**Fishing Regulations**

Fishing in NYC lakes and ponds requires a Freshwater Fishing License to fish in NYC lakes and ponds.

**Eating Legally Caught Fish**

- Children up to age 15 and women up to age 49 can eat their catch, but not use barbed hooks in open swimming areas.
- Separated fish heads and tails do not have to be removed before cooking.
- Eating of fish caught by children under the age of 15, women, or men over age 50 is prohibited.
- Fish caught on a guided fishing trip shall not be counted toward annual bag limits.

**Fishing Licenses**

New York State residents must purchase a freshwater or saltwater license to fish in NYC lakes and ponds.

- A Freshwater Fishing License costs $5.00 for New York State residents and $15.00 for visitors.
- A Saltwater Fishing License costs $10.00 for New York State residents and $20.00 for visitors.

**DEC Freshwater Fishing Map**

Available in print and online, this map provides information on fishing spots, regulations, and other resources.

**DEC Marine Resources**

Access fish species and fishing locations for New York's coastal waters.

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**Common Freshwater Fish Species in New York City**

- **Bluegill**
  - **Description**: Small sunfish with blue/green metallic sheen. Found in freshwater ponds, lakes, and streams.
  - **Habitat**: Shallow, weedy areas.
  - **Bait**: Mealworms, worms, grubs, and live bait.

- **Bass**
  - **Description**: Two species native to New York: Black Bass and White Bass.
  - **Habitat**: Open water, structure, and estuaries.
  - **Bait**: Lures, baits, and live bait.

- **Crappie**
  - **Description**: Small, schooling fish with silver scales.
  - **Habitat**: Shallow, weedy areas.
  - **Bait**: Mealworms, worms, grubs, and live bait.

- **Sunfish**
  - **Description**: Small, colorful fish with blue/green metallic sheen.
  - **Habitat**: Shallow, weedy areas.
  - **Bait**: Mealworms, worms, grubs, and live bait.

- **Tilapia**
  - **Description**: Native to Africa, introduced to NYC in the 1940s.
  - **Habitat**: Shallow, weedy areas.
  - **Bait**: Mealworms, worms, grubs, and live bait.

- **Pickerel**
  - **Description**: Small, schooling fish with silver scales.
  - **Habitat**: Shallow, weedy areas.
  - **Bait**: Mealworms, worms, grubs, and live bait.

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**Common Marine Fish Species in New York City**

- **Striped Bass**
  - **Description**: Large, schooling fish with a striped pattern.
  - **Habitat**: Ocean, estuaries, bays, and rivers.
  - **Bait**: Lures, baits, and live bait.

- **Gulf Striped Bass**
  - **Description**: Similar to Striped Bass but with a more pronounced striped pattern.
  - **Habitat**: Ocean, estuaries, bays, and rivers.
  - **Bait**: Lures, baits, and live bait.

- **Bluefish**
  - **Description**: Large, schooling fish with a blue/green metallic sheen.
  - **Habitat**: Ocean, estuaries, bays, and rivers.
  - **Bait**: Lures, baits, and live bait.

- **Black Bass**
  - **Description**: Large, schooling fish with a striped pattern.
  - **Habitat**: Ocean, estuaries, bays, and rivers.
  - **Bait**: Lures, baits, and live bait.

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Learn to Fish!

For Teachers, Educators, and Parents:
DEC’s I FISH NY program brings fishing education to NYC school students in grades 3 and up. Classroom lessons cover fish anatomy and diversity while addressing ideas from NYS Science Learning Standards. Students participate in trip days at a freshwater or saltwater location.

Free programs are also available for groups in after-school programs, summer youth camps, senior centers, and through other social services. Train-the-trainer programs are also conducted by DEC’s I FISH NY staff.

I FISH NY educators bring all the necessary fishing gear and bait, but the group must provide their own transportation to the fishing spot. Those interested in a fishing program can contact I FISH NY by emailing fwfish2@dec.ny.gov or calling (718) 482-4922.

Public Fishing Clinics:
The I FISH NY program also hosts free public fishing clinics. These are designated "free fishing events" so participants do not need to possess a New York State fishing license or be enrolled in the Marine Recreational Fishing Registry. Find fishing events throughout NYS:

- www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27123.html
- NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation: www.parks.ny.gov/parks/149/details.aspx
- Prospect Park Audubon Center: www.prospectpark.org/visit-the-park/things-to-do/fishing/
- Randall’s Island Park Alliance: www.randallsisland.org
- The River Project: www.riverprojectnyc.org
- Rockaway Waterfront Alliance: www.rockawaybroadcom.org

Other Free Fishing Opportunities:
- Battery Park City Parks Conservancy: www.bpcparks.org
- Central Park Conservancy: www.centralparknyc.org
- Crooke’s Point: www.nps.gov/gate/planyourvisit/fees.html
- Fort Tilden: www.nps.gov/gate/planyourvisit/fees.html
- Hudson River Park Trust: www.hudsonriverpark.org
- Lower East Side Ecology Center: www.lesecologycenter.org
- NYC Department of Parks and Recreation: www.nycgovparks.org/facilities/fishing
- Prospect Park Audubon Center: www.prospectpark.org/visit-the-park/things-to-do/fishing/
- Randall’s Island Park Alliance: www.randallsisland.org
- The River Project: www.riverprojectnyc.org
- Rockaway Waterfront Alliance: www.rockawaybroadcom.org

Fishing at National Park Service Sites
Fishing at National Park Service locations such as Crooke’s Point, Floyd Bennett Field, Fort Tilden and Betsy Ross may require special permits. Check with the park for details.

Photo credits: K. Lee, Brooklyn Fishing Club

Red = Saltwater
Blue = Freshwater
*See reverse for site tables