

# Pan-Seared Salmon

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**Total Time** 20 minutes

**Prep Time** 5 minutes

**Cook Time** 15 minutes

**Rating** ★★★★★ (311)



Christopher Testani for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Simon Andrews.

Searing salmon in a hot skillet is not only a speedy way to prepare it, but it also makes for a super-crisp crust and a tender, flaky center. A nonstick pan makes cleanup easy, but a heavy, cast-iron or stainless steel skillet works, too — just be sure to use a large one to avoid crowding the fish, and make sure to preheat the pan to avoid sticking. Make the recipe as written, or finish the salmon with a steakhouse-inspired butter-and-garlic baste (see Tip). Add a squeeze of lemon juice and a sprinkling of fresh herbs, such as parsley, dill or tarragon, if you have some on hand.

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## INGREDIENTS

**Yield:** 4 servings

4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets, skin on or off

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal)

Black pepper

Half a lemon, for serving

Chopped fresh parsley, dill or tarragon, for serving (optional)

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## PREPARATION

### Step 1

Heat a (12-inch) nonstick, cast-iron or stainless steel skillet over medium-high until it's very hot. (A drop of water flicked onto the pan should turn to steam almost immediately.)

### Step 2

Meanwhile, pat the salmon fillets dry with paper towels. Pour the oil over them and toss to coat, then season all over with salt and pepper.

### Step 3

When the pan is hot, add the fillets skin-side up, spacing them evenly. Cook until the salmon is browned on the bottom and releases easily from the pan, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip the fillets, reduce the heat to medium and cook until the salmon is cooked through but still slightly rare in the center, 4 to 5 more minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets.

### Step 4

Remove the fish to a platter or individual plates and rest for 5 minutes, then squeeze the lemon on top and sprinkle with fresh parsley, if desired.

**TIP**

*For a rich, restaurant-style finish, remove the pan from the heat and add 2 tablespoons cubed, unsalted butter and a smashed, peeled garlic clove. Tilt the skillet and spoon the melted butter over the salmon fillets a few times, until coated.*