The Complete Surf Tackle Box Check List

No tackle box for the surf can contain everything for every situation. However, it is possible to stock it with enough gear that will usually give you something to work with.

Stocking a good universal surf box can be a daunting task especially if you are just starting out. It's easy though, if you just keep it simple. It isn't necessary to stock all the colors and variations of each type of artificial bait, hook and sinker.

Use this list of the basics to put together a good general use surf tackle box.

The Tackle Box

If you haven't done it already get into an adequate tackle box. If you intend to become a serious surf angler get a large enough three tier tackle box. Keep in mind that the gear you stock it with tends to be larger than freshwater gear. Sinkers are larger, the lures are larger and the rigs are larger. Here's a tip. All beginners make the mistake of buying the tackle box first so they have something to put the gear in. Do just the opposite. Buy the rest of the gear first. When you see what you need to hold everything then pick a tackle. Allow a little extra room to add a few extra things and you'll be all set.

Artificial bait and Lures

A small selection popular to a variety of surf fish is all that's needed.

**D.O.A Shrimp**

Get some soft plastic shrimp by D.O.A.,3-1/2 or 4" sizes and in a couple colors.

See [How To Fish D.O.A. Shrimp](#)
Storm Jig'n Eel

Add a couple of black Storm Jig'n Eels in 1oz or 2oz.

See Surf Fishing The Storm Jig'n Eel at night for some tips.

Little Neck Popers by Super Strike

For hard baits one or two Super Strike Little Neck Poppers either in 4-1/4” or 5-1/4” in both sinking and floating models.

Sinkers

Pyramid Sinkers

To get started you will only need to buy a few different sizes in a couple of different configurations. Starting with pyramid sinkers start with a few 2 ounce and a few 3 to 5 ounce sinkers for rougher surf and greater casting distance.

More about pyramid sinkers here.

Spider Sinkers

Spider sinkers are excellent for holding the bottom under heavier surf conditions. A couple of 4 ounce's will do.

Floats

These Palsa pinch on floats work great attached to your leader near the hook to keep the bait off the bottom and prevent the crabs from stealing it.

You can also purchase rigs with fixed floats already on them.
Hooks

First, here's a little primer on hook sizes. Hooks sizes are designated with a number. Single number sizes get smaller as the number gets bigger. Hooks designated with a number followed by a slash and a zero get bigger as the numbers get bigger. Hook sizes range from a 32 up a 20/0

For general surf fishing the following list will get you started in the right direction. Number 8 and 6 hooks are the smallest hooks you'll need. Use the for Kingfish, Pompano and sand Perch. Hook sizes from #4 to #1 are good for Snapper Bluefish, Croaker and smaller Sea Trout. Sizes 3/0, 5/0 and 6/0. (and up) are for the bigger fish like Red Drum and Strippers. Just size the hooks relative to your bait size and the fish you seek. With any kind of cut bait go with 3/0 and larger. If you are using some kind of worm go with #8 or #6 hooks.

Rigs

If you have a few good ready made rig in your box and some bait you shouldn't go home empty handed.

Get 3 or 4 Fireball Rigs also known as Bluefish Rigs but they're good for a lot different surf fish. Always have a few Finger Mullet Rigs on hand they are good all year long. Another quite popular rig is a Kingfish Rig good for Kingfish, Trout and Blowfish. This is the rig to use if you are fishing with bloodworms. You should have 3 or 4 of these also. Finally the last rig you should have at least two ready to go is a Fish Finder Rig. The main difference between a Fish Finder Rig and the other rigs is that the sinker is attached to a swivel that slides on the line instead of a fixed position. This allows the bait to be picked up by the fish without feeling the drag of the sinker.

See Start Surf Fishing With Two Popular Surf Fishing Rigs

Leaders

Monofilament Leaders should start at 40lb test up 60lb for bigger fish. Use 45lb test wire leaders for fish with sharp teeth.

Shock Leaders

Shock leaders for the surf are used to absorb the shock of the weight on the end of your line when casting. The standard rule of thumb for a shock leader is that the leader should be long enough to make five turns around the reel, and it should be 10 lb test for every ounce of lead sinker to be used. Too much shock leader will shorten your casting distance.

Line

Choose monofilament or braided line. Minimum 20lb test up to 30lb will cover most situations. Braided line will take up less space on the reel for more yardage and distance and lighter line casts farther. My preferred braided line to use is PowerPro

Swivels and Snap Swivels

Size #1 and #3 swivels will do the job. Just make sure that the snap swivels are large
enough to attach what you will be using them for. Always use coast lock swivels. See why here

Tools
Knife, Nail Clippers, Scale, Tape Measure, Hook Removal Tool, Needle Nose Pliers, Wire cutter, Small Hook Sharpening Stone, Bait Dipper Net, Finger guards if you are using braided line.

A very useful tool to have in your box or on your belt is the Leatherman Wave multitool. I carry one with me whether I'm fishing or not. You can eliminate several of the tools listed above by adding the Leatherman Wave to your tackle box.

Leatherman Wave Multitool

That's it! Set yourself up with this list of gear and you will have everything you need to get started with this exciting sport. Many anglers will spend much more trying to be sure they have everything needed to catch fish. The truth is though, most of it will never leave the tackle box.