



Tuning Lures by Kevin Ford

Tuning hardbody lures can be an interesting way of getting a little more from your particular favourite lure.

A lot of the higher end lures are tank tested and tuned out of the box, but they can get out of tune easily enough by banging them off structure or fish giving them the torture test and twisting them up on you. Other types don't have a fixed connection point on the bib or nose of the lure, these rely on a clip or link through the bib and are less likely to need fine tuning because of the movement in the connection point to the line.

For basic tuning if the Lure is swimming to the Left then your need to bend the Eye to the Right to get the lure to swim straight again. On small lures these adjustments are minute, by the time you feel the tow point move it is too much and best done a little at a time by putting pressure on the tow point in the direction you need to move it.

So gently does it is the go, otherwise you could break the towpoint out of the lure. Goes without saying, That's not a good thing!

The faster the troll or retrieve the more noticeable any "out of tune" effect is. Sometimes "out of tune" isn't necessarily a bad thing. I have a couple of Hardbodies I use a lot for Bream; One is a little out of tune to the left. It swims straight when I retrieve it dead slow, but if I crank up the speed it swims slightly to the left. It comes in really handy knowing this because if I put a wayward cast in or the wind catches the lure and it lands further away from the structure than I would have liked, with a few quick cranks I can swim the lure over closer to the Structure or get the lure to swim along under the edge of the Structure.

Of course if it rolls over and blows out of the water it needs the pliers treatment. With this in mind it is worth a mention, with small lures a pair of fine tipped pliers are required to get to the tow point of the lure without damaging the bib, they also allow for a better feel when only small movements are required. Generally by the time you feel movement you have gone too far.

The action and look of lures can be changed in a number of ways to slightly or dramatically alter the action and the look of a lure.

Several things can be done to tune the lure to work slightly different or to serve a different purpose.

Changes to the hardware- Hooks and Rings on a Lure can turn a buoyant floater into a Suspending or Sinking lure and visa versa. Also changing the size of say one of the trebles on a lure with two trebles will change the way the lure sits at rest. Hooks can be removed completely or one treble can be removed and the remaining trebles upgraded to keep a similar overall lure weight.

Other products like Sticky Weight (Tungsten Putty) or Lead Strips can be added and removed from the body of the Lure or Hooks to also tune the lure and change its buoyancy. A lure, which is suspending in Fresh water, may float if used in a saltwater environment.

Other things like Dressing on the rear treble, adding extra Flash with the use of strips of Prism film, adding stripes or dots with coloured Tecta's or repainting and partially or totally changing the colour scheme or underside of a lure.

I recall reading an in depth article on Lure Testing a few years ago, briefly they had divers underwater observing the lures and recording depth etc as they were trolled past, one if the comments which sticks with me was the mention of the visual effect from a lure with strips running the length of the body as opposed to vertical strips. I am still intrigued by this comment and the very few lures in the market that have strips running from head to tail. Food for thought perhaps!