



Fish Selection Information

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Here are a few fish facts:

Fresh fish have clear, bulging eyes, elastic firm flesh, reddish pink gills, and are free from strong odor. If purchasing fresh fish, buy fish stored and displayed on crushed ice ... just before using. (The fresher the better.) Avoid fish with sunken and/or cloudy eyes, flesh that leaves an indentation when pressed (does not spring back when pressed), gills that are dull or not pink, or that has a strong, offensive odor. Fresh fish should have a "clean", fresh watery smell. If it smells or looks bad it probably is bad!

Cook fresh fish as soon as possible, preferably the day you catch it (or buy it). If you can't cook it right away, wrap it loosely in clear plastic wrap, store in zip type plastic bags, or in a loosely covered bowl and refrigerate it up to two days. Frozen fish are available the year 'round (in steaks and fillets). For best results, thaw frozen fish (preferably in refrigerator or microwave) immediately before cooking. **Never refreeze** fish that has been thawed. Prepare as with fresh fish. Properly frozen fish should have the flavor and texture of fresh-caught fish.

Amount to plan per average serving:

whole or round fish.....1 lb. per serving
 dressed fish.....2 lb. per serving
 steaks, fillets, sticks.....1/3 lb. per serving

Smoked fish are delicious plain or very simply prepared (boiled, steamed, baked). Most popular are salmon, whitefish, finnan haddie; but many fatty fish are excellent smoked. Carp, mooneye and many others produce an excellent smoked fish.

Salted cured fish, such as cod and mackerel, require removing excess salt. Soak overnight in cold water. (Or soak for 2 hrs....then simmer in fresh water for 30 min.). Cook as desired.

Fat fish have oil running through all the flesh and are generally best for broiling, baking, and planking.

Examples include:

mackerel	pompano	salmon
lake trout	rosefish	herring
barracuda	tuna	shad
sturgeon	whitefish	catfish

Lean fish have a drier flesh with the oil stored mainly in the liver and are generally best for boiling and steaming. When baking, add strips of bacon or pats of margarine or butter or and oil baste marinade; when broiling baste with melted fat or oil or an oil marinade. Examples include:

bass	haddock	pike
carp	red snapper	halibut
cod	buffalo	perch
flounder	whiting	croaker

Both fat and lean fish may be pan or deep fat fried.

Many fish are seasonal delicacies. Others are available all year round. Careful preservation can extend the season for seasonal varieties, like smelt or winter flounder, but many anglers prefer to have an excuse for getting out in all seasons.

Remember fish cooks very rapidly and increasing cooking time does not increase tenderness as it does other meats. In fact it tends to have the opposite effect. Whatever kind of fish you choose or have at hand and regardless of the cooking method selected, **don't over cook** the fish!

For those interested in the nutritional value of fish, nutrient analysis for many fish may be found in general books on nutrition and some diet and health books. Fish provides an excellent source of protein. Some fishes also provide a source of omega-fatty acids, which may combat heart disease. On the cautionary side, be sure to know the waters from which fish are taken. If consumption advisories are issued, weigh the risk factors and abide by those consumption advisories.