



Department of **Primary Industries
and Regional Development**

Department of **Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions**

How to clean blue swimmer crabs

Clean it before you eat it

(All crabs must still be landed and transported whole to your home*, unless you plan to eat them immediately.)



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How to properly clean a blue swimmer crab prior to freezing, cooking or eating.



1. Anaesthetise the crab by putting in an ice slurry for five minutes before the cleaning process.



2. Turn the crab over, pry up the belly plate and remove.



3. Put your thumb between the top shell and bottom shell and peel off carapace. Keep the guts in the shell and discard them.



4. Turn the crab over, put your thumbs in the middle, press down and break into two halves.



5. Pull off the mouth parts.



6. Remove the gill filaments from both sides of the crab.



7. Clean out all guts (mustard) remnants with running water.



8. Cleaned blue swimmer crab ready to cook or store at your home*.



Alexandrium is a serious public health issue. Don't eat mussels caught in the Swan or Canning rivers, and remove the head, guts (mustard) and gills of crabs before freezing, cooking or eating them. Check out FAQs and a video of how to clean crabs at fish.wa.gov.au/alerts or dbca.wa.gov.au/algal-bloom

*Home means your principal place of residence as defined under regulation 3 of the *Fish Resources Management Regulations 1995*.

How to properly cook a blue swimmer crab

After cleaning, cook the crab in boiling water or steam for at least 6 minutes. The crab meat is cooked when it is no longer translucent.

Discard the cooking water or marinade.

Health advice

Toxic algal blooms of *Alexandrium* have occurred in the Swan and Canning Rivers during peak crabbing months.

Alexandrium can produce neurotoxins called paralytic shellfish toxins (PSTs) which bioaccumulate in crustaceans and shellfish. Cooking or freezing whole crabs does not destroy most toxins and contaminants - they may even transfer into the flesh or broth.

Consumption of affected crabs or shellfish may be dangerous and in extreme cases can be fatal. Seek immediate medical attention if you become ill after eating crabs or mussels.

Even if there isn't a bloom, you should use caution if you plan to catch crabs from waterways in urban or industrial areas such as Cockburn Sound and the Swan and Canning Rivers. Chemical contaminants including toxins can accumulate in crabs, shellfish (including mussels and oysters), fish and other seafood. You can reduce your risk of ingesting chemical contaminants including toxins from crabs:

- Do not catch and eat crabs from areas impacted by algal blooms, fish kills, or where a current health warning has been issued.
- Properly clean any crabs you catch **before** cooking and/or freezing them. Discard the head, guts (mustard) and gills where toxins can accumulate.

Know your recreational crab fishing rules

Visit rules.fish.wa.gov.au/Species/Index/27 to find the latest crabbing rules.

Further information

Alexandrium algal bloom information FAQs and how-to video fish.wa.gov.au/alerts

Alexandrium algal bloom information dbca.wa.gov.au/algal-bloom



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