



PREPARING FISH FOR COOKING

1. To Scale a whole fish: Using a dull knife and starting from the tail, work toward the head. Hold the knife at an angle of about 45° to prevent the scales from flying too much and the skin from being cut.
2. To Clean: Split the fish from back of the gills to the vent. Cut off the head and tail if they are to be removed (if the head is left on, remove the gills and eyes and trim the unedible part of the tail). Lift out the viscera and wash away any blood. Scrape the backbone clean, and remove the black membrane (when present) by rubbing with salt. Wipe the inside and outside with a damp cloth and dry the fish. Salt lightly and place in a cold retainer until cooking time.
3. To Skin: Remove the dorsal (back) fins by cutting along each side and pulling them out, pulling toward the head. Cut the skin around the gills and cut off a narrow strip down the back. Start pulling the skin off with the fingers, beginning at the bony part of the gills. A knife may be used to follow the skin to prevent the flesh from tearing. A fresh fish is skinned easily. Soft fleshed fish require more care. Do not skin oily-meated fish before cooking in order to save the fat which lies directly under the skin.
4. To Bone: Continue beyond the vent, the cut made when cleaning the fish. Then, beginning at the tail insert a sharp knife between the flesh and the backbone. Keep the knife as close to the bone as possible and work it toward the head, cutting the bone clear from that side of the flesh. Turn and cut the bone from