



# Buyer's Guide: What You Need To Know When Buying A Fish Skinner

If the word “fish” is in your job description, this information is for you. Have you been tasked with researching and purchasing a fish skinner? Do you know what to look for when buying one? The mountains of processing materials available can be overwhelming and leave you confused about where to begin on the journey of finding the fish skinning solution best suited for your business. This download is here to help.

## Always start with your product

When considering which skinning unit to buy for your production, you should always begin by looking at your own product, particularly in its final form. The following questions are the most important among processing machinery manufacturers:

- ***What fish species do you process?***
- ***What is the weight of your average fish (fish fillet)?***
- ***What is your daily capacity?***

By asking yourself these three questions, you can start narrowing down the pathway to finding the best skinner for your business.

***So, what fish species do you process?*** This one is important to know because different fish species can require unique skinner settings. Most manufacturers work with a mechanical roller and a knife. These rollers and knives need to be dead-precise to take off the skin, which is paper-thin most of the time. It all depends on the toughness of the skin and the flexibility of the fillet. Tell your specialist, and they will set you up with the right roller-knife setting.

***What is the weight of your average fish or fish fillet?*** This second question is crucial in determining whether you need a soft-handling top-unit for your skinner. A top-unit's main function is to guide the product during the skinning itself. This component will eventually be pressing down on your fillet. When you have large fish, a little bit of pressure on your fillet won't get the job done. The bigger your fillets are, the harder they need to be pressed down by the top-unit; if your pressure application is too soft, it won't skin your product properly.

Conversely, smaller fillets will require a lesser amount of pressure – if you apply too



much, you will end up losing a lot of good meat and be left with a damaged fillet. No one wants that!

***What is your daily capacity?*** Here is the critical moment where you decide whether you will need an automatic skinner or a manual skinner. An automatic will skin a lot more fish in one minute compared to a manual one. But the manual skinner is three-to-five times less expensive than an automatic one. Let the experts in processing machinery advise you. Check out STEEN's website for more information: <https://www.steen.be/fish/>

## The manual skinner

A manual skinner is a machine that you use manually. You place the fish on the machine, press a foot switch, and the machine will skin your fish. There are no conveyor belts or other automations – just one machine and you, its operator.

Manual skimmers are best suited for fishmongers, fish restaurant operators, market vendors, etc. Essentially, this kind of skinner is perfect for those in the fish industry who work by the order.

A manual skinner can be placed on your working counter or be set up as a free-standing machine on wheels, which you can easily roll about.

## The automatic skinner

An automatic skinner is a skinning machine that skins your fillets automatically. It usually has conveyor belts and can be sometimes placed in line with your other processing machinery. But, before you're planning to do so, always contact your expert first.

Automatic skimmers are specialized pieces of equipment that can cope with a high output capacity and are usually easy to put in operation. They don't need too much maintenance when used correctly.



Some automatic skimmers have different options to skin, clean, and maintain, so you as a processor can sleep on both ears.

Here are some things you should look for when considering the purchase of an automatic skinner:

***Do I want to regular skin or deep skin? OR BOTH?***

Regular skinning means you will only take off the skin and leave everything else – membrane and fat, for instance – on the meat.

Deep skinning is when you remove skin from the fillet along with some substantial fat as well. Species like salmon or tilapia have these fat structures, and some fish processors like to see the fat come off.

It is best practice to buy a machine that can do both regular and deep skinning. There are a lot of manufacturers on the market who produce machines like this. See for yourself with the following links:

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rp\\_AqOImsss](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rp_AqOImsss)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1ZVIHL0p1k>

***Does my machine need to be clean before I start processing?***

If you've ever posed the above question to yourself, you're right on the money. Yes, your machine needs to be cleaned and sanitized before and after you start processing. After all, you're handling food and the consequences can be high if you don't thoroughly clean your production equipment. What you should look for is a machine that is easy to clean and sanitize, and one that is designed so bacterial build-up is brought to a minimum.

Here are some traits of an easy-clean machine:

- You can dismantle the machine in such a way that you can easily reach all angles with your hose
- You don't need any tools to dismantle everything
- You aren't taking longer than two minutes to clean it

Machines like the STEEN ST700V possess these characteristics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5m3xKykc998&t=55s>

## The world of skinning

We hope that all the information above will help you in your search for a proper and suitable skinning machine. Keep this in mind and you will be fine.

Good luck!

