

**TAKE THE BAIT
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Most every angler has at least one or two favorite lures or jigs in their tackle box. These are commonly known as confidence baits because the angler has had more success using those one or two lures than they have with other baits they have used in the past. These lures differ from angler to angler depending on the species of fish that are targeted or the region that the angler is fishing in. Here in Tampa Bay my confidence lures for fishing inshore species would have to be a half ounce gold spoon, a quarter ounce buck tail jig and last but not least is a half ounce D.O.A. shrimp. With those three simple lures I have managed to catch just about everything that has lips and swims, from trout to tarpon.

There is no big secret on why or how these lures produce better catches; it's really quite simple. A spoon lure has a special characteristic, while it is falling or being reeled in the spoon wobbles by its design and the sun reflects off of it and causes momentary flashes that resembles a crippled or wounded bait fish that triggers a strike response by the fish. Spoons can also be used by offshore anglers for trolling or jigging in deep water where the wobble of the spoon displaces water and creates a low frequency vibration that the fish senses through their lateral line and helps them home in on the lure.

The buck tail jig is probably one of the oldest fishing lures around and extremely effective. Once again by design this lure does nothing more than resemble a small

baitfish. The profile of a buck tail jig with its lead head at one end and the buck hair strands that are lashed to the shaft of the hook on the other resembles the body and tail of the baitfish. The profile of the lure coupled with the visual affect of bouncing up and down is often too much for the fish to resist and their instinctive response is to strike at the jig. Once again this lure can be used in deep-water situations such as fishing for grouper. The buck tail material itself I believe has a certain texture that is appealing to the fish so it holds on to it without hesitation. A jig can often be tipped with a small piece of shrimp to appeal to the fish's sense of smell as well.

The D.O.A. shrimp by its design resembles nothing more than what it is, “a shrimp,” and we all know everything likes and eats shrimp. From the time a saltwater fish hatches and goes through his normal life chances are good that fish has eaten a lot of shrimp along the way. The D.O.A shrimp is also impregnated with natural shrimp flavoring along with its soft plastic body for the right texture makes the artificial shrimp real confidence bait.

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