

Cleaning & Handling Freshly Caught Fish

Think about where you fish! Consider the local history and industry (past and present) of your favorite fishing areas. The risks of contaminants could be higher in old industrial areas. Take appropriate precautions.



Freshly caught fish should be kept in a cooler on ice. Keep out of the sun. As soon as possible, gut the fish and remove the gills or fillet. This allows for blood removal from and efficient chilling of the edible portion. Properly iced or refrigerated fish can be held for 2 to 3 days

- ★ Use clean utensils and wash hands!

Fish with slime

- ★ Some species, such as northern pike, have a thick mucous coating
- ★ Remove slime by placing fish in vinegar solution (1 part vinegar & 3 parts water or
- ★ Rub the fish with generous amounts of salt
- ★ Rinse

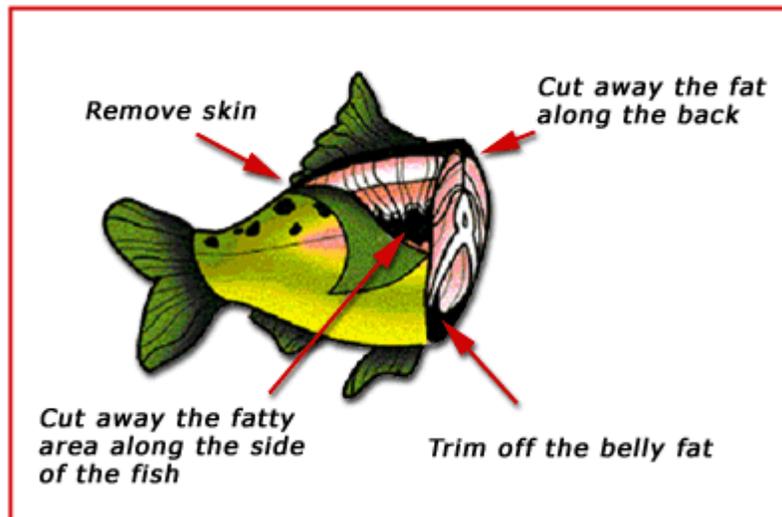
Scales

- ★ Not a problem if fish is filleted and skinned
- ★ Scrap off the scales

Filleting your fish, if appropriate has several advantages.

- ★ It reduces fat in edible portion
- ★ It reduces exposure to any fat soluble contaminants
- ★ It is simpler to clean since guts do not have to be removed.
- ★ It saves only the edible portion instead of taking up space with inedible bones, organs, etc.
- ★ It is more convenient to wrap and store
- ★ It is simpler and faster to cook
- ★ It freezes faster and may increase storage time

Cleaning and dressing



Reducing possible contaminate consumption

1. Choose smaller (younger) fish and leaner types of fish, such as panfish, brook trout, brown trout, smaller walleye, northern pike & bass. Avoid carp and catfish.
2. Cut along the bone to remove the bones and fat.
3. Cut off the skin, where much of the fat is stored.
4. Remove the belly fat and the fatty meat under the stomach of the fish and cut out a v-shaped wedge to remove fat along each side of the fish – fatty areas are darker in color in fish like salmon and trout but may be lighter on other fish, such as bass and walleye. Throw these parts away.
5. Bake, broil, grill, roast, boil or poach the remaining meat. Do not fry the fish. This locks in the fat, which is high in PCB's.
6. Throw away any leftover juices or grease, including the water in which the fish was boiled or poached. DO NOT use them to make a soup or stock.