

# Statewide Freshwater Rules

## Using Freshwater Rules

### 1 • • • • • Read:

The Statewide Freshwater Rules and Statewide Freshwater Species Rules. Determine seasons and general rules applying to the species for which you intend to fish. Remember to check for emergency rules, which can be found by calling the WDFW Fishing Hotline at (360) 902-2500, by contacting statewide customer service at (360) 902-2700, or by visiting the WDFW website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov>.

### 2 • • • • • Choose:

The location you are going to fish and check that area for Special Rule listings. Special Rules are divided into five areas: Puget Sound and Strait Rivers, Westside Rivers, Westside Lakes, Eastside Rivers, and Eastside Lakes. **RIVERS** lists rivers, streams, and beaver ponds. **LAKES** lists lakes, ponds, and reservoirs. For the purposes of this pamphlet, the COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVERS are rivers (not reservoirs), and any special rules that apply are listed in the Eastside Rivers section. See map below for additional information.

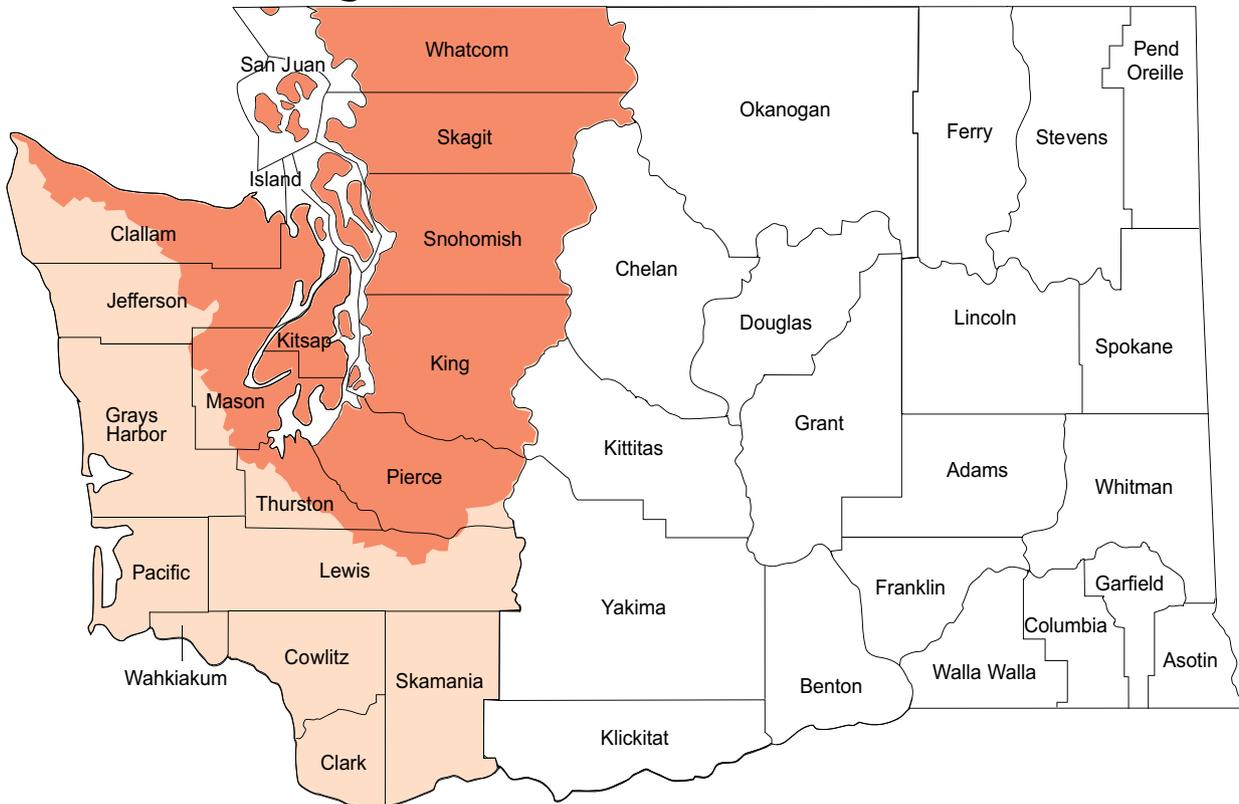
### 3 • • • • • If your area is listed in a Special Rules section:

Read Special Rules Instructions on the bottom of page 26. If your area is NOT listed in the Special Rules for Westside Rivers, Eastside Rivers, Westside Lakes, and Eastside Lakes (**pages 49-98**), then all the Statewide Rules apply. In the Puget Sound and Strait Rivers section **ALL** unlisted areas are **CLOSED**.

### 4 • • • • • The following terms are used frequently in the Special Rules:

*Catch-and-release, Chumming, Daily Limit, Fly Fishing Only, Juvenile Only, Landlocked Salmon Rules, Minimum Size (min. size), Maximum Size (max. size), Night Closure, Anti-Snagging Rule, Selective Gear Rules, Release wild STEELHEAD, Release wild CHINOOK, Release wild COHO, and Release wild CUTTHROAT. Definitions can be found on pages 18-19.*

## Puget Sound Tributaries



Westside

Eastside

# Statewide Freshwater Rules

## Tackle

Hook and line angling only. Barbed or barbless hooks may be used, and a hook may be single-point, double, or treble, but not more than one line with up to three hooks per angler may be used.

Single-point barbless hooks are required in areas designated as "fly fishing only" or "selective gear rules."

All fishing gear must be kept in immediate control and may not be left unattended while fishing. Rodholders may be used, but the rod must be easily removed without delay; rod may be left in holder while playing the fish.

A club or dipnet may be used to assist landing a legal fish taken by legal gear. A gaff hook may not be used.

It is unlawful to possess a fish taken from freshwater that was not hooked inside the mouth or on the head. The head is defined as any portion forward of the rear margin of the gill plate.

## Bait Rules

It is unlawful to chum or broadcast any substance to attract game fish.

Where use of bait is prohibited, or where lures or flies are used voluntarily, game fish may be caught and released until the daily limit is retained. If any fish has swallowed the hook or is hooked in the gill, eye, or tongue, it should be kept if legal to do so.

It is unlawful to possess or use live aquatic animals as bait, except:

1. Live aquatic animals (other than fish) collected from the water being fished.
2. Live sand shrimp.
3. Live forage fish in the Columbia River downstream of the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line.

## Areas/Seasons

The following rules and seasons apply unless listed otherwise in the Special Rules. For all game fish and salmon, the Special Rules show ALL of the fishing opportunities for each freshwater area listed.

**Unlisted areas fall under statewide rules except the Puget Sound and Strait Rivers.**

**All freshwater areas are CLOSED to the harvest of any fish not classified as a food fish or game fish (see definitions page 18).**

**Freshwater areas are open 24 hours per day when open.**

All FRESHWATER areas are CLOSED to fishing for SALMON, DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT, GREEN STURGEON, LAMPREY, and GRASS CARP unless listed as open in Special Rules. Fishing for COMMON CARP, WHITE STURGEON, SHAD, or forage fish (unless specifically noted in Special Rules) is open only during open game fish or SALMON seasons.

**LAKES, PONDS, AND RESERVOIRS** are open to fishing for game fish (except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP) **year-round**.

**RIVERS, STREAMS, AND BEAVER PONDS** that drain into Puget Sound or the Strait of Juan de Fuca are **CLOSED** to fishing unless listed as open. See page 31 for complete information.

**RIVERS, STREAMS, AND BEAVER PONDS** that do not drain into Puget Sound or the Strait of Juan de Fuca are open to fishing for game fish (except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP) the first Saturday in JUNE-OCTOBER 31.

## Sturgeon

Catch Record Cards are required statewide. **Annual WHITE STURGEON limit is 5 fish even if the angler holds both a Washington and Oregon license. GREEN STURGEON may not be retained.** In Columbia River waters forming the boundary between Washington and Oregon, STURGEON anglers may continue to fish (catch-and-release) after a daily or yearly limit has been retained.

Only one single-point barbless hook and bait is allowed when fishing for STURGEON. In the field, eggs must be retained with intact carcass of fish from which they came. **Night closure in effect for all STURGEON (except Chehalis River).** Any STURGEON not to be retained must be released immediately. Oversized STURGEON cannot be removed totally or in part from the water.

**Tagged STURGEON:** Do not remove tags from fish not of legal size or not to be retained, but record: tag number and color, date, location of catch, fish length, your name and address. If fish is retained, remove tag and send with above information to the address below.

**WDFW Region 5 Office (Vancouver)**  
2108 Grand Boulevard  
Vancouver, Washington 98661

## "Open Listings"

An "open" listing does not authorize anglers to trespass on private property (which often includes the bed of the stream) or reservation lands. Please respect private property and reservation boundaries by contacting the land owner before entering these waters.

**REMINDER: A fishing license is not a license to trespass on private property**

## Special Rules Instructions

The Special Rules (pages 31-98) list freshwater areas where the Statewide Rules have been modified.

Unless otherwise listed in the Special Rules, you must follow the Statewide Rules.

For all game fish and salmon, the Special Rules show ALL of the fishing opportunities for each freshwater area listed.

The terms "**All Game Fish**" and "**Other Game Fish**" include the Game Fish species on the definitions pages, except DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT and GRASS CARP.

**The term TROUT includes: STEELHEAD, BROWN, CUTTHROAT, TIGER, RAINBOW, LAKE, GOLDEN, and EASTERN BROOK TROUT; GRAYLING; KOKANEE; and LANDLOCKED ATLANTIC, COHO, AND CHINOOK SALMON.**

County references after lakes or streams are noted to make it easier to locate the waters listed, or to differentiate between two places with the same name. They do not mean that the rules apply only to the portion of water in that county.

In the Special Rules "motors prohibited" mean that fishing from a floating device equipped with a motor is prohibited. "Internal combustion motors prohibited" means that fishing from a floating device equipped with an internal combustion motor is prohibited. "Equipped with" means the motor is attached to the floating device, regardless of whether the motor is in the water.

In the Special Rules, all seasons for named lakes in Grant and Adams Counties apply to inlet and outlet streams. In Grant, Adams, Okanogan, and Douglas Counties, you may fish up to the base of all man-made dams

or other obstructions (in listed and unlisted areas), except Zosel Dam.

Lakes with this icon have a public boat ramp.



Lakes with the below icon are excluded from the Two-Pole Endorsement.



Rivers annotated with: **Col. R. Salmon/Steelhead Endorsement**, require a Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement when fishing for salmon or steelhead.

See:

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/crss\\_endorsement](http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/crss_endorsement)

See Shellfish/Seaweed section for CRAWFISH rules.

# Statewide Freshwater Species Rules

## Game Fish

**Possession Limit for Game Fish is 2 Daily Limits in any form.**

SPECIES	ADDITIONAL RULES
LARGEMOUTH BASS (See DOH advisory, page 30)	No min. size. Only LARGEMOUTH BASS less than 12" may be retained, except 1 over 17" may be retained. Daily limit 5. Bass may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until a daily limit is in possession.
SMALLMOUTH BASS (See DOH advisory, page 30)	No min. size. Only 1 SMALLMOUTH BASS over 14" may be retained. Daily limit 10. Bass may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until a daily limit is in possession.
TIGER MUSKELLUNGE (TIGER MUSKIE)	Min. size 50". Daily limit 1.
WALLEYE	Min. size 16". Daily limit 5. Only 1 over 22" may be retained. WALLEYE may be caught, retained, and released alive from a livewell until daily limit is in possession.
WHITEFISH	No min. size. Daily limit 15.
BURBOT (FRESHWATER LING)	No min. size. Daily limit 5.
CHANNEL CATFISH	No min. size. Daily limit 5.
CRAPPIE, NORTHERN PIKE, NORTHERN PIKEMINNOW, PEAMOUTH CHUB, PERCH, SUCKERS, SUNFISH, CATFISH (except CHANNEL), BULLFROGS, ROCK BASS, STRIPED BASS	No min. size. No daily limit.
GRASS CARP	CLOSED.
<b>TROUT:</b>	<b>The combined daily limit for an angler that fishes in both rivers and lakes on the same day is 5 TROUT. In the combined daily limit, only 2 TROUT may be from rivers, except as provided for EASTERN BROOK TROUT.</b>
BROWN TROUT RAINBOW TROUT GOLDEN TROUT TIGER TROUT GRAYLING	<b>In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds:</b> Min. size 8". Daily limit 2. When fishing with bait, all TROUT (except STEELHEAD) equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.  <b>In lakes, ponds, and reservoirs:</b> No min. size. Daily limit 5. When fishing with bait, all TROUT (except STEELHEAD) equal to or greater than the minimum size are counted as part of the daily limit whether kept or released.
CUTTTHROAT TROUT LAKE TROUT KOKANEE LANDLOCKED ATLANTIC, CHINOOK, AND COHO SALMON	
EASTERN BROOK TROUT (EBT)	<b>In rivers, streams, and beaver ponds:</b> No min. size. Daily limit 5. Anglers may keep up to 5 EASTERN BROOK TROUT (EBT), but no more than 5 TROUT total, and no more than 2 can be other TROUT species. <b>In lakes, ponds, and reservoirs:</b> Count as part of the 5 TROUT daily limit.
STEELHEAD	Min. size 20". Daily limit 2. No more than 2 STEELHEAD may be retained as part of TROUT combined daily limit. STEELHEAD may be caught and released until the daily limit is retained. <b>WILD STEELHEAD RETENTION RULES: ONE</b> wild STEELHEAD per license year may be retained from <b>ONE</b> of the following rivers: Bogachiel River, Calawah River, Clearwater River, Dickey River, Hoh River, Quillayute River, Quinault River, or Sol Duc River, as listed in the special rules. No annual limit for hatchery STEELHEAD.
DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT	When listed as open under the special rules, count as part of the TROUT combined daily limit.

*Release of wild STEELHEAD and DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT is required year-round, except where retention is specifically authorized in the Special Rules. In freshwater areas (except in the Columbia River between the Buoy 10 line and the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line) SALMON, STEELHEAD, and DOLLY VARDEN/BULL TROUT to be released may not be totally removed from the water.*

## Food Fish

SPECIES	ADDITIONAL RULES/POSSESSION LIMIT
COMMON CARP, SHAD	No min. size. No daily limit. No possession limit. COMMON CARP may also be taken by spear or bow-and-arrow.
SALMON (Anglers may not continue to fish for SALMON after the adult portion of the daily limit has been retained.)	Possession limit - 2 daily limits in fresh form. An additional 40 pounds of SALMON may be possessed in frozen or processed form. ATLANTIC SALMON may be retained during any open TROUT or SALMON fishery. There is no size limit or daily limit for ATLANTIC SALMON.
FORAGE FISH	No min. size. Daily limit is 10 lbs. in the aggregate with HERRING, SARDINES, SANDLANCE, and ANCHOVIES. Possession limit - 1 daily limit in fresh form. Additional SMELT may be possessed in a frozen or processed form. All SMELT caught must be kept and count toward the daily limit. SMELT may be taken by dip net. <b>Statewide CLOSURE of EULACHON (Columbia River smelt).</b>
WHITE STURGEON See the Special Rules for Columbia River, Snake River, and Tributaries.	Min. size 38" fork length. Max. size 54" fork length. Daily limit 1. Possession limit - 2 daily limits. Annual limit 5 STURGEON statewide per license year (April 1-March 31). Unless specifically noted in special rules open only during open game fish or SALMON seasons.
GREEN STURGEON	CLOSED

## Unclassified Fish

SPECIES	ADDITIONAL RULES/POSSESSION LIMIT
LAMPREY	It is unlawful to take, fish for, or possess PACIFIC LAMPREY, WESTERN BROOK LAMPREY, or RIVER LAMPREY or to use any species of LAMPREY as fishing bait.
Fish not classified as Game Fish or Food Fish	CLOSED

Unless otherwise listed under the Special Rules sections, you must follow the Statewide Freshwater Species Rules.

# Selected Washington Game Fish



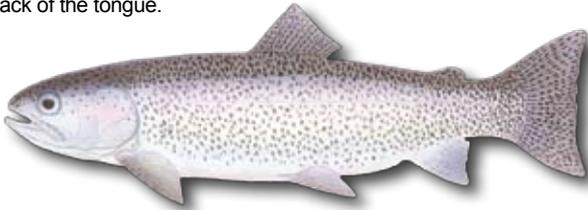
**Rainbow Trout**

Body color is variable and may be silvery in lakes and reservoirs. It has a red to pink streak on its side and irregular spotting. There are no teeth on the back of the tongue.



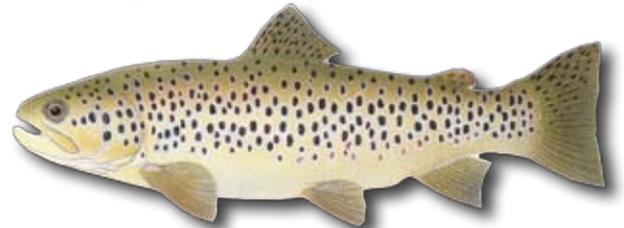
**Steelhead (Female)**

Steelhead are ocean-run rainbow trout that run in both summer and winter seasons, returning after one to three years at sea.



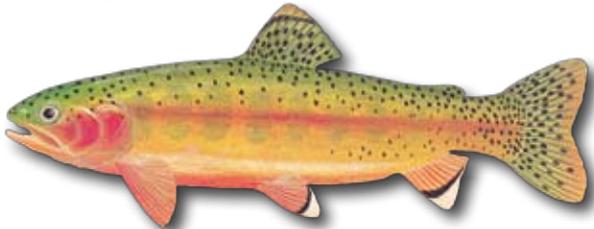
**Coastal Cutthroat Trout**

Body color is variable. The maxillary (upper jaw bone) usually extends beyond the margin of the eye. The hyoid teeth are behind the tongue. There may be a red or orange slash on the underside of the jaw. Spotting is more closely grouped toward the tail. Sea-run coastal cutthroat return in fall.



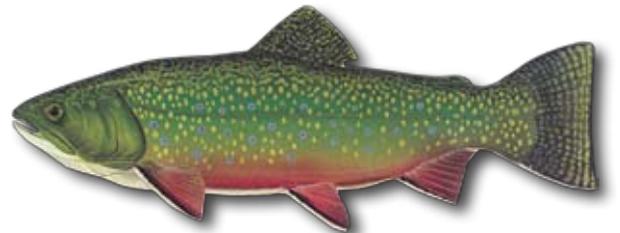
**Brown Trout**

This trout's back is brown or olive with large spots. Sides are light brown to yellowish with large dark spots surrounded by halos of blue-gray. The tail has few spots.



**Golden Trout**

Coloration is brilliant and distinct with a green back and gold-toned sides. There are a few spots below mid-point of the body, and white tips on the dorsal, anal, and pelvic fins. Parr marks show on the side of the body.



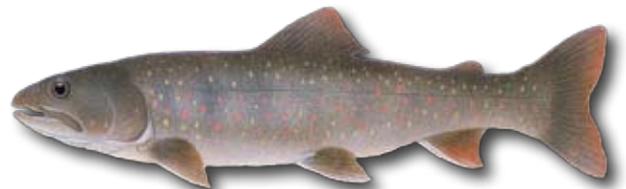
**Eastern Brook Trout**

Dark green or blue with white belly; its upper body and dorsal fin have wormlike markings. Its sides have yellow and pink spots with blue rings. The lower fins are white-tipped and the tail is square.



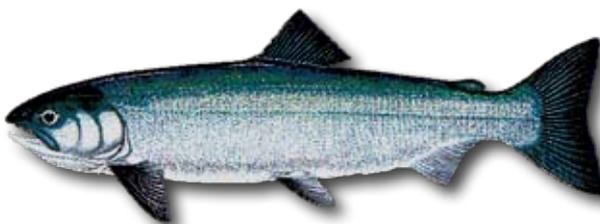
**Lake Trout (Mackinaw)**

Dark gray or gray green above, with a light gray to white belly. Colored spots are absent, fins have small white borders, and the tail is forked. It inhabits large, deep lakes.



**Dolly Varden/Bull Trout**

This fish is olive green to brown above and on the sides with no wormlike markings. There are cream or crimson spots. The tail is slightly forked. Dolly Varden are only found in a few headwater streams in Western Washington. Bull trout are found in Eastern and Western Washington and may also be encountered in marine waters.



**Kokanee (Silver Trout)**

Its back is greenish blue to silver with faint speckling. The sides and belly are silvery with no distinct spotting. When kokanee spawn in fall, their sides turn red to scarlet. The inside of the mouth is white, not black as in some salmon.



**Whitefish**

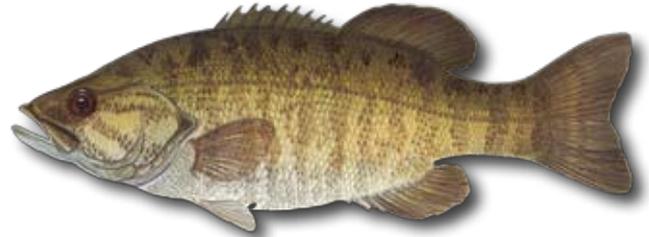
Coloration is light grayish-blue on the back with silvery sides and a dull, whitish belly. It has large scales, and a small mouth without teeth.

# Selected Washington Game Fish



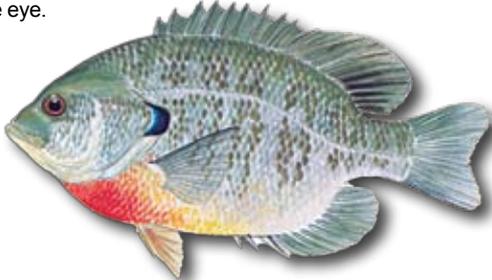
**Largemouth Bass**

This bass is dark green on the back and sides, with a dark, horizontal band along its sides. The belly is white. The large jaw, when closed, extends behind the eye.



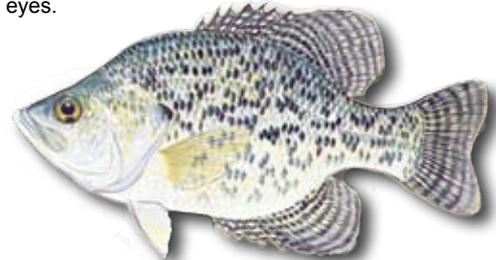
**Smallmouth Bass**

This bass is dark olive to brown on the back with a white belly. The sides are bronze and have dark vertical bands. The small jaw does not extend behind the eyes.



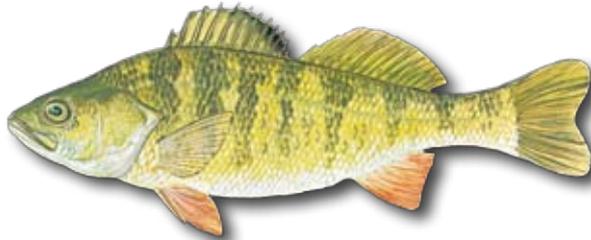
**Bluegill**

The bluegill is olive green to bluish with a blue and orange lower body. It has vertical bars on each side and solid black gill opercular lobes.



**Crappie**

The body is silvery with dark spots. The fins have dark bands. White crappie may have vertical bars on the sides.



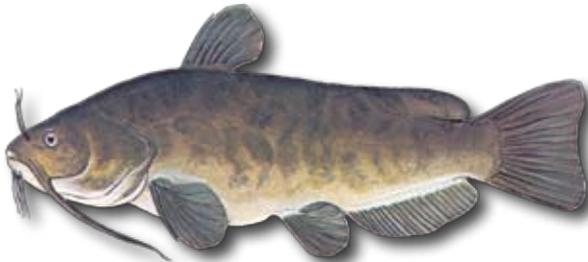
**Yellow Perch**

This perch has a greenish to yellow body, a white belly, and vertical dark crossbars on each side. There are no prominent teeth.



**Walleye**

Coloration is black to brown on a whitish background. The lower portion of the tail fin is also whitish. It has a dark spot on the first dorsal fin, but no strong cross bars on the sides. The teeth are elongated.



**Bullhead**

The body is darkish-black to brown. Its head is not as flat as a channel catfish. The cat-like barbels on its mouth are brown or yellow. The skin has no scales. There are no spots on the side, and the tail is not forked.



**Channel Catfish**

The body goes from blackish to silvery to white on the sides. There may be some small irregular spots on the sides. Its skin lacks scales. It has cat-like black barbels on the mouth and jaw, a flat head, and forked tail.

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# Eat Fish? Read This! Advice from the Washington Department of Health

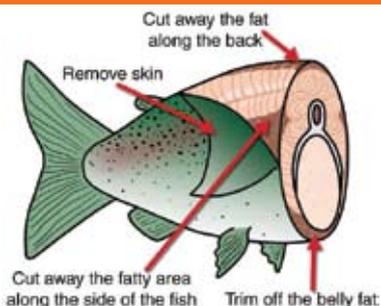
- Eat Fish, Be Smart, Choose Wisely.** The American Heart Association recommends eating fish at least twice a week. **Why?** Because fish are high in protein, low in saturated fat, nutritious, and rich in omega-3 fatty acids - the building blocks for a healthy heart and brain. To balance the health benefits in fish with risks associated with chemical contaminants, such as mercury and PCBs, eat a variety of fish and choose fish low in contaminants.
- Sport-Caught Fish:** Follow the local and state fish consumption advisories in the table below.
- Store-Bought Fish:** Women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and young children: Do not eat shark, swordfish, tilefish, king mackerel, marlin, or tuna steak (bluefin, bigeye, yellowfin). For a list of healthy choices visit [www.doh.wa.gov/fish](http://www.doh.wa.gov/fish) or call toll free (877) 485-7316.

## Washington State - Fish Consumption Advisories

The following consumption advice is for anyone concerned about contaminants in fish, but is especially important for women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and young children. An adult (160 lb.) meal size is 8 oz. uncooked fish.

State and County Fish Advisories		Consumption Advice for Different Groups		
Body of Water/ Location	Fish Species	Women of Childbearing Age	Children	General Population
<b>STATEWIDE MERCURY ADVISORY</b>	Northern Pikeminnow	DO NOT EAT	DO NOT EAT	Unrestricted
	Largemouth Bass	2 meals per month	2 meals per month	Unrestricted
	Smallmouth Bass	2 meals per month	2 meals per month	Unrestricted
<b>Green Lake / King Co.</b>	Carp	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
<b>Lake Chelan / Chelan Co.</b>	Lake Trout	All Groups: 1 meal per week		
<b>Lake Roosevelt / NE Tri-County</b>	Burbot, Largescale Sucker	1 meal per week	1 meal per week	Unrestricted
	Walleye	2 meals per month	2 meals per month	Unrestricted
<b>Lake Washington / King Co.</b>	Carp, Northern Pikeminnow	All Groups: DO NOT EAT		
	Cutthroat Trout	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
	Yellow Perch	All Groups: 1 meal per week		
<b>Lake Whatcom / Whatcom Co.</b>	Smallmouth Bass	DO NOT EAT	DO NOT EAT	Unrestricted
	Yellow Perch	1 meal per week	1 meal per week	Unrestricted
<b>Lower Duwamish Waterway/ King Co.</b>	Resident Fish, Shellfish, Crab	All Groups: DO NOT EAT		
<b>Okanogan River / Okanogan Co.</b>				
• Malott Bridge to River Mouth	Carp	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
<b>PUGET SOUND Marine Areas 6-13</b>	Salmon, Flatfish, Rockfish, Crab	Visit <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/oehas/fish/ps.htm">http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/oehas/fish/ps.htm</a>		
<b>Spokane River / Spokane Co.</b>	All Species - All Areas	All Groups: DO NOT EAT fish head or entrails (guts)		
• Idaho Border to Upriver Dam	All Species	All Groups: DO NOT EAT		
	All Species *	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
• Upriver Dam to Nine Mile Dam	*Exception: Largescale Sucker	All Groups: DO NOT EAT		
	Largescale Sucker, Brown Trout	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
• Long Lake (Lake Spokane)	Mountain Whitefish	All Groups: 1 meal per week		
<b>Walla Walla River / Walla Walla Co.</b>				
• Upper Walla Walla River	Northern Pikeminnow	DO NOT EAT	DO NOT EAT	1 meal per month
• Lower Walla Walla River	Carp	All Groups: 1 meal per month		
<b>Wenatchee River / Chelan Co.</b>	Mountain Whitefish	All Groups: DO NOT EAT		
<b>Yakima River/ Yakima Co.</b>				
• Prosser to River Mouth	Carp	All Groups: 1 meal per week		

## Prepare Fish This Way to Reduce your Exposure to Contaminants!



Prepare fish the following ways to reduce your exposure to PCBs and other contaminants\* that collect in the fatty parts of fish by up to 50%:

- Remove the skin and visible fat before cooking
- Grill, broil, or bake the fish
- Let fat drip off during cooking
- Do not use fat for gravy or sauces
- Consume younger, smaller fish (within legal limits)

\* Mercury collects in the fillet (muscle), not the fat of the fish, and is not reduced by preparing this way.

**Eat Shellfish? "Know Before You Dig" See Pages 128-131**