

How to Fish Responsibly in Sweden's Largest Lake



VÄNERN

Enjoy Fishing in Lake Vänern!

In Lake Vänern, you are allowed to fish with handheld gear without a fishing license, as long as you follow the current fishing regulations. As an angler, you can also take several steps to promote sustainable sport fishing over time.

In this brochure, you will find tips on responsible fishing, how to handle and release fish properly, and where to find more information about fishing in Lake Vänern.



Report your catch to
FångstDataBanken



Preparation

Good planning and preparation are key to a successful fishing trip. Check in advance which fishing regulations apply and whether there are protected areas or bird sanctuaries in the places you intend to fish. Around Lake Vänern, several tackle shops can offer local advice on fishing spots and suitable baits.

Protected Species, Areas, and Seasons in Lake Vänern

Wild salmon and trout are protected and must be released immediately—without photographing, weighing, or measuring. Hatchery-reared salmon and trout can be identified by their missing adipose fin (the small fin on the back near the tail).

- Protected areas for salmon, trout, and zander exist in Vänern. For zander, these apply from April 25 to May 25. Full details are available at www.svenskafiskeregler.se.
- Fishing for asp is prohibited in all inflowing streams to Vänern from April 1 to May 31.
- It is forbidden to fish for or keep eel.
- Fishing for signal crayfish is only permitted for property rights owners or those with a specific personal license.

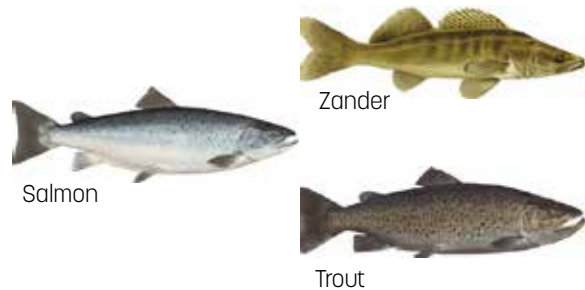
Catch and Release

Releasing fish helps protect both the fish populations and the fishery. This practice has become increasingly important in recent years and is now a key part of modern sport fishing and fisheries management. Success depends on preparation and avoiding bleeding, air exposure, and unnecessary handling.

Why Release Fish?

Pike, zander, perch, salmon, and trout are popular sport fish and play vital roles in the ecosystem. Larger fish are especially important for reproduction—they produce more eggs, which are larger and more nutrient-rich.

- Catch and release supports sustainable fish populations.
- It contributes to responsible fisheries management.
- It helps maintain fishing tourism and long-term angling opportunities.



Size and Catch Limits in Lake Vänern

| Species | Minimum Size | Catch Limit |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Hatchery-reared salmon & trout | 60 cm | 3 per angler per day |
| Zander | 45 cm | - |



More information about fishing rules in Vänern:
www.svenskafiskeregler.se



Tips and Recommendations for Gentle Catch and Release

- » Use tackle suited to the size of the fish you aim to catch.
- » Be prepared with a rubber-mesh net, pliers, an unhooking mat, weighing sling, and camera if needed.
- » Set the hook promptly to avoid deep hooking.
- » Keep the fight short and land the fish as quickly as possible.
- » Use fewer hooks and barbless hooks whenever possible.
- » If you can, unhook the fish while it's still in the water and minimize time above the surface.
- » If you must handle the fish, place it on a soft, wet surface—not directly on the ground or boat floor. Always wet your hands and the surface first.
- » Use pliers or forceps to remove the hook.
- » If a fish is deeply hooked, cut the hook shank quickly to minimize injury or bleeding.
- » Avoid unnecessary handling, weighing, or photographing.
- » If weighing is necessary, always use a weighing sling or large bag—never weigh a fish vertically on the scale.
- » Support the fish under its belly when handling.
- » After release, hold the fish gently in the net until it swims away on its own.
- » Avoid catch and release fishing for salmon, trout, and pike during high water temperatures.
- » Golden rule: Handle all fish as gently and as quickly as possible.



Fishing with Care and Responsibility

Releasing fish allows for sustainable, long-term sport fishing. But remember – the future of Vänern's fishing depends on your personal responsibility.

What Else Can We Do?

Knowing and respecting fishing regulations is, of course, essential for sustainable sport fishing. But beyond the rules, there are many other things every angler can do to make sport fishing more sustainable and responsible.

- Only keep as much fish as you plan to eat or make use of.
- Release fish carefully using proper equipment and technique. Always wet your hands and the unhooking mat, and keep the fish in the water as much as possible.
- Respect bird protection areas and avoid fishing there during closed periods.
- Keep nature clean—don't litter, and pick up any plastic or other debris you find.
- Avoid fishing during spawning season.
- Report your catches to the Catch Data Bank.

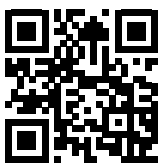
Support Our Work with a Contribution!

Support Laxfond Vänern by donating to fisheries management and the restocking of salmon and trout in Lake Vänern.



123-208 52 80





Learn more about fishing in Lake Vänern at:
www.lakevanern.se



LÄNSSTYRELSEN
VÄSTRA GÖTALANDS LÄN



Länsstyrelsen
Värmland



Medfinansieras av
Europeiska unionen