

Learning to Cast with the Opposing Arm

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Now that you're more familiar with the parts of the cast and proficient in your casting, I would like you to consider learning to cast with your "opposing arm". In other words, learning to cast with your left arm for right-handed casters and right arm for left-handed casters.

What are some reasons why this may be beneficial?

1. If you're fishing for long periods, your primary arm may tire. If you can only cast with one arm, you may have to end your day sooner than desired. If you are able to cast with your opposing arm, you'll extend your fishing time and have more fun.
2. Pretend you're on your favorite stream and spot a nice 5-pound trout under some limbs in front of you and there is brush or limbs preventing you from making a horizontal cast with your primary arm. You may be able to get to it using your opposing arm.
3. If you aspire to become an instructor or you simply wish to teach a friend or family member to cast, their primary arm may be the equivalent to your opposing arm. You, therefore, may be able to relate to their needs better if you can cast with either arm.

Now, I'm not going to suggest you need to cast as well with your opposing arm as you can with your primary arm, as I certainly can't, but it will pay dividends in the future if you can become somewhat proficient.

How do we do this?

1. We can use the same techniques we learned using our primary arm.

- a. Position our rod tip touching the ground with 30' of line straightened out from the tip, our wrist bent down and the rod butt touching our forearm
- b. Slowly begin lifting the rod tip until the end of the line (where the leader is attached) begins to lift from the water's surface and, in one continuous backcast motion
- c. Begin raising your forearm and elbow while Accelerating to a stop making a "Power Snap" (straightening your wrist creating a 30-45-degree angle with your rod butt in relation to your forearm). Then
- d. Pausing to allow the line to unroll. Once unrolled,
- e. Begin lowering your elbow and forearm while accelerating to a stop making a Power Snap (bending your wrist down, closing the rod butt against your forearm) and
- f. Follow through, lowering your rod tip, following the line as it falls

2. Pantomiming

- a. Same as above, practicing the parts of the cast using your opposing arm *without* a rod

3. Mirroring

- a. Practice the parts of the cast without a rod with the opposing arm mirroring the movements of your primary arm while pantomiming
- b. Practice the parts of the cast without a rod with the opposing arm mirroring the movements of your primary arm with a rod
- c. Practice the parts of the cast with the opposing arm *with* a rod mirroring the movements of your primary arm *without* a rod
- d. Practice the parts of the cast *with a rod in both hands* with the opposing arm mirroring the movements of your primary arm. When doing so, I recommend tilting the arms away from your body, as you would when making a roll cast, to prevent your lines from tangling.

All these techniques will help you become proficient casting with your opposing arm. I have found the fourth technique ("d" Mirroring with a rod in each hand) to work well and seem easier and more natural. There appears to be less thought required to follow the parts of the cast and their timing, making the process easier.

Once you have become proficient using those techniques, try this:

With a rod in each hand, try making the backcast with one rod while making the forward cast with the other.

Casting two rods at once may appear as a trick and, therefore, useless. But, what I have found is that, besides teaching you to cast with your opposing arm, it helps to develop your co-ordination, timing and left-brain functionality. ENJOY!