

CHOICE OF FISH.

When purchasing fish the following points should be borne in mind :—

1. Choose fish in season (see p. 3), as it then has a finer flavour, and is cheaper.
2. The fish should be quite fresh and should not smell at all unpleasant.
3. When fresh, the flesh is firm and of a good colour, the scales plentiful and the eyes bright and not sunken. The gills of herrings and the spots on plaice should be bright red.
4. Medium sized fish have a better flavour than small fish and are less coarse than large ones.

The General Directions for Preparing Fish are as follows :—

1. Clean, if necessary. Cut off the tail and fins (cutting from the tail towards the head), and scale. Remove the eyes if the fish is to be cooked with the head on.
2. Wash well in cold water using salt to remove any blood, etc.; dry in a clean cloth.
3. Many fish may be filleted, skinned and boned. The skin of soles is more easily removed before filleting.

To Bone round Fish.

Slit open along the underside from tail to head. Spread the back uppermost and rub up and down with the fingers and thumb to loosen the bone from the flesh. Turn the fish over and remove all the back bone.

Boiling.

If possible choose a fish kettle with a drainer so that the fish can be easily lifted in and out of the pan. If a drainer is not available, place an enamel plate at the bottom of the pan and rest the fish on a coarse cloth, the corners of which can be held in place by the lid of the pan. The fish can be seasoned, sprinkled with lemon juice and tied in greased paper to prevent loss of flavour. This is especially to be recommended when cooking cod.

Use sufficient water to cover the fish and add 3 teaspoonfuls salt and 1 tablespoonful vinegar to every quart of water. The water should be hot but not boiling when the fish is first put in, or the delicate skin will be broken. Salmon, which has a harder skin, may be placed in boiling water.

The average time for boiling is 10 minutes per lb. and 10 minutes over except for thick cuts of salmon or cod when 12 minutes per lb. and 12 minutes over should be allowed.