# Pre-Season Warm-up

**Athletes warm up before the season starts and before each event. Why shouldn't you before trout season opens? If you haven't fished since last fall, your skills could use some practice.**
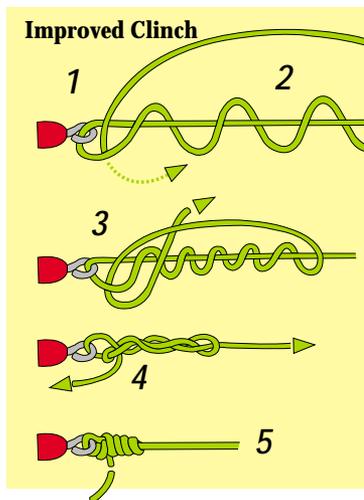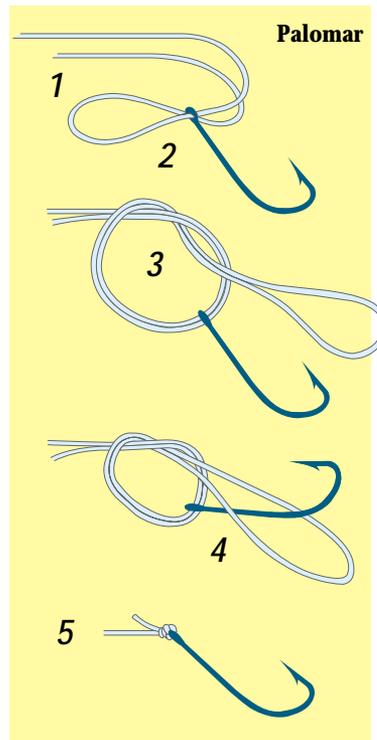
## Practice Plug

Practice plugs are handy for casting practice. You don't want to throw lures with hooks around the house or in the yard. Most tackle shops sell practice plugs. You can make one of your own.

## Knots

A poorly tied knot can weaken the line strength by 50 percent or more. That means a lousy knot tied on 4-pound test is like fishing with 2-pound test. Practice your knots at home using a heavy cord, parachute rope or an old fly line. Your casting plug can do double duty–tie your knots to it. Here are some of the knots commonly used by anglers.

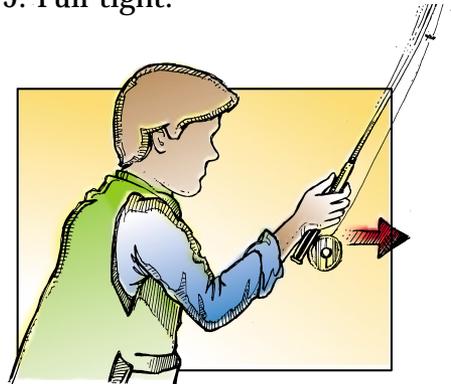**Palomar**–used for attaching lures or hooks
1. Make a loop of 4 inches or so of line.
2. Pull loop through eye.
3. Tie an overhand knot with loop. Hook should dangle from middle of knot.
4. Pull loop over hook .
5. Pull both lines to tighten.

**Palomar**

1
2
3
4
5

**Improved Clinch**

1    2
3
4
5

**Improved clinch**–used for attaching lures or hooks
1. Thread line through eye and double back on line.
2. Wrap loose end around line to reel five times.
3. Thread loose end through first loop above eye.

4. Thread loose end through the big loop made in step #3.
5. Pull tight.

## Casting Practice

Practice in your backyard will make you a better caster on the water. Don't mind the funny looks your friends and neighbors give you! Tell yourself (and them) that you will catch more fish than they will. Better yet, get them practicing with you. Targets include hula hoops, trash can lids or wash tubs.

Scatter your targets around the yard. Practice casting accurately at different distances. With a partner, you can play FISH, a game like HORSE played by basketball players. One caster makes a trick or hard cast and the other tries to make that same cast. The caster missing the target or not making the cast gets a letter from the word FISH. The casters switch who goes first. The first one to get all the letters in the word FISH loses.

**PLAY**