

How to choose fish

The test of successful shopping is of course whether you have secured the fullest possible value for your money. Now there are so many different kinds of fish, over 30 deep sea varieties are offered you daily, and so many different ways of cutting it that for true economy it is most important for you to be sure that you are getting just the right kind of fish for your purpose. Here are a few points to bear in mind.

For frying remember medium sized fillets are far less likely to break in the pan than very large ones. So ask your fishmonger not to cut your fillets too large.

In the same way if you are buying steaks for frying remember that a very thick steak is more difficult to cook. Ask the fishmonger to cut them medium thick. Your fishmonger is your best guide for fish value. Don't insist on having only four or five kinds of fish. Ask him what he can recommend that is good and cheap. He will very likely introduce you to a new delicious variety that will cost you less.

Don't forget that the more delicate kinds of fish are not only more expensive but are not so successful in "made up" dishes. Many people buy the highest priced fish for such purposes as making fishpie, fish cakes, and fish scallops. This is as absurd as using best rump steak for cottage pie.

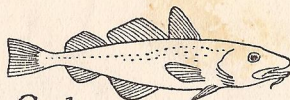
For the same reason do not insist always on the "middle cut." You might just as well always buy sirloin. Do not forget the tail or the head. For instance, a halibut or turbot's head boiled will give you enough fish for a delicious salad or creamed fish, at a low price.

Another useful economy hint is to ask for the bones of fish you have filleted. These bones make beautiful stock for fish soups (see page twenty).

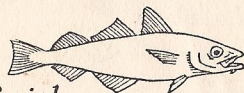
Golden rules for cooking fish

How to fry fish

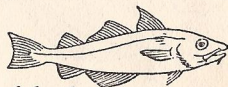
First wipe your fish and salt well. Leave salt on for a few minutes, then wash off. This salting greatly improves the flavour. Now thoroughly dry. Wrap in a clean cloth, press very gently and make sure every atom of moisture



Cod



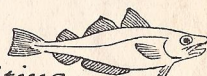
Saithe



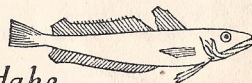
Haddock



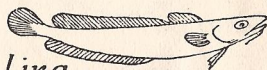
Pollack



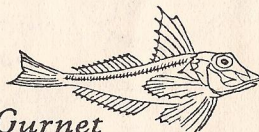
Whiting



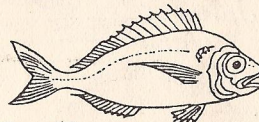
Hake



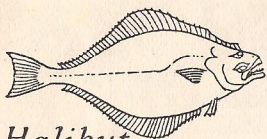
Ling



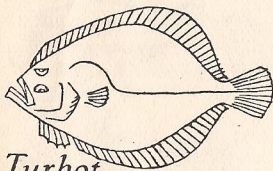
Gurnet



Sea Bream



Halibut

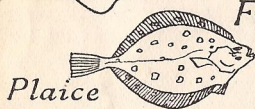


Turbot

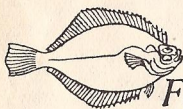


Monk

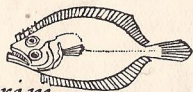
Fish



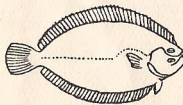
Plaice



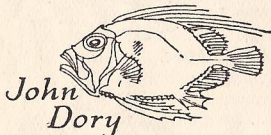
Flounder



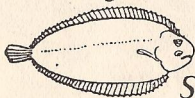
Megrim



Lemon
Sole



John
Dory



Sole

is out. Then dip in batter, or egg and breadcrumb, or simply flour. Now have a pan with plenty of clean fat. Heat until fat gives off a BLUE SMOKE. This is most important. Fry your fish until golden crisp. Drain thoroughly and serve.

CAUTION.—If your fish is not properly dried it will be watery inside. If your fat is not properly hot your fish will not fry to a golden crispness.

Boiling and steaming

Do not boil fish if you can avoid it. Steaming is much better. If you have not a steamer you can steam moderate sized pieces of fish between two plates as directed below. Should boiling be necessary use it only for large pieces of fish such as a "cod's head and shoulders" or the entire middle cut of turbot or halibut. Boil as follows :—

Place large saucepan on fire to boil. When water is warm add dessertspoonful of vinegar. Place in the well washed fish. Salt and pepper. It is advisable either to tie fish up well or to cook in a muslin bag which may be used any number of times. Bring water to boil, then simmer gently until fish is cooked. When skin begins to crack the fish is done.

CAUTION.—After lifting out fish carefully on a slice, drain and press out all moisture with clean cloth. The fault of most boiled fish is that it is watery.

If fish is put into boiling water and "galloped" it will be tough and fall to pieces, so be sure you *simmer* your fish.

How to steam fish

There is no easier or more delicious way of cooking fish than steaming. Steaming requires no attention and cannot fail to be successful. All the flavour is retained, the fish itself keeps firm, the full nourishment is preserved. Season any fish to be steamed with pepper and salt, put a little butter or margarine on the top, this greatly improves the flavour. Then place the fish on a greased plate, invert another plate over the top and cook over a saucepan in which water is kept boiling. When the fish feels soft and tender to a fork it is done.

Steaming is the ideal way of cooking fish for children and invalids because it makes it particularly digestible.