

The Opinion Poll

It's an extension of The Rotary Letter if you like, but here you control the content –



The debate topics...

Chris Keenan from South London asks:
“Do you change the weight of your lead much and if you do, why?”



[1] Lewis Read

I probably change my lead size more now than ever before. I prefer to use the smallest lead size I need to get the hookbait where I want it, as this will mean that the disturbance caused by casting will be reduced. With practice you can still 'feel' a 1oz lead hit the lakebed, so you still get that vital feedback about the nature of the lakebed your hookbait has landed on. Make sure your hook points are absolutely razor sharp and you won't have any problems.

[2] Shaun Harrison

Yes, I change my lead weights a lot and looking around I tend to use smaller leads than most. I basically use leads from 1oz and a fraction (keeping it legal) and increase the size simply to reach the fish. I firmly believe that the noise from leads going into the swim is one of the main carp frighteners these days so tend to use the smallest I think I can get away with. I also know this gives the carp a few problems too. Most carp anglers I see use leads around the 3oz size. This gives the fish a lot of leeway to detect something is wrong and eject the hookbait without dislodging the lead so the indicator doesn't move and the angler is unaware he/she has even had an inquiry. Smaller leads move far easier – thus indicator activity signalling something has occurred.

Graham Kirk from Ipswich asks:
“How about shape? When does that change?”



The critical relationship between rig mechanics and lead shape is extremely complex. It all changes if you're using slack lines or pin tight lines. When I fish hard spots on venues that allow bait boats it's flat in-lines, but prefer a long Zipp style 'Torpedo Distance' lead for helicopter rigs and Chod Rigs, or dumpy style pear leads for short/medium range and 'Ranger' distance leads for longer range in 3oz plus on lead clips.

For years all I carried was dumpy pear swivel leads in different sizes as these give a much quicker and more effective jolt to the carp than the longer style leads. In-line leads are even better for this with the main weight being at the hooklink end but I never liked the fact that they are stuck on your line. Since realising I can get in-line leads to easily pop-off the swivel by passing the line over them rather than through them and tying to the front eye of the swivel I have found myself using in-lines a fair bit. The only time I ever use long casting style swivel leads is when I am trying to gain those extra precious few yards.

Mark Jackson from Nottingham asks:
“What about the coating of the lead? Some like the matt finish others like a textured one, but which is right and which blends in best?”



If I can get my lead to blend in with the lakebed by using a finish that is natural looking or a close colour match, then this is a no brainer of a decision! All the little steps we take to improve the camouflage of all the individual components of our terminal tackle add up to an improved set-up that is less likely to rouse the carp's suspicions that there is something amiss – and that they are being angled for.

Guess I must be different on this one; my preference is for un-coated leads. I do leave them weathering in the garden for a fair period before using them to dull them down. Alternately you can easily speed this process up by attaching several to a line and throwing them into silt overnight. I did use to paint the odd one, matching up the colours of what I was fishing over from the vast Humbrol range found in anorak type model shops, but again they need plenty of weathering afterwards to remove the paint smell. I could never see the point in making the lead bigger still by adding a coating to them, this is only going to increase the noise on entry into the water and probably cut the distance down that they will cast. Possibly only by tiny percentages, but it's these tiny percentages I try and gain back in all aspects of my angling – eventually they add up to a few percentages! Having said that however, my mate Jamie Simpson has been making some superb leads utilising dried water plants (weed) and making them a different shape to normal – I have been using these on one particularly clear water I'm fishing.

Your turn

Got a set of burning questions you want answered by our panel of angling experts? Send them to editorial@carpology.net