

# Fishery Basics — Fishing Gear

## Gear Types

All types of fishing gear, regardless of how it might be used, are designed to lure and capture fish. Fishing gears are defined as tools used to capture marine/aquatic resources, whereas how the gear is used is the **fishing method**. Additionally, a single type of gear may also be used in multiple ways. Different target **species** require different fishing gear to effectively catch the target species.

Fishing gears fall under two general categories, active gear and passive gear. Active gears are designed to chase and capture target species, while passive gears generally sit in one place allowing the target species to approach the capture device. The [United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#) further classifies fishing gear into 11 categories primarily based on how the gear are fished, we have provided detailed information about each category [See Fishing Gear](#). To browse a partial list of fishing methods and marine zones where they might be used [click here](#).

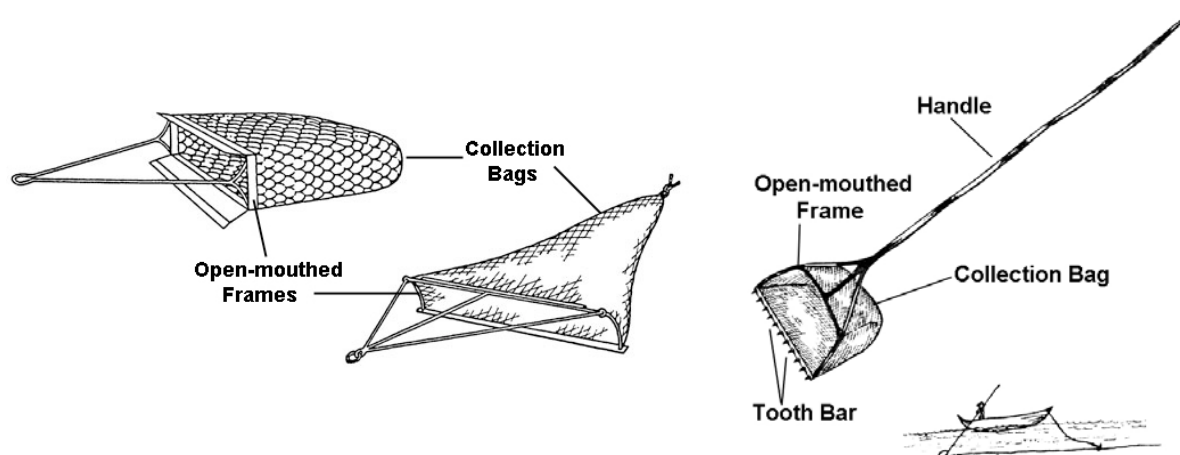
## Dredges

**Dredges** are dragged along the seafloor to catch **shellfish**. Dredges are made from an open-mouthed frame that scoops shellfish from the seafloor. Attached to the back of the frame is a collection area made from metal rings or mesh. These gear often fish for shellfish, such as Mussels, Oysters, or Scallops. The giant seagoing Scallop dredges have a sharp underbar that scrapes the bottom, while other types of dredges may have rake-like teeth to uncover Clams of buried **mollusks**.

Dredges are primarily operated in shallow areas but are sometimes deployed in deeper waters on the **continental shelf**. The [United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Gear](#) identifies two types of dredges:

1. [Boat dredges](#)
2. [Hand dredges](#)

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Illustrations of boat dredges (left) and a hand dredge (right). (Credit: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

## References

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## Additional Resources

[Bycatch Reduction Database](#)

FAO – [The Use of Technical Measures in Responsible Fisheries: Regulation Of Fishing Gear](#)



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Marine Conservation Society – [Fishing Methods](#)