

Fishing Scenario ID # 189

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# Lake Washington Perch



Courtesy [nw-photos.com](http://nw-photos.com)

Call it an "urban fishery" if you like, or even "Bill Gates's Pond." But in autumn, Lake Washington's prolific yellow perch congregate in schools ranging from several fish to several thousand. Locate a larger gathering and these little predators will provide action fast enough to delight beginners, kids...and sage old anglers who just get a kick out of *feeling* like a kid again. That's the case with Fishing Coaches consultant Dave Vedder, who in this scenario offers a chance for a hundred hook-ups a day within an hour's drive from Seattle and its suburbs.



# Lake Washington Perch Timing Details

- 1. **September 1 - 16**
- 2. Stay flexible in your trip timing and planning. Some conditions are difficult to determine far in advance, so the more quickly you can prepare to go – or cancel – the better you can adapt to Timing Details. Try to cut your lead-time to 36 hours.

***Don't go when:***

- a. Weather or wind cautions are forecast at [Seattle weather](#).
- b. A cold front is on the way. (See link above.)
- c. Weather forecasts predict a drop in high air temperature of more than 7 degrees from the previous day! (See link above.)
- 3. Remember the "Fourth Trip" Rule – how it can take as many as four trips to a specific scenario location to learn it well enough to catch up to full potential. For your first three trips, focus on following the Game Plan, also on learning and experimenting! Ideally don't give up, even if you get skunked, until after four trips.



Dave Vedder photo

## **Special Regulations/Concerns:**

- 1. Perch are so abundant in Lake Washington there's no limit at all. Before you fill your ice chest, however, check [cautions](#) in the WDFW regulations. **Fish from this water contain small amounts of mercury**, so your intake should be limited by age, gender and other factors. See [fish and health](#)



## Lake Washington Perch

# Equipment/Tackle

- 1. A "big lake-worthy" boat, and all safety gear. (See members' Reminder List).
- 2. An electronic fish finder or depth sounder.
- 3. Spinning rigs with reels spooled with two- to four-pound test line (or, even better, six-pound test super-thin lines like Spectra™), and rods that will handle up to 1/2 ounce of weight and bait combined.

4. For lure fishing:

a) 1/10, 1/5 oz ¼ oz Swedish Pimples™ in white prism, red prism and blue prism finishes



b) 1/16 oz to ¼ oz jigs in black, tallow and white, either marabou or curly tail plastic.



5. For bait fishing:

- a) a spool of 10 pound test line for building dropper rigs
- b) Size 1 snap/swivels and size 14 barrel swivels
- c) 3/8 ounce bass casting sinkers
- d) size 6 or 8 snelled Eagle Claw Baitholder hooks
- e) earthworms
- f) a very sharp knife for cutting perch pieces (see rigging below)

# Lake Washington Perch Rigging

To build a dropper leader:

- 1. Tie a loop in your leader 24 inches above the weight (see Figure 1, from [www.fishsa.com/kntiesdl.php](http://www.fishsa.com/kntiesdl.php) )
- 2. Loop through this a snelled Eagle Claw™ baitholder hook in size 6 or 8. Note that perch are not leader shy, and that the stiff nylon snell material will help keep your hooks from fouling around your leader when you cast.
- 3. Repeat this process with a second snelled hook 24 inches above the first. (see Figure 2)
- 4. Tie a swivel at the top end of the leader, and a snap/swivel at the bottom.
- 5. Attach the 3/8 ounce weight to snap/swivel.

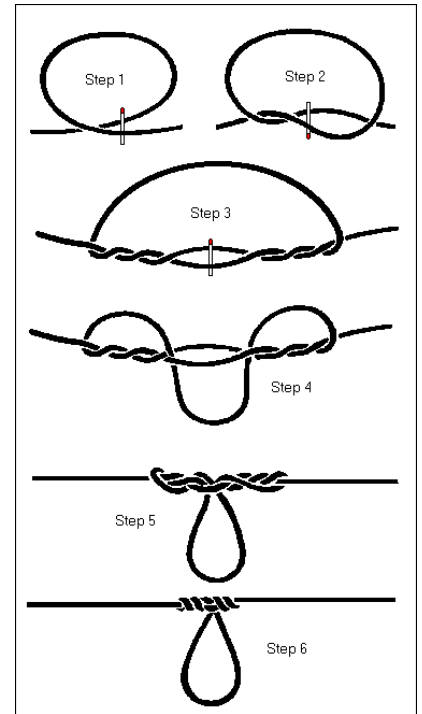
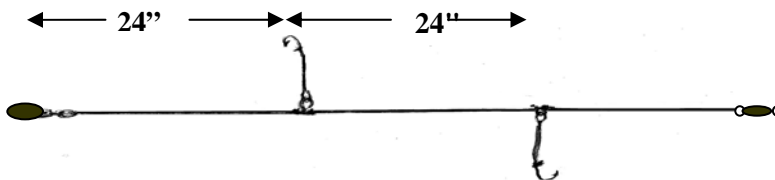


Figure 1

Figure 2



- 5. While earthworms and redworms work well, Dave also recommends that you slice a fillet off your first perch and make pennant-shaped baits about one inch long and ¼ inch wide. (Typically the larger the perch piece, the more likely it will interest a large fish.) See Figure 3.

Figure 3





## Lake Washington Perch Techniques

- 1. At this time of year perch schools can be found in water between 12 and 25 feet deep. Cruise until a school shows on your fish finder, or look for clusters of boats and then anchor at a reasonable distance.
- 2. If fishing with bait, lower your gear until the weight touches the bottom, then reel up about six inches. Perch are aggressive biters: wait until they hook themselves, or set the hook with a sharp upward jerk as soon as you feel the bite.
- 3. If using a jig or Swedish Pimple, let lure drop to the bottom, reel up about a foot and begin jigging. Try to imagine the jig hopping up and down six inches at a time.
- 4. If no strikes come near the bottom, reel up another foot and begin jigging again. Cover the entire water column until you find the best depth.
- 5. Jigs and jigging spoons often work better with a tiny piece of bait on the hook. Keep the baits very small to keep from interfering with the action of the lure.
- 6. Perch tend to school by size, so if you're getting only small fish, **move** to find another school.
- 7. Three Hour Rule: Even on great days, the "bite" is sometimes off for two hours or more. If you only fished during that period, you might mistakenly think the fishing is no good! So fish for three hours at least, and you're more likely to sample the day's great potential.
- 10. Each day at your destination, talk to (and learn from) four or more fishers, if possible.





## Lake Washington Perch Location Details

- 1. Top locations in Lake Washington include Kenmore, Juanita Bay and the East channel of Mercer Island. Any part of the lake that has the appropriate depths can produce. The easiest way to find the schools is with a depth sounder or electronic fish finder.
- 2. Boat Launching. There are several boat launches scattered around the lake. Dave prefers the launch at Kenmore because it is free and very near some of the best fishing in the lake. There is also a large launch with dock at Sand Point. For a general map of Lake Washington see [MapQuest L. WA](#). For launch sites, click [Lake Washington launches](#)
- 3. Lodging/camping. While there is no camping on Lake Washington, the choice of motels and restaurants in Seattle is almost limitless.

