

Best Practice Guide

The Canary Islands are home to a number of endangered sharks and rays, especially the angel shark. This guide has been developed with the sportfishing community to increase the probability of these animals surviving when they are returned to the water.

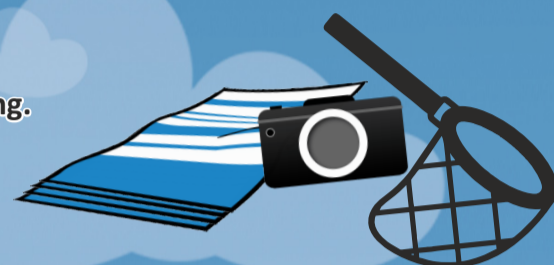


REMEMBER that under EU Legislation (40/2013 order ARM/2689/2009) you are prohibited to catch the following shark and ray species: angel shark, butterfly ray, oceanic manta ray, guitar fish, white skate, round stingray, thresher shark, hammerhead shark, basking shark, porbeagle, great white shark, silky shark, oceanic whitetip shark. **If any are accidentally caught, please follow the best-practice guide and release them immediately.**



1. PREPARATION

- Have your camera, landing net and any equipment you use to unhook the shark ready on the boat before casting. Make sure the crew know what role they will play.
- Reason: To reduce unnecessary delays when the shark is being unhooked



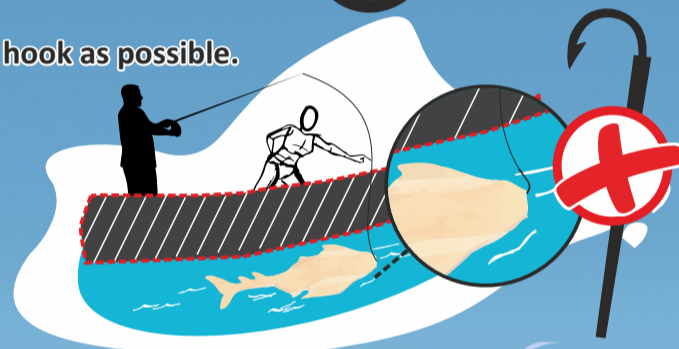
2. FISHING TACKLE

- Use always circle hooks. If these are unavailable, use barbless brass hooks or flatten the barb down on the hooks you use.
- Reason: To reduce the chance of gut hooking so that it is easier to unhook the shark
- Use a strong line
- Reason: To reduce the time it takes to reel in the shark and thus reduce tackle loss



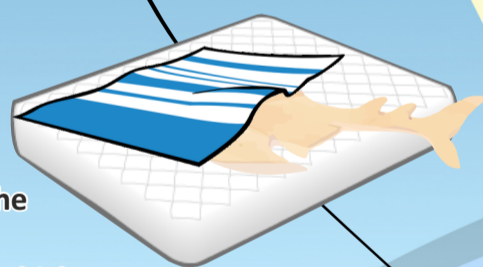
3. UNHOOKING

- Always try to unhook the shark at the side of the boat. If you have to cut the leader, cut it as close to the hook as possible.
- Reason: To reduce stress on the shark as the water supports its internal organs
- If you need to land the shark to unhook it safely, use a large landing net to bring it onto the boat. Never use a gaff.
- Reason: To support the internal organs and ensure no injury is caused



4. LANDING (if necessary)

- If the shark is brought onto the boat, place it on a cool, wet, soft surface (e.g. a wet towel). Never put a fish straight onto the deck.
- Reason: To reduce stress on the shark and stop it thrashing
- Place a towel soaked in seawater over the eyes of the shark
- Reason: To keep it calm and stop it thrashing



5. HANDLING (if necessary)

- Never hold the shark just by its tail, its fins or by the gills. You need to support the ventral surface.
- Reason: To reduce pressure on its internal organs which can lead to death



6. RELEASING

- Release the shark as soon as possible after unhooking.
- Reason: To reduce the chances of mortality after release
- When releasing a shark, never throw it over the side of the boat, carefully lower the shark into the water facing the tide or waves
- Reason: Forces oxygen through its gills so that it can quickly swim away

7. REPORTING

To further help our science and conservation project, please submit sightings and photos of sharks and rays to our online database:

www.angelsharkproject.com

We use this information to better understand and conserve these animals.

