

SEASONS, MINIMUM SIZES, DAILY CREEL & POSSESSION LIMITS

CHESAPEAKE BAY & ITS TIDAL TRIBUTARIES

SPECIES	MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS	SEASON	CREEL LIMIT	REMARKS
AMERICAN EEL	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 25	
BASS (Largemouth & Smallmouth)	15 inches March 1–June 15	Open Year Round	Daily – 5 in aggregate	
	12 inches June 16 through last day in February			
BLACK DRUM	16 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 1 Daily boat limit – 6	
BLACK SEA BASS	12.5 inches	Open May 19 through September 18 & October 18 through December 31	Daily – 15	
BLUEFISH	8 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 10	
CATFISH	None	Open Year Round		
CHAIN PICKEREL (pike)	14 inches	CLOSED March 15 – April 30	Daily – 10	
CROAKER (hardhead)	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 25	
RED DRUM (channel bass or puppy drum)	18–27 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 1	
SPANISH MACKEREL	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 15	Must be landed with head and fins intact.
SPOTTED SEATROUT	14 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 10	
STRIPED BASS				See Chesapeake Bay Striped Bass section — page 38
SUMMER FLOUNDER (fluke)	16 inches	Open January 1 through December 31	Daily – 4	
WALLEYE	15 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 5	
WEAKFISH	13 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 1	
WHITE PERCH	None if caught with hook & line; 8 inch minimum if caught with other gear	Open Year Round	No Limit	
YELLOW PERCH	9 inches	Open Year Round	Daily – 10	

The taking of American Shad, Hickory Shad, Alewife Herring, Blueback Herring, Atlantic Sturgeon and Shortnose Sturgeon is prohibited.

Areas Closed to Fishing — February, March and April:

1. Magothy River from Lake Waterford dam downstream for 3,300 feet.
2. Severn River and Severn Run from the Route 3 Bridge downstream for 2,400 feet.

HOW TO MEASURE A FISH

Size limits are generally based on the total length of a fish. The total length of a fish is the maximum length with the mouth closed and the tail pinched together measured from the snout to the tip of the tail. The best way to obtain this straight line measurement is to push the fish's snout against a vertical surface with the mouth closed and with the fish lying along a tape measure and then pinch the tail fin closed to determine the total length.

Fork length refers to the length from the snout of a fish to the end of the middle caudal fin rays. This is the measurement for determining the legal size of a shark.

The girth of a fish is best measured with a fabric ruler. Measuring the girth is helpful in trying to determine if you have a possible record fish, which is determined by total weight. By using the total length and girth of a fish in inches you can get a rough estimate of the weight in pounds with this formula —

$$((\text{Girth in inches} \times \text{Girth in inches}) \times \text{Length in inches}) / 800 = \text{Approximate weight in pounds}$$

