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ACA's Beginner's Guide to Fly Casting

Featuring the Twelve Casts You Need to Know

Rating:

[Excellent](#)

★★★★★★

Publisher:

Skyhorse Publishing

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128

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John Field

Reviewed by:

Martin Joergensen

These days a 128 page book isn't a big book, and when reading through John Field's new casting book, I was surprised how quickly I finished it.

I started off being a little slow, finding the book rather talkative and overly detailed. Even considering that it is aimed at beginners, I thought that less basic information was needed. But once into the second chapter – after a mere 15-18 pages or so – the book gained momentum, and so did my reading pace.

My slow start can't be blamed on the book, which pretty clearly declares itself as a beginner's book. The very title very obviously justifies the really basic 1st chapter introducing rods, reels, lines and teaching setting up a reel and line as well as rod assembly and other preparations for the first cast.

I know from this very site that the interest in these subjects is immense, and that there's a very good reason to start out so basic when teaching beginners to cast. Quite a few first timers simply have no idea about how to set up a rod. So the details in that first chapter are there for a reason after all, and I could just have skipped to the more meaty part: grip, stance and casting.

I have said it before, and there's a risk I will say it again: learning to cast from a book is definitely not the best way to learn to cast. Getting real life instructions from real people is the clear winner in that game. But having said so, I have to admit that a book like this can provide some really excellent guidelines and teach you some basic rules, ensure that you don't get the worst bad habits and be a great support when wanting to know the whats and whys of casting. The book also has the clear advantage of being useful indoors in bad weather or off season. Even the seasoned caster will learn something from this book.

Seen in that light, this book really shines. It's without doubt the best introduction to casting that I have read, and will require no previous knowledge from the reader, but still be able to take him or her from the level of a rookie fly rod owner to a well behaved fly caster. It will not make you a master. Only practice and fishing can do that – and proper instruction – but it will certainly be a great support and be able to answer some of your questions about casting. The chapter on troubleshooting the cast can become extra valuable to the caster who is slowly mastering the basics, but suddenly finds that tailing loops, curled and knotted leaders, lack of precision and all kinds of nasty things has distorted the emerging self image of a proficient and skillful fly angler.

It's without doubt the best introduction to casting that I have read

The book doesn't cover fishing as such, but addresses lots of issues related to fishing like casting in the wind, various useful fishing casts, changing casting direction, obtaining better precision, reaching and mending and more. It does undoubtedly cover twelve casts – and then some – but whether you need to learn all these casts in order to fish well is another matter. I'm not so sure. Each kind of fishing might require a much smaller subset of the full palette. Some anglers need double hauls and distance, some need short lines and precision, some need to be able to cast in tight spots or propel out big flies on heavy rods. The book will help them all.

As the title also indicates, the book has part of its outset in organized casting clubs and casting events, which might bring it slightly off course with regards to beginner's needs, but on the other hand helps the learning caster who wants to meet other people interested in casting.

When done with this book, those wanting more casting instruction from John Field can look into his previous book Fly-casting Finesse, which can be recommended.