



TAKE ME FISHING™

Fishing High Tide

Discover the importance of fishing high tide times when fishing saltwater spots. Learn how to read a fishing time chart to determine the best tide for fishing in your area. Find out how high tide times affect feeding activity and more.

FISHING HIGH OR LOW TIDE

If you want to have a successful saltwater fishing trip, it's best to plan your time on the water according to the fishing tide times. There are stark differences between fishing high tide or low tide and while this section focuses primarily on fishing high tide, there are low tide opportunities (such as points and sloughs) to catch fish if you find yourself at the shore at the "wrong" time, which, ironically, can occasionally occur even when fishing high tide.

For example, during the peak of a high tide (or low tide), the water may not move for a period of minutes or hours depending on the time of year and tide schedule which is why it's vital to check your local fishing tide chart to find out when the tides are occurring. Once you know, you should plan to **focus most of your time between the high and low tides when the current will be moving.**

Another thing you may notice when fishing high tide or low tide, during the peaks and lows of each respectively, when there is little to no current, is that baitfish activity levels drop.

As a result, the feeding activity of saltwater game fish slows down as well. However, as noted earlier, while fishing may be more challenging during these peak times, there are still saltwater spots that provide opportunities to catch fish. You will just have to adjust your fishing tactics based on where the fish are most likely to find food sources as water levels rise (or fall).

In other words, once you have an answer to the question "when is high tide?" it certainly doesn't mean that you need to stop fishing.

WHERE TO FISH DURING RISING TIDES

Shallow bays and backcountry flats are two types of areas that are good to try when the tide is rising.

As the tide rises, baitfish and crustaceans are swept along with the current into the shallows. Game fish will often follow behind in search of these food sources. If you want to catch inshore species such as striped bass, try fishing shallow bays or flats during a rising tide (prior to a peak high tide period).

Now that you know more about fishing high tides, you should begin to consider the **barometric pressure** when making a decision about the best times to saltwater fish. Fishing high pressure periods before an approaching front can also help increase your chances of catching fish on an incoming or rising tide. If you are wondering about specific fishing techniques that you can use during incoming and outgoing tides, read more about how to fish the tides.

How to Fish the Tides

Knowing how to fish the tides is one of the most worthwhile

skills you can learn as a saltwater angler. You may already be aware that some the best times to fish are during rising and falling tides. Learn more in this section.

You know that there are different techniques to apply during these periods depending on where you plan to fish? Not to worry though, these techniques are easy to pick up once you have a better understanding of how tidal movement affects fish feeding activity.

The first thing to do when learning how to fish tides is looking for the best tide to fish find a tide table or fishing tide chart for your fishing spot of choice. You can find daily fishing tide charts online or get a printed weekly tide chart at a local tackle shop. These charts provide tidal movement data in terms of feet. Once you know how to use a tide chart, the process of learning how to fish tides will be much easier.

TIPS FOR FISHING INSHORE INCOMING TIDES

- If you are fishing from a beach or saltwater shoreline, you may want to consider timing your trip for the first part of an incoming tide. Rising water will begin to cover shorelines where crustaceans and other forms of prey like to hide. The opportunity for an easy meal draws game fish closer to shore to feed.

- When fishing incoming tidal current, try to cast your baits up into the current, and then let them naturally drift back toward you.

TIPS FOR FISHING INSHORE OUTGOING TIDES

- As tide levels in a bay or estuary area recede, focus your techniques on deeper channels, drop-offs, or passes that lead out toward open water. This tip on tides and fishing will apply whether you are fishing from a boat or from the shoreline.

- If you want to try catching fluke on an outgoing tide, cast a squid-tipped rig near the edges of inshore potholes or drop-offs.

HOW TO FISH THE TIDES OFFSHORE

While tidal changes may not be as obvious when fishing offshore, tidal changes do have an impact on deep sea fishing conditions as well — just keep in mind that weather and wind current can overpower tidal flow when you're out in the blue waters. During periods of slack tide, offshore currents aren't as strong and bait fish are better able to escape from predatory game fish. However, once the tide begins to move, bait fish are swept along with the strong currents, making it easier for game fish to locate and pursue their prey.

TIPS FOR FISHING OFFSHORE TIDES

The best tides for fishing offshore can be either incoming or outgoing. While the current is moving, you will have a good chance at catching fish. (to page 28)