

Hunting and Fishing; Led Lights Up the Best Gear

If you're packing up your gear to go fishing – whether your venue is a mountain stream, a quiet Midwestern lake or the deep sea – there are a few things you should make a point to pack along besides your rods and reels. Here's a quick list of some very important – and a few very fun – gadgets that should make it into your tackle box.

In Case of Emergency

No one likes to think that bad things will happen, but sometimes they do. When the worst happens, you can minimize the damage by being prepared. What should you have in your tackle box (or on board your boat) to deal with emergencies?

An all-in-one survival kit that includes matches in a waterproof tin, a cutting tool with a sawed edge, a folding knife, aerial flares, a metal whistle and a large plastic garbage bag/tarp. You'll find some excellent compact survival kits that include all that you need to get you through the 72 hours that most matter if you're lost or stranded somewhere.

A working flashlight – for emergencies ranging from finding something in the darkest corner of a storage cubby to finding your way in unfamiliar terrain at night. The best of the current litter feature LED lights, which draw far less current so will stay bright up to ten times longer than most other types of flashlights. Some have been tested to run over 400 hours on 3 D-cell batteries.

Emergency signal light or survival light. LED lights are small and compact, but can pack a powerful wallop of brightness if you need it. An LED survival light that flashes a signal beacon can help searchers locate you if you're lost. You can pick up a Flash Fire LED survival light for less than \$15, and pack it along on your keychain – a small price to pay if you find yourself with a stalled engine and night coming on.

Routine Lighting

Night fishing is a whole different animal than a lazy day on the riverbank. For one thing, you need to be able to see what you're doing. You'll really appreciate the convenience of a headlamp, which leaves both hands free for other things and eliminates the awkwardness of trying to position a standing light to focus illumination where you need it. Because of their light weight and the fact that they can run for days on the power of two triple AAA or a 9V battery, LED lights are the perfect choice for lightweight, bright and long-lasting headlamps.

Obviously, if you're fishing at night, you'll need more than just your headlamp for illumination. Most of the experts recommend diffuse lighting off the gunwales of your boat if you're using one, as well as camp lanterns and regular camp lighting to help you see your way.

The absolute best little gadget light that I've seen anywhere, though, is the Fisherman's 5-way Light Kit. It includes a hand held LED light with four colored refractor rods. Use the light without a rod, or pop on one of the colors to specialize the use: bright red for emergencies (slow flash, fast flash or steady as a beacon), blue for low light intensity and preserving your night vision, white for all purpose lighting and green for attracting fish. You'll get up to 100,000 hours of light in one of the easiest to use forms ever.

-2006 Ben Anton

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