

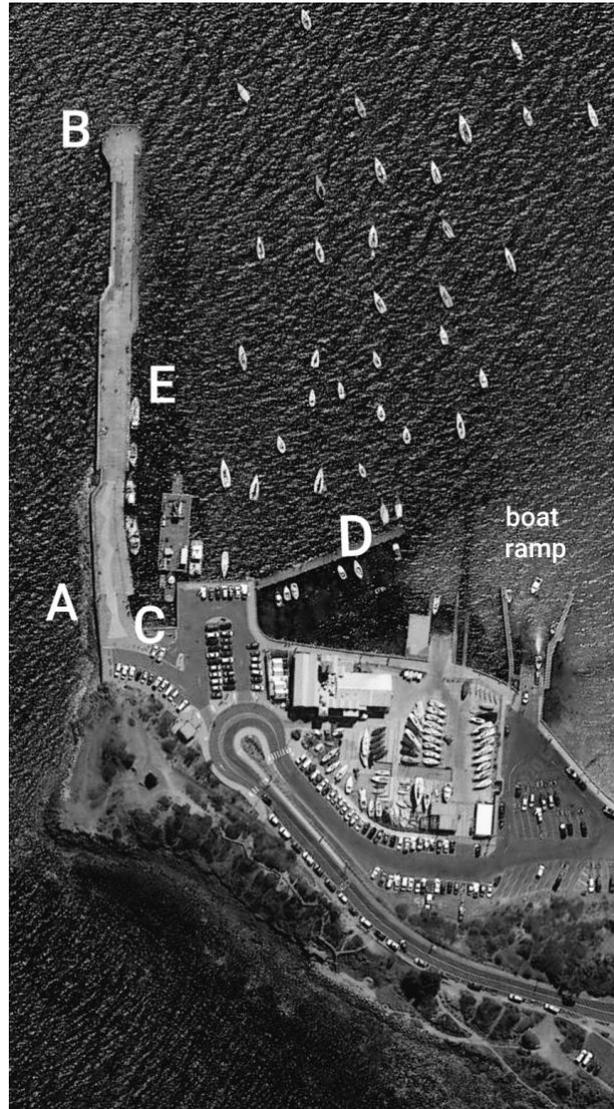
Mornington Pier

Mornington Pier is located on the Mornington Peninsula and is situated on the East side of Port Phillip Bay. It is approximately 35 minutes from Dandenong.

Mornington Pier is regarded as one of the best land-based fishing platforms in Port Phillip Bay and is certainly one of the most popular. Throughout the entire year fisherman flock to this Pier in search of a few fish, whether that be a little garfish, squid, or a big snapper Mornington Pier has endless opportunities for the angler.

The water surrounding the Pier consists of reef and rocky terrain but also has sand holes and weed too. This means the angler who targets specific areas can target specific species accordingly.

Ultimately, targeting a particular fish species and fishing the suitable 'zone' for it around the pier will see your results add up.



Aerial shot of Mornington Pier and Harbour. (A) Cobblestone rock wall (B) End of pier and deeper water (C) Inner Harbour (D) Small pier and moorings (E) Mid pier moorings

Snapper

If you talk to any land-based Snapper fisherman in Victoria most of them would associate Snapper with Mornington Pier and this reputation is certainly justified especially during September to December. Snapper love reef and structure and the rock wall at the start of the Pier facing West (A) provides the ideal habitat for them and many Snapper are caught here, as well as the very end of the pier facing Melbourne (B).

Fishing early dawn, which is just prior the sun coming up and dusk are prime times. Sometimes a tide change can often stimulate a bite, however a West or South West wind direction and a rising barometer seem to be key for a hot Snapper bite.

Fishing in amongst the structure means you will lose some rigs but some adjustments to your set up can help prevent this. Try a Paternoster rig with some cork or cut foam on the leader just above your hook, this will help lift your bait off the structure and aid in keeping the bait clean. Mix your bait selection and give the Snapper some variety. Pilchards, Silver Whiting, Squid, Garfish, Barracouta heads and Sauries are some of my preferred choices.

Hook sizes from 3/0 to 7/0 in a beak or suicide pattern is suitable. Snapper have a firm mouth so be sure to keep the hook point exposed when you bait up to help set the hook.

Squid

Mornington Pier seems to be a nursery for large numbers of juvenile Squid, and they can be caught all year round. Although the average size of the Squid are small when compared to further South in Port Phillip Bay, you will still see fisherman literally lined up shoulder to shoulder catching these tasty little critters. Some of the more popular locations to try and around the lights of the inner harbour (C) and around the moorings and weed of the small pier (D).

The abundance of fisherman here will cast and retrieve small artificial squid jigs, from size 1.5 to 2.5 with a jerk and pause technique. The jig size is small purely because the squid are small too and using a jig too big can often spook them.

Squid are predominantly a sight feeder, so it is imperative that you mix your squid jig colours and adjust as needed. Having a mix between natural, aggressive and passive colour tones is recommended to increase your chances.

Things like overcast conditions, sunny bright days, artificial lights that are casting shadows on the water will all effect how and what the Squid see. If in doubt start with a 'aggressive' colour to gauge the mood of the squid and work back more natural from there.

Garfish

Over the last few years Garfish have made a welcome return to Mornington Pier and whether you are the accomplished expert, or the young novice they provide great sport and are amazing on the dinner table. Garfish can be very tricky at times to catch so you need to always be thinking about things like your float buoyancy, hook pattern, bait size etc.

Adjusting your fishing depth is absolutely critical as the Gars can go from being only 3 inches under the water surface to 3 metres very quickly. Silverfish, Maggots and Banana Prawn are the best baits but be sure to keep the bait size very small.

Berley is an absolute must for Garfish success, with a 'wet sand' consistency preferred to aid in dispersal and also attract yet not feed the fish. Garfish usually prefer to hang about in the shallows but can be caught out in deeper water – so they can be found around the whole harbour. A couple of excellent areas to focus on are the smaller

pier (D) and along the first half of the main pier (E).

Other species on offer

Mornington pier and harbour has a decent variety of other species on offer, with a good chance of any of the following; King George Whiting, Sand Flathead, Slimey and Horse Mackerel(yakkas), Australian Salmon, Barracouta, Pike and the occasional Kingfish.

While all of these fish are on offer, picking the specifics of a species and targeting them at the prime time will see the best results for you.

For any additional information or specifics talk to us in-store.

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