

Fishing for Largemouth Bass

By Kevin Sewell

Largemouth bass are one of the most popular types of fish in the United States. You can easily write hundreds of different articles on bass fishing and I will continue to write about the different techniques that you can use to catch bass, but this article will cover the basics of bass fishing and how to catch them through the seasons.

In the spring, you will find these fish moving into the shallows to spawn. In lakes that have crappie, you will know that the bass spawn is coming just after the crappie spawn. Check the local fishing reports and talk to the bait shops to see what's going on with the fishing in your area. If the crappies are spawning, it's about that time to get ready for largemouth bass. While the crappies are spawning bass will be in pre-spawn and you can catch them in deeper water near the typical spawning grounds. Try fishing deeper water off of points, deeper channels near shallow water. If you remember where the good spawning areas were the previous years you can try fishing the deep water that is near these great spawning sites.

Once the spawning begins, you will start seeing bass cruising all along the shorelines and starting to make beds. Some fish will be very picky and others will strike vigorously. The bass that are cruising will usually take a live worm, minnow or leech as well as a variety of lures that mimic these baits. Plastic worms are very effective, small spinners work and many anglers prefer throwing jigs and spinner baits. Since you can see these fish, many anglers spend way too much on the inactive fish. Here's a tip to save you some time. Most bass fishermen prefer using lures and if you are in a tournament, you don't have the option of using live bait. If you are willing to use some live bait, get some lively leeches and keep them in the boat. Fish with your preferred fishing lure and if you see bass along the shallows and they won't take your lure, put a live leech on a hook and flip it out there. Don't use a weight. Let the leech free fall and you will get so many more strikes. If the bass that you see doesn't show an interest in your live leech, move on and find more active bass.

You are not going to want to move on, but do it anyways. Go look for the active fish. There will be lots of them protecting their beds and they will usually hit your lure right away. What I like to do is mark my GPS with the spots that have less active fish and I will come back to them later, sometimes even at night.

In the summer, bass fishing gets tougher, but you will still be able to catch some fish shallow. There will always be some largemouth bass in shallow water around some type of cover such as docks, weeds, etc. In the summer, many of the bigger bass will be deeper. Try fishing the deep weed edges for more success. My favorite deep water, summer lures are 11 inch plastic worms, deep-diving crank baits and jigging spoons. If you can get out on the water early in the morning or late in the evening top water lures work very well in 4 to 12 feet of water along weed edges and other types of cover.

During the fall, you can catch more bass in the shallows, but there will still be some fish deep. You will have the option of catching fish shallow or deep, which does give you some options. Try fishing shallow and deep to see where the best bite is coming from. In the fall, I prefer using big baits. I move away from worms in the fall and throw big spinner baits, big jigs, swim baits and my personal favorite is a live chub in the 6 to 8 inch range. Go big or go home in the fall. I catch more 5 to 7 pound bass in the fall than the spring and I prefer very big baits.

The winter can be tough. If you live far enough south, fishing can be good, but up north it's time to sit inside and watch football or go ice fishing for perch, bluegill, crappie, walleye and pike.

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