

Trout Anatomy Vocabulary



Adipose fin – the soft fin on the fish’s back closest to the tail. It is called “adipose”, which means “fatty”, because it has no fin rays. It may serve to help with stability and to sense the flow of water over the fish’s back.

Anal fin – the single fin on the fish’s belly closest to the tail. It helps with stability.

Caudal fin – also known as the tail fin, this fin is used mainly for swimming.

Dorsal fin – the fin on the fish’s back closest to the head. It helps keep the fish from rolling over.

Eye – used for finding prey and avoiding predators. The relatively large size indicates the importance of sight for trout. The eye has no eyelid but is covered by a tough membrane for protection. Trout can see color.

Kype – the hooked part of the lower jaw found in spawning males. It is used for fighting with other males.

Lateral line – a sense organ that runs down both sides of the fish from the gills to the tail. It helps the fish sense movement and vibrations in the water.

Operculum – the bony plate that covers the gills; sometimes called the gill cover.

Pectoral fin – the pair of fins on the sides of the fish near the operculum. They help the fish stop and change direction.

Pelvic fin – the pair of fins on the belly of the fish, directly below the pectoral fins. They help the fish stop and change direction, especially up and down.