

**FLOATS FOR ROD AND LINE:
BASIC WAGGLERS:**



There literally thousands of floats to buy for a day's fishing. So, as a newcomer, which one do you attach to your line?

Let's see if we can help you... As usual, a description of items in bold capitals can be found at the end.

Lakes are by far the most common type of venue for fishing. Either commercial, or club lakes. This guide will look at floats for a general style of fishing.

The float you choose should reflect on the weather conditions, the bait you are using, the distance you need to cast, and the fish you wish to catch.

Just to make it more difficult, all the things listed above could change during the day. So, you may need to change your set up too.

To begin, you will often hear the term '**WAGGLER**' being used. It is the term that anglers use for a float that is attached to the line at the bottom end only. River floats are attached to the line top and bottom, but's a PDF for another day...

Rather than start with a float, we're going to start with a gadget. A **FLOAT ADAPTER** is a must when using a Waggler float because it allows you to change the float without the need to break your rig down and starting from scratch.

Made from silicone, they are either small tubes with a flattened end through which a hole is made or a **SWIVEL**. The line is passed through the hole/swivel and the float pushed into the tube.



LOADED floats have weight built into the base and can be fixed in place on the line with **FLOAT STOPS**.

UNLOADED floats have no weight built into them, so you will need to add **SPLIT SHOT** to the line to set the float, fix it in position, and for casting weight.



Each float should have a suggested 'weight' written on them (left). This is how much weight the float needs to **COCK**, or to **SET** it in the water. What size float you need to use will depend on how deep the water is and/or on how far you need to cast it.

The amount float you have showing above the water is vital (right) and will depend on conditions, the distance cast, and on how good your eyes are! But you should always have as much of the float under the water as you can. The less you can see, the more sensitive the float is, the more bites you will see, and the more fish you will catch.



If you are fishing close in (less than 10 metres), you can get away with a 1 Gram float or less.

As a guide, you can add 0.5 grams for every 10 metres you need to cast. It is not bulletproof but, it will help.

I do not want to go into depth too much in this basic guide because we could enter areas that get a little more technical. For the venues (lakes) that the juniors visit, a selection of floats of between 1 gram and 2 grams will more than sufficiently cover all your fishing needs.

Now we have the weight sorted out, what type of float do you need?

Basically, there are just two types of float to use. An **INSERTED** Waggler (left), or a **STRAIGHT** Waggler (right).

The Inserted Waggler has a much thinner top. Being thinner it is much more sensitive than the thicker straight Waggler. The straight Waggler has more buoyancy and can carry larger, heavier baits. It will not be dragged under so easily if you need to lay some line on the bottom in windy conditions, or if there is a strong **UNDERTOW**.

Both floats have their strengths and weaknesses. It's up to you to decide which to use on the day. Start with the Insert and go from there.

Going a step further with sensitivity, some Inserted Wagglers have a much finer top made from a plastic bristle. These floats are almost as sensitive as a pole float. The two colours on the tip makes it easier to see **LIFT BITES**.

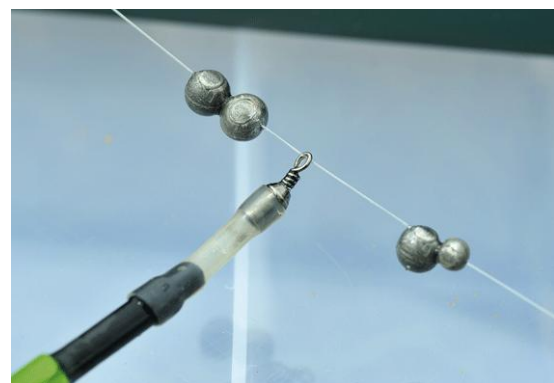


So, how do we fix them to the line?

Because Loaded floats have most of the weight built into them, we only need to add small **DROPPER SHOTS** to set them in the water. We can use Float Stops to fix the float in position on the line (right). You use one either side of the float as shown in the picture or, if you need to cast any distance, you may need two or even three below the float to prevent it from slipping during the cast.



An unloaded float requires the use of split shot to 'lock' it on to the line. Whatever the float says it needs to cock it, put that around the float as shown in the picture. Note that there are equal numbers of shot either side of the float which gives it balance in flight. Little tip, if you are going to do it this way, slide some thin silicone tube onto the line first. You can pinch your shot onto the tube instead of



directly onto the line. This protects the line and will allow the float and shots to be adjusted, if necessary, without with damaging the line.

WARNING! Many floats will lie...

They can either, take less shot than is stated on the float. More often than not, they will need more. If you can, try to set your float up at home or at a session where you have plenty of time. You will want to get this right so the sessions you have can be as successful as possible.

Without favouring one brand over another, there is one range of floats that are very useful. The Drennan Visi Wag series 4 range come in different weights/sizes but, will all use the same shots on the line. This means that you can change the casting weight of your float without adding or subtracting shot and messing with your rig.

There are some shotting patterns at the end of this PDF along with a split shot conversion table.

So, you have your float set up and you are ready to go. How do you know that the float you have painstakingly set up at home is the right size for the job?

You can make this very simple for yourself.

A 1.25g or 1.5g float will cover MOST of your fishing on the waters we visit. If you fish at very close range, drop down to a 1g float. If you need a little more weight for a longer cast, or windy conditions, you can go up to a 1.75g or 2g floats. You can only do this by using adapters unless you really enjoy setting up fishing rods!

The art of Waggler fishing is on the decline thanks to longer, lighter poles and other methods like the Method feeder. But there are days when the fish do not like a pole waved over their heads, and that is when the Waggler comes into its own. You may not get a float rod out that often, but it will always have a place in the angler's rod holdall. Try the Waggler from time to time. You might be surprised at how effective it can be and how much fun it is to use.

GLOSSARY:

Cock (the float): The term used to balance the buoyancy of the float with weights, so a measured amount is still visible above the water.

Dropper Shots: The name given to small split shots positioned on the line below the float. Sometimes known as 'Tell tail shots', droppers will detect the movement caused by a fish as it eats the bait. This is then registered on the float as a bite.

Float Adapter: A small device made from silicone or rubber tube that fits over the end of a float so that it can be easily changed if necessary.

Float stops: Small rubber beads that slip on to the line that anchor a float in place without damaging the line.

Lift Bites: When a fish moves the bottom dropper shot upwards so that the weight of the shot is taken away from the float causing it to rise up in the water.

Set (the float): See 'Cock the float'.

Split Shot: A round weight made from either Lead or Tungsten that has a slot cut into it.

Swivel: A small metal device that will reduce line twist and/or add flexibility to a fishing rig. Can also be used as a quick-change point for line or lures. They come in multiple variations.

Undertow: A current below the surface of the water caused by winds. Usually travels in the opposite direction of the wind.

Waggler: A float that attaches at the bottom end only. Variations include, Straight, Inserted, Bodied, Stepped and Pellet. Some are given their own names like Onions or Zoomers and are far too numerous to write about here!

SHOTTING PATTERNS:

The two images show typical shott patterns for an Unloaded Waggler on the left, and a Loaded Waggler on the right.

Firstly you can see that both floats are set as low as possible in the water for maximum sensitivity, whilst still able to be seen.

Both floats are Inserted Wagglers because they most commonly used. Straight Wagglers will be shotted in a similar way, may be with more dropper shots in the lower part of the rig.

Unloaded: (left)

Around the base of the float you will see a group of large shots know as the bulk or locking shots (a). These make up a large percentage of the weight needed to set the float and will aid casting. Note the gap where the float sits which allows the float to 'fold' on the strike.

Below the Locking shots you can see a small trimming shot (b). This is used if the float needs some fine tuning. (c) shows the No.8 dropper shots spread down the line beneath the float. The last positioned just above the hook link knot. These are spread so they are closer together as they get closer to the hook. This will help to prevent them from tangling in flight.

Loaded: (right)

Because the bulk of the weight needed to set the float is built in, we can use float stops (a) to lock the float in position. Note two stops below the float and one above to prevent it from slipping during the cast.

Like the Unloaded pattern, the droppers (c) are spread down the line in exactly the same way.

All spare shots (b) are grouped beneath the float stops and can be pulled down the line to act as additional droppers if needed.

The shots you will need are **No.11, 10, 9, 8, 6, 4, BB, AA, & SSG**.

You can convert them as follows;

$$2x \text{ No.10} = 1x \text{ No.8}$$

$$2x \text{ No.8} = 1x \text{ No.6}$$

$$2x \text{ No.6} = 1x \text{ No.4}$$

$$2x \text{ No.4} = 1x \text{ BB}$$

$$2x \text{ BB} = 1x \text{ AA}$$

$$2x \text{ AA} = 1x \text{ SSG}$$

Also,

$$2x \text{ No.11} = 1x \text{ No.9}$$

