



## Tips for Cooking Lobster Tails & Crab Legs

### **Thawing Your Lobster Tails or Crab Legs:**

If frozen, lobster tails & crab legs should be thawed in the refrigerator for 8 to 10 hours, covered, or optionally, in a microwave oven, covered, (especially if it has an auto-defrost setting).

You CAN cook both frozen, but they tend to be more tender if thawed first.

### **Prepping:**

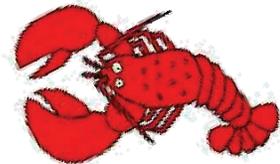
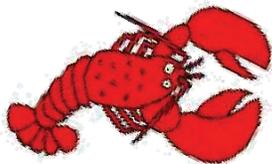
For lobster tails, insert point of kitchen shears between meat and hard shell on back. Clip shell down center, leaving fan tail intact. Do not remove underside membrane. Gently pry open the shell, separating it from the meat. Lift raw tail meat through split shell, and then close the shell, arranging the lobster tail meat on top. If crab legs are split, leave meat in shell.

### **Seasoning:**

Before cooking, brush each lobster tail or crab leg with melted butter and season lightly with paprika, garlic powder, and pepper. Avoid salting the meat as it tends to draw moisture out of the meat during cooking, making it dryer, and tougher. You may wish to consider other herbs and spices like barbecue spice, chili powder or Italian Herbs such as Oregano, Thyme or Basil. Rosemary is usually not used.

### **Broiling:**

LOBSTER: Fan the end piece of the lobster tail and wrap in foil to prevent burning then place lobster tails, meat side up in shallow pan with a small amount of water in bottom of pan to create a bit of steam and prevent drying. CRAB: Crab legs can be arranged meat side up on a baking pan with or without rack. Broil about 4 to 6 inches from the heat source. The challenge of course is to place the meat the right distance from the broiler and cook it for the right amount of time. Larger tails and legs should be further away from the heat (up to 12 inches). First, leave the oven door slightly ajar and as the cooking time is short, keep a close eye on the tails. If after one minute, if the meat begins to brown excessively, move the pan 2 to 3 inches lower in the oven. Use the chart below to gauge the proper cooking time.



## Time Table For Broiling, Baking & Boiling Lobster Tails & Crab Legs (in minutes)

Weight	1 - 3 oz.	4 - 6 oz	10 -12 oz.	14 -16 oz.
Broiling	3 - 4 min.	5 - 6 min.	8 -10 min.	12 -15 min.
Boiling	3 - 5 min.	5 - 7 min.	10 - 12 min.	15 - 20 min.

### Baking:

Follow procedures for broiling. Bake in a 400 F oven and use Time Table guide to estimate cooking time.

### Steaming:

Follow procedures for broiling except use slightly more water in the pan (about a cup) and cover the pan protecting them from direct heat. Place the covered pan in a pre-heated 400 F oven. Depending on the size of the tails, the cooking time will be approximately double from the charts estimated time for broiling & baking. With this method, you may choose to make a sauce from the resulting cooking liquid. To do so, use a white wine instead of water to steam. (Crab Legs should be placed on a rack so as not to poach in the wine). Once the seafood is cooked, remove it from the pan, reduce the resulting liquid by half, and add a tablespoon or so of fresh tarragon, parsley or chervil and a little cream or butter. Other appropriate finishing sauces are melted butter, Hollandaise or Beurre Blanc Sauce.

### Boiling:

Boiling is one of the least recommended methods as it tends to bleach the delicate seafood flavor out of the meat and leaves it a bit bland. It is the method most commonly used to cook large quantities of product for salads and other uses. If you do choose to boil your tails, cook in a well seasoned and slightly salted broth of vegetables and lemon and use the cooking timetable guidelines above. Boiling is not recommended for crab legs.

### Grilling:

Follow the preparation procedures for broiling, Crab legs should remain in their shells but lobster tails can be grilled either in or out of their shells. To grill shell less lobster, grill on medium heat and use the broiling guidelines. Open air grilling may require additional time and you may also wish to consider basting the meat with additional butter. For lobster tails grilled in their shell, it is best to cut the lobster tails directly in half through both sides of the shell and leaving the meat in each half. Place tail halves on the grill above direct heat, shell side down. Grill for 7-9 minutes, occasionally turning onto the sides to cook through. Baste with butter if desired. The lobster is done when the meat turns opaque and begins to separate from the shell.

### In the end:

Cooked lobster and crab meat should be firm, opaque white all the way through, and moist. It's always best to check for doneness often rather than risk over cooking the meat, making it dry and tough.

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