

Ice Fishing 201 - Beyond the Basics

CLOTHING AND STUFF YOU SHOULD HAVE ON YOUR PERSON

+Dress warm, dry, and in layers - Insulated wind-proof and water resistant - Hoodies are nice

+Insulated water-proof boots - felt pack type or Mickey Mouse are most popular

+Hat, facemask, or balaclava - a LOT of body heat is lost through the head

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Baseball or other billed cap - in case a heavy hat gets TOO warm

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Gloves and SPARE gloves - fingerless wool for fishing are nice

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Scarf or neck protector - wind and/or snow down the back of the neck is VERY CHILLING

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SUNGLASSES - SNOW BLINDESS SUCKS!!

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Spare bag of clothes (including towel) in car - JUST IN CASE you get wet

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Don't wear the boots you will fish in driving to the spot (gives you spare DRY shoes or boots in car)

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Ice cleats (Creepers) or cleated boots - CONCUSSIONS SUCK!!

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Ice picks - pieces of broom handles with nails will work as will old screwdriver

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One handed pocket knife - you should ALWAYS carry a pocketknife according to grandpa

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Whistle and a compass - WHITE OUTS REALLY SUCK!!

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Flashlight - L.E.D. headlamps work great

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IF FISHING ALONE - Flotation Vest - PFD - you can wear one under your parka

FISHING ACCESSORIES aside from rods, reels, Slammer Tip-Ups, and terminal tackle (Ice fishing depth finder, lures, hooks, leaders, line, split-shot, bobbers, and bobber stops etc)

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Hole scooper OR TWO - preferably metal

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Multi-tool w/ pliers, screwdrivers, scissors, hook sharpener etc. (Leatherman, Gerber, others) OR pliers, scissors, screwdrivers (phillips and slotted), hook sharpener

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Fishing towel - to wipe off goo

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Jaw spreader and/or hook remover (depending on species)

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Foam kneeling pad - Cardboard wrapped with duct tape also works

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Rod holder or rod cradle (bucket mounted or free-standing) - I prefer a Slammer Tip-Up for a free standing hook-setting open ice rod-holder, the little red Tackle Tamer Rod-Holder for a bucket mounted in-shanty rod holder, and the Orangeville Hooker for a free-standing fold-up rod cradle

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DO NOT LAY YOUR ROD ON THE ICE!!!

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR ROD!! - IGNORANCE GETS RODS SUCKED DOWN HOLES!!!

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Gaff - with TIP COVER!!

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Stringer - good idea to stringer female steelies under the ice to keep them from freezing

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Plastic bags - size according to fish species being kept - keeps the slime off the gear

MORE FISHING ACCESSORIES - not always necessary, but things to consider if you want to catch more and bigger fish

* Portable Depth Finder - Strikemaster PolarVision and others - size of a flashlight

* Portable Fish Finder - Flashers are awesome i.e. Vexilar and Marcum - LCD's will also work

* Underwater Camera - Aqua View is most popular with most models - Aqua Cam (from Menard's), Harbor Freight's camera, and Homier's cameras also work fine and have a Sony camera

* Handheld GPS - to find the hot-spot

* Lake Map - HotSpot fishing maps are about the best

* Sled type flip-over shanty - Bring up again - also good for sight fishing

* Artificial weeds - ReelWeeds, other commercially available - fish tank supplies, hobby

shops for make your own structure

* Automatic Hook Setting devices - Slammer Tip-Up

* Hole Covers - Slamco lightweight, freeze-proof, folding, insulated, solar heated hole cover - avoid foam as it could get frozen into your hole

* Wind-Jigging devices - Slamco Wig-Jigger attaches to your Slammer Tip-Up

* Small snow shovel - nice for clearing an area for your stuff in heavier snow and/or slush

* Snow brush - nice for dusting snow off accessories

* Longer "stand up" rods for standing on the ice and fishing - good for moving from hole to hole while jigging - if you have the room and aren't in a shanty, a 4 to 6 foot rod works FINE ON THE OPEN ICE

* Sitting on your ass in a shanty - use a short enough rod that's comfortable

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SWISH RODS - for deep water perch fishing - they are hard to beat - if you know someone who has some and doesn't use and/or want them - BUY THEM!!

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ICE CHECKING AND HOLE MAKING GEAR

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Spud bar or Ice Chisel - CHECK THE ICE!!

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Hand Auger - Laser Augers work GREAT

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Spare Blades and tool for the screws of your hand auger are a good idea

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Gas Power Auger - DON'T RELY ON JUST A POWER AUGER!! (Dave's last year on PM Lake)

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Electric Ice drills - IceGator Power Head has VERY GOOD REVIEWS!!

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Auger Adaptor's for Cordless Drills - Minimum 18V GOOD drill - 6" diameter hole OR LESS - Ice Master is best - has a collar and a strap that wraps around drill - most others (i.e. Nymrod) ARE A JOKE - loosens in drill chuck and you lose your auger head to bottom of the lake

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Ice saw - for cutting spearing holes - CHAIN SAWS ARE A BAD IDEA!!

TRANSPORT GEAR

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5-Gallon bucket OR TWO - preferably with lid - also acts as a seat

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Plastic "milk" crates work nice as do plastic totes - lightweight, sturdy, and waterproof

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SOLID minnow bucket or old cooler for live minnows - styrofoam liner in a 5-gallon bucket works fine - JUST a styrofoam bucket is NOT a good choice - battery operated aerators are nice too

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Soft or hard cooler for spawn - DON'T LET YOUR SPAWN FREEZE!!!

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Gear bag - keep your small items CONTAINED

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Ice Fishing Rod Case - DON'T HAVE YOUR RODS AND REELS IN A MESS!!

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Backpacks - work well for transporting gear

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High walled sled - i.e. Shappel Jet Sled - Frabill, Otter, Viking

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Bungie cords to secure your gear in the sled

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Sled cover, plastic tarp, or even blanket to keep snow and slush off of gear in the sled

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Snomobiles, ATV's, Utility Vehicles - WEAR YOUR HELMET !!! C.O. Chris Simpson will get you!!

COMFORT GEAR

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Snacks - something to drink and munch on

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Propane or White Gas Heater - style, size and type depending - HAVE ADDIQUATE VENTILATION!!!

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Gas Lantern - for light and/or heat

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Lighters and Matches - a couple disposable lighters and some waterproof matches

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Hand warmers - different types (Jon-E lighter fluid, charcoal stick, Liquid-filled bag w/ metal disc, disposable)

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Toe Warmers - DISPOSABLE TOE WARMERS ARE A GOD SEND !!!!

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Mittens are warmer than gloves

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Hand muff that wraps around your waist (with a hand warmer works great)

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Chair - usually more comfortable than a bucket

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Portable Shanty - sled flip-over Lodge style works great - other types i.e. Muskegon manufactured Viking, accordion style Alumatents (make your own with plywood ends, canvas or plastic tarp middle and conduit pipe poles)

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NOTE: Muskegon Awning's Lodge was available BEFORE the Clam flip-over type portable shanty

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Permanent Shanties - Have to check on them almost every day

SAFETY GEAR - some good things to have handy in case someone falls in if you're away from the public - a good idea to be fishing with a buddy or a group as well

* 50' - 100' Rope tied to a boat cushion OR a manufactured throw bag

* Snow shoes - weight distribution for rescue

* Flares or flare gun

* Emergency blanket

* Cell phone