

# How To Make Perfect Clams

## Cleaning

The Littleneck clam, also known as a quahog or hard-shell clam, is native to the eastern shores of North America all along the Atlantic coast. Hard clams are classified according to their different sizes. Although it is not required, some people choose to soak the clams in cornmeal and salt water for a few hours, this will help purge any remaining sand left in the clams. Generally all you need to do is spray the clams with a garden hose to rinse or at worst give each clam a short scrub with a stiff bristle brush to knock off any remaining dirt before cooking.

## Cooking

Clams are done when they open up, so whether you are steaming, grilling or baking it is easy to know when they are ready to eat. Plan on one to two dozen per person for your party. This is usually a good gauge for estimating how many clams you need to buy.

## Serving

Raw clams on the half shell should be very cold so make sure you have plenty of ice. Steamers should be served immediately with lemon, butter and a splash of the clam broth.

## Littleneck Clams

The smallest clams are called littlenecks amounting to 10-12 clams per pound. The most popular steaming clam in our area but they are often served raw on the half shell with cocktail sauce or even grilled with a squeeze of lemon and some melted butter.



## Gold Necks or Mahogany Clams

Averaging between 12-15/lb. Golden necks or Mahoganies are a deep water clam caught further out at sea. They have a much higher salinity and a very robust clam flavor. They are best if cooked and served in pasta dishes or with rich bases.



## Middleneck Clams

Middlenecks are measured at about 7-10/lb. Considered by many to be the perfect size, they are great for most applications; raw, steamed, grilled, fried, in chowder or stuffed and baked. Some of the best middlenecks harvested come from the warm waters around Florida.



## Top Neck and Cherry Stone Clams

Topnecks, approximately 6-9/lb. and cherrystones about 4-5/lb. are larger clams great for eating raw or used for clams casino. The largest clams are called quahogs or chowder clams. Weighing in at a mighty 2-3 clams per pound, quahogs are used in such dishes as clam chowder, stuffed clams and clam fritters.

