

Casting Reference Card

The Joe Humphreys' Fly Fishing Stream School - Inspired by the Methods of Joe Humphreys

CASTING QUICK REFERENCE CARD

The 5 Humphreys Casts

The 5 Casts at a Glance

Cast	When to Use	Key Mechanic	Common Mistake
Short Stroke	Open water, most situations	Thumb squeeze at stop	Too much arm, not enough wrist
Roll Cast	Backcast blocked	D-loop anchor loads rod	Lifting too much line
Bow-and-Arrow	No backcast room (brush)	5-step, simultaneous release	Hand on hook - SAFETY RISK
Tuck Cast	Nymphing, deep/fast	High stop, nymph kicks under	Stop too low, too gentle
Downer-Upper Cast	Plunge pools below	Sharp downward stop	Following through (rod drops)

Joe's 3 Rules of Casting

Casting Into the Wind: Drift the rod further forward before the stroke. Use wrist - not arm. Keep the rod level and right into the wind. The back two fingers pull; the thumb pushes down. Do not dump the rod tip.

Distance Secret: Climb the angle on the back cast - stop the rod high and wait. Feel the rod load before making the forward stroke. 'You can feel it right down to your casting hand.' Many casters fail at distance because they rush the forward stroke before the rod has ever loaded. Wait. Feel it. Then wrist.

"Wrestling and fly fishing? They're both physical sports. Secondly, the technique is so important. There's technique and smarts involved. You have to have great fly control so that the fly will float perfectly, drag-free." - Joe Humphreys

1. "If the fish can't see the fly, it doesn't matter how pretty your cast is."
2. "Short and sharp beats long and lazy every time on a brushy stream."
3. "Casting is a means to an end. The end is a fish."

Strike Indicator Colors

- Chartreuse/Yellow: Best for most conditions

- Orange: Low light (early morning/evening)
- White: Overcast days, gray sky
- Rule: Use smallest indicator still visible

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The Short Stroke - Step-by-Step

(The Most Important Cast)

STEP 1	Grip: Thumb on TOP. Firm but relaxed. Like holding a hammer.
STEP 2	Pick-up: Smoothly lift line off water. Accelerate as you go UP.
STEP 3	Back Stop: Abrupt stop at 1 o'clock. SQUEEZE THUMB. Feel line straighten.
STEP 4	Pause: Brief. Let line fully extend. Feel the rod load.
STEP 5	Forward Stroke: Accelerate forward.
STEP 6	Forward Stop: Stop at 11 o'clock. SQUEEZE THUMB. Tight loop forms.
STEP 7	Follow-through: Lower rod tip toward water. Feed line into drift.

Bow-and-Arrow Cast - 5 Critical Steps

Master this for tight spaces!

1. Pinpoint your target BEFORE you grab anything
2. Determine distance and loop the line
3. Keep your hand ABOVE the fly (grab LEADER, NOT hook) - SAFETY!
4. Wrap 4 fingers for grip
5. Breathe, then release all contact points simultaneously

Remember: Casting is Practice

Practice before the season. Tie yarn to paracord and practice in your yard. Master the short stroke first. Tight loops = accuracy. Accuracy = fish.