low heat for 5 minutes approx. and add fish.

Simmer for a further 5 - 10 minutes until sauce thickens.

Divide evenly between ramekins. Cut puff pastry into rounds slightly larger than the ramekins.

Brush egg around edge of pastry- put over ramekins - Brush more egg over top of pie.

Cook in oven for 20 minutes until golden brown

Potato/cheese Topping Variation

Boil 4 large potatoes

When soft mash with salt and pepper to season add 1 tablespoon butter and a little milk or cream. Add a handful of grated cheese. When the pie is in the ramekin spoon potato mash on the top add a dollop of butter and sprinkle grated cheese on top.

Cooking time remains the same.

CRUMBED SARDINES

(For when you get hungry when fishing)

Ingredients

600 g sardine	½ white onion
¼ cup all-purpose flour	Milk (if needed)
Pepper (to taste)	Salt (to taste)
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley	2 tablespoons shredded lemon zest
4 eggs, lightly beaten	200g (3 cups) breadcrumbs
2 tablespoons vegetable oil (for frying)	

Method

Place the breadcrumbs, chopped parsley and lemon zest, salt and pepper in a bowl and mix well to combine. In separate bowls place the flour and the egg.

Slice the onion and place in a pan with 1 tablespoon of oil on low heat. Cook for 15 minutes until caramelised.

Press sardine fillets into the flour, dip into egg and press into breadcrumb mixture to coat.

In a non-stick fry pan heat some oil, cook the sardines for 1-2 minutes on each side. Drain them on paper towel before serving with the aioli and caramelised onions.

Tip:

Any firm-fleshed white fish is suitable for this recipe. Cooking time will depend on how large and how thick the fish is.

FETTUCCINE SALMON

Smoked salmon is without doubt one of my favourite seafood delicacies and this pasta dish is designed to utilise ingredients that complements the smoky characteristics of the salmon well.

Cream-based pasta dishes are quick and easy to knock-up in the kitchen, and this salmon version is no exception taking around 15-20 minutes in total. Despite the wonderful flavours on offer, the best part about it is that the salmon isn't lost as the main star, so if you're anything like me then this recipe is a must for any smoked salmon enthusiast!

Ingredients

200 gm Tasmanian smoked salmon, coarsely chopped
600 ml thickened cream
2 cloves garlic, crushed
Olive oil
1 tbsp fresh dill
1 red onion, finely chopped
50g unsalted cooking butter
2 tbsp capers
60ml brandy (optional)
500g fettuccine (any brand will do but I prefer Bari)
1 punnet cherry/grape tomatoes, whole
Generous pinch of grated parmesan
½ cup freshly chopped continental parsley (optional)

Method

Prepare a pot of salted water for the pasta and bring to the boil. Meanwhile heat the oil, onion, a handful of cherry tomatoes and 25g of butter in a pan on medium heat for around 2-3 minutes or until the onion softens. Next add the brandy and flame (optional) to deglaze the pan and simmer for roughly 1-minute. Add the remaining 25g of butter, smoked salmon, dill, garlic and capers and stir through, cooking for around 2 minutes on medium heat. Next, add the cream and parmesan and bring to the boil, then quickly reduce heat to a simmer to allow the cream to thicken. Add salt and pepper to taste.

While the sauce is simmering away, add the fettuccine to the boiling salted water and cook as per instructions. Once cooked al dente, or to your liking, remove from the pot into a colander and strain any remaining water. Finally, combine the pasta with the sauce in a separate pot and mix through well. A good way to finish the dish is to add the fresh parsley and mix through prior to serving, however this is optional.