



Ohio Administrative Code
Rule 1501:31-13-01 Sport fishing.
Effective: January 1, 2026

(A) Fish may be taken in any number and of any size unless otherwise restricted by the Ohio Revised Code or other rules of the wildlife division.

(1) Notwithstanding division (M) of section 1531.01 and section 1533.37 of the Revised Code, fish may be taken with not more than three hand lines, three units of rod and line, or a combination of up to three hand lines or units of rod and line in the aggregate. Provided further, it shall be unlawful for any person at any time to engage in fishing with more than three hand lines, three units of rod and line, or more than three hand lines and units of rod and line combined, either in hand or under control.

(2) Throughout the state, it shall be unlawful for any person to take or attempt to take fish by the use of explosives, poisons, firearms, electricity, chemicals, seines, nets, or traps, except:

(a) Minnows, gizzard shad, and smelt may be taken with a minnow seine, minnow dip net, or hand landing net;

(b) Minnows and forage fish may be taken with a cast net;

(c) Bait fish and crayfish listed in paragraph (A)(1) of rule 1501:31-13-04 of the Administrative Code may be taken with a minnow or bait fish trap.

(3) Throughout the state, fish may be taken only by angling except as provided by wildlife rule or the Revised Code.

(4) All fish may be taken by hand except bullheads, catfish, trout and salmon species statewide, and walleye and sauger in the Maumee and Sandusky rivers.

(5) Throughout the state, it shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain tipups, float



lines, trotlines, set lines, bank lines, turtle traps, minnow traps or bait fish traps, or an ice fishing shelter which does not have attached thereon the name and address of the owner or user in legible letters in the English language or the unique division of wildlife customer identification number of the owner or user legible at all times. Provided further, it shall be unlawful to use an ice fishing shelter that does not have the owner or user's name and address or their unique division of wildlife customer identification number exhibited on the outer part of the structure of an ice fishing shelter.

(6) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use or maintain any fishing device having floats or buoys made of glass or other shatterable material attached thereto.

(7) It shall be unlawful for any person to release any fish or aquatic invertebrate, including but not limited to crayfish, snails and insects, into waters of the state, or waters under control of the division of wildlife, from which it did not originate, without first obtaining permission from the chief of the division of wildlife.

(8) Sheepshead, carp, grass carp, silver carp, black carp, big-head carp, quillback, suckers, bowfin, longnose gar, buffalo, gizzard shad, and goldfish throughout the state are hereby designated as "forage fish" or "rough fish" and may be taken by any method except as expressly prohibited in paragraphs (A)(1) and (A)(2) of this rule.

(9) It shall be unlawful for any person to take or possess any fish not mentioned in paragraph (A)(8) of this rule, which were taken by snagging, spearing, or shooting.

(10) It shall be unlawful for any person to use a cast net within a distance of one thousand feet down stream from any dam posted with division of wildlife signs indicating cast net use is prohibited. Provided further it shall be unlawful to use cast nets with a square mesh less than one-quarter inch on a side or larger than one-inch on a side, and with a diameter larger than ten feet, to take forage fish.

(11) It shall be unlawful to set or maintain any device for rearing, culturing or raising aquatic animals into waters of the state or waters under control of the division of wildlife.

(B) Ice fishing.



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- (1) In the inland fishing district it shall be unlawful for any person to cut or fish through a hole in the ice which has a diameter that exceeds twelve inches.
- (2) Throughout the state, it shall be unlawful for any person to use more than six tip-ups while fishing through the ice.
- (3) In the lake Erie fishing district, it shall be unlawful for any person to cut or fish through a hole in the ice which has a width that exceeds twelve inches.

(C) It shall be unlawful for any person, other than authorized division employees, to remove fish from, tamper with, destroy in any manner, or possess any fishing device set, maintained, or owned by the division of wildlife.

(D) It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in fishing at any time other than from sunrise to sunset daily from March first through April thirtieth, in the following areas:

- (1) Maumee river from the Ohio turnpike bridge upstream to the easternmost point of Missionary island in Lucas county.
- (2) Maumee river from the state route 295 bridge upstream to the Grand Rapids Providence dam.
- (3) Sandusky river from the Waterworks dam, city of Tiffin, Seneca county to the northern tip of Brady's island in Sandusky county.
- (4) Portage river from the state route 19 bridge upstream to the dam at Elmore.
- (5) Mahoning river from the dam at Berlin reservoir to lake Milton.

(E) It shall be unlawful for any person, while fishing from March first through April thirtieth, to have attached to their line:

- (1) More than one single hook or;



- (2) Any double hook or;
- (3) Any treble hook or;
- (4) More than one lure or;
- (5) Any lure having more than one single hook or;
- (6) Any hook larger than one-half inch from shank to point;

In the following areas of the lake Erie sport fishing district:

- (a) Maumee river from the Grand Rapids Providence dam to a line in Maumee bay from Little cedar point to Turtle island.
- (b) Sandusky river from the Waterworks dam, city of Tiffin, Seneca county to a line in Sandusky bay that runs one quarter mile east of and parallel to the full length of the railroad bridge in Sandusky bay (from N 41 degrees 29' 35.4", W 82 degrees 49' 18.0" to N 41 degrees 28' 02.4", w 82 degrees 47' 58.2").
- (c) Portage river from the state route 19 bridge upstream to the dam at Elmore.
- (d) Mahoning river from the dam at Berlin reservoir to lake Milton.

(F) It shall be unlawful for any person at any time to place or dispose of a dead fish in a stream, river, pond, lake, or any other body of water or upon the banks thereof, except dead fish or parts of fish may be used as bait.

(G) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell any fish taken from any waters in the state wherein an Ohio fishing license is required by section 1533.32 of the Revised Code except:

Fish lawfully taken pursuant to a license or permit issued under section 1533.34, 1533.35 or 1533.40 of the Revised Code.



(H) It shall be unlawful for any person to take or possess paddlefish in or within two thousand feet of Deer creek reservoir and dam, Paint creek reservoir and dam, Caesar creek reservoir and dam, and East Fork reservoir and dam.

(I) Unless otherwise provided, the provisions of this rule, rule 1501:31-13-02, rule 1501:31-13-08, and rule 1501:31-13-09 of the Administrative Code apply to those waters in the state wherein an Ohio fishing license is required by section 1533.32 of the Revised Code, including privately owned ponds, lakes, or reservoirs that are open to public fishing through an agreement or lease with the division of wildlife.

(J) All definitions set forth in rule 1501:31-1-02 of the Administrative Code apply to this rule.