

- Prep Time: 10 minutes
 - Cook Time: 20 minutes
 - Total Time: 30 minutes
 - Servings: 4
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The “Intensity” Meter

We’ve broken down the key elements of this recipe into an “intensity” scale so you know exactly what to expect.

- Flavor Intensity:  (Bold & Spicy)
 - Heat Level:  (Medium – Customizable)
 - Difficulty:  (Easy)
 - Sauce Richness:  (Rich & Glossy)
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Ingredients

For the Chicken & Marinade:

- 1.5 lbs (680g) boneless, skinless chicken thighs or breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp Shaoxing wine (or dry sherry)
- 1 tsp cornstarch

- 1/2 tsp sesame oil

For the Stir-Fry:

- 2 tbsp vegetable or canola oil, divided
- 8 oz (225g) cremini or white button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 large bell pepper (any color), sliced
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp freshly ground black pepper (yes, a whole tablespoon!)
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, grated

For the Sauce:

- 1/4 cup chicken broth or water
- 2 tbsp oyster sauce

- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp dark soy sauce (for color, optional but recommended)
- 1 tsp sugar (brown or white)
- 1 tsp cornstarch

For Garnish (Optional):

- Sliced green onions
 - Toasted sesame seeds
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Instructions

Step 1: Marinate the Chicken (Intensity: Low)

In a medium bowl, combine the chicken pieces with 1 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tbsp Shaoxing wine, 1 tsp cornstarch, and 1/2 tsp sesame oil. Mix well until every piece is coated. Let it marinate for at least 10 minutes while you prepare the other ingredients. This step is crucial for tender, flavorful chicken.

Step 2: Prepare the Sauce & Aromatics (Intensity: Low)

In a small bowl, whisk together all the sauce ingredients: chicken broth, oyster sauce, regular soy sauce, dark soy sauce, sugar, and cornstarch. Set aside. This pre-mixed sauce is your secret to a quick, stress-free stir-fry. Next, mince the garlic, grate the ginger, and slice your mushrooms, bell pepper, and onion.

Step 3: Sear the Chicken (Intensity: High)

Place a large wok or skillet over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of oil and swirl to coat. Once the oil is shimmering and nearly smoking, carefully add the marinated chicken in a single, even layer. Let it sear undisturbed for 2-3 minutes to develop a golden-brown crust. Then, stir-fry for another 2-3 minutes until the chicken is just cooked through. It should be opaque but not dry. Remove the chicken from the wok and set it aside on a plate.

Step 4: Sauté the Vegetables (Intensity: Medium-High)

Return the wok to high heat and add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Add the sliced mushrooms and let them sear for 2 minutes without stirring. This helps them release their moisture and brown beautifully. After 2 minutes, stir and continue to cook for another 2-3 minutes until they are softened and lightly browned.

Add the sliced onion and bell pepper to the wok. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes until they are slightly softened but still retain a crisp bite. Add the minced garlic, grated ginger, and the full tablespoon of freshly ground black pepper. Stir-fry for just 30-45 seconds until the aroma is intensely fragrant. Be careful not to burn the garlic.

Step 5: Bring It All Together (Intensity: High)

Return the seared chicken to the wok with the vegetables. Give your prepared sauce a quick stir (the cornstarch may have settled) and pour it over everything in the wok. Toss and stir-fry continuously for 1-2 minutes. The sauce will quickly bubble and thicken, creating a beautiful, glossy coating on the chicken and vegetables. Once everything is evenly coated

and the sauce has reached your desired consistency, turn off the heat.

Step 6: Garnish and Serve (Intensity: Low)

Transfer your Black Pepper Chicken and Mushrooms to a serving platter. Garnish with sliced green onions and a sprinkle of toasted sesame seeds for an extra layer of flavor and texture. Serve immediately with steamed jasmine rice, brown rice, or cauliflower rice.

Tips for Success

- **High Heat is Key:** Stir-frying is all about high heat and speed. Make sure your wok or pan is very hot before adding ingredients. This creates that delicious “wok hei” (breath of the wok) flavor.
- **Don’t Crowd the Pan:** Cook the chicken in a single layer. If your pan is small, cook the chicken in two batches. Crowding the pan will steam the chicken instead of searing it, resulting in a soggy texture.
- **Freshly Ground Pepper:** This is non-negotiable. Pre-ground black pepper loses its potent aroma and spice. Grinding it fresh makes all the difference in this recipe.
- **Prep Ahead:** Have all your ingredients chopped, measured, and ready to go before you turn on the stove. Stir-frying happens fast, and you won’t have time to chop vegetables once you start.

Nutrition Information

Nutrition information is an estimate and will vary based on the exact ingredients and quantities used. It does not include the optional serving of rice.

- Serving Size: 1/4 of the recipe
- Calories: 335
- Total Fat: 18g
- Saturated Fat: 3g
- Cholesterol: 140mg
- Sodium: 950mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 14g
- Dietary Fiber: 3g
- Sugars: 6g
- Protein: 32g