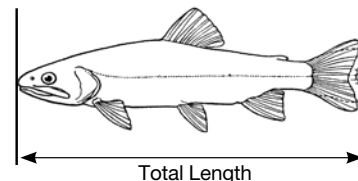


# CREEL (HARVEST) AND LENGTH LIMITS

The tables that follow give statewide creel (harvest) and length limits for major sport fish and exceptions for major rivers and lakes. Regulations for many smaller lakes and boat access areas are posted on site, and posted regulations are in effect (see "OTHER USES" under Department-owned Lakes, Ponds, Streams or Boat Access Sites, page 14). For smaller lakes, information can be found online at: [www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing). Creel limits are per person per day.

## How to Measure a Fish



| CREEL AND LENGTH LIMIT | GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS | CREEL OR LENGTH LIMITS FOR EXCEPTIONS |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|

## Bass

### Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted

|   | LAKES   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   |   |  |
|   | Briery Creek Lake   | No bass 16 to 24 inches, only 1 per day longer than 24 inches                |
|   | Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir  | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | Claytor Lake  | No smallmouth less than 14 inches; 15 spotted bass per day                   |
|   | Flannagan Reservoir   | No bass less than 12 inches  |
|   | Lake Gaston   | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | Leesville Reservoir   | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | Lake Moomaw   | No bass less than 12 inches  |
|   | Philpott Reservoir  | No bass less than 12 inches  |
|   | Quantico Marine Base waters   | No bass 12 to 15 inches  |
|   | Smith Mt. Lake and its tributaries below Niagara Dam  | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | South Holston Reservoir   | No smallmouth less than 15 inches, 15 spotted bass per day                   |
|   | RIVERS  |  |
|   | Clinch River—within the boundaries of Scott, Wise, Russell or Tazewell counties   | No bass less than 20 inches, only 1 bass per day longer than 20 inches       |
|   | Dan River and tributaries down-stream from the Union Street Dam, Danville   | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | James River—Confluence of the Jackson and Cowpasture rivers (Botetourt Cty) downstream to the 14th St. Bridge in Richmond   | No bass 14 to 22 inches, only 1 per day longer than 22 inches                |
|   | Levisa Fork River—within the boundaries Buchanan County   | No bass less than 20 inches, only 1 bass per day longer than 20 inches       |
| 5 per day in the aggregate (combined)<br>No statewide length limits | New River—Fields Dam (Grayson County) downstream to the VA-WV state line and its tributaries Little River downstream from Little River Dam in Montgomery County, Big Walker Creek from the Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge downstream to the New River and Wolf Creek from the Narrows Dam downstream to the New River in Giles County. (This does not include Claytor Lake which is delineated as: The upper end of the island at Allisonia downstream to the dam.) | No bass 14 to 22 inches, only 1 per day longer than 22 inches                |
|   | North Fork Holston River—Rt. 91 Bridge upstream of Saltville, Va. downstream to the VA-TN state line  | No bass less than 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches            |
|   | North Fork Shenandoah River— Rt. 42 bridge, Rockingham Co. downstream to the confluence with S. Fork Shenandoah at Front Royal  | No bass 11 to 14 inches  |
|   | Potomac River - Virginia tidal tributaries above Rt. 301 bridge   | No bass less than 15 inches from March 1 through June 15                     |
|   | Staunton (Roanoke) River—and its tributaries below Difficult Creek, Charlotte County  | Only 2 of 5 bass less than 14 inches   |
|   | Shenandoah River—Confluence of South Fork and North Fork rivers, Front Royal, downstream to the Warren Dam, near Front Royal  | No bass 11 to 14 inches  |
|   | Base of Warren Dam, near Front Royal downstream to Rt. 17/50 bridge   | No bass 14 to 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches                |
|   | Rt. 17/50 bridge downstream to VA-WV state line   | No bass 11 to 14 inches  |
|   | South Fork Shenandoah River— Confluence of North and South rivers below Port Republic, downstream to Shenandoah Dam, near Town of Shenandoah  | No bass 11 to 14 inches  |
|   | Base of Shenandoah Dam, near Town of Shenandoah, downstream to Luray Dam, near Luray  | No bass 14 to 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches                |
|   | Base of Luray Dam, near Luray, downstream to the confluence with North Fork of Shenandoah, Front Royal  | No bass 11 to 14 inches  |
|   | Staunton River—Leesville Dam (Campbell County) downstream to the mouth of Difficult Creek, Charlotte County   | No smallmouth bass less than 20 inches, only 1 per day longer than 20 inches |

| CREEL AND LENGTH LIMIT | GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS | CREEL OR LENGTH LIMITS FOR EXCEPTIONS |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|

## Striped Bass

### Landlocked Striped Bass and Landlocked Striped Bass X White Bass Hybrids

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| 4 per day in the aggregate<br>No fish less than 20 inches | Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir including the Staunton (Roanoke) River to Leesville Dam and the Dan River to the Union Street Dam (Danville) | October 1–May 31: 2 per day in the aggregate (combined) No striped bass or hybrid striped bass less than 20 inches<br>June 1–September 30: 4 per day in the aggregate (combined) No length limit |   |
|   | Claytor Lake and its tributaries  | September 16–June 30: 2 per day in the aggregate, no striped bass or hybrid bass less than 20 inches<br>July 1–September 15: 4 per day in the aggregate; no length limit                         |   |
|   |   | Lake Gaston  | 4 per day in the aggregate (combined)<br>October 1–May 31: No striped bass or hybrid striped bass less than 20 inches<br>June 1–September 30: No length limit |
|   | Smith Mountain Lake and its tributaries, including the Roanoke River upstream to Niagara Dam  |  | 2 per day in the aggregate (combined)<br>November 1–May 31: No striped bass 30 to 40 inches<br>June 1–October 31: No length limit                             |

### Anadromous (coastal) striped bass above the fall line in all coastal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay

|  |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| Creel and length limits shall be as set by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission for recreational fishing in tidal waters | None apply | None apply |
|--|------------|------------|

### Striped bass in the Meherrin, Nottoway, Blackwater (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and Northwest rivers and their tributaries plus Back Bay

|  |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| 2 per day<br>No striped bass less than 18 inches | None apply | None apply |
|--|------------|------------|

## Walleye, Saugeye

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 5 per day in the aggregate<br>No walleye or saugeye less than 18 inches | New River upstream of Buck Dam in Carroll County  | No walleye less than 20 inches                                       |
|   | New River downstream from Claytor Dam   | No walleye less than 18 inches                                       |
|   | Claytor Lake and the New River upstream of Claytor Lake Dam to Buck Dam in Carroll County | February 1–May 31: 2 walleye per day; no walleye 19 to 28 inches     |
|   |   | June 1–January 31: 5 walleye per day; no walleye less than 20 inches |

## Sauger

|   |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| 2 per day<br>No statewide length limits | None apply | None apply |
|---|------------|------------|

## White Bass

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 5 per day<br>No statewide length limits | South Holston Reservoir  | No harvest or possession (catch and release only) |
|   | Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir, including the Staunton River to Leesville Dam and the Dan River to Union Street Dam (Danville) | 10 per day; no white bass less than 14 inches     |

## Chain Pickerel

|   |  |                |
|---|--|----------------|
| 5 per day<br>No statewide length limits | Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir | No daily limit |
|---|--|----------------|

## Northern Pike

|  |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| 2 per day<br>No pike less than 20 inches | None apply | None apply |
|--|------------|------------|

# CREEL (HARVEST) AND LENGTH LIMITS

| CREEL AND LENGTH LIMIT | GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS | CREEL OR LENGTH LIMITS FOR EXCEPTIONS |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|

## Muskellunge

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 2 per day<br>No muskellunge less than 30 inches | New River-Fields Dam (Grayson County) downstream to Claytor Dam, including Claytor Lake | 1 per day<br>No muskellunge less than 42 inches  |
|   | New River-Claytor Dam downstream to VA-WV state line                                    | 1 per day<br>June 1–last day of February: No muskellunge 40 to 48 inches<br>March 1–May 31: No muskellunge less than 48 inches |

## Bluegill (bream) and other sunfish excluding Crappie, Rock Bass (redeye) and Roanoke Bass

|  |  |                |
|--|--|----------------|
| 50 per day in the aggregate (combined)<br>No statewide length limits | Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir and that portion of the New River from the VA–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County | No daily limit |
|--|--|----------------|

## Crappie (black or white)

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 25 per day in the aggregate (combined)<br>No statewide length limits | Lake Gaston and that portion of the New River from the VA–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County | No daily limit  |
|  | Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir  | No crappie less than 9 inches   |
|  | Briery Creek and Sandy River reservoirs   | No crappie less than 9 inches   |
|  | Flannagan and South Holston reservoirs  | No crappie less than 10 inches; South Holston Res.–15 per day in the aggregate (combined) |

## Rock Bass (redeye)

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 25 per day in the aggregate with Roanoke bass<br>No statewide length limits | Lake Gaston and Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir and that portion of the New River from the VA–NC state line downstream to the confluence of the New and Little rivers in Grayson County | No daily limit   |
|   | Nottoway, Meherrin, Blackwater (Franklin County), Falling and Smith rivers and their tributaries   | 5 per day in the aggregate (combined) with Roanoke bass<br>No rock bass less than 8 inches |
|   | South Holston Reservoir  | 20 per day   |

## Roanoke Bass

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 25 per day in the aggregate with rock bass<br>No statewide length limits | Nottoway, Meherrin, and Blackwater (Franklin County), Falling and Smith rivers and their tributaries | 5 per day in the aggregate (combined) with rock bass<br>No Roanoke bass less than 8 inches |
|--|--|--|

## Perch (yellow and white)

|   |             |            |
|---|-------------|------------|
| No statewide daily limit<br>No statewide length limit | Lake Moomaw | 10 per day |
|---|-------------|------------|

## Trout

|                                  |                               |  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 6 per day<br>7 inch minimum size | See Trout Waters, pages 29-33 |  |
| No minimum size limit            | South Holston Reservoir       | 7 fish per day—only 2 lake trout. No minimum size. |

| CREEL AND LENGTH LIMIT | GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS | CREEL OR LENGTH LIMITS FOR EXCEPTIONS |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|

## Catfish

### Channel, White and Flathead

|                                |                                |                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 20 per day<br>No length limits | All rivers below the fall line | No daily limit |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|

### Blue

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 20 per day<br>No statewide length limits | Buggs Island Lake/Kerr Reservoir  | 20 per day, except only 1 blue catfish per day longer than 32 inches     |
|  | James River and its tributaries below the fall line and York River and its tributaries (including the Pamunkey River and Mattaponi River) below the fall line | No daily limit, except only 1 blue catfish per day longer than 32 inches |
|  | Lake Gaston   | No daily limit, except only 1 blue catfish per day longer than 32 inches |
|  | All rivers below the fall line other than the James River and its tributaries and the York River and its tributaries  | No daily limit   |

### Yellow, brown, black, flat, and snail bullhead

|                                    |            |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| No daily limit<br>No length limits | None apply | None apply |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|

### All Catfish

|  |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|--|
|  | South Holston Reservoir | 20 per day, only 1 catfish per day longer than 34 inches |
|--|-------------------------|--|

## Hickory Shad

### Above and below the fall line in all coastal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay

|   |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| Creel and length limits shall be the same as those set by the Virginia Marine Resources Comm. in tidal rivers | None apply | None apply |
|---|------------|------------|

### Meherrin River below Emporia Dam, Nottoway River, Blackwater River, (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and Northwest rivers, and their tributaries plus Back Bay

|                                |            |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|
| 10 per day<br>No length limits | None apply | None apply |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|

## American Shad

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| No possession (catch and release only) |  |  |
|--|--|--|

## Anadromous (coastal) Alewife and Blueback Herring

### Above and below the fall line in all coastal rivers of the Chesapeake Bay and their tributaries

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Creel and length limits shall be the same as those set by the Virginia Marine Resources Comm. for these species in tidal rivers | The Virginia Marine Resources Commission enacted a ban on the possession of river herring, effective January 1, 2012, due to the collapse of the stock, and to comply with an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries fishery management plan directive |  |
|---|--|--|

### Meherrin River, Nottoway River, Blackwater River (Chowan Drainage), North Landing and Northwest rivers and their tributaries, plus Back Bay

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| No possession |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|

## Other native or naturalized nongame fish

|                                |           |                                |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 20 per day<br>No length limits | Statewide | See pages 25–26 for exceptions |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|

### Threatened and endangered species

|               |            |            |
|---------------|------------|------------|
| No possession | None apply | None apply |
|---------------|------------|------------|

# CREEL (HARVEST) AND LENGTH LIMITS

| CREEL AND LENGTH LIMIT                                | GEOGRAPHIC EXCEPTIONS  | CREEL OR LENGTH LIMITS FOR EXCEPTIONS  |
|---|--|--|
| <h2>Grass Carp</h2>                                   |  |  |
| No statewide daily limit<br>No statewide length limit | Anglers may possess grass carp taken from inland public waters, except from Department-owned or -controlled lakes. Anglers must ensure that harvested grass carp are dead.   |  |
| <h2>Northern Snakehead</h2>                           |  |  |
| No statewide daily limit<br>No statewide length limit | Anglers may possess a snakehead taken from Virginia waters if they immediately kill the fish and notify the headquarters or a regional office of the department; notification may be made by calling (804) 367-2925. |  |
| <h2>Non-native (Exotic) Fish</h2>                     |  |  |
| See pages 25–26                                       |  |  |
| <h2>Longnose Gar</h2>                                 |  |  |
| 5 per day<br>No statewide length limits               |  |  |
| <h2>Bowfin</h2>                                       |  |  |
| 5 per day<br>No statewide length limits               |  |  |
| <h2>American Eel</h2>                                 |  |  |
| 25 per day; no eel less than 9 inches                 | Back Bay and North Landing River   | No possession limit for those individuals possessing a permit obtained under 4VAC15-340-80 |

## Saltwater Marine Species

See Virginia Marine Resources website: [www.mrc.virginia.gov](http://www.mrc.virginia.gov)

The most up-to-date regulations online.



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