First-Trip Fishing Checklist

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Pack the night before so you can leave early.

Fishing gear

- [ ] Rod and reel, already spooled with line
- [ ] Extra hooks (sizes 6 to 10)
- [ ] Bobbers and split-shot sinkers
- [ ] A few lures, such as a spinner or small jig
- [ ] Needle-nose pliers or a hook remover
- [ ] Line clippers
- [ ] Small tackle box

Bait

- [ ] Worms or nightcrawlers
- [ ] A small cooler or shaded spot to keep bait cool
- [ ] Other bait for your target fish (crickets, minnows, catfish bait)

Safety

- [ ] Life jackets for kids, weak swimmers and anyone on a boat
- [ ] Sunscreen and a hat
- [ ] Polarized sunglasses
- [ ] Bug spray
- [ ] Small first-aid kit
- [ ] Charged phone; tell someone where you're going

Comfort

- [ ] Water and snacks
- [ ] Folding chair or blanket
- [ ] Rain jacket or an extra layer
- [ ] Wipes or hand towel
- [ ] Trash bag for line scraps and litter

Paperwork & rules

- [ ] Fishing license for everyone who needs one
- [ ] Local size and daily limits if you plan to keep fish
- [ ] Park hours and parking information

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