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Omega-3 Content of Common Fish

Approximate EPA and DHA tiers for common fish, shown alongside the current FDA/EPA fish categories.

Standard Definition

EPA and DHA are long-chain omega-3 fatty acids found in seafood and algae. The table uses approximate combined EPA plus DHA per 3-ounce (85-gram) cooked serving. Values vary by species, feed, season, origin, preparation, edible portion, and the specific USDA record selected. Tiers are this site's cut-points: **Higher**, 1,000 mg or more per 3 ounces; **Moderate**, 500–999 mg; **Lower**, under 500 mg. Mercury advice uses FDA/EPA categories rather than a site-created risk scale.

Omega-3 Content of Common Fish (Approximate per 3 oz / 85 g)

Fish	EPA + DHA per 3 oz (mg, approx.)	Tier	FDA/EPA category	Practical note
Atlantic or chub mackerel	1,020 (Atlantic)	Higher	Best Choices	Do not confuse with king mackerel, a Choice to Avoid
Salmon, species identified	910–1,830	Moderate to higher	Best Choices	Atlantic, farmed or wild: higher. Canned pink: moderate
Herring	1,710 (Atlantic)	Higher	Best Choices	Species and preparation vary
Sardines	1,190 (canned in tomato sauce)	Higher	Best Choices	Check sodium when canned
Anchovies	About 1,700–1,800*	Higher	Best Choices	Typical portion may be smaller than 3 oz
Rainbow trout	840 (wild)	Moderate	Best Choices	The chart lists freshwater trout; farmed/wild values vary
Tuna, canned light	190	Lower	Best Choices	Do not merge with albacore, bigeye, bluefin, or yellowfin
Tuna, albacore/white	About 750 (canned)*	Moderate	Good Choices	Follow its distinct FDA/EPA frequency guidance
Cod or tilapia	110–140	Lower	Best Choices	Useful protein; not a high EPA/DHA choice
Shrimp or oysters	240–530	Lower to moderate	Best Choices	Shrimp: lower. Eastern oysters: moderate

Data note: Combined EPA plus DHA from USDA FoodData Central records as compiled in the NIH Office of Dietary Supplements omega-3 fact sheet (Table 2). *Scaled to 3 oz from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 seafood table (values per 4 oz cooked). USDA records mostly do not specify farmed or wild. Values verified November 21, 2026. Mercury categories: FDA/EPA Advice about Eating Fish chart, verified row by row July 19, 2026.

> **Default use pattern:** For most adults, about two servings of fish per week is a practical food-first default. Prioritize a variety of species from the FDA/EPA Best Choices category, such as salmon, sardines, Atlantic or chub mackerel, herring, or trout. Pregnancy, breastfeeding, and childhood require the chart's population-specific serving guidance.

FDA/EPA Fish Categories

The FDA/EPA chart uses three consumer categories: **Best Choices**, **Good Choices**, and **Choices to Avoid**. These categories were designed especially for people who might become or are pregnant or breastfeeding and for children. Adults should also vary seafood choices and check local advisories for self-caught fish. Do not translate the categories into a homemade monthly or weekly scale.

A fish's omega-3 tier does not determine its mercury category. The tiers estimate likely omega-3 contribution; the FDA/EPA category answers a separate safety question. Confirm the species and product when precision matters, especially for tuna, mackerel, canned fish, and mixed shellfish categories.

Canned vs Fresh

Canned-fish nutrient values depend on species, packing medium, drained amount, and the database record used. Compare the labeled product or the matching USDA entry rather than assuming one universal difference between oil- and water-packed fish.

Sources: USDA FoodData Central · NIH Office of Dietary Supplements omega-3 fact sheet, Table 2 · Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, Appendix 11 · FDA/EPA Advice about Eating Fish (fda.gov/food/consumers/advice-about-eating-fish).

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