

## **Rod Butt Shortening**

Most store-bought spinning rods I have bought have been too long. I get the butt of the rod caught in my life vest, gut, and fishing vest and they are especially a pain in kayaking.

Many have asked me how to chop a rod butt and this article will detail the procedure. Quite a few fishermen are either currently fishing with a rod I have chopped or have donated the chopped rod to Davy Jones' locker.

You will first need either a dremel tool with a cutting wheel or a brand new hacksaw blade. I like the blades with the most teeth. These toothy blades will cut the graphite clean.

Next, measure up from the butt of the rod where you want to cut. For a St. Croix, keeping in mind you'll add 1/2 inch with the rubberized cork butt. For other rods, you'll find a plastic insert plug and will not need to add the extra 1/2 inch. I hold the rod with a reel in it and then measure about two inches up from the elbow. This will end up being the bottom of the butt of the rod.

If you're not chopping a St. Croix, but a rod with a plastic insert butt piece, after your first cut, get a dowel and tap out the plastic piece. Usually the manufacturers only put a drop of glue on it and the plastic insert piece will pop out with ease.

Next, either put the reel seat in a miter box or if you're good, just support it on your desk and cut. A dremel tool will make quick work and a clean cut. If using a hacksaw, the cork will cut like butter. The blank will offer some resistance, but use slow steady cuts and the blank will cut clean. You may want to rotate the blank while cutting. When finished, clean up the bottom with a file.

If you have a St. Croix, take the piece you just cut off and make a second cut between the rubberized cork and regular cork. Whittle a small piece of wood (I use either a chopstick or an old fashion yellow lead pencil). Find the spot on the rod where the rubberized cork piece you just cut fits best by rotating.

Then get some slow cure epoxy, add a little cork dust from the butt piece you just cut off. If you have access to glass micro-balls, use them instead of the cork dust. Glue in the small dowel you cut, then generously, butter the end of the rod and the top of the rubberized cork butt, and put together.

Let the epoxy ooze out, then clean roughly with a rag soaked in denatured alcohol. It's OK to leave too much epoxy, since the cork dust soaked epoxy will fill any cracks during bonding. Use saran wrap to hold the two pieces together and most importantly, add tension and stretch the saran wrap so it holds the rubberized piece in tightly. With black electrical tape, wrap the saran wrap around the bottom, while applying tension with the wrap. Don't worry; The epoxy will cure under the saran wrap.

If your rod does not have a rubberized cork butt, sand the bottom flat and then round the edges. Epoxy the plastic insert piece back into the bottom of the rod, clean off any epoxy that oozes out, then use the saran wrap to hold the piece in place.

After allowing the epoxy to cure, remove the saran wrap and sand all the glue that oozed out and sand the cork to its original form.