

Simple Steps for Making Your Own Tackle



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Making Sinkers and Cleaning Lead



Cleaned lead ingots. After I've gotten the lead cleaned up I can make sinkers at my leisure and just grab about 10 of these and pour up enough sinkers to last for several fishing trips.



This is my melting pot I use for pouring the lead into the sinker mold with pan, mold, safety glasses, block of wood, and edge cutters



After you've poured your sinkers they'll have a bit of lead that is sticking out ... you can remove this with edge cutters as shown here





When pouring lead use the utmost caution and safety, as it's very dangerous if you just take off with reckless abandon. A trip to the emergency room and then burn center will not be very cost effective in trying to save money making your own sinkers or jigs.

Tackle and Jigs

PRO-SERIES MODELS

Models of the Do-it Molds PRO-SERIES are made to save time in volume production. These models feature minimal pouring gate opening for fast and clean twist off sprue removal. It is necessary to have good lead melting equipment and proper casting technique to get results from molds with minimal pouring gates.

The PRO-SERIES Models are designed to be cast with a bottom pour type melter. The small pouring gates in the PRO-SERIES require more ideal casting conditions than most other Do-it Mold models.

The use of soft lead with PRO-SERIES Models is highly recommended. Excellent castings and high rates of production can be achieved with PRO-SERIES Models used under proper conditions.

WEEDLESS JIG MOLDS

Y-GUARDS

Plastic Y-Guards are easy to use inserts in weedless jig making. They are made in different sizes. It is important that the Y-Guard size designated for each model is used.

The simplest way to use a Do-it Mold designed for Y-Guards is to simply cast the Y-Guard into the jig head along with the hook. The molten lead will melt the plastic only slightly before it hardens in the cavity. Always place the base of the Y-Guard as far into the cavity as possible without interfering with the hook. This will insure that the Y-Guard will be securely locked in place.

Some models are furnished with special insert pins (base hole pins) for those who prefer to epoxy the Y-Guard into the head after the lure has been completed. To mold the base hole, the pins must be positioned in the mold and cast in the lure in place of

the Y-Guard. The reusable base hole pins are then removed carefully with pliers.

Caution: Use pliers to remove the pin, do not use fingers! The point of the hook will be much too close to the pin and injury could result.

Y-Guards can be epoxied into the hole left by the pin. Some prefer to do this after the lure is completely finished. Molds designed for the YG-1 Y-Guard share a 1/8" base diameter with the FG-30 type sizes of fiberguard insert.

FG-30 Fiberguards can be molded or epoxied in place of YG-1 type Y-Guards. The fiberguards should be trimmed with sharp scissors to the length desired.

FIBERGUARDS

Fiberguards are nylon strands fused together at one end for ease of use. They should be trimmed to length after the lure is completed. Fiberguards are made in several base and strand diameters to affect the stiffness of the weedguard. Each mold specifies the type of weedguard that is required.

Three base diameters of fiberguard units are commonly available:

- ± the FG-30,
- ± the FG-40
- ± the FG-9 style.

The FG-30 type fiberguard unit is the most popular fiberguard style because it is available in a variety of stiffness and it shares the same 1/8" base diameter as the YG-1 Y-Guard.

The heavy duty unit is the FG-40 fiberguard. It is composed of the maximum fiber strands and is 5/32" in diameter at the base. The FG-40 is a fairly stiff weedguard and is usually best on the largest lures or in the heaviest cover.

The FG-9 fiberguard is a light duty 1/16" diameter weedguard best suited for small crappie jigs.

None of the base diameter styles of fiberguard, (FG-9, FG-30, FG-40) are interchangeable with another, so make sure that you use the one your mold designates.

FG-30 and FG-40 size fiberguards can be installed in two ways; cast in or glued in. FG-9 fiberguards can only be cast in place. The cast in method is the simplest. Just insert

the fiberguard in the mold after the hook. Make sure that the fiberguard is in the cavity as far as possible, touching the shank of the hook where possible. When molten lead contacts the plastic, it will melt it only slightly and fuse it firmly in place.

The glue in process requires a hole to be formed in the lure during the molding process with a special base hole pin. Several reusable steel pins are furnished with the fiberguard molds using FG-30 or FG40 sizes, and additional base hole pins can be purchased separately.

The pin is simply substituted for the fiberguard during the casting process. When the lure is cool, the pin is removed leaving a base hole for glue in installation.

***Caution:** Use pliers to remove the pins, do not use your fingers! The point of the hook will be much too close and an injury could result.*

The fiberguard can be epoxied into the hole as soon as the lead cools, however, some prefer to postpone this step until after the rest of the lure is completed.

Important: One more step before the lure is finished. Fiberguards are furnished extra long so they can be trimmed to the desired length. A sharp scissors will work fine for this task.

LURE MOLDS

HORSE HEAD - PONY HEAD - SEA HORSE

A swivel is molded in the head of the lure along with the jig hook. Attach a spinner blade to the swivel with a split ring. Molds are currently made for use only with a “crane swivel.” Models have been made previously to accept a “barrel swivel”. These swivel types are not interchangeable; so make certain that you use both the STYLE and SIZE designated for use with your mold.

FINISHING JIGS AND LURES

PAINT

Getting a professional finish on your jigs and lures requires a good base coat first. White paint makes the best base because it adheres well and is easily covered by other colors.

For a truly outstanding finish use two white base coats followed by one or two coats of the selected color, then seal with a clear gloss or clear epoxy final coat.

Paint can be applied by a variety of methods: brushing, dipping, or even spraying with an airbrush. Usually, two thin coats will cover better and be more attractive than the same amount of paint applied in one thick coat.

Paints made for use on metal are available at hardware, paint and automotive stores. Some tackle shops will carry paints specially formulated for use on lures.

Lacquer and enamel paints are the most economical, but have some drawbacks. They chip easily and may react with chemicals found in the soft plastic bodies often used on fishing lures.

Epoxy type paints produce hard and durable finishes and do not react with plastic bodies. Epoxy paints are expensive and must be mixed with a hardener before use. Once mixed, epoxy paints must be used at once. Be certain to follow the manufacturers instructions with all paints.

Another choice has proven to be one of the best paints for fishing lures: VINYL JIG & LURE FINISH. Many lures receive rough use over rocks and obstructions. Most paints will chip and flake when subjected to this kind of use, but vinyl remains flexible and holds up exceptionally well.

Vinyl is nearly as easy to apply as lacquer or enamel and as chip resistant as epoxy. Many of the most popular soft plastic bodies do not react with vinyl finish, thus eliminating the need for an epoxy sealer coat in most cases. Vinyl Jig & Lure Finish is a top choice for most tackle crafters.

Hobbyist tackle makers are also finding another type of paint, POWDER PAINT, can also be a good option for simple jigs. Powder paint gives quick one coat coverage without need for any base coat. Application of powder paint is much different from other

paints. It requires that the jig be preheated to 350 degrees F. (some use a heat gun, toaster oven, or propane torch to heat the jig).

The hot lure is dipped into loose powder paint for an instant. The powder will melt immediately upon contacting the heated metal and bond to form a smooth, even, and high gloss finish. It cools in just a moment and the lure could be used immediately. The powder paint is brittle at this stage, like lacquer paint.

With one more step, powder paint can be changed into a super tough finish. Suspend the jig in a curing oven for 20 minutes at 250 degrees F. to turn it into a hard, almost epoxy like finish. Be certain to remove any paint in the hook eye before oven curing because the final finish is so tough it will be impossible to remove later. The paint will temporarily soften during an oven cure; so place aluminum foil under the jig to collect any paint drips.

PAINT AND OXIDATION

While there are almost as many types and brands of paint as there are colors, better results will be obtained with any of them if the jig heads are painted shortly after they are poured. The reason for this is that lead will start oxidizing after it is cast.

This could occur in as short a time as a couple of days in high humidity conditions. Paint adheres poorly to oxidized metal. If casting a large quantity of jig heads for future completion, it would be wise to prime them before they are set aside. Once primed, oxidation is stopped and the jigs may be stored indefinitely before they are painted and finished.

TYING JIGS

Most jigs are tied with hair (bucktail) or feather (marabou.) You should have three tools to tie jigs:

- ± a jig or fly tier's vise
- ± a thread bobbin and
- ± a good scissors.

Tying is a matter of wrapping and tying thread tightly around the material to be attached to the jig. Head cement can be brushed on the wrap to insure that it does not loosen.

RUBBER

“Filament Rubber” or “Living Rubber” has proven to be very effective material on many lures. This material comes in long, pre-slit flat strips about 1” in width.

These strips must be cut to length and attached to the lure by wrapping tightly with strong thread or fine wire. Then the strips are stretched away from the lure and trimmed with scissors.

The pre-slit strands separate into tentacles when stretched and cut and thus spring to life. Tools are also available to easily make removable rubber skirts from this material.

SOURCES OF FINISHING MATERIALS AND ADVICE

Your local sporting goods store or tackle shop is a good source of advice and may carry much of the material that you will want to complete your lures, or can obtain them for you. Mail order tackle specialty firms typically advertise in fishing magazines, and often these firms can supply hard to find items.

Lead Information

LEAD ALLOYS

There are two general types of lead alloy, “soft lead” (mostly pure lead) and “hard lead” (an alloy of lead and a harder metal.)

Pure lead melts at 621 degrees F. and has excellent pouring characteristics at 700-800 degrees. A hard lead alloy may solidify too quickly and require more effort to mold good parts.

SOFT LEAD

Soft lead can usually be identified by pressing or scratching your thumbnail into it. If it scratches easily, it is probably soft lead. If you can't scratch it at all or only with pressure, it is not soft lead.

Since soft lead has a relatively low working temperature (700-800 degrees for most applications), it is easy to use.

Small jigs and sinkers, as well as spinner jig lures, are much easier to cast when using soft lead. Soft lead is a necessity for use with bendable type sinkers such as split shot or pinch-on sinkers.

HARD LEAD (Tire Weights, etc.)

Because of its molding difficulties, the use of hard lead is not recommended in Do-it molds. Hard lead refers to a lead alloy that has one or more other metals added to make a metal that is harder than pure lead.

The other metals can cause the alloy, when poured into a mold, to solidify or “freeze” at temperatures where pure or soft lead is still fluid. Consequently, more heat or a faster rate of pour may be necessary to get complete castings with hard lead.

The chief appeal of a hard lead alloy for sinker and lure making is that it can often be purchased at less cost than soft lead. This advantage can be offset by difficulty in molding the metal.

The most common source of hard lead is used wheel or tire weights. Since the main function of wheel weights is weight, they often contain a lot of tramp elements. Wheel weight compositions vary widely.

If you acquire hard lead, remember that it will likely require more experimentation and effort than soft lead to pour complete castings. It may work well for some medium and large sinkers and lures, but avoid its use in the more difficult to mold small jigs and spinner baits.

Do not use hard lead to make sinkers like split shot or pinch-on types. These sinkers must be easily bendable to work correctly. A hard lead alloy will make these sinkers too stiff to bend.

Best molding results will be obtained using soft lead or a lead alloy that is at least 98% lead. Following is a listing of various types of lead and their approximate percentages of tin or antimony.

- ± Commercial Pig Lead - 99.6% lead;
- ± Cable Sheathing - 98.5% lead;
- ± Battery Lead - 90% lead and 10% antimony;
- ± Plumbers Solder - 67% lead and 33% tin;
- ± Wheel Weights - (varies) may contain anything from aluminum to zinc, in addition to antimony and lead;
- ± Type Metal - 82% lead, 15% antimony and 3% tin.

EFFECTS OF OTHER ELEMENTS TO A LEAD ALLOY

Antimony:

Adds strength and hardness. May cause premature solidification, wrinkles or other molding flaws. Avoid metals containing antimony.

Zinc:

Makes a lead alloy sluggish, limits its ability to flow and requires a higher casting temperature. It can cause roughness, porosity, voids and a grainy or frosted appearance on castings. Avoid metals containing zinc

Aluminum and Iron:

Effects castings the way zinc does. Avoid!

Tin:

Adds ductility and strengthens lead. Tin melts at a low temperature, 449 degrees F., and generally improves a lead alloy. With some experimentation, pure tin can be used to make lures and sinkers.










Tin is an expensive metal, but has no known environmental or health risks. A tin object will weigh only 2/3 that of the same object made of lead. Example: a 3/8 oz. lead jig will only weigh 1/4 oz. if made from pure tin.

Tin could be an attractive lead substitute if it was not so expensive and difficult to obtain

Sinker Molds

You can buy a sinker molds to make every size, shape and weight of sinker for both freshwater and saltwater. The Bass Pro Shop has a lot of different molds to make your own sinkers and jigs.

		
Casting Jig Mold	Egg Sinker Mold	Split Shot Mold
		
Bank Sinker Mold	Pyramid Sinker Mold	Worm Sinker Mold

 <p>Walking Sinker Mold</p>	 <p>Round Head Jig Mold</p>	 <p>Tube Jig Mold</p>
 <p>Arky Jig Mold</p>	 <p>Arky Jig Mold</p>	 <p>Minnow Jig Mold</p>
 <p>Brass Sinker Eyelets</p>	 <p>Lead Cutter Pliers</p>	 <p>Click here to shop for Sinker & Jig Molds</p>

Notes:

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