



FISHING IN FINLAND



Information about fishing permits
and fishing regulations



Finland offers diverse fishing opportunities

FINLAND IS the world's most water-rich country, making it an ideal destination for fishing. Lakes, rivers, and the Baltic Sea offer a wide range of opportunities for various types of fishing.

FISHING IS a significant hobby for many Finns. Older generations use fishing nets and fish traps, while younger people are more interested in the experience and prefer different types of fishing rods and tackles.

REGARDLESS OF the fishing method, the same rules apply to everyone. Many fish species have specific catch sizes and closed seasons.

BY PRACTICING sustainable fishing and taking care of our fishing waters, we can ensure that everyone has equal access to fishing opportunities.

The website fishinginfinland.fi offers extensive info about fishing in Finland in several languages!



All fishers aged 18–69 years have to pay the fisheries management fee. However, angling with a hook and line, ice-fishing, and herring fishing with a rig are free of charge!



Fishing licenses

THE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT FEE grants the right to fish with one rod anywhere in Finland, except in rapids and currents in waters containing migratory fish, areas where fishing is prohibited, certain special sites, and the Åland Islands. This fee is mandatory for all fishermen aged 18 to 69 who engage in fishing methods other than angling with a hook and line, ice-fishing, or herring fishing with a rig. Fishers who have reached the age of 65 or more by 31 December 2023, are however exempt from the fisheries management fee.

The fisheries management fee can be paid online at Eräluvut.fi, by downloading the Eräluvut app on your mobile device, by calling the Metsähallitus service number at +358 20 69 2424 (free of charge, weekdays 9–15), or at Metsähallitus' Nature Centres. Registration requires your name, contact information, and date of birth.

Always carry the receipt and your ID card while fishing.

FOR FISHING with nets, traps, or with several rods, and for catching crayfish, a permit from the owner of the water area is always needed, in addition to the fisheries management fee.



Keep the receipts for your fishing licenses with you when fishing, as well as your ID. You have to show them to the fishing supervisor upon request.

FISHING LICENCE SYSTEM IN FINLAND

Fishing method	18–69 years old	Under 18, over 70 years old
<i>Angling with a hook and line, ice-fishing and herring fishing with one rig</i>	<i>Free of charge</i>	<i>Free of charge</i>
<i>Lure fishing with one rod and one lure</i>	<i>Fisheries management fee</i>	<i>Free of charge</i>
<i>Fishing with more than one rod, all other types of fishing e.g. nets, long-lines, cray fishing</i>	<i>Fisheries management fee AND permission by water owner</i>	<i>Permission by water owner</i>



Angling with a hook and line, ice-fishing, and herring fishing with a rig are free of charge!

Angling means fishing with one rod and hook without a reel suitable for spinning and without a lure.

Ice fishing means fishing with a short rod and a vertically moved jig attached to a line.

Herring fishing means fishing with a rod and vertically move the hooks attached to a line.

Local fishing permits

FOR FISHING with nets, traps, or with several rods, and for catching crayfish, a permit from the owner of the water area is always needed, as well as for fishing at special fishing sites. These permits are often called local permits.

In order to buy a permit from the water owner, you first need to know exactly where you want to fish. Many fisheries regions have their own websites that provide detailed information on purchasing the necessary permits.

Fishing associations and fisheries centers, found in each region of Finland, can also assist in locating a permit seller. Contact information for the fisheries centers can be found on the website ahven.net (in Finnish).

Many municipalities and cities provide information on what types of fishing permits are required for their waters on their own websites. Local fishing permits can also be purchased through various online shops. For state-owned waters, local permits are sold by Metsähallitus (www.eraluvat.fi). In the Åland Islands, the water owner's permit is always required for all types of fishing.

Did you know that around 100 fish species have been found in Finland? About 70 of them occur regularly in the wild.

Report your catch!

REPORTING OF catch and fishing data is mandatory for recreational fishers aged 16 or older for the following fish species and stocks: Atlantic salmon*, landlocked salmon, brown trout, eel*, cod*, pink salmon, Arctic char (in lakes Kuolimo and Saimaa and elsewhere in the Vuoksi water system) and grayling (in inland waters south of latitude 65°00'N and in the sea).

The catch report must be submitted within 14 days, and the obligation also applies to fish that are released. You can report your catch using the Omakala app, online at omakala.fi, or by phone.

You're also welcome to report other species in the app, which also works as your personal fishing diary.

Catch reports provide researchers with up-to-date information on fishing and the status of fish stocks.

* Please note that due to EU regulations, catches of Atlantic salmon, eel and cod must be reported daily and electronically, and the reporting obligation applies to all recreational fishers regardless of age. In addition, you are required to indicate whether the fish was caught from shore, from a vessel, underwater (by diving), or from ice.



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PERCH

Perca fluviatilis

Finnish record 2,88 kg

National fish of Finland



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PIKE

Esox lucius

Finnish record 18,8 kg

The Finnish crocodile



Closed seasons

DURING CLOSED SEASONS the use of fishing gear specifically suited for catching the protected species is prohibited. If you get a fish or crayfish during its closed season, you have to release your catch, regardless of if it is alive or dead. Please note that catches of certain fish species must be reported.

TROUT WITH ADIPOSE FIN

- Fully protected in all marine areas.
- Fully protected in inland waters south of latitude 64°00'N. Not applicable to trout caught from brooks or ponds with no migratory connection from the sea or a lake.
- Rivers and brooks 1.9 – 30.11.

ADIPOSE FIN-CLIPPED TROUT

- Rivers and brooks 1.9 – 30.11.

SALMON *

- Rivers and brooks 1.9 – 30.11

LANDLOCKED SALMON WITH ADIPOSE FIN

- Fully protected in the Vuoksi and Hiitolanjoki river basins.
- Rivers and brooks 1.9 – 30.11.

ADIPOSE FIN-CLIPPED LANDLOCKED SALMON

- Vuoksi and Hiitolanjoki waters specified in the map annexed to the Fishing Decree 1.6 – 31.8.
- Rivers and brooks 1.9 – 30.11.

ARCTIC CHAR

- Fully protected in Lake Kuolimo and in Lake Saimaa in the area between Puumalansalmi and Vuoksenniska.
- Elsewhere in the Vuoksi river basin 1.9 – 30.11.

GRAYLING

- Fully protected in marine areas.
- Inland waters south of latitude 67°00'N 1.4 – 31.5.

WHITEFISH

- Rivers and brooks flowing into the sea 1.9 – 30.11.

LAMPREY

- 1.4 – 15.8.

EEL *

- 1.8 – 30.6.

NOBLE CRAYFISH, SIGNAL CRAYFISH, NARROW-CLAWED CRAYFISH

- 1.11 – 21.7 at 12 noon.

Catch sizes & quotas

THE LENGTH of a fish is measured from the tip of the snout to the end of the caudal fin with the lobes straightened and compressed together. PLEASE NOTE! Permitted catch sizes may vary due to regional decisions. Check the web site kalastusrajoitus.fi for these.

TROUT WITH ADIPOSE FIN

- Minimum 50 cm in waters north of latitude 67°00'N.
- Minimum 60 cm in other areas where fishing is permitted.
- Maximum 45 cm in brooks or ponds with no migratory connection from the sea of a lake.

ADIPOSE FIN-CLIPPED TROUT

- Minimum 50 cm.

SALMON *

- Minimum 60 cm.
- Minimum 50 cm in the Bothnian Bay north of latitude 63°30'N.
- Quota for recreational fishing 2 salmon/day/person.

LANDLOCKED SALMON WITH ADIPOSE FIN

- Minimum 60 cm.

* NOTE! Due to EU regulations, stricter rules regarding closed seasons or bag limits may apply in the Baltic Sea. Check kalastusrajoitus.fi for more information.

Updates to the regulations may occur, please check kalastusrajoitus.fi for the latest information!

ADIPOSE FIN-CLIPPED LANDLOCKED SALMON

- Minimum 60 cm.
- Quota for recreational fishing 1 salmon/day/person in the Vuoksi river basin

ARCTIC CHAR

- Minimum 60 cm in the Vuoksi river basin where not fully protected.
- Minimum 45 cm in Lake Inari.

GRAYLING

- Minimum 35 cm south of and 30 cm north of latitude 67°00'N.

ZANDER

- Minimum 42 cm.

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ZANDER

Sander lucioperca

Finnish record 14,7 kg

Popular fish in Finnish restaurants



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ROACH

Rutilus rutilus

Finnish record 1,544 kg

Underrated delicacy



Waters with migratory fish

WATERS WITH MIGRATORY FISH means waters that migratory fish use as their central migratory path or breeding area. These waters play an essential role as a fish route or spawning area for migratory fish. Fishing shall not be conducted in a manner that obstructs the passage of fish to their spawning or feeding areas.

The following species are defined as migratory fish in Finland: salmon, lake trout, eel, lampern, asp, trout and the migratory stocks of char, grayling and whitefish.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS WHEN FISHING IN WATERS WITH MIGRATORY FISH:

- Angling with a hook and line, ice-fishing and herring fishing with a rig angle is prohibited in rapids and currents in waters with migratory fish.
- The fisheries management fee does not entitle you to fish in rapids and currents in waters with migratory fish. The owner of the water area, however, has the right to sell fishing permits to these fishing sites. These permits are sold locally and online.
- It is prohibited to fish with gill nets in rivers with migratory fish 15.8–30.11.

Prohibitions & restrictions

MAKE SURE TO CHECK which prohibitions and restrictions apply before going fishing. The fisheries management fee does not entitle you to fish in rapids and currents in waters with migratory fish, at sites requiring a site-specific permit, or at sites where fishing is entirely prohibited.

All fishing is prohibited in a fish pass built to secure the passage of fish, as well as within 200 meters above and below it or any corresponding structure. No fishing is allowed in a channel conducting water to a power plant or other facility, or within 100 meters below a dam built across a water body.

Areas where fishing is prohibited may be indicated by 'Kalastus kielletty' (No Fishing) signs.

MORE INFORMATION about fishing restrictions and waters with migratory fish can be found at the web site kalastusrajoitus.fi. Unfortunately the web site is only partly available in English for the moment.



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WHITEFISH

Coregonus lavaretus
Finnish record 7,08 kg
Superb as graved (cured)



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BALTIC HERRING

Clupea harengus membras
Finnish record 0,726 kg
The commercially most important fish in Finland



Marking fishing gear

FIXED AND STANDING fishing gear such as gill nets, traps, pots, and long-lines shall be equipped with clear signs so that the gear can be easily detected above water. The fishing gear shall also display the name and contact information of the person who placed the gear and carry a mark indicating the fishing right if the fishing right holder so demands.



Always remember to keep the receipts of your fishing permits as well as your ID with you while fishing!

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VENDACE

Coregonus albula

Finnish record 0,634 kg

The most important species for inland fisheries



Fishing supervision

FISHING IS SUPERVISED by fishing supervisors and various authorities, including the Police, the Finnish Border Guard, Metsähallitus, the Economic Development Centres and Customs. You must keep the receipt of the fisheries management fee or any other fishing permit, as well as your ID, with you when fishing and show them to the authority or fishing supervisor upon request. You must also obey a clearly visible stop signal given by a fishing supervisor when operating a vehicle used for fishing.

For minor offenses, the fishing supervisor can issue a warning. In the case of more significant offenses, the matter is referred to the police, who may issue fines or forward the case to the prosecutor. For an unpaid fisheries management fee, the penalty is always a fixed petty fine (100 euros).

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BURBOT

Lota lota

Finnish record 8,05 kg

Spawns during mid-winter





Conservation values

IN FINLAND CONSERVATION VALUES have been established for declining and threatened fish species. The decree on conservation values lists 23 different values ranging from 50 euros to 7 510 euros. The species with the highest value is the landlocked salmon in the Vuoksi river basin, while the noble crayfish has the lowest value. The fish species affected by the decree include salmon, landlocked salmon, eel, lamprey, trout, grayling, arctic char, noble crayfish, as well as European whitefish in rivers and brooks flowing into the sea.

If you catch a protected fish during its closed season, a fish does not meet size limits or you exceed given daily quotas, you must release your catch, even if the fish is dead. For example, you are allowed to fish for whitefish, but not during its closed season. If you catch a whitefish during its closed season and do not release it, you will be fined and required to pay its conservation value (460 euros per whitefish).

Checklist for fishing in Finland

- Purchase the necessary fishing permits.
- Check the fishing restrictions, catch sizes, closed seasons, and fishing quotas applicable in the area where you plan to fish.
- If you are using fixed or standing gear, such as nets, remember to mark them correctly.
- Navigate the waters safely. Always wear a life jacket and keep oars, an anchor, and a bailer in your boat.
- When ice fishing, ensure there is at least 5 – 10 centimeters of solid ice. Carry ice picks, a probing stick, a whistle, and a throw line with you. It is also advisable to have a buoyant backpack containing dry spare clothes.
- To light an open fire, you always need the landowner's permission. Lighting open fires is prohibited during forest fire or grass fire warnings.
- Dispose of trash in the garbage bin, including fishing lines.
- Waterfowl nests during spring and summer. Avoid fishing close to shores during the nesting period (15.4–15.7).
- Avoid approaching inhabited shorelines closely and be considerate of others enjoying nature.

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SALMON*Salmo salar*

Finnish record 27,4 kg

The biggest migratory fish in Finland



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BREAM*Abramis brama*

Finnish record 7,45 kg

Tasty as smoked or oven-baked



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