

Hair & Bolt Rig

How do I do it

Most hair rigs are tied via a knotless knot, and this method of tying hairs has always proven strong enough for me.

Finish off the other end of the rig with a swivel of appropriate size.

I usually prefer to use braid for my Hair-rig hooklengths, due to its extra suppleness and strength for its diameter.

Why does it work

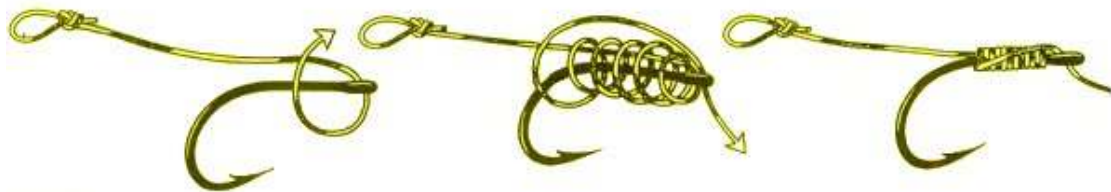
As explained above, hair-rigged baits give better presentation, crucial for tempting those larger carp to bite.

When carp feed, they will mouth baits and then eject them.

Hair-rigged baits leave the hook free to prick in the carp's mouth upon rejection of the bait, causing carp to bolt and signalling runs.

As most carp anglers fish with tight lines to bite alarms, getting the carp to bolt to signal a run is vital.

The hair rig is the basic type



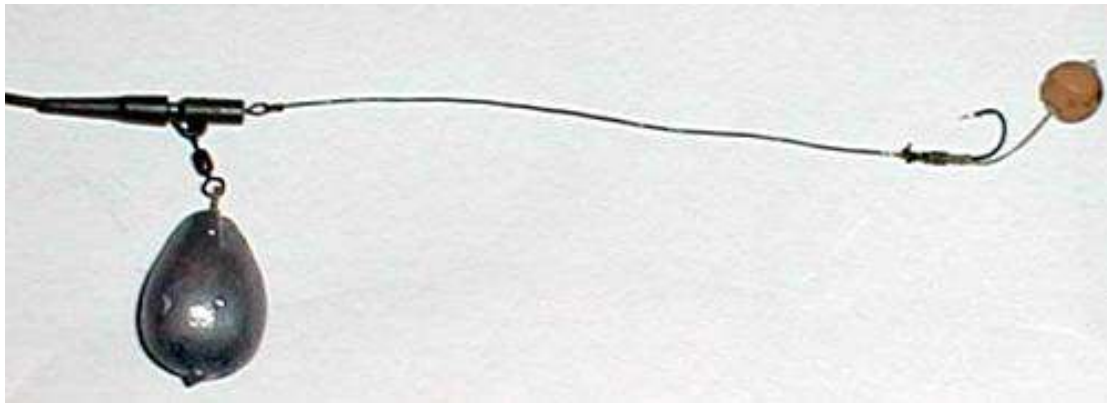
Whereupon the hair is a length 1/2lb - 1lb nylon about 1/2 - 2 inches in length and the hooklength can be either nylon or braid of about 12 - 16 inches. Hook size 10 - 8 for a 16 - 18mm boilie, go no go bigger but then I suppose it would depend on the size of the fish that you expect to catch.

Carp though became a bit more clever, and on picking up the bait, sensed that something was wrong and let go before registering a single movement back on the bank. Carp could also feel either the line itself as they picked up the hookbait, or the resistance of the line due to monofilaments springy nature.

As the carp takes its food straight into the back of its mouth where it is crushed, anglers believed that they could also feel the hook and would eject the bait. And so the hair rig was developed. This involved taking a very thin piece of line and attaching it to the end of the hook.

The bait was attached to the hair so that when a carp passed the bait into the back of its mouth the hook was still at the front near the carp's lips. Anglers also started to use a finer trace length of a softer material, such as Dacron, believing that the fish wouldn't feel resistance from the trace. This helped a lot and today many rigs are still tied with these basic principles, using hair rigs and soft trace materials.

The Bolt Rig



However, one more innovation was to change rig technology as we know it today and that is the bolt rig.

Even with the softer trace materials and hair rigs, carp were still believed to be mouthing the baits and ejecting them without any indication of a bite. The bolt rig involves having the weight fixed to the line so that the line cannot slide through it. When the carp picks up the bait, it senses something is wrong and panics or bolts. As it does so, it immediately gets resistance from the heavy weight, which causes the hook to penetrate the carps mouth and it is hooked.

This is the reason for the so called "screaming runs" we often see today, where the carp is already hooked and racing for the nearest safe haven it can find, meanwhile on the bank it is pulling line from your reel at a vast rate and your bite indicator is screaming

The problem with fixed weights is that if a carp runs into snags and manages to break your line above the weight, it could end up towing a lead around until it becomes snagged, and if it can't get out of it, then it may stay snagged until it starves to death. To prevent this, anglers use what we call a semi fixed lead, where the lead is trapped to the line by some mechanism, but if it becomes snagged it will pull free. OK so you lose a lead, but that is always preferable to harming and maybe killing a fish.