

# 'The fishing game'

This game aims to assist participants to learn some responsible fishing behaviours (preferably before fishing for the first time) such as:

- Where to find the Victorian Recreational Fishing rules
- Where to find pictures to identify a fish -The Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide, App or fish ruler
- How to correctly measure a fish
- What you must do with fish or other things you might catch that you are not allowed to keep or do not want to keep

## Materials needed

- Marine and/or freshwater fishing games ( Freshwater game too complex for PS students)
- For each game you will also need:
  - **Current** Recreational Fishing Guides, or access to smart phones to download apps
  - **Current** Fish measuring rulers relevant to each game (Marine or Freshwater)
  - '*When I catch a fish I...*' sheets
  - '*Fisheries rules defined*' sheets

## Optional

1. Source an **old sheet** or piece of material from an op shop to represent the "water"

## Educator background information

- Ideal number of fishers per game 2 -12 maximum
- Fishers can play the games
  - as individuals
  - in pairs
  - as a team
- At the end of the fishing activity the team with the
  - most legal sized fish
  - biggest legal sized fish
  - first team to catch all the legal sized fish

can be crowned responsible fishers

To accommodate larger numbers of fishers and to generate discussion about differing rules in different places, play the Marine and Freshwater game at the same time.

## Setting up the activity

- Find a space large enough for the game and the four **measuring stations**.
- Put "**the water**" on the ground/floor, place the fish face up (patterned side) on "**the water**" or group the fish in an area on the ground/floor
- Set up 4 **measuring stations** in spaces not too close to the game/s  
At each measuring station put
  - 1 x Recreational Fishing Guide,
  - 1 x Fish measuring ruler
  - 1 x '*When I catch a fish I*' sheet
  - 1x Fisheries rules defined sheet

## Optional

- **Angler Diary recording sheets** /pencils (1 per individual / pair/ team) for recording the catch (Angler Diary master copy at the end of these instructions)

### Playing the game

- Arrange the fishers in a circle around the fishing spot.

### **Demonstrate**

- how to correctly measure a fish using a fish ruler and a fish from the game. Measure exactly from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.
- **removing the fish from the 'hook' by gently sliding the washer sideways from the magnet on the fish (if you don't follow this instruction the magnets will tear away from the fish)**
- **how to identify a fish using the Fishing Guide**
- **Explain**, Each fisher
  - Takes a turn catching a fish using the fishing rod
  - Carefully remove the fish from the hook
  - Pass the fishing rod to the next fisher who follows all the steps
  - Take the fish to the **measuring station**, turn it over to reveal the species
  - **Follows the 7 steps on the 'When I catch a fish I ...'** to determine what to do with their catch
  - Returns to the circle either keeping their catch or returning it to the water and waiting for another turn.
  - The game continues until everyone, has had a turn, a time period has expired, there are no fish left to catch

OPTIONAL- Teams or individuals can fill in an **Angler Diary recording sheet**

### Educator instruction

**While the game is played, move around the measuring stations to supervise and advise.**

### At the completion of the game, bring everyone together to discuss:

- What fish were caught and kept (species, size)
- What fish were returned to the water, why they were returned to the water
- Were all the rules the same for each species of fish
- What type of rules did they encounter (bag, possession, legal size, closed season, protected species, legal equipment)
- What do each of the rules mean (e.g. bag limits if the number of fish a person may take on any one calendar day while –) refer to the **'Fisheries rules defined'** sheet
- Consequences for not following the rules from the perspective of the fish, (Less fish in the future, impacts on food chains)
- Consequences for people who do not follow the rules (Official warning, fines, banned from fishing, gaol, confiscation of boat, fishing gear)
- What can we do to ensure we all can continue to fish in the future? - ( We can fish responsibly following the rules and we can all be eyes in the community, call 13 FISH- a 24 hour hotline to report suspected illegal fishing activity)

### Pre or post Extension activities

**Species profiles.** Complete profiles for each species in the game before playing the game

Participants share their findings to the group.

- I am a .....
- I eat.....
- I am eaten by.....
- List an interesting fact about this species

### Marine Fishing Game contains the following species

Snapper, spiny globe fish, blue throat wrasse, sand crab, Blue groper, King George whiting, sand flathead, bream

### Freshwater Fishing Games contains the following species

Murray cod, golden perch, rainbow trout, rakali, brown trout, carp, yabby, trout cod, Macquarie perch

## Angler diary

What did you catch?

Species caught	size	Did you keep it	Reason for keeping or not keeping the catch

# When I catch a fish....

1. I use the Recreational Fishing guide to identify it.



2. I confirm if I am allowed to keep it.  
If not, I put it back quickly.

3. I decide if I want it.  
If not, I put it back quickly.



4. I make sure it is a legal size.  
I handle it carefully and measure it!

5. If it is too big or too small,  
I put it back quickly.



6. If I already have my bag limit  
I put it back quickly.

7. If I am going to keep it I kill it quickly  
and put it in ice.



## Fisheries Rule Definitions

Certain words and terms have special meaning when used in fisheries rules. It is important for all fishers to understand what these terms mean. The common words are found below

### Bag limit

- is the maximum number of a particular type of fish that a person can take on one day, while in, on or next to Victorian Waters.

### Possession limit

- is the maximum number of a particular type of fish that a person can possess at any one time while in, on or next to Victorian waters.

### Absolute state-wide possession limits

- is the maximum number of a particular type of fish that a person can have at any one time anywhere in Victoria (including in your home).

### Size limits

- tell you what size of fish you can catch and keep legally. Size limits apply for most but not all fish. Where there is no size limit you can legally catch and keep a fish of any size.

### Minimum legal size

- tells you the size (length) of the smallest fish you can catch and keep legally. Fish shorter than this size must be immediately returned to water alive and without harm.

### Maximum legal size

- tells you the size (length) of the largest fish you can catch and keep legally. Fish longer than this size must be immediately returned to water alive and without harm.

### Landed whole or in carcass form

- The fish species must be kept whole until you arrive on land. This ensures that bag and size limits are obeyed.

### Open Season

- is a period of time during which you CAN:
  - fish in a particular location
  - attempt to take, take or possess a particular species
  - use particular equipment.

### Closed Season

- is a period of time during which you CANNOT:
  - fish in a particular location
  - attempt to take, take or possess a particular species
  - use particular equipment

You need to check before you go fishing if a closed season is in place.

Fish caught accidentally during the closed season must be released immediately to the water alive without harm.

## Fish

Fish is a general term that refers to a range of animals that live in water. In this guide fish can mean and is not limited to:

- scale fish (such as black bream, snapper, bait fish etc.)
- sharks, skates and rays etc.
- crustaceans (such as shrimps, prawns, crabs, lobsters, yabbies, crayfish etc.)
- molluscs (such as abalone, oysters, pipis, octopus, squid cuttlefish etc.)
- other invertebrates (such as sand worms and sea urchins).

## Recreational fishing

Recreational fishing is fishing for fun, food or sport. It includes:

- line fishing
- bait collection
- gathering shellfish
- fishing for yabbies
- prawning
- spearfishing.

Recreational fishing also means having (possessing) or using fishing equipment in, on or next to Victorian waters.

## Noxious species

- is a plant or animal the Victorian Government identified as being capable of causing harm to public health, agriculture, recreation, wildlife or property.

In Victoria many plants and animals are declared noxious.

Common noxious species living in Victorian waters, which fishers may come across include:

- fish (common carp)
- plants (water hyacinth and salvinia)
- animals (red eared turtles).

## Protected species

A protected species is an animal you are not allowed by law to try to catch, harm or kill.