

## **How many do you need?**

When it comes to rod and reels, how many do you really need? I'm sure many anglers have heard that question, usually from someone who may not be that into fishing, and especially after they have gazed at a wall or ceiling completely covered with rod and reels.

If we started fishing at a young age, we had only a single rod and reel, and that's all we needed. Sometimes it wasn't even a rod and reel, but a limber branch with a length of monofilament tied to the end. For years we got by with just that one. And we caught fish. Somewhere along the way, as our passion for the sport increased and our skill level improved, we felt the need for more. Two became three and three became four and so on.

Old or broken rods were replaced, although usually not completely discarded in case one was needed for "parts". Eventually, our rod and reels numbered in the double digits. The justification for having more than one was efficiency. It was easier to pick up another rod already rigged than to re-tie.

How many rod and reels we need depends somewhat on the different types of fishing we enjoy and the species we target. Unfortunately, when it comes to rod and reels no one size fits all. Anglers' who fish both fresh and saltwater often have a set for each type of environment. Since many saltwater species are larger than those caught in freshwater, heavier equipment is usually necessary. You'd have a hard time trying to catch a billfish on a rod and reel made for catching largemouth bass.

Regardless of how many different species you pursue, the rod and reel is nothing more than a tool. And like any tool, you don't have just one. What mechanic has just one screwdriver or one wrench? Few golfers play with just one club. They have a set, each designed for a specific purpose. And such is the case with rod and reels.

The four primary rod and reel types are spinning, baitcasting, trolling, and fly. The options for each type are endless. Rods come in many lengths and are designed with different actions ranging from ultra light to heavy. Reels range in size to match the rod, but have different gear ratios that allow an angler to retrieve the bait at a faster pace with less effort. Each combination performs differently. And this is the reason why some anglers have so many, especially if they target multiple species in both salt and freshwater.

It seems ironic that the combination of rod and reel is also referred to as an "outfit", as in, "How many outfits do you need?" When the question is phrased this way, it can take on a whole different meaning, one to which I'm sure many anglers can relate. The reality is that the number of rod and reels you have depends entirely on personal preference. And in my opinion, there is no such thing as having too many" outfits.