

Electronics 102: Setting Up Your Graph

Eric Prey & Mike Webb

In our first installment in this series, Mike Webb and I discussed selecting the right graph; in this installment we will discuss fine tuning your graph to get the most out of it. Out of the box most graphs will perform well but a little fine tuning is needed to make them perform. First thing, take the graph off of auto mode; you want to be able to control the graph. If the graph has a fish i.d. mode shut it off as well. Next, let's get into the menu of the graph and do some fine tuning:

- Sensitivity: As high as you can set it without trolling motor interference, usually around 85%. Become familiar with this adjustment as you will need to change it as depth and conditions change.
- Ping Speed: Crank it up all the way, this controls the number of times the transducer bounces, pings, a signal. More Pings = More Detail!
- Chart Speed: Again, crank it up. You want returns as fast as they can be read by the graph.
- Greyline: You want to be able to distinguish fish and bait on the bottom from the bottom. A group of fish or bait on the bottom will show as a line with very little or any grey between it and a line and a lot of grey. Set your Greyline between 65% - 75%.
- Upper & Lower Limit: This is an optional adjustment and it is an adjustment you will need to make throughout the day if you change depths allot. But by adjusting it, you will be able too get greater detail of a smaller section of the water column. Simply enter in the upper limit and lower limit in the boxes provided.
- Spit Screen Zoom: Another optional adjustment, this allows you to view a zoomed image at the same time you are looking at the full image.

A side note, if at anytime you "mess up" the settings on your graph, most graphs have a "return to factory presets" option in their menu so you can always go back to where you started.

On-the-Water Adjustments

Now we have a starting point, let's head to deeper water and set the graph up for deep fishing. According to Mike Webb; "It's important to make adjustments and fine tune the settings on the water in real fishing conditions." Move out into 50' – 90' of water and drop the trolling motor. Turn on your graph and start to look at the images, kick on your trolling motor and see if you are getting any interference, if yes, lower the sensitivity, if no raise it until you get interference and then back off. Now adjust the upper and lower limits and notice how you can bring in more detail by eliminating water that you are not fishing, and can get even greater detail by 2x and 4x zooming in the images. Webb adds; "Knowing how to use your zoom effectively is an important part of using your graph, so take some time to become familiar with adjusting and scrolling it". This is a good time to drop a lure over the side and follow it on your graph, if you are having a hard time following it or if it disappears off the graph practice keeping it in the cone with your trolling motor. Remember if you make a mistake you can always return to the factory presets so don't be afraid to experiment and see how the different buttons and menus work.

Tip of the Month

Learning to zoom in and out as well as scrolling within the zoom range is a vital part of deep fishing. Being able to zoom in tight on your bait and then move that zoom area with the bait and the fish is critical. On a Lowrance graph simply hit zoom and it will zoom in 2X hit it again and it will zoom in 4X, anytime you are zoomed in you can scroll that zoomed area up and down within the water column.

Eric Prey is a Professional Angler and Coast Guard Licensed Fishing Guide. Annually Eric competes in over 30 Regional Tournaments, conducts over 150 guided fishing trips and writes over twenty published fishing articles. His knowledge of both techniques and technology make him a trusted source of information regarding fishing techniques and marine electronics