

How to Buy Salmon

When selecting *salmon steaks and fillets*, look for deep salmon-pink color, meat that is firm and elastic (springs back when pressed gently), with a slight sheen and somewhat translucent. The aroma should be mild, and somewhat similar to that of fresh fruit. In fillets and steaks, look for smooth, clean cuts and no gaping or separation of muscle fibers, which indicates old fish. If the salmon is packaged, it should be in an airtight container with no liquid.

For *whole salmon*, look for a firm, glossy skin, eyes that are clear and not cloudy, bright red gills, firm light pink flesh that is elastic, somewhat translucent meat, and a mild aroma.

Frozen salmon should be frozen solid in a package that is tightly sealed, with no evidence of frost, and little or no air space between salmon and its packaging. Frozen salmon should have good, consistent pink color—no discoloration—and be odor-free.

Portion Size

Plan on 4 to 6 ounces of raw salmon for each serving.

How to Store Salmon

Refrigeration

Refrigerate salmon in its original wrapping in the coldest part of the refrigerator (32-36° F). Use within one to two days, and keep refrigerated until cooking. Wrap and refrigerate any leftover cooked salmon, and use within two days.

Freezing

To prepare salmon for freezing, rinse in cold water and cut into desired portion sizes. To dry pack, use freezer bags, heavy foil or freezer wrap. If using containers, use only containers that are moisture-proof, airtight and able to withstand freezer temperatures of below 0° F. Use freezer tape around edge of lid to ensure a tight seal. Place packages in freezer in a single layer to ensure they freeze quickly. Leave air space around each package to encourage the circulation of cold air. Once packages are frozen solid, they can be stacked. Label and date packages, and use within two months. Commercially frozen salmon (salmon that has been purchased frozen) can be kept frozen for up to eight months.

Thawing Salmon

Defrost salmon in the refrigerator overnight or, for quicker results, defrost under cold running water. With salmon tightly wrapped in plastic, place it under cold running water until just defrosted, which will take only a few minutes. Salmon with a few ice crystals remaining can be cooked with good results.