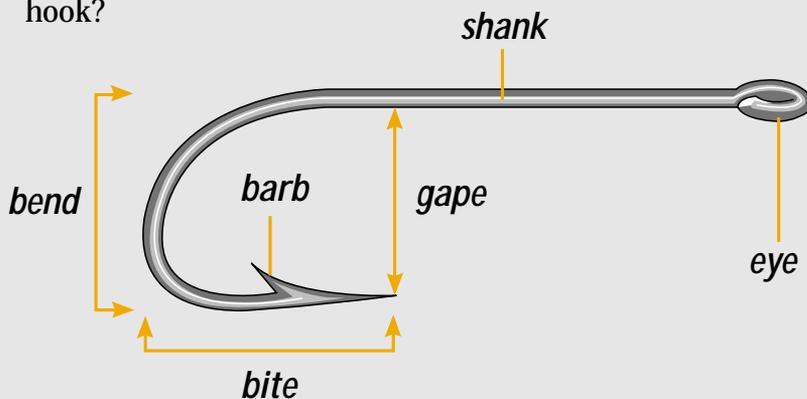


Hook Sharpening: Keep Those Hooks Sharp!

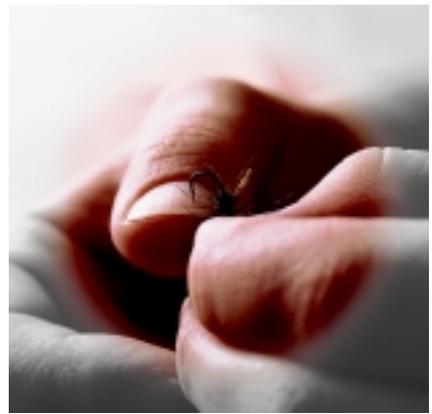
Get the point?

Your first “point” of contact with fish is the point of the hook. If the hook is sharp, you increase the chances of a good hookset. Solid and deep hooksets are critical to hooking and landing fish. Dull hooks take more effort to hit home. Why spend hundreds (or thousands, if you own a boat) of dollars to catch fish, and not do so just because of a dull hook?



Is it sharp?

There is an easy way to determine if a hook is sharp. Gently draw the point of the hook across a fingernail. If the point digs in and leaves a mark, it's sharp. If the hook doesn't leave a mark or won't dig in, it needs to be sharpened.



How to sharpen

There are likely as many gadgets and techniques for sharpening hooks as there are anglers. A small metal finishing file will do fine. In this method, you are filing three surfaces of the hook point.

- ✓ 1. Firmly hold the hook.
- ✓ 2. Draw the file across the barb toward the point. Repeat this stroke several times. Be sure to hold the file at the same angle each time.
- ✓ 3. Repeat these strokes on the other side of the point.
- ✓ 4. Make final strokes on the bottom of the point, forming a triangular point.
- ✓ 5. Test the hook for sharpness.

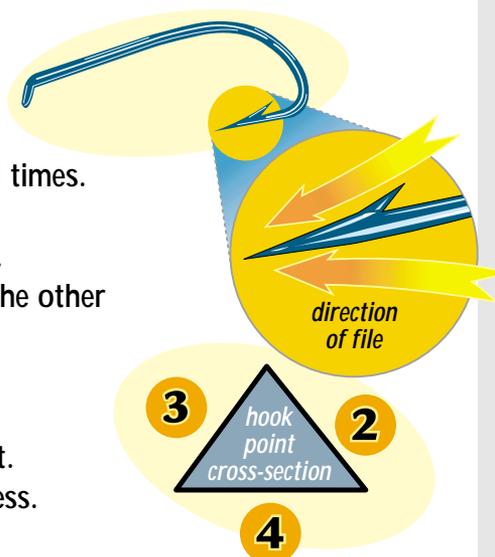


photo-Art Michaels; illustration and graphics-Ted Walke

Hook-sharpening tips:

1. Don't file too much or you will weaken the point.
2. Hooks will rust, so be sure to let them air dry. Don't store damp lures or hooks in tackle boxes.
3. Buy the best-quality hook you can afford. It will be money well-spent.
4. Replace rusted treble hooks.

