

Shark Endorsement Quiz

- 1.) Which shark has an interdorsal ridge?
- Picture of shark with interdorsal ridge
 - Picture of shark without interdorsal ridge

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. 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. 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
 - 72 inches fork length

Answer: (C) The minimum size for most sharks that can be kept recreationally is 54 inches fork length. Exceptions include shortfin mako shark, hammerhead sharks, small coastal sharks, and smoothhound sharks. See the table below for minimum sizes by shark species.

Minimum Size	Shark Species
54" fork length	<i>blacktip, bull, lemon, nurse, spinner, tiger, blacknose, finetooth, blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle, and common thresher sharks</i>
78" fork length	<i>hammerhead sharks (great, scalloped, and smooth)</i>
71" fork length	<i>male shortfin mako sharks (effective March 3, 2019)</i>

83" fork length	<i>female shortfin mako sharks (effective March 3, 2019)</i>
None	<i>Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, and smoothhound sharks</i>

Fork length refers to the **straight line** measurement of a shark from the fork of the tail to the tip of the snout (or the center of the head for hammerhead sharks). Male sharks are identified by the presence of two appendages called **claspers** located between the pelvic fins (see shortfin mako shark figure below). Claspers are absent on female sharks. For more information on shark fishing regulations, and identification of sharks that are legal to retain, please see our **Recreational Shark Identification Placard** [here](#).

4) Which of the two sharks pictured below is a male shark?

A.



B.



Answer: (A) Male sharks are identified by the presence of two appendages called **claspers** located between the pelvic fins. Claspers become larger and more prevalent as male sharks reach maturity. Claspers are absent on female sharks.

A.



B.



- 5.) If you catch a dusky shark greater than the recreational minimum size of 54 inches fork length can you keep it?
- g. Yes
 - h. 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](#).

- 6.) How many blacktip sharks can recreational fishermen keep per fishing trip?
- i. As many as can fit in the boat
 - j. One blacktip shark for every person on board
 - k. One blacktip shark for the entire vessel
 - l. Keeping blacktip sharks is prohibited

Answer: (C) A recreational vessel can retain 1 shark per trip only, be it a blacktip shark or any of the other authorized shark species listed [here](#). In addition, the vessel may also retain:

- 1 Atlantic sharpnose shark and 1 bonnethead shark per person onboard, and
- 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 blacktip or other shark, and several smoothhound sharks.

If a hammerhead, oceanic whitetip, or porbeagle shark is retained, then tunas, billfish, or swordfish cannot be retained. Conversely, if tunas, billfish, or swordfish are retained, then hammerhead, oceanic whitetip, or porbeagle sharks cannot be retained. For the entire list of sharks that can be kept, see the **Atlantic HMS Recreational Compliance Guide** [here](#).

- 7.) When are HMS Angling and HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders with shark endorsements required to use circle hooks?
- a. At all times, no matter what fish species they are targeting
 - b. Only when they are fishing for sharks
 - c. Only when they are fishing for sharks south of 41° 43' N latitude, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures.
 - d. 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, 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.

- 8.) When releasing a shark, which of the following catch and release practices should you follow?
- a. Reel in the shark as quickly as practicable to reduce the chances of exhaustion
 - b. 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. All the above

Answer: (D) All of the above are correct. When practicing catch and release, remember to:

- Minimize fight time by bringing the fish in quickly to reduce exhaustion and increase its chances for survival after release.
- When it is time to release the shark, 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 shark in the water, boat side, at all times while releasing it. At no time during the release process should the shark be removed from the water, or brought into the boat for any purpose, including taking a picture. If you want to measure the size of the shark, be prepared to do so at boatside using a tape measure or by marking off feet on the side of the boat.
- If safety and experience allows, remove the hook using a dehooking device and safe handling gear.
- If you are inexperienced with using a dehooking device, cut the leader as short as possible using a long pair of wire or bolt cutters.
- At all times, angler safety should be your paramount concern when handling live sharks.

More tips on safe handling and release of sharks and other highly migratory species can be found [here](#).