

# Recreational Fisheries



*Putting more fish  
on your dish*



## Word scramble

1. rsfu fnhsiig
2. icnlsee
3. aragiidlb
4. ohpo nte
5. lcacoi ssba

Answers: 1. surf fishing 2. license 3. garibaldi 4. hoop net 5. calico bass

Commercial fishing isn't the only way to put fish on your dish. There is also recreational fishing, something that many people in our community like to do. Recreational fishing, also known as sport fishing, is a great way to enjoy multiple types of fishing. You can go pier fishing, deep sea fishing, surf fishing, and even "fish" by diving for lobster and crabs, or catch fish by spearfishing!

In order to go sport fishing, you need to know a few things. First, if you are 16 years or older, you will need to buy a license. However, if you just want to try fishing without spending money on a license, you are in luck. No matter what your age, you may fish off public piers and some jetties without a license. Just check to make sure that the pier/jetty you want to go to is one where you don't need a license to fish.

### You also need to know:

- *what you can fish*
- *where you can fish*
- *(some fish are protected)*
- *when you can fish*
- *how many and what size fish you can take*
- *what type of gear you can use*

Sound familiar? Just like commercial fishing, there are many rules to follow when recreationally fishing. These rules are often different for commercial and recreational fishing. For example, some fishes

can only be taken when sport fishing, not commercial fishing. One of these is the kelp bass, which is also known as the calico bass due to its spots. The giant sea bass, commonly known as the black seabass, and the bright orange garibaldi (our State Marine Fish!) are protected by law – you're not supposed to take these. You should also know that while you may sport fish for lobsters, they can only be caught during certain seasons (fall & winter) and you can only keep them if they are larger than a certain size. There are also some areas where fishing is not allowed, including several sites at the Channel Islands. It is important to know these restrictions so you don't do something illegal and to help protect the animals so they can reproduce and thrive. You can find the rules, license requirements and other information about recreational fishing at the Department of Fish and Game Web site, [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/sportfishing\\_regs2009.asp](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/sportfishing_regs2009.asp).

There are many other things you should know to increase your chances of successfully catching a fish. You can learn about what types of fish are being caught locally and get some tips on how to catch these fish by talking to people fishing or by searching online. This can be very helpful for figuring out what type of bait and gear you will need to catch the fish you want. One thing we learned is that if you are going to fish for halibut you need heavier gear (larger hooks and thicker line and poles) than for small fish like sardines. Also, figure out what types of hooks you should use because there are many kinds to choose from. Some creatures, like the California spiny lobster, cannot be caught with poles and line. You will need a

hoop net to fish lobster and crabs from a pier, or dive gear if you are going to catch them by hand underwater.

The nice thing about sport fishing is you can do it for the 'sport' (it is so exciting to reel in a fish) or for food or for both. Catch and release, is a common way to enjoy the sport of fishing. You can have fun catching the fish and then release (return) it to the ocean so it can grow and reproduce. However, if you want to keep the fish to bring home and eat, this is also an option, as long as you have followed the rules. No matter what your reason for fishing, just remember to dispose of your used line properly. Otherwise, it might end up getting tangled around birds' feet or choke other marine life!

So, are you ready to try your hand at recreational fishing? We did, and it was a blast! We can see why many use this activity to uncover some of the treasured sea life of the SBC.