

# YUMMY NORTHWEST

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## Stir crazy

In the West Country of England, Bristol to be exact, lives an enthusiastic cook named Nick Park, who loves to make stir-fries.

Nick works for months, even years, on minutiae to create award-winning films like "Chicken Run" and "Wallace and Gromit and the Curse of the Wererabbit." When he comes home from a long day, cooking up a stir-fry is a relaxing occupation.

At the supermarket Nick buys some vegetables already cut. He combines these with others that he quickly chops and then sautés in a wok to make a healthy, one-of-a-kind meal. No two stir-fries are the same.

Join Yummy Northwest to watch Nick cook up a stir-fry with the joy that should accompany every meal we eat.

Note that a wok helps make stir-frying easy, but a large skillet will work, too.

## Fast, fresh food



First, raw vegetables are quickly prepared.



## Stir-fry origins

It is believed that the term "stir-frying" originally appeared in Dr. Buwei Yang Chao's book, "How to Cook and Eat in Chinese," first published in 1945.

Chao traveled around China and collected local recipes while her linguist husband collected dialects.

In her book, Chao explains that the "Chinese cook or housewife never measures space, time, or matter." The Chinese cooking technique, she continues, is to simply use what is available and stir it together until it tastes right. This results in the assurance that anyone can cook.

Chao created the word "stir-frying" to translate a Chinese word meaning "big-fire-shallow-fat-continually-stirring-quick-frying."

Whatever you call it, it's a tasty addition to the English – and American – kitchen.



Use a variety of fresh vegetables.



At a high heat, stir all the vegetables.



Raw cashews add a delicious crunch.



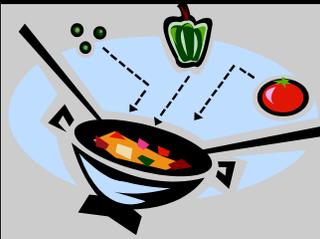
Plenty of noodles are a must. Nick uses soft pre-cooked egg noodles.



If you're not having fun at this point, add more ingredients.



Finally, splash in some soy sauce to taste...



## Nick's Stir-Fry

Heat a couple of glugs of oil until the wok is just smoking.

Sauté some chopped garlic and sliced gingerroot.

Add some peeled king or tiger prawns (or small pieces of chicken) and sauté for half a minute.

If there's too much water in the prawns, it can get too liquidy and start to boil rather than fry. If so, drain off excess, or put cooked meat aside to add back later, and sauté veg separately in fresh garlic and ginger oil.

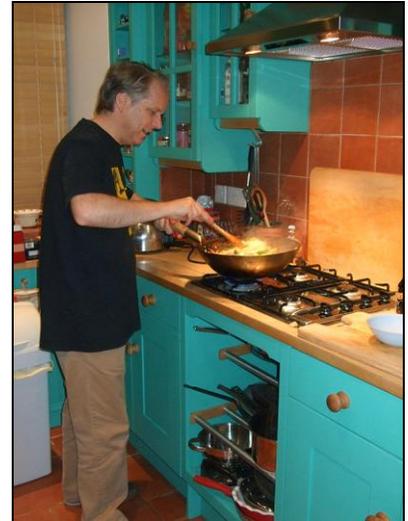
Keep the wok hot and add some sliced (but not too thinly): spring (green) onions, mushrooms, peppers (green, red, or yellow), broccoli, and carrots.

Stir-fry for a minute then throw in some bean sprouts, sugar-snap peas, and cashew nuts and then some soft egg noodles and soy sauce, and stir-fry for another minute or two.

Here's a sauce I make when using chicken:

To hot chicken or vegetable stock, add:  
 Soy sauce  
 Cheap dry sherry (not Harvey's Bristol Cream, please; it's too good)  
 White wine or cider vinegar  
 Brown sugar  
 Salt and pepper

Mix together and add corn flour (starch) for thickening. Pour over sautéed chicken and/or veg in wok and cook for another couple of minutes until it thickens. I love it with cashew nuts.



...stir some more...



...and serve.



Yum!

## About Yummy Northwest

Each monthly issue highlights an edible delight available in the Pacific Northwest and Montana.

## Contact the editor

Comments, corrections, topic ideas, and submissions are all most welcome at [Yummy\\_Northwest@hotmail.com](mailto:Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com). View archives at [yummynorthwest.com](http://yummynorthwest.com).