

TACTICS | SMALL THINGS MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUCCESS AND FAILURE. LEARN HERE HOW TO GAIN AN EDGE ON RUNNING WATER



TOP TIPS

1 FISH LATE ON
In autumn the best time of the day for good catches tends to be the last two or three hours of light. Try to coincide your pleasure fishing trips with these.

2 SLOW IT DOWN
With temperatures now dropping it's worth trying different ways of presenting your hookbait when floatfishing. I favour slowing it down by feeding the line through my fingers.

3 GO OVERDEPTH
You can often catch better quality fish by adding depth to your rigs and fishing the hookbait hard on the bottom. This works with big top-and-bottom floats and with wagglers.

4 FISH OFF BOTTOM
If chub are the quarry, try fishing with a waggler set from mid-depth down to three-quarters depth. By feeding little and often you can often catch them off the bottom this way.

5 CHANGE DEPTH
Autumn is when you need to work hard on rivers, and the best way to stay in touch with a feeding shoal is to change depths regularly. Over the course of a day you will often find them feeding at many different depths.

6 FEED STEADILY
With water temperatures dropping each week it's best to build swims up by feeding little and often rather than throwing a lot in all at once. Always feed to response – if you're getting plenty of bites, put more in!

7 FISH THE BOW
The best way of hitting the most bites is to cast slightly upstream and let the feeder settle in front of you. Pay off several yards of line and put the rod in a rest downstream of you. All the bites will now be registered as drop-backs.

8 FOLLOW THE FISH
If you get the opportunity to watch the weigh-in at matches it's worth following the scales at the end to find out what species have been caught and where. It will definitely speed up the process of finding where the shoals are.

9 KEEP WARM!
It's easy to get caught out by lowering temperatures, so make sure you have plenty of warm clothes with you, even if they end up staying in the car.

10 ASK QUESTIONS
If you're at a new river venue for the first time this autumn, ask questions of other anglers there. Most are only too pleased to help if approached correctly. Local tackle shops will also help as they want you to spend money with them.

11 KEEP UP TO DATE
Finally, keep reading Angling Times for up-to-the-minute match reports and features to give you an insight into where is fishing well. It's your shortcut to success this autumn.

MY 40 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR FISHING AUTUMN RIVERS

TACKLE

12 SHOT
You can't go floatfishing on rivers without shot, so ensure your box is always full. I always carry sizes from No.12 right the way up to 3SSS.

13 HEAVY PLUMMETS
Always use a heavy plummet, especially when the river is running through fast. It will enable you to be much more precise as to exact depth because it won't get dragged away in the current.

14 BOMBS AWAY!
If bites are hard to come by on a feeder, try using a straight bomb over the same line. Sometimes the fish will respond better to this approach, especially when the water is clear.

15 ADAPTORS
Quick-change adaptors are a must, as far as I'm concerned, because I'm forever changing my rigs around looking for the best presentation.



16 HOOKS
There are many good hook types to choose from nowadays, but I keep things simple and use just a few patterns. Current favourites are Kamasan B511, B611 and B711, Animal Spades and Drennan Wide Gape and Super Specialist Barbel hooks.

17 FLOAT RUBBERS
Like shot, you can't go floatfishing on rivers without the correct diameter rubbers for your floats. I carry diameters from 0.5mm up to 8mm, suitable for use across the entire range of my floats.

18 FLOATING LINE SPRAY
Always spray your line with floating line spray before you start fishing. That way line control will be much easier.

19 LONG RODS
Autumn is the time for long rods to start coming into play, and I love to use long telescopic versions. Six metres is about the right length in this country, although there are places where 7m might work better if you have a lot of depth.



20 GREASE
This simple product has helped to catch me loads of fish down the years because it makes the line totally buoyant. I would never go fishing without a pot of it!

21 SOFT-ACTIONED RODS
If roach and dace are your quarry this autumn, get hold of a couple of soft-actioned rods. You'll lose far fewer fish than you would on a stiff-actioned rod.

22 BIG WAGGLERS
Wagglers come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. I use everything from light insert peacock wagglers taking just three BB shot right the way up to Thick Spec Wagglers and Truncheon Wagglers taking six SSGs!



24 DIFFERENT COLOURS
Carry different coloured float tops to suit the background you are fishing against. Yellow is a great colour to see when there is shade on the water.

25 CATAPULTS
I use just two types of catapult for all my river fishing. The first is a flat pouch, which is great for introducing small amounts of bait quickly. The second is a soft groundbait pouch, which I use for big volumes of loosefeeder and for groundbait.

26 POLE ELASTIC
I keep my elastic choice simple and use solid Kamasan elastics from No.3 up to No.6. Above this I use hollow Daiwa Hydrolastic.



27 POLE RIGS
Autumn is a great time for big river weights on the pole. Plenty of rigs are required and I'm currently using new prototype samples that I am launching soon in sizes from 0.2g up to a whopping 10g! I also use flat floats from 3g up to 15g.

28 FEEDERS AND LEADS
Once the temperatures drop it's worth trying a feeder with maggots. I always carry a selection of sizes and leads from 1.5oz up to 6oz.

29 NEOPRENE WADERS
I have used Neoprene-lined waders for many years and would recommend them to anyone who has to stand in rivers to fish. It's well worth investing in a pair before the winter sets in.

30 BOLOGNESE FLOATS
Bolo floats are designed for deep, flowing water and are a must in depths over 10ft. Use a simple shooting arrangement consisting of an olivette about 2ft from the hook and a single No.4 shot midway between the olivette and the hook.



BAITS



32 SMELLY BAITS!
If your river is carrying a lot of colour due to rain water, try using flavoured meat. It's a great for big fish.

33 GROUND BAIT
Groundbait plays more of a part in my autumn and winter approaches, and I'm currently sampling some new Bait-Tech products, which I'm very pleased with. My current off-the-shelf favourite is Bait-Tech Mantra.

34 MOLEHILL SOIL
If the river is pushing through fast, bulk out your groundbait with an equal amount of molehill soil. It helps to get the balls down fast, and it's free!

35 TRY PELLETS
Floatfished carp pellets have been a revelation during the summer and are worth trying anywhere where chub and barbel are the target species over the next couple of months.

36 HALIBUT PELLETS
On milder autumn days it's always worth trying halibut pellets for barbel and chub. I tend to use one or two 8mm offerings in the colder months.

37 BREAD PUNCH
Breadpunch works great for roach right through autumn and winter, so give this cheap bait a try now!

38 MAGGOTS
Maggots are the number one bait for catching everything that swims in rivers. I buy white and red maggots and sometimes add a little bit of bronze dye to give them colour.

39 CASTERS
For me, casters are the perfect feed bait for species like chub and barbel and it's always worth carrying a couple of pints with you in the autumn months.

40 HEMP
I would never go river fishing at this time of the year without two or three tins of hemp. Roach, dace, chub and barbel all love it and I use the seed both as loosefeeder and in my groundbait.

MORE DETAILS
Dave Harrell is recognised as one of the country's best-ever river anglers and has devoted his life to learning different skills on running water. He has fished for England at World and European level and now owns his own tackle company, Dave Harrell Angling. For details of the product range go to: www.daveharrellangling.com He is also available for one-to-one and group coaching sessions on the River Wye throughout the river season. For more details contact Dave at: info@daveharrellangling.com

31 BIG STICKS AND AVONS
When the rivers start carrying extra water and pace I tend to go for big sticks, taking up to 30 x No.4 and Avons up to 10g. If you've never used floats this big, give them a try over the next few months and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at how well they work!