

Fly Pattern Sheet - Bunny Fly

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Hook: 2XL to 4XL Nymph/Streamer
Thread: Heavy, 140 Denier, or similar
Weight: optional - Lead wire, bead, cone
Tail: Rabbit strip; from the body material
Body: Rabbit strip

On this fly we are using a #6 3XL hook, .030 lead, and a rabbit strip dyed to imitate flesh from salmon carcasses decaying in the water.



Notes: Bunny Flies, like Woolly Buggers, are highly adaptable to meet a variety of needs. From small pieces of flesh to multi-sectional leech patterns, this basic pattern is only limited by your imagination.

(See the Kulik Leech and Dolly Llama Fly Pattern Sheets for more "Bunny" style flies.)



Wrap lead wire from above the hook point to an eye width behind the hook eye. Attach your thread and secure the lead with wraps, leaving the thread at the rear of the shank.



Tie in a rabbit strip, with a short section of the hide extending to create the tail, with four very tight wraps. Notice that the hair is coming off the hide to the left, and that we've separated the hair so we are tying on the hide only.



Lift the rabbit strip and bring your thread forward to the front of the shank, just off the lead wraps.



Wrap the rabbit strip forward with touching wraps. (I find it beneficial to stretch the hide a bit while wrapping.) Once at the tie in spot, separate the hair and tie down the hide with four very tight wraps.



Stretch the excess hide a bit and cut it off as close to the thread wraps as possible. Wrap thread over the hide to create a neat head. Half-hitch and whip finish.



A sampling of flesh colored rabbit strips.

Tying tips:

Rabbit strips come in two different styles, both of which have their uses in tying.

Zonker strips are when the hide is cut from top to bottom and the hair comes off the hide in the same direction as the strip. When wrapped, the hair has a tendency to stick up away from the shank, creating a bulky look. We used a Zonker strip on this pattern.

Cross-cut is when the strip is created by cutting the hide from side to side causing the hair to come off the hide perpendicular to the strip. This allows the hair to lie flatter when wrapped, creating a slimmer profile.

Rabbit strips also come in a couple different widths. Mostly you'll use 1/8", which is the standard, but there is also Magnum (wider) and Micro (thinner) strips available. Pine squirrel is also available stripped (usually dyed) and is a great substitute for small flies.

Rabbit hide is usually thick and can be difficult to tie down. It's one of the few materials that benefit from four wraps instead of the traditional three when attaching to the shank. You also benefit from using a strong (heavier denier) thread to crank down the tension on your wraps, which means you need to watch the number of wraps you use to minimize build-up.

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