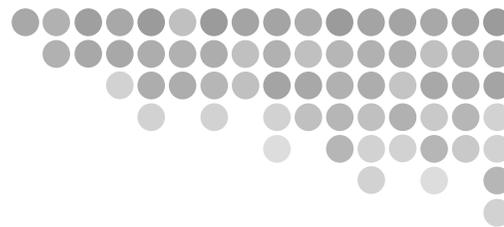


Figure 1: A vertical cord at the front of the pot entrance will help to deter turtles.



Figure 2: A properly constructed collapsible crab pot.

For more information, call the  
Department of Employment,  
Economic Development  
and Innovation on **13 25 23** or  
visit [www.deedi.qld.gov.au](http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au)



## Responsible crabbing



## Crabbing in Queensland

Queenslanders love their crabs. Crabbing is one of the state's most popular forms of fishing. It is an easy and accessible way to fish.

However, as with any form of fishing, we need to consider how it affects our environment. Some crab pots can trap other marine animals, including turtles. Also, crab pots used incorrectly can become lost and may continue to 'ghost fish'.

Fisheries Queensland, in partnership with the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), has developed guidelines to help with the construction and use of crab pots in Queensland waters.

Commercial fishers should regularly refer to the fisheries legislation as specific requirements apply to the use and marking of crab pots and relevant floats.

**Please note that you must comply with the 'Legal requirements' highlighted in this guide. All other guidelines are recommendations only, aimed at helping you crab responsibly.**

## Buying or making a new crab pot

To minimise the impact of your crab pots on turtles and the environment, we recommend considering the following features before purchasing or making a crab pot:

**Pot opening size** – Your pot should have a **maximum** opening of approximately 60 cm circumference or smaller. This is a measurement of the opening/s where the crab actually enters the pot (i.e. if the pot has a funnel-type entrance/s then it is the smaller measurement of the funnel).

If the pot opening is flexible, then a barrier should be installed (see Figure 1) that will be effective in excluding turtles (e.g. vertical cord at the front of the pot entrance). Turtles often try to enter crab pots as they are attracted to the bait.

**Pot weight** – Your pot should weigh about 3 kg or more to make sure it sits firmly on the sea floor or creek/river bed.

**Rope** – Your pot should be secured by a 6 mm (approx.) rope, which is either **not buoyant** or **is weighted** so it hangs below the surface of the water. If possible, your rope should be made from a **UV stabilised** material. This will make sure it does not break down after continued exposure to sunlight.

**Construction** – If your pot is constructed of trawl mesh (or a similar material), then it should be of reasonable quality so that it will not easily entangle marine species such as turtles.

**Maintenance** – You should maintain your crabbing gear. This means regularly cleaning and repairing or replacing any damaged pots, ropes or floats.

## Modifying existing crab pots

If you would like to modify crab pots you already own so they meet the guidelines, please follow these steps:

**Pot opening size** – Modify by using wire or zip ties etc. to restrict the entrance to 60 cm circumference or smaller. Similarly, install a vertical cord in front of the pot opening to deter turtles from trying to enter and steal baits.

**Pot weight** – Increase by adding weight to the pot (e.g. attaching weight/s to the pot frame).

## Legal requirements

**Surface floats** – These should be a light colour and robust (e.g. solid polystyrene or similar). Floats must measure 15 cm in all dimensions.

Recreational fishers must mark crab pot floats with the owner's surname.

All crab apparatus must be attached by a rope to either a float or a fixed object (e.g. a jetty or tree) above the high water mark. The rope must have a tag with the owner's surname on it at the point of attachment to the fixed object. Crab pots must also have a tag showing the name and address of the owner.

Fishers should also make sure that crab pots are in a sufficient depth of water at all stages of the tide (so that marine animals are not exposed to the sun etc. and unwanted crabs can be released alive).