

Choosing fish better, every day

FOR CONSUMERS

A practical guide for anyone who wants to eat seafood more responsibly



Two things worth knowing before you start.

What is a nudge?

A nudge is a small, intentional change in how food options are presented. It makes one option easier, more visible, or more normal, without removing alternatives or trying to convince you of anything. Nudges work by changing the environment around a choice, not the person making it.

What is a situation?

A situation is a repeated pattern that shapes how you make food choices - not a personal failing or a knowledge gap. It describes how choices happen, not who you are. Most of us are in one or two situations that play out automatically, without us noticing them.

How to use this guide

- 1 Read the four quotes on the next page. Find the one that sounds most like you.
- 2 Turn to that page. Read the story and check whether the signals ("Does this sound like you?" section) match your experience.
- 3 Try one of the three nudges ("Three things to try" section) - start with the simplest.
- 4 Fill in the commitment card at the end. One nudge. One week.

Helping you make the right choice.

There are different reasons why many of us don't make the most sustainable choice in terms of our eating habits. But certainly, the right choice is rarely the easy one.

This guide doesn't tell you what to do. It helps you implement small changes.

→ Find the quote that sounds most like you. Turn to that page. It's okay if you recognise yourself in more than one quote.



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"I'd cook more fish meals but I'm too busy to experiment."

Page 4

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"I want to make more responsible choices when buying seafood products, but I'm not sure where to start."

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"Every time I try to choose differently, I end up in a maze of contradictory advice."

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"I've cooked the same fish my whole life and it has never let me down."

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"I'm curious about seafood that is not fish (mussels or algae for example), but I never actually buy them."


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A note on convenience

Across Europe, the cooking habit is under pressure. Ready meals, meal kits, and delivery apps have replaced home cooking for many households, and fish, which takes more confidence to cook than pasta or chicken, is often the first thing to disappear from the weekly shop.

This guide assumes you cook at home at least occasionally. If fish has dropped out of your routine entirely, the first nudge is the simplest one:

 **cook one fish-based meal from scratch this week.**

 Use the Mr.Goodfish platform to find a recipe that takes under 20 minutes.

 www.mrgoodfish.com





"I'd cook more fish meals but I'm too busy to experiment."

**You care about food quality.
You just have no space to get it wrong.**

You cook regularly and you cook well. But when it comes to fish, you reach for the same one or two species every time such as salmon, sea bass or whatever is your traditional practice. Not because you don't want to try something different. Because you're busy, and a failed experiment on a busy day is not an option. The fish counter feels like a test you haven't studied for.

Does this sound like you?

- You buy the same fish on autopilot, week after week
- Trying something new feels like a risk you can't afford on a busy day
- You'd change your habits if someone made it genuinely easy
- You care about what you eat but eco-labels don't move you

Three things to try

- 1 Let the fishmonger decide.**
Ask 'what would you recommend today that is seasonal and local?' and buy it without researching first. One sentence from someone you trust removes the decision entirely. You don't need to know the species in advance, just ask the fishmonger how they would cook it.
- 2 Find an easy-to-understand recipe in the MGF3 repository on sustainable cooking**
Mr.Goodfish website offers a collection of recipes that promote responsible seafood consumption, catering to different skill levels and culinary experiences. Browse the repository to find a recipe that matches your preferences and cooking confidence.
- 3 Buy seafood once, eat twice: the art of leftovers.**
When you're at the counter looking at fresh fish, do you wonder: "Will we eat all of this?" That moment of doubt often means the fish stays in the case. Here's the shift: plan two meals with that one purchase when you shop. Not after. 'Tonight: baked gurnard. Tomorrow: fish cakes with the rest.'



Real example: France → Mr.Goodfish at the fish counter

Through Nausicaá's Mr.Goodfish programme, over 400 French fishmongers, fishers and restaurateurs display a blue logo on price labels and menus, and fishmongers are there to suggest a seasonal species you don't usually buy and how to cook it.



Our tip: Before your weekly shop, use the MGF website or app to discover seasonal species recommendations. It takes just 30 seconds and helps you make more informed and sustainable choices.



"I want to make more responsible choices when buying fish and other seafood products, but I'm not sure where to start."

The cost of getting it wrong financially and practically stops you before you start.

You buy aquatic food products occasionally, usually choosing something familiar or frozen. The fresh counter often feels overwhelming: too many options, uncertainty about what is responsible, and concerns about buying something you may not know how to prepare or finish. When you do consider trying something new, you may already be weighing the risk of making the wrong choice. Sometimes, that uncertainty is enough to steer you back toward what you already know.

Does this sound like you?

- You mostly buy frozen or pre-packaged fish
- The fresh fish counter feels like it requires knowledge you don't have
- You've bought fish before and ended up throwing some of it away
- You worry about buying too much or cooking it wrong

Three things to try

- 1 Ask for exactly what you need.**
Tell the fishmonger how many portions you need, and let them weigh it out or specify the weight yourself, using roughly 180 grams per person as a guide. For example, a meal for four would be about 720 grams.
- 2 Decide the recipe before you go, not at the counter.**
Find one recipe on mrgoodfish.com before you leave the house. Walk in knowing what you're making. The uncertainty disappears when the decision is already made before you arrive.
- 3 Buy for two meals, not one.**
A slightly larger piece of fish, used across two meals, costs less per meal and removes the 'what if I have leftovers?' fear. Half tonight as a fillet, the rest tomorrow in a pasta or rice bowl. The leftover is the plan, not the problem.



Real example: Norway → cooking monkfish from head to tail

When surveys at the Norwegian pilot site revealed that young people avoided unfamiliar fish out of anxiety about waste and preparation, students from The Arctic University of Norway designed a beginner-friendly workshop around monkfish: locally abundant, rarely chosen. Participants cooked three dishes from a single fish, including lesser-used parts like the liver, framed as culinary discovery rather than waste reduction. The biggest barrier, almost everyone said, was simply not knowing how to start.



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“Every time I try to choose differently, I end up in a maze of contradictory advice.”

You're not disengaged. You're overwhelmed. There's a difference.

You already make conscious choices in other parts of your life. You suspect that buying the same two or three fish on autopilot is probably not the most sustainable habit. But the moment you look for an alternative, you hit eco-labels that disagree with each other, advice that depends on who's giving it, and a low hum of guilt underneath all of it. The more sustainable food is framed as a moral obligation, the more you switch off. You're not against changing, you just refuse to be made to feel bad about a piece of fish.

Does this sound like you?

- You skip past eco-labels and sustainability messaging automatically
- You already make conscious choices in other areas and this one frustrates you
- Being told what to do closes you down rather than opening you up
- You'd change if it felt like your own decision, arrived at on your own terms

Three things to try

- 1 Stop reading labels. Ask one question instead.**
'What is fresh and local this week?' The answer to that question is almost always the right choice: no label, no certification, no research required. Local and fresh are often aligned with seasonal availability making responsible consumption easier and more intuitive.
- 2 Choose for taste first. Collect verdicts like Pokémon.**
Pick the fish that sounds good to cook tonight. The next day, look it up on mrgoodfish.com and add it to your mental running tally, green light, amber, or "ah, interesting." The goal isn't a perfect score; it's a fuller map. Nobody got good at responsibly consuming fish by getting it right the first time.
- 3 Try one low-impact species as a personal discovery, not a duty.**
Sardines cost less than salmon, are higher in omega-3, and most people who try them are surprised. Start there, not because you should, but because it's genuinely worth trying. The ocean part is just a side benefit.



Real example: Cyprus → eating lionfish to protect local fish

In Cyprus, lionfish is an invasive species with negative impacts on local ecosystems. Rather than leading with environmental obligation, the message was reframed entirely: 'Eating lionfish helps protect local fish.' The angle was culinary curiosity and local pride. People who had tuned out from sustainability messaging responded to this framing, because it reached them through something they cared about: good food and local identity.



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"I've cooked the same fish my whole life and it has never let me down"

**You're not resistant to change.
You just haven't been given a good reason.**

You eat fish regularly and you cook it well. You have your species, your recipes, your source. The idea of trying something different isn't unwelcome; it's just unnecessary. The fish you buy is tied to habit, to memory, to the way you've always done it. Someone suggesting you change can feel less like useful advice and more like a comment on something that has always worked perfectly well.

Does this sound like you?

- You buy the same two or three species you've always bought
- You trust your fishmonger or supplier more than any app or campaign
- Food is connected to memory, culture, and identity for you
- You're not against trying something new, you just haven't had a reason to

Three things to try

- 1 Cook the new species in the same way you cook the familiar one.**
Same technique, same seasoning, same dish. Only the fish changes. If you always bake sea bass with olive oil and lemon, try it with a species that's in season this week. The dish stays yours - the repertoire quietly expands.
- 2 Ask the person you already trust.**
Next time you're at your fishmonger or market, ask: 'What is most abundant locally right now?' If they recommend something different, try it once. Their endorsement carries more weight than any campaign or label.
- 3 Let curiosity be enough.**
If you see a fish at the counter you don't recognise, ask what it tastes like and how to cook it. That's not a commitment to buy it, it's just a question. Most discoveries start there.



Real example: United Kingdom → trying something new is easier than it feels

When a UK supermarket encouraged shoppers to swap the usual cod or salmon for lesser-known species like coley, megrim or whiting, sales of those alternatives rose sharply. With no price change and no lecturing, simply by making the unexplored species more visible and giving people a simple cue for how to cook them ("cook it like cod"). People didn't need to become fish experts; they needed one easy prompt at the moment of choice.



Our tip: Before your weekly shop, use the MGF website or app to discover seasonal species recommendations. It takes just 30 seconds and helps you make more informed and sustainable choices.



“I like mussels and things like that but I never actually buy to cook them.”

You're not against it. It just never feels like the immediate choice.

You've eaten mussels at a restaurant and enjoyed them. You've seen seaweed on a menu and been intrigued. You might even know, vaguely, that farmed shellfish and bivalves are among the lowest-impact foods you can eat. But back at the supermarket or the fish counter, you reach for something familiar. The low-impact option always feels like a special-occasion thing and something other people buy, or something you'll try someday. Someday hasn't come yet.

Does this sound like you?

- You've tried mussels or seaweed and liked them but don't buy them regularly
- These feel like restaurant food, health-food shop food, or someone else's food
- You're open to the idea but it never becomes a habit
- You're already reducing meat - but fish choices haven't shifted yet

Three things to try

- 1 Put it in something you already make.**
Add mussels to a pasta or tomato sauce you cook every week. Add a teaspoon of dried seaweed flakes to soup or rice. Don't announce it as a new thing, just cook it. Familiar dish, new ingredient. In case you liked it, adjust and repeat.
- 2 Buy it as the default protein one week.**
Farmed mussels are almost always the cheapest option at the fish counter, and among the most sustainable foods you can eat, anywhere. Treat them as your standard protein a couple of times per month.
- 3 Start shelf-stable, no fishmonger needed.**
Jarred mussels, tinned sardines, smoked mackerel in a packet, caught and preserved at the peak season when quotas are higher, all available in any supermarket, no preparation required, no waste risk. Add to a salad, on toast, in a quick pasta. Getting familiar with the flavour removes the barrier to buying fresh.



Real example: Spain → mussels (*mejillones*) as an everyday home dish

In Galicia, mussels are farmed on floating rafts (*bateas*) in the Atlantic *rías* and are an everyday, affordable staple cooked simply at home, most classically as *mejillones al vapor*, steamed with lemon, white wine and bay leaf. Spain is the world's third-largest mussel producer after China and Chile, and Galician mussels hold Protected Designation of Origin status (*Mejillón de Galicia*); the growth of Galician raft farming is what popularised mussels in Spain and made them a staple on many tables.



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Tools that can help.

You don't need to figure this out alone. These tools are free, open and made for exactly the situations in this guide.

The MGF App



Seasonal species and restaurants serving them at a glance

Tells you what is in season right now in your region, where it comes from, and gives you a simple recipe. Endorsed local fishmongers and restaurants appear on the map. Useful for anyone who wants the right choice without having to research it.

 [App Store](#) | [Google Play](#)

The MGF Platform



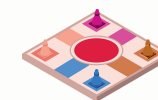
Recipes, species guides, seasonal calendars and other content

The platform at www.mrgoodfish.com hosts free recipes organised by species, type of a meal, difficulty level and time for preparation.

The 'Choose the right species' section on the Mr.Goodfish website explains which species to choose according to their season and fishing area.

 [Visit platform](#)

Pillars of the sea



A cooperative board game for families, schools and groups

Makes the links between fishing, consumption, and ocean health tangible through play. For teenagers and adults.

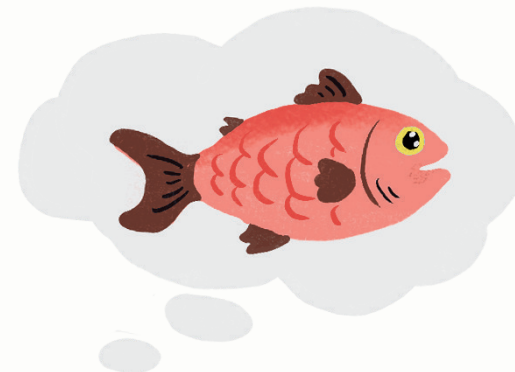
Ideal for a family evening, a community event, or a school session.

 [Download game](#)

My commitment

One nudge. One week.

Write it down and put it somewhere visible.



My situation – Feel free to check all that apply

- "I'd cook more fish if it didn't always feel like a risk"
- "I want to eat more fish but I always end up wasting it"
- "I know I should do better - I just can't stand being lectured about it"
- "I've cooked the same fish my whole life and it's never let me down"
- "I'm curious about mussels and things like that - but I never actually buy them"

My one nudge

The single change I will make this week...

I will do it by

Pick a specific date, not 'soon'...

I'll know it worked when

e.g. I tried one new species / I used up the whole fish...

MGF3 tool I'll use

- 📱 MGF App - seasonal species at a glance
- 📖 Find a recipe
- 🧑‍🤝‍🧑 Play Pillars of the Sea with family or friends

➔ **SHARE**

Are you posting about MGF3-related news on social media? Feel free to tag Mr.Goodfish and use the hashtag #MrGoodFish.

About

Since its launch in 2010 by Nausicaá, Acquario di Genova and Aquarium Finisterrae, the European Mr.Goodfish programme has worked to raise public awareness about the sustainable consumption of seafood. By publishing seasonal recommendations developed by marine resource specialists, the programme encourages consumers to choose abundant and responsibly sourced species, helping to protect vulnerable fish stocks and preserve marine biodiversity.

Since 2017, the initiative has also expanded its guidance to include sustainable aquaculture products, reinforcing its commitment to responsible seafood choices across Europe.

In 2024, Mr.Goodfish entered a new phase through the European project "Mr.Goodfish3.0: Co-creating Solutions for Sustainable Seafood Consumption", funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme.

During three years, the project will enhance and expand the Mr.Goodfish app and platform, combining scientific expertise with social, cultural and economic perspectives gathered through collaboration with stakeholders, citizens and seafood professionals across Europe.

Supported by a consortium led by Cyprus Marine & Maritime Institute, the initiative aims to reach 30 million European citizens, promote

sustainable seafood practices in all EU Member States, and strengthen awareness through educational campaigns, partnerships and multilingual tools adapted to regional ecosystems and consumption habits.

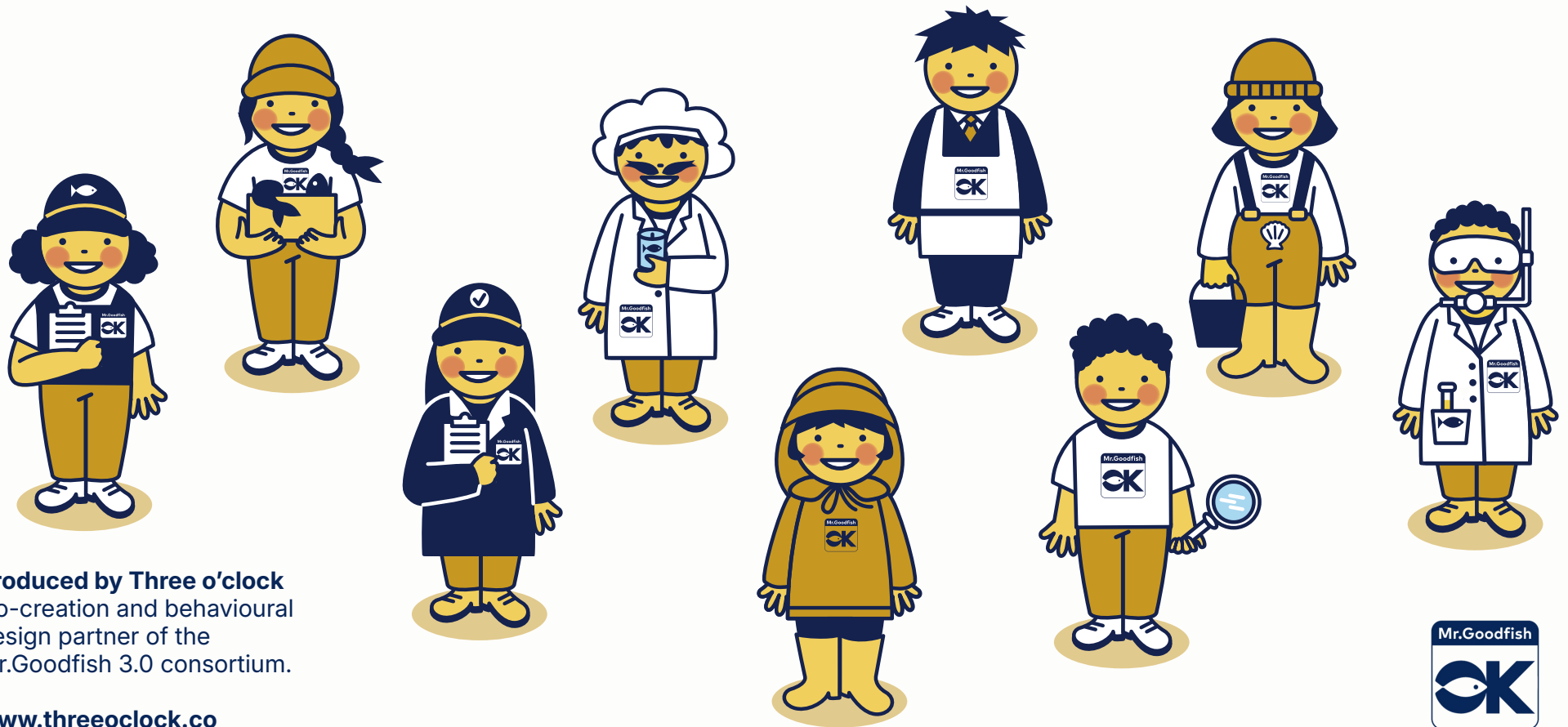
Learn about Mr Goodfish 3.0 project

<https://www.mrgoodfish.com/en/>



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Choose the right fish at the right season!



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www.threeoclock.co

