

Fighting and Releasing Steelhead

Most large fish are lost due to poorly tied knots, slack line, weak hooks or incorrect rod handling.

- Set your drag to handle steelhead and make sure you have strong knots.
- After setting the hook, maintain a tight line between your rod hand and the steelhead.
 1. Reel in slack line as the steelhead swims toward you.
 2. Allow the steelhead to take line off the reel when it "runs."
 3. Don't grab the line with your fingers.



- Angle your rod to the side and at waist height, using the butt end (back section) of the rod to play the fish. The rod should bend at the butt end, not at the tip.
- Keep your rod angled low and apply pressure in the opposite direction that the fish is swimming.
- Net your trophy. Bring the tip of the fish's head out of the water and slide the net under its body. Have a friend help net your fish.



Releasing Your Catch

- Use a net to land your fish and pliers to remove the hook.
- Wet hands before handling.
- Keep the trout in the water when removing the hook and taking photos.
- Allow the fish to revive in the water before releasing it.