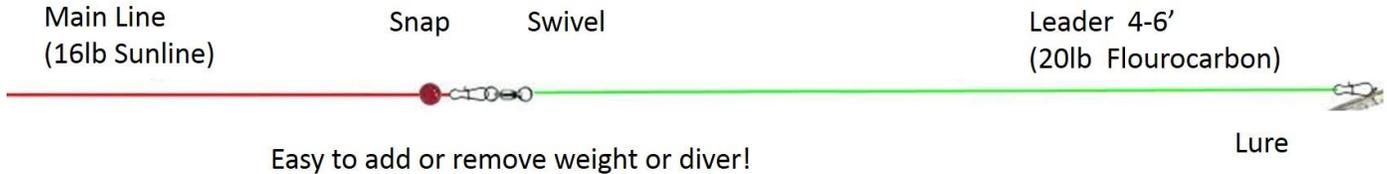


The Secret of the bead...

by: Captain Lance Valentine

“How do you rig your trolling rods?” I get this question a lot when I talk about trolling. First, I calibrate my line counter reels. Then, I use a bead on my line between the rod tip and the rest of my setup (see pic below). After the bead, I tie on a crankbait snap, then attach a leader to the snap. The leader has a high-quality ball bearing swivel at one end and a crankbait snap at the other.



So what does the bead do? Well, it does many things, but here are just a few:

- 1) Keeps my clients from reeling in too far when landing a fish
- 2) Keeps debris off my lure (floating weeds, cottonwood etc.)
- 3) Helps me see when a fish is getting close to the surface for netting
- 4) Allows for easy adding/deleting of weights or divers
- 5) Helps keep track of what lures are in the water
- 6) Helps keep my rods organized and makes it easy to identify what rods need maintenance.

The first 3 are pretty easy to understand, but number 4 is where the bead rigging makes me a much more efficient angler. By allowing me to quickly add or remove inline weights, Tadpoles, Diver Discs or other devices, I can fish the same rod regardless of what lure I am using and how I want to fish it. In an instant I can go from running flat line crankbaits to running spoons behind a Tadpole weight, then quickly switch back again!

So how do number 5 and 6 work? This is the TRUE beauty of “the bead”. By putting different colored beads on each rod, it is easy to keep them straight...I have a “red” rod, a “blue” rod, a “purple” rod; you get the idea. Now to make the real bead magic happen, I wrap a few wraps of electrical tape just above the handle of each rod, using the same color tape as the bead!

I have fished with lots of anglers who number their rod holders to identify what lures are in the water. The problem with that system is that when you start moving rods around to change lures, juggle lines, bring in boards etc. the rods can get moved to a different rod holder position and now no one knows what lures are where.



By identifying what is in the water by the “color” of the rod, we can move rods anywhere and the “blue” rod has the same lure, lure color, distance back, etc. no matter what holder it gets moved to. An invaluable piece of info when running 6-10 lines on a charter boat!

I carry a dry erase board in the boat (or use a piece of notebook paper) to keep my lure spread straight and to make it easy to quickly look at my spread and make a decision on changing lures, colors, depths etc. based on the conditions. Each rod is identified the COLOR of the bead and the tape.

Identifying rods this way also works great if you need to fix one, recalibrate the line or any other maintenance issues. I just make a note on my dry erase board, in my phone, or in a notebook. So when I see “red rod lost 100 feet of line” in my notes I know the red rod needs to have line added and be recalibrated. Easy!

Try the “bead”.....a very helpful piece of the trolling puzzle!

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