



What you will need to be

“River Ready”

A Basic Gear List for Beginner Anglers

Summer List for Waikato and Waipa streams (Mangatutu, Puniu, Kaniwhaniwha, Waihou etc)

The following gear is suitable when targeting resident fish during the warmer months in small, clear water where fish can often be spotted and “targeted”.

Rods:

A 9 foot, 5-6 weight fly rod and reel loaded with a compatible weight-forward floating line (A 6-weight is a good rod to start with, as you will find it is quite a versatile option that can also be used on larger). You should be able to pick up a starter rod, reel and floating line combo for around \$300.

Footwear:

A pair of hiking boots with good tread (or even old trainers) for “wet wading”. Fishing small streams often involves a lot of walking as you fish your way upstream so you need to make sure what you have on your feet is comfortable and suitable for walking on slippery rocks.

Sun Protection:

An obvious consideration but worth mentioning. Some of the Waikato streams are quite open and a session fishing usually means a considerable time out in the elements. Sunscreen and hats are a must but there are a variety of other sun protection measures you can take to reduce your skin’s exposure to the sun while fishing. These include, “buffs” or neck gaiters, long sleeve UV shirts/hoodies and even lightweight gloves. Activewear leggings/tights worn underneath sports shorts are a comfortable option for wet wading as they are cool, quick-drying and offer protection from the sun as well as scratchy brambles, blackberry etc. which you will encounter.

Polarised Sunglasses:

These make a huge difference when it comes to spotting fish (which is a big part of summer fishing).

Landing Net:

This is not essential but makes handling and releasing fish a lot easier especially when it comes to catch and release. Some come with magnets, but it is a good idea to fasten them to your pack or vest with cord or bungy as well. (Always get a bigger net than you think you will need!).

Flies:

A selection of nymphs unweighted or lightly weighted “naturals” in sizes 18-12 (pole positions, hare's ears, pheasant tails, hare and coppers etc).

Large foam “hoppers” that are very buoyant and highly visible are good to start with when learning the dry-fly technique. Patterns in your box should include cicadas, crickets and “stimulators” (which imitate a whole range of terrestrial insects). These can be fished on their own (particularly if you can see fish actively feeding off the surface) or with a nymph tied underneath in what is called a “dry-dropper” rig (very effective and a lot of fun!).

It is also a good idea to have a few smaller dry flies in your box as well, as there are times when the fish are picky. Parachute Adams and Royal Wulff patterns are staples when more subtly is required.

A container of led “split shot” can also be handy for adding weight quickly without having to change flies. At times fish might still be preferring to feed at the bottom of deeper pools or in faster, riffley water.

It is quite common to lose more than a handful of flies in a few hours fishing so make sure you head out each time with a plenty in your box.

Tippet:

A spool of 6lb (4X) fluorocarbon or monofilament (which is much cheaper) to make your leaders. You tend to go through this quickly, so it is always a good idea to have more than you think you will use. A couple of tapered leaders are also a good idea as they produce a more subtle presentation - especially when casting a dry fly. Typically, the longer your leader is, the more difficult it is to cast (but a long leader is required in clear water with wary fish, so a bit of trial and error will be required in order to find the winning formula!).

Indicators:

3 or 4 small synthetic yarn indicators for "nymphing" (or the "NZ strike indicator" kit). In clear water it is best to use small, subtle indicators to avoid spooking fish. A half hitch of fence-pulled sheep's wool is an alternative to indicators you buy.

Flotant:

A gel or spray to treat your indicators and dry flies so that they float.

You will also need a comfortable backpack or hip-pack to carry your lunch and waterbottle. Ideally something that won't obstruct your casting (you are likely to be fishing on the move and therefore wearing your pack the whole time). "Nippers" and a pair of small pliers/forceps are also very handy tools to have with you while you are on the river..

One knot you should learn before leaving home:

<https://www.animatedknots.com/improved-clinch-knot>

Fish & Game NZ [Trout Fishing Made Easy](#)

