

The Canada Approved Walleye And Pike Tackle Box

by Gord Ellis for Wilderness North
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One of the hardest things to do is pack tackle for a Canadian wilderness fishing trip. We all have a lot of tackle these days, and the temptation is to bring all of it, just in case. Trouble is, tackle is heavy and takes up a lot of space. If you are going in to a remote area, weight becomes an issue. All those extra worm weights and crappie jigs start to add up.

The folks at Wilderness North have asked me to put together what I think would be the perfect walleye and pike tackle box. This list includes many of my favourite baits, but may be missing some of yours. Add and delete to this list as you wish. Keep in mind that the lures and tackle described for one species may just as easily catch the other. I can't tell you how many nice walleye I've caught on spoons, and how many monster pike have eaten a 3 inch jig and twister. When fishing in Canada, expect the unexpected.

The Walleye Anglers Tackle Box

- Jigs: These should be at the core of the Canadian walleye anglers tackle box.
- Northland Fire Ball Jigs - with the short hook - are the best for fishing walleye with live bait like minnows.
- Stand up jigs such as the Lipstick and Tip Up Jig are good with both twisters and live bait. When using plastic baits only, round head jig with a large hook are the best choice .
- It's tough to beat the Northland Gumball jig when fishing grubs or twisters. Have a selection of jig weights from one eighth to half ounce.
- Canadian approved jig colours include flame red, metallic gold, yellow, neon fire tiger and pink.
- Plastics: Twisters and curly tail grubs are the go-to plastic. Have a selection of 3 and 4 inch Mister Twister or Berkley Power Grubs on hand.
- Scented shads and plastic minnow baits like the Gulp minnow are very powerful and often work as well as live bait without the mess of constantly re-baiting. Gulp and Power Crawlers are great for trolling with spinners and you won't have to keep changing the bait. Some other good plastics include the Yum family of twisters and tubes.
- Crankbaits: I'd definitely have a selection of #5 and #7 Rapala Shad Raps (perch/silver/fire tiger), as these are one of the best trolling baits ever made for walleye. Wally Divers and Wally Demons in the same shades as the Shad Raps are

also great for trolling up nice walleye. For casting, the Rapala Husky Jerk is a fine choice, as are the Rapala X Rap and Smithwick Rattlin' Rogue.

- Lipless crank baits like the Rattle Trap and Frenzy Rattler are great for covering water and catch big fish.
- Live Bait Rigs: For live bait rigging, have a selection of walking sinkers from one quarter ounce to one ounce. My favourite are the Lindy No Snagg slip sinkers. Give them a little slack and they usually come right out.
- Bottom bouncers - basically a weight on a wire bent at 90 degree - are a great tool for trolling spinners, cranks and live bait. Have a selection of bottom bouncers from one to 3 ounces. Bring a selection of #4 #6 and #8 bait holder hooks, a dozen barrel swivels and some leader material such as 8 pound test Berkley Vanish.
- Spinners: Little Joe spinners with red or silver blades, Northland Tackle single blade Rainbow spinners. For casting, it's hard to beat a #3 Mepps Aglia. Even one ounce spinner baits will catch walleye when they are in the weeds or on the tops of reefs.
- Jigging Spoons: An off ball technique, but I've caught walleye on jigging spoons when nothing else was working. The best all around spoon is a half ounce silver Hopkins Smoothie. Other good jigging spoons include the Swedish Pimple, Kastmaster and Krocodile. Clip them on and drop the spoon to the bottom. Jerk the spoon hard, letting it flutter back down to the bottom. Strikes will be bone jarring!



The Pike Anglers Tackle Box:

- Spoons - A couple dozen half to 1 ounce spoons from 3 to 6 inches will cover most situations. You should have a varied selection including: Eppinger Daredevil red and white; Len Thompson five of diamonds (yellow and black); Lucky Strike Toronto Spoons (silver/brass); Northland Jaw Breakers (fire tiger) and a few Gator Spoons (fire tiger). Other good choices include the ACME Aqua Spoon is brass and red. As for weedless spoons, the Johnson Silver minnow is hard to beat. Spinners - You'll need a handful of the following: Mepps Musky Killers (silver/black); Lindy Musky Roller (red blade, black tail); 1 and a half ounce Buchertails (black dressing/silver blade or black dressing/red blade), Giant Tandem Spin (chart/yellow) and Northlands (Es Buzz-Ard Buzzer (white/silver). I'd also recommend bringing a couple one ounce white spinner baits. These are awesome in the weeds and are a great spinner to troll.
- Soft Plastic - Plastics are deadly when pike are shallow. I like mostly big stuff, like the 6-8 inch Berkley Power Grubs; Power Lizards; Jerk Shads and Inshore Minnows. Also the Lindy Gator Tube is worth a try in deep water. Best plastic colours are white, pearl and chartreuse bodies in that order. Bring a selection of Northland Buckshot Rattle Jigs and Swimming jigs in half ounce to 1 ounce plus some 5/0 worm hooks.
- Flies - If you are fly fishing, have some Dahlberg Divers, Lefty's Deceivers and any large white streamer of 3 to 5 inches. The flies should be tied on quality hooks from 2/0 to 5/0. Weed guards on a fly never hurt. Bring lots of thin wire leader material.

- Cranks and Jerks - Rapala Super Shad Raps in pearl and red/white and Lindy's Big M in fire tiger or silver shiner are both deadly pike trolling lures; Rapala's Husky Jerk is a great shallow water pike bait; the 6 and 8 inch size Suick in sucker or black is a classic jerk bait best used over weed beds or rock reefs. For twitching, the 6 inch Jake or Grandma bait is a good one for big pike.
- Topwater- The Rapala Skitter Pop (largest size), Zara Spook (4 inch) and Rebel Buzz'n Frog are all deadly on pike. White, silver or frog are top water colors of choice for pike.
- Steel leaders - 2 dozen - good quality 12- 18 inch steel leaders of no less than 50 lb. test. Make sure the snaps are Berkley Cross Lok .
- Other Pike Fishing Must Have's - needle nose pliers, surgical hemostats, bolt cutters, jaw spreaders, file, 60 inch measuring tape, slime towel Lindy Fish Handling Glove, waterproof camera and first aid kit.

Good fishing.

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