

PRACTICAL CARP FISHING

The CarpAnswers Guide to Catching More Carp

Find the fish. Fish the spot. Make better decisions.



FREE SAMPLE / FULL GUIDE COMING SOON

Already catching carp? Make more of your next trip.

Already catching carp, but keen for a few more bites? These eight illustrated excerpts from **The CarpAnswers Guide to Catching More Carp** will give you a taste of the ideas in the full book.

The full guide is coming soon: five tactical chapters, 82 pages, 45 distinct images and diagrams, worked examples, and fillable planning and review pages. It stands on its own; you do not need our beginner's book.

How to use these pages

These are selected excerpts, not consecutive chapters. Chapter labels show where each lesson belongs in the full book. References to other chapters refer to the complete guide; this sample is not a rig-tying or setup course.

Pick something worth trying on your own water: watch the bite times, compare a hooklink change or see what your bait does after a soak. A small improvement is a good start.

Worked waters and session outcomes in the full guide are fictional teaching examples. Always follow venue rules, use a compatible safe setup and look after the fish.

[Visit the book page for release updates](#)

A taste of the tactical guide

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What the full guide adds

Finding a better chance, getting back to the spot, making the rig work and judging the feed. Follow worked UK sessions and a week in France, with short planning pages to help on your own trips.

Choose an opportunity, not just a swim



Time spent watching can reveal an opportunity that the nearest empty swim does not offer.

Have a look before settling in

It's tempting to settle into the first decent empty swim, especially when you're keen to get the rods out. Before you do, take a look at what you can actually fish. Where have carp shown? Can you reach them cleanly? Is there a feeding spell you might catch before you have to leave?

Pick two or three promising areas rather than trying to work out the whole lake. For each, ask: **why might carp be here, are they likely to feed here, and can I fish it properly today?** A sunny bay full of cruising fish can look irresistible, but the entrance they pass through later may offer the better bite.

Keep another option ready

Give today's signs more weight than a swim's reputation. Repeated shows in reachable open water may be more useful than last week's catch from the margin. On the other hand, a reliable early feeding spell could be a better bet than a lone fish rolling just before you're due home.

Have a second choice ready. If the first spot turns out to be weedy, occupied or too awkward in the wind, you won't have to start the whole search again. It also makes it easier to move on instead of spending the afternoon trying to justify your first choice.

Find the useful part of the day



Record when activity begins, not just where it happens. A repeated time pattern is more useful than one show.

When does your lake come alive?

Dawn can be excellent, but it isn't the answer on every lake. What matters is **when your water tends to give you a chance**. If your winter sightings and catches keep falling at lunchtime, that's useful information even if everyone talks about first light.

Put catches and sightings alongside the time you actually fished. Include baiting, recasting and weather changes. A blank morning followed by a bite at 14:00 tells you something different from arriving at 13:30 and catching straight away. You didn't see the morning on the second trip.

Be ready for that spell

Once you've noticed a likely bite time, get the noisy jobs done beforehand. Have the spot checked and the rig in place rather than sending a marker through the area as the carp arrive. If they turn up early, leave the rest of the routine for later.

Use the pattern to make one practical change: arrive earlier, rest the spot before the usual spell or delay a top-up. Look at the quiet visits too. They may show that the timing changes with pressure or weather, or that you need a few more trips before relying on it.

Is a marker float worth another cast?



Use the depth reading to answer a question, then get back to fishing.

Will depth change the plan?

A marker is worth using when depth will change your choice. Perhaps you want to compare a shelf with the basin beside it, or work out whether a stretch of activity follows a depth change. Have that question in mind before you cast.

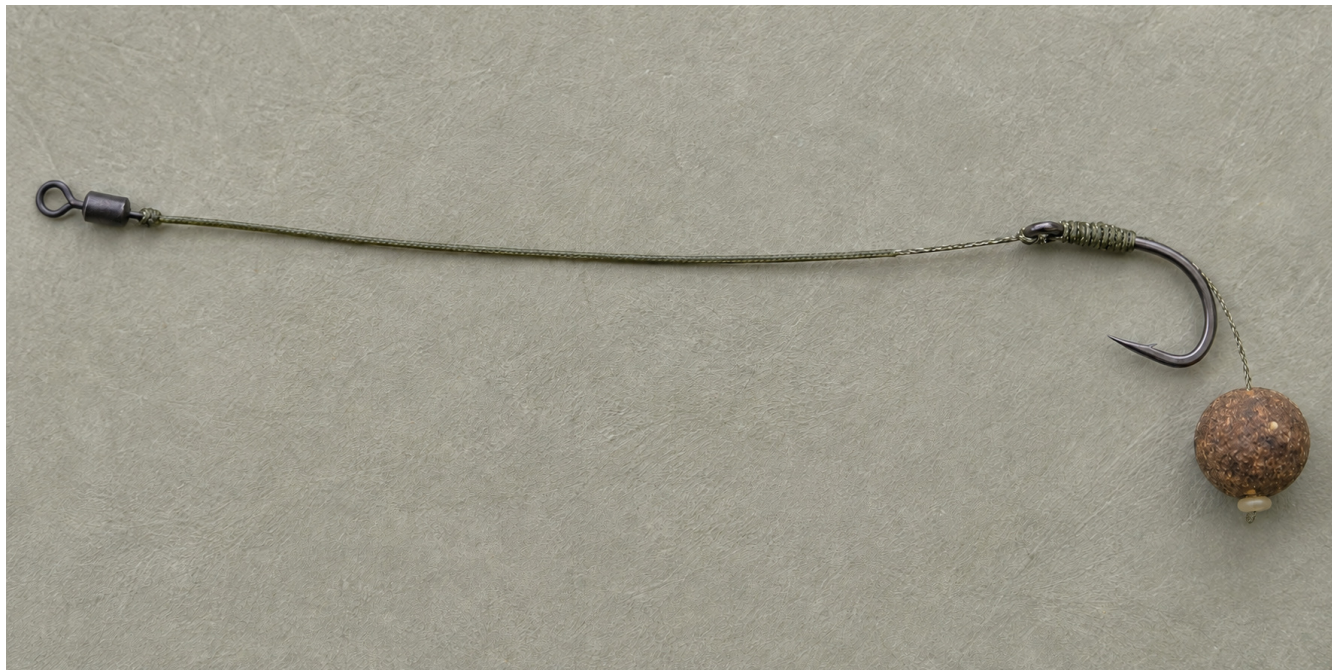
On a familiar clear spot with fish already feeding, another marker session may tell you very little. A quick lead check could be enough. Save the extra work for the detail you actually need.

Make the cast worthwhile

Make the check fit the session. A short visit doesn't leave much room for half an hour of feature finding, especially during the spell when carp tend to arrive.

Keep the marker out of the fishing line routes and retrieve it once you've got the reading, unless a deliberate permitted arrangement keeps it safely clear. A useful reference shouldn't become the next obstruction.

Would a different hooklink length help?



Keep the hair clearance unchanged when comparing hooklink lengths, so you can judge the difference.

Change the right detail

Lengthening the hooklink won't give a swollen boilie more room beside the hook. Check the hair clearance first. Match the change to the problem, rather than making the whole rig longer and hoping for the best.

A short hooklink can suit a compact solid-bag presentation. Over soft ground, too little usable length or movement may let a buried attachment pull the hook section down. But extra length alone won't necessarily help a stiff section that's already bridging the bottom.

Compare the cast as well

Compare two lengths within a familiar design, keeping the hook, hair and bait the same. Check how they settle with the actual lead attachment, then how they cast at your intended range. **A rig that settles better but keeps tangling hasn't solved the problem.**

If the length change helps, keep the finished measurement. If it doesn't, look at the material, lead arrangement or spot instead. You may already have had the right length.

Softened bait hasn't necessarily gone



Intact, softened and dispersed bait. Breaking down changes its form; food can remain on the bottom.

Compare the baits you use

A pellet can lose its shape while plenty of edible bits remain. A boilie can soften without disappearing. Don't let a breakdown time on a packet become an automatic signal to put more food in.

Compare the actual foods you plan to use in separate clear containers. Keep the sample amounts, water depth and temperature alike, including any liquid treatment. Take a starting photo, then look again at times that fit the session you have in mind.

Look at what remains

Notice whether the bait is intact, soft, split or dispersed. If you need to handle it, use a separate sample rather than stirring the same one repeatedly. Keep the crumbs in view; they're still part of the feed.

Use the comparison to choose your mix: perhaps something that releases small bits early alongside a more durable food. It won't tell you how much carp have eaten on the lake, where other fish, crayfish and water movement all play a part. Let the fishing help you decide when to top up.

What does the liquid add?



Dry bait and a lightly coated alternative. Compare a small batch before treating the whole supply.

Try a small batch first

Before treating the whole bucket, try a small batch alongside some untreated bait. Check the intended use and amount. A stronger coating isn't necessarily a better one.

Look at the practical effects first. Does it soften the bait too quickly? Does the pop-up keep its buoyancy for the planned soak? Does the actual mix weaken the PVA before casting or delay its opening in cold water?

Keep a reliable alternative

Measure what you add so you can repeat a useful result. If the bait becomes fragile or awkward to fish, adjust the treatment rather than working round it all day. Keep a reliable untreated option.

Then give both a fair chance on the bank. If you change the bait size or feed quantity as well, note that too. You may find a useful combination, even if you can't put the result down to the liquid alone.

Could naturals offer something different?



A small natural-bait offering worth comparing when nuisance fish and venue rules allow.

When is it worth a try?

Maggots and casters can give you a different offering from the usual boilie approach. Live maggots bring movement too. They're worth trying when the lake allows them and small-fish attention won't keep ruining the chance.

Think about the session length and how reliably the bait will last. On a clip rig, keep the point and gape clear; with PVA, check the actual contents release as intended in the water temperature you're fishing. Keep a durable option handy if the naturals get too much attention.

Compare it on the bank

For a useful cold-water comparison, fish the same familiar hookbait and rig with a small natural-feed parcel, then compare it with the approach without that parcel. Keep the spots as similar as practical. That way, you're looking at the extra feed rather than changing the hookbait at the same time.

Use the result honestly. Repeated small-fish bites or missing bait may make the idea wrong for this session. Neither tells you that carp are feeding on the spot, and naturals won't make up for fishing away from the fish.

Give the spot a proper breather



A quiet interval removes your own casting and feeding disturbance. Watch what changes before returning to the spot.

Remove the disturbance

If activity has dropped while you've been casting, baiting or adding lines, try removing that disturbance. Winding in and watching quietly makes a clearer change than resting one rod while casting another through the same water.

Choose a useful time to rest it. Perhaps the evening bite time is still ahead, or fish keep turning away as a line goes in. Watch what changes rather than waiting for a fixed number of minutes and assuming the lake has reset.

Watch what happens next

Don't automatically feed before every rest. If plenty may already be there, more could be the wrong move. Where a small feed fits a pattern you know, note it separately from taking the lines out.

If carp start using the area again, put the trap back quietly. If they're feeding elsewhere, leaving the old spot alone for longer won't bring them back. In an allocated holiday swim, a quieter angle or different fishing time may be the better option.

Keep the useful ideas. Build a better fishing plan.

We hope you have found a few ideas you are looking forward to trying. The full guide brings them together, from choosing where to start to deciding what to do when the bites stop.

Find a better chance

Read the fish, the pressure and the bite times.

Get back to the spot

Make the cast count, and put the feed where it helps.

Make the rig work for you

Find what needs changing and keep what works.

Make every handful count

Start sensibly, watch the fish and adjust the feed.

Keep up with the lake

Know when to move, change depth or leave it alone.

Full e-book coming soon

There is no confirmed release date or price yet. Check the book page for the latest news. No purchase or pre-order is needed to enjoy this free sample.

Explore the full guide on CarpAnswers

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