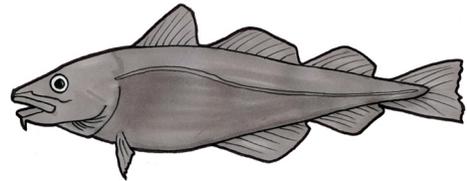


TYPES OF FISH AND SHELLFISH

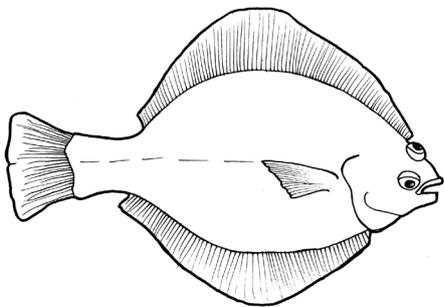


You'll probably see the same common varieties of fish and shellfish crop up again in shops and restaurants throughout the UK. The easiest way to categorise them is to divide them into different groups: round fish, flat fish, shellfish and crustaceans (plus a few extras!), then think of them as little families within these groups.

Round fish: These fish aren't actually round, but if you were to cut across them, you would end up with round pieces, which is where their name comes from. In this group you'll find:



- The pink-fleshed family of salmon, trout, sea trout and rainbow trout. These fish are real all-rounders and are brilliant used whole or cut into smaller fillets for poaching, frying, roasting or baking.
- The white flaky family of cod, haddock, hake and whiting. These fish have a very delicate texture, and need to be handled carefully once cooked as they can flake apart really easily. They're great for roasting, delicious baked with simple flavours or deep-fried in batter for the nation's favourite dish: fish and chips.
- The oily family of sardines, herring, anchovies and mackerel. These fish are relatively small and are wonderful cooked whole, either on the barbecue, in the oven or under the grill. These fish are often preserved in brine (salty water) or oil and then sold in tins or jars, or smoked and dried. Kippers, for example, come from smoked and dried mackerel.
- The warm water family of bass, bream, mullet and snapper. These fish have great flavour and are even tastier when cooked whole, either in the oven, on the barbecue or under the grill. Fillets are fantastic pan-fried.
- The meaty tuna and swordfish brothers. These fish always come in boneless meaty steaks that are perfect for barbecuing, griddling or pan-frying. Tuna – a brilliant and cheap source of fish – is also cooked then packed into tins or jars with brine (salty water).



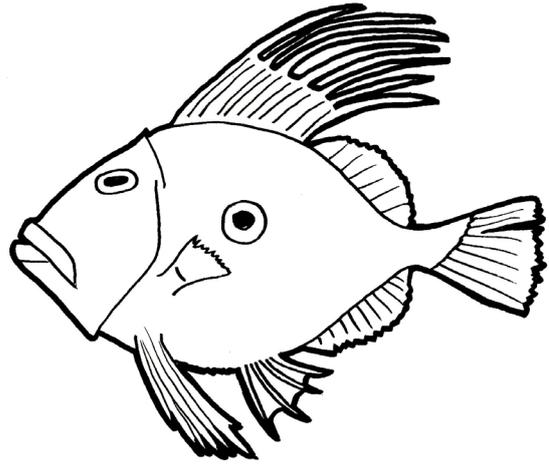
Flat fish: Flat fish are actually flat. They spend most of their time swimming along the seabed. Think of them as one big family, with halibut, turbot and brill as the big brothers, and Dover sole, lemon sole, plaice and dabs as the smaller younger siblings. These fish are often sold whole because they are great roasted or grilled, but are also sold in several small fillets, which are good baked or fried.

AND THE REST...

There are a few other fish you may find that don't fit into either of the above categories.

They are:

- Monkfish are a very ugly but very tasty deep-sea fish. Monkfish is a meaty fish and its fillets are delicious grilled, roasted or pan-fried.
- Skate is a member of the ray family, it always comes on the bone and is great for grilling or roasting.
- John Dory is spiny and beautiful and normally sold in fillets for frying, grilling or barbecuing.



Shellfish: These are small creatures that live inside a hard protective shell.

- Scallops are delicious white nuggets of meat that come in big crinkly shells. You always take them out of their shells to cook them and they're good steamed, fried, grilled or even raw (as long as they're really fresh!).
- Mussels have deep-blue shells that must be scrubbed clean before use as they're always cooked in their shells. The meat inside the shells ranges in colour from creamy white to deep orange depending on their sex and the time of year. Mussels are brilliant cooked in the pan with a little cream or tomato sauce and eaten straight out of the shell.
- Clams are very small and have very small grey shells. They're prepared and cooked in the same way as mussels and are fantastic cooked simply with garlic and chilli then tossed through cooked spaghetti.
- Oysters have beautiful greenish silver crinkly shells with a creamy little creature inside. They're considered a delicacy by many people and are normally eaten raw on their own, or with a little lemon, Tabasco sauce and a pinch of black pepper.



Crustaceans: These are sea creatures that have legs and claws and a protective shell on their backs. They can swim in the sea or walk around the seabed.

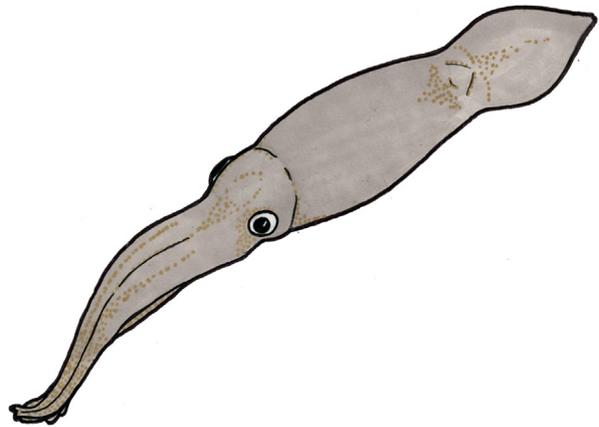
- Prawns come in a variety of sizes, from tiny little cold-water ones to huge tropical ones. They can be cooked in or out of their shell and are delicious served hot or cold.

They're fantastic grilled, barbecued, fried or boiled. They're incredibly versatile and can be used in anything from pasta to stir-fries.

- Lobsters are really like bigger, posher prawns. They are much bigger and have delicious meaty claws. Like prawns they can be cooked in or out of their shells and are delicious hot or cold. Lobsters are fantastic sliced in half and grilled, or boiled whole, then chopped into chunks and served with melted butter.
- Crabs are thick-shelled creatures that live on the seabed. They are always cooked in their shell, normally by boiling, and then picked and eaten. You get two kinds of meat from a crab – creamy brown meat from inside the head shell and fine, sweet white meat from the claws and legs. Crabs are delicious eaten cold in a salad or just picked out of their shell and eaten with crusty bread and mayonnaise. Crab is also great in soups and stir-fries.

Other sea creatures: Octopus and squid are boneless creatures with lots of suckered legs that swim through the sea.

- Octopus are quite tough and thick. They need to be boiled for quite a while to become tender enough to eat. They're full of flavour and delicious in any kind of fish stew, pre-cooked then barbecued or even boiled.
- Squid are tender and soft, and only need a little frying or grilling to cook them. They're incredibly versatile, and are fantastic sliced up and deep-fried for calamari, stuffed and braised, boiled and dressed, grilled, fried or barbecued.



To learn more about different types of fish, check out:

<http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/healthydiet/nutritionessentials/fishandshellfish>