

Texas Saltwater Fishing Regulations – Complete Guide

Updated Reference Guide for Texas Coastal Anglers

Introduction

Texas saltwater fishing is regulated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). All anglers must follow licensing requirements, size limits, bag limits, and seasonal rules to protect marine ecosystems and ensure sustainable fishing.

Saltwater Fishing License Requirements

- A valid Texas Saltwater Fishing License is required for most anglers.
- Residents and non-residents must carry a license while fishing.
- Exemptions may apply for children, seniors, and special free fishing days.
- Additional endorsements may be required for specific activities.

Legal Saltwater Fishing Areas

Saltwater fishing is permitted in the Gulf of Mexico, coastal bays, estuaries, and tidal waters along the Texas coastline. Always confirm whether a location is classified as saltwater before fishing.

Bag Limits & Size Restrictions

- Redfish (Red Drum): Daily bag and slot size limits apply.
- Spotted Seatrout: Regulated by minimum and maximum length limits.
- Flounder: Seasonal closures and reduced bag limits may apply.
- Sharks: Special regulations apply, including gear restrictions.
- Always measure fish accurately before keeping them.

Approved Fishing Gear

- Rod and reel fishing is legal statewide.
- Nets, traps, and trotlines are regulated or restricted in saltwater.
- Spearfishing is allowed only under specific conditions.
- Certain gear types may be prohibited in protected areas.

Seasonal Closures & Special Rules

Some species have seasonal closures to protect spawning populations. Flounder and certain shark species often have special seasonal regulations. Always check current TPWD announcements before planning a trip.

Violations & Penalties

Failure to follow Texas saltwater fishing regulations may result in fines, license suspension, or confiscation of equipment. Compliance ensures conservation and avoids legal trouble.

Helpful Tips for Texas Saltwater Anglers

- Carry a digital or printed copy of your fishing license.
- Review regulations before every fishing trip.
- Release undersized or protected species carefully.
- Respect marine habitats and follow ethical fishing practices.

Note: Regulations may change. Always verify the latest rules from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).