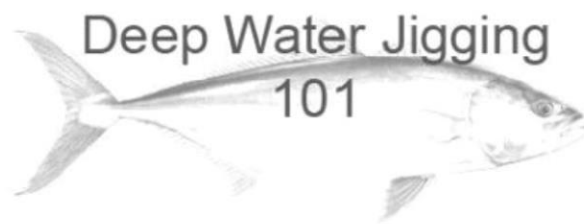
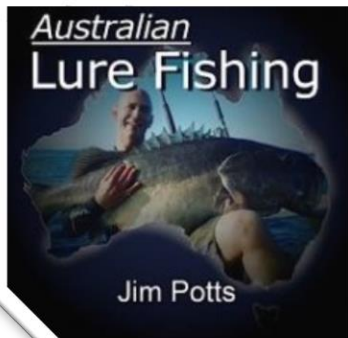


Australian Lure Fishing Podcast [Episode 358](#)



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Jim Potts

Offshore Jigging Addict

Jim started his saltwater jigging addiction some 15 years ago when he was based in Sydney. A six year stint based in New Zealand only fuelled the fire until his return to Australia early in 2020. Now based in Brisbane, Jim fishes the reefs off Cape Moreton for kingfish, amberjack, snapper, pearl perch and numerous other species.



In this episode of the Australian Lure Fishing podcast we've thrown away the usual format and explored five key things prospective offshore jiggers need to know before they give this very specialised form of fishing a crack.

5 Fundamental Deep Jigging Lessons

#1 The Gear You Use Is Critical

- This is a specialised form of fishing and you'd be wasting your time trying to use the wrong gear. Spin or overhead gear is fine, depending on your preference.
- A PE 5-6 rod that can handle jigs to around 400g weight is perfect for high speed jigging. It's important to couple this with a lightweight reel that has plenty of drag capacity. An 8000-10000 size spin reel or a 400-500 size overhead reel is a good balance, good options include the Shimano Saragosa and the Penn Slammer. Load the reel with 60lb braid and

finish with a 100 to 150 lb leader of 4-5 m in length, connecting the line and leader with a PR or FG knot.

- Colour coded braid is good for speed jigging, as fish may be well above the bottom. It's worth paying extra to get the thinnest line you can get for deep jigging, as it makes it easier to keep the lure vertical, which is critical.
- Jim prefers mono leader to fluorocarbon and works with a minimum of 100lb.
- Jim is relatively new to slow pitch jigging but uses a slightly longer rod (6' to 7'), higher speed reel and much lighter line class (PE 1.5 to PE3), all of which are necessary to work the jigs properly.
- Gloves, split ring pliers and a gimbal are other key pieces of gear. Don't go for the gimbal straight away though, fish with the rod under your arm until you have the fish under control, then use a gimbal if you wish.

#2 The Universal Technique For Finding Fish

- Wherever you decide to try deep jigging, the basic technique for finding fish is pretty universal and starts with studying charts for likely bottom structure and googling for jigging marks at your location. You're looking for undulations, drop-offs, wrecks and lumps indicated by tight contour lines in depths from 50 to 400m and will want to identify.
- Marks and charts are just a starting point, once you reach your destination, sound around looking for rises, falls, pinnacles and aggregations of bait. Often these won't show on regular charts, which are intended primarily for navigation, however higher resolution mapping for anglers is becoming increasingly available. You'll need to spend some time sounding around to find places where fish are holding.
- Once you've found a likely spot, don't drop your jigs over the side straight away. Spend some time figuring out the drift, then position the boat so that you'll drift over the fish after the jig has reached the required depth.
- Keeping an eye on currents is also important – if it's over 1.5 to 2 knots Jim won't bother going as it's likely to be unfishable. In Jim's area (SE Queensland) the East Australian Current can run fast over the summer months, making deep jigging impossible. Use data from Rip Charts, waverider buoys and so on to get an idea, but understand that these aren't always spot on and you might need a Plan B if you get to your destination and find that current is faster than expected.

#3 Deep Jigging Lures You Should Have

- The Williamson Benthos 400g is a very good option, but sadly discontinued. There are plenty of them around still, so keep your eyes open and snap them up when you can.
- The Daiwa Slow Knuckle is a slow pitch jig that can also be worked fast if conditions (ie currents) allow.
- The Jigging Master Rocket is a tail-weighted jig that plummets through the current and is very effective for fast jigging pelagics in deep water.
- Seafloor Control Gawky is a rather expensive jig but has an amazing swimming action and is deadly on a range of species.
- Feed Lures make some excellent slow pitch jigs that are slightly cheaper than the Seafloor Control lures, though still more expensive than the speed jigging varieties.
- In general, for high speed jigging in 70-140 m depths the elongated, tail-weighted jigs are the best option and are more likely to get down to depth when a current is running without being swept sideways. Centre weighted jigs are less useful if there's a current, but their fluttering action can sometimes make them better fish takers if the currents permit.

#4 Correct Rigging Saves Tears!

- Jim prefers a PR knot for joining his braid to the leader, but will only tie this knot at home before he leaves – and it requires a bobbin to tie it properly. If he needs to replace a leader at sea, Jim uses an FG knot, which is almost as strong as the PR knot, but faster and easier to tie on a boat and doesn't require any tools.
- A long leader is a good idea as it gives a little shock absorption and makes it easier to land a fish without needing to gaff it. The jig also makes a good handle for lifting a fish over the side.
- A chain knot is the best for tying the leader to a solid brass ring, although a uni knot can also work for lighter leaders. Make sure you attach the leader to a solid brass ring, not a split ring or the jig itself. The jig can then be attached with a heavy split ring to the solid brass ring ensuring that the split ring doesn't come under any pressure during the fight. Beware of flattened brass rings often found on cheaper assist rigs as they can easily cut a leader whilst fighting fish. Avoid using snaps or swivels, they'll inevitably fail no matter how strong they are.
- It's easy (and cheaper) to tie your own assist hooks using Owner SJ 41, Gamakatsu or BKK hooks and definitely worth the effort. Most good tackle stores will stock the Dyneema cord and there are tons of good tutorials on how to tie assist hooks.

#5 Be Prepared For Fighting And Landing Fish

- A common beginner mistake is to not use the gear to full capacity, especially the drag. Fishing with a super heavy drag is very important as it ensures a good hook set, but also because it's very important to get control of a large fish in the first thirty seconds of the fight. Tighten the drag so that you can barely pull line from the reel using a gloved hand – it's also important to note that your unlikely to get busted off on the strike with the tackle recommended here, but a light drag is highly likely to end with a fish burying you in the reef. Start heavy and back the drag off during the fight if necessary.
- When a fish hits, try to continue with the jigging action for at least another 2-3 pumps of the rod, effectively driving the hook home, but also keeping the fish headed away from the reef for the first few crucial seconds of the fight.