How to shuck an Oyster

What you’ll need
- Fresh oysters
- Oyster shucking knife
- Kitchen towel (or protective glove)

1. Place a folded hand towel in your hand with the fold towards your thumb. You can also use a protective glove instead of a towel.

2. Unfold the towel and place an oyster in your hand with the hinge facing away from your thumb with the flat side of the oyster facing up.

3. Pinch the oyster between your thumb and fingers using the towel to protect your hand from your oyster knife.

4. Wedge the knife into the hinge and work your oyster knife up and down to start to pry the hinge apart. This is the hardest part!
5. Use the knife as a lever to open the oyster until you feel a pop or a give. Make sure your knife is inserted far enough so that you don’t break the tip of the hinge.

6. Slide your knife along the flat side of the oyster.

7. Cut through the muscle in the middle of the oyster that holds the shell closed, keeping your knife along the inside of the flat side. (Towel removed for clarity.)

8. Remove the flat side of the oyster.

9. Scrape your knife under the oyster and cut the other side of the muscle against the cup of the shell.

10. Your oyster is ready to eat. Enjoy!

NH Sea Grant supported the creation of this shucking guide for the NH Shellfish Farmers Initiative. For more information about New Hampshire’s oyster aquaculture industry, visit seagrant.unh.edu/oysters. (Photos by Tim Briggs | NH Sea Grant)