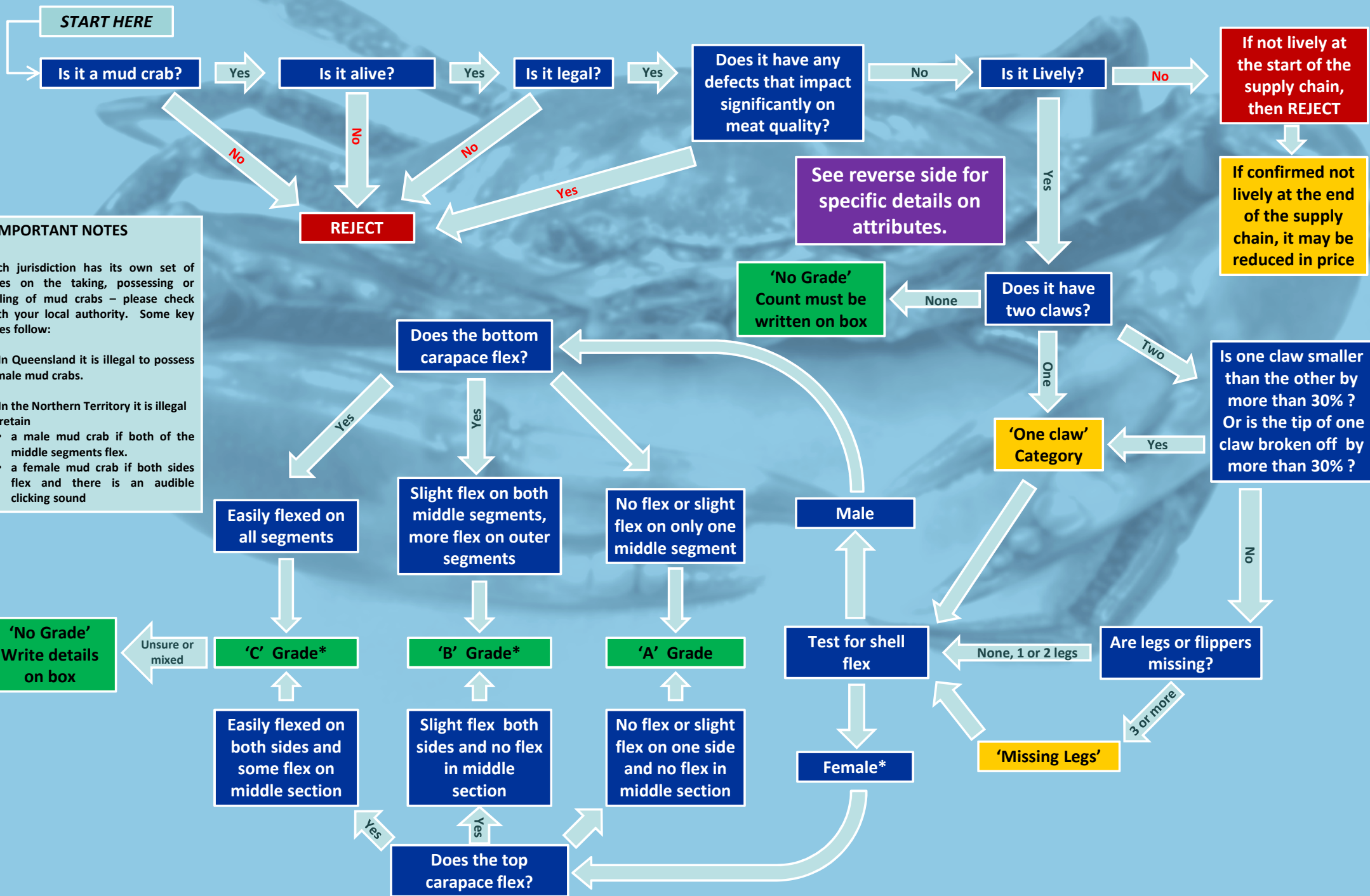


Australian Industry Live Mud Crab Grading Scheme - Version 3 - 2016



Is it a mud crab - *Scylla* species



A mud crab has nine similarly sized spines on each side of the carapace. If not, it must be rejected.

Bleeding



If there is a significant amount of blood, reject the crab. A small amount of blood may not be 'A grade'.

Damaged or deformed



If damage or deformity is significant **and likely to impact on meat quality or survivability**, reject the crab. Minor damage and excessive barnacles are not defects.

Old empty crabs



If scarring is significant, claw teeth completely worn **and** the crab is light in weight for its size, reject the crab.

Frothing



If the froth is black or yellow, reject the crab. If there is a significant amount of clear froth and the crab is slow, it may be downgraded. Short exposure to cold can cause temporary frothing and the crab will recover.

Parasite



Loxothylacus ihlei (Loxy) appears as a mass under the flap which can be confused for an egg bearing female. If evident, reject.

Is it lively?



A lively crab's legs will provide resistance or push back against you, and their eyes react to movement. A cold crab may appear to be slow and can be revived. Crabs placed on their back may appear motionless, so confirm liveliness by untying or wetting.

Two normal and complete claws



If one claw is smaller than the other by more than 30% or the top tip is broken off by more than 30% and signs of spoilage, then 'One claw' category.

Male shell flex test



Hold the crab in both hands, with your palms facing upwards and the abdominal flap of the crab facing upwards. Place the flat of your thumbs on the middle segments (next to the 2nd walking legs and either side of the flap, see **X** on diagram) and press gently at first.

'A' Grade - No flex with firm pressure (~6kg) or slight flex on only one middle segment

'B' Grade - Slight flex with moderate pressure (~4kg) on both middle segments, more flex on outer segments

'C' Grade - Easily flexed (~2kg) with minimal pressure on all segments. Excessively soft on most segments are out of grade and should be returned to the water.

Note:

- Only press once. Repeated pressure will damage the shell.
- Segments already damaged from previous tests should not be used to determine grade.
- Do not use the tip of your thumb to apply pressure.
- Avoid excessive pressure as shell damage will reduce survivability.
- In the NT it is illegal to retain a male mud crab if both of the middle segments flex.

'No Grade' - Write details on box.

Accessed only for liveliness, shell damage, missing legs or claws and other 'defects'. Details to include:- sex, one or no claws, 'missing legs', count & weight of each category. **Mandatory that number of no claws crabs be written on box or buyer can reject.**

Female shell flex test



Hold the crab in both hands, palms facing upwards and the abdominal flap facing down. Place the flat of your thumbs on the carapace, in line with the widest part of the carapace and where the string is (or would be if the crab was tied up, see **X** on the diagram), and press gently at first.

'A' Grade - No flex with firm pressure (~6kg) or slight flex on only one side (either side) and no flex in middle section

'B' Grade - Slight flex (~4kg) on both sides and no flex in middle section

'C' Grade - Easily flexed (~2kg) on both sides and some flex on middle section. Excessively soft all over top carapace are out of grade and should be returned to the water.

Note:

- Only press once. Repeated pressure will damage the shell.
- Carapace already damaged from previous tests should not be used to determine grade.
- Do not use the tip of your thumb to apply pressure.
- Avoid excessive pressure as shell damage will reduce survivability.
- In the NT it is illegal to retain a female mud crab if both sides flex and there is an audible clicking sound.

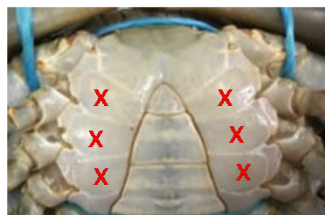
Australian Industry Live Mud Crab Grading Scheme – Version 3

Pressure is applied by using the pad of a straight thumb, not the tip of the thumb with a bent knuckle.

A segment that is already damaged cannot be used to determine shell hardness.

The following tables can be used to determine grades with greater precision when there is uncertainty.

Shell hardness grade	Description
4	No flex using firm pressure ~ 6kg
3	Slight flex with moderate pressure ~ 4kg
2	Easily flexed with light pressure ~ 2kg
1	Very soft, easily flexed with minimal pressure ~1kg



Grade	Male	Segments (x)	Total score	Female	Zone (x)	Total score
A	No flex or slight flex on only one middle segment (either side)	444,444 - 434,444	24-23	No flex or slight flex on only one side (either side) and no flex in middle section (M)	4,4 - 4,3	8-7
B	Slight flex on both middle segments, more flex on outer segments	434,434 - 323,323	22-16	Slight flex on both sides and no flex in middle section	3,3 - 3,2	6-5
C	Easily flexed on all segments	323,322 - 212,212	15-10	Easily flexed on both sides and some flex on middle section	2,2	4
	Out of grade – return to water		<10	Out of grade – return to water		<4