

By: **Buzz Ramsey**

Casting Spinners for Trout

Trout are attracted to spinners due to their size, color, flash, and vibration. While the above factors play a role in attracting hungry trout, spinner vibration is credited as the key to spinner appeal. And although some companies tout theirs as the only one producing sonic vibration; in reality, all spinners generate underwater noise created as their blade spins through the water.

Of course, spinners come in a variety of different blade shapes, which mostly affect pulling resistance. For example, a narrow blade shape will perform at faster retrieve speeds while producing minimum drag - meaning they can be more easily pulled through the water. Wide blade shapes generate more cranking resistance (drag), especially when pulled fast, but will maintain high action and blade vibration at the slowest of retrieve speeds.

According to the tackle buyers I interviewed (Fred Meyer, Bi-Mart and Fisherman Marine & Outdoor) the Rooster Tail is the most popular trout spinner. This lure's popularity is due to its versatility. For example, the fact that its semi-narrow blade will perform when pulled both fast and slow means you can quickly cover an area when searching for concentrations of trout but then slow down your retrieve speed to more thoroughly work fish over.

Strikes are easily identified but can, at times, be subtle as trout will sometimes just stop the blade and/or forward movement of your spinner. In either case, it's important to set the hook hard when noticing any change in spinner action. Sharp hooks; so sharp the fish can't let go, are important for consistent hookups.

Spinners come in a variety of different colors, which can have a huge influence on your success. What color works best will likely depend on the amount of available light (which can vary depending on time of day or whether it's sunny or overcast), water clarity and the type of natural forage that's available. For example, if minnows are abundant there is a good chance that a silver, gold or minnow colored body finish will produce best – especially when worked in an erratic fashion.

When aquatic insects are the main forage, and especially when combined with clear water and bright sunlight, spinner body colors like brown, green, yellow, red or black will likely work best. During times when the light is low or water turbid; try a bright red, orange, white, or chartreuse finish. What I do is follow these basic guidelines and let the fish tell me what color they like.

In lakes, most anglers searching for trout cast and retrieve spinners while working their way along the shoreline or from a drifting boat. What I've found is that trout are likely to be found cruising near the surface when water temperatures are cool, early in the morning, on overcast days, or evening time periods. Trout are more likely to be found near bottom (or at some level above it) during the middle of the day when the sun is bright or at times when the surface water temperature is uncomfortably warm.

To determine the depth they're running, and be able to return to it, may require you to practice what's known as the "count-down" method. In preparation for learning the "count-down" technique, realize that most weighted spinners will sink at a rate of one foot per second. Here's how: cast out, and allow your spinner to fall freely to the bottom, counting one-one thousand, two-one thousand etc. until it hits bottom.

Now that you know the bottom depth based on counting you can begin your retrieve, on the next cast, just before your lure hits bottom, which may help you avoid hang ups. Using this simple procedure will

allow you to search for fish at different depths and reliably return to the fish producing level on subsequent casts.

While tipping is a common practice among bass and walleye anglers, the trick is often overlooked by those chasing trout. With spinners what works is to tip the hook of your spinner with a short section pinched from a scent-filled worm - like the 3-inch PowerBait Trout Worm. And while different colors can work, what often adds to success is to hang a half to one-inch section of a red colored worm from one prong of your treble hook – just let it hang straight back.

With recent stocking of fat trout likely in a lake close to your home (check the DFW web site for details) now is the time to try your spinner luck.