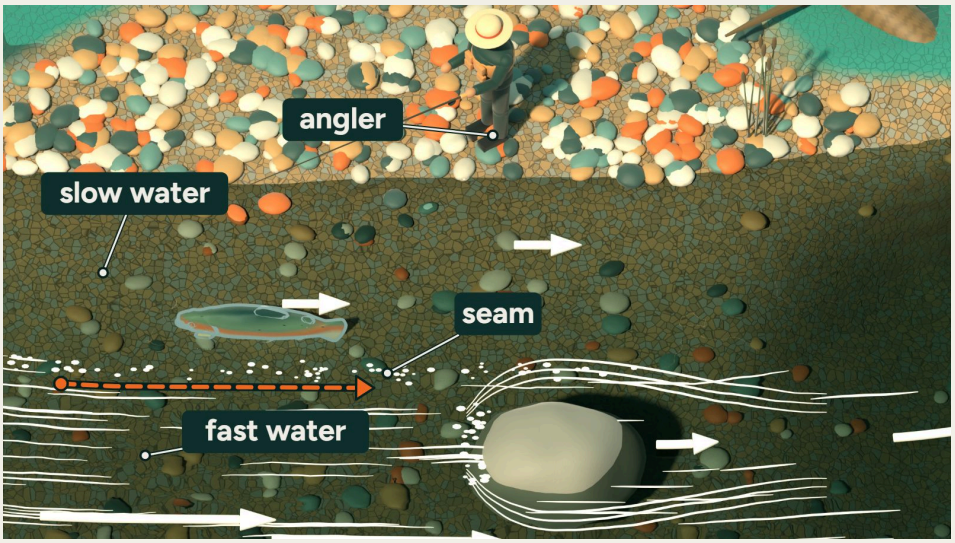
WHAT IS A SEAM, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A seam is the line where faster current meets slower current. Trout tend to hold in the slow water right beside the fast water that carries their food. Land the fly on the fast edge of the seam and let it drift down along it.



A run from above: fast lane, seam, slow side, the angler on the bar, and a fly drifting down the fast edge of the seam. Illustration: Fly Findr

HOW TO SPOT A SEAM

Surface texture. It changes where slow water meets fast.

Speed and color. Two lanes side by side that differ.

Foam and bubbles. Foam lines mark a steady current path.

Anything that sticks out. Boulders, banks, riffle ends, side streams.

WHERE TO STAND AND HOW TO DRIFT THE FLY

1	**Start with the nearest water**	Stand below and to one side. Fish the nearest part of the seam first, then work up it.
2	**Cast to the fast edge of the line**	A little upstream of where you expect fish. Hold the rod tip high or reach it upstream so the line stays off the slow water above them.
3	**Let it drift down the seam**	Keep it close to the line. Trout tend to rest on the slow side and make short trips into the fast water for food.
4	**Mend**	Line on slow water, fly on faster water: mend downstream. Fast water between you and the fly: mend upstream.
5	**Cover it, then move on**	Fish the next seam. Nothing? Come back another day.

COMMON MISTAKES

Fishing only the fast lane. In lab studies of young fish, prey capture fell as water sped up. Fish the slow water beside it.

Letting the fly drag. Line on water of a different speed pulls the fly off the seam. Mend, or move.

flyfindr.co/learn/current-seams

The full guide, the studies behind each point and what they don't settle. Sources: see the guide.

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