



Tips for **setting shrimp traps** and **not losing your gear**

Flags and Sticks on Buoys are Optional - These are often used to identify your trap visually from a distance where many similar buoys are grouped.



- 1 Include Contact Information** - Full name and address is required on the buoy and it must be legible. Phone number is recommended. Shrimp buoys are required to be yellow. Adding an optional trailer buoy will help you locate your primary buoy in stronger currents.



- 2 Always Attach Buoys with Rounded End Towards the Trap** - Attaching with the flat end towards the trap creates more drag and snags on floating debris.

- 3 Use Sinking Lines (Best Option, also called Leaded Line) or Add Weight to Lines** - Propellers can sever a line floating on the surface. Floating line will increase the chance of entanglement with floating debris.

- 4 Minimize Line Drag** - Avoid using lines with large diameters, particularly those greater than 5/16 inch. These create more drag in a current and can pull lighter traps away from where they are set.

- 5 Use Escape Cord** - Biodegradable cord made of cotton (or other natural fiber) will degrade and reduce the number of shrimp wasted if the pot is lost. It is required on all shellfish pots.

Other Recommendations

- **Know the Water Depth** - The easiest way to lose a pot is to drop one in water deeper than the length of line attached. Remember that tide changes will alter your water depth, so plan for the deepest water at your location. Use a line that is 1/3 longer than the maximum water depth to prevent losing a trap.
 - **Watch Your Pots if Possible** - Stay close to shrimp pots to ensure they are all accounted for at the end of the day.
 - **Do Not Use Empty Containers as Buoys** - It is illegal because their shape may increase drag and they can fill with water and sink.
 - **Avoid Setting Traps in Areas of High Risk** - This includes waters with heavy vessel traffic or where other fishing gear or floating debris exists.
- 6 Add Extra Weights to Shrimp Pots** - Even more important for shrimping because often the depth fished is greater than crab. May require adding 10 to 30 pounds of weight to keep the trap from moving in strong currents.

