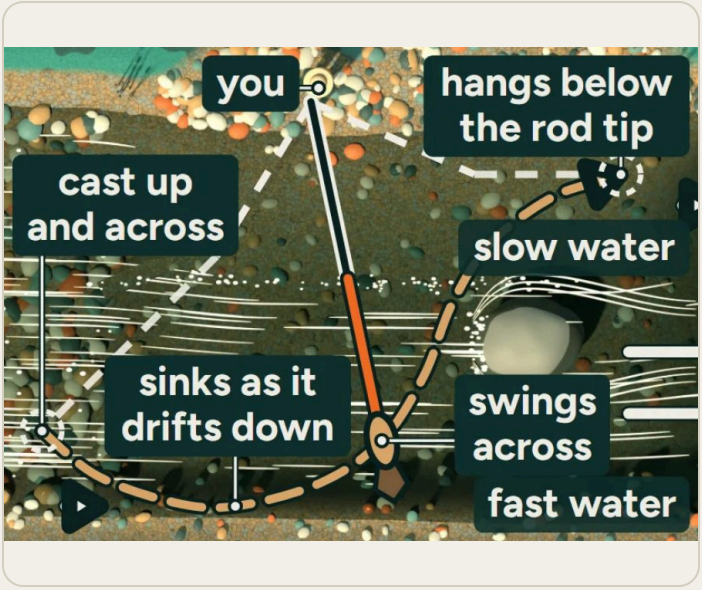
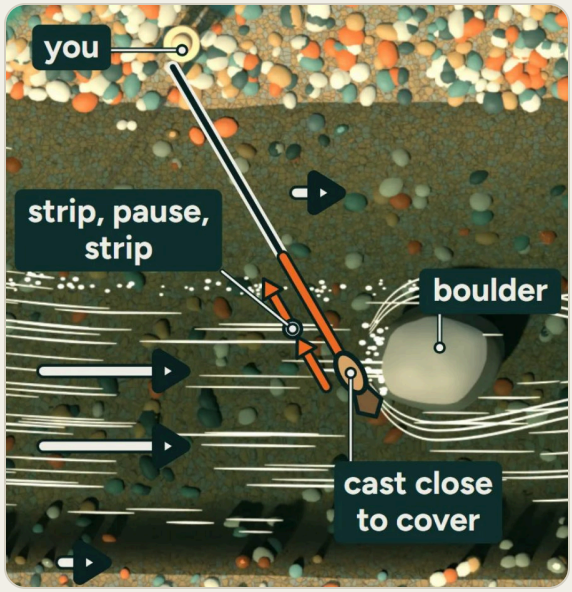
# HOW DO I FISH A STREAMER?

**A streamer is a larger fly that imitates a baitfish, leech or crayfish, and you fish it moving instead of letting it drift dead. Start with two methods: swing it across the current on a tight line, or strip it back in short pulls.**

In streams, trout and salmon started eating fish at about 27 cm (about 10½ inches). In one Utah river, in reaches with sculpin, fish turned up in a third of the brown trout aged three and older and in none of the 1-year-olds. A streamer is aimed at the larger trout.




## THE SWING

1. Stand beside the head of a run.
2. Cast across, or a little upstream so the fly sinks before the line comes tight.
3. Mend once upstream if you want it slower.
4. Point the rod at the fly and let the current swing it across, line under a finger of your rod hand.
5. When it hangs straight downstream of the rod tip, pause, strip it back, take a step or two downstream and cast again.

## THE STRIP

1. Cast across or down and across, close to cover: banks, wood, boulders.
2. Let it sink. Count it down, and note the count when a fish takes.
3. Rod tip low and pointed at the fly. Pull line in short strips with your other hand, with a pause between.
4. Change the length, speed and pauses until something takes.
5. Feel weight? Pull the line tight with your line hand, then lift the rod.

Seen from above, current left to right. Lines are drawn straight; on the water they bow downstream. Distances are drawn, not measured. Illustration: Fly Findr

## WHERE AND WHEN

**Deep water and cover**
Larger trout used deeper water, and in the studies that measured it, trout chose positions with cover overhead or nearby.

**Low light**
In a Michigan river, large brown trout were most active at dusk and dawn and least by day. That was movement, not feeding or catch.

**Winter**
Many trout hold in deep, slow pools with cover, and adult trout moved little there. Fish slow and near the bottom.

**Muddy water: don't assume a streamer works better.** In tests, rainbow trout caught fewer small fish in muddy water. Fish near the bottom and put the fly close. **No study** compared the swing with the strip or tested retrieve speed, and none tested fly pattern or size against catch, or fly color against water clarity. These are methods: vary them and let the day show you.