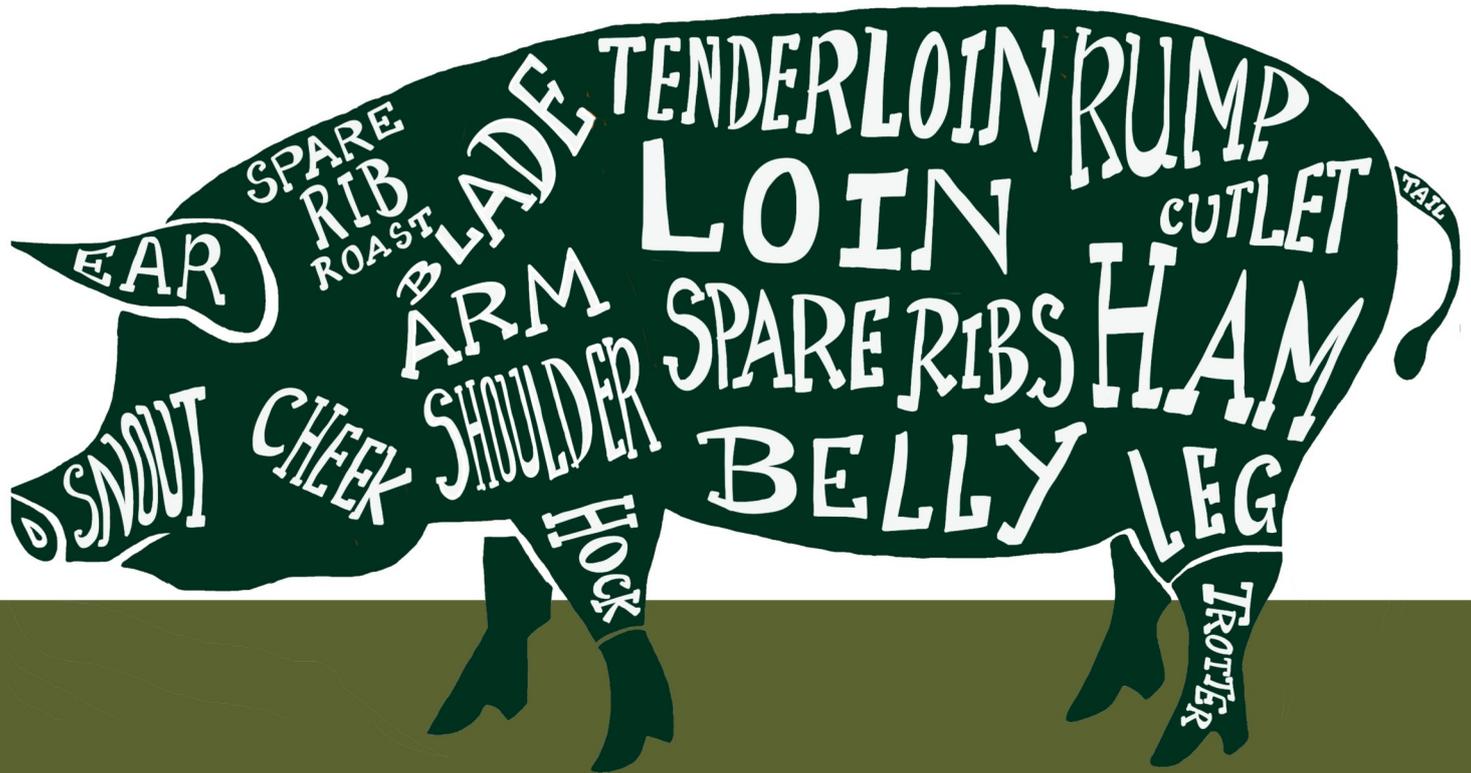


CUTS OF PORK GUIDE



Head - Grim to look at but the head is full of rich, fatty and gelatinous goodness. Can be cooked **whole** or you can ask for the **ears, cheek/jowl** or **snout**.

Neck – This cut is an extremely underused and underrated cut and often ends up in **sausages** or as **mince**. It presents just the right amount of muscle and fat to provide a small and tasty roast.

Shoulder – This cut is an extremely hardworking joint that is webbed with fat and connective tissue; if slow cooked the shoulder can be amazingly juicy. It can be slow or pot roasted, casseroled or minced. If you want to serve roast pork at a big family dinner, a whole shoulder (and the best part of a day of roasting) is exactly what you need.

Blade of pork – A small, flat cut from the top of the shoulder left on the blade bone. It is covered in a layer of skin so great for **crackling**.

Spare Ribs – Cut from the upper part of the shoulder and come in a rack of four or five ribs. Due to the generous amount of marbled fat and connective tissue, slow cooking leads to extremely tasty, sweet and succulent spare ribs. They are a versatile and economical cut.

Hand and Spring - A chunky, almost triangular and peculiar looking but delicious cut. The hand and spring comes from the lower part of the shoulder/upper part of the front leg and will serve **2-3 people** as a roast.

Hock - A small triangular cut from just above the trotter, with just enough meat to stew for two. In its cured form, it provides a lovely strong flavour which can be used to give depth of flavour in a stew or a soup for six.

Front end of Loin – The fore end of the loin is slightly fattier than the back, however still provides the neat eye of meat for which the loin is generally desired. If you draw a comparison against beef it is essentially the **fore rib of pork**. The ends of the bones can be **French-trimmed** to present an impressive and tasty roast **rack of pork**, it can be separated into **cutlets** or **boned and rolled** into a neat, round **roasting joint** with an eye of meat and a covering of fat and skin.

Loin – Comes from the middle of the pig’s back. As it is an area that doesn’t work hard this cut is about as lean as this fatty animal will get. The loin is an excellent roasting joint – particularly on the bone. Cut up, the loin makes **pork chops**.

Tenderloin – When you compare this cut to beef the tenderloin is essentially the **fillet of pork**. It is incredibly lean and is taken from the other side of the rib to the **loin chop**.

Belly – Once an unpopular cut, now the favourite cut of chefs and home cooks alike. Its fat-rich composition makes it a fantastic addition to sausages and pies, but it is in its slow-roasted form that this cut comes into its own. It is extremely rich meaning that a little goes a long way, and so even at its currently popular height, it is still an economical roast.

Rump – this is a large lean muscle that is tasty when roasted but lacks fat of other cuts and therefore shouldn’t be overcooked. It makes fantastic **escalopes** and other quick cooking items.

Leg – A classic roasting joint which has currently fallen out of favour. Again this cut is fairly lean and so needs careful cooking, but a leg of good quality pork won’t dry out as some people think. Due to its size, it can be wise to opt for a **boneless joint** to speed up the cooking a little to prevent it drying out – but it can be slow roasted **on the bone** for a big gathering.

Tail - A gelatinous and rich addition to the stockpot. For the carnivore in you, simmer the tail, bread crumbed and deep-fry so the wobbly, soft flesh can be prized off with your teeth.

Trotter – The best source of gelatine, which is essential for a hot-water pastry pork pie. Ensure that your butcher has cleaned the trotter properly, as it can be awkward to do at home.

Liver – Pork liver has a very strong flavour and is extremely rich in iron. Even the most dedicated of liver eaters may find pork liver a bit too much. In cooking, small amounts of pork liver are often added to **faggots, pates** and **terrines** to give depth of flavour. If you use pork liver in your own cooking it needs to be trimmed of any membrane or grainy bits.

Kidneys - these can be a real treat, though need them to be from a quality pig and thoroughly cleaned to avoid the taste of ammonia. If you buy them whole, make sure you remove any membrane; trim out the white gristly centre before cooking.

Short back bacon – Often considered the premium bacon cut in the UK, taken from the back of the loin where there's a nice big eye of meat and a slightly smaller layer of fat. If left on the bone, the loin can be cured to make **bacon chops**, ideal for grilling.

Long back bacon – Cut from the middle of the back, this cut features the best of both back and streaky bacon; the fat and flavour benefit of a little streaky with an eye of leaner meat too.

Streaky bacon – Although the cheaper option it is often the favourite with foodies. Streaky bacon is taken from the belly and consists of plenty of fat, it can be fried or grilled to get really crispy bacon.

Shoulder or Collar – Collar of bacon is a sweet, economical cut, which needs to be thinly sliced if used in the same way as back or streaky bacon. **Boned and rolled**, makes a classic boiling ham joint.

Gammon - Comes from the top of the rump. For a small, tidy joint, you can ask for a **slipper** or **corner gammon**, where the leg meets the rump. It can be cut into thick slices for **gammon steaks** to grill or fry.

