

General instructions:

1. Touch the fish only as needed, body temperature may contribute to the spoiling of the fish
2. Assess from Head to Tail
3. If possible, use multiple fish samples for comparison
4. Document any unusual conditions

Process:

1. External visual examination
  - Examine visually the physical condition of the fish, eye and gill color, any belly bursting, damages in the skin and scales
2. Assess the odor
  - Assess the odor of the fish, fresh fish usually have a seaweedy, or sea-like smell, while spoiled fish have a strong sour odor.
3. Evaluate the texture
  - Touch the skin, scales and body. Assess whether the skin and scales are loose and whether the muscles of the fish are still elastic

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Fresh</b>	<b>Stale</b>	<b>Spoiled</b>
Skin	Bright, shiny, and firm	Dull, slight bleaching	Dull, marked bleaching
Eyes	Clear, convex, and black pupil	Slightly sunken, cloudy	Sunken, cloudy, discolored
Gills	Red, clean, and moist	Pinkish, slightly sticky	Brown, thick mucus
Odor	Fresh, seaweedy smell	Neutral or slightly sour	Strongly sour or ammonia-like
Texture	Firm, springs back when pressed	Soft but still springs back slowly	Very soft, does not springback
Scales	Bright, shiny, firmly attached	Dull, slightly loose	Dull, flaking, easily removable
Belly	Firm, no soft spots, no bursting	Soft but still springs back	Soft, fluid leakage and burst belly

## References

FAO. (n.d.). Quality and quality changes in fresh fish - 8. Assessment of fish quality.  
<https://www.fao.org/4/v7180e/v7180e09.htm>