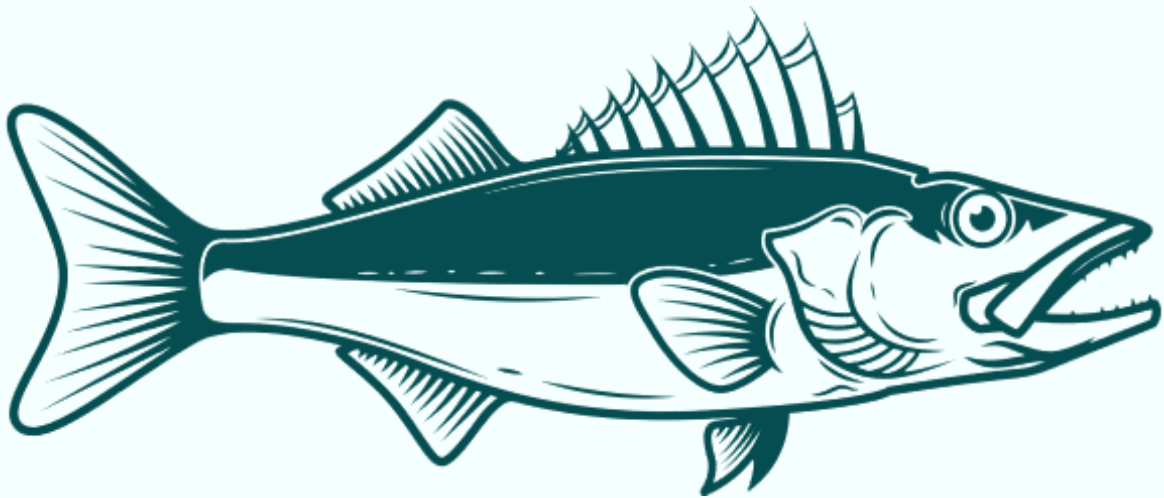


HOW TO PREPARE FISH

Fish is an important part of a heart healthy diet.
Follow along as we learn how to prepare
fresh caught fish together!



Rivers of Plenty

Step 1: Preserve Your Fish

You should prepare your fish for eating or refrigerating/freezing as soon as you can.

But, if you're out on the boat or have a long trip home, you can keep your fish fresh with some quick preservation techniques!

The best thing to do is **kill and chill** your fish on crushed ice as quickly as possible.



If you can't chill the fish, keep it **alive** in the same **water** from where you caught it.



Keeping raw fish below 4°C helps to slow bacteria growth and prevent food poisoning.

IMPORTANT: Do not eat your fish if it is dead or dying when you catch it, or if it appears sick.



Step 2: Prepare Your Fish

Equipment You Will Need



Fish Scaler

Tool used to remove a fish's tough outer scales. A spoon or the blunt side of the knife can also work, but using a scaler is easier and safer.



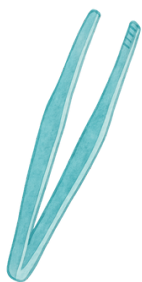
Kitchen Shears

Shears are stronger and sturdier than regular scissors. They are good for cutting through fish skin, fins and bones.



Fillet Knife

Long, thin knife with a narrow, flexible tip. If a fillet knife isn't available, a sharp chef's or carving knife with a straight edge can be used.



Tweezers

Sturdy tweezers allow you to grip onto bones without cutting through them.



Gloves

Cut-resistant gloves help you safely and securely hold slippery fish.



Cutting Board

Avoid cross-contamination by using a board that you **DON'T** use for ready-to-eat foods.



Towel

Use a kitchen towel larger than the cutting board, or two towels if you don't have one large enough.

Set-up

First, wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

Next, ensure all the tools you need and the surface you are working on is clean and sanitized.

Take your kitchen towel, wet it, and place it on the counter. Lay the cutting board on top. This prevents the cutting board from slipping!



Scaling

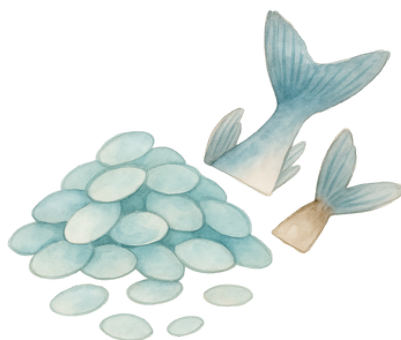
Scaling involves removing scales from the skin of your fish.

First, lay the fish on the cutting board. Use the kitchen shears to cut off all the fins.

Securely hold the tail with one hand, and hold the scaler in your other hand. Rub the teeth of the scaler along the fish, from tail to head. Do this until all the scales have fallen off.

Rinse the fish so that it is clean of all scales.

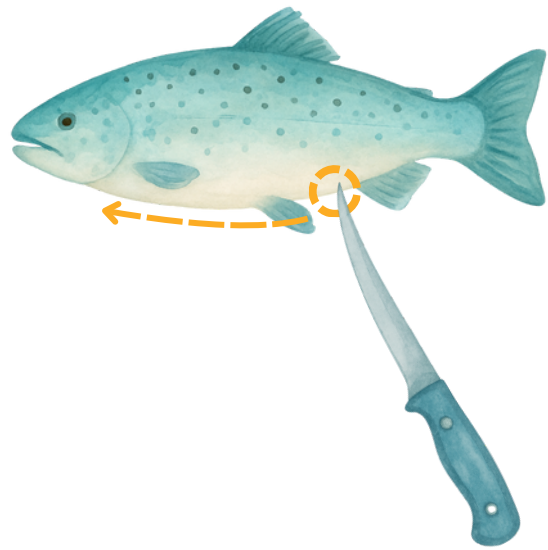
PRO TIP: Add fish fins and scales to your compost pile! Mix the fish remains with sawdust or wood chips and bury at least 6 inches deep into the pile to trap smells and avoid pests.



Gutting

Gutting means taking out the inside parts of the fish.

Put the fish on its side on the cutting board, with its belly facing you. Gently poke the very tip of your fillet knife into the small opening under the belly (the anus). Then, carefully slide the knife up toward the gills. Use only the point of the knife and make a very shallow cut — don't push too deep, or you might poke the organs inside and make the fish taste bad.



Now you have an opening to the inside of the fish.

For smaller fish, you can use your fingers to pull out the inside parts and gills.



For large fish, you may need to use a knife or kitchen shears to help remove everything.



You may find fish eggs inside. Fish eggs are healthy and have protein and other nutrients. But they also have more fat.



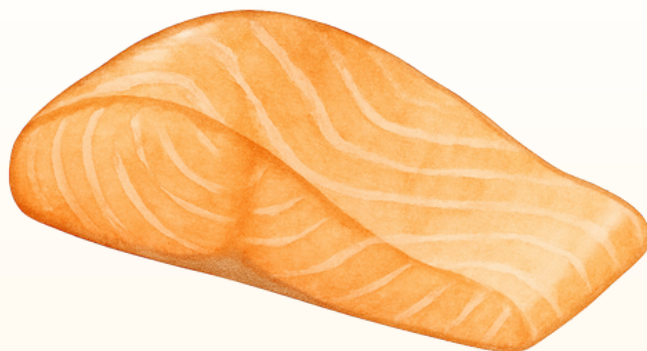
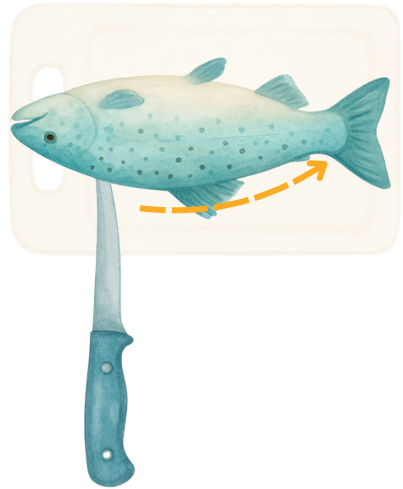
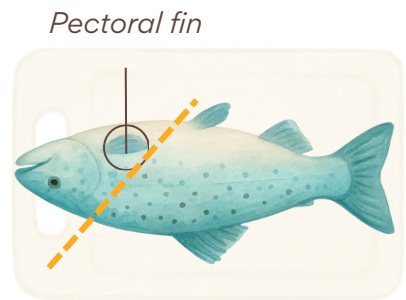
You may also see worms or grubs while cleaning your fish. Even though they look gross, these are a normal part of nature. The fish is usually still safe to eat if you cook it well.

Once gutted, thoroughly rinse the cavity of the fish with running water before moving on to the next step.

Filleting

Filleting means taking the bones out of a fish.

- ① Place the fish on its side on the cutting board with its back facing you.
- ② Find the pectoral fin. Hold your knife at a 45° angle. Cut just behind the fin until you hit the backbone. Stop there — do not cut all the way through.
- ③ Turn your knife so the blade is flat and parallel to the cutting board. With gentle sawing motions, slide your knife into your first cut and along the backbone. Once you reach where the fish's anus is, you can slide your blade deeper through the fish and cut through to its tail.
- ④ Rotate the fish so its belly is facing you. Slice along the belly in the direction from head to tail.
- ⑤ You will now be able to lift the meat, or fillet, away from the fish. Put it to the side.
- ⑥ Repeat the same steps on the other side of the fish.



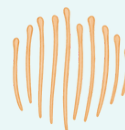
Removing Pin Bones

Pin bones are tiny bones in the middle of fish fillets. They're hard to see, but you can feel them when you take a bite! They're typically removed for a more pleasant eating experience.

Large fish: Use your fingers to feel the pin bones and remove them one by one with tweezers.



Small fish: Use a knife to cut out the whole strip of flesh containing the pin bones.

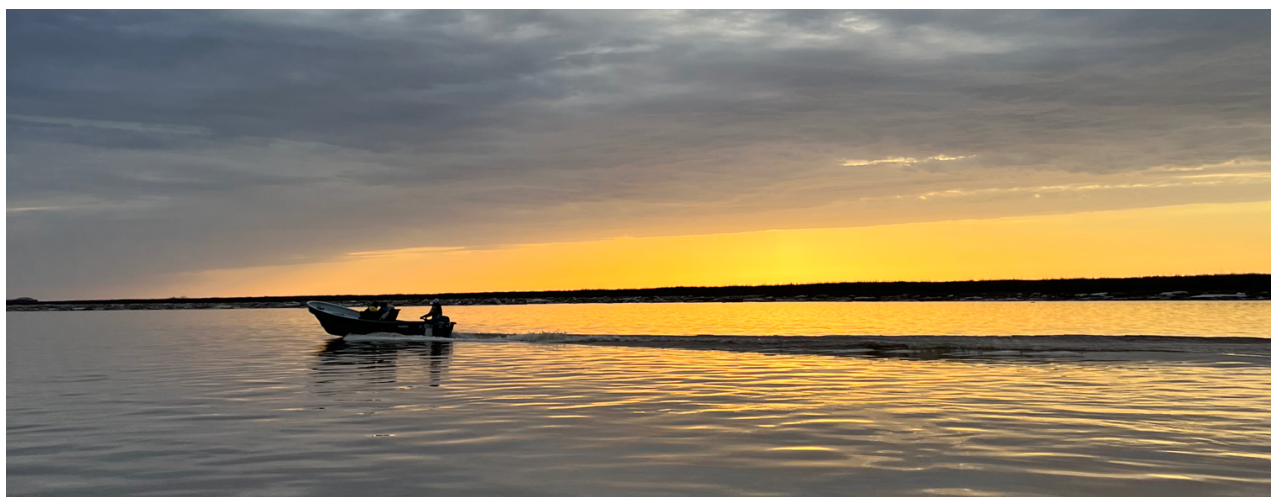


Removing Skin - Optional!

Skinning a fish is a matter of personal preference. Skinning removes potential contaminants and can create a less oily product, but keeping the skin on retains valuable nutrients and moisture.

To skin your fish:

- Place the fillet skin side down on a cutting board.
- Make a shallow cut at the very end of the tail.
- Turn your blade parallel to the cutting board and start a sawing motion to cut between the skin and the meat, slicing along the fillet.
- Tug the tail end and the skin to help peel the skin off.
- Continue until the entire skin is removed.



Rivers of Plenty