



TEN TIPS FOR FISH CARE

B.A.S.S. prides itself on being a leader in conservation but we need **your** help to maintain that reputation. Every cast and every catch can be recorded and broadcast on television, printed in magazines or posted on the Internet. What you do and say has a powerful influence on how other fishermen behave. More than ever, it is critically important that you **"Do it right!"**

Landing & Handling...

1. **Stay off the carpet!** The #1 complaint from fans watching tournaments on television or the Internet is flipping fish onto the carpet. We discourage this to protect the bass' slime coat. Use a rubber or coated nylon landing net, grasp the lower jaw, or lift them by the line - catching them before they hit the deck. Don't lay fish on the carpet when culling.

Livewell Operation is Critical to Survival...

2. **When water temps are below 65°F** pump in freshwater at regular intervals to refresh the livewell.
3. **When water temps are 65-75°F** pump fresh water *continuously* and turn on recirculating aerator.
4. **When water temps are over 75°F** fill livewells early, cool with small amounts of ice and turn on the recirculating aerator full time. Don't pump in hot surface water all day. Cool the water no more than 5-7°F below lake temps. Replace half the livewell water every 2-3 hours then add more ice.
5. **Keep both livewells full** and divide your catch. Use pool noodles or sponges to reduce sloshing.
6. **Install livewell lid ventilation devices** that help cool the water, allow fresh air in and CO₂ out.



Fish-friendly Culling...

7. **Use non-penetrating culling clips** such as the plastic clamps that have spring tension keeping them on the bass' jaw. They are fast, secure, and don't require piercing the fish's mouth.

Fizzing Can't Wait...

8. **Learn to fizz.** Fish caught in deep water suffer with overinflated air bladders. Leaving this untreated for just a few hours lowers chances of survival. Check fish in the livewell after a few minutes and fizz them in the boat! Do not wait for the tournament staff to render first-aid...by then it may be too late. Weighted fin clips that keep fish upright do not cure over-inflation – restricted blood flow and damage to internal organs can still occur. See How-to videos for smallmouth and largemouth at <https://video.bassmaster.com/detail/videos/conservation>



Bagging Fish & Weigh-in Lines...

9. **Keep your fish in your bag while waiting in line.** Avoid the temptation to pull out the big one to show to fans or photographers backstage. Excessive handling and additional air exposure cause additional mortality.

Show 'em off...Carefully

10. **Hold bass vertically** if less than 6-7 pounds. Hold larger fish **using two hands** supporting the fish under the anal fish as shown here. This avoids damage to the jaws & ligaments.

