

Tips for the Demonstration Fly Tyer

by Dean Childs

(if you are crazy enough to do it, these tips will help make it easier on you and your audience)

1. Clean your hands and especially your fingernails. Remember they will look two feet across on the screen!
2. Wear a shirt that contrasts with the fly you will tie and with no fancy patterns. Plain white is a good bet.
3. String up two bobbins for each thread you will be using. The audience gets restless when you have to stop and string up in the middle of the tie. (Especially when you forget to bring your threader and have to suck!)
4. Make a kit of the materials needed for the fly. Pluck the feathers, cut the wire, select the hook, the hand tools, etc. Put all this in a small container. Consider doing two of these if you are the nervous type. Again, audiences don't particularly get thrilled watching you sort through your bag for the fly components during the tie.
5. Since you saved all this time by not having to string and sort, consider providing some background info on the fly. The originator, where it is used, how to fish it, your experiences with it, all are interesting to the audience. Do this before you start tying and stand up in front of the audience to present the info.
6. Before you start tying, provide a sample of the finished fly. After the demonstration, provide handouts of the tying recipe.
7. Sometimes this is hard to do, but try to explain the tying steps while you tie. It helps to rehearse the dialog of the tying steps at home ahead of time. Long awkward silences make everyone uncomfortable, (especially you!)
8. Make sure you know how to tie the pattern comfortably. There is nothing like tying up at least a dozen in advance to make you an ace.
9. If you make a mistake, don't panic and try to hurry up. Unwind the thread and do the step over again, very deliberately, explaining what you are doing as you go. They will understand.
10. Remember, you have two goals, to teach or demonstrate a pattern, and to pass on tips on methods, materials and tools. If your audience says "Wow, I never thought of that" you have done your job.