

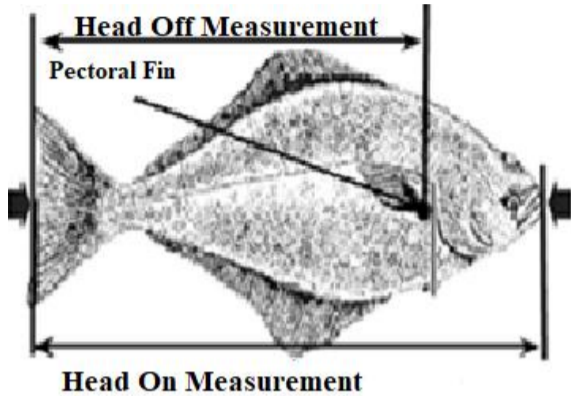
# FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### HALIBUT LIMITS, PACKAGING & CLOSED AREAS

Effective April 1, 2025 until December 31, 2025, the following limits are in effect:

- The daily limit is one (1) halibut.
- The possession limit is one (1) halibut.
- The annual limit is ten (10).
- No person shall retain a halibut greater than 102 cm head-on length (78 cm head-off).



**Head-on Measurement** – Measurements are made from the foremost end of the lower lip to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as shown in the image (left).

**Head-off Measurement** – To aid in transporting your catch, you may remove the head from a halibut that you are keeping.

Measurements are made from the base of the pectoral fin at its most forward point to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as shown in the image (left). **Note: it is the responsibility of recreational fish harvesters to ensure the pectoral fin measurement is legal before the head is removed.**

You will find information on the annual catch limit, size requirements, and closed areas on the fishery notice at: [https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=view\\_notice&DOC\\_ID=317518&ID=all](https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=view_notice&DOC_ID=317518&ID=all)

- Recreational harvesters wishing to fish for halibut require a Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Licence and must comply with the conditions of the licence. **You must record any halibut that you keep on your licence** (or if internet access is available, in your National Recreational Licensing System account) and identify the length and the Pacific Fisheries Management Area where it was caught.
- It is a **violation** to have any recreationally caught fish in your possession that has been skinned, cut, packed or otherwise dealt with in such a manner that the **species, number, and length** of the fish cannot be **readily determined**.

### SAFE HANDLING AND MEASURING HALIBUT

As identified above and on the 2025/26 Tidal Waters Sport Fishing Licence, size limits are in effect. In order to comply with these size limits it will be a requirement for recreational harvesters to measure any halibut they decide to retain prior to keeping it.

There are regulations in place that require all fish that are not retained, to be released back into the water from which they came immediately with the least amount of harm.

- Mark an area on your vessel's hull at the water-line in the area where you would play your catch. Use these marks to determine the 78 cm or 102 cm size limit of your catch. A measuring device may also be fashioned from a piece of wooden dowel such as the handle on a deck broom. Mark the two size limits on the dowel and use this to measure your catch while it is still in the water.
- Small halibut are easier to handle than larger ones and may be netted and brought on board your vessel where they can be measured and either returned or taken within your daily limit. If you decide to release a small halibut, do so while it is still in the water as this will cause the least harm.
- **DO NOT bring large halibut (longer than 102 cm) on board your vessel to measure.** Halibut are a very powerful fish and can cause you serious injury; in addition the fish itself may be injured. If you believe you cannot properly measure a large fish safely and accurately enough to comply with the length requirement then release the fish unharmed while it is still in the water.
- In order to comply with minimum or maximum length regulations you must either leave your halibut with the head and tail attached, or you may fillet it so that one fillet has the tail and the pectoral fin attached. This will allow the length from the end of the tail to the most forward anterior point where the pectoral fin is attached to be measured.
- Halibut may be packaged by a registered fish processing establishment. Some lodges are registered and provide this service and most coastal communities have certified establishments that also offer this service.

### FILLETING

Halibut that are too large for your cooler may be filleted for transport however some care must be taken to ensure that the fish you possess can be readily measured if inspected by a fishery officer.

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- Once filleted you should have no more than **seven pieces** from each halibut including the one whole fillet with the tail and pectoral fin attached.
- To remove the fillets so that you can comply with the maximum length requirement remove the top (dorsal) fillets first.
- Remove the bottom (ventral) fillet from one side. This leaves you the last remaining fillet still attached, the backbone, tail, and the pectoral fin on the side opposite to where the first ventral fillet was removed.
- **You must retain the pectoral fin and the tail attached to the last fillet.** Beginning at the pectoral fin, start to remove the fillet towards the tail as you normally would.
- Once near the end of the fillet, cut through the spine above the tail being careful to leave the skin facing you at the tail attached.
- When you have cut through the spine you can cut through the flesh at the end of the fillet down to the skin without cutting it through which then will act like a hinge allowing the tail to be folded under the fillet for transport. If this last halibut fillet is still too long to fit your cooler, you may make a cut through the flesh of the fillet down to the skin without cutting through into two pieces. This fillet can then be folded at the cuts to permit storage in your cooler and allow the length of your catch to be readily measured.
- The dorsal fillets and the fillet without the tail and pectoral fin may each be cut into two pieces for ease of storage until you arrive at your ordinary residence.
- Keep the pieces of each fillet together in its own bag. Fillet pieces that are frozen must be frozen separately so that each piece may be measured if required.
- **The ventral fillet that has the tail and pectoral fin attached must remain in one piece.** Should you make a mistake during this procedure on removal of this last fillet, retain the pieces from it and keep them together in a separate bag so that they may be inspected if required.
- Avoid cutting fish into smaller pieces. The regulation states that the fish you possess must be readily measureable to determine that it is in compliance where size limits apply. You are responsible to comply with this requirement.

### CLOSED AREAS

#### Areas 121, 23 and 123

No person shall fish for or retain halibut, rockfish and lingcod in Area 121 outside the 12 nautical mile limit seaward of a line that begins at 48°34.00'N and 125°17.386'W and continues south easterly at a bearing of 116° True to a point at 48°28.327'N and 125°01.687'W.

**Non-residents of Canada wishing to fish for and retain halibut in Fishery Management Areas 121, 23 and 123, must obtain their licence in-person from a licence provider in Canada. Please see the list of Independent Access Providers at: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/licence-permis/iap-fai-eng.html>**

#### Area 121 - Swiftsure Bank

The waters of Swiftsure Bank, inside a line from 48°34.00'N and 125°06.00'W, thence to 48°34.00'N and 124°54.20'W, thence to 48°29.62'N and 124°43.40'W, thence following the International Boundary between Canada and the U.S. to 48°29.55'N and 124°56.20'W, thence in a straight line to the point of commencement, are closed to retention of all finfish.

### ROCKFISH CONSERVATION

By condition of licence you must use a descender device when returning rockfish by-catch to the water. For more information visit our web page at: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/docs/rockfish-sebaste-dd-eng.html>.

**TO REPORT FISHING VIOLATIONS CALL: 1-800-465-4336**