

# Fundamentals of a Straight-line Cast

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- Pick-Up without Slack Line. To instantly load the rod when the cast begins, the rod needs to pull against the weight of the entire line and leader extended beyond the rod tip – no slack in the line or leader. Hold the rod tip close to the surface and strip in enough line to get the fly moving. Smoothly lift the line off the water and into the initial back cast.

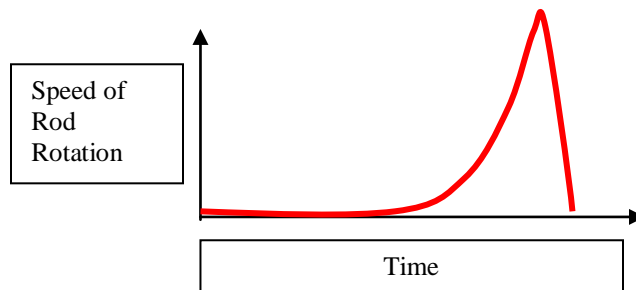
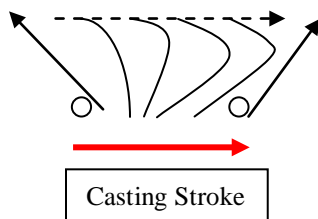


Rod tip up - slack in line – poor pick-up

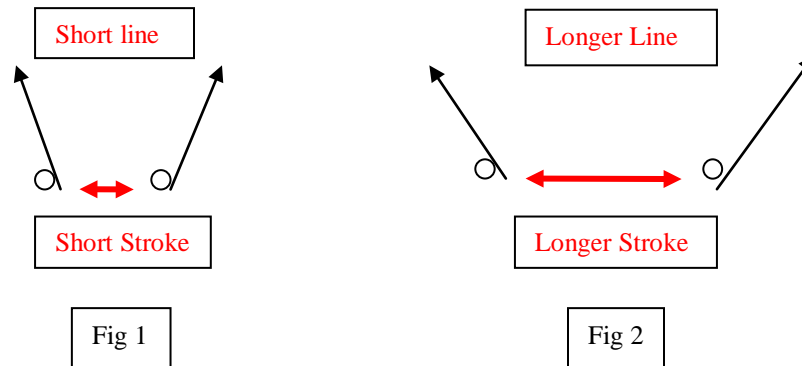


Rod tip down - no slack - good pick-up

- Bend the Rod. Rod bend and line speed are needed to make the cast and result from rotating the rod at the end of the casting stroke. Rotating the shoulder, elbow or wrist, usually in some combination, rotates the rod. For short casts, little rod bend is needed and can result from a slight rotation of the wrist, elbow or shoulder alone, or in combination. Longer casts require more rod bend and best results are achieved with a long pulling motion of the hand to remove slack, followed by a faster combined rotational movement of the shoulder, elbow and wrist. Begin the cast by moving the hand along a straight path with a pulling motion to remove slack, steadily increasing hand speed. Continue the hand movement ending the cast by rapidly rotating the rod to an abrupt stop.

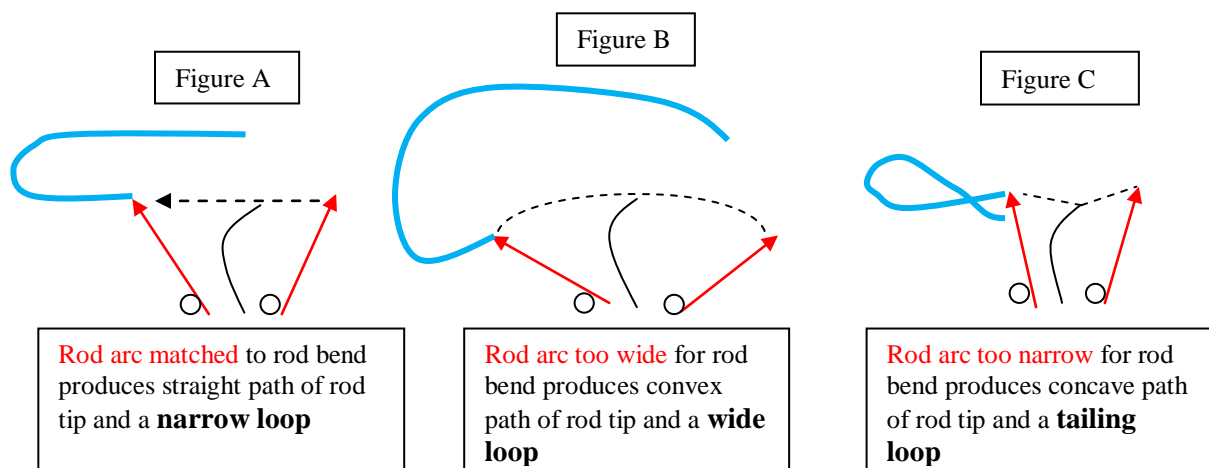


- Adjust the Stroke Length - the distance traveled by the hand during the casting stroke, from beginning of distinct acceleration to the stop. The length of the stroke varies with the length of line being cast. For a short straight-line cast use a short stroke - Figure 1. For a longer cast use a longer stroke -Figure 2. The path of the hand should be straight away from and straight to the target area.

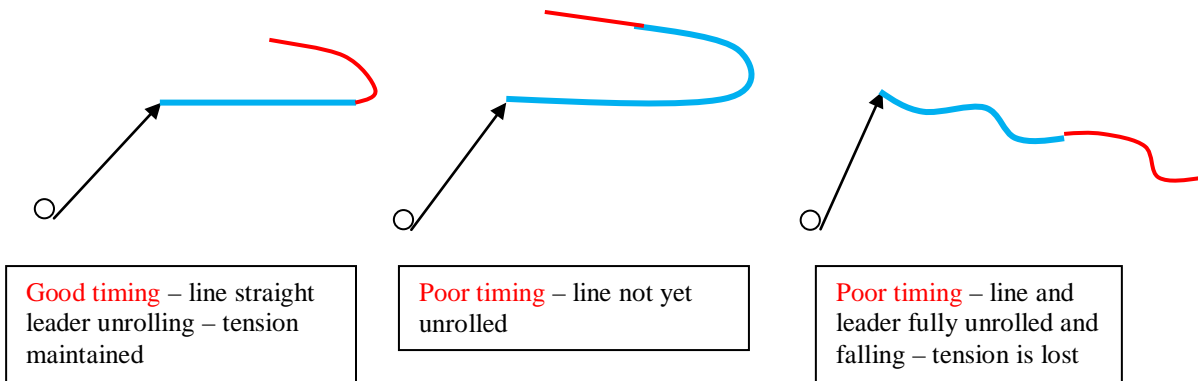


- Adjust the Rod Arc - the angle between the rod butt at the beginning of the cast and the stop position. The width of the angle should match the bend in the rod to maintain a relatively straight path of the rod tip. A relatively straight path of the rod tip produces a narrow loop of line. The rod tip should stop just below the on-coming line.

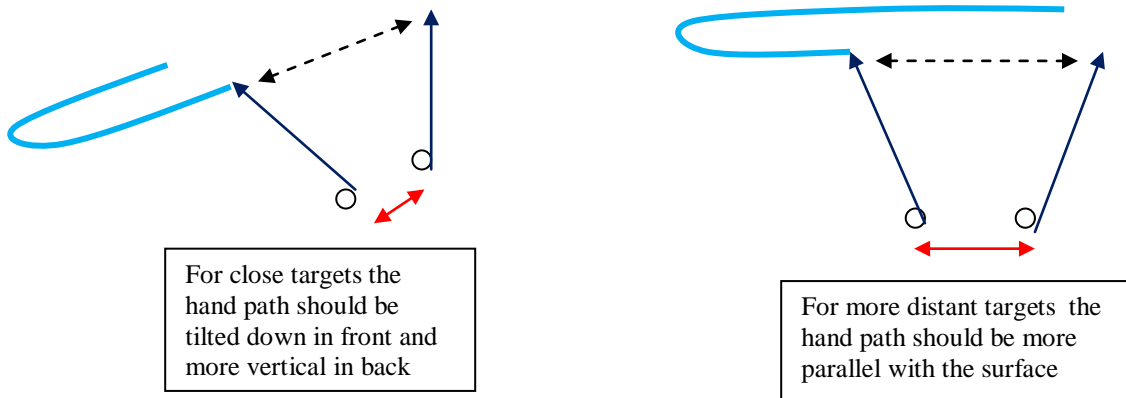
Adjust the rod arc to fit the bend in the rod. For short casts use a narrow arc; for longer casts use a wider arc. The intent in the figures below is to illustrate casts with the same amount of rod bend but with differing rod arcs. A rod arc matched to the bend in the rod will produce straight path of the rod tip and a narrow loop – Figure A. A rod arc too wide for the bend in the rod will produce a wide loop – Figure B. A rod arc too narrow for the bend in the rod will produce a tailing loop – Figure C.



- Adjust Timing - the pause between strokes to allow the line to fully straighten without losing tension and falling dramatically. Wait between strokes to let the line straighten. Good timing – adequate pause - is long enough to allow the line to straighten fully with just the leader not yet straightened. Poor timing is not waiting long enough or waiting too long. Watch your back cast when you practice!



- Select the Casting Angle. For casting to close targets stop the hand low in front and higher in back, unrolling the line just above the target. For more distant targets the hand path should be more parallel with the water. To reach targets under obstacles, tilt the rod to the side, casting more parallel with the surface.



## Good Casters

- Begin the cast by removing slack
- Smoothly lift the line from the surface into the initial back cast
- Select a casting angle in-line with the target
- Smoothly accelerate the hand along a straight path
- Use enough rod bend - rod rotation - to unroll the line
- Adjust the rod arc to fit the bend in the rod
- Stop the rod abruptly
- Pause to allow the line to straighten