

How to Cast an Open-Faced Spinning Reel

By Dennis Segura

Spinning reels are designed to hold the line, cast and then retrieve the line easily. Reels come in three types. The “closed–face” push-button reel has a covering over the line and is usually best for beginners. The second type of spinning reel is the “bait-casting reel,” which requires a skilled angler to use. The third type of spin-cast reel is the “open face” spinning reel, which is the most common reel used by anglers. By reviewing this tutorial, you can learn how to use an open-faced spinning reel before getting out to the water. Remember, it’s best to practice as much as possible until you get proficient with your rod and reel.

Remember:

- Never practice casting with a hook tied to the end of your line.
- Use a casting plug or a small sinker attached to the end of your line to practice.
- Practice looking behind you and both sides before every cast; you do not want to hook someone when the time comes for you to cast out in the water.
- Don’t forget to look up as well; there might be a tree close by, and you want to avoid wrapping your line around a branch.

STEPS FOR CASTING WITH AN OPEN-FACE SPINCASTING REEL

1. Get a proper grip on your rod with your dominant hand and hold the rod horizontally. Your rod always stays in your dominant casting hand. Remember, the reel goes under the rod.
2. Everyone has a slightly different grip depending on hand size and comfort. Most anglers prefer holding the rod with two fingers in front of the reel foot and two fingers behind while always leaving the index finger for the line.
 - a. If your grip feels better and more balanced between other fingers, that is fine. Children can grip the rod with all four fingers in front of the reel foot. Find the grip that is most comfortable for you.
3. Leave six to 12 inches of line hanging from your rod tip. If you have a sinker or bobber attached to the line, it should be six to 12 inches from the rod tip instead.
4. Turn the bail around clockwise manually so the line roller is near your index finger. Your index finger of your casting hand should now be able to grip the line.
 - a. If your index finger still has trouble reaching the line easily, try adjusting your grip.
 - b. The line roller has to be in the proper position in order for your index finger to reach the line before you can make a cast.

5. Pull the line off the roller with your index finger while holding it against the rod's grip. If you let go of the line at this point, it will simply fall straight down to the ground. If this happens, simply reel the line in until you have six to 12 inches from the rod tip and start again.
6. While holding the rod in the horizontal position, with your index finger still holding the line, use your free hand to flip the reel's bail up. This will allow the line to come off the reel when you make your cast.
 - a. Ensure you hold the line between your fingertip and the first joint of your index finger, so it releases easily without pulling or stopping the line when you cast.
7. With your non-dominant free hand, grab the bottom of the reel handle. This will give you a little more action in your rod to make a good cast. It is best to use a two-hand grip to cast an open face reel.
8. Face the target and point your rod tip to the area you want to cast to.
9. In one smooth motion, bring the rod back and vertically just over your head and with a forward throwing motion, release the line with your index finger as your arm is at 45 degrees or just over your shoulder. This step will take repeated casting practice before you hit the water to get the timing down, so do not get discouraged.

POSSIBLE CASTING PROBLEMS:

- a. If the line goes straight up in the air, you let go of the line too early. Try again and let go of the line just a split second later.
 - b. If the line goes straight down in front of you, the line was released too late. Try again and let go of the line a split second sooner.
 - c. If you cast and no line comes out, then you forgot to open the bail.
10. As soon as the lure/bait hits the target area, use your non-dominant hand to close the bail quickly. Now you can transfer your free hand to the reel handle and start reeling in the line if using a lure or keep the line tight if using bait.
- Why use your hand to close the bail?
- a. If you cast your line in the water and start reeling the line in to close the bail, loops and tangles will occur. It is always the best practice to use your free hand to close the bail immediately.
 - b. Another reason to immediately close your bail with your free hand as soon as the bait/lure hits the water is you can now concentrate on your lure and retrieve without worrying about tangles.

THE PARTS OF A SPINNING REEL AND THEIR FUNCTION



Reel Foot – The reel foot is attached to the rod on the reel seat and connects the rod to the reel. It is important that your reel fits your rod and that the reel foot is secured correctly, so both parts stay firmly together. You do not want your reel coming off the reel seat of the rod after a cast.

Reel Handle – The reel handle is rotated in a forward motion by the free hand to retrieve the line back to the rod after the cast. Most handles can be switched to either the right- or the left-hand side, depending on the angler's dominant hand.

- If you are right-handed, the handle should be on the left side of the reel.
- If you are left-handed, the handle should be on the right side of the reel.

Reel Body – The reel body or frame holds all the reel's parts together. In most spinning reels, the body is made up of the support arm, foot and gearbox housing. Most reels are made out of graphite, aluminum or plastic.

Anti-reverse Switch – The anti-reverse is a reel feature that engages the drag and prevents it from turning backward. This is an important feature of spinning reels, especially in bass fishing, where the fish are more likely to fight and pull out the line.

Bail – The bail is designed to help move the line on and off the spool. Bail arms are thin metal pieces that are attached to the reel body itself. The bail arm can either be flipped

up by hand to allow the line to come off the reel or flipped down by hand to stop the line from coming out of the reel for the retrieve.

Line Spool – The spool is the main part of the reel that holds the line. The line is kept in place on the spool by being wrapped around its axis. Reels usually indicate the line capacity in yards and test (the line size required for that particular reel). You can check for your reel's specifications on the reel itself. For example, if you see "Line Capacity Lb./yd: 12/240," this indicates a 12-pound test line and a maximum of 240 yards of line on your reel.

- Remember, using your free hand to immediately close the bail as soon as the lure hits the water will save you serious line problems.

Drag Adjustment – Drag adjustment is a button on the front of the spinning reel that can easily be adjusted by the angler to increase or decrease the amount of friction, or drag, on a line. The drag adjustment also prevents fish, especially bass and large trout, from pulling your line further out into the water.

Line Roller - The line roller is attached to one end of the bail and is the contact point where your line meets the reel as it is retrieved from a cast. The line roller helps eliminate line twists and forces the line to be wound around the spool correctly.

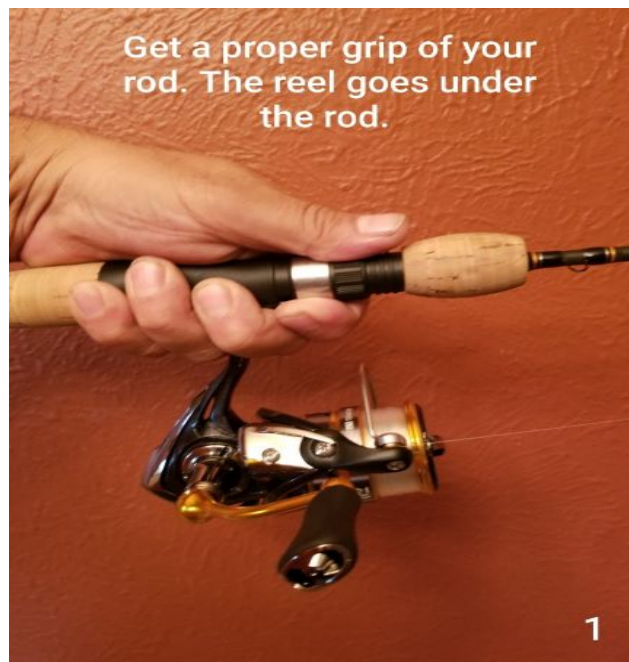
Remember, before you cast, make sure your grip is comfortable and turn the bail clockwise, so the line roller is directly under your casting hand's index finger.

Now you are ready to practice casting an open face spinning reel. Find a spacious area to practice, such as a park or an empty school ground, and remember, use a casting plug or a lightweight sinker attached to the end of your line. Never practice casting with a hook attached.

Accuracy is always one of the most important parts of a successful cast. Practice casting at targets such as hula hoops, small cones or anything you feel would make a great target. Place your target at different distances and become proficient at casting before you go to the water. Good luck and good fishing.

STEPS TO CASTING AN OPEN-FACE SPINNING REEL

Step # 1. Get a proper grip.



Step # 2. Leave line hanging 6–12 inches from the rod tip.



Step # 3. Problem- What if my finger cannot secure the line?



Step # 4. Turn the Line Roller clockwise to place it under your finger.



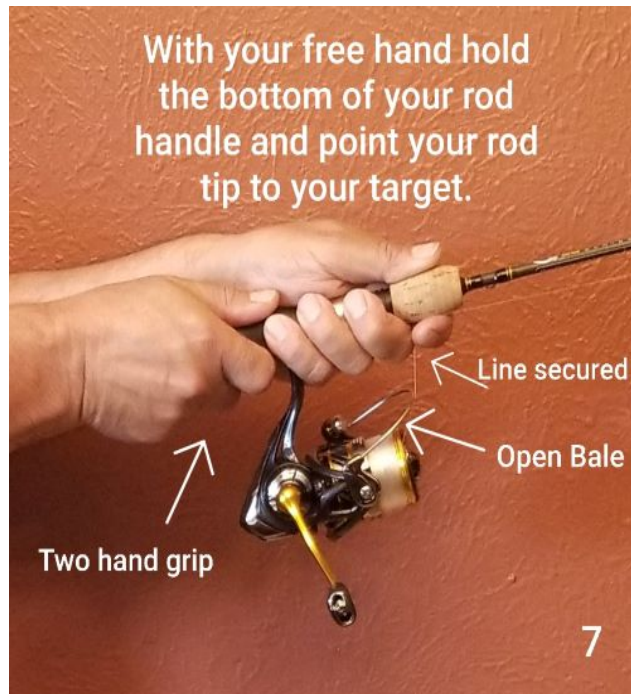
Step # 5. Secure the line with your index finger.



Step # 6. Continue to secure the line and open the bail with your free hand.



Step # 7. Place the freehand on the bottom of the handle for a two-hand grip.

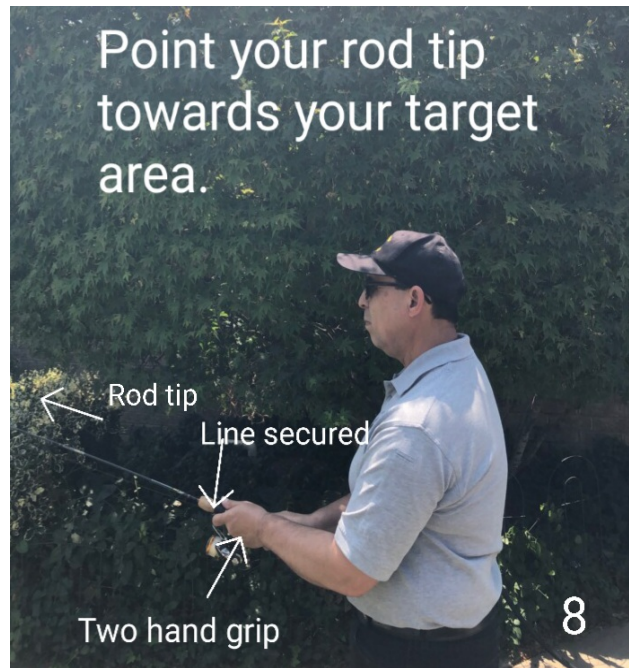


Step # 7-a. At this point, space your finger holding the line away from the rod handle.



Now you are ready to cast. Remember to space your feet shoulder-width apart, face your target area with your body and make your cast in one smooth motion.

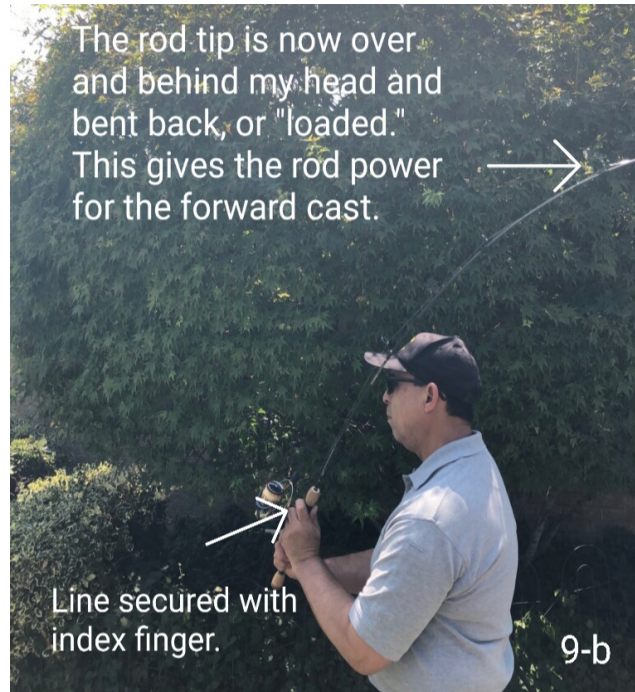
Step # 8. Point your rod tip towards your target.



Step # 9-a. Bring your rod back vertically over your shoulder, just past your head.



Step # 9-b. The rod tip is behind my head and is "loaded" for the forward cast.

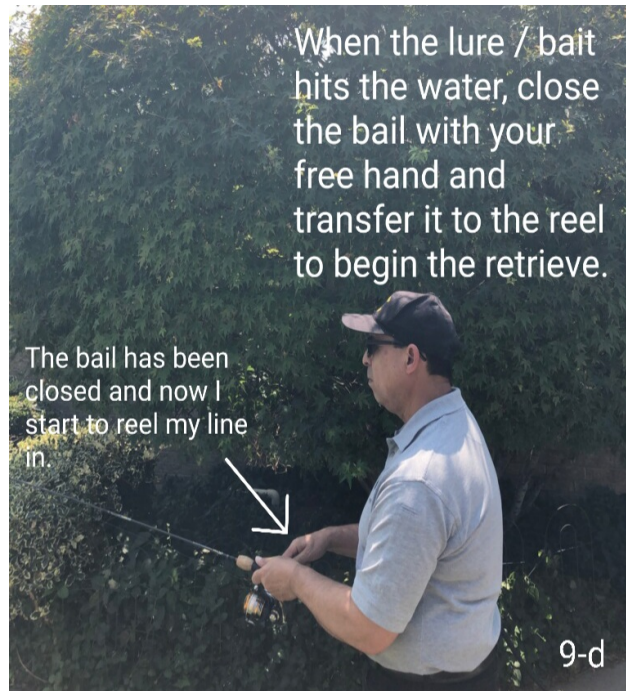


Step # 9-c. Then, use a forward throwing motion, release the line on your finger when the rod is at 45 degrees or just over your shoulder, and follow-through.



Remember, step 9-c is all about timing. It will take a bit of practice to allow the line to slip off your finger at the right time to hit the target, but it will become easier the more you do it.

Step # 9-d. As soon as the lure/bait hits the water, use your non-dominant hand to close the bail quickly. Then, transfer your free hand to the reel handle and begin retrieving if using a lure or tightening your line if using bait.



Take your time when casting, and only practice with a casting plug or small sinker. Always look behind you, to each side as well as above. Make this a part of every cast, and you will avoid hooking someone or getting tangled in a tree.

THE CAST



Point to target and open the bail.



With line secured, start the back cast.



Back cast.



End of back cast just over my head



The front cast is over my shoulder.



The line has come off my index finger.



I follow through on my cast.



I close the bail and start to reel in.

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