

## How do I know if FISH IS FRESH?

Fresh fish has a short shelf life, so knowing how to spotcheck for freshness can be useful.

Once a fish dies, its digestive enzymes continue to work and bacteria that is naturally present on the fish start breaking down its flesh. Because bacteria in fish breed well at lower temperatures, and the unsaturated oils turn rancid more rapidly than other animal fats, fish should ideally be eaten within one week of being caught. Use the indicators below to help you identify the freshest fish.

**Skin and scales**  
These will be metallic-looking and bright on fresh fish, rather than dull, and there should be no patchy or broken scales.

**Smell**  
A fresh, slightly briny smell is ideal. Avoid fish that have an unpleasant, or especially strong, fishy aroma.

**Eyes**  
Look for fish with bright, shiny, bulging eyes and avoid those with milky, sunken eyes.

**Feel**  
The freshest fish have a firm consistency and are springy to the touch, rather than inelastic, soft, or squishy.

**Gills**  
In fresh fish, the gills are moist, bright red, and clean-looking, rather than dull or slimy.

### MYTH-BUSTER

**Myth**  
ALL FISH SMELL "FISHY"

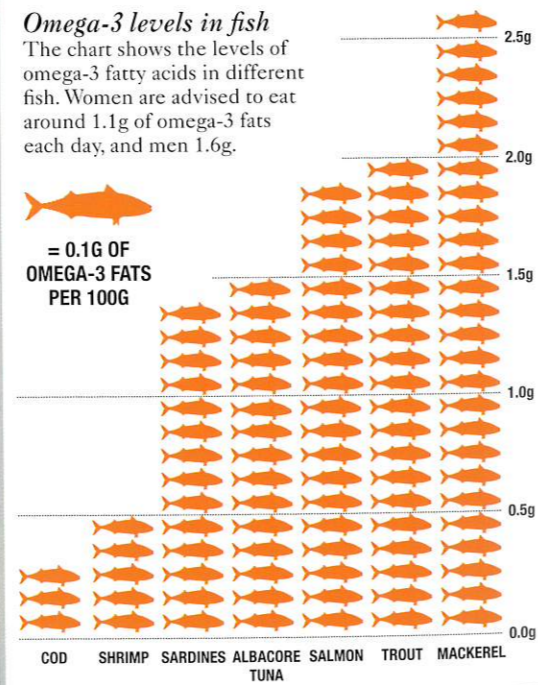
**Truth**  
Freshly landed fish actually have a pleasant grassy smell, but after 2-3 days this sweet smell vanishes. In saltwater fish, the foul-smelling odour comes from the breakdown of urea and trimethylamine oxide (TAMO). Freshwater fish don't have TAMO, but start to smell over time as bacteria produce rancid-smelling gases. So a freshly caught fish doesn't smell "fishy", but fishy smells evolve the less fresh it becomes.

## Why is fish called "BRAIN" FOOD?

Our pre-human ancestors started fishing around two million years ago. Today, researchers believe that fish nutrients fuelled our rapid brain growth.

Fish is a rich source of iodine and iron, minerals that are essential for healthy brain development during childhood. In addition to these brain-fortifying minerals, the oils in fish also contain essential omega-3 fats, which act as building blocks for the fatty sheaths that surround our nerve cells, allowing them to function properly. Oily fish, such as salmon, anchovies, sardines, mackerel, trout, and tuna, have the most plentiful supply of brain-fortifying omega-3 fats.

The way in which fish is prepared or cooked can affect its levels of essential fats. Canning fish destroys a large proportion of omega-3s, and cooking at high temperatures – for example, frying – can break down, or oxidize, omega-3s. Delicate cooking methods, such as baking and steaming, are best for preserving these oils.



**OILY FISH ARE ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST SOURCES OF OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS, WHICH ARE INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT FOR THE BODY AND BRAIN.**

**A HEALTHY BRAIN**  
RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PEOPLE WHO EAT OILY FISH REGULARLY HAVE LESS BRAIN SHRINKAGE IN OLD AGE.

**A FISHY DIET MAY OFFER SOME PROTECTION AGAINST DEMENTIA.**

**OMEGA-3 ALLOWS NEURONS TO FORM NEW CONNECTIONS, ESSENTIAL FOR LEARNING.**

**RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT A DIET RICH IN FISH OILS BOOSTS MENTAL PROWESS AND REACTION TIMES.**

**EVIDENCE REVEALS FISH OILS MAY IMPROVE CONCENTRATION IN CHILDREN WITH ADHD.**

**EATING OILY FISH MAY IMPROVE SLEEP QUALITY.**

**BRAIN-FORTIFYING**  
FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTS GIVEN TO PREMATURE BABIES HELP ENSURE NORMAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.

**FATTY ACIDS IMPROVE BLOOD FLOW TO THE BRAIN.**

**A SAFE LIMIT**  
FISH SOAK UP POLLUTANTS, SUCH AS MERCURY, FROM THE SEA, SO EAT NO MORE THAN FOUR PORTIONS OF OILY FISH A WEEK.

**SUPER FISH**  
MACKEREL HAS AN IMPRESSIVE 2.6G OF OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS PER 100G.

**Brain-boosting nutrients**  
For those low in omega-3, research shows that fish has marked brain-boosting benefits, helping to keep our mental faculties sharp and functioning well.