

# Fish Finder Buying Checklist Canada 2026

Use this before comparing screens, sonar packages, battery kits, or ice-fishing electronics.

## Trip Platform

- Boat / kayak / canoe / rental / ice / lodge boat
- Permanent mount or removable kit?
- Screen must be readable sitting, standing, or in shelter light.
- Transducer mount location planned before purchase.

## Water and Species

- Main water: shallow weeds / deep basin / river / big lake / ice hole
- Main species: bass / walleye / trout / pike / panfish / salmon
- Need bottom detail, bait clouds, suspended fish, maps, or waypoints?
- Fishing style: casting / trolling / vertical jigging / drifting.

## Budget Reality

- Unit budget: \_\_\_\_\_
- Battery and mount budget: \_\_\_\_\_
- Map card/app budget: \_\_\_\_\_
- Install time and tools: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sonar, Maps and Power Notes

Electronics work only when the full system fits the trip.

## Sonar Choice

- Traditional sonar for depth and bottom.
- Down imaging for clearer structure shapes.
- Side imaging for scanning wider water from boats.
- Live/forward sonar only if the platform and budget support it.

## Mapping Choice

- Need contour maps?
- Need waypoint marking?
- Need route safety on larger water?
- Need charts for every province or only one region?

## Power Choice

- Battery chemistry and charger confirmed.
- Runtime estimate for screen size and temperature.
- Cold-weather backup plan.
- Cable routing avoids water, feet, and paddle strokes.

# Setup and Trip Review

Use the same notes after the trip so the next purchase is smarter.

## Setup Check

- Screen angle readable in sun.
- Transducer is level and secure.
- Cables tied down.
- Battery secured and dry.
- Unit removed or protected for transport.

## On-Water Notes

- Depths where fish showed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Structure found: \_\_\_\_\_
- Bait/fish marks: \_\_\_\_\_
- Useful waypoint names: \_\_\_\_\_

## Review

- What worked?
- What was annoying?
- What needs practice?
- What upgrade is actually justified?