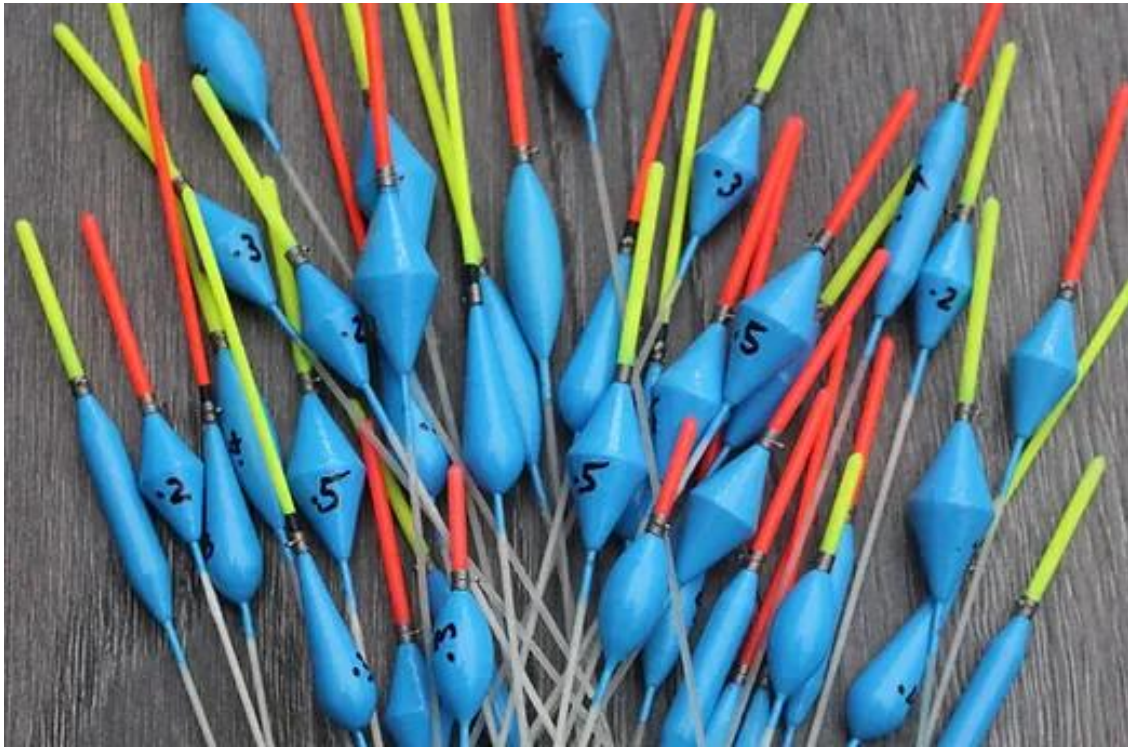


POLE FLOATS:



What is a pole float?

A float designed for use with a **POLE** or **WHIP**. Usually much smaller, lighter, and more sensitive than a conventional float. Commonly made from a **BRISTLE**, an **EYE**, a **BODY**, and a **STEM**, all made from a variety of materials, and for a variety of uses.

What are pole floats made from?

The coloured '**BRISTLE**' part of the float can be made from hollow plastic, solid plastic, cane, or even wire.

Hollow: Probably most common because they use sunlight to almost 'glow', making them very easy to see. They are more bouyant making the thicker hollow tips better for heavier baits.

Solid: Much thinner than a hollow bristle and sometimes difficult to see. These bristles are very sensitive and better for small baits, in cold conditions or when fishing for smaller, shy biting fish.

Cane: Not as common, but still very useful for shy biting fishing. Cane is heavier than plastic making it it more sensitive, but harder to get the shotting right.

Wire: Rarely used now-a-days, but worth a mention. Incredibly hard to shot, but ultra sensitive. Perfect for the coldest days when using tiny baits like **BLOODWORM** or **JOKER** in clear water.

BODY:

The part of the float that gives it bouyancy. Made from either Balsawood or dense foam, float bodies come in a thousand shapes and sizes. The most



common shape a slim 'Rugby ball' shape as show in the picture. Good for most weather conditions and very sensitive, this is the float shape that you will probably use the most. Other shapes worth noting are a 'Diamond' shape for windier conditions and a 'Pear' shape for fishing for big fish in the Margins, around islands or **SNAGS**.

STEM:

The stem is the part of the float that, along with the eye, is used to attach the float to the line and fix it in position. The stem usually passes right through the body of the float and has the eye/bristle fixed to it. The stem is a vital consideration to which float you choose, but we can make it simple.

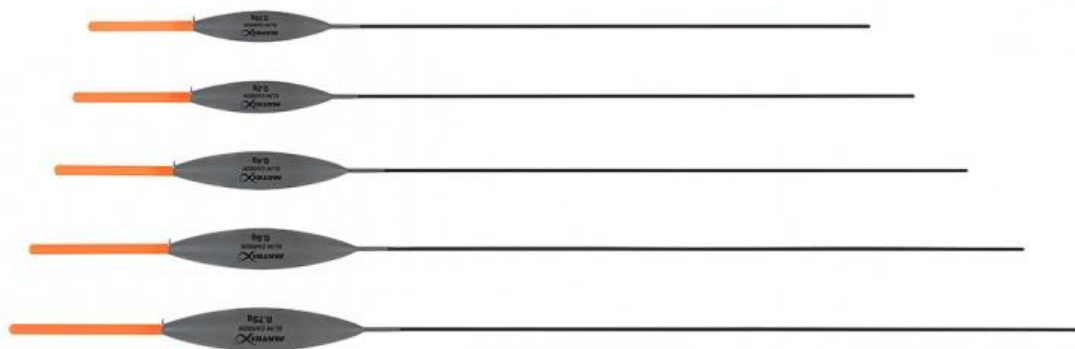
Carbon stem: For most of your fishing, for fishing off the bottom or **ON THE DROP**.

Wire stem: Use a wire stem if; It is windy. The water is deep. There is a strong undertow. If the fish are feeding on the bottom and you want your float to 'ready' quickly as wire floats will set more quickly than a carbon stem. New Titanium stems rarely bend out of shape.

Glassfibre (Glass) stem: If you are fishing for lots of larger fish, or fishing shallow. Glass is a much stronger material than the other two, and rarely bends out of shape (like standard stainless wire) or can snap (like Carbon) under extreme conditions.

EYES:

Made from coiled or twisted wire, through which the line is threaded. The eye can be glued to the stem of the float beneath the bristle, or pushed into the body and glued in place. Eyes mounted to, or around the stem tend to be stronger than those positioned in the float body. Choose carefully.



What size of float should I use?

What size float you choose will depend on the depth of the water and/or the depth you will be fishing at. Things like weather and bait choice will affect things too, but let's keep it simple for now.

Very basically, for every 30cm (One foot) of depth, you need to add 0.1g of weight. So, for a area that is 60cm (two feet) deep, go for a 0.2g float.

0.3g for 90cm (three feet), 0.4g for 1.2m (four feet), and so on.

It is a very basic guide that is not perfect, but it will help you to choose your float a little more wisely.

What if I do not know the depth?

If you do not know the depth or you are at a new venue. Then you can either pop a rig on and hope you have guessed it correctly, or you can ask someone who does know either before you go, or at the venue if there is someone there to ask. Knowledge is power.

How do I attach my float?

This bit SHOULD be done at home.

You will need a selection of **FLOAT SLEEVES** that come in a range of sizes. Find one that fits snugly on the stem of your float, but not too tight. Tight enough so that the float can't move unless you move it.



Cut three pieces about four or five millimetres long.

From the bristle, thread the line down through the eye on the float, then thread on the three sections of float sleeve.

With the line still threaded, push the three sleeves onto the stem of the float in the order they are on the line. Once all are on, position the last one at the bottom of the stem, the first one **1cm below the float body**, and the middle one evenly between the other two.

The 1cm is important to prevent the line from cutting into the body of the float when you move it, if you hook a large fish, or get snagged up. If a Balsa body gets cut, it can sink the float as the wood takes on water.

You should now be able to slide the float on the line without damaging it, but the float should stay put when fishing. If the line goes curly when you move the float, the sleeves are too tight. If the sleeves fall away from the stem when you move the float, the sleeves are too loose.

Look for the Shotting Pattern PDF to see how to position the weights on the line.



Once you have made your 'rig', you will need to store it.

POLE WINDERS will enable you to store and keep your carefully made rigs for as long as you need them. As long as they are kept in your seat box, or out of the sunlight, they should last for a while.

It pays not to reuse a rig too many times, twice max, because of the wear and tear it may receive. Making new rigs is better than losing valuable fish. Keep a rig on the winder for about a year without use. After that, it is better to remove the float and consider tying it on to fresh line.

So, which floats should I buy?

This part is purely personal opinion and is totally up to you.

Anglers will have their favourite floats for many different reasons. But we can make it easier to choose.



For a beginner in most fishing situations, a slim 'F1' style float (above) is perfect. They are sensitive once shotted correctly, stable in all but the most extreme conditions, and strong enough to cope with most species. Most will have a thin hollow bristle, a foam body, and a carbon stem. Use wire stem options if it is windy or the fish are on the bottom, and a glass stem with thicker bristles if you find yourself fishing for larger fish.



For deeper water and/or windier conditions, a 'Diamond' shaped body is a very stable float to use. These floats should have a longer bristle to get the body of the float deeper below the surface, so the float is not affected by waves, '**SKIM**', or '**CHOP**'.



A float for fishing in the **MARGINS** needs to be strong and robust. Either a diamond or 'Pear' shaped float with a thick hollow bristle and a thicker glass or carbon stem will be just right. These floats should also be shorter because the margins will be shallower than the rest of the lake in most cases.

Remember, you are looking at the shape of the floats and the materials they are made from. It doesn't matter which manufacturer's name is on the float, just as long as it works!

The three float patterns above are recommended shapes, but there are a couple more that are worth mentioning.

Shallow floats will come into their own as the weather warms the water and the fish move towards the surface. Because these floats are fished on very short rigs, they need to be as strong as any margin float. Short thick bristled floats with a glass stem work very well. But a classic float for this type of fishing is a **DIBBER** float.



Dumpy little floats with a thick glass or carbon stem have been used for years for shallow fishing and still work well today. Every serious pole angler needs some of these in their collection.

The only other float recommended for the beginner is a **PASTE** float.



Paste floats tend to be quite long. A long glass or carbon stem with a long hollow bristle. Quite often, paste floats will be **SELF-COCKING**. This means that they require no additional shot on the line at all.

There will be another PDF on how paste floats work another time, but these are worth considering as your experience of pole fishing grows.

The size or 'weight' of a float can be complicated to understand at first. Until you have an idea of what float you need for the depth and conditions you are fishing in, it can get a bit confusing. It's a bit like selecting a Golf club... I wouldn't have a clue!

Personally, I like to buy my pole floats in pairs. That way I always have a backup rig should something go wrong. If a float breaks, which they will from time to time, then I only need to replace one at a time.

If you find a float that works for you, get that pattern in the sizes that you feel you will use most often. The Angling Times pole float conversion chart should help.



**POLE FLOAT
CONVERSION CHART**

Pole float size	Weight	Shot equivalent
3 x 10	0.10g	2 x No10
4 x 10	0.15g	3 x No9
4 x 12	0.2g	5 x No10
4 x 14	0.4g	6 x No8
4 x 16	0.5g	8 x No8
4 x 18	0.75g	3 x No4 + 3 x No9
4 x 20	1g	5 x No4
5 x 20	1.25g	6 x No4
6 x 20	1.5g	7 x No4 + 2 x No10

We have only scratched the surface of the world of pole floats and this PDF is already too long! Over the years you will collect many, many pole floats. Some good, some not so good, and you will always have your favourites.

Having the right float for the job will make you a much better angler and, more importantly, make your fishing days more fun...

Glossary:

Chop: A term given to a heavy ripple on the surface of a lake.

Bloodworm: An aquatic larvae of a non-biting Midge. Used for hookbait.

Dibber: A small dome topped float commonly used for fishing shallow.

Joker: Same as Bloodworm, only a smaller variety of Midge. Used for feed, sometimes on the hook.

Margins: Areas around the edges of a body of water and/or around islands.

On the drop: A term given to a bite that occurs as the bait is sinking through the water.

Paste: A soft mixture of a powdered mix and water. Excellent summer bait for Carp.

Pole Float Sleeves: Small silicone tubing with various internal diameters, usually up to around 1mm. Used to attach and fix (pole) floats to line.

Pole Winders: Plastic devices on to which pole rigs are wound and stored. Come to a variety of sizes. 18cm is most common. Match the size of the winder to the size of the float and the depth of the rig.

Self-Cocking: A float that has all the weight it needs to sit correctly in the water without any need for additional weight. Not to be confused with a loaded float. A loaded float will need additional weight.

Skim: A term given to a light ripple on the surface of water.

Snags: Unseen, usually underwater obstacles like rocks, weed beds, and tree roots etc. Occasionally man made.