SYDNEY LAKE FISHING CHEAT SHEET

How to Catch Walleye

Where they are, how deep, what to throw and when to go, mid-May to September.

SIX RULES THAT WORK ALL SEASON

1. **Low light is go time.** Dawn, dusk, wind and clouds. The last hour before sunset is often the best of the day.
2. **Clear water deep, dark water shallow.** Clear Sydney: deeper, low-light bite. Stained Kilburn and back bays: shallower, bites all day.
3. **Minnow hooking trick.** Hook the minnow in the mouth and out the gill, then back through the opposite side through the spine.
4. **Bright day? Fish the shade.** When the sun is high, fish the shady side of steep breaks.
5. **Fish the edges.** Weedlines, the lip of a flat, the windy face of a reef, the top of a narrows.
6. **Cold front? Go small and slow.** Drop to a 1/8 oz jig and smaller bait, slide a little deeper, slow down.

MONTH BY MONTH

MONTH	WHERE TO LOOK	DEPTH	WHAT TO THROW	BEST TIME
Mid–late May The Hungry Opener Water 45–55°F	Dark, shallow bays and creek mouths near spawning areas (Mineral, Tranquility, Hansen's, Bottle). Current, wind-blown points, mud lines.	**3–10 ft**	**1/8–1/4 oz jig + minnow**, dragged slow. 3 in plastic to cover water. Floating Rapala or Shad Rap on drop-offs.	**Afternoon and evening** as the sun warms the bays. Mornings fair.
June Mud Flats & Mayflies Water 55–68°F	Mud flats in the stained bays, new weed edges, Kilburn narrows, wind-blown points. Clear basin on bright days: 12–18 ft.	**6–12 ft**	**1/4 oz jig + minnow**: bounce, lift, pause. Minnow on a slip bobber. Hatch: bouncer + minnow spinner rig over mud, 15–20 ft.	**Evening**, peaking about 30 min before sunset. Kilburn bites midday.
July Hit the Reefs Water 68–75°F	Main-lake reefs, sunken islands and rocky points (Finger Reefs, Blood Brothers, The Gap). **Windy side first.** Narrows with current.	**10–20 ft**	**1/4–3/8 oz jig + minnow** on reef edges. Bouncer + minnow spinner rig at ¾–1¼ mph. Windy: Shad Rap over reef tops.	**Dawn and the last 2 hours before dark.** Windy or cloudy middays.
August Dog Days, Deep Edges Water 68–73°F	Mid-lake humps, reefs and sunken islands next to deep water. Deep point edges. Kilburn: about 18–28 ft.	**18–30 ft**	**3/8 oz jig + minnow** straight down. Snap-jig plastics. Bouncer + minnow rig. Dusk: troll a #5 Shad Rap in 6–10 ft.	**Twilight into dark.** Midday: shady side of steep breaks.
September Heavyweights on the Breaks Water 55–64°F	Steep breaks on main-lake humps and points. Channels with 25–40 ft holes. Mini Gap, Kilburn big-island flat.	**23–32 ft**	**3/8–1/2 oz jig + minnow**, straight down. Pink and white. Snap-jig a plastic minnow.	**Daylight bite**, mid-morning on. Heaviest fish of the season.

TACKLE BOX

- 6–6½ ft medium-light rod, 8–12 lb fluoro
- Jigs: mostly 1/4 oz, some 1/8, 3/8 and 1/2 oz
- Chartreuse, orange, pink & white, gold, plain
- 3 in twister tails and paddletails
- Shad Rap, Floating Rapala, Husky Jerk
- Bottom bouncers, spinner rigs, slip bobbers
- **Minnows all season** (sold at camp). Leeches and crawlers work at times

QUICK TIPS

- **Fish the wind.** Start on the windy side of the reef.
- **Caught one? Stay.** Walleye school. Note the depth and stay in it.
- **No bites in 20 minutes?** Move.
- **Mayflies hatching?** Fish the mud-flat edges, smaller and slower.
- **July to September:** rent a Garmin at camp and mark your first fish.

KEEP & RELEASE

- Keep 2 walleye a day, 18 in or under
- 27 in+? Register it in Ontario's Trophy Waters at camp (witness + photo), then release it
- Bring deep fish up slowly. Fish from 30 ft+ have a harder time
- Have the camera ready before you lift a big one
- Warm water: set the hook fast with live bait

Full guide: sydneylake.com/how-to-catch-walleye
Sydney Lake Wilderness Lodge · fly-in fishing 30 minutes north of Kenora, Ontario
Questions? Call **1-800-437-9937** or text Jeb **1-780-660-7171**

Tips from the dock, written by Jeb Fahlgren
sydneylake.com