

Beyond Baked Beans

**Cheap healthy food for students,
singles and anyone else on a budget**



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|
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If the eating of an Italian noodle is like a great big hug from a rotund aunt, then its Asian cousin is a hearty slap on the back from an enthusiastic uncle. They both elicit a magnificent feeling of wellbeing and contentment within the eater, but while a creamy Italian noodle soothes and cossets, a perky rice noodle in a broth zinging with lime and chillies refreshes and nourishes.

In terms of readily available supermarket noodles, the two main categories are egg noodles and rice noodles. These can be bought fresh or dried – for my money I think you are often safer with dried, as, like bought fresh pasta, fresh noodles can sometimes be glutinous and cloying. (They're also pricier pre-cooked)

Egg noodles

I reckon these are fab with Chinese cookery – a stir fry would be perfect – lots of good vegetables, ginger and chilli for some va va voom, and some chicken or beef. Finished with a slug of soy sauce it is a really yummy quick and easy supper. The cooking of the noodles is simple, same concept as spaghetti but they cook quicker. If you find you have messed up your timing and the noodles are done before the stir-fry, run them under cold water quickly after draining them. They can then be reheated, stirred in a pan over a high heat with a little oil.

Rice noodles

Slippery and delightful in the mouth, rice noodles work best with South East Asian cookery. Floating seductively in a broth with some sliced chilli (seeds in, Thai style!), a few prawns and a handful of chopped coriander, they make a cracking weeknight supper. Cook them by pouring boiling water over them in a bowl, giving them a stir and leaving for a few minutes (check the pack instructions). Drain them then put them in a bowl and pour over your spicy broth. Heaven! You can also use them for dry noodle dish like [Pad Thai](#).

Soba noodles

Nutty, light brown noodles made from buckwheat flour, these are harder to track down but you should be able to find them in health food shops or an Asian supermarket. They're popular in [Japanese cookery](#) and often used cold. In Japan it is considered polite to slurp as you eat them, although this is probably not recommended on a first date.

James Ramsden is a fourth year student at Bristol. He has his own blog [The Larder Lout](#)

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