

# After the Catch...

Clean your fish to prepare it to eat or release it quick and unharmed.

## Releasing a Fish

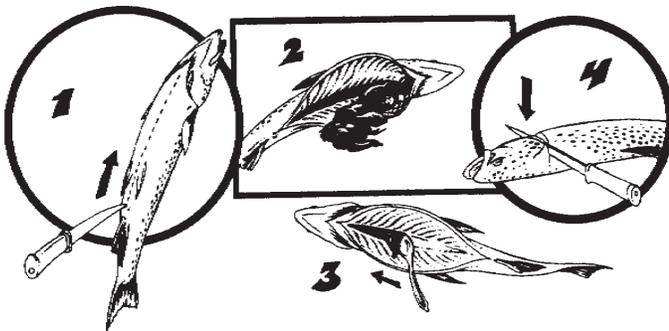
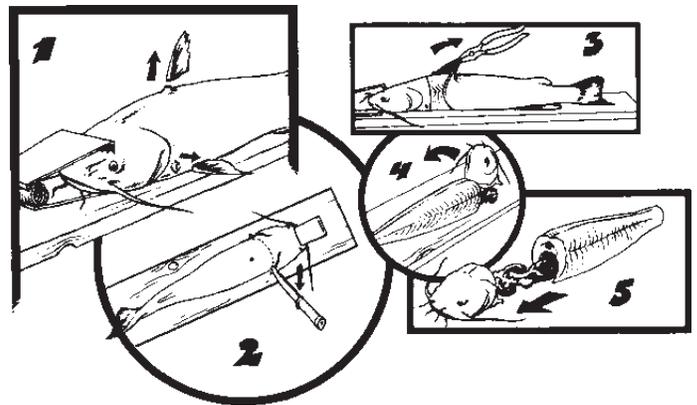
Handle the fish gently with a wet hand as you remove the hook. Grasp it carefully to avoid any spines on the back. If the hook is deep in the fish, you may not be able to remove it. Cut the line and release the fish. The hook will rust, dis-solve, or work its way loose. If a fish loses consciousness, try to revive it by gently moving it forward and backward so water moves through its gills. When the fish revives and begins to struggle, let it go. Fish do not always survive being caught.

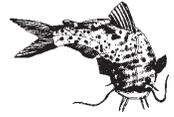
## Skinning

Many people like to remove the skin from catfish and bullheads. To do this, hold the head firmly on a flat surface with a clamp. For safety, snip off a catfish's spines before skinning. Cut through the skin behind the head and the pectoral fins. Use pliers to remove the skin from the body, pulling from the head toward the tail. Grasp the head of the fish with one hand and the body with the other. Break the backbone at the head. Pull the head and guts away from the skinned body. Wash the fish in clean water and it is ready for cooking.

## Cleaning a Fish

Fish are slippery and knives are sharp – be careful! Rinse the slime off the fish, lay it on a board, and insert the knife tip into the fish's anus. Cut upward along the belly to the head. Keep the knife blade shallow so you do not puncture the intestines. Spread the body open and remove all of the entrails. Some fish have a kidney by the backbone. You can remove it by scraping it out with a spoon or your thumbnail. Cut off the head and rinse the fish in clean water. Keep the fish cool.





# Cooking your Catch

## Campfire (or BBQ) Trout

### *Ingredients*

trout - cleaned  
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter  
salt and pepper to taste  
herbs such as parsley, sage or thyme

Make a long deep dish out of foil, with enough foil to fold over and seal on top. Butter the foil and place the fish in the dish. Add the remaining butter and herbs. Seal the top of the foil so that no liquid can escape. Bake on a grate over a hot bed of coals, turning frequently.

## Pan Fried Trout

### *Ingredients*

fresh trout - cleaned, scaled, and filleted  
cooking oil  
flour  
lemon wedges (optional)

Dredge the trout filets through the flour. Heat the cooking oil in a frying pan. Fry the trout until golden brown on both sides. Use care when turning the filets over so they don't stick to the pan or break apart. Serve hot with lemon wedges.

## Baked Trout or Catfish

### *Ingredients*

fresh fish - cleaned, scaled and filleted  
1/4 cup milk  
seasoned bread crumbs or crushed corn flakes  
2 tablespoons melted butter

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Dip the fillets in the milk, then in the bread crumbs or crushed corn flakes to coat. Place the fish in a baking pan. Bake until firm and golden basting with the butter several times.

## Fried Catfish

### *Ingredients*

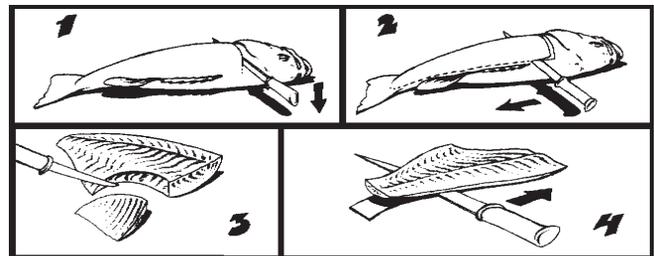
fresh catfish - cleaned, skinned, and filleted  
cooking oil  
seasoned white cornmeal  
lemon wedges (optional)

Cut the catfish filets into chunks and dredge them through the cornmeal. Heat the cooking oil in a frying pan. Deep fry the catfish until golden brown. Serve hot with lemon wedges.

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## Filleting Your Catch

Lay the fish on its side on a flat surface. Cut the fish behind its gills and pectoral fin down to, but not through, the backbone. Without removing the knife, turn the blade and cut through the ribs toward the tail. Use the fish's backbone to guide you. Turn the fish over and repeat the steps.



To skin the fish place it skin side down, insert the knife blade about a 1/2 inch from the tail. Gripping this tail part firmly, put the blade between the skin and the meat at an angle. Wash each fillet in cold water. Pat dry with a clean cloth or paper towel. The fillets are ready to cook or freeze.