

Ice Fishing Trip Checklist Canada 2026

Page 1 - Safety and ice conditions

Use this page before anyone walks out. Ice changes by day, depth, current, snow cover, and shoreline exposure.

Ice check before travel

- Local ice report checked: _____
- Access point and exit point: _____
- Clear blue ice observed: yes / no / mixed
- Weak areas marked: current / pressure cracks / old holes / inlets / outlets

Trip plan

- Fishing location shared with: _____
- Expected return time: _____
- Weather and wind checked: yes / no
- Night travel avoided: yes / no

Safety gear

- Cleats on boots: yes / no
- Ice picks accessible, not buried in sled: yes / no
- Throw rope or rescue line packed: yes / no
- Dry gloves, spare hat, and emergency layer packed: yes / no

Gear and Shelter Checklist

Page 2 - Rods, shelter, heat, electronics, and setup

Pack for the way you fish. A mobile walleye day needs a different kit than a family shelter day.

Core fishing kit

- Ice rod combo: panfish / walleye / trout / pike
- Line and leader checked for cold weather: yes / no
- Jigs, spoons, bait, and hooks packed: yes / no
- Scoop, bucket, measuring tool, and pliers packed: yes / no

Shelter and comfort

- Shelter packed and anchors counted: yes / no
- Chair, floor mat, and storage plan: yes / no
- Heater checked outdoors before trip: yes / no / not using
- Ventilation plan if using heat: _____

Hole drilling and electronics

- Auger battery or blades checked: yes / no
- Backup blade cover or wrench: yes / no
- Flasher/finder charged: yes / no
- Depth map or lake notes reviewed: yes / no

Species, Location, and Trip Notes

Page 3 - Fish target, rules, and review

Use this after the trip too. The fastest winter learning comes from recording where fish were active and why.

Target and rules

- Target species: _____
- Zone or province: _____
- Licence and local regulations checked: yes / no
- Limit, slot, bait, line, and hut rules noted: yes / no

Location pattern

- Depth range: _____
- Structure: weed edge / basin / point / hump / current / drop-off
- Best bite window: morning / mid-day / evening / night
- Fish response: aggressive / neutral / negative

Trip review

- What worked: _____
- What failed: _____
- One change for next trip: _____
- Safety issue to fix before next trip: _____