



Understanding Spey Lines

2012

by Simon Gawesworth

Understanding Spey lines – the Basics

A newcomer to spey casting would be forgiven for peeping into this sport, trying it out, or listen to the many different opinions out there, and then turning tail and running away from the mass of confusion.

There is a mind boggling array of theories, techniques, tackle and styles, and it is very difficult for the beginner to make head or tail out of the world of spey casting. To explain the subtleties and intricacies of this spey world would be like trying to explain the rules of cricket to the average American, or of baseball to the average Brit. However, as fly line manufacturers, we only need to make it easier to understand the fly line – the most important part of your tackle.

Let's start with a good rule of thumb. "*The shorter the head length you use, the easier it is to cast*". Use your rod length as an indication of "easy". A spey line that has a head 3 times longer than the rod (for example a 12 ft rod with 36 ft head length) is a lot easier to cast than a line with a head that is 5 or 6 times longer than the rod (60 to 72 ft on the same 12 ft rod).

Another advantage with shorter head length lines is that you can use them in much more restricted spaces than longer head lines - which require enough room to form a decent D-loop behind.

The main advantage of a longer head line is "fishing efficiency". An angler will spend a lot less time stripping in line between each cast, and have less slack line swirling around on the water in front of them with the longer line types. They are also a delight to use (when a caster is good enough).

There are three different types of lines that you will hear talk about in the spey world: "Traditional Spey", "Scandinavian" (usually abbreviated to "Scandi") and Skagit". Each of these has an advantage over the others in certain situations. If you know what the advantages of each of these groups are, you can choose the type of line you need much more effectively.

TRADITIONAL SPEY

In the old days, anglers used heavy double tapers to cast the long two handed spey rods. However these are not the best line for producing easy casts, so spey lines started to get developed. Spey lines are usually lines that have a fairly long head length - something in excess of 50 ft, and usually with an integrated running line. There are many different types of spey lines; Short belly lines, mid belly lines and long belly lines, which will be explained in a little more detail further on in this document.

The advantage a Spey line has over the Scandinavian and Skagit type lines is versatility. Spey lines are a great for anglers that are going to fish multiple destinations, for a variety of species and in all seasons.

SCANDINAVIAN

As the name suggests, Scandinavian style heads originated in Scandinavia. They are usually shooting heads with long front tapers, and they are very pleasant to cast. The heads are short, usually no longer than three times the length of the rod, thus they are much easier to cast than Spey lines, and very good for smaller rivers and tight casting situations. The main disadvantages with this type of head is that they don't cast heavy flies and fast sinking tips well, and that there is a lot of fishing time wasted at the end of each cast stripping the line back (if you make a long cast!).

SKAGIT

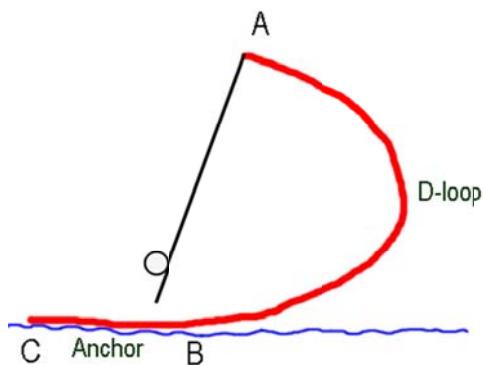
Skagit lines/heads are short and heavy - even shorter than Scandinavian lines in most cases; working on a ratio of less than three times the rod length. Skagit lines almost always need a front tip added (whether floating or sinking) before they are ready to fish. They are the newest design of spey line on the market and the strength of Skagit lines is that they lift weight very easily. Anyone fishing large or heavy flies will find nothing casts these easier than a Skagit line. Likewise, a fast sinking tip is far easier to cast on the end of a Skagit line than either of the other two types. Also, as Skagit heads are so short, they are the easiest of all spey line designs to cast.

The disadvantage with Skagit lines is that they don't have the same kind of presentation as the other two types, and tend to be clunkier when they land. Because they are so short, they also have a lot of stripping in after each cast has fished out.

The first part of choosing a spey line is always going to be choosing the best taper for the situation you are fishing. Many casters prefer shooting head options so they can interchange between heads as they fish different seasons or species, and only need a single reel and a shooting line to do this.

Taper

Most "Spey" lines follow a simple principle - there needs to be weight in the back of the belly to load the rod effectively when it is formed as a "D-loop". There also needs to be a long fine front taper, so that the line lying on the water ("The Anchor") at the start of the forward cast has as little drag as possible.



In a spey cast the "D-loop" (from A to B) loads the rod and needs to be the heaviest part of the line. The "Anchor" (B to C) lies on the water. The more line there is lying on the water, the more energy is lost during the forward cast as it tries to tear itself off the surface film.

A typical spey line design will have most of the weight in the back end of the head and a long, fine front taper to make the most of these casting requirements:



Within this basic spey line design are numerous variations and permutations, but the main difference to compare is the length of the head. As stated earlier, the shorter head length Spey lines are usually the easiest to cast.

Because the loading weight is at the back of the line, a long head spey line needs plenty of length outside the rod to make an efficient cast. A caster using a longer belly lines has to form a big D-loop, which means they need more space behind them. As a very rough guideline you need about a third of the head length to make a good cast, so a line with a 75 ft long head, needs 25 ft of space behind. A short 30 ft head needs only 10 ft of room. This is a very loose guideline, as the casters skill level can make a big difference.

Space behind isn't the only factor. There are other factors that influence the choice of head length:

1. **Casting Ability** - you need to be a better caster to handle the longer head length lines.
2. **River Size** – small rivers don't need long head spey lines
3. **Rod Length** – a short rod does not have the same lift as a long rod, so the shorter the rod is, the shorter the line head length should be.
4. **Sinking Tip** – with sink tips or heavy flies it can be really tricky to get the sunken line to the surface with a long belly line. A short head line means that the sink tip is closer to you and easier to get out of the water.
5. **Stripping flies** – some fishing techniques require you to strip the fly in to entice a fish to take. The short head lines are perfect for this as you must strip the start of the head up to the rod tip before making a cast. If you don't need to strip line, the short belly lines can be more of a problem and a caster will have to manage the slack coils of running line hanging in the water before each cast. It can also waste good fishing time, having to strip the line into the casting length before each cast.

Spey Line Head Length Comparisons



Short Head - 30 to 40 ft



Medium Head - 50 to 60 ft



Long Head - 65 to 75 ft

A good rule of thumb is to start with a short head length line and, with practice, get to a skill level where you can cast the whole head at the tip of the rod, without stripping anything in, then move up to the mid lengths, then to the longer head lines. This will certainly advance your skill level.

SKAGIT CASTING

The most recent style of spey casting to evolve is called Skagit casting (pronounced **ska-jit**) and named after the Skagit River in Washington.

Skagit casting utilizes a much shorter and thicker/heavier spey line than regular spey casting. These exceptionally easy casting, short heads allow casters to make long casts in extremely tight situations. Even the most novice of spey casters can make a 70 ft cast with no more than 5 ft of room behind. Added to the shortness of the line is the fact that the head weighs about the same amount as the corresponding Spey line, but at half the length. This means that the Skagit line is about twice as thick as the equivalent Spey line, and has almost twice the weight per inch. This extra weight per inch is an immense asset for lifting out deeply sunken tips or heavy, large flies. Nothing will pick up big flies or fast sinking tips as easily as a Skagit line does.



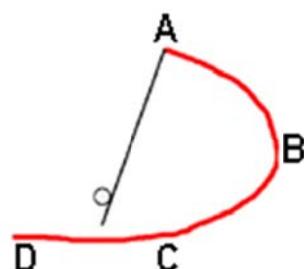
SALTWATER/LAKE - OVERHEAD

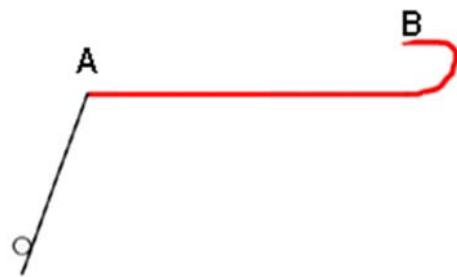
More and more people are using two-handed rods - both Switch and Spey - for overhead casting in the surf these days. The length and power of these rods are great for throwing big flies out against a wind and over incoming surf - and just for pure distance!

When choosing a line for overhead casting on a two-handed rod there are two important considerations.

1. **The head length needs to be shorter than for spey casting (so that the back loop does not drop and line speed is retained to shoot big distances).**
2. **The line weight should be less with an overhead cast, than with a spey cast.**

Here's why: In this diagram the rod needs 500 grains to load. The part of a spey cast that loads the rod is the D-loop (A to C), so this part needs to weigh 500 grains. The piece of line from C to D really has no effect on the load of the rod, but still has weight, so the total line weight here from A to D is about 650 grains.





With an overhead cast, the entire weight of the line serves to load the rod at the end of the back cast. If you used the 650 grain line above on a rod that requires only 500 grains, you would crush it. For overhead casting, the whole line must weigh 500 grains.

Because of this, the best design of line for overhead casting for maximum distance, and for fast, effective rod loading, is a line with more weight at the front end. A good example of this is RIO's OutBound and OutBound Short series. The OB short is ideal for Switch and single handed rods, while the regular OutBound is more applicable to the true two handed spey rods of 12 ft or more.



Weight

Perhaps the greatest confusion lies in the weight/rating of Spey rods. Most fly fishers are familiar with the rating of a single handed rod – choose a #5 rod for trout, a #8 rod for bonefish and a #12 rod for tarpon, for example. Two-handed rods also have a similar rating – somewhere between #5 and #12, but the 8 weight fly line that loads your bonefish rod will never get close to loading a #8 Spey rod. The reason for this is that Spey rods are far more powerful than an equivalent rated single handed rod.

A single handed rod, rated for a #8 line, loads effectively with between 200 and 300 grains. A #8 Spey rod will take between 450 and 600 grains to load for spey casting. The “why” isn’t so important - just remember that a Spey rod needs more weight to make it load.

One confusing thing about spey lines is that most of them have more than one line number as a “size”. RIO’s old WindCutter lines had three numbers, such as 7/8/9, 8/9/10 and 9/10/11. The reason for this triple numbering system is that the first WindCutter line designed by Jim Vincent, was made by taking the body of a #10 line, adding some of a #9 to the front end and then finishing it off with the full front taper of a #8, thus the line became an 8/9/10. The numbering system stuck. However, it is rare to find triple number designated lines these days, and most line manufacturers use a dual numbering system.

With dual numbered lines (like RIO’s AFS, UniSpey and PowerSpey) use the higher number. For example a line designated 8/9 is, in effect a #9 line. To help choose the right line for your rod, we have compiled a chart on RIO’s web site (www.rioproducts.com) that recommends the right line for hundreds of spey rods on the market.

AFTMA vs AFFTA Standard

Okay, so how confused do you want to be? In an attempt to illustrate the difference in line weights between the single handed AFTMA standard and the two handed AFFTA standard the following charts might be helpful. On the other hand, they might cause you to go cross eyed and reach for the nearest bottle of Single Malt!

The **AFTMA** (American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association) standard is an attempt to standardize line weights for single handed rods so that whichever line manufacturer you buy a fly line from you know that they will all weigh about the same and load the rod equally – that is, of course, assuming line manufacturers actually make fly lines to the **AFTMA** standard (it is not compulsory!).

Before you look at the charts you need to understand that the two handed standard from **AFFTA** (American Fly Fishing Trade Association) actually has **four** different categories: **H, S, M** and **L**. More than regular casting the head length of the line in spey casting influences the weight. So, we have four standards (for ease of recognition RIO's appropriate Spey line is listed after the category):

'H' is for shooting **Heads** and is measured at 40 ft. – **AFS head and AFS OutBound**

'S' is for **Short belly** spey lines and is measured at 55 ft – **UniSpey**

'M' is for **Mid length** belly lines and is measured at 65 ft - **PowerSpey**

'L' is for **Long** belly spey lines and is measured at 75 ft.

So, depending on how long the belly of the spey line is, the “weigh point” falls at different lengths. The AFTMA single handed designation is measured at 30 feet.

Now that everyone is clear on that, let's look at the AFTMA and AFFTA Standards (the numbers represent the weight in grains at the “weigh point”)!

Size	Single Handed	H	S	M	L
#5	140	-	380	-	-
#6	160	250	420	460	600
#7	185	300	470	510	650
#8	210	360	530	570	710
#9	240	430	600	640	780
#10	280	510	680	720	860
#11	330	600	770	810	950
#12	380	700	870	910	1050

Oh, a final thing to remember is that the two handed standard has a plus or minus tolerance of 30 grains, while the single handed standard has a tolerance of plus or minus 6 to 12 grains (depending on the size). Thus you could have a spey line labeled S8 and it would be acceptable if it weighed between 500 and 560 grains.

Mega confusing! Just don't buy a single handed line for a two handed rod!!

Which Spey line should I choose?

With the array of spey and skagit lines on the market it is a little baffling to know which one to purchase. The above text is designed to help you understand some of the theory behind line design and be able to make more knowledgeable decisions. The next part of this document is a more detailed description of each line RIO makes and their particular advantages.

One note to observe is that more and more spey casters are adopting the use of shooting heads in various spey formats. There are four principle reasons for this:

- 1) *It keeps the number of reels and spools purchased down to a minimum.*
- 2) *Shooting heads are much cheaper than the full length lines.*
- 3) *There is nothing as fast, or as efficient, when an angler needs to change line type, than looping off one shooting head, and looping on the new, required one.*
- 4) *An angler can travel very lightly, with a single reel and half a dozen lines*

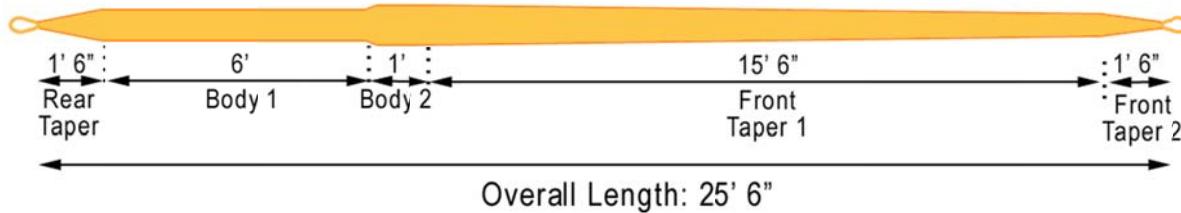
Skagit Line

RIO has developed two different types of Skagit lines, both offered as shooting heads:

1) Skagit Flights are powerful shooting heads that will easily lift the largest of fly and the fastest of sinking tips. The taper of the Skagit Flight has been exhaustively tested and tweaked and it is the finest casting Skagit line on the market.

Skagit Flight Shooting Head

Example: 550 Grains

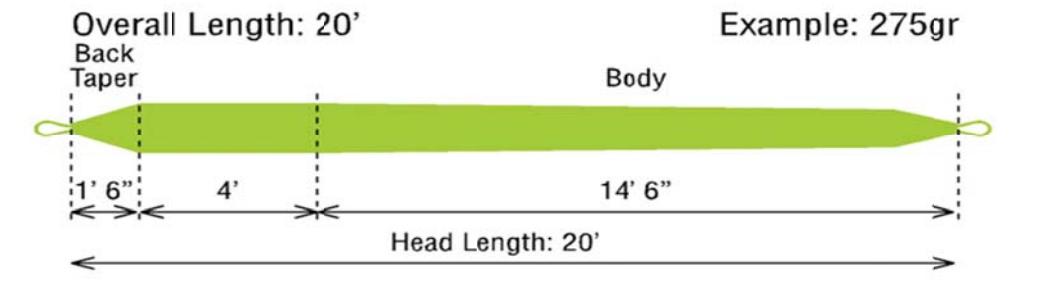


A point to note on the Skagit Flight heads is that the length of each head is different and range from 22 ft to 31 ft (depending on the size). This variation in length has been designed to eliminate the need for cheaters in most situations and keep the act of buying and rigging an outfit very simple. The Flights vary in weight by 25 grains from 350 to 750 grains (no 725 grain version), so that even the most fastidious caster can perfectly tune the head to their rod, fishing situation and casting ability.

Being a shooting head, it is important to match the right size of shooting line to the size of the head used to ensure the best possible flight time. It also helps to match the front tip to the head for similar reasons. The following is a good guideline to follow to ensure that the Flight is perfectly balanced for the best in performance. This is only a guideline, and casters can use heavier and lighter shooting lines and tips to match fly size and water/weather conditions.

Shooting Line						
Flight	Powerflex	SlickShooter	15' Tip	"T"	MOW	10' Tip
350	0.024"	25 lb	#5	T-8	Light	#5
375	0.024"	25 lb	#5	T-8	Light	#5
400	0.024"	25 lb	#6	T-8	Light	#6
425	0.024"	25 lb	#6	T-8	Light	#6
450	0.024"	25 lb	#7	T-11	Light	#7
475	0.030"	35 lb	#7	T-11	Medium	#7
500	0.030"	35 lb	#8	T-11	Medium	#8
525	0.030"	35 lb	#8	T-11	Medium	#8
550	0.030"	35 lb	#9	T-14	Medium	#9
575	0.030"	35 lb	#9	T-14	Heavy	#9
600	0.035"	50 lb	#10	T-14	Heavy	
625	0.035"	50 lb	#10	T-14	Heavy	
650	0.035"	50 lb	#11	T-17	Heavy	
675	0.040"	50 lb	#11	T-17	Heavy	
700	0.040"	50 lb	#12	T-20	Heavy	
750	0.040"	50 lb	#12	T-20	Heavy	

2) **Skagit Shorts** have a short head length of only 20 ft, and are designed for shorter rods – rods between 9 ft and 11 ft in length - and for fishing in the tightest of casting situations (even with a long rod). They are shooting heads and also require a shooting line and a front tip to make them fishable. The Shorts are available in 50 grain increments, from 275 grains up to 625 grains.



As with the Flights, it is an advantage to match shooting line and tip to the required head, and the following guideline should help:

Shooting Line						
Short	Powerflex	SlickShooter	15' Tip	"T"	MOW	10' Tip
275	0.024"	25 lb	#5	T-8	Light	#5
325	0.024"	25 lb	#5	T-8	Light	#5
375	0.024"	25 lb	#5	T-8	Light	#5
425	0.024"	25 lb	#6	T-8	Light	#6
475	0.030"	35 lb	#7	T-11	Medium	#7
525	0.030"	35 lb	#8	T-11	Medium	#8
575	0.030"	35 lb	#9	T-14	Heavy	#9
625	0.035"	50 lb	#10	T-14	Heavy	

Tips for Skagit lines

As mentioned above, all Skagit lines require a front tip to complete the rig and there are numerous options. Some anglers put Poly or VersiLeaders on the front end as a tip. While this works well enough, the diameter difference between the end of the Skagit line and the butt of the Poly/VersiLeaders is quite large (especially on the bigger heads) and the energy transfer is less efficient than with actual tips. RIO has four options for tips that are ideal for attaching to the front of a Skagit head.

15 ft Tips

One option, tried and tested over the years, is to attach a 15 ft tip to the front end. These 15 ft tips are available from most line companies as part of the VersiTip style lines they sell. RIO makes five 15 ft tips to chose from:

1. **Floating (#7 to #11)**
2. **Intermediate (1.5 - 2 ips - #4 to #12)**
3. **Type 3 (3 - 4 ips - #4 to #12)**
4. **Type 6 (6 - 7 ips - #4 to #12)**
5. **Type 8 (8 - 9 ips - #8 to #12)**

Each tip has a standard weight for a given size. For example, all #10 weight tips weigh 150 grains, which makes it really easy to change tips and keep a balanced outfit. The tip weights are as follows:

#4	61 grains
#5	73 grains
#6	84 grains
#7	95 grains
#8	109 grains
#9	129 grains
#10	150 grains
#11	166 grains
#12	190 grains

10 ft Tips

A new tip from RIO, offered for 2012, and ideal for lighter and shorter heads. It comes packaged with RIO's new Scandi Short VersiTip, but is ideal on Skagit heads in tight quarters. There are 3 options:

1. **Intermediate (1.5 to 2 ips - #4 to #12)**
2. **Type 3 (3-4 ips - #4 to #12)**
3. **Type 6 (6-7 ips - #4 to #12)**

Like the 15 ft tips, each tip has a standard weight for a given size:

#5	55 grains
#6	65 grains
#7	75 grains
#8	85 grains
#9	95 grains

T-8, T-11, T-14, T-17 & T-20

The “T” series are level, fast sinking lines with the following specifications:

“T”	Sink rate	Weight (grains per foot)
T-8	6 - 7 ips	8 g/ft
T-11	7 - 8 ips	11 g/ft
T-14	8 - 9 ips	14 g/ft
T-17	9 - 10 ips	17 g/ft
T-20	+10 ips	20 g/ft

The material is sold either in a jumbo 500 ft spool or in a 30 ft pack. Anglers simply cut this level material to the length they need for a variety of fishing conditions. The 30 ft packs of “T” have color coded, welded loops in both ends for easy rigging. T-8 has white sleeved loops, T-11 green sleeved loops, T-14 blue sleeved loops and T-17 black sleeved loops. T-20 does not have welded loops.

The weight of T-14, T-17 and T-20 makes them pretty heavy for lighter fly lines to lift out. Most of the Skagit line sizes will not have a problem with T-14, but attaching it to the lighter sizes of regular Spey lines can result in poor turnover and inefficient casts.

Skagit MOW Tips (mow rhymes with “sew”, not “cow”)

These extraordinarily easy casting and fishing tips are the very finest sink tips on the market and perfect for Skagit lines and heads. The majority of tips are 10 ft long, which allows for a very efficient casting stroke – especially on shorter spey rods. As a general guideline, the length of the tip you fish, should not exceed the length of the rod, making these tips ideal for spey rods between 11 ft and 14 ft.

There are three different series of MOW Tips “Light”, “Medium” and “Heavy”:

The Light tips use T-8 as a sinking material and have white loops

The Medium tips use T-11 as a sinking material and have green loops

The Heavy tips use T-14 as a sinking material and have blue loops.

As a rule of thumb, the Light tips are ideal for Skagit lines of 475 grains and lighter, while the Medium Tips are great on Skagit lines between 475 and 575 grains, and the Heavy tips are perfect for the heavier Skagit lines above 575 grains. This is another “loose” rule of thumb, as fly size plays an equally important role. A large, heavy fly will always cast best with a Heavy MOW tip, even on a 450 grain Skagit line.

A welded loop in each end of the MOW tips makes it very easy for anglers to interchange as necessary.

Each series of Skagit MOW tips feature 6 different tips with different lengths of sinking sections - allowing anglers to fish at a variety of depths, yet still fish one length of tip. For example, anglers can fish a short, 2.5 ft sinking tip, dropping the fly behind a particular rock in one part of the pool, then switch to a 7.5 ft sinking tip for another part of the pool and retain the easy casting stroke of all the 10 ft tips.

The six available tips are:

- 1) 10 ft floating
- 2) 7.5 ft floating/2.5 ft sinking
- 3) 5 ft floating/5 ft sinking
- 4) 2.5 ft floating/7.5 ft sinking
- 5) 10 ft sinking
- 6) 12.5 ft sinking.

Skagit MOW Tips

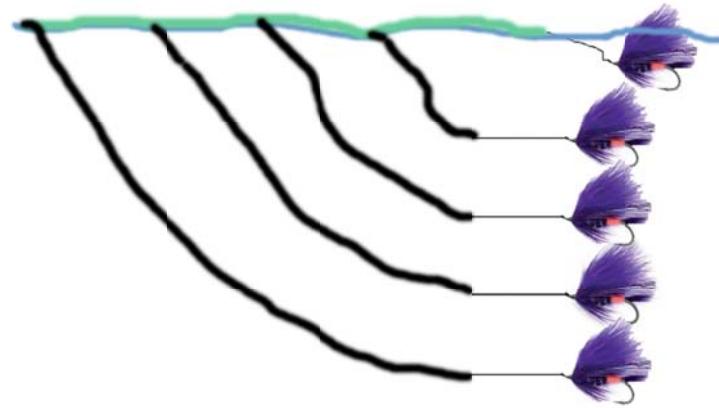
MOW Tip Light



MOW Tip Medium



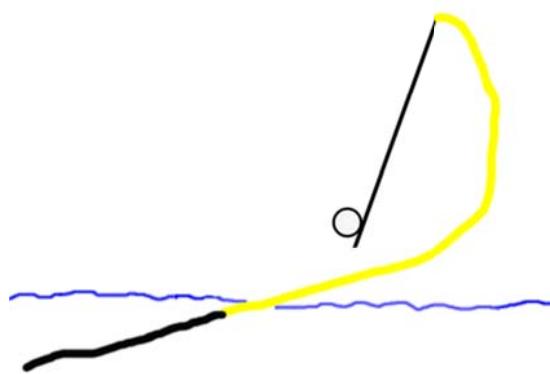
MOW Tip Heavy



The MOW tips were the brain-child of steelhead gurus Mike McCune, Scott O'Donnell and Ed Ward. These three amigos have been using their own versions of these tips for years – their clients benefiting from the easy casting, fish catching success of such a simple design.

A good point to mention with Skagit lines is that the sink tip does **not** form part of the calculation for line weight. If you look at the spey line recommendation chart on the RIO web site and find the appropriate Skagit line for your rod, make sure you **do not** deduct the weight of any sink tip you are planning on using.

If the chart suggests you need a 550 grain Skagit line, it does not matter which size sink tip weight you add on to the front end of this (as long as it is not heavier than the Skagit body). The reason for this is that the sink tip usually does not form part of the D-loop and, therefore, plays no role in loading the rod. A typical example is that someone is told that they need a 550 grain Skagit line. They know they are going to use a 150 grain sink tip, so they buy a 400 grain Skagit line (thinking that the two added together will give them the correct load). This is very wrong and will result in an under-loaded outfit. Make sure the Skagit **body** weight is correct, regardless of the sink tip.

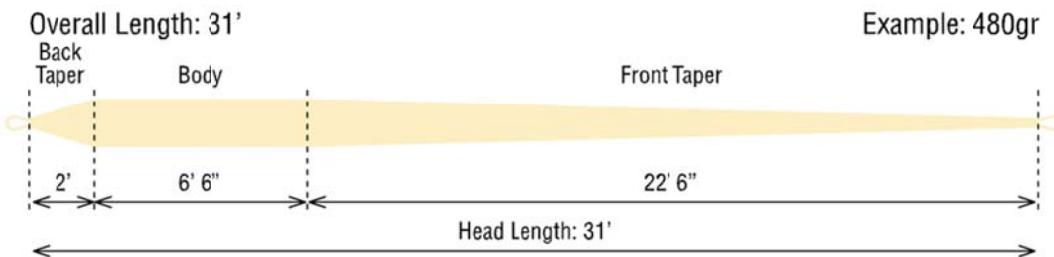


Steelhead Scandi

This series of Scandinavian style shooting heads was designed by legendary steelhead angler and guide John Hazel. John's idea was to create a series of easy casting heads that are perfectly tuned to the modern lighter/shorter two handed rods used by the majority of steelhead anglers. These heads load a rod deeper and have shorter front tapers and head lengths than RIO's AFS heads, making it ideal for effortless casting and for larger flies, VersiLeaders and tough wind conditions. There are 11 different heads available:

29 ft	280 grains	31 ft	310 grains
31 ft	350 grains	31 ft	385 grains
31 ft	410 grains	31 ft	480 grains
32 ft	435 grains	33 ft	450 grains
34 ft	480 grains	34 ft	210 grains
34 ft	550 grains		

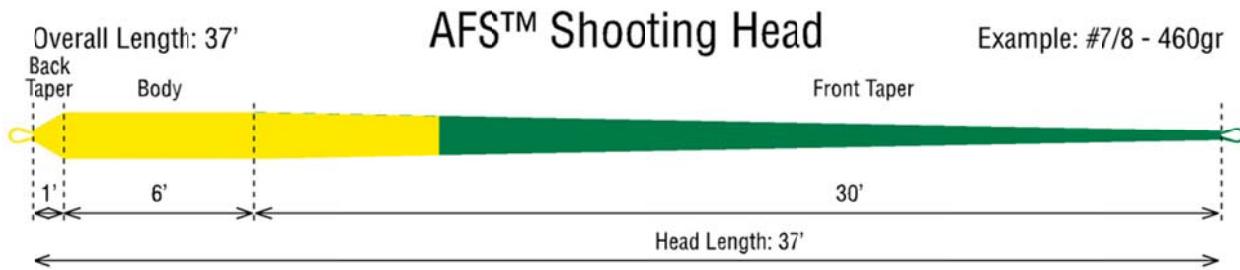
Steelhead Scandi Shooting Head



AFS Shooting Head

An excellent presentation Scandinavian style shooting head that is very easy to cast. There are two different densities available:

1. **F.** A full floating head between a 4/5 weight (31 ft, 300 grains or 9.5 m, 19 grams) and a 10/11 weight (40 ft, 640 grains or 12.2m, 42 grams). The head is a subtle olive color that will not spook fish in clear water, but the rear 15 ft is yellow so the angler can gauge the line's swing.
2. **S1.** A slow sinking head. A very slowing head, with a sink rate of 1" per second that tends to fish only a couple of inches below the surface. This is an excellent choice of head for faster water or for windy days when the wind would affect the swing of the fly. It is an awesome head for Atlantic salmon, and particularly useful for summer run steelhead on rivers like the Deschutes in Oregon. Sizes 6/7 to 10/11.



While the Steelhead Scandi and AFS heads are exceptionally easy to cast, adding a "Spey VersiLeader" to the front end can give even better casting and fishing performance. RIO has 6 different densities of these leaders in three lengths – 6 ft, 10 ft and 15 ft. Use the 6 ft leaders with switch rods of 11 ft and less. The 10 ft VersiLeaders are best on rods between 12 ft and 14 ft and the 15 ft leaders with rods of 14 ft and longer. The leader densities are:

- Floating (olive) (not in the 6 ft length)**
- Intermediate (1.5 inches per second – clear)**
- Slow sink (2.4 inches per second – green loop)**
- Medium sink (3.9 inches per second – red loop)**
- Fast sink (5.6 inches per second – blue loop)**
- Super fast sink (7.0 inches per second – black loop)**

Like all shooting heads, attach the back of either the Steelhead Scandi, or the AFS shooting heads to a hard nylon like RIO's SlickShooter (25, lb, 35 lb or 50 lb) for the ultimate in distance, or to a floating Powerflex core shooting line (0.024", 0.030", 0.035" or 0.040") for the very best handling shooting line.

RIO suggests using the 0.024" diameter shooting line for heads of 6/7 (400 grains) and lighter, the 0.030" for heads between 7/8 and 8/9 (400 to 550 grains), the 0.035" for heads of 9/10 (550 to 650 grains) and the 0.040" for 10/11 (+ 700 grains) size heads.

AFS OutBound® Integrated Shooting Head

Built with a thin, hard running line this line is the integrated version of the floating AFS head. It is an excellent choice of line for casters that do not want a loop to loop connection running through their guides. The short head is very easy to cast and particularly useful in tight situations and the long front taper gives a beautiful presentation. These lines are available in 4/5 to 10/11.

Like the AFS head these lines will cast even better with one of RIO's Spey VersiLeaders.

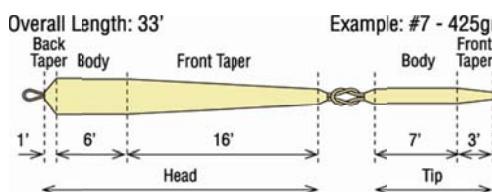


Scandi Short VersiTip – New for 2012

For 2012 RIO has developed a very unique line. The Scandi Short VersiTip is a shooting head with 10 ft interchangeable tips. The total head length, including the 10 ft tips, is only 33 ft, and its specific design application is for fishing in really tight quarters, when there is only room enough to throw the smallest of D-loops. It is a fantastic line for smaller rivers and was designed particularly for the Great Lakes tributaries and smaller coastal steelhead/salmon rivers. This new head is outstanding on Switch rods and smaller Spey rods, but works equally well on single handed rods - though being rated on the "Spey Standard" it is important to use a line three sizes lighter than the single handed rod; For example, use a#5 Scandi Short VersiTip on a #8 single handed rod.

There are 5 sizes of Scandi Short VersiTip available, from a light #5 to a powerful #9 weight, and what is unique about these heads is that they combine the grace of Scandinavian style heads, with the power of skagit heads – once the 10 ft tip has been removed. Thought the Scandi Short VersiTip come supplied with four 10 ft tips of different densities, they are powerful enough to cast MOW tips and “T-series” tips. A good guideline as to which size of tip, and which shooting line is best, is as follows:

Size	MOW	“T”	SlickShooter	Powerflex Core
#5	Light	T-8	25 lb	0.024”
#6	Light	T-8	25 lb	0.024”
#7	Medium	T-11	35 lb	0.030”
#8	Medium	T-11	35 lb	0.030”
#9	Heavy	T-14	50 lb	0.035”



UniSpey – New for 2012

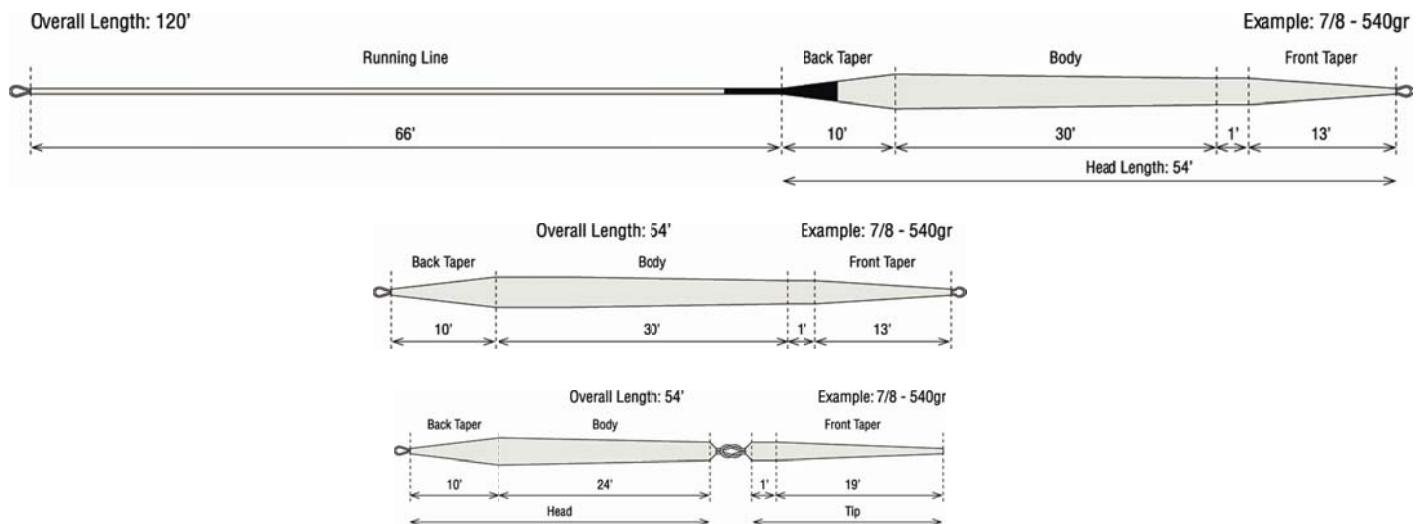
After more than 15 years of production and sales, RIO has replaced the WindCutter spey line. The new short/mid belly length Spey line from RIO is called the UniSpey, and it has had more than 2 years of hard product testing and taper tweaking. The UniSpey has a far more sophisticated taper and design than the old WindCutter line, and is very, very easy to cast. The line has a long front taper that effortlessly unrolls and carries energy all the way to the fly – resulting in great turnover and presentation. The UniSpey is the best all round, general purpose Spey line RIO makes, and is available in three different formats:

- 1) A full floating line with an integrated running line and a black loading zone indicator.
- 2) A full floating shooting head, with welded loops in both ends
- 3) A VersiTip shooting head with a 20 ft removable floating tip.

The two shooting head versions are a great choice for anglers that use Skagit and/or Scandi heads already, and want to keep a longer belly head option ready to loop on when conditions dictate. The VersiTip shooting head has a long 20 ft floating tip that, when removed, leaves a lot of mass and power in the body section, allowing it to cast all manner of sinking tips with extreme ease. A good guideline for the correct tip and shooting line choice is:

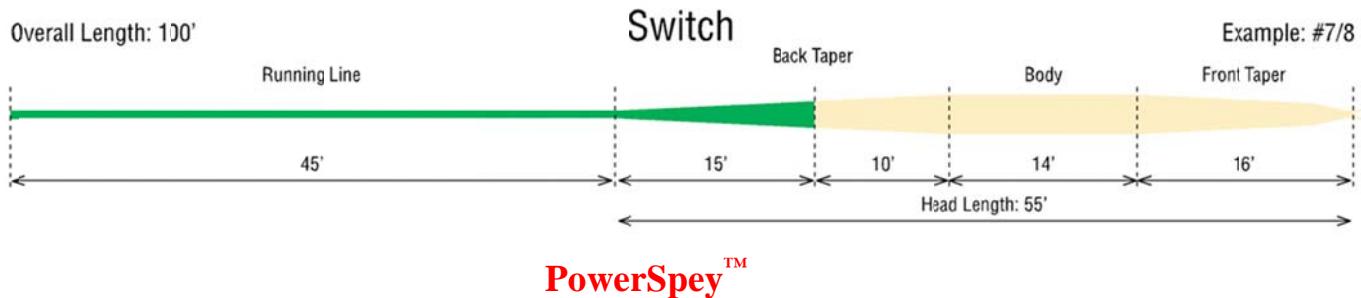
Size	15 ft Tips	"T"	SlickShooter	Powerflex Core
6/7	#8	T-8	0.030"	35 lb
7/8	#9	T-8	0.030"	35 lb
8/9	#10	T-11	0.035"	50 lb
9/10	#11	T-11	0.035"	50 lb
10/11	#12	T-14	0.040"	50 lb

Each of the three UniSpey options are available in size 6/7 to 10/11. The head length varies between 52' and 64', depending on the line size.



Switch Line

The Switch line is available in 5 different sizes, from a 4/5 to 8/9, each with a head length of 55 ft. The front end of the Switch line has a short, aggressive bullet taper that turns over large flies and indicators and a long head for mending and line control. The line has been specifically designed for the multitude of options that Switch rods users encounter. Anglers can overhead or spey cast it, use it single or two handed, and throw indicator rigs, VersiLeaders and big streamers with ease. If mostly overhead casting, RIO suggests purchasing the line using the second number designation. For example, if you are using a #6 Switch rod, get the 5/6. If a caster is mostly roll and spey casting, we recommend purchasing the line with the first designation – the 6/7 for a #6 Switch rod.



RIO's PowerSpey has a medium to long length head between 57 ft and 71 ft (depending on the size) and with its revolutionary taper design is the easiest mid to long belly line to cast. The longer head is ideal for big rods, larger rivers and for casters that prefer to do less stripping of the fly between casts. Fishing with the PowerSpey allows anglers to keep their fly in the water longer than shorter head lines - as there is little need to strip the head in between casts, the fly fisher will make more casts in a day, thus increasing the odds.

Another advantage with the longer head lines is when winter fishing with air temperatures below freezing. As there is no need to strip the line in between casts, the rod guides do not get iced up.

The PowerSpey is available in 5/6, 6/7, 7/8, 8/9, 9/10 and 10/11 sizes.



Particularly useful in the salt or in lakes and available in 3 densities: Floating, Intermediate (2" per second) and Sink 6 (6" per second).

The **OutBound Short** lines are a far better choice of line on shorter spey and Switch rods of less than 12 ft, and these lines are available with floating, F/I, Hover (S1), full intermediate and Type 6 sinking heads, as well as a selection with tropical coatings and cores for fishing in high heat.

Accessories

In addition to the lines, heads and VersiLeaders mentioned above, there are a few accessories RIO makes that are worth mentioning here.

HeadCase: The case features 10 zip-loc style bags in a neat, durable zip fronted cloth case that will hold a selection of shooting heads, as well as mesh pockets for leaders, tippets and other accessories. The HeadCase will hold the largest of heads comfortably, and additional sets of 5 Zip-loc style bags are available to increase capacity.

Mega Kits: For anglers that want to be prepared for everything, or who wish to have every size of head available within a given product range. The Mega Kits come packaged in RIO's HeadCase and are available in 3 selections - the Skagit Flight Mega Kit, the AFS Floating Head Mega Kit and the new Steelhead Scandi Mega Kit. Each kit comprises of one head of each size within the product range, 2 shooting lines and either 2 floating VersiLeaders (for the Scandinavian style kits) or 3 "5&5" MOW tips with the Skagit Flight Mega Kit.

Flight Mega Kit

All 16 Flight heads (350 to 750 gr)
1 x 0.030 "floating shooting line
1 x 0.035" floating shooting line
1 x Light 5&5 MOW Tip
1 x Medium 5&5 MOW Tip
1 x Heavy 5&5 MOW Tip

Steelhead Scandi Mega Kit

All 11 heads (280 to 550 gr)
1 x 0.030 "floating shooting line
1 x 0.035" floating shooting line
1 x 15 ft floating VersiLeader
1 x 10 ft floating VersiLeader

AFS Mega Kit

All 7 heads (4/5 to 10/11 floating)
1 x 0.030 "floating shooting line
1 x 0.035" floating shooting line
1 x 15 ft floating VersiLeader
1 x 10 ft floating VersiLeader

The **Skagit floating tip** is a floating tip designed to be added to the Skagit heads in order to turn them into a full floating line.

Modern Spey Casting is the best instructional DVD on spey casting ever produced. Learn the basics as well as these casts: roll cast, switch cast, single spey, double spey, snap T, snake roll, wombat cast, perry poke, jelly roll, Skagit casts, underhand cast, spiral spey, overhead cast, single handed spey casts and using the two-handed rods in the salt. It also includes fault recognition, a glossary of terms and a very useful biokinetic section.

Steelhead & Atlantic Salmon knotless tapered leaders are a great addition to the front end of a spey line. RIO offers these tapered leaders in 4 different lengths – 6 ft, 9 ft, 12 ft and 15 ft. We recommend the longer leaders for floating lines and tips, and the short 6 ft leaders are ideal for fast sinking heads or tips. For low, clear water, RIO also offers 10 ft long **Steelhead/Salmon fluorocarbon** leaders that can give an angler the edge in tricky conditions.

RIO Max Plus is a medium stiff nylon with incredible abrasion resistance. It is ideal for the larger flies used when spey casting and aids a cast in turning over. Using a supple, thin copolymer might be tempting, but a soft tippet can drastically reduce the turnover power of a cast – particularly when used with a larger fly, or in a tough wind.

Fluoroflex is a medium stiff fluorocarbon tippet with good knot strength. It would be the fluorocarbon of choice for spey casting techniques and for when using larger flies.

Hopefully, this document will help to give you a better understanding of RIO's spey line assortment and when to use what. If you are still in doubt, or confused, do not hesitate to contact us, either by phone; 800 553 0838, or email; rio@rioproducts.com

www.rioproducts.com