

BEEF FOR STIR-FRYING CONSUMER TIPS



SMART SHOPPING WHICH CUTS?

Stir-frying, quickly cooking thin uniform pieces of meat in a small amount of fat in an open pan is a variation on sautéing. For best results, use tender beef cuts.

Packages of pre-cut beef strips, **beef for stir-fry**, are often available in the meat case.

Most tender beef cuts, such as **sirloin, tri-tip, ribeye, top loin (strip), tenderloin, shoulder center (Ranch Steak), shoulder top blade (Flat Iron)** and **shoulder petite tender**, can be cut into strips for use in stir-fry recipes.

Even some less tender beef cuts — **flank, top round, round tip, round sirloin tip center** and **round sirloin tip side** steaks — when cut into thin strips, can be stir-fried.

HOW MUCH TO BUY?

- Lean boneless cuts will yield 3-1/2 to 4 three-ounce servings of cooked, trimmed beef per pound.
- Ribeye, with slightly more trim, will yield 3 three-ounce servings per pound.



COOKING TIPS GETTING READY:

- Prepare and assemble all ingredients for the dish before starting to cook.
- Be sure the beef strips are of uniform thickness and width for even cooking.
- To facilitate cutting beef strips from steaks, partially freeze the beef first — about 30 minutes will do.

MARINATING:

- Thin beef strips absorb flavors and/or tenderize more quickly than steaks. Keep marinating times short — 15 to 30 minutes to add flavor; up to 2 hours to tenderize.
- Strips from beef flank, top round and round tip steaks benefit from a tenderizing marinade — one that contains a food acid (such as lemon juice) or a tenderizing enzyme (such as fresh ginger).
- A small amount of cornstarch is traditional in Asian stir-fry marinades. It coats the beef, binding flavors and sealing in juices during cooking.
- Drain beef strips well before stir-frying.

AT THE STOVE:

- Use a wok or a heavy nonstick skillet. Preheat it until hot — usually about 5 minutes to start — before adding food. Reheat pan between batches.
- Stir-fry over medium-high heat.
- Stir-fry beef in batches, about 1/2 pound at a time. Overcrowding causes the beef to steam rather than brown.
- Stir-fry with a continuous stirring-scooping-tossing motion to ensure even cooking.
- Stir-fry beef just until the outside surface is no longer pink; the center should be slightly pink.
- Stir-frying proceeds very rapidly. Beef can go from just right to overcooked in a few seconds, so pay attention. Beef tri-tip, flank and round cuts are heat sensitive. Be especially careful not to overcook them.