

Port Walk #17



Fishing with Nets

Many of the boats at Fisherman's Wharf use nets instead of lines. Some crews place the nets in open water to catch herring, sardines, and other schooling fish; others drag the ocean floor, scooping up sole and shrimp.

Purse Seiners

Purse seiners use a heavy net to catch schooling fish such as anchovies. Cork floats are attached to the top of the seine net, and a weighted lead line is attached to the bottom. When a school of fish is located, a power skiff casts off from the boat's stern, towing one end of the net in a large circle. Once the circle is closed and the fish are surrounded, the bottom of the net is cinched tight like a purse and the catch is pulled up.



Trawlers

Trawlers, or "draggers," catch fish with a large sock-shaped net known as a trawl, held open by two large metal "doors," which are generally stored along the sides of the boat. In shallow areas, the net may drag the bottom in search of rockfish or halibut. Deeper waters yield catches of shrimp as well as groundfish such as sablefish and sole. Many of the larger vessels here at Fisherman's Wharf are trawlers.

Gillnetters

Gillnetters drop a vertical sheet of transparent netting into the water, where it hangs like a curtain. The size of the mesh allows the fishermen to be selective by determining the size of the fish that will swim into the net and be caught by their gills. Larger fish bounce off the net and smaller ones squirt through it.

