

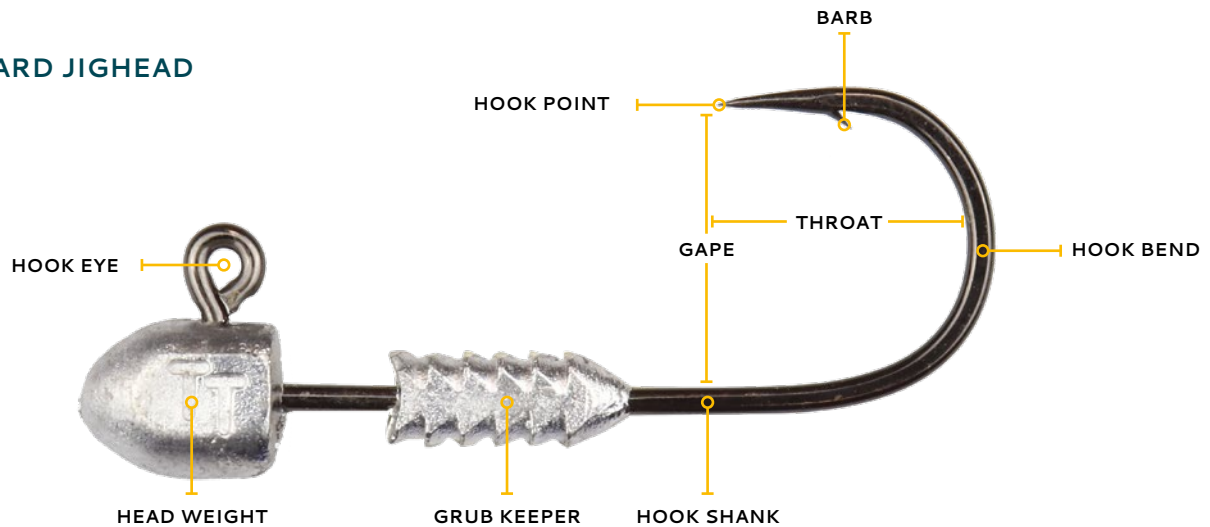
SOFT PLASTICS 101

CHAPTER 2

JIGHEAD ANATOMY

There are many types of specialist jigheads that we'll look at in more detail in following chapters, however it's important to first understand the basic anatomy of a jighead and the purpose of the different components. This chapter will assist you in better understanding articles and videos about rigging and fishing soft plastics. Fish on!

STANDARD JIGHEAD



HOOK EYE – The hook eye is where your line is attached, using a knot such as a locked half blood knot or uni knot. We recommend not using a loop knot with jigheads as extreme pressures and fine lines can result in the loop slipping out of the hook eye.

HEAD WEIGHT – On a standard jighead the weight is toward the front of the hook and is designed to provide both casting weight and weight to sink the soft plastic to the required depth (much like a sinker when bait fishing).

GRUB KEEPER – The grub keeper is designed to hold the soft plastic securely onto the jighead and on many standard jigheads, including TT Lures Tournament Series and Head Hunter jigheads, the grub keeper is attached as part of the head weight. The 'head lock' style grub keeper, found on the TT Lures HeadlockZ and DemonZ jigheads has a gap between the head weight and the grub keeper (as seen in the image above) which has been designed specifically to lock the ZMan 10X Tough ElaZtech, super-soft and flexible soft plastics into the gap and make sliding them over the grub keeper easier when rigging, while also being suitable for other brands of soft plastics.

HOOK SHANK – The hook shank is the straight length of the hook from the eye of the hook to the hook bend.

HOOK BEND – The hook bend is the curved section of the hook, including the throat (depth the hook penetrates to) and the gape (the width of the hook from the point to the shank).

BARB – The barb is the reverse point set back from the hook point, designed to make the hook more difficult for fish to shake out or dislodge. Some anglers prefer to crush the barb flat, especially when catch and release fishing, to minimise damage to the fish and aid with quick release. Crushed barbs are often also preferred when fishing remotely in case anglers are accidentally hooked.

HOOK POINT – The hook point is the first point of penetration and it needs to be strong and sharp.



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LIGHT & HEAVY WIRE HOOKS

Jigheads are available in light and heavy wire hooks, designed to suit different applications.

Light wire hooks are constructed from lighter gauge wire and are generally referred to as light wire or fine wire hooks. This finer gauge wire penetrates more easily, especially when using lighter lines and lighter drag settings. The downside of course is that the hook is not as strong as a heavy wire hook. Light wire jigheads, such as the TT Lures HeadlockZ Finesse, are often the preferred option when chasing bream, bass, trout, flathead, golden perch and other such species.

Heavy wire hooks are then constructed from heavier wire and in turn are thicker. It takes more pressure for the hook to penetrate the mouth of the fish, generally requiring more drag force or slightly heavier lines. This is overcome to a degree by using chemically sharpened hooks, like those found in the heavy wire TT Lures HeadlockZ HD jigheads. Even the aforementioned species are targeted on heavy wire hooks at times, especially when fishing heavier around structure, and heavy wire hooks are a go-to for anglers chasing larger species and fish with powerful jaws, such as snapper, mulloway, barra, mangrovejack, Murray cod and offshore species.

When selecting a jighead this information is often printed on the packaging, for example 1/0L ('L' refers to light wire), 1/0H ('H' refers to heavy wire) and 1/0XH ('XH' refers to extra heavy wire).

HEADLOCKZ FINESSE

MADE ON A FINE WIRE
GAMAKATSU HOOK



HEADLOCKZ HD

MADE ON A HEAVY WIRE
MUSTAD HOOK



TT HWS (HIDDEN WEIGHT SYSTEM)

Here's one that's a bit different. The TT HWS (Hidden Weight System) jighead is still made up of a point, barb, bend, shank, eye, etc., however it is designed so that it doesn't have a head weight, instead it's grub keeper acts as both the keeper and the weight for casting and sinking your soft plastic.

The weight is built onto the shank, stopping the plastic from sliding, while also concealing the weight inside the plastic for an extremely realistic and natural appearance and horizontal flutter and sink. This is a deadly option when a finesse presentation is required, such as clear water and finicky feeders, as well as when fishing higher in the water column around structure. We will spend more time on the HWS jighead in a future chapter, however it is worth a brief look when discussing jighead anatomy.

The HWS has become a go-to for bream tournament anglers targeting bridges, pontoons, jetties, rock walls and other structure, with many bream tournaments won on this deadly little jighead.



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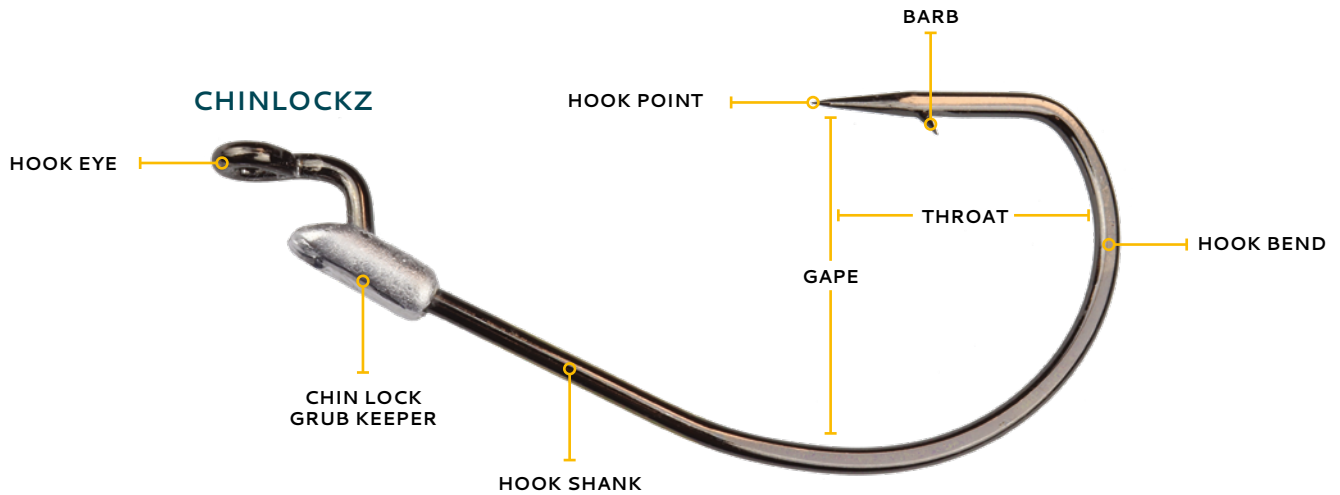
JIGHEAD ANATOMY

WEEDLESS JIGHEADS

Weedless rigging is a popular technique for fishing weed, mangroves, fallen timber and other structure as it minimises the chance of the hook fouling or snagging.

The soft plastic effectively lays under the barb and hook point to shield them from weed, timber and other structure, while a curved shank (the belly of the hook) creates clearance between the soft plastic and the hook shank so that when a fish strikes it clears the plastic away from the point and the fish is hooked.

These hooks are commonly referred to as worm hooks or weedless hooks.



CHINLOCKZ

ChinlockZ jigheads (pictured above) are unweighted and feature a 'chin lock' grub keeper on the front to lock the soft plastic in place. Being unweighted they are ideal for a surface presentation or very slow sink. Popular for fishing the buoyant ZMan 10X Tough FrogZ and Pop ShadZ.

CHINLOCKZ SWS

The SWS in ChinlockZ SWS stands for Snagless Weight System, as it features a belly weight for a balanced, keeled presentation, slow natural sink and additional casting weight. This jighead is again popular for FrogZ, especially when it's windy or longer casts are required, while also being popular for prospecting weed beds, mangrove prop roots and other shallower water.

SNAKELOCKZ

The SnakelockZ features an interchangeable head weight, attached with a heavy duty stainless steel quick attachment system. By carrying a mix of hook sizes and head weights, you have a stack of combinations available to suit different scenarios. SnakelockZ are popular when weight is required to sink your soft plastic into the strike zone and work it through structure. SnakelockZ are also available in a fine / light wire version called a SnakelockZ Finesse jighead. For videos on weedless rigging check out the Rigging Guides section of the Tackle Tactics website.

CHINLOCKZ SWS



SNAKELOCKZ



NEXT UP IN CHAPTER 3: SOFT PLASTIC ANATOMY

