

# Fishing With Crankbaits: The Ultimate “How To” Guide.

If ever there was a fishing lure for all seasons and all locations, surely it must be the crankbait! These deadly offerings can take fish almost anywhere, anytime.

But with such a diverse group of lures you'd better believe there's a lot to know. Tackle, technique and lure all need to come together to win the prize!

**If you want to blast your fishing up a notch or two (who doesn't) then becoming a crankbait gun isn't optional. It's mandatory.**



## The Ultimate List Of The Web's Best Crankbait Fishing Resources

[General Crankbait Fishing Tips](#)

[Fishing With Deep Diving Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Square-Bill Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Shallow Running Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Lipless Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Jointed Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Flat Sided Crankbaits](#)

[Fishing With Custom Wooden Crankbaits](#)

[Tips From The Crankbait Guru's](#)

## Chapter 1: Noobs Guide To Using Crankbaits Like A Tournament Pro.

Year in, year out crankbaits continue to be consistent fish producers. Other lure styles have come and gone, but the humble crankbait has only gone from strength to strength.

Successful crankbait fishing is all about the choosing right tackle and techniques. It's about understanding the fish and presenting the right lure in an irresistible way. These resources cover all of the basics you need to get off on the right foot.

- [4 Tips For Better Crankbait Fishing](#)
- [Crankbait Selection With Bernie Schultz](#)
- [How to tune a crankbait with Mike Iaconelli](#)
- [The basics of crankbait](#)
- [How to get the most out of your crankbaits](#)
- [Kevin Van Dam Spring Fishing Tips: The Crankbait](#)
- [Baitcasting with saltwater crankbait lures](#)
- [5 common crankbait fishing mistakes](#)
- [Everything you ever wanted to know about crankbaits](#)
- [Crankbaits 101](#)
- [Crankbait Basics For Bass](#)
- [5 Reasons You're Losing Crankbait Fish](#)
- [Choosing The Best Fishing Line For Crankbaits](#)
- [4 Types Of Crankbaits That Catch Fish](#)
- [A guide to bass fishing crankbaits](#)
- [Crankbait retrieves](#)
- [Crankbaiting after dark](#)

## Chapter 2: Targeting Depth Dwellers With Deep Diving Crankbaits.

The trophy fish are down deep. So, Whatchagunnado? It's either go deep or go home! After all, a few fish will travel a long way upwards to nail a lure, but most wont.

If you're going to stick with hard bodied lures you need to get "in the zone" – the sweet spot that's close enough that fish will move to inhale a piece of balsa bristling with trebles. Understanding deep diving crankbaits and how to fish them can open a whole world of fishing options.

[7 deep diving crankbait tips for big bass](#)

[Fishing Deep Diving Crankbaits](#)

[Pounding summer bass with deep diving crankbaits](#)

[Fishing Deep Diving Crankbaits](#)

[The Deep Diving Crankbait: A Must Have Summer Bait](#)

[5 Mistakes Deep Crankers Make](#)

[Working Deep Cranks](#)

### **Doc's Tip For Using Deep Diving Crankbaits:**

Don't waste time putting in short casts with deep diving crankbaits. They need enough line to get down to working depth, so cast well past where the fish are holding. Then put in a few fast cranks to get the lure to maximum depth before settling into a fishing speed.

## Chapter 3: Smashing Structure-Hugging Fish With Square-Bill Crankbaits.

Afraid of tossing crankbaits deep into woody structure? Then you can bet you're missing a LOT of fish. Square bills are a favourite with many experienced anglers for extracting bruisers from gnarly water. But their erratic action also makes them great for burning across flats and deflecting of stumps.

This series of articles will help you make sense of square billed crankbaits and how to use them

[All Squared Up For The Fall](#)  
[Square Bill Crankbait Basics For Bass](#)  
[Ish Monroe Is A Better Square Bill Fisherman Than You](#)  
[How To Make Lures That Dodge Snags](#)

### **Docs Tip For Fishing Heavy Structure:**

Square bill crankbaits aren't bulletproof, they still get hung up. So carry a tackle retriever! Actually, most wide bodied, wide billed crankbaits are surprisingly snag resistant – equal to squarebills in many cases. So if you don't have a squarebill on hand, try another wide-billed, wide-bodied crankbait. The main thing is to fear no snag and just keep pegging your lures into danger!

## Chapter 4: How To Blast Skinny-Water Fish With Shallow Crankbaits.

Fish tailing in water that barely comes up to their shoulders? Or maybe they're cruising the shallows on the windward shore or scattered over an expanse of flats and weed beds. It's time to pull out the shallow running crankbaits!

Perfect for sight casting to fish or structure in shallow water. But equally good for quickly prospecting flats to find where fish are holding. This collection of key articles will get the ball rolling!

[Gnarly Crankbaiting](#)

[Cranking Out The Hits](#)

[Pro's Quick Tip: Crews Shallow Cranking Secrets](#)

[Three tips to improve your shallow water cranking](#)

[Crankin the flats for bream](#)

### **Docs Tip For Fishing With Shallow Running Crankbaits:**

When I'm fishing from a boat or kayak over a shelving bottom I like to position so that I can cast parallel to the bank. This allows me to select a crankbait that will stay in contact with the bottom for the duration of the retrieve. If there are wind rows with accumulated debris it's not a bad strategy to cast parallel with those, either.

## Chapter 5: How To Double Your Catch Rates By Using Lipless Crankbaits

Lipless crankbaits, rattlebaits, rattletraps..... call 'em what you like! This is a style of lure you really can't do without in your arsenal. I reckon they double the fishing options because they do what most other crankbaits can't. Like vertical jigging and high speed trolling, for example. And because of their mode of action, lipless crankbaits can carry heavier terminals than other crankbait styles. That makes them perfect for those locked drag, white knuckle occasions when fish have to be wrestled from heavy cover.

[When, where and how to fish lipless crankbaits](#)

[Are you fishing lipless crankbaits properly?](#)

[How to fish rattlebaits year round](#)

[Tips from a Bass Pro: Work a Rattle Bait Fast for Coldwater Bass](#)

[3 Ways To Use Rattling Baits To Catch More Bass](#)

[The rattle trap](#)

### **Docs Tip For Fishing With Lipless Crankbaits:**

Lipless crankbaits and rattlebaits pump out massive vibration with minimal drag on the rod. They usually have flat sides that catch the light and create flash, cast like bullets and can be worked quite quickly. I love 'em for prospecting or when the fish are scattered because you can cover a lot of water fast.

## Chapter 6: How To Unleash The Power Of Jointed Crankbaits

It's amazing what a little joint in the body of a crankbait can do. Suddenly your lure has a sexier wiggle and can fished slower and more seductively. Try a jointed crankbait in dirty water or at night. The extra action at slower speeds gives fish more time to home in and attack the lure.

There are not as many jointed baits around as single piece versions. That means fish are less educated when it comes to jointed baits. And since the vibration they create is completely different to other styles, jointed cranks can work a treat on hard fished waters.

[Jointed lures or straight models?](#)  
[When you should be throwing a jointed baits](#)

### **Docs Tip For Cleaning Up With Jointed Crankbaits:**

A jointed crankbait tends to cast poorly when compared with other crankbait styles, so I save them for days when a short cast will do the trick. Worked slowly in the same manner as a jerkbait, they are enticing around structure and over weed beds.

## Chapter 7: How To Eliminate Tough Days With Flat-Sided Crankbaits

Flat sided crankbaits are kind of like a cross between a normal crankbait and a lipless crank. They vary in width, but as the name suggests, they all have flat sides. They kind of look like something a lazy lure maker turned out..... couldn't be bothered rounding the shape!

But for some reason, flat sided crankbaits seem to really do the deed, especially when the water is cold. My theory is that the flat sides not only pump out plenty of vibration, but also catch the sunlight to create flash. Whatever the reason, these lures just work.

[When to use flat sided crankbaits](#)  
[Slim down on crankbaits](#)

### **Docs Tip For using Flat Sided Crankbaits:**

For me, flat sided cranks have been effective on the flats, where they do a good job of deflecting off rocks, stumps and other structure. I usually choose a lure with foiled sides to take full advantage of the extra flash created by flat sides.

## Chapter 8: How To Smash ‘Em With A Custom Wooden Crankbait On Highly Pressured Waters

A handmade, custom wooden crankbait is the worst kept secret in the tournament fisherman’s private lure collection. They come in particularly handy when production lures are rendered ineffective by fishing pressure. Fishing close to large populations or on the final day of a tournament are the classic examples of when to pull out these bad boys.

Hand made wooden crankbaits aren’t just deadly where the fishing pressure is high – they work anywhere. It’s all about their resonance, acoustic qualities, vibration and appearance. It’s hard for fish to become educated not to inhale a well presented wooden crankbait.

[For God’s Sake, Stop Trying To Think Like A Fish!](#)  
[Top 10 Crankbait Design Elements For Tackle Makers](#)  
[Wood Trap?](#)  
[Choosing between balsa and plastic crankbaits](#)  
[Advantages of balsa lures in the summer](#)  
[Should you be fishing handmade balsa baits?](#)

### **Doc’s Tip For Fishing With Custom Wooden Crankbaits:**

Why not have a crack at making your own custom wooden crankbaits? It’s not as difficult as you might think, and there is no better way to understand lures and how to use them than learning to design and make your own. If you’re keen to get started, why not check out my popular [Wooden Lure Making Mega Pack](#)?

## Chapter 9: Extra Tips From Some Crankbait Fishing Gurus

[Iaconelli's Crankbait Tips](#)

[Kevin Van Dam: How Pros Use Crankbaits](#)

[Crank Points Deep and Slow: Jimmy Houston](#)

[10 Inspiring Hard Body Lure Fishing Tips From Steve Starlo](#)

[Suspending Crankbaits: Rick Clunn.](#)

### **Doc's Final Thought On Fishing With Crankbaits:**

It's easy to switch into autopilot when you're casting a crankbait. If the bite is quiet you can easily fall into a hypnotic pattern of casting and retrieving. Try to avoid this.... mix things up by changing lures or by changing the way you fish them.