

New Florida Shark Fishing Regulations

What you Need to Know

Rules Effective July 1, 2019



Why were the regulations revised? The new recreational shark regulations were established to standardize and improve recreational shark handling practices, facilitate the collection of important information and increase the survival rates of sharks that are released. The regulations will help ensure the sport of shark fishing can continue by minimizing conflicts between shoreline shark anglers and the millions of people who use Florida's beaches for other activities.

Who is required to have the new Shore-based Shark Fishing Permit?

- Any angler who is 16 years of age or over who is targeting sharks from shore.
- Any angler (16 years or over) who is targeting any species of fish from the shoreline if:
 - using a metal leader longer than 4 feet **or**
 - using a fighting belt or harness **or**
 - fishing with a hook larger than 1.5 inches across the gap at the widest point **and** deploying that baited hook by any means other than casting.
- Anglers under the age of 16 who are targeting sharks from shore and are not fishing with a person who has the shark-fishing permit are **not** required to have the permit but **are** required to take the Shark-Smart Educational Course and carry their "Certificate of Completion" while shark fishing from shore.

Shore-based Shark-Smart Educational Course Instructions

- To take the educational course, **which must be completed before getting the permit**, visit MyFWC.com/SharkCourse.
- If you do not already have a user profile, create a new account by providing your name, email address, and login credentials.
- After logging in or creating your account, select "Shore-based Shark-Smart Fishing" from the list of courses.
- View all four educational modules and pass the quiz with a score of 100 percent to receive your Certificate of Completion with unique identification code.

Getting your Shore-based Shark Fishing Permit

- If you are under 16, keep your Certificate of Completion with you to fish for sharks from shore unless fishing with someone who already has the shark-fishing permit.

- If you are 16 or older, keep the unique identification code on your Certificate of Completion and sign in at **GoOutdoorsFlorida.com**.
- Click “Purchase a License.”
- Navigate to the Shore-based Shark Fishing Permit and Click “Add to Cart.”
- When prompted, type in the unique identification code and confirm the selection.
- Print a copy of the permit or store the permit on the **Fish|Hunt FL mobile app**.
- Note that this permit is only available online at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com.

What are the rules on chumming?

Chumming is prohibited when targeting or harvesting **sharks or any other species** from the beach or while wading near the beach.

What are the new gear requirements?

- **Hooks:** New rules require all persons targeting or harvesting sharks (from shore or vessel) to use non-stainless steel, non-offset, circle hooks when using natural bait.
- **Cutting Tools:** Any person targeting or harvesting sharks (from shore or vessel) must also be in possession of a cutting device that is capable of quickly cutting the hook or leader.

What is the daily recreational bag limit for sharks?

One shark per person with a maximum of two sharks per vessel even if more than two anglers are on board.

What are the rules for prohibited species of sharks?

27 species of shark are classified as “prohibited” and cannot be harvested or possessed from Florida waters.

- Prohibited sharks must not be harmed or removed from Florida waters. The entire length of the shark including the gills must remain in the water during the release process. The head of the shark may be quickly lifted above the water to facilitate hook/tackle removal only.
- Hooks should be removed if this can be accomplished quickly and without further injury to the shark. If the hook cannot be quickly removed, the hook should be cut (with bolt cutters for example) or the leader should be cut as close to the hook as possible with cable cutters or another cutting device. Make sure that you have suitable cutting tools on hand and that you know how to use them.
- Prohibited sharks must be released as quickly as possible without delaying the release process for measuring, tagging, photographs, etc.

For additional information:

- Troubleshooting access to the educational module: email Elearning@myfwc.com.
- Division of Marine Fisheries Management at 850-487-0554 or Saltwater@MyFWC.com
- Visit: MyFWC.com/Marine and click on “Recreational Regulations” and “Sharks.”