

How to Make Sushi Rolls

Two popular types of **sushi** are **finger rolls** (called *nigiri-zushi*) and **nori rolls** (called *maki-zushi* or *maki-mono*). Finger rolls are bars of sushi rice topped with wasabi and fish. Sushi nori rolls, the most popular type of sushi, consist of rice and various ingredients, such as fish, wrapped in a sheet of seaweed call *nori*. Below is a short guide to making a basic sushi roll (maki-zushi), such as a *California Roll*.



Spread Rice over Nori- Place the nori sheet, shiny side down, on the bamboo rolling mat. With water moistened hands (which helps in handling the sticky rice), spread half a cup of sushi rice evenly over the nori sheet, leaving 1" at the top.



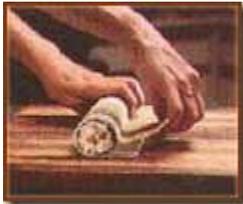
Arrange Fillings over Rice

Arrange the sushi roll fillings in a narrow row across the top third of the sushi rice. Leave a space of rice above and below the strip of toppings.



Fold sushi mat over roll

Moisten the top edge of exposed nori with water. Grasp the rolling mat with both hands, thumbs underneath, and fold the close edge of the nori sheet so it overlaps the sushi rice and ingredients.



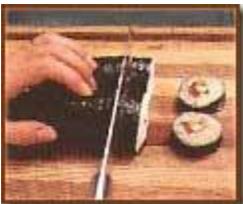
Roll Sushi Tightly with Mat

Roll tightly with firm pressure using the rolling mat. Lift the mat slightly and finish rolling until the edge closest to you meets the rice free edge at the far end of the nori. Overlap the moist edge of the nori sheet to create a seal.



Remove Sushi Roll from Mat

Use the rolling mat to shape and square up the sushi roll by pressing gently along the tops and sides of the roll. Remove the sushi roll from the bamboo mat, and place the roll seam side down on a cutting board.



Slice Sushi Roll into pieces

Sushi is best sliced using a carbon steel Japanese style knife. After the knife is moistened in water/vinegar, cut the nori rolls into six or eight equal pieces. (Cut the roll in half, then each half in thirds or fourths.) Use a swift back and forth cut for best results.

How to make Sushi rice

It's essential while the production of Japanese sushi to pay attention to use the right rice and utensils to get the best results.

Ingredients

- 2 cups Japanese rice
- 3-5 Tablespoons Japanese rice vinegar
- 2-3 Tablespoons sugar
- 1-2 teaspoons salt

Utensils

- Pan for rinsing rice
- Rice cooker or pan with lid
- Wooden or plastic spoon for mixing
- Measuring cup, spoons

How to cook Sushi Rice

Heat the rice vinegar until hot, but not boiling. Add the sugar and salt. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Allow mixture to cool before using. Room temperature is best. Adjust measurements according to taste.

Original Sushi Rice is important

It's important to use Japanese rice because of its short grain. It has just the right amount of starch to make it sticky. Trying to use long grained rice for sushi will only produce a frustrated cook.

Preparing the Rice

Measure out your rice and place it in a pan deep enough to cover with cold water. Remember, each cup of uncooked rice will double in amount. Wash thoroughly, running your hands through the rice. This removes the coating used to keep it from sticking during storage. At first, the water will have a milky look to it. Continue to rinse several times until the final rinse almost clear. Let it soak for about 15 minutes. Drain off water and let the rice set for several more minutes.

Stove Top Cooking

If you are cooking the rice on the stove top, follow the directions on the package. Bring the rice to a boil, then turn down the heat until the water evaporates. Keep the lid on at all times. Check the rice with a spoon to see if it's done properly. Be careful not to over- or under-cook the rice. Remove the pan from the heat and let it set for a few minutes.

Rice Cooker

A rice cooker makes the whole process much easier. Follow your cooker directions as the water to rice ratio may be different.

Seasoning the Rice

Place the cooked rice in a large stainless steel bowl while it is still hot. Add the seasoning a little at a time, cutting in, and folding carefully to avoid damaging the rice. Taste it along the way until you reach the desired flavor. As you continue to fold in the seasoning mixture, fan the rice to cool. You may choose to use a baking sheet to spread out the rice to cool, but do not use anything aluminum as it will react to the vinegar. When the rice has cooled to room temperature, use a damp cloth or moist paper towel and place it over the rice. Keep the rice moist until it's ready to use.

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