



**2026 PAID PDF GUIDE**

# Utah Stocked Fish Weekend Playbook

**2026 Beginner & Family Guide**

Where to go this weekend, what to bring, what to throw, and how to avoid wasting the trip.

Beginner rigs

Family waters

Weekend decisions

**USE THIS FIRST**

# Start here: the 3-step weekend loop

**1**

## **Check recency**

Open the DWR stocking report and look for waters stocked in the last 1-10 days. That is your first filter, not a guarantee.

**2**

## **Choose by effort**

For kids or first-timers, pick short drives, bathrooms, safe banks, and a nearby backup pond before chasing bigger fish.

**3**

## **Pack one pivot**

Bring the trout kit plus one backup species kit: panfish for kids, catfish for evening, or white bass for Utah Lake windows.

## **The whole point**

Do not ask "where is the best place in Utah?" Ask "what is the best trip for this weekend, this weather, this group, and this bite window?"

**QUICK SCORECARD**

# How to pick water in under five minutes

**+3**

Stocked in the last week or there is a reliable seasonal bite.

**+2**

Drive is short enough that a slow bite will not ruin the day.

**+2**

Bank access is simple for your group.

**+1**

There is a realistic second species to target.

**-2**

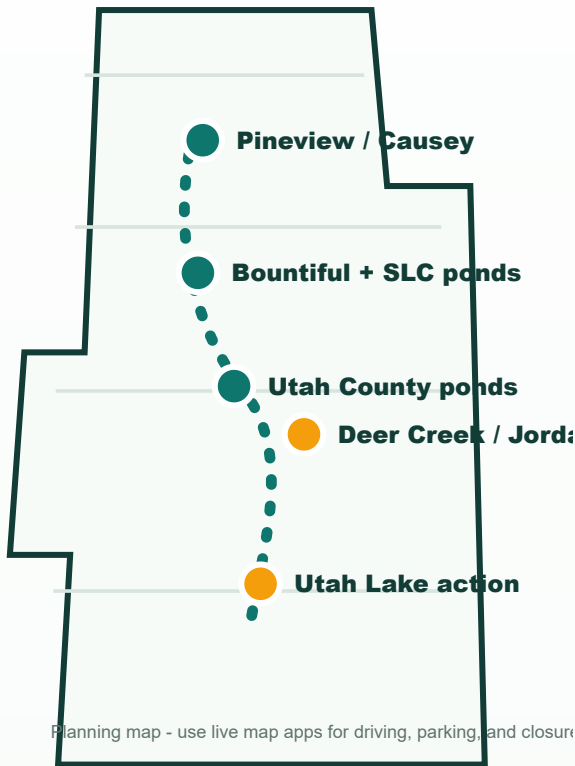
Wind, heat, crowds, or drought conditions make the first plan fragile.

**-3**

You have not checked current regulations or emergency changes.

Scoring is a planning tool only. It is not a regulation or stocking guarantee.

# This is not a DWR homework packet



## What is already narrowed for you

The guide gives you	You verify before fishing
Beginner/family water shortlist	Current stocking entry and park access
Primary + backup trip logic	Weather, wind, closures, and emergency changes
Exact first rigs and presentations	Water-specific bait/lure restrictions
Stroller/wagon and restroom notes	Seasonal restroom status and construction
Species pivots for slow trout days	Current harvest limits for the exact water

Use the DWR report for legal and live facts. Use this guide to decide what those facts mean for a two-hour beginner trip.

# What to fish this month

## Jan

### Safe-ice trout only

Fish stocked trout only where ice/access are clearly safe; keep backup plans close.

## Feb

### Thaw-window bait

Use slow bait or tiny spoons during warm windows; do not force unsafe ice.

## Mar

### First stocking push

Community ponds become the best beginner filter when fresh stocking appears.

## Apr

### Prime pond month

Recent stocking plus active trout makes short family trips efficient.

## May

### White bass watch

Fish trout early; watch Utah Lake tributary mouths and marinas as water warms.

## Jun

### Catfish evenings

Shift toward catfish, bass, bluegill, and higher-elevation trout.

## Jul

### Heat-first planning

Fish early/late; avoid warm stressed trout water and target warmwater species.

## Aug

### Low-light ponds

Use evenings for catfish/panfish or drive higher for trout conditions.

## Sep

### Cool-night restart

Cooler nights improve trout behavior and bass edges before fall stocking peaks.

## Oct

### Fall trout window

Stocked trout and reservoir shore action improve again.

## Nov

### Quiet-bank bait

Slow bait, small spoons, and simple trout rigs beat overcomplicated plans.

## Dec

### Access check month

Verify access, ice, and current regulations before travel.

## BEST BETS

# Best beginner waters to shortlist

Water	Best use	First move	Backup
<b>Bountiful Pond</b> Wasatch Front North	March-May for trout; summer evenings for catfish.	PowerBait on a sliding sinker or bait hook under a bobber.	If the obvious bank is crowded, walk to secondary corners and fan-cast a spinner.
<b>Fairmont Park Pond</b> Salt Lake Valley	Spring trout and short after-school sessions.	Bobber, split shot, size 8-10 hook, PowerBait or worm.	Switch from still bait to a small spinner if fish are cruising but not committing.
<b>Salem Pond</b> Utah County	Spring trout, summer catfish, warm evenings for panfish.	PowerBait on bottom for trout; worm under bobber for kids.	Move to shaded edges and target bluegill if trout pressure gets heavy.
<b>Kidney Pond</b> Salt Lake Valley	Spring trout and summer evening panfish.	Worm or dough bait with a light bobber rig.	Hop to Midas Pond or Grandpa's Pond if the bank is crowded.
<b>Midas Pond</b> Salt Lake Valley	Spring and early summer.	Small hook, split shot, bobber, worm or PowerBait.	Fish moving baits only after you have covered bait depth changes.
<b>Grandpa's Pond</b> Salt Lake Valley	Spring trout with warmwater fallback later.	PowerBait or worm, then a small spinner when fish move shallow.	Rotate through the South Jordan pond cluster rather than grinding one slow bank.
<b>Manila Creek Pond</b> Utah County	Spring and fall trout.	Bobber rig with PowerBait or a worm.	Bring one small spinner for active fish and keep casts short.
<b>Deer Creek Reservoir</b> Heber Valley	Spring trout from shore; boat options broaden through summer.	PowerBait or worm near points, then spoon/spinner to cover water.	Move by wind direction and avoid committing to dead shoreline.