

**Atlantic HMS Permit Family of Forms**  
**OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0327**

**Shark Identification and Fishing Regulations Quiz for Shark Endorsement**

- 1.) Which shark has an interdorsal ridge?
- Picture of shark with interdorsal ridge (preferably dusky)
  - Picture of shark without interdorsal ridge (mako or blacktip)

Answer: (A) An interdorsal ridge is a visible line of raised skin between dorsal fins of a shark. Most sharks with an interdorsal ridge cannot be retained. The only sharks with an interdorsal ridge that can be kept recreationally are tiger sharks and smoothhound sharks; oceanic whitetip sharks can be kept under certain circumstances. For the entire list of sharks that **cannot** be kept, see the Atlantic HMS Recreational Compliance Guide [here](#).

- 2.) Do dusky sharks have an interdorsal ridge?
- Yes
  - No

Answer: (A) **Yes, dusky sharks do have an interdorsal ridge**, and that is one of their key identifying characteristics. Most sharks with an interdorsal ridge cannot be retained. **If you catch a shark with an interdorsal ridge**, unless it is a tiger shark, a smoothhound shark, or an oceanic whitetip shark, **you must release it**. For the entire list of sharks that **cannot** be kept, see the Atlantic HMS Recreational Compliance Guide [here](#).

- 3.) The recreational minimum size for most sharks is:
- 24 inches fork length
  - 36 inches fork length
  - 54 inches fork length
  - 78 inches fork length

Answer: (C) **The minimum size for most sharks that can be kept recreationally is 54 inches fork length**. This includes blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, spinner, tiger, blacknose, finetooth, blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle, shortfin mako, and common thresher sharks. The minimum size for hammerhead sharks (great, scalloped, and smooth) is 78 inches fork length. Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, and smoothhound sharks have no minimum size.

- 4.) If you catch a dusky shark greater than the recreational minimum size of 54 inches fork length can you keep it?
- Yes
  - No

Answer: (B) **No. Dusky sharks cannot be retained recreationally.** There are 22 species of sharks that cannot be kept recreationally. For the entire list of sharks that **cannot** be kept, see the Atlantic HMS Recreational Compliance Guide [here](#).

- 5.) How many sharks can recreational fishermen keep per fishing trip?
- As many as can fit in the boat
  - 1 for every person on board
  - 1 hammerhead shark or 1 other shark per vessel, 1 Atlantic sharpnose and bonnethead shark per person onboard, and smoothhound sharks
  - 1 hammerhead shark and 1 other shark per vessel

Answer: (C) Recreational fishermen can retain:

- 1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead shark per person onboard,
- And 1 hammerhead or other shark for the entire vessel (e.g., shortfin mako, blacktip, etc.)
- There is no recreational trip limit for smoothhound sharks.

For example, if there are 3 passengers on a trip, the vessel may retain up to 3 Atlantic sharpnose, 3 bonnethead, 1 hammerhead or other shark, and several smoothhound sharks. If a hammerhead or oceanic whitetip shark is retained, no tunas, billfish, or swordfish can be retained. Conversely, if tunas, billfish, or swordfish are retained, no hammerhead or oceanic whitetip sharks can be retained. For the entire list of sharks that **can** be kept, see the Atlantic HMS Recreational Compliance Guide [here](#).

- 6.) When are HMS Angling and HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders with shark endorsements required to use circle hooks?
- At all times, no matter what fish species they are targeting
  - Only when they are fishing for sharks
  - Only when they are fishing for sharks south of 41° 43' N latitude, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures.
  - Those with shark endorsement are not required to fish with circle hooks

Answer: (C) HMS permit holders with shark endorsements are required to use non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks whenever they are fishing for sharks south of 41° 43' N latitude, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures. HMS permit holders with shark endorsements may not deploy J-hooks when fishing for sharks, except in conjunction with flies or artificial lures. These requirements apply to any person fishing on a vessel with an Atlantic HMS shark endorsement. [Only HMS permit holders with shark endorsements can retain sharks.](#)

- 7.) When releasing a shark, which of the following catch and release practices are you recommended to follow?
- Fight the shark to exhaustion so it is easier to handle at boatside
  - Leave the shark in the water if you intend to release it, do not bring onto the boat

- c. Remove the hook with a dehooker device or cut the line as close to the hook as possible
- d. Release the shark as quickly as possible regardless of its condition
- e. Both b and c are correct

Answer: (E) Both b and c are correct. When practicing catch and release, remember to minimize fight time by bringing the fish in quickly to reduce exhaustion and increases its chance for survival after release. When it is time to release the fish, allow water to flow over the gills by moving the shark forward in the water, or by positioning the shark so the current flows toward the head of the animal, until its energy returns. Keep the fish in the water, boat side, while safely removing the hook using a dehooking device and safe handling gear. If you cannot remove the hook, cut the leader as short as possible. More tips on safe handling and release of HMS can be found [here](#).