



OPENING DAY OF BASS

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TOP FIVE TIPS AND BAITS FOR BASS IN JUNE

by John Allen photo by the author

As the season opens in mid-June, bass are in between the post-spawn phase and their summer phase. The post-spawn is well-known for a tough bite, so you need to present your lures in a way that entices the fish to strike. This requires the right lures and techniques.

Tube lures

The tube lure is my favorite lure to use on a tight-lipped fish. Whether in a lake or river, the goal of this lure is to mimic a crayfish, by bouncing the lure off the bottom around structure. I find a slow-bouncing lure is difficult for fish to turn down.

Worm baits

Whether it's bouncing a Ned Rig along the bottom or throwing a wacky-rigged sinking worm, worm baits are always a good option. With a wacky-rigged bait, I let it sink through the water column, then jig the rod towards myself and let it sink a second time. This covers more water as you search for a willing bite.

Chatterbaits

Chatterbaits are great for quickly covering a lot of water. During the post-spawn, I like to fish them on

multiple levels of the water column by pulling the rod back to move the bait, then reel down, and continue to repeat until the bait is back to the rod. Most strikes happen while the bait is dropping through the water column. When I begin to pull back again, I feel the strike. I'm already in the hook setting motion, so it results in better hooked fish.

Hard plastic baits

Whether crankbaits or jerkbaits, they both work well when using the reel-reel-pause-reel retrieval. When I'm fishing near a structure, as soon as my bait gets near it, I pause the retrieve for a few seconds and then slowly start the retrieve again. This is effective with both suspending and floating baits.

Topwater baits

Early in bass season, you want baits that can entice a stubborn fish. For me, that has always been small frog baits and spooks. Remember, the fish are more used to chasing tadpoles than full-sized bullfrogs during this time of the year. I find the "walk the dog" retrieval motion from small spooks effective. Often, your strikes will come after you've paused the bait for a few seconds and then start moving it again. The most effective time to use these baits is first thing in the morning and late in the evening. ☐