



Mangrove Jack Tackle Cheat Sheet

Rod, Reel, Line And Leader Combo's

In most situations where mangrove jack are targeted the fishing is a “sudden death” affair. Super accurate casting puts the lure within inches of structure. Locked drags are used to wrestle the fish away from cover after an aggressive strike. Occasionally there are situations where fish are away from heavy structure and can be targeted with much lighter tackle, but for the most part jack fishing is a close-contact combat sport!

Baitcast Tackle

Baitcast tackle is popular with jack fishers because of its capability for delivering accurate casts, the powerful drag systems and the direct line of pull (ie it doesn't go around a bail arm, as a spin reel does). As I've already described, jack fishing tends to be a short-range tussle, so you won't need heaps of line and relatively small, low profile baitcast reels are perfect for the task.

Rods tend to be relatively short (6' to 6'6") to further improve casting accuracy and to facilitate casting in tight, overgrown mangrove creeks. A medium-fast or fast action rod helps with lure speed and accuracy and reduces the ability of the jacks to get back to cover. For many parts of Australia where a 50cm jack is a good fish a 3-5 kg line class rod is sufficient, but in SE Queensland where a 70cm monster is possible, or in super snaggy country, a 6-10kg rod may not be over the top.

Braided lines of 20-30lb and abrasion resistant leaders of 20-30lb are normal, although once again upping to 50lb braid and 50-60lb leader might be necessary on 60cm fish around bridge pylons and oysters.

Spin Tackle

Spin tackle is great for jack fishing too, if that's your preference. In fact, in some circumstances it can be the better option. For example, there are times when casting unweighted or very lightly weighted soft plastics or small surface poppers can be very productive. Spin gear eats this style of fishing up, while it's a bit of a struggle on baitcast tackle.

A 3000 size spin reel is about right for most jack fishing and can be coupled with a 6'6" medium-fast to fast taper rod in the 3-6kg line class. 20-30lb braided mainline and a 20-40lb, abrasion resistant leader will suffice for most jack fishing. As with baitcast gear you may need to consider sizing up to a 6-10kg rod, 50lb braid and 50lb leader in extreme circumstances. The heavier gear is more tiring to use and restricts lure action, so the heavier gear isn't recommended unless there's no other option.

It doesn't hurt to have a lighter and longer rod of 7' and 2-3 kg or 2-4kg with a 3000 size reel 20lb braid and 20-30lb leader handy for those occasions when jacks are away from cover a little more and you want to cast small topwaters of unweighted plastics at them.

Lures

The following summarises information shared by ALF guests regarding their lure preferences for mangrove jack fishing. It is advisable to [listen to podcast audio and refer to show notes](#) for the locations you'll be fishing. You'll get more detailed information on how to use these lures in specific locations and conditions.



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Mangrove Jack Lure Styles Most Frequently Recommended By ALF Podcast Guests

Lure	Size	Saltwater					
		Mangroves/Snags	Rock Bars	Bridges/Racks	Pontoons	Rockwalls	Snake Drains
Suspending	75-100mm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	100-120mm	✓	✓				
Shallow Running	75-100mm	✓					✓
	100-120mm	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Medium Running	75-100mm						✓
	100-120mm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Deep Running	60-100mm	✓	✓			✓	
	100-120mm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Paddle Tail	75-100 mm	✓					✓
	100-120 mm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	120-130 mm	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Jerkbaits	120mm	✓					
Soft Prawns	75mm	✓	✓	✓			
	100mm	✓					



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Lure	Size	Saltwater					
		Mangroves/Snags	Rock Bars	Bridges/Racks	Pontoons	Rockwalls	Snake Drains
Soft Frogs	100mm	✓					
	120mm	✓					
Soft Vibes	14g		✓			✓	
Poppers and stickbaits	60-100mm	✓			✓	✓	✓
	100-120mm	✓					
Fizzers	75-100mm	✓					✓



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Jack Lure Makes and Models Used By Australian Lure Fishing Podcast Guests

Soft Plastic Paddletails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Savage Gear 3D Fat Minnow T-Tail- Berkley Hollow Belly- Molix RT Shad- Keitech Swing Impact Fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Zerek Flat Shad- ZMan MinnowZ, Diezel MinnowZ- Samaki Boom Bait Paddletail- Atomic Fish Arrow Flash J Shad
Soft Plastic Prawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Atomic Prong- Zerek Prawn and Cherabin- Squidgies Paddetail Prawn- Zman EZ Shrimp- Chase Baits Flick Prawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Halco Madeye Paddleprawn- Storm 360 GT Coastal Shrimp- DOA Shrimp- Holt Productions Prawn
Soft Frogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ZMan Goat, Billy Goat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ZMan Pop Frog
Soft Vibes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jackall Transam	
Hard Bodies – suspending	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jackall Squirrel Hank Tune- Lucky Craft Pointer Deep- Tilsan Barra- Leeds Lure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jackson G Control- Bassday Sugardeep- Bomber 14A- Lucky Craft Pointer
Hardbodies – shallow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Old Dog GM80- Rapala Shad Rap, Rapala XSR- Rapala Shad Rap Jack Deep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Halco Laser Pro- Lucky Craft Pointer
Hardbodies – medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Old Dog GM80- Halco Scorpion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lucky Craft Pointer- Tilsan Barra
Hardbodies - deep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sebile Koolie Minnow- Atomic Shiner Double Deep- Lucky Craft Pointer DD and XD- Manns Stretch 20 Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jackall Squirrel DD- Tiemco Sumari Deep- Deep Diving Bomber



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Topwater

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|------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Lucky Craft G Splash | - Zerek Skittish Dog |
| - MMD Splashprawn | - Boy Howdy |
| - Halco Roosta Popper | - Berkley Driftwalker |
| - Duo Realis Pencil | - Bassday Sugar Pen |
| - Lively Lures Ziggy | - Cultiva Gogo Pop |
| - Rapala Skitterpop | - Ballista LED |
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