

## Fish Crumble

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Yes, I know this might sound strange to those accustomed to an apple crumble but trust me, this savoury crumble works well and has always proved immensely popular with those for whom we've cooked it.

The savoury cheese crumble mixture could, I imagine, be more traditionally replaced by a cheesy mashed potato topping, if you preferred, but then it would become a pretty standard fish pie that'd be rather missing the point, in my opinion.

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### Planning

serves:	4
prep time:	20 mins
cooking time:	45 mins

### Ingredients

1½ lbs (~700 g) white fish  
(haddock, plaice; hake  
is excellent)  
1 bay leaf  
1 pt semi-skimmed milk  
4 oz prawns  
3 eggs, hard-boiled and  
sliced  
2 oz butter  
3½ oz plain flour  
2 oz Cheddar cheese,  
coarsely grated  
pinch of grated nutmeg  
Salt & pepper

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4.

Add the bay leaf and white fish to the milk and bring it to simmering point. Poach the white fish very gently until barely cooked. Remove the fish and let it cool; leave the bay leaf in the milk cooling as well.

When the fish is cool, remove any skin and bones and flake it coarsely into a bowl. Add the prawns and the sliced hard-boiled eggs.

Make the crumble mixture. Rub or process together 2 oz of the plain flour and 1½ oz of the butter until you get the famed bread-crumble stage. Stir in the grated Cheddar and some salt and pepper. Set the mixture aside.

Make a thin white sauce with the poaching liquid. Strain the milk into a jug and sprinkle in the pinch of nutmeg. Melt the remaining ½ oz butter in a small saucepan over low heat. When the foam subsides, stir in the remaining ½ oz plain flour and cook gently, stirring frequently until the mixture is pale (2-3 minutes). Remove the pan from the heat and gradually add the reserved poaching milk, beating vigorously between additions to ensure a smooth consistency is achieved. Return the pan to the heat and bring it to a simmer, stirring constantly. Gently cook out the flour taste for a couple of minutes, then stir it gently into the fish, prawn and egg mixture.

Assemble the crumble. Tip the fish mixture into an appropriately sized dish. Cover it with the crumble mixture and bake it in the oven for 20-30 minutes until the top is golden brown.