

Ginger Basil Stir-Fry Template

2 Tbsp olive oil

2" piece of ginger (peeled and chopped) or 2 tsp powdered ginger

2 garlic cloves – chopped or pressed

1 onion – chopped

1 Tbsp dried basil or handful of fresh chopped leaves

2 Tbsp tamari or soy sauce

1 Tbsp honey, real maple syrup or sugar

lean protein (choose one from list below):

½ pound chicken, beef, tofu or pork cut into pieces

1 cup cooked chick peas or mung bean

3 eggs – scrambled and cooked separately

3 cups diced or grated vegetables (anything you like)

4 cups of chopped greens (kale, spinach, chard, collards, kohlrabi tops etc.)

Serve over your favorite whole grain. Brown rice is great but don't limit yourself try barley, quinoa, couscous, wheat berries or kamut.

- Start cooking the whole grain of your choice first, before prepping the other ingredients. Some grains take quite a while to cook (like barley) while others are quick (like couscous), but all will hold well if done before the stir-fry. (See the back side of this sheet for more information on cooking with whole grains.)
- Heat a large pan (the one I use is 12" in diameter and 2 ½" deep) on medium to medium-high heat, depending on your stove.
- When hot, add olive oil. Wait a few seconds until oil is hot, then add onion. Oil should never smoke, if it does the temp is too high.
- Saute onion for about 5 minutes until soft.
- Add garlic, ginger and dried basil (If using fresh basil add it with the vegetables). Stir for 30 seconds.
- If using meat or tofu, add now and cook for 5 minutes to brown. Stir often to prevent sticking.
- Add tamari or soy sauce and honey, maple syrup or sugar and stir. If using meat cook another 5 minutes.
- If at any time things are sticking you can add water a Tbsp at a time.
- Add your vegetables. Depending on what you use, they will take different amounts of time to cook. If you are using a variety be sure to add them separately if some require longer cooking times. You want them cooked, but still crunchy. This usually takes between 5-10 minutes, depending on the vegetable. If using very hard vegetables like cubed root vegetables you might want to cover the pan with a lid to help cook them. If using spinach or chard, add at the very end and stir to wilt them.
- If using beans or scrambled eggs, add them now and heat for a few minutes until warmed thru.
- Serve over your whole grain.



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Cooking with Whole Grains

Incorporating whole grains into your diet is an inexpensive way to eat healthy. A wide range of organic whole grains are available at Nature's Pantry and the Granary, as well as many of the local grocery stores.

Before I started using whole grains regularly, I had the impression they took forever to cook and were a giant pain. That's what happens when you grow up seeing commercials for Uncle Ben's instant rice! Once I became familiar with how long each different kind of grain took to cook, incorporating them into dinner became easy. On days when I am home early, I can plan on making a longer cooking grain. There really isn't any work - you just have to start it earlier. Then there are days when I am in a hurry and cook with the fast cooking grains. Below I have a list of grains I like to use and how I cook them. My cooking recommendations are for grains that are still firm and chewy when done. Mushy, congealed grains are not my thing so I tend to serve them al dente. You might prefer to cook your grains longer and with slightly more water. Experiment to find what fits your tastes.

Before cooking any grain, I like to rinse it with water to remove any residue from the field or processing center.

Couscous

Very short time commitment.

Don't rinse first. Bring 1 ½ cups water to a boil, remove from heat. Add 1 cup couscous - stir, cover and let sit for 5 minutes off heat. Fluff with a fork before serving.

Couscous is just wheat processed into granules. Look for whole wheat varieties otherwise it is like eating white bread. Since I love bread, I eat way too much wheat already so I don't make this very often. However, when you are in a hurry, it is done very fast.

Quinoa

Short time commitment.

Bring 1 ½ cups of water to a boil. Add 1 cup - quinoa, cover and reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer without lifting the lid for 15 minutes. Turn off burner, but leave the pot on the stove. DO NOT lift the lid. Let sit for another 5 minutes to finish cooking. If using a gas stove cook for a minute or two longer since the burner will not stay warm the way an electric range does.

Quinoa has a mild nutty flavor. Technically it isn't a grain since the plant isn't in the grass family, but for culinary purposes it acts like a whole grain. It is one of my favorites since it has a nutrient profile that contains a balanced set of essential amino acids, making it a complete protein source.

Brown Rice or Wild Rice

Medium time commitment.

Bring 1 ½ cups of water to a boil. Add 1 cup of rice, cover, and reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer without lifting the lid for 20 minutes. Turn off burner, but leave pot on the stove. DO NOT lift the lid. Let sit this way for another 20-30 minutes to finish cooking. If using a gas stove cook for a minute or two longer since the burner will not stay warm the way an electric range does.

Barley

Longer time commitment

Bring 1 ½ cups water to a boil. Add 1 cup of barley, cover, and reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer without lifting the lid for 40 minutes. Turn off burner, but leave pot on the stove. DO NOT lift the lid. Let sit this way for another 20-30 minutes to finish cooking. If using a gas stove cook for a minute or two longer since the burner will not stay warm the way an electric range does.

Barley has an outer hull that is not edible. Look for barley where the hull has been removed; but do not buy pearled barley, since this is a refined form that has the bran removed. Dehulled barley with the bran intact is referred to by several names including hullless barley, scotch barley and pot barley.

Wheat Berries or Kamut

Longer time commitment - soaked overnight.

Soak 1 cup overnight in cold water. Drain water, place in sauce pan, add 2 cups of fresh water, cover, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer without lifting the lid for 60-90 minutes. Drain any excess water before serving.



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