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Safely Cooking Seafood: Clams & Oysters



Basic cooking tip:

Clams & Oysters can be cooked in multiple ways before consumption. The most important thing to remember is that the right temperature must be achieved to ensure harmful bacteria that can cause illness are killed. Using a clean food thermometer to measure the temperature can help make sure foods are cooked all the way through.

Proper temperatures or tips to know clams & oysters are fully cooked:

- Shells open during cooking
- Leftovers: 165 degrees F

Serving Oysters:

- Oyster can be served raw or cooked. When serving raw, pull the top shell off and display the flesh on the lower shell.
- Clam/oyster juice can be saved and used in flavoring soups and chowders (the juice can be frozen).

Cooking Methods for Clams & Oysters:

1. Dry Heat: baking, grilling, broiling
 - Shucked clams & oysters cook in 3-5 minutes. Make sure to baste (pour juice or melted liquid) before cooking.
 - Bake for 10 minutes at 450 degrees F.
2. Moist Heat: steaming or boiling
 - Steam for 4-9 minutes until shells are opened completely. Make sure to use a small pot to steam.
 - Boil for 3-5 minutes until shells are opened completely.
3. Frying: pan or deep fry
 - Pan fry shucked oysters and clams for 3-5 minutes.
 - Deep fry breaded clams or oysters in oil for 3 minutes at 375 degrees F.



Important tip: Discard any clams or oysters that do not open during cooking. Closed shells indicate they did not get enough heat and are not thoroughly cooked.