

How to Read the Depth Charts

Knowing how to read a depth chart will definitely improve your fishing success. Depth charts are the best way to find clues to where fish are hanging out. When reading depth charts there are some general rules that can help your angling success.

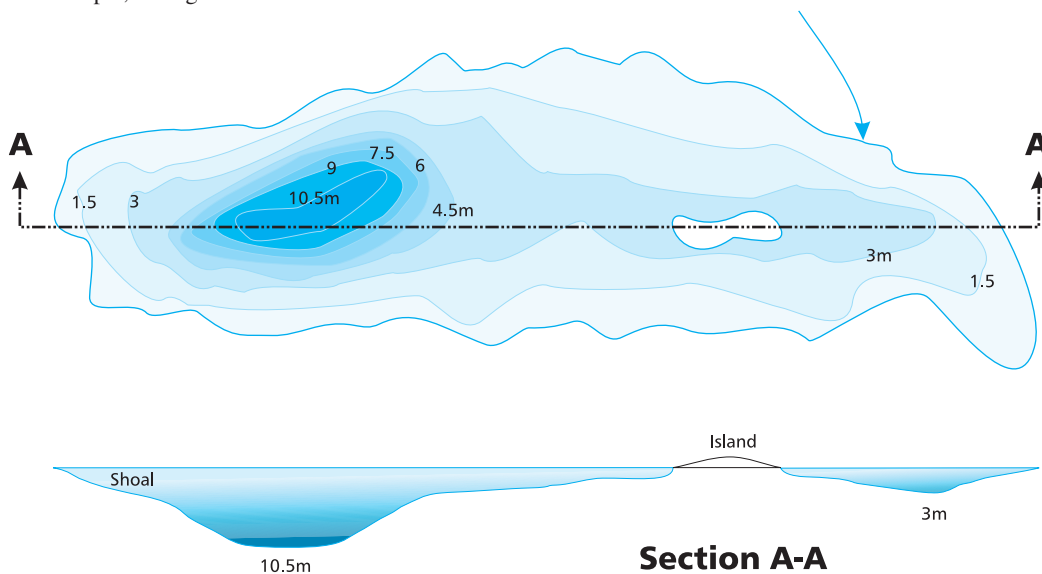
When analyzing a depth chart, look for hidden islands, drop-offs and shoals. A hidden island is a relatively flat, shallow area that is slightly submerged, while being surrounded by deeper water. A drop-off is a rapid decline in the depth on the chart. A shoal is a slowly declining area of the lake, which then drops off into the depths. In larger lakes, shoals can also be characterized as shallow irregularities in the bottom of the lake, essentially, a bump in the bottom. In some lakes there may be only one or two of these significant shoal sites and often are the site of some of the best angling on the lake. Shoals often produce thicker aquatic vegetation that is home to insects and baitfish for the larger fish to feed on.

When looking for a species like lake trout, depth information can be very handy. As an example, during summer lake trout often

revert to the deepest part of the lake in order to find colder water. On some lakes, there may be limited areas where lake trout will find the required depth needed for survival. With a depth chart in hand, these deep spots can be easily located.

Creek and river estuaries are always important areas to note on any lake. Fish tend to congregate near the inflows and outflows of lakes in search of increased oxygen levels and food. At times, these areas can be the hottest spot in a lake. As an example, during the fall period, walleye will often congregate near river inflows, as a part of their migration to spawning grounds.

If you read a depth chart properly, you can find very useful information. This information should allow you to improve your angling experience on the given lake or water body.



CAUTION:
DO NOT USE THE DEPTH CHARTS FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES.
The charts may not reflect current conditions. Uncharted hazards may exist.

The base maps for the lake charts are courtesy of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

DEPTH CHART LEGEND

GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES & ROADS		MAP & RECREATION SYMBOLS		ABBREVIATIONS	
	Flooded Land		Rocks		Catchables
	Native Reserve		Sandbar		Fingerling
	Swamp / Marsh		Shoal		Fall Fry
	Provincial Park		Water Vegetation		Yearlings
	Highway		Side Road		Rainbow
	Main Road		Old Road/Trail		Hectare
	Stream		Lake		Acre
			Anchorage		Four Wheel Drive Vehicles
			Boat Launch		Feet
			Lodge / Resort		Meters
			Community		Kilogram
			Dam		Pounds
			Float Plane Access		
			Highway, Primary		Hiking
			Highway, Secondary		Lighthouse
			Highway, Trans-Canada		No Fishing
			Footbridge		Parking
			Dock/Wharf		Picnic Area
					Point of Interest
					Truck Only Campground
					Trail or Water Access Campsite
					Trailer and Tent Campground
					Waterfall
					Cabins