

The Jump Roll Cast

Also known as the switch cast or accelerated roll cast



Why is the Jump Roll cast more efficient than the Roll Cast?

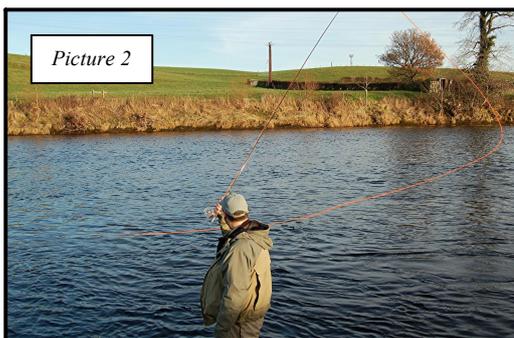
This is because you are now introducing into your cast, what could be described as a minimum drag technique.

- Let me explain the above statement.

At the point in your roll cast, just as you are about to deliver your fly line and fly, take a good look at the D Loop that you have created (*this is the shape of the fly line behind the rod tip, including the rod, that takes the form of a capital D*) (**Picture 1**). You will notice that although you have your fly line nicely under tension, you also have a substantial amount of that fly line still stuck in the surface film of the water; (*meniscus*) this is always going to detract from the efficiency of the end product. It is this section of fly line that we now need to make better use of. To do this, you need to remove as much of this sticking line from the water surface as possible and place it into your D Loop, prior to the delivery of your forward cast. This will give you the minimum amount of line (*drag*) on the surface of the water, and therefore the maximum amount of line (*casting weight*) in your D Loop.



- Remember, no matter what you do with a standing (*basic*) roll cast, you will only be able to create a limited size of D Loop (*under tension*) behind the rod, even if you stretch your arm out behind, by the time you have come back to your delivery position the D Loop will be no bigger, in fact you may even lose line tension, therefore creating slack line, causing the cast to be even less efficient.
- Any fly line that is stuck in the water surface prior to the delivery of your cast will also be referred to as your anchor. It is this anchor that is essential to creating any of the Spey casts we decide to adopt. The reason we need this anchor is that when we are Spey casting, (*unlike an overhead cast*) we often have obstacles behind us that we need to avoid (*such as trees etc*) and therefore we do not want our fly line and fly to travel too far behind us on the back cast. It is this fixed position on the water surface (*anchor*) that prevents your fly line and fly from doing this, thus still affording you the ability to cast reasonable distances whilst what could simply be described as “folding your overhead cast in half”. This will allow you to access areas that were previously inaccessible. Imagine how efficient these casts would be if you could minimize this anchor point (*less drag*) and maximize your D Loop (*more casting weight*).
- Enter the Jump Roll Cast (*I hope you all have your eye protection*)

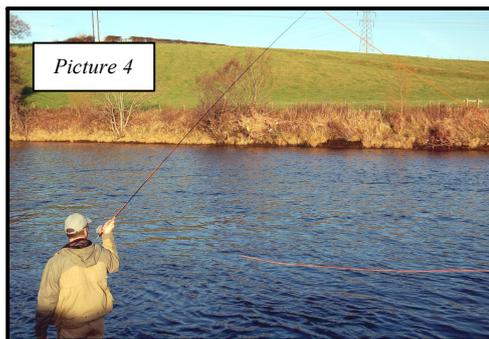
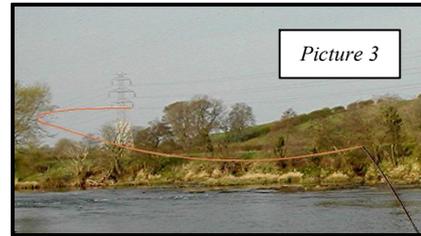


The Jump Roll Cast is effectively a roll cast slightly speeded up. The objectives of this cast, (*amongst other things*) are to address the points discussed above, which are (**a**) to create a bigger D Loop behind the rod, (**Picture 2**) (*therefore creating more casting weight*) whilst at the same time (**b**) leaving less line on the water surface prior to the delivery of the cast, (*therefore creating less drag*) especially whilst fishing in areas where we have obstacles behind us. This will now (**a**) help us to load the rod much more efficiently, whilst avoiding the trees behind us

our flies, (**b**) assist with tightening up the forward loop, (*where necessary*) (**c**) improve our ability to cast to those difficult to target areas that have been previously unavailable to us, and (**d**) still allow us to achieve the required distances for very little effort.

- **Why do these things happen?**

Let's take a look without getting too technical. By applying additional acceleration to the cast from the outset, you have in effect applied a bigger bend to the rod as you accelerate it around your body during the back cast, unlike the basic, slower moving roll cast. Therefore when you now apply the stop at the end of the back cast stroke, the rod tip (*or spring*) unloads more efficiently creating more weight behind the rod in the form of a larger D Loop. Now as you deliver the forward cast, this additional weight you have created in your bigger D Loop, will help to bend your rod deeper as you progressively accelerate it forward again, (*using the rod rather like a lever*) so that when you deliver your forward cast, and this larger bend in the rod unloads, you will now have generated more line speed than you did with your normal standing (*basic*) roll cast, which will in turn cause the accelerating fly line to tighten up during your forward cast, creating a (v) shape laying on it's side (*rather like this <*) at the front end of the fly line (**Picture 3**). This is now a very efficient cast, and one that will also cut into the wind much easier if faced with difficult conditions. Line speed in conjunction with an initial straight line path of the rod tip will result in tight loops. However it is worth mentioning that you may not always require a tight loop in some fishing situations.



Ok, back to the aforementioned anchor point. Although we are attempting to remove as much line stick from the water as possible, (*to create a much larger D Loop behind the rod*) incorporating most of the available fly line that is outside of the rod tip, it is also essential to have a small amount of fly line, (*along with our leader and fly*) touching down on the water beside us (*minimum line stick*). This is what we call our anchor point as it locks into the surface of the water, allowing us to create maximum casting weight (*D Loop*) behind the rod, ready to be drawn into the forward delivery. Where possible, this anchor point should touch down on the water surface just out to the side of the anglers casting shoulder prior to the forward delivery (**Picture 4**). (*approximately one to one and a half rod lengths away from us*) This allows the maximum D Loop to form between the rod tip and the aforementioned anchor point on the water, therefore assisting with the loading of the rod as it is delivered into the forward cast by you, whilst at the same time allowing you to deliver your fly from a safe position off the water surface.

- **How do we do this?**

Start the cast with your rod tip pointing downstream, (*on the river*) straight out in front of you, and just above the water surface (**Picture 6**). If you are holding the rod with your right hand, or in the case of a double handed rod, you have your right hand uppermost on the rod handle; place your right foot forward (*as explained in the roll cast*). The initial lift is exactly the same as the roll cast (*raising the rod tip to 45°*) and the next stage is also the same movement as the second stage of the roll cast (*sweeping out and around to the side*). The only difference being, that this time there should be a slight increase in speed, because unlike the roll cast, the fly must now leave the water, only touching down again when reaching the desired anchor point position (*as described above*).

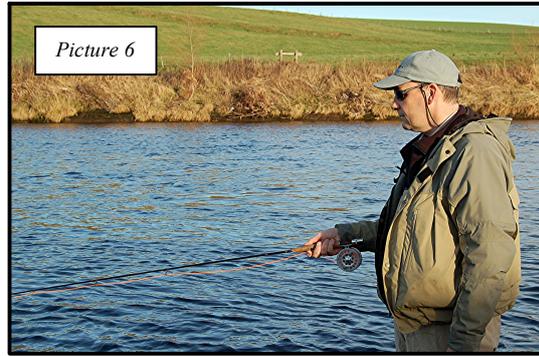
- Whilst doing this, you can (*initially*) use the rod tip as a visual aid, (*see additional information below*) so that when you start to sweep it out and around your body, you will see the rod tip begin to bend under tension (*you will also be able to feel this*). It is at this point that you must progressively increase the speed of your sweep, whilst at the same time, drawing a very shallow arc with your thumb (*rather like a hammock between two trees*). At around 45 degrees out to the side of your body the rod will have taken a significant bend, (**Picture 5**) it is at this point (*whilst continuing along the aforementioned shallow arc*) that you should now be raising your rod tip back up to the 45 degree position behind you, (*to where the other end of the hammock would be tied to the tree*) but still canted out to the side (**Picture 4**). Stop your thumb firmly at the 45 degree position behind, allowing the bend you have created in the rod to unload at the end of the stroke, (*rather like a spring unloading*) allowing your D Loop to form up and away from the water surface (**Picture 4**) and in line with the direction you are making your cast, ready for your forward delivery (*like a big wheel ready to roll forward*)



- If the energy applied to the sweep is correct your fly will be lifted from the water in front of you, follow the path of your rod tip, and be transferred, along with your leader, and a small amount of fly line, to a position out to the side of your casting shoulder (*as discussed earlier*) where it will fall onto the water, automatically creating your anchor point and maximizing your D Loop. It is worth noting that wherever the centre of your shallow arc (*hammock*) bottoms out (*i.e. at the point where you begin to raise the rod again in the back cast*) is where your fly will inevitably land on the water. As soon as your fly has touched down, the forward cast should be delivered with a smooth progressive acceleration. Too early, and the leader will slip, flick your fly backwards, and cause an audible click in the air. Too late, and the bottom leg of your D Loop will fall onto the water creating excess drag, (*or line stick*) causing a slurping noise as your fly line tries to pull clear of the water surface on the forward delivery. Remember all you are trying to achieve is to keep tension on your fly line throughout the cast (*no slack line*). Smooth and progressive is the key.
- **Just a quick recap.**
Your aim, prior to the delivery, is to create a mirror image (*with the rod tip behind you and canted out to the side*) of your initial 45 degree lift at the front, but this time creating a much bigger D Loop behind the rod than you did in the basic roll cast, this is done by placing an anchor point on the water no more than a rod and a half length away from your casting shoulder. The anchor point should consist of the minimum amount of line on the water; preferably, tip of fly line, leader and fly, and your D Loop should consist of the maximum amount of line available to you (*outside the rod tip*). Do not take the rod tip behind your back as this will set your D Loop at the wrong angle causing you to swing the forward cast, which is one of the reasons (*as well as for safety*) that the rod tip should always be canted out from your body. The D Loop must be lined up with your target prior to the final delivery, which is often referred to as the 180° rule (*180 degrees to your target*).
- **Minor adjustments.**
At this point, if you are having problems creating your anchor point, e.g. constantly missing the water, you can do one of two things. First of all try reducing the speed at which you are sweeping your rod tip (*and therefore your fly line*) around your body, (*which often cures this*). If this does not help, try deepening the shape of your hammock as you sweep your rod tip around your body, (*your shallow arc may be too shallow*) before raising it back up to your 45 degree position prior to your delivery, (*a bit like drawing a smiley face or crescent moon shape with your rod tip*) this can also solve the problem. You will often here people referring to this movement as a “dip” of the rod tip, but be very wary of the word “dip” as people interpret this in many different ways, and in some cases it’s interpretation (*if the dip is too steep*) can contribute to the angler crashing the fly line leader and fly, down into a pile on the water. Remember, gravity will help your anchor point to occur naturally if the speed and angle of the sweep are correct.
- **Reminders**
You will remember in article 1 **The Basic Roll Cast**. I explained that the fastest part of any casting stroke is toward the end, and that if you imagine your rod tip is attached to an elastic band, all you will need to do is progressively stretch that elastic band throughout each stage of the cast, (*whether it be the back cast or the forward cast*) to it’s extremity, it is then and only then that you may snap it right at the end of each stroke (*the lever and the spring*). Do not be over zealous at this point, as the snap is simply a dead stop and not an aggressive movement. Once again “do not be in a hurry”.
- Bearing this in mind, if you are now delivering a smooth progressively accelerated forward stroke, snapping the elastic band at it’s conclusion, whilst at the same time bringing your thumb to a dead stop, then you are executing the cast correctly, and by stopping the rod tip high (*45 degrees*) at the end of the forward stroke, you will have created a nice forward cast.
- Always remember that although the rod tip is tilted out to the side of your body when setting up your D Loop (**Picture 4**) that the rod tip (*thumb*) must still maintain a straight line path throughout the delivery of the forward cast. Avoid bowling or swinging the forward cast as this will result in either a very open forward loop of fly line, often falling in a heap at the conclusion of the cast, (*bowling*) or a tracking problem resulting in a curving (*swinging*) of the fly line. Remember, the fly line can only follow the path of the rod tip.
- I think at this point it is important to mention that in some situations open loops and curves in your fly line may be a requirement and in certain fishing situations, (*where this can be controlled by the angler*) will offer up several advantages, but for now let’s stick to the basic mechanics of the cast.

- **Finally**

When you are happy that your cast is smooth and progressive throughout, you are now ready for closure. Here's what to do. After the stop on the forward cast lower your thumb, and therefore rod tip, at the same speed as the line leader and fly begin to fall, so that they all land together in a straight line on the water surface, allowing for a good presentation, once again arriving back at your start position with your rod tip just above the water surface. You have now successfully completed the Jump Roll Cast and are ready to go again.



- These are the basic mechanics of the Jump Roll Cast and if used regularly, (*practiced*) will give you a greater understanding of the principles of Spey Casting, but it is not until we add a change of direction to this cast that it then becomes much more versatile and very useful to us in a fishing situation, especially on rivers when faced with flow and wind conditions. This change of direction coupled with an upstream wind scenario is what will influence our choice of cast in the next article, prompting our decision to change to a **Single Spey Cast**.

- **Additional Information.**

Visual aids can be very useful when Spey casting and you will notice, in the paragraph adjacent to Picture 5, I have made reference to, watching your rod tip at the start of the sweep, thus allowing you to see the rod tip bending under tension. When you first start Spey casting this can be a great visual indicator of what is happening at this stage of your cast and it is also a good teaching aid in the early stages. However, (in brackets) you will also notice the word (initially). I have included this because when you have practiced this sweep for a while, you will then inevitably begin to “feel” the rod bend, (or load) whilst doing so, “this is much more important” and once you are comfortable with this feeling there will be no further need to watch your rod tip during this stage of the cast. This is because, as you improve your Spey casting techniques, there are more important visual aids to be aware of that will definitely help to improve your casts, especially at this stage, such as watching your fly line lifting from the water all the way to your fly, before going into your sweep. This will then get you into the very good habit of watching your fly line; leader and fly travel all the way round to your anchor point position out to the side of your body (casting shoulder) during the sweep, allowing you to see exactly where it lands on the water and therefore assisting with the timing of your delivery. Once you have reached this stage, you are definitely on the right track as this will assist you with a consistent anchor placement, which is essential to a good cast.

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