

New England Fishing (from page 14)

8. MIX MASTERS

We all relish those special days when the fish can't wait to pounce on the first lure we show them, but most days prove more challenging. It's easy to get caught in a "lure rut," especially when fish are busting all around you. At such times it's easy to convince yourself that one of the "stupid" fish will eventually hit your offering.

When confronted by finicky fish, the best anglers force themselves to switch lures every few casts until they crack the code. Sometimes it's a subtle change in color, size or shape that elicits a strike; other times it's a slightly different retrieve or switching to a lighter leader. Work methodically through your arsenal until you find the winning combination.

9. IT'S A WASH

Sunblock and bug spray are essential on the water, but you might as well be putting fish repellent on your lure if you fail to wash your hands thoroughly after applying either product. Keep some biodegradable soap onboard



and scrub your hands thoroughly to remove all traces of chemicals. A masking agent, sold in many sporting-goods stores or online outdoor retailers, will also hide foreign odors that could raise a warning flag to fish as they home in on a lure.

10. NET GOOD ENOUGH

If you play fast and loose with keeping a net aboard your boat, you're going to pay the price some day. A landing net is mandatory when a trophy is on the line, and the bigger the net, the better!

Oh, and make sure your net is sturdy enough to handle the species you intend to catch, and that the mesh is in good shape.



When it comes time to employ said net, make sure you do it right. Never swipe or slap at the fish or you'll end up scaring it off on a run or dive. Instead, slip the net gently into the water and have the angler lead his prize head-first into the net as you slowly sweep it toward the fish in a controlled motion. Make sure the fish has at least three-quarters of its body inside the net before lifting it from the water; otherwise it can flop its way to freedom.

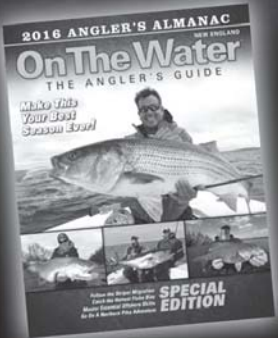
Slam Dunk

Few things are more disappointing than losing a fish at boatside because it suddenly ran under the boat, cutting the line on the hull, trim tab or engine. To thwart your quarry's last-ditch escape tactics, be prepared to dunk the rod tip deep below the surface, walk it around the bow, or thrust it far out beyond the engines as you follow the fish around the boat. Whatever you do, don't just stand there like a dope. Bust a move!

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About the author...

Tom Richardson, a RISAA member and Massachusetts native, is passionate for the outdoors, including camping, hiking, boating and fishing. An award-winning writer, he was editor for *Salt Water Sportsman* for 15 years prior to becoming editor of the regional boating magazine *Offshore* in 2004. In 2009, he started the boating-lifestyle BoatingLocal.com. Three years later, BoatingLocal became **New England Boating**, a multimedia brand comprising the website, a glossy magazine, and a TV show, all edited and co-hosted by Richardson. In 2016, he launched **New England Fishing** magazine, website and TV show, which he also wrote and hosted.