

The Double-Haul Made Easy

A simple method for going long **BY KIRK DEETER**



LOOKING FOR A LITTLE EXTRA “OOMPH” to add distance to your fly cast? Learn the right way to double-haul. Like most aspects of fly casting, it's more about feel and timing than it is about power. Simply put, to double-haul you use your noncasting hand to pull the fly line away from the rod tip in an abrupt, well-timed burst—thus increasing the resistance and flex in the rod—first on the back cast and then on the forward cast. By increasing that flex, you boost line speed. And if you maintain a well-formed loop during your cast, that added energy translates to distance. The trick is to avoid common mistakes.



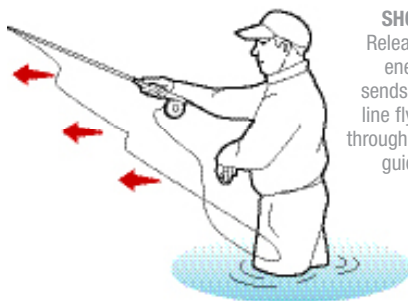
1
START
Increase rod flex by pulling on the line.



2
BACK CAST
Hauling on the line as the rod goes back builds line speed.



3
FORWARD
The second haul adds “load” to the rod.



4
SHOOT
Released energy sends the line flying through the guides.

FIRST, you need to feel the effect to get your timing down, and that's hard to do with 60 feet of line flying overhead. Start short, with maybe 20 feet of line. Pull the line on your back cast, feel the resistance, let the line spring back through the guides (sliding through your fingers so you can pinch it again), then give it another tug on the forward cast, release, and shoot the cast. After a while, this becomes instinct; you'll notice good casters double-hauling on their short casts out of habit. Don't try long casts until you get the groove with short ones.

THE SECOND mistake is not giving the line back to the rod. What do I mean? You pull down on the line, feel the flex, and shoot the line on your back cast, but you're sunk if you

let your line hand end up down by your hip pocket, 3 feet away from your casting hand, with “dead” line flapping in between. All the energy is lost. You want your hands to spring apart, and come together, like you're playing an accordion. If you're stuck on this, tie your wrists together with a 20-inch piece of string.

LASTLY, when it's time to let fly with that cast, let go of the line! Haul on the back cast, haul on the forward cast, feel the flex, and when your loop gets ahead of your rod tip, let go of the line as if you're shooting a slingshot through the guides on your rod. Hanging on kills the cast. You'll soon learn how to gently release and regather the line with your fingertips as you're double-hauling.