

Making Sushi...



This section describes how to prepare two types of sushi; [Nigiri](#) and [Maki](#).
Please select which one you want to discover.



Click on the ingredient to learn more...

Crabsticks

Used in the [California Rolls](#), these are perhaps the most straightforward ingredient. Available in most stores, they are low fat and very tasty. "Crabstick" is probably the wrong name for this product, because in reality they probably contain only a very small percentage of crab meat. They are mostly made from pressed white fish of many varieties. This is perhaps the reason that most supermarkets, at least in the UK, display them as "Seafood Sticks". In the UK they cost around 11pence each.



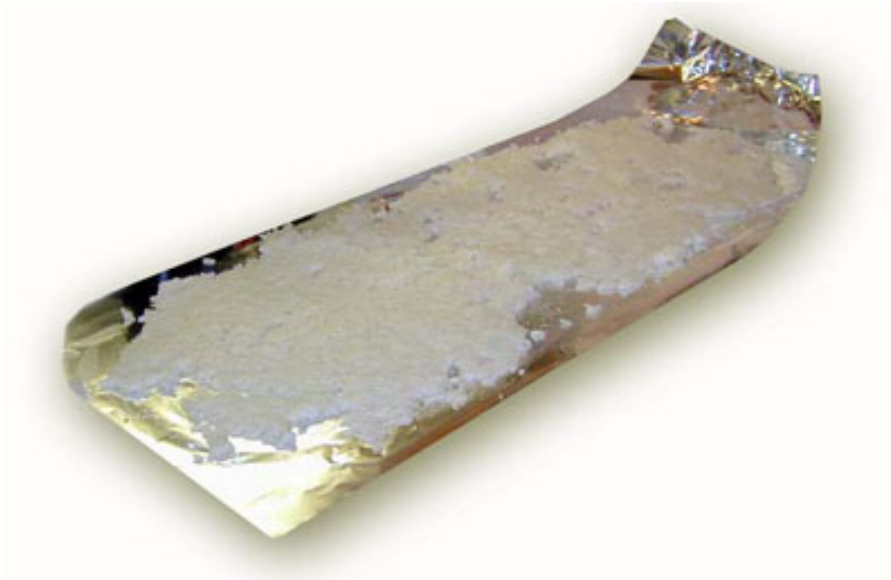
Preparation For California Rolls

Simple, remove the cellophane sleeves, simply slice them into two, lengthways, cutting down the middle of the red-stained face, so each half has some red colouring. About two and a half of these will be laid lengthways inside the California Roll, the remaining half is a nibble for the chef!



Making Maki Sushi...

First of all, you should [prepare the rice](#) as described in the section on ingredients, then mix it with the [sushi-su](#). I'm always in a hurry, so I stretch out about 0.5 metre of kitchen foil, shiny side up, and spread the rice in a thin layer all over it to help it to cool quickly and also to give me a neat layer for spreading onto the [Nori Seaweed](#).



Then, when the rice is cold, take your [sushi rolling mat](#), and place a sheet of the nori seaweed on the part of the mat closest to you. Two points... 1) If you are making "inside-out" california rolls, remove about 1/3 of the seaweed sheet with a sharp knife and discard. and 2) if your seaweed has a rough and a smooth side, lay it on the mat rough side up, it makes the rice stick and spread easier.



Now, let's assume you are making a California Roll....

With a wooden spatula or rice paddle, spread rice evenly over the front 3/4 of the

seaweed, leaving the last 1/4 bare and also trying not to spread too thickly or mash the rice unduly. It helps to wet your wooden spatula regularly. Try to cover right up to the front edge as much as possible.



Now the tricky California roll t!, with thumbs and fingers take hold of the back edge of the seaweed which has no rice spread on it, and lift it off the mat and flip over the seaweed sheet, so that the rice goes face down onto the mat. (this is easy with the first California roll, but subsequent ones stick more as the mat gets stickier!!)



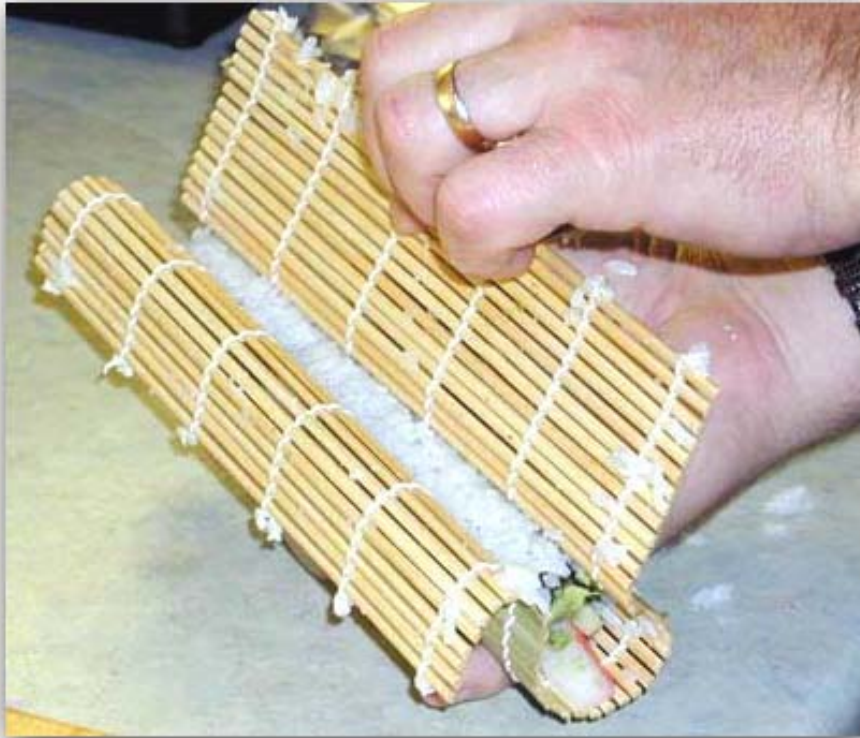
Once you've flipped the rice over, lay your ingredients in a line about 1/4 the way in to the seaweed, for California rolls use [Avocado](#), [Crabstick](#), [Cucumber](#). Optionally you can additionally use strips of [fresh salmon](#), (the trimmings of any salmon you used to make nigiri sushis are useful for this) and sometimes I add finely chopped spring onion too.



Then roll the seaweed from the front, starting it by hand, tucking it over with your fingertips so that all the ingredients stay together....



Then finally finish off by picking up the mat as shown, and roll tightly into a neat, compact roll.



When you've rolled it, leave it to stand for about 5 minutes. If desired you may then roll the roll over a layer of [toasted sesame seeds](#) but not everyone enjoy that, (those with a nut allergy may not thank you!!)



Then slice into 6-8 pieces with a sharp wetted serrated knife. Arrange the roll pices on a plate (good presentation is essential).

Serve at room temperature. NEVER SERVE SUSHI FROM THE REFRIGERATOR! it destroys the texture and flavour.

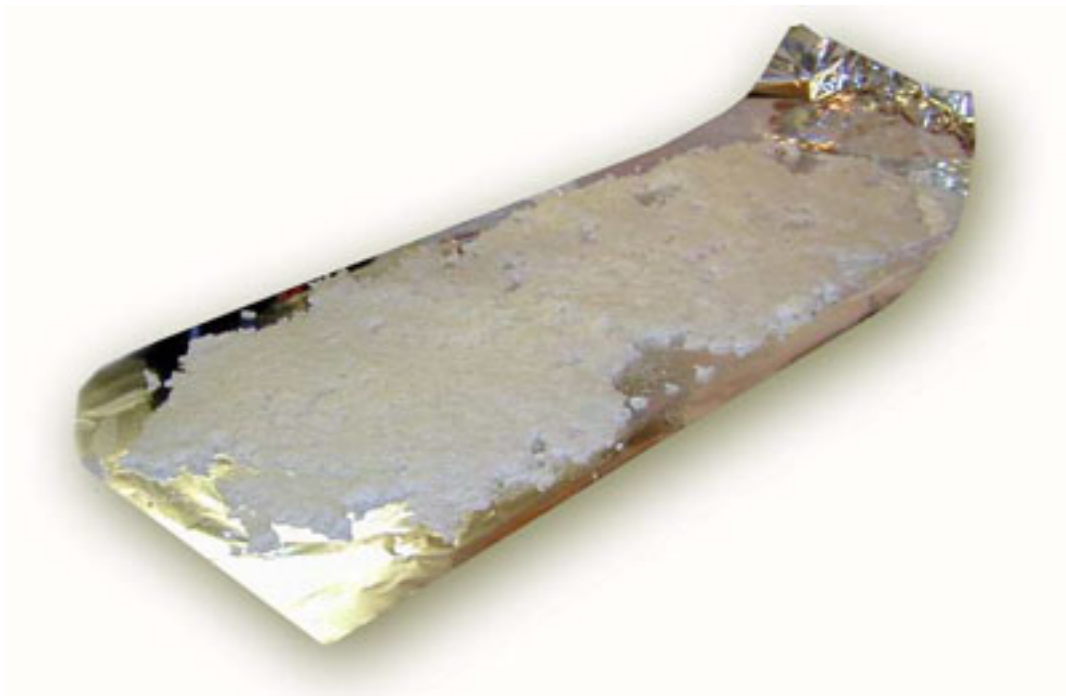
Japanese Sticky Rice

The basic rice for sushi is a short grain rice. With rice the shorter the grain, the starchier it is, and Japanese short grain rice is about the shortest. Alternatively, you can use other short grain rice. I have never tried Arborio (Italian risotto) rice but my guess is that it would probably work okay.

Recommendation: I use the "Blue Dragon" Sushi Rice, available in 500g packs in the UK from [Waitrose](#). Alternatively, you can get "Kokuho Rose" rice in large sacks from good oriental food stores. (American but good!)



So, first, put the rice in a sieve, and keep rinsing it under cold water until it runs clear. This gets all the talc and dust off the rice. Then, stand it in cold water for at least 30 minutes. I find the best way to cook the rice is in the microwave. I put a 300g serving in for 5 mins on high (900W) then 7 mins on medium (450W) then 7 minutes on low (300W). Stir the rice every 2 or 3 minutes. So what about water, you ask ??



My rule of thumb is 1 part rice to 1.5 part water. So for example if you use a cup of rice, use a cup and a half of water. Once you've done this, mix the rice with some [sushi-su](#) to the point that it tastes to your liking, then spread it on a sheet of tin foil to cool.



Sushi-Su

Sushi-su is the seasoning you add to your sushi rice. It's basically a mix of rice vinegar, sugar and salt. I used to make my own sushi-su, by mixing 4 tbsp rice vinegar with 4 tbsp caster sugar, and one tsp of salt. They are best mixed in a warm saucepan, then left to cool. Then mix this with the cooled, cooked rice. This quantity will do about 500g (dry) of sushi rice.

My life changed however when I discovered the Mitsukan 'Seasoned rice vinegar' perfect.. It has a really pleasant sweet, vinegary flavour, and you simply add it straight from the bottle to the cooled, cooked rice. Just keep adding a little and tasting until your sticky rice is perfect!



Seaweed

Un-toasted seaweed, "Nori" is black and needs to be toasted before use. "Sanchi" branded nori comes un-toasted. To toast it you place it under a very hot grill for a few seconds.. and you need to watch it carefully.. it toasts very quickly. It will turn dark green when ready. Alternatively you can take the easy way out like me and buy it already roasted. The brand I buy is "Yutaka"

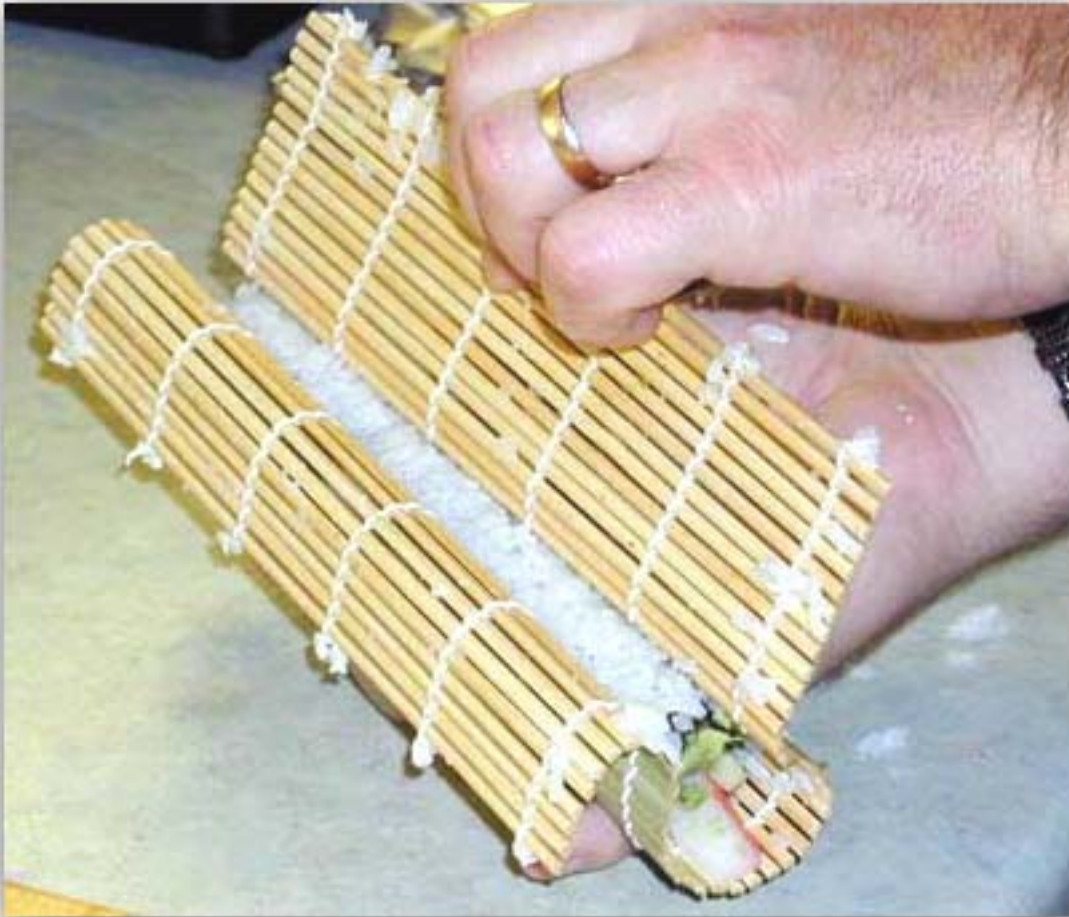


Nori Seaweed is very good for you. It contains iodine and minerals. Nori Seaweed is used for the [maki rolls](#) and for the larger hand-rolls (Teka Maki) which are very tasty.



Maki Rolling Mat

An essential tool for rolling Maki Sushi Rolls. The Mat is basically a collection of round wooden sticks woven into a flat rollable shape with string.



You need to go to a specialist Japanese store to get one of these, in the UK there are two sources I know. The Anglo-Japanese store in Brighton, and [Utsuwa-No-Yakata](#) in oriental village in Hendon, NW London.



Avocado

The Avocado Pear is used in [California Rolls](#), (which are best rolled with the rice on the outside of the Seaweed). **Don't be afraid of Avocado**. Many people talk about the Avocado as being full of fat and really bad for you. In fact, the Avocado is GREAT food. [The fats in Avocado are good fats](#).. mono-unsaturated fats (like those in Olive Oil) which raise the good HDL Cholesterol levels in the bloodstream, which in turn help neutralize the harmful LDL Cholesterol in your blood.



Avocado has a wonderfully buttery texture and nutty, flavour. At their best Avocados can taste vaguely 'oniony'.



In my opinion, the 'Haas' avocado has the best flavour, it's richer and nuttier. They can be identified by their darker appearance (more purple than green), plus their skin is much coarser and bumpy.



Choosing the right Avocado for Sushi is VERY important. There is nothing worse than eating California rolls with under ripe, firm avocado. The ideal texture is buttery. Don't be afraid to gently squeeze an Avocado in the palm of your hand before you buy it, it should just 'give' a little.



The best Avocados I've found (in the UK) are from Waitrose Supermarket, it sells two-packs of "Ripe and Ready to Eat" Avocados.. although on occasions I've found them over ripe, indicated by blackening inside the flesh!!

Another important point: Its best to not to store the avocado in the refrigerator for at least two hours before serving, it will be far too cold, and firm in the mouth, and the taste is spoiled.

Cucumber

Used in the [California Rolls](#), and many other Maki Rolls. Preparation is simple, slice them lengthways into strips of about 6mm x 6mm. Some prefer to discard the middle part, but I personally find it tastes no different from the fleshy part. If you are feeling brave with a knife, and creative, you can use the skin of the cucumber to make fancy table decorations too.



An important point: Its best not to store the cucumber in the refrigerator for at least two hours before serving, it will be far too cold (and firm) in the mouth, and the taste is spoiled.



Making Nigiri Sushi...



First of all, you should [prepare the rice](#) as described in the section on [ingredients](#), then mix it with the [sushi-su](#). I'm always in a hurry, so I stretch out about 0.5m of kitchen foil, shiny side up, and spread the rice in a thin layer all over it to help it to cool quickly, although if you have more time, it probably best when making Nigiri sushi to just let the rice cool in a bowl.

Then slice your fish ([salmon](#), [eel \(unagi\)](#), [tuna](#), yellowtail, red snapper etc.) into slices of about 17mm x 45mm x 2mm thick. Any trimmings can be used to put into [Maki rolls](#) or frozen for later use in a fish pasta dish for example.



Once you have all your fish and rice ready, you can start making the Nigiris. First have a

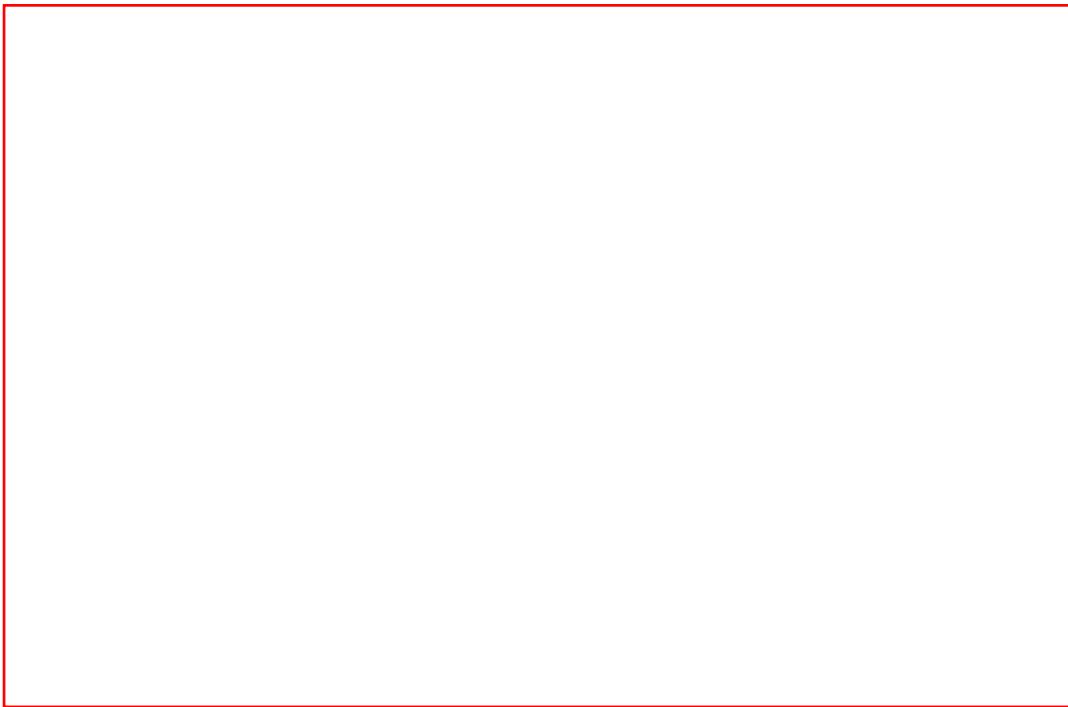
bowl of water with a liberal amount of rice vinegar in it to regularly wet your hands. Dip your (left or right) hand into the water and leave it wet.



For each Nigiri, take a small palm full of rice and squeeze it firmly until it sticks firmly together.



Put it down on a flat clean surface. Repeat as necessary for each Nigiri. Then using two thumbs and two forefingers, neatly shape the rice into 'cigar' shapes.



Optionally, add a small piece of [wasabi](#) to each nigiri....



Then lay the fish over the top of the rice, gently shaping it over the top of the rice.

Serve at room temperature. NEVER SERVE SUSHI FROM THE REFRIGERATOR!, it destroys the texture and flavour.

Et voila.. Nigiri Sushi!!!... Enjoy!!



Tuna

The tuna needs to be fresh not previously frozen, make sure the tuna steak you buy is a nice dark red and has a translucent appearance and the steak is not falling apart.



Preparation

Make sure the steak is about 1 inch thick and 2 inches in width to make nigiris. You need a very sharp knife, and carefully slice the tuna width ways in thin slices for the [nigiris](#).

Tuna is very good just on its own, the Japanese call this sashimi. You need to slice this slightly thicker than if you were making nigiris. You then just dip the tuna into the [soy sauce](#) and [wasabi](#) and eat, delicious!! You can also make Tuna maki rolls we personally prefer tuna nigiris and sashimi.



Soy Sauce

Soy sauce is an essential accompaniment to Sushi. Typically it is served on the table either straight from the bottle, or from a little 'tea-pot' like dispenser. You would place about a tablespoon of soy into a small dipping bowl, then mix in a little wasabi to taste, then dip your sushi pieces into the sauce. Some sushi chefs may find it offensive if you dip certain types of sushi into the soy. Generally avoid dipping 'unagi' (eel) and the cooked vinaigrette tuna nigiris.



I have tried many soya sauces, and always come back to one as my favourite.. Kikkoman. It has a pleasant flavour (no too strong or salty) and comes in a convenient bottle. The Yamasa is good too, but may be to intensely flavoured for some.



Wasabi

Wasabi is served as a condiment with Sushi, along with [Pickled Ginger](#). A small amount of wasabi is placed on the side of the plate shaped in a cone. Wasabi is **HOT!!** Its basically a type of hot horseradish, and adds a nice bite to Sushi, and its flavour is a really good accompaniment to fish.

Wasabi can be bought ready-made in a tube, but I personally prefer the type that comes in powdered form, which you mix it into a paste. Take a teaspoon of the powder and mix it very sparingly with little drops of luke warm water. This will be enough for two people, with a 'cone' each.



The normal procedure is to take a pinch of the wasabi, and mix it with your dipping soy sauce while you are eating to give a hot and spicy taste to your soy sauce dip.



Wasabi is like hot horseradish so you need to add only a little to the soya sauce at first as it is quite hot!!



Ginger

Pickled Sliced Ginger "Gari" is generally served with Sushi to cleanse the palate between different types of sushi. Ginger together with [wasabi](#) are the two "condiments" which are most commonly served with Sushi.



Pre-packaged ginger generally contains salt, saccharin/sugar, and MSG, in addition to the ginger. My advice is to buy the type which is in a sealed sachet, and sold from the refrigerator. You can get the type which comes in a jar, don't buy it, its awful!

If you are really stuck, and can only get the jar type, drain it, rinse it, and soak it in some [Sushi-Su](#) for an hour before serving.



Et voila.. California rolls!!... Enjoy!!



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with help and support from Sue, my wife.

This site is a non-commercial site, just created and maintained for fun.
Its been alive now for about two years, and I have received feedback from
all over the world on the content (some good, some bad!).

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Our other site [\(Mitchells Online\)](#) is the home page of our business, which is all
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database designer and generally helpful person!

Enjoy Life!

Ian