

Market Forms of Fresh Fish and Cleaning Methods

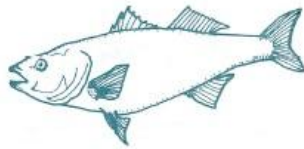
HOW TO SELECT, HANDLE, CLEAN AND STORE SEAFOOD

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[Be sure that the seafood you buy is fresh.](#) It's a good idea to go to the market to buy fresh seafood, not just a particular species. If your recipe calls for flounder, but the snapper is fresher, buy the snapper.

Market Forms of Fresh Fish

Whole or round fish are sold just as they come from the water. They must be scaled and eviscerated — or gutted — before cooking. If the head is left on, the fish must be degilled. The edible yield is about 45 percent.



Drawn fish have been eviscerated. They must be scaled and, if the head is left on, must be degilled. The edible portion is about 48 percent.



Dressed fish are ready to cook, usually with head, tail and fins removed. The edible portion is about 67 percent.



Fillets are the sides of the fish cut away from the backbone and are ready to cook. They are usually boneless, with no waste.



Steaks are ready-to-cook, cross-sectional slices of large fish. The edible yield is about 86 percent.



Dressing a Round Fish

Place fish on a flat surface. With a fish scaler or dull side of a knife, scrape off scales, moving from head to tail.



Remove the head and pectoral fins by cutting through the fish at a 45-degree angle just behind the head.



Cut the entire length of the belly from head to tail.



Remove viscera and all black membranes and blood, particularly the blood streak running along the backbone. Cut around pelvic fins and remove them. Rinse fish well — with attention to cavity — under cold, running water.



Filleting a Round-Bodied Fish

Scale the fish. At the pectoral fin, just behind the head, cut into flesh at a 45-degree angle toward the head until your knife reaches the backbone.



Turn the knife and follow backbone to the tail, keeping the knife against the backbone. Or, if you prefer, reverse this and cut from the tail to the head. Turn fish over and repeat on the other side.

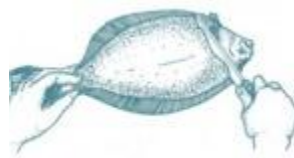


Rinse the fillet well under cold, running water.



Filleting a Flat-Bodied Fish

Scale the fish. Cut down to the backbone at a 45-degree angle just behind the head.



Make a cut from nape to tail along each side of the backbone. Slide knife along the backbone to loosen the fillet. Turn fish over and repeat on the other side.



You may leave fish as two fillets or cut each in half lengthwise to make four fillets. Rinse well under cold, running water.



Skimming a Fillet

With skin side down, hold tail of fillet. Slide knife between skin and flesh. With the blade almost horizontal, pull the skin taut as you draw the blade toward the large end of the fillet.



From: [Mariner's Menu: 30 Years of Fresh Seafood Ideas](#)

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