

TOP FISHING SECRETS

TOP FISHING SECRETS.COM

Chest Waders

Types, Sizes, Purchasing Techniques, and Fitting

Timothy Kuserets



Here I am fishing during Mid November. The wind is howling, whitecaps are everywhere, and the temperature plummets and rises constantly. It would be virtually impossible to stay in the water for extended periods of time without the use of chest waders.

The Waders I'm using in the photograph are 3.00 millimeters thick, more than enough to keep me warm for hours on end. The height of the chest waders allows me to fish waters too deep for hip waders.

The very last place you want to consider wader size, shape, texture, and thickness is literally at the water.

Using the wrong type and size will swamp in less than a couple feet of water; whether getting in or out of a boat, or simply wading can spell disaster for an angler.

Chest waders are for those times spent in deeper water that typically goes above the waist. When wading rivers and streams they are used to traverse rivers too wide to cast at holds that cannot be gotten to, sometimes even with a boat. When not in use, the tops of the waders can be rolled or folded down around the waist. They are commonly created out of thick rubber, polyurethane, and neoprene. This type of wader commonly comes with felt attached to the soles of boots since slipping can be real issue with algae. Waders that don't have felt that come with the boots can have felt attached to them with kits sold in sporting goods stores.

Rubber chest waders come complete with rubber boots attached to them with belts and shoulder straps. Since they don't have significant insulation they're perfect during warmer months. Consider the density of the material as it can get heavy and cumbersome as the day progresses. Maintain rubber chest waders by washing them at the end of the day with warm soapy water and hanging them up with a hanger in the garage, or they can be hung upside down.

Polyurethane chest waders are light and are either complete with boots attached to them or booties with boots

TOP FISHING SECRETS

sold separately. This material is extremely light and is used during warmer months but can also be worn during moderately cold winter months. The leg and chest material is meant to breathe letting out sweat and retaining warmth. This particular type of chest wader is very cheap making it ideal for backup gear. The material used for this type of wader is extremely sensitive and should never be washed with soap. Use cold water to wash them and then press them flat on a surface that the material will not accidentally get hung up on. Because polyurethane is so inexpensive many outdoorsmen prefer to buy them for "occasional" fishing.

Neoprene waders are the most rugged wader material on the market today. Neoprene material is the same as those used for scuba diving and as such have buoyant properties that make them double as Personal Flotation Devices. There are two kinds of neoprene waders: one has boots attached to them; the second that has booties in place of boots. Neoprene waders that have booties sell boots separately from them.

Neoprene waders are versatile in the degree of thickness which is measured in millimeters. The more millimeters the thicker it is and the warmer you'll be; however, if care is not taken an angler could easily sweat an entire day using waders too thick for the season. The most common thickness is 3.5 mm, which can be used in cold winters, mild springs, cool summer days, and harsh autumn months. On hot days 2.0 mm is perfect for keeping cool and since there is less material at this thickness is considerably lighter. In harsh winter months a 5.00 mm will keep any outdoorsman warm even as he or she stands in below freezing water. It is one of the heaviest types of waders and should only be worn when freezing temperatures are a certainty. They are absolutely perfect for drift-fishing anglers boating down a river when a strong wind prevails.

The fabric neoprene requires special care when it comes to maintenance. Never walk through brush or low hanging branches or risk puncturing holes in them, and with neoprene that's easy to do. As a precaution take the time to purchase a hole repair kit when getting the waders. These kits can repair holes up to a quarter inch wide, beyond that they can be rendered useless, but don't let that scare you away from them. Under normal conditions these waders can take a beating that will punish any other type of waders.

Even with the greatest of care, an angler can sweat in a pair of neoprenes and can be commonly mistaken for a hole. Even when wet in the field the inside of each pair will keep an angler warm for hours without the need to change out of them. At the end of the day when the inside of these waders are wet turn them inside out and then hang them to dry, after it's dry turn them right-side out and allow the rest of it to dry. Make sure to dry out any wet pairs long before each fishing trip to ensure that the beginning of the day doesn't start out cold.

This type of wader is hard to fit for most people so when shopping for neoprenes take some time to do it. After finding the correct size it is not uncommon to consume forty-five minutes to find a properly fitting pair to try on, take off, and repackage; however, the protection they offer from the weather make them worth the effort.