

QI had my first go at pole fishing the other day using a friend's tackle. I loved it, but I'm a bit in the dark about all the paraphernalia required to do it properly.

I could do with some guidance on what bits and bobs I need and how to use it all to make the most of my fishing. Any ideas?

Ricky Hope
Hometown: Blackburn
Age: 37
Favourite species: Any

A Putting together a good catch on the pole is great fun Ricky, and we can certainly help you make the most of it – especially with the aid of top angler Darren Cox. Here's what he had to say...



CFA EXPERT
Name: Darren Cox
Hometown: Stratford-upon-Avon
Sponsor: Garbolino

Words: Darren Cox Photos: Steve Martin

ASK AN EXPERT
Your questions answered



TYPES OF TOP KITS

There are a few different types of top-two kits these days, which all are around 2.9 metres long, and use the full length to elasticate:



THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

Garbolino's Darren Cox gives you the lowdown on what to look for in a pole package, and how to set yourself up for a productive day on the bank.

The big question here is 'what to look for in a pole package?' Buying a new pole is a bit like buying a new computer or car; plenty of different brands and models all claiming to

be the next best revolutionary product, as well as friends and experts telling you that the brand they have is best! So how should you go about deciding exactly which pole to buy?

First of all, establish your budget. This will give you the ceiling price you want to spend and that will then help you understand what you will get for your money. We all want the best cars and biggest houses, but do we really need them? Poles are the same; the best-quality poles are all

generally sold in 16m packages with extra top kits and sections to boot.

The more you pay for a pole, however, the better quality it will be in terms of lightness and rigidity. But do you really need the best 16m pole? If you don't then there may be some hidden benefits for you.

The most hard-wearing and strong; a little like Formula 1 racing cars, which are perfect in the right hands when used at the highest level but hopeless on a main road!

There are some excellent 16m poles available at more sensible prices, and in reality for those only using that length on odd occasions they

offer much better value for money. Look for a pole that will do everything for you; most of us don't fish much past 13 metres, so it's really important that at this length and shorter it feels balanced and strong enough in the section walls and joint ends to cope with your style of fishing.

Make sure you get plenty of top kits with your pole too, as forking out for more kits can be a very expensive operation. Most poles now come as a package, and a good example is the new 16m Garbolino G-MAX Competition Carp.

You also get a total of eight top kits, which include Power Puller, Power and Match Lite kits. The pole is good at all lengths and very solid in all sections, which makes it durable.

POWER LITE KITS

1 These are standard top-two kits, which have added strength to cope with commercial carp fishing. It is when you break down to land a big fish that the pole is under a lot of pressure so I would advise you use power kits for all but your lightest fishing. These kits are designed to be used in conjunction with elastics up to size 20 (3mm hollow/2.1mm solid) if used correctly.

POWER PULLER KITS

2 By far the most popular kits for commercials, the puller system works so that the elastic can be 'pulled' out in order to increase the tension. This helps get the fish in quicker but also means that if it bolts close to the net you can release the tension according to how hard it is fighting. The biggest advantage of these kits is that you can use lighter hollow elastics to catch bigger fish, meaning you lose fewer, especially smaller skimmers that 'bounce' off a heavy elastic.

MATCH LITE KITS

3 Designed more for thinner-diameter and solid elastics up to size 10 (2mm hollow/1.4mm solid), these kits are lighter but they are not as strong. They are ideal if fishing light lines and hooks for silvers as they are very responsive on the strike. Make sure you cut your tips back far enough for the elastic to work freely through the top kit. Fitting a 5mm internal PTFE bush will ensure that any elastic you fit will flow well in the tops. Use a 5mm internal bush with a smaller inner hole for lighter elastics.

POTTING KIT AND CUPS

4 A quality potting kit is essential, as you will be using it a lot! Most of the time when potting bait in I will use the biggest pot, but the smaller ones come in handy on windy days or where you need to ensure you don't feed too much.

(a) The Garbolino Extendable Potting kit is supplied with most Garbolino pole packs and is unique as you don't have to cut it back; simply adjust the length of the section to suit the exact length of your top kits.

(b) It is also very strong so it won't buckle under the weight of a big pot of corn or a heavy ball of groundbait.

(c) The threads provided can be glued straight into the top of the kit, then simply screw the pot on at your peg. An essential piece of kit you cannot fish without.

