



MEMBERS UPDATE

August 2021



Totally Illegal SHTF Fishing Methods (Plus Some Legal Ones)

- The 21 Foot Rule: Fact or Fiction?
- NOT Your Typical Survival Rifle



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Not Your Typical Survival Rifle

We've been fielding lots of question lately about alternatives to traditional firearms. Do any comparable weapons exist? If so, can civilians get their hands on such weapons? You might be surprised to find that air rifles have made some incredible progress over the past decade. In fact, many states already allow the use of air rifles in big game hunting.



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Totally Illegal SHTF Fishing Methods

If you teach a man to fish, then you feed him for a lifetime, as the saying goes. Guided by that logic, as well as our mission to be prepared for anything, we've compiled the definitive list of both conventional and unconventional (often highly illegal) methods of harvesting fish in a lawless post-apocalyptic world in which hunger trumps fishing ethics.



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The 21 Foot Rule

This common rule of thumb has been taught to law enforcement officers for generations: Any armed threat within 21 feet should be met with a decisive force. Is 21 feet really the magic distance that allows responsibly armed Americans to draw a weapon and confront an assailant? Can this rule help the average person better defend themselves?



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Why the Military Uses Reflex Red Dot Optics

The craze that's currently sweeping through the handgun market just finished revolutionizing the world of tactical carbines. Funny thing is, the technology isn't as cutting edge as you might think. It is, however, making drastic improvements in accuracy and shooting speed.



NOT YOUR TYPICAL SURVIVAL RIFLE

With this ammo shortage grinding on and an anti-2nd Amendment President in the Oval Office, we've been getting a lot of questions about firearm alternatives. Now, truth be told, when it comes to self-defense, there aren't many comparable options. When it comes to several other very important functions that our firearms fulfill, however, there is one alternative that's closing fast: Air Rifles.

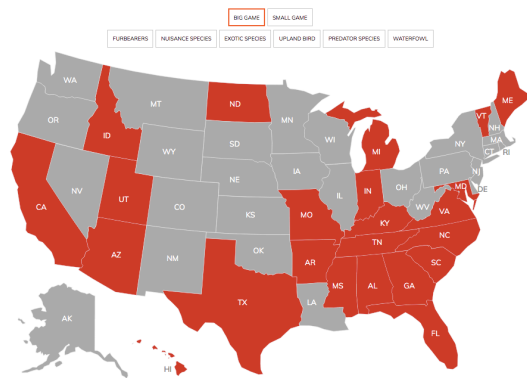
Bear in mind, these aren't the air guns you grew up with playing BB gun wars with your friends in the neighborhood. These weapons raise the stakes of carelessness several orders of magnitude from those kid-sized Red Ryders. Sure, we're all familiar with the famous quote from *A Christmas Story*, but the ol' "you'll shoot your eye out," is a glaring understatement when it comes to the modern air rifle.

It is commonplace for these rifles to launch a pellet at 1,000 or 1,200 FPS. For comparison, a standard .22lr round will achieve about 1,070 FPS. So yes,

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these are rifles are by no means "toys." They are

most certainly weapons, many of them achieving lethal weapon status.



In fact, some state game agencies have already approved using air rifles to harvest not only predators and small game species, but upland birds and big game species as well (see nearby map). Each state has slightly different requirements that weapons must meet in order to be legal, of course. Still, for anyone with a deep well of hunting experience, the rapid acceptance of air rifle technology is nothing short of remarkable.

If anything, this shows us how quickly air powered technology is closing the gap with traditional firearms. Don't worry, gunpowder fans, there's still a very long way to go here. But given the present ammo shortage, it's a very interesting time to ponder what it's like to fire extremely inexpensive ammunition powered by the free energy source you're currently filling your lungs with.

LET'S TALK POWER



So, when comparing air gun power to firearm power, it's important to make sure you're comparing apples to apples. There are some cases in which manufacturers will focus on a particular statistic in order to create the illusion these air-powered rifles are superior in firepower. Unfortunately for them, that's seldom the case.

For example, many air rifles you'll find at your local sporting goods store will advertise velocities of 1,000 FPS, some production models achieving over 1,600 FPS. That's considerably faster than the venerable .45 ACP cartridge which clocks in at 1,000 FPS. What they fail to mention is that velocity was achieved with a pellet that weighed a whopping 8 grains. The .45 ACP was pushing 230 grains. Let's just say, it makes a statistically significant difference.

If we're really trying to compare apples to apples, then we need to be speaking in terms of muzzle energy, aka foot-pound energy (FPE). For illustration purposes only, because there's really no practical reason in the world to compare the two rounds in our previous example, we'll list their corresponding muzzle energy:

.177 Pellet (8 gr) @ 1300 FPS = 30.03 ft-lb

3 .45 ACP (230 gr) @ 835 FPS = 356 ft-lb

While there are several air-powered weapons out there that truly produce centerfire level results (which we will most certainly discuss in this article), the majority of these rifles are still in pursuit of rimfire level ballistics. But for anyone who's truly explored just what rimfire ballistics are capable of, this statement may read with more enthusiasm. In fact, that's how we intend it.



Rimfire muzzle energy is very much real lethal power. In fact, the .22lr is often cited as the most lethal cartridge in the world. Although that's based largely on the ubiquity (and cost) of this ammo.

Although we're not making a case for using air-rifles in a self-defense setting, the fact is that many of today's air rifles can have lethal effects. Well placed shots from a .177 pellet rifle have famously been documented with taking down feral hogs. Thus, it's safe to say that even a store-bought pellet gun can produce the foot-pounds to be very dangerous and/or lethal.

For comparison, let's take a quick look at the muzzle energy stats for a .22lr:

.22 LR (40 gr) @1,200 FPS = 131 ft-lb

As you can see, the classic .22lr cartridge packs quite a punch for its size. It's also much more powerful than your average break barrel air rifle. That's not to say that break barrel rifles aren't extremely powerful and dangerous.

Another key factor to consider with all of these statistics is that all of the foot-pound energy numbers we've discussed here are measured at the muzzle. And as projectiles fly through the air, they meet resistance that greatly influences their FPE, especially with lighter projectiles.



In order to cut to the chase, let us just say that faster muzzle velocities generated with a lighter pellet experience a much greater drop off in FPE as they reach the 20 and 40 yard marks. Thus, instead of fixating on those advertised muzzle velocities that the manufacturers like to plaster all over their marketing, you need to do a little extra research.

Every shooter is different, but very few of them purchase a rifle to shoot objects that are 2-4" from the end of the muzzle. This research will likely result in you considering a .25 or even .30 caliber air rifle, in order to benefit from the momentum carried by heavier projectiles.

To underscore the importance of a heavy projectile vs high muzzle velocity, consider that the most powerful production air rifle produces over 700 foot-pounds, with a velocity under 800 feet per second. How does it achieve muzzle energy that doubles the .45 ACP? This weapon fires a 520-grain pellet.

WHY YOU SHOULD OWN AN AIR RIFLE



When it comes to the cost of ammo, legal restrictions (both present and potential), and the pure shooting enjoyment, not to mention hunting possibilities, air rifles pack an unbelievable bang

for your buck value. Additionally, consider the fact that shooting these rifles doesn't require hearing protection or even a trip to the shooting range in many cases. That means: You can enjoy shooting these guns in your own backyard.

We often promote the idea of training at home. Most of the time, we are referring to dry fire training, of course. In the case of most air rifles or air pistols, you can go "live fire" right at home as long as local laws don't prevent it.

Another idea to explore here is small game hunting. It's one of the most overlooked categories of hunting, but the benefits are many. As with any other type of hunting, you can get out in nature, practice your wayfinding and navigation skills, and gain experience carrying a weapon.

Depending on your quarry, you can harvest some very delicious game species and pelts on your expeditions. If you have a need for pest control, then you can use your air rifle to do actual productive work. Perhaps the greatest benefit that comes with small game hunting is that it is available in all areas of the United States, in all seasons.

TOP 5 AIR RIFLES

Now that we've gone over a bit of where we are currently in terms of air rifle technology, let's get to everyone's favorite topic: What guns you should buy.

Given the already wide and growing spectrum when it comes to air rifles, it's really no use to compare all air rifles to one another. As you'll see, these really run the gamut from target shooting to taking down deer and hogs.

That's why we've decided to nominate the best rifles for each application. Every shooter has different needs and ambitions for each rifle. And at the most fundamental level, every new air power enthusiast needs a good starter rifle to ignite the interest in this fast-growing movement.

BEST STARTER RIFLE:

Hatsan 95 (.22 Caliber)



Let's face it -- there's a lot riding on that critical "first adult air rifle" purchase. You want something that's going to not only make you feel like you got a good dependable rifle that's going to provide you with years of service, but you also want a fun rifle with some zip on it.

There are tons of nice starter rifles out there, and by no means are these specifically for beginners only, but the Hatsan 95 really hits the nail on the head. For starters, the Hatsan 95 comes with a very nice Turkish Walnut stock that makes it a real head turner. Its spring piston design is simple, durable, and easy to service.

Launching .22 caliber lead at 800 FPS, this single shot rifle is capable of generating 20+ FPE and doing so rather quietly. The Quattro trigger is a serious upgrade over other weapons in the 95's price range. The Quattro is a gold plated, two-stage trigger with adjustable uptake and pull. It also comes standard with a 3-9X32 scope for shooting those quarter sized groups.



If you want a solid rifle that's equally suited for plinking or pest control, this is the best rifle under \$200. It achieves its advertised velocity all day long with multiple pellets, and has the features and capabilities of many rifles twice the price.

Retail: \$199

BEST BUDGET BUY:

Crosman F4



You'd be hard pressed to get any more bang for your buck than you get with the Crosman F4, .177 caliber. This nitro piston break-barrel is accurate, powerful, and very accessible at around \$79. Plus, it comes with a lot of extras that make this a killer springer right out of the box.

With an advertised muzzle velocity of 1,200 FPS with alloy pellets, 1,000 FPS with lead, the F4 packs a nice punch. Crosman lists this gun as a small game hunter, but doesn't recommend it for varmint hunting.

The F4 is certainly powerful enough to take down small game, rabbit sized or smaller. Just as important, however, is that the F4 is capable of the accuracy needed to take game ethically, thanks to a few of those extras we mentioned earlier.



Among these are a thumbhole stock, allowing for a pistol grip configuration for shooters that find that hold more comfortable. Believe it or not, the F4 also comes standard with an adjustable 2-stage trigger, pretty impressive.

To really unlock the potential of these springers, magnification is necessary. To that end, the F4 also comes standard with a 4X32mm scope by CenterPoint. It's not a great optic by any means, but it is nice that it's included in such a cost-effective package.

Retail: \$79

BEST SPRINGER VARMINT SLAYER:

Diana RWS 460 Magnum (.22)



The RWS 460 Magnum in .22 is one of the hardest hitting, highest quality rifles on the market. Check the reviews and you'll notice an almost boring repetition of high marks for accuracy, power, and good craftsmanship. Of course, this is coming from folks who value quality air rifles enough to pay \$469 for one.

This underlever single-shot actually outperforms many PCP (Pre-Charged Pneumatic) air rifles in its class. And that comes at a significantly lower price than the PCPs it competes with. Most of the PCP competition does include a magazine feed, however.



One of the strongest talking points of the RWS 460 Magnum is its T06 trigger,

a 2-stage match grade job that is potentially the best on the market. This gun advertises 1000 FPS, though that mileage varies with your pellet weight.

The RWS 460 Magnum is an extremely consistent performer, easily capable of generating 24 FPE with excellent accuracy. From the Monte Carlo stock to well-engineered (and quiet) barrel design, this rifle is a great option for anyone who wants a best-in-class springer and is willing to pay for it.

At 8.3lbs, the only real drawback with this rifle is that it's a bit heavy for younger shooters. The RWS 460 Magnum comes scope-ready with iron sights, so it does come ready to shoot. We prefer our rifles to come with sights and no scope, since most packed rifle+scope combos feature very low-quality optics. Diana lets you pick your own – and we don't mind that at all.

Retail: \$469

BEST PCP VARMINT SLAYER:

Benjamin Marauder, Synthetic .22



Before we get to the specifics of this weapon, let's take a moment to catalog the differences in PCP versus traditional air gun technology. PCP stands for pre-charged pneumatic, meaning that what fuels this weapon isn't you cocking a spring, but a tank of compressed air.

Much of the rapid advancement in air gun technology has come by way of refining the PCP systems to the point at which they are now capable of competing with centerfire cartridges.

What isn't much of a competition, however, is the ability to store and reload ammunition. In this way, springers hold a decided advantage because they can shoot as long as you keep cocking them. For PCP air guns, you have the pressure in the tank, plus a possible recharging tank, and then you're going to need to locate an air compressor.

The Benjamin Marauder line is a PCP powered rifle. This being the case, it comes standard with a 10-round magazine, operated by a traditional bolt action, kind of a nice touch. It comes with a nice 2-stage trigger, synthetic stock with adjustable comb, built-in pressure gauge and adjustable velocity controls.



Benjamin is a trusted name in air guns, with loads of experience figuring out how to deliver what shooters want. The Marauder line is a near perfect distillation of the performance and features that'll put a smile on your face. If you want to shoot half-inch groups at 25 yards, this gun will do it all day long.

The 215cc tank has a roughly 32 shot capacity, which is ample. The choked barrel delivers excellent accuracy, while the shroud really baffles what would otherwise be a fairly loud PCP thump. Generating 25-27 FPE, the Marauder is expelling some significant air pressure.

The Marauder comes scope-ready, decked out in 11mm dovetail mounts, but does not include iron sights. That's our only complaint with this rifle. On the other hand, Benjamin sells a modified bicycle pump that allows you to air up in the field (sold separately).

Retail: \$499

BEST BIG GAME SLAYER:

Air Force Texas SS .457



One of the PCP rifles grabbing the most headlines as of late is the Texan LSS, manufactured by AirForce. Granted, one

reason this rifle is turning heads is its hefty price tag. The Texan retails for around \$1,300 – admittedly no small sum for any rifle. The other reasons, however, are pretty compelling.

The Texan LSS comes in four calibers (.30, .357, .45 and .50), but we tend to prefer the .457 since it compares with centerfire ammo more directly. The .45 caliber Texan LSS launches an impressive 265-grain pellet at a velocity of 930 feet per second. This gun is capable of 600+ FPE folks, possibly more.

Compare that to a .45ACP round fired through one of our all-time favorite firearms, the M1911A1, achieves a muzzle energy of 356 FPE. This is why many big bore PCP rifle enthusiasts maintain that their .45 caliber pneumatic rifles compare more closely with the ballistics of a 45 Long Colt, which has a bit more zip to it.

The Texan LSS is a single shot big bore PCP with a very smooth, low effort side cocking mechanism. The LSS comes with a very long 34" barrel, not ideal for hunting in the brush necessarily, but the longer barrel helps generate more FPE.

With an integrated 11mm dovetail scope mount, the Texan LSS is most definitely going to need a high-powered optic. This weapon is very accurate at 200+ yards. As we said, the PCP technology is edging its way into centerfire territory.



With a few updates over the original Texan, the LSS is a good thing that just keeps getting better. One of those features is a big honkin' suppressor.

While it's true that PCP air rifles aren't quite as loud as comparable firearms, hearing protection is still a very much a necessity. Given the repetitive nature of shooting, even the air blast of a pre-charged pneumatic rifle has the capacity to damage your hearing. That is, unless you're shooting the Texan SS, which is roughly as loud as your Red Ryder BB gun.

So, that explains why a suppressor is beneficial when shooting a PCP rifle. But the million-dollar question is: Why is this suppressed big bore rifle legal without any special legal clearances or permissions?

Simply put, a "suppressor" is legally defined as a device designed to suppress the sound produced by a firearm; and these PCP rifles are not firearms. Thus, federal laws regulating traditional suppressors simply don't apply in the case of air powered weapons, and likely won't apply for a long time, if they ever do.

Retail: \$1,300

CONCLUSION

These are "boom" times when it comes to air rifles. Air gun technology is improving every single year at a pace we've never seen before. And whether or not you plan to harvest game, shoot cans, or compete in the growing world of air gun competition shooting, the fact is that you can have a lot more fun with these weapons than most would ever imagine.

These guns are not all what you might consider inexpensive, but the ammo is comparatively cheap and definitely plentiful. Perhaps you intend to use your air rifle solely as a training tool, in the service of better firearm accuracy. The undeniable benefit, in terms of cost and accessibility, is that you can work on your technique in your own back yard. That's hard to beat.



TECHNIQUES FOR
CATCHING FISH
IN GOOD TIMES
AND SHIT SCENARIOS

Whether you are fly-fishing in a river while wearing waders or straining to reel in a monster catfish from the shore, fishing is a glorious experience. And, besides getting you in tune with nature, fishing is a wonderful self-reliance skill to pick up in times of plenty ahead of any potential TEOTWAWKI event.

In this newsletter, we are going to share some angling techniques that are perfectly legal, along with some shady ones that will likely get you fined or arrested in times of plenty. In true survival fashion, though, you should know the time and the place each method applies.

We also categorize what follows as bait and baitless fishing. So, first up, let's discuss the fun pastime of bait fishing.

Bait Fishing

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Although you couldn't tell by watching the sheer number of anglers casting their artificial lures

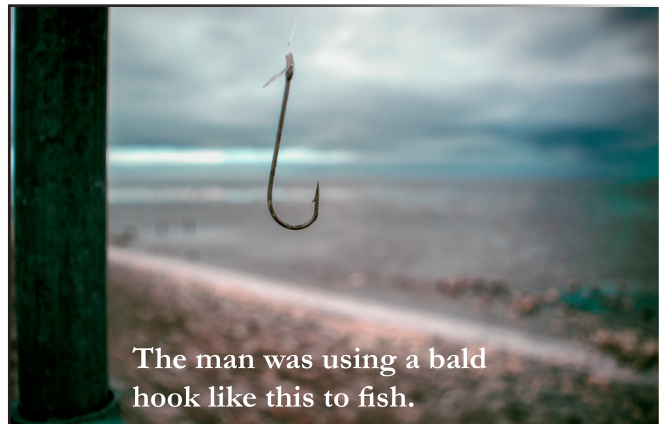
around on sports channels, bait fishing is the most widely used style of fishing. How does it work for the most part? In essence, you put foodstuff that the fish digs on a lure, and they either go for it hook, line and sinker...or not, which can lead to a lesson in patience or frustration.

Freshwater fish can hit anything from corn to chicken livers, to live fish on a lure, depending on the species. Reeling them in takes a special sort of finesse and skill, too. More importantly, fishing can be quite a relaxing experience once you get the hang of it, and it is an excellent idea to learn this self-reliance skill.

You can fish on the shoreline, in the water with waders or from the side of a boat and more. Here are a few freshwater bait fishing facts and how-tos to get you started.

Rod & Reel Fishing

One time when I was fishing with my son at Lake Sidney Lanier in Georgia, we saw a young man casting his line without any bait on his generic fishing hook. Transfixed at the strange sight, I asked the fella why he didn't put any bait on his hook. He replied, saying that he "was fishing for bass."



Of course, we let him know that not much was going to be happening without live bait or an artificial lure at the very least on the end of his line. "Nothing less would probably tempt the fish to strike," we told him.

Our family invited him to come over to watch us after we set up our poles. We had some earthworms we had bought from the bait store that was up the

road apiece, and we baited our books and showed the young gentleman how to do it to his.

We shared legless insects for a while, and before long, he left to pick up some worms of his own. He decided that he would try some nightcrawlers based upon the convenience store owner's recommendation.

At the end of the day, the group caught a fine mess of crappie and bream, even though a turtle had helped himself to a few of the fish that were on the stringer. They fried up nice when we got them home, and I wondered if the man would be able to figure out how to gut and clean his fish when he got them home. Oh, well, that's the stuff that YouTube is made for, I guess.

What Bait Should I Use?

Live bait such as nightcrawlers, earthworms and minnows will catch almost every type of fish imaginable in rivers and lakes. They're also some of the best options for bottom-feeders like carp, catfish and suckers.

As an aside, I was baiting my hook with chicken livers and shrimp one night while freshwater fishing on Lake Sidney Lanier in Georgia. For the record, scavenging catfish will hit almost anything, and I've even had luck snagging them using marshmallows a time or two. Catfish love them some chicken livers and shrimp, though.

That same evening, something big wanted what was on that hook fiercely and almost drug me off the bank in its exuberance. In the end, I wasn't able to wrestle the beast to shore, and it eventually broke my pole.

In my mind's eye, I envisioned a catfish big enough to swallow a duck or someone's pet alligator at the end of my line. The creature definitely had to be the one that got away, as I've never had a big fish fight that hard, even when I've gone deep sea fishing.

How Long Should My Freshwater Rod Be?

Short rods, which are around 6 feet or less, are ideal if you plan on making short, accurate casts. However, if pinpoint accuracy really isn't needed, you should go with a long rod that's over 7 feet. Muddy water and heavy cover are two scenarios where a shorter rod can really shine. The chart (courtesy of sportfishingbuddy.com) shown below provides guidelines about the line and rod weights you need, which are also helpful when you go to pick out your fishing rod and line.

Fishing Rod Weight Chart

Rod Weight	Line Weight	Recommended species & application
Medium	6 - 12 lb test	Bass, walleye, pike, lake trout
Medium Heavy	8 - 14 lb test	Salmon, pike, catfish (casting)
Heavy	15 - 25 lb test	Muskie, pike, salmon (trolling)
Extra Heavy	25 lb test and more	Heavy casting for bass with over-sized baits or rigs

When is the Best Time to Freshwater Fish?

The time of day and the season can determine whether you are going to reel in fish by the dozens or sit on a bank or in a boat and twiddle your thumbs. Here are some guidelines to go by for the best success:

- In the summertime, prime times to catch fish are early morning and late evening.
- In the fall and spring, the best time to fish is around dusk.
- Cold fronts can limit your chances of making a catch, along with heavy rain. However, catfish are the exception to the heavy rain rule since it can make them active, hungry and more likely to feed.

- Except for wintertime, the best time of day to catch catfish (channel, blues and flatheads) is from an hour before sunset until two hours after sunrise.
- In the southern portions of the United States, you can typically catch fish year-round.

When Do I Use a Bobber When Fishing?

Bobbers are best suited for fishing waters that are no deeper than the length of your fishing rod. This design keeps your bait at a preset depth while fishing. In deeper water, or when casting long distances, use a slip bobber to eliminate casting problems caused by the long length of line between the bobber and hook.

However, keep the bobber small enough so the fish you're targeting can easily pull the float under without feeling resistance. A too-big bobber may cause the fish to drop the bait. Keep several styles and sizes in your tacklebox to match different fishing conditions and rigs.

You don't need a bobber for bottom feeding fish like catfish and carp. Just add a few weights to the end of the line near the bait and hook, so the line will sink to the bottom.

Setting the Hook and Reeling in the Fish

You have to get used to bites and working through them to catch a fish. You are also going to snag wood and other things in the water and lose a few lures. More importantly, you need to know how to set the hook, which requires finesse.

Watch the YouTube video *Fishing Basics: Setting the Hook* for tips and to see how setting the hook is done. You need to ensure that your line is tight at all times and that your rod tip stays up.

After you set the hook properly, your rod should be at 90 degrees. Lower it down to about 45 degrees and start reeling in as you lower it. Do this until the

fish is close enough for you to reach it and pull it out of the water.

Jugging

The more fishing poles are in the water, the more likely you will be to catch a fish. Jug fishing acts on the same principle, but you use several plastic jugs vs. a pole with this method. Jugging is a nice way to catch fish in lakes and rivers without a rod & reel, and it typically involves using several cheap plastic jugs where lines are tied onto them with a hook and bait at the end.

Sinkers and weights such half bricks and cinder blocks are added to the line to keep the containers stationary. The jugs should stay suspended over the water when you're done with setup.

Different types of fish can be caught using this method, but the main target of it is usually catfish. You can use discarded milk containers or plastic beverage containers for jugs, and as you can probably tell by that statement, jug fishing is a lot cheaper than buying multiple fishing poles.

Although it's common practice to see 20 jug sets used at once in some states, keep in mind that jug fishing is subject to numerous state and local laws and guidelines that could limit that or impose other rules. Moreover, in some states, it is not allowed under any circumstances. In times of societal collapse, though, you can see the advantages of upping the ante to score more tasty freshwater fish.

Trotlines

Trotlines allow you to catch lots of catfish in rapid fashion. The design calls for 10-25 hooks that dangle from short, regularly spaced fishing lines known as trots. These lines are composed of heavy nylon cords, massive hooks and swivels that allow you to subdue even the most monstrous sized-flatheads.

The best places to place a trotline are target transition locations where tributaries flow into the main lake or at a side channel that upsurges onto shallow flats. Make anchor points or tie it between snags to keep it stable. Then, after baiting those big

hooks, add a trotline weight in the middle to drag the line close to the bottom.

When targeting blue catfish or channel catfish, they like freshly cut pieces of dead fish the best. Flathead catfish are very predatory and will typically only feed on live crayfish, bream, shad and even smaller catfish. Many species of catfish are scavengers, too, and stinky catfish bait made from things like blood, cheese or chicken livers work well on trotline hooks.

To work a trotline, you'll need to recruit a friend. Both of you should grip the main line and pull your way along it, rebating and removing fish as you go.

Limblines

For simplicity, you can't beat a limblines, as it is only a baited hook and line tied to a limb suspended over the water. Willow limbs and cypress tree branches are good to use because they're strong, pliant and keep hard-fighting catfish from snapping lines or pulling hooks free.

Be sure to mark each set with brightly colored tape so you can easily find them. Rig them in a way that they hang right at the water's surface, creating catfish-attracting sounds.

To coax the real big guys and girls to take a chomp, try live bullheads, carp and suckers that are around 6-7 inches in length. They will really create a commotion. Run your lines often, and when you see a limb bouncing up and down, you know you hooked a fish. It could be a good-sized channel cat, or maybe even a monster blue or flathead catfish that will provide meat for a while.

Baitless Methods

You can have great success fishing without live bait, and we don't mean the kind like the gentleman at the onset of this article was doing, either. For the most part, you typically use artificial lures, which are amazing for catching all types and sizes of fish, both big and small. And, given enough time and coverage, these "fake baits" have been known to out fish live ones.

Here are some tried and true methods for fishing you can try that doesn't use any bait.

Cast & Retrieve Fishing



Similar to lure fishing, is cast & retrieve fishing. The main difference is that you retrieve the line once you've hooked a fish with lure fishing, and with casting and retrieval, the motions are continuous. Most anglers often associate cast & retrieve with the elegant, rhythmic sport of fly fishing as seen in *A River Runs Through It*. "Only three more years till I think like a fish." God, what a movie!

Cast & retrieve fishing can cover a lot of area quickly as the motion is mainly horizontal. The speed at which you reel in the lure, the angle at which you hold your fishing rod and the design of the lure all define the depth the lure stays at on the way back.

Many rigid swimming lures are design with a lip at the front that helps the lure dive to specific depths. Several are also available in deep or shallow running styles. Soft, plastic minnows or tapering-shaped artificial worms can also be used.

Steps for Cast & Retrieve Fishing

- Cast your lure to the target area. Remember fish love cover and structure.
- Let the lure drop to the depth you want.
- Retrieve your lure by reeling it in and using your pull on the line to mimic a swimming fish.
- You may wish to mix up the speed that you retrieve to find one that entices a bite.

- Wait a few seconds, and then cast the line again.
- Repeat your retrieval.

Topwater Fishing



With top water fishing, you fish on the surface of the water with a floating artificial lure that mimics a minnow or some other type of tasty creature that will attract fish. They will respond in varying ways to different types of topwater lures, but these types of lures usually float on the top of the water.

Smooth surfaces typically call for a gentle and quiet presentation, while choppy waves require you to make more of a statement. It will be necessary to learn how to rig the type of topwater lure you're using for different conditions.

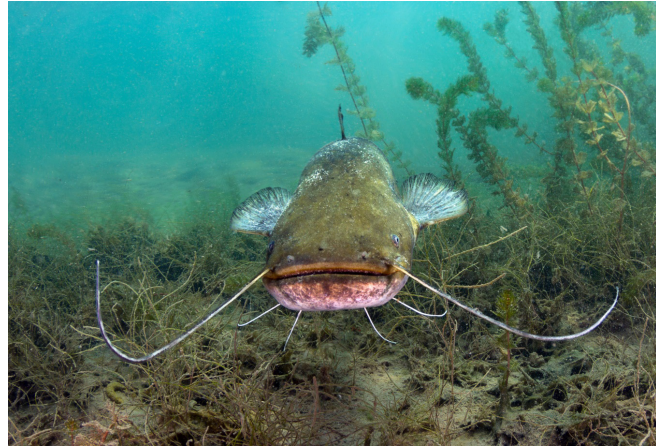
Swim a soft plastic or slider erratically around rocks, edges or weeds, but aggressively chug poppers around the same surface of water when strong winds create a chop. If that doesn't work, try experimenting with different approaches.

Steps for Topwater Fishing

- Use a topwater lure such as a popper. They have a concave face that makes a huge splash when you jerk it sharply on the water's surface.
- Cast the popper to a location, and then reel it in using a motion that mimics a swimming fish.
- Try "walk the dog" type of artificial lure that shakes their head back and forth. These types of lures move realistically when you twitch the tip of your fishing rod in a consistent rhythm,

mimicking a shaking head action that is similar to what a dying baitfish does on the surface.

Noodling



Catching catfish by putting your bare arms (and sometimes your legs) into dark freshwater is known as noodling. The method uses no equipment or bait, and it's practiced mainly in the southern United States. You may have seen it on the reality TV show "Hillbilly Handfishin" that aired on Animal Planet from 2011 to 2013.

Noodling can be Dangerous

Noodling has grown in popularity, and that's probably due to the TV show. However, it comes with a few dangers. First, it can be painful. Catfish have needle-like teeth, and if they bite you, it will hurt, especially if they begin rolling. If it won't bite your appendage, you'll need to grab it, pull open its mouth, wriggle your fingers through its gills and hold onto it. Gripping it this way will make it harder for it to bite you, too.

Second, catfish instinctively know you don't have the best intentions, so they will often try to get away by pricking you with their sharp fins or popping you with the long, bony protrusions on the side of their jaws. Although the cuts they make are mostly an annoyance, the broken skin where they tag you can get infected. Clean and bandage the area when this happens, and also watch out for allergic reactions since catfish gills contain a mild venom.

Third, snakes can attack your bare skin, as one noodler in Oklahoma found out the hard way.

Destry Mitchell, from Atoka, was having a lot of fun pulling out giant catfish, until a three and a half-foot-long cottonmouth sank its fangs into his finger.

“I put my hand on top of a rock and I guess that snake was on the other side of the rock, and he saw my hand and just attacked it,” he said.

The attack was life threatening, and he spent a week in the hospital after receiving anti-venom treatments. After the ordeal, Mitchell told news crews that he “isn’t sure if he’ll noodle again, but he might.”

Best Places to Noodle

Catfish nest wherever they feel safe and can be well submerged. It’s best to look for a catfish hole in shallow water, so you can wrestle them without getting too deep. Usually they hang out in holes that are close to the shore, under rocks, in fallen logs or in puddles in mud banks.

Is it Worth It?

Many noodlers don’t have any problems. However, it might be best to leave it to the pros and stick to a rod and reel since handfishing can be dangerous. Moreover, there’s bound to be a shortage of doctors, hospitals and anti-venom if a poisonous “nope rope” decides to latch on to you. So, don’t do it when the SHTF unless you have no equipment or bait and are starving. Otherwise, it’s going to be like having a death wish.

Stunning

Stunning, which uses an electric charge to confuse catfish, has been around for quite a while. The NSRA once read about a man that made a DIY stunner to shock catfish from his rowboat. He said that once a monster catfish floated up that was larger than his boat.

A stunner has an electrical pulse generator that works by sending a pulse of electricity through water and into the catfish. The catfish get confused

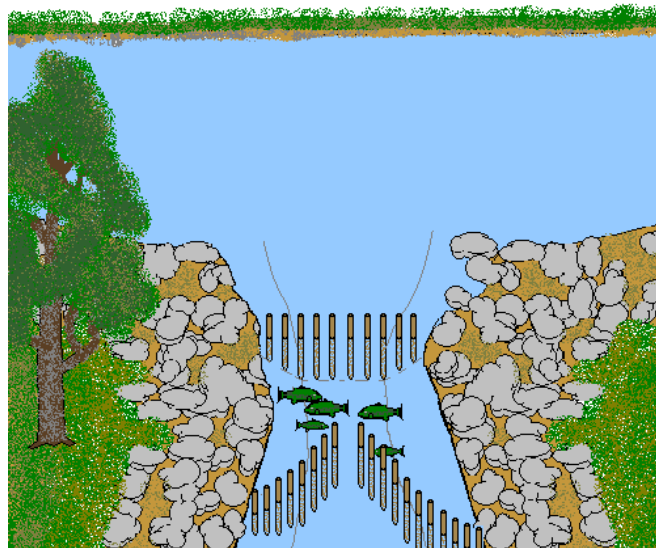
and swim to the surface where they can be netted or picked up.

If Amazon sells stunners, there is a good chance that stunning is legal in most parts of the U.S. A few things to keep in mind: Stunners only work on catfish, and they won’t shock you. Lastly, they do not work in ponds, and there must be flowing water.

The Dark Side of Fishing

You are about to enter the dark side of fishing, but hey...you and your family are likely to get hungry when society falls, right? The following baitless methods of fishing are illegal and are for survival use only.

Fish Weir



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishing_weir#/media/File:Fish_Trapp_BKG.png

Fishing weirs, or kiddies as they are sometimes known, were obstructions created in lakes and rivers to trap fish or guide them to a desired location. The technology may be older than modern humans, and Native Americans, such as the Cherokee strategically placed them in streams and rivers near their villages. Cherokee weir design involved the placement of stones across the river, and a line of people would then form a chain across the water, startling the fish and causing them to swim downstream to the location of the weir.

Once inside, the fish would swim into a gradually narrowing funnel and eventually into a trap waiting

inside the kiddie. The introduction of modern game laws made kiddies illegal and eventually led to the abandonment of the practice in North America.

Blast Fishing

Blast fishing, also known as fish bombing or dynamite fishing, is an extremely destructive fishing practice that is illegal in every part of the United States. Blast fishing involves using small sticks of dynamite like an M80 or other types of explosive to detonate and send shock waves through the water to stun or kill the fish.

In some countries they still perform fish bombing, but it is a very shortsighted fishing method, as it destroys the fish's delicate ecosystem – which, in turn, spoils the fishing spot for further use. Dynamite fishing is also extremely dangerous to the fisher folk that deploy the explosives because they can often explode prematurely. Of course, you can probably think of better uses for dynamite in a SHTF situation.

Fish Poisoning

Poisoning was one of the most primitive ways to fish before the advent of modern ways of doing it. As far as a societal collapse goes, it should be employed only in the direst of circumstances.

The poison is made by crushing leaves of some plants, such as neoratanenia, tephrosiavogelii, adenalobat and munduleasericea. Barriers are temporarily put in place in flowing water to prevent it from washing away the poison.

Afterward, pour the leaves in the water, and they will release juices that kill or shock fish. Also, collect the leaves once you are done fishing or they will continue to kill the fish. The substance in the plants isn't harmful to humans, and practitioners have used the method since ancient times.

Final Thoughts

Whether it is in good times or bad times, knowing how to use these methods is sure to provide you and your family with fresh and tasty fish. Also, don't forget that good-sized crayfish and soft shell & snapping turtles you catch can provide you with sustenance, too. As with anything, the more you know, the better your chance for you to make the correct decision in the face of survival.

Be sure to check out our next newsletter where we will discuss saltwater fishing methods, homemade recipes for preparing catfish and recipes for making homemade bait that catfish can't resist.





21 Foot Rule: Fact or Fiction

Like many other things in life, something that started off as a helpful guideline has been twisted. The so-called 21 Foot Rule of policing is taught before an officer has graduated training. In a nutshell, it means that the average officer must stay 21 feet away from a suspect with a knife or else risk being injured or killed. Therefore, if a suspect with a knife pulled enters the 21-foot space, the officer must kill or be killed. But is that really the truth? Let's examine this controversial rule that dates back more than 35 years.

Does the Rule Really Protect Officers?

First, let's start with the life of a police officer. If they're less than 21 feet away from a suspect with a knife, will they automatically become injured or killed? The answer, of course, is no. So, why do so many officers believe this?

The reality is that most officers cannot rely on 21 feet to keep them safe if the aggressor really intends to harm them. In fact, studies have found that

pulling a gun and shooting someone takes more time than rushing an officer.



On the other hand, a prevalent misinterpretation of this rule states that everyone within a 21-foot range is an immediate threat to kill the officer. That's quite simply not true. Most people will put their weapon down if they're confronted by an officer who doesn't escalate the situation. Basically, if an officer chooses to confront the suspect with violence, they should expect the same in return. If, however, they

pull their gun but don't immediately decide to shoot, this gives them a chance to talk the suspect down.

This doesn't work in all cases, of course. Sometimes, no matter how much patience an officer has, they will have no choice but to shoot. The more common issue is that officers open fire before they can determine if the suspect was really a risk to them. And, in today's social climate, this can lead to protests.

Does the Rule Ever Work?

In limited situations, the 21 Foot Rule does keep officers safe. But, as pointed out in the last section, strictly observing this rule will not provide enough time to react for most officers. Sadly, traditional training still states that it will be, though, which has caused many officers to kill or be killed when neither needed to happen.

Should the Rule be Forgotten?

Police need training on how to handle edged weapons. But the 21 Foot Rule is not a good example of how to best react. Instead, their training should consist more of learning how to understand body language and intent. If the aggressor has the intent to actually cause bodily harm to others, they need to be taken down. There's a big difference between an armed aggressor and a person with a mental illness, though. And it can make all the difference in the world when it comes to protests.

So, no, the 21 Foot Rule shouldn't be completely forgotten, but it does need to come with much more training. None of us can ever read another person's mind, but there are many telltale signs of whether or not the knife is defending the suspect instead of aggressively being turned on the police.

Does the Rule Offer Defense in Court?

We can now see how tricky the 21 Foot Rule can be. If an officer reacts too quickly, they might kill someone who was never really a risk to them. But if they act too slowly, they might end up dead. There's really no good way to go about it, but the reality is that American police officers kill way more people than almost any other country.



In the U.S., men have a 1 in 2,000 chance of being killed by an officer. This number becomes 1 in 1,000 when you consider only Black men, and it's 1 in 1,800 for Latinos. Women have a 1 in 33,000 chance of being killed. Even worse, at least 10 percent of people who are killed by officers did not have any weapon on them. No matter what side of this issue you're on, it can definitely be agreed that those 10 percent did not deserve to die.

In total, U.S. police officers killed 984 people during the past year with a gun. Meanwhile, throughout the U.K. and Wales, police officers only kill between 0 and 6 people per year. In Denmark, Iceland, and Switzerland, the annual average is 0. Hong Kong and New Zealand have 1 police killing per year.

There are only five countries in the entire world that have a higher average of people killed by the police than the U.S.: Brazil, Venezuela, Philippines, India, and Syria. Still, U.S. courts have traditionally upheld an officer's right to shoot someone who was carrying a weapon. The Supreme Court determined that if a 'reasonable' officer would have shot, then the officer is protected from legal action.

A Gun Might Not Help an Officer

If you're an officer still relying on the 21 Foot Rule, you need to be aware that your gun may not offer enough defense. Officers who have been killed in the line of duty often became overly reliant on their sidearm. If someone is determined to kill you, though, you might not have enough time to shoot. Even worse, your shot might not hit the intended target or may hit him in a non-critical area.

The point is that an officer should never decide that his gun is a deadlier weapon than whatever the suspect has. Becoming overly confident could easily be the last thing an officer ever does.

More Room is Better

This article vacillates between two points of view, but that's for a very good reason. No matter what an officer does, he or she is going to face a lot of scrutiny if the person dies, especially right now. Ideally, the officer would instead make sure to secure an area that's bigger than 21 feet. Not only will this give him more time to make a judgment call, but it will also reduce the overall risk of having to kill the aggressor.

A Taser May Not Work

It's really easy for everybody to be an armchair quarterback, especially after the fact. Unfortunately, if someone is charging at an officer, their taser just may not cut it. The thing about a taser is that it works best when the suspect is more or less stationary. An officer could try to use their taser on a charging suspect, but the odds are high that they're not going to actually hit them.

This removes one of the most commonly heard defenses from those who are opposed to police violence. How many times have you heard someone say, "Why didn't he use a taser? Why did he have to kill him?" Now, you have a good answer to those questions. Yes, the officer could try to use a taser, but only their gun has the best chance of taking the suspect down before he does any damage.

Tactical L vs. Tactical J

When an officer finds themselves in a standoff with someone who might rush them, they need to decide what to do right away. Since we know that the 21 Foot Rule won't necessarily help them, what else can they try?

Tactical L involves moving laterally to the aggressor's line of attack. This may confuse or disorient the suspect, which will give the officer enough time to draw their weapon and shoot, if necessary. It may also provide officers with enough

time to subdue the aggressor instead of shooting them, which is always the ideal.

Tactical J can really put an aggressor off-guard. In this formation, you must wait until they start to charge at you. Then, move obliquely at a 45-degree angle toward the suspect. This is generally more confusing and requires a much more radical change if they hope to hit you. Again, this provides time to either shoot the aggressor or to overpower them.

Knife Culture Continues to Grow



Perhaps it's a response to police violence or simply a way of feeling safer. Either way, knife culture continues to grow throughout the country. Officers need to get more used to dealing with them, and they also need to learn to disarm a suspect from a close range. Because the truth is that most close-range suspects will be within 10 feet of you, which really throws the entire 21 Foot Rule out the window, doesn't it?

One thing that officers really need training on is how to tell if a suspect has a knife or if they're planning to use that knife. In the case of Ma'Khia Bryant, that hasn't been determined yet as of the time of this writing. What we do know is that Bryant called the police to ask for help. But when they responded, they ended up killing her. According to the officer, she had a knife and was attacking another girl. Therefore, the officer said, he was justified in his shooting.

The big questions surrounding the Bryant case are: Why did she call for help if she was planning

to attack? Would she have really used her knife to attack or was it just for defense?

These are the things that everyone now wants to know. She was only 16 years old and has been classified as a sweet honor's student. The officer couldn't have known any of these facts, though. All he knew was that he was responding to a call and found a girl with a knife having a fight with another girl.

Would you have taken the time to try to deescalate the situation? Or would you have simply shot, like the officer did?

We will never know if Bryant really intended to use her knife on the other girl. Nor will we ever know if she intended to seriously harm the other girl or just to cut her. What we do know is that she called the police for help, which makes it seem like she pulled out a knife as a last line of defense. But can an officer reasonably be expected to make such a judgment call? Or is it his main imperative to take out any person with a weapon during such a situation?

Many armchair quarterbacks say that as a 16-year-old girl who called for help, she probably had the knife to make her feel safer. Instead, it got her killed. What those same people would have done if they'd found themselves inside the situation is anyone's guess, but it's clear that the situation was anything but clear.

How Should Officers Respond?



Ultimately, this is the big question. And there's no perfect answer for it. However, if the officer is able to, they should:

- Stay more than 21 feet away.
- Deescalate the situation.
- Keep their gun trained on the suspect.
- Make the best judgment call possible.
- Be aware that they may be criticized by the media/protestors.
- Be able to look people in the eye and say, "I had to shoot."

If an officer can't do all of these things, they probably shouldn't be an officer. One more really important thing that needs to be said is that an officer who makes a mistake should be able to own up to it. It may take their career away, but it's very important for people to be able to trust the police. If an officer finds themselves hiding key information or flat out lying about what happened, they should turn in their badge because they're not helping anyone other than themselves.

Final Thoughts



When it comes to the 21 Foot Rule, it's only useful in limited scenarios. What's really needed is an entirely different way of training officers. After all, it does them no justice to be led to believe that anyone within 21 feet of them with a knife intends to kill them. Additionally, on the off chance the aggressor does want to hurt or kill the officer, 21 feet just won't cut it most of the time.



Why the Military Uses Reflex Red Dot Optics

Introduced to the US Armed Forces in 2000, reflex optics quickly became the go-to sighting choice for small arms, starting with the M4 family of rifles and branching out quickly. In fact, the SEAL responsible for dispatching Osama bin Laden used the technology to place 3 rounds through the most wanted man in history's forehead.

With the adoption of the Sig Sauer P320 as the USA Military's primary sidearm in 2017, there are a good many military handguns that also incorporate a mini-reflex optic (one of the civilian Sig Sauer P320's distinguishing features). So, what's the story with the optics?

The interesting thing is that reflex sights are really not particularly new or cutting edge. Built on

a curved lens will appear to the viewer at infinity, the first patent on this type of reflector sight was registered in 1900 by telescope designer Howard Grubb. Fighter aircraft have used reflex sights in one form or another starting as early as 1918.



The advantages to this type of sight are obvious immediately upon the first use, chiefly the simplicity. Pilots, in specific, could use this highly accurate sighting tech while flying a plane... during a dogfight. That speaks volumes in itself.

Since the military's adoption of this technology, reflex sights have spread like wildfire throughout law enforcement, security, and hobby shooting alike. For many, reflex sighting technology has been a revelation, a driving force in the rise of the tactical carbine. And as this shooting trend, unlike most, has shown it has some serious staying power, advances in technology and production have made it very accessible and inexpensive.

One of the primary advantages to this type of optic, versus other conventional sights, is that it eliminates much of the margin for error posed by open sights. Since the aim point displays at the same exact spot regardless of the shooter's eye position, getting your eye lined up precisely with an iron sight or scope tube isn't necessary.



In addition, reflex users won't have their field of view limited by a scope tube. In fact, many shooters use reflex sights with both eyes open. Cross-dominant eye shooters typically find reflex sights to be ideal.

As you know already, open sights create several challenges to the shooter, such as multiple planes to focus on, as well as the interpretation of the aim point. You must line up the sights, focus on the front post, and acquire your target. It takes work to make this process happen smoothly and efficiently. Plus, the aiming mechanism you're using literally obstructs your view of the target. Had you ever considered that?

With a red dot, you simply focus on the target itself. The reticle simply appears to be superimposed on top of your target. That is, it only requires you to focus upon one visual plane, your target. As you can imagine, this simplicity works wonders for accuracy



and speed at close to middle ranges.

For tactical shooters, military applications, and law enforcement, reflex sights support a more heads up, dynamic type of shooting. In an environment where being completely aware of your surrounding is critical, reflex sights are ideal. The shooter doesn't have to put their head down on the stock as they would with a magnified riflescope or iron sights, they don't even have to be perfectly aligned with their optic.

At any angle where the reticle is visible, it will be accurate with the correct aim point because of the curved lens infinite focal point principle. This makes reflex sights ideal not just for accuracy, but accuracy combined with speed. Acquiring a bullseye is as simple as looking through a pair of corrective lenses.





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