



HOOK SHARPENING TECH SHEET

LEARN QUICK, PROVEN TECHNIQUES TO KEEP YOUR CRANKBAIT, TOPWATER, JIG, WORM, BLADE BAIT AND SPINNERBAIT HOOKS RAZOR SHARP!

No matter what your skill level is, beginner, intermediate or advanced tournament angler, ultimately your final connection to a fish is by a hook. The hook is what brings a striking fish into the boat and this fact makes sharp hook knowledge one of the most important considerations you can make every time you cast or troll. Sharp hooks are extremely important on lures like crankbaits and topwaters where impact force between the mouth of the fish and the lure hooks is very low. On crankbaits and topwaters, a fish may inhale them when they have zero forward speed, are floating upwards, traveling slowly forward, or are at great depths on light line. This means low impact to drive the points home and crankbait strikes are totally unlike worms or jig and pork combos where the angler can use a stiff rod to generate high rod tip speed on heavier line to slam a hook point past the barb.

POINTERS ABOUT HOOK POINTS

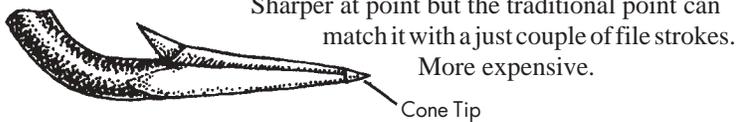
In the 1990s, hook manufacturers, both U.S. and foreign, have finally addressed the need for sharper hook point designs and there are a number of specialty hooks on the market. Here are some of the hook points designs and comments about them.

TRADITIONAL CUTTING EDGE WITH INSIDE BARB (Most common and readily available design)



Excellent design, but usually needs a touch-up with a file (this sheet shows how!). This point style can be made lethally sharp only with a file and contains large "burrs" around the barb which reduce penetration, or very high barbs that need trimming. The big advantage is that this style of hook can be purchased economically and is available with the ideal short-shank, wide-gap treble hook configuration.

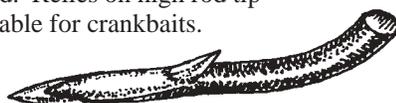
TRADITIONAL CUTTING EDGE WITH CONICAL MECHANICAL SHARPENING - "CONE CUT"



Sharper at point but the traditional point can match it with a just couple of file strokes. More expensive.

CONICAL POINT WITH FLAT, WEDGE BLADE

A good hook for plastic worms. Resists bending on impact and is easily sharpened. Relies on high rod tip speed to penetrate. Not available for crankbaits.

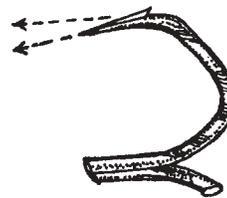


CONICAL POINT WITH TRANSITION TO WEDGE SIDES", THE ICE PICK STYLE"

Good worm hook for big fish. Does not bend easily and is easy to touch up. Poor on crankbaits.

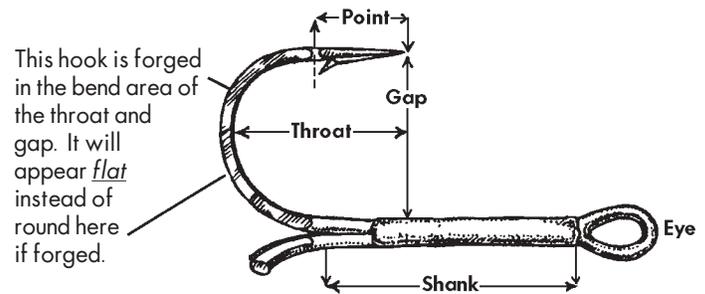


TURNUED-IN BARB & POINT - TRADITIONAL CUTTING EDGE AND ANGLED THROAT AREA TO HOLD FISH



Good angle of penetration but will need standard sharp point and small barb to be efficient. More expensive. Good on crankbaits.

SIMPLE ANATOMY OF A HOOK



Forging alters metal grain for more tensile strength.

MULTIPLE BARBS

Unnecessary on crankbait hooks. Harder to penetrate and more damage to released fish.



"BEAKED" OR CURVED POINTS



Usable but inefficient on a crankbait. Hard to sharpen and often collapses on impact. Poorest of all crankbait hooks!

MULTIPLE CUTTING EDGE - "OWNER" STYLE"

Good on worm- and jig-style hooks. Also available on trebles. Uses ideas on cutting edges from items such as surgical needles which require low pressure to penetrate. Expensive on a per-hook basis.



WHAT REALLY COUNTS ON HOOKS?

Invariably, and ultimately, it is point and barb design that penetrate the fish's mouth parts and hold it. Regardless of shank, gap and throat style, you will need a sharp point, any available cutting edges and a de-burred barb. Following are some problem areas to keep alert for!

1

RECEDING POINT LENGTH

A great part of successful hook point design comes from the correct length of the point to barb area. If this tapered wedge becomes too short, it will be difficult to get good penetration. Look

out for short, poorly-formed points struck in factory dies. These are hard to sharpen and do not penetrate well. Replace individual hooks with this defect. Over-sharpening also causes this condition.



BENT POINT

A bent point will cause immediate fish losses and your first sign of trouble is a fish that jumps and throws the lure. This is most common on worm and crankbait hooks and needs immediate correction. The causes of bent points are, in order of occurrence probability: over-sharpened "hair thin" points, poor point design, impact with hard mouth bones of fish and shake-off from snags, especially rocks. Bent points can be instantly detected by sliding fingertips from area outside barb down to the point. Correct immediately with a file or replace lure or hook if fishing time allows the delay. You may also set the lure aside to replace the hook at home.



2

3

"BURRS" ON BARB

A high, prominent barb with a burr elevated by the forming dies can easily stop penetration past the barb. This area is quickly reduced and sharpened using a Luhr Jensen #9130 Sharp Hook File™.



WHAT ABOUT TESTS FOR HOOK SHARPNESS?

Only a file can put cutting edges and angles on a hook. "Finger nail" penetration tests are meaningless on a crankbait-style hook. Fish do not have "fingernails" and all you want to do is cut your way in and through the skin, cartilage or gristle over bony areas.

WILL A CUTTING-EDGE POINT CUT ITS WAY OUT AGAIN?

There is little evidence of this, especially when the hook penetrates past the barb. On crankbaits you must play fish according to the fact you can loop around a bone with the hook gap and bend, but rarely penetrate, bone. You will be attached to fish only by skin and cartilage areas, so play them accordingly.

DO I NEED SPECIALTY HOOKS ON MY CRANKBAITS?

You will seldom need expensive and hard to find specialty hooks if you learn to sharpen your standard straight-point, round-bend V.M.C. 9650 hooks! Most specialty hooks offer a sharp point that will soon need sharpening after impact and their point sharpness can easily be matched by the sharpening sequences shown here. A case for stronger hooks or one size larger hooks exists if you must stop large fish from making a run in timber or brush. In this case, *forged gap* or 3X strength-rated hooks can help.

Teflon®-coated hooks have quick penetration as long as they have a good point design, but their effectiveness is reduced as soon as they need sharpening and expense is still a factor.

HOW DO I SHARPEN SPECIALTY HOOKS?

Just follow the blade cutting edges and point angles already on the hook and restore them with a file.

LUHR JENSEN #9130 SHARP HOOK FILE™



Available in 4 1/4" and 5 1/2" lengths.

Remember, a file only cuts on the forward stroke! Store them in a WD-40-soaked plastic filesaver pouch right near you in the boat as you fish. That way you can quickly touch-up hooks as needed in seconds. Luhr Jensen was the first to offer this great file and *only a file will form the desired cutting edges.* Use the 4 1/4" model for hooks up to size 4 and the 5 1/2" file for those larger than size 4.

With practice, you can use the following basic sequence very quickly and get a hook as sharp as many specialty hooks or even do a more refined "tournament-style" sharpening that is lethal on crankbaits. Remember, sharp hooks are dangerous, so to avoid injury, treat thrashing fish with great caution and handle all lures with care.

