

Pad Thai Noodles

- 10 oz dried flat Thai rice noodles - these noodles look similar to Italian linguini noodles, except made of rice
- 3 sliced shallots
- 1-2 fresh minced green or red chilies, depending on desired spiciness (for milder noodles, omit chili, or remove seeds)
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup snow peas (optional - not strictly Thai, but adding some green vegetables makes this dish a complete meal)
- 1 cup bean sprouts
- ¼ cup ground or chopped peanuts (unsalted)
- 3 spring onions, finely sliced
- 1 cup fresh coriander, roughly chopped
- 3 Tbsp peanut, coconut, or other vegetable oil for frying
- Sauce:
 - 2 Tbsp fish sauce
 - 1 Tbsp lime juice
 - 2 Tbsp. brown sugar
 - 1/2 Tbsp. tamarind paste mixed with 3 Tbsp. water
- Optional: 1-3 tsp. chili sauce, depending on how spicy you want your Pad Thai (or omit for mild noodles)
- Optional: 2 Tbsp tomato ketchup (this is a North American addition to Pad Thai that has become popular at Thai restaurants)

Preparation:

1. Soak rice noodles in a pot of cool water for 1 hour. Drain when ready to use. The noodles should still be firm and very chewy (they will finish cooking later, when they're fried). Tip: Rice noodles are best when soaked to soften them, not boiled. However, if you're in a hurry: Bring a pot of water to the boil, then remove from heat and dunk in the noodles. Allow them to soak until nearly soft, but still firm and too crunchy to eat (10-15 minutes). Rinse with cold water and drain well.

2. Mix all sauce ingredients together in a cup until sugar dissolves. Set aside. Place remaining oil in wok. Over medium-high heat, stir-fry shallots and chilies until fragrant (about 1 minute).

Add snow peas, if desired, and stir-fry another minute until bright green. (If not adding snow peas, continue to the next step.)

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Clear a space in the center of the wok. Crack eggs into it and stir-fry (like scrambled eggs) until they're cooked.

The egg will have made the wok a little dry. Add a little more oil and spread it around. Now add the noodles. As you stir-fry them, drizzle the sauce over a little at a time (so that the sauce

doesn't all land in one place). Lift and turn the noodles very gently (or they will break up) to combine all the ingredients as you stir-fry (1-2 minutes). Note: the wok should be fairly dry at this point. If you find your noodles are sticking to the bottom of the pan, add a little more oil (not water or broth - this will make your Pad Thai soggy).

Add bean sprouts, mixing well and stir-frying to combine. The noodles are cooked when they are soft, but still chewy in texture. If your noodles are still a little on the "hard" side, stir-fry a little longer over medium heat. Finally, taste test for saltiness. If not salty enough, add 1-2 Tbsp. more fish sauce. If too sour, add a little more sugar (you may need to use white sugar at this point, as brown may not dissolve). If too salty, add more lime juice. Tip: Pad Thai noodles should be a balance between sweet and sour, but leaning slightly more on the sweet side. Remove from heat.

To serve, place noodles on a platter. Sprinkle with spring onions, ground nuts, and coriander and/or basil. You can also add wedges of fresh-cut lime, if desired. For those who like it extra hot, serve with a bottle of Thai red chili sauce on the side. Enjoy!