

HOW TO SCORE AND STORE THE BEST CATCH OF THE DAY

SEAFOOD SUCCESS

BY Caitlyn Diimig, RD

Spot Fresh

Fish smell clean and retain their color when fresh, and the flesh will bounce back when pressed. “A fish will tell you right off the bat if it's worthy of coming home,” says John Livera, chef for the Norwegian Seafood Council. If it smells fishy, has cloudy eyes, gray flesh or rusty brown gills, keep looking.

Choose Frozen

Fresh fish may seem like a superior option, but frozen fish can retain more nutrients, says Valerie Agyeman, registered dietician with the Seafood Nutrition Partnership. “Most fish and seafood are frozen on the boat or dock, locking in nutrients at their peak,” she says. To thaw frozen fillets, simply set them in a bowl of cold water for 30 to 60 minutes (shrimp need 20 to 30 minutes), then drain and pat dry.

Ask A Monger

Don't be afraid to call your store's fishmongers. They're knowledgeable about what's freshest; how to store, clean and prep fish and seafood; and how long a purchase will stay fresh.

Keep It Cold & Use It Quickly

Keep fresh fish in the coldest part of your refrigerator and cook and consume it (or freeze for later) within about 24 hours of purchase, Livera says. To freeze, he advises vacuum sealing the fish, or tightly wrapping it in plastic wrap inside a zip-top freezer bag, and storing it in the freezer for up to three months.

Avoiding Grit

Scallops, clams and mussels open their shells slightly and filter water to feed, which means sand or grit can get inside. That isn't pleasant to eat. Many are sold pre-purged, but it's smart to give them some extra attention just before you cook them. Rinse raw scallops well under cold water and pat dry. Soak raw clams and mussels in cold water for 20 minutes, remove with a slotted spoon, then brush the shells to remove any additional grit. Rinse under cold water and pat dry. Then remove the beard from the mussels.