

## Practicing Fly Casting to Teach Yourself

We are asked about how to correctly practice fly-casting quite often. Of course following the six essentials during casting is the answer. However, once the casting essentials are known and understood the angler needs a way to gauge how well they are doing and the best method to engage practicing the fly cast. The best answer is to false cast with the length of line that you can control and look at both forward and back cast loops. If you can make both loops the same then your casting will soon improve. Continue this method increasing the length of aerialized line in small increments until you can easily cast and control 40 to 50 feet of line. Often the key to better casting is looking at your back-cast to see how well it matches the loop on the forward cast anyway.

It is said that your forward-cast and back-cast should be a mirror image of each other when making an overhead cast. Many fly fishermen have problems with accuracy, distance and loop formation and often their problems are related to a poor back-cast. These back-cast problems are generally associated with large open loops, top and bottom legs of the back-cast loop being in different planes and poor stops at the end of the back-cast. When the back-cast suffers from one or more of these deficiencies then the forward cast that follows is very likely to be poor.

If the back-cast is made correctly then the fly line is unrolled directly behind the caster forming a straight line. When the following forward cast is started all the mass of the fly line is accelerated and the rod is subsequently loaded or bent allowing for a good forward cast. On the other hand, when the back-cast suffers from poor loop formation then the entire mass of the line is unavailable to load the rod during the early stages of the forward cast because the poor loop that was formed in the back-cast must be straightened before the rod can load properly. When this occurs it always affects the quality of the forward cast. If you add a little wind to the process then the delivery cast is likely to get even worst.

So it often makes good sense to look at the quality of your back-cast and practice to make it look as close to your forward cast as possible. However, if your forward cast also has poor loop formation then both casts will require some improvement and visit to the Atlanta Fly Fishing School may be in order.

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