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General Notes

In general, for Chinese cooking, recipes break down ingredients into one main ingredient (主料), which should be primarily what you're tasting / eating in the dish, some accompanying side ingredients to enhance it (配料), optionally some more small side ingredients (小料), then flavor ingredients (调料) like spices and such to tune the taste. That's how the recipes I list will break down the ingredients.

Prep all the ingredients before putting things on the heat so that you don't overcook anything. If throwing ingredients in / mixing things is taking too long, turn off the heat until you're ready for the next step.

Whenever we heat an ingredient, the purpose is to bring out the flavors from within. Generally we can throw in the next ingredient when that one's fragrances come out.

Poach - put ingredient in water, bring water to a boil, ladle it out and wash itself with the boiled water, then take the ingredient out. This gives it a quick cooking to keep its shape for cutting, removes things we don't want like the cooked blood and preservatives, and makes it easier to cook later when we stir fry or another process.

If we don't want the cold water to osmosis out too much of the juices, we can bring water to boil first, then dip ingredients in for a bit. This could apply too much heat though, so depends on what we're going for.

GGG - with small heat, little oil, stir fry ginger, garlic, green onion until the smell comes out. We need some variation of this in pretty much every dish lol

Corn starch - When you put corn starch on an ingredient, it helps it keep its form but makes it a bit harder to absorb flavors. Also helps to tenderize meat.

When you mix corn starch and water and add it to a sauce, it thickens it, making it easier to stick onto the food. But then it'll be hard to adjust the taste after, so corn starch + water at the end always, and always taste the flavor before adding it to make sure it's good.

Pressure cook - faster way to cook things you want broken down than braising, but flavors don't seep in as much. Start timing when it boils and you hear the steam whistling. When timing ends take it off the heat, but don't open til you can press on the lid knob without anymore whistling.

上浆 - tenderization. First add a bit of salt and pepper and mix it hard until there's no more water coming out and there's a sticky sort of surface on it. Otherwise it'll stick to the pot and juices will leave. After add some egg - just the white if it's meat that we don't want to color, yolk if it is. Mix hard again until no more egg is noticeable. Then add some corn starch and mix again until no more noticeable. This acts like a shield against absorbing too much oil and keeps juices inside. Don't add too much corn starch or else there'll be too thick of a coat.

There are several types of soy sauces in Chinese cooking. Normal soy sauce is mostly for salty taste. 老抽 is for adding a darker color. Don't add too much, it seriously colors. 生抽 is somewhere in between.

川菜 (Sichuan food)

General process

Make your own [辣椒油](#) and [花椒油](#) to get authentic spicyness / numbness!

Most things follow this pattern. Prep the main meat / side ingredients. Then small heat, small oil, stir fry 麻椒 -> spices -> GGG -> whichever pepper is appropriate for the dish -> main / side ingredients -> salt, sugar, MSG, ground pepper to taste -> water mixed with corn starch to thicken the sauce -> 辣椒油 and 麻椒油 for oily texture. ([example videos following roughly this process](#))

Without good 麻椒 it's hard to get the numbing taste. No matter how much you put in.

Soak dry peppers if you want the kick without the throaty dry spice. What kind of pepper depends on what kind of spice you're going for. Fish you want fresh peppers for fresh taste. Intestines you want to go for a heavier spice.

Fun fact: Chongqing is hilly and poorer, so there's more of the "worse" ingredients, like intestines and pig blood, so there's more of the intense spice and heavy tastes to make up for it.

辣椒面 (Pepper Paste)



If you want this to be hotter, use hotter kinds of dried peppers. Can mix hot ones with medium ones at different ratios for different spice levels. Cook the dried peppers alternating between 0 and 1 heat to prevent any burning. Cook until the fragrance comes out. Then blend until even the seeds are broken into pieces. Leave out to dry.

辣椒油 (Pepper Oil)

辣椒面 to oil ratio 1:3. Sesame to 辣椒面 ratio 1:3.

Cook oil til 220 degrees. Cook sesame at that temp and remove when brown.

Let oil cool a bit, til about 200, then pour in half the 辣椒面. Stir continuously to make it not burn. This brings out the nice fragrance.

Let oil cool a bit to about 160, then pour in the rest along with the sesame. This allows the flavor to concentrate.



花椒面 (Numbing Paste)



20g 麻椒. It's supposed to be more numbing, but need good quality ones. 10g 花椒. Same technique as with 辣椒面, but cook until they're easily crushable with your hands. Then blend to crush.

花椒油 (Numbing Oil)

1:4 花椒面 to oil. Cook on high heat to real quick bring out the fragrance on the outside, then lower heat to bring out the flavor inside.

糍粑辣酱 (Thicker Pepper Oil)

Used for things like 水煮鱼, where you want a deeper pepper taste.

Dried peppers that you boil in water til they're banana peel texture, then blended. 3x oil as dried peppers. 10g sugar cubes (for 500g oil, 150g peppers).



Cook on small heat until all the bubbling stops. That means all the water has left the peppers.



Left is 糍粑辣酱, right is 辣椒油.

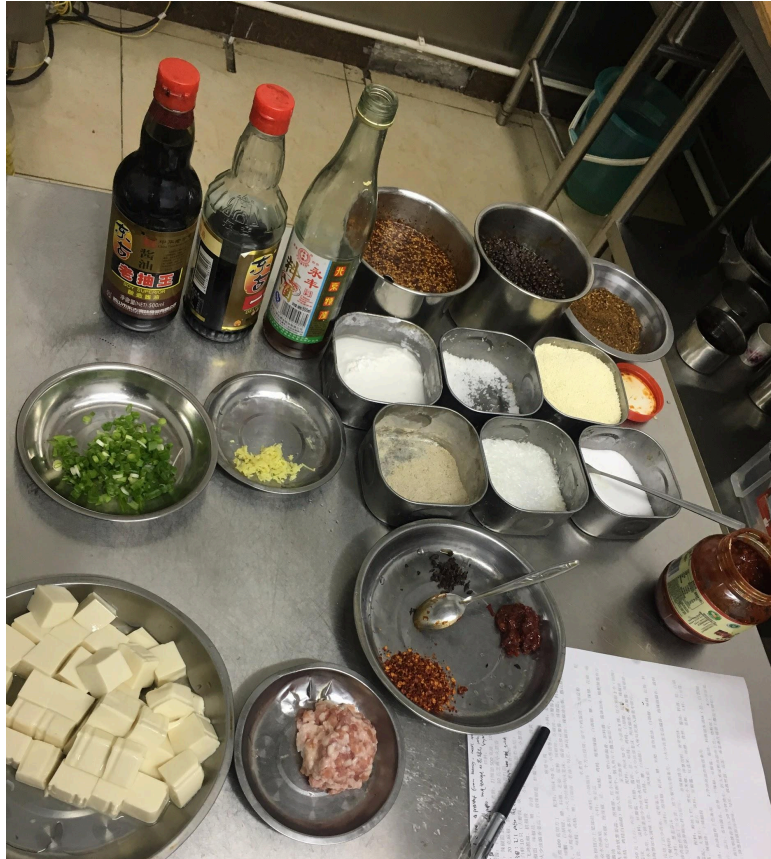
麻婆豆腐 (Mapo Tofu)

Main: 400g soft tofu cubed. If you cut holes in two opposite corners of the bottom of the tofu box, the tofu slides out easier!

Side: 50g ground pork. Green onions

Small: minced ginger

Flavor: salt (very light), MSG, ground pepper, sugar (very light), cooking wine, 老抽, corn starch, 辣椒油, 花椒油, 豆瓣酱, soy sauce, 永川豆豉 (6 pieces), 辣椒面



Medium heat cook tofu in water. Shake the pot and push the water with the ladle around the outside of the tofu, don't touch the tofu or it'll break. Take tofu off after cooking.

Small heat small oil cook ground pork and ginger -> 豆瓣酱, 辣椒面, cooking wine, soy sauce, water -> tofu -> everything else to taste -> let it sit for a couple min for tofu to soak in flavor -> corn starch to soak up the watery sauce into one that'll stick to the tofu

Finish off cooking with 辣椒油, 花椒油, then take off heat and add green onion on top.



啤酒香羊排 (Beer Can Lamb Ribs)

Main: Lamb ribs

Side: Taro chunks

Small: GGG chunks, parsley

Flavor: 豆瓣酱, dried peppers boiled a bit / halved to let seeds come out, salt, MSG, ground pepper, beer, sugar

Fragrance: 白芷, bay leaf, star anis, shan lai



Small heat, lots of oil stir fry star anis, GGG -> dried peppers -> 豆瓣酱. Add lamb, beer, water, soy sauce, cooking wine, other fragrance and flavor things, parsley and stew for 45 minutes. Put taro in when there's 10 minutes left. Remove things not taro, lamb, peppers and serve.



红烧肉 (Braised Pork)

大料, 豆蔻, orange peels, parsley, shan lai = fragrance ingredients

干黄酱 + 5x cooking wine + a bit of soy sauce = 酱汁

Poach 五花肉 (pork meat that has some fatty as well as lean parts)

Small heat, small oil. Stir fry fragrance ingredients -> GGG chunks -> meat -> 酱汁 -> cubed sugar (makes more tender, removes 腻味) -> 红曲粉 (adds color) -> water -> salt -> parsley

Pressure cook for 12 minutes. Throw the soupy meat on high heat, removing the other ingredients. Add other vegetables if you so choose. Cook until soup evaporates / is soaked into the meat. Can remove part of soup if there's too much.



口水鸡 (Chicken Cold Dish)

Submerge chicken in water. Cook on low heat with peppers, 麻椒, green onions, ginger, lots of salt. Squeeze the green onions and ginger to get the juices into it.

Use tender chicken since we're going to be eating this cold. Use older chicken for stews - they have more flavor and the chicken cooks better.



Sauce: 1:1 salt and MSG. 3x sugar. A bit of 生油, 1:2 sesame paste and sesame oil to liquify it all. Stir until all solids are dissolved. Mix in some 辣椒面 and 麻椒面. Then a thicker layer of 辣椒油, 麻椒油, bit of vinegar, and very finely minced ginger and garlic.



铁锅肥肠 (Steel Pot Intestines)

Main: Pork intestines cut into chunks

Side: Onions, spicy red and green peppers

Small: Garlic and ginger chunks

Flavor: 辣味子酱, 十三香, cooking wine, 老抽, peanut butter, sesame oil, oyster sauce, MSG, chicken bouillon, ground pepper, salt, sugar



Intestines prep:

Clean it - lather in salt and rub against itself hard to use friction to get the salt to clean off the bad stuff. Rinse. Flip inside out (flip a bit of the end, then pour water into it to make the rest flip with it), remove the black parts and excess fat. Salt rub. Flip back out. Salt rub again.

Poach the intestines.

Pressure cook for 15 minutes with salt, ginger and leek chunks, pepper, 白芷, cooking wine, 老抽 (lots of it, or the color won't stick). Water should not be transparent anymore when you pour it.

Medium heat, lots of oil. Stir fry ginger, garlic -> red and green peppers -> 辣味子酱 -> cooking wine. Turn off the heat. Add rest of the flavor ingredients and stir thoroughly. At the bottom of a 铁锅 put some onions and sesame oil. Layer on rest of the stuff. Serve with a stove turned on below the pot.



鱼香肉丝 (Yuxiang Pork)

Main: Pork chopped into super thin strips, 上浆

Side: Bamboo, wood ear both also super thin strips

Small: GGG finely diced. Lots of it, at least 2x what you'd normally put. 泡辣椒 (the red stuff pictured). This plus GGG is what gives it the 鱼香.

Flavor: salt (1g), sugar (40g), vinegar (35g), ground pepper (.5g), soy sauce (5g), cooking wine (5g), corn starch mixed with water (15g)



High heat and oil, cook the meat briefly, and make sure they don't stick together ([video](#)). Put on top of the wood ear and bamboo on the side.

Mix all flavor ingredients together in a bowl.

Small oil and heat, stir fry GGG -> 泡辣椒 -> mixed flavor ingredients. Turn heat up high and add in meat, bamboo, wood ear.



宫保鸡丁 (Kung Pao Chicken)

Main: Chicken cubed 上浆

Side: Peanuts, leek cubed

Small: garlic, ginger

Flavors: dried peppers, 辣椒面, 花椒, tomato paste, salt, sugar, vinegar, MSG, cooking wine, soy sauce, ground pepper, corn starch mixed with water



Roast peanuts:

1:1 oil to peanut ratio. Put in pot then turn heat to low. Continuously stir. When smell peanut fragrance / see some browning / don't hear the popping sound anymore, take off the heat and let it cool. If you wait until the peanuts are crunchy, the residual heat will end up cooking them too much.

High heat and oil, cook chicken until it's brown. Add in leek at end, then put on the side.

Mix flavors in a bowl - salt (2g), ground pepper (.5g), cooking wine (3g), soy sauce (3g), vinegar (35-45g), sugar (45-55g)

Low heat, small oil cook 花椒 -> ginger garlic -> dried peppers -> tomato paste -> flavor mixture -> corn starch (8g corn starch, 2g water). Turn up heat and add in chicken and leek. Before taking off the heat add in roasted peanuts and 辣椒油 and 花椒油.



芽菜扣肉 (Upside-down Pork)

Main: 五花肉 with skin. Boil for an hour whole. Rub 老抽 on the skin while it's hot to give it a nice color. Put on high heat skin facing down to brown the skin a bit, then put back in boiling water to soften it again. Cut into slices

Side: 芽菜. Submerge in water for a bit, then rinse to get rid of the preservatives.

Small: GGG slices

Flavor: Salt, MSG, 老抽, soy sauce, oyster sauce

Mix small and flavor ingredients with the meat, cook in a bit of the boiling water used to cook the meat.

Line the meat up inside a small bowl, with the skin facing down.



Cover the meat with the 芽菜 and add a bit of green onion, ginger, boiled water.

Place a plate on top, then steam it for an hour. After steaming, place bowl upside down on serving plate, then remove the bowl.



回锅肉 (Twice Cooked Pork)

Main: 五花肉 with skin. Boil for an hour whole, then let it cool / freeze it to make it easier to cut, then cut into thinnest possible slices. Thinner the better

Side: Green pepper chunks, onion chunks, leek - lots of all three

Small: Thinly sliced ginger and garlic

Flavor: 红油豆瓣, 甜面酱, sugar, ground pepper, MSG, cooking wine, soy sauce



High heat, lots of oil, fry the 五花肉 until it's dry. Add the side ingredients. Put on the side. Small heat, small oil stir fry garlic, ginger -> 豆瓣酱 -> meat back in -> 甜面酱 -> rest of the flavor ingredients -> finish with some 辣椒油 before taking it off the heat.

?? (Dope Fish)

Main: Fish - cut off head and tail, we want those for decoration. Filet rest of the fish and 上浆.

Side: Bok choy, spicy green and red fresh peppers

Flavor: seafood soy sauce, soy sauce, cooking wine, MSG, chicken bouillon, ground pepper, sugar, 辣椒油, 花椒油



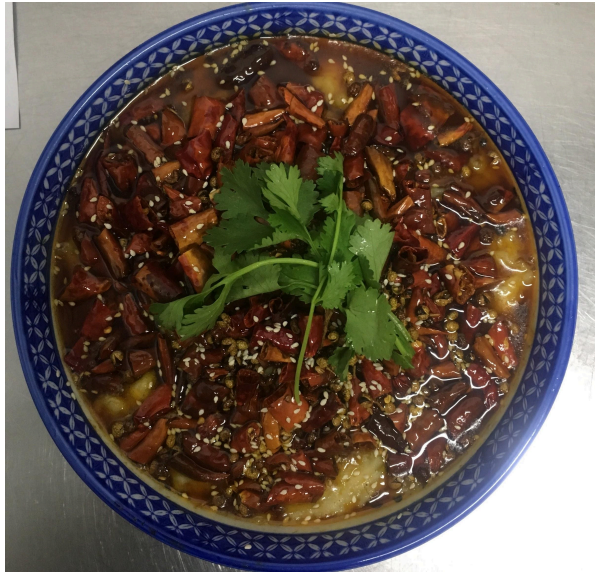
Bok choy boil in water real quick with some oil to keep the green gleam and crispness. Place in two rows along the plate, one half on top of another. Squeeze / brush with chopsticks to get the excess water off before putting on plate.

Poach fish parts, put on plate on top of bok choy. Mix flavor ingredients and pour it on the fish. High heat, medium oil, stir fry the spicy red, green peppers, 麻椒 briefly. Pour mixture on top of fish. Sprinkle on some green onion, sesame, and the 麻椒 for garnish.

Briefly boil the bean sprouts, drain and layer it at the bottom of the serving bowl

Small heat lots of oil stir fry GGG -> add in 野山椒, 红小米椒, 泡辣椒 -> cooking wine, soy sauce, enough water for soup, 糍粑辣酱 -> fish -> salt, MSG, chicken bouillon, sugar, ground pepper -> pour into the serving bowl

Small oil high heat cook 花椒, dried peppers, sesame until fragrance comes out and pour on top as garnish



风味茄子 (Crispy Eggplant)

Main: Eggplant peeled and cubed

Side: Green peas, spam (optional)

Small: GGG minced

Flavor: 泡辣椒, oyster sauce, sugar, vinegar, seafood soy sauce, ground pepper, MSG, corn starch, cooking wine



Drip a bit of water on the eggplant so it can absorb corn starch. Put very little corn starch on it, just enough to coat it super lightly. Don't want it to just taste of corn starch and not be able to absorb the other flavors, but enough to not soak in too much oil.

Deep fry to cook it without deforming it until golden

Small oil, small heat stir fry GGG -> 泡辣椒 -> tiny bit of water and cooking wine -> rest of the flavor ingredients -> corn starch + water to thicken, then put back in eggplant, spam, peas to coat in sauce



粤菜 (Cantonese food)

General Process

Most stir fry follow this methodology - cook main ingredients separately -> GGG -> oyster sauce, salt, sugar -> water or stock -> add back in main ingredients, as well as some red and green bell peppers

Most steaming follow this methodology - steam main ingredient -> add oil on top with GGG for fragrance -> add oyster sauce + salt + water below for flavor

清蒸鲩鱼 (Steamed Fish)

Main: Fish - remove fish bladders near head, then cut down middle at bottom to remove backbone. Leave everything else intact. ([video](#))



Side: Red and green peppers, green onion, ginger, all suuuper thinly sliced



Flavor: Oil, cooking wine, seafood soy sauce, green onion and ginger chunks

Put fish on a plate, sprinkle with cooking wine, green onions and ginger, oil. Steam for 10 minutes.

Put fish on serving plate, put a bunch of the side ingredients on top of the fish, leave some for later.

Pour hot oil on the fish / garnishes.

Mix some seafood soy sauce with water and pour from the side of the plate for it to go under the fish.

Garnish more on top with parsley and the rest of the side ingredients.



蒜蓉开边虾 (Steamed Garlic Shrimp)

Main: Shrimp split down the middle of the back from head til back with only the fin intact, with the intestinal track removed

Side: Finely minced garlic, green/red bell peppers, vermicelli

Flavor: Oil, salt, chicken bouillon, ground pepper, green onions, seafood soy sauce

Soak the vermicelli in cold water until softened. Lay on plate with the shrimp.

Submerge garlic in water for a while to remove bitterness. Using medium heat, small oil cook half the garlic until golden. Leave the other half raw. Mix both together with the peppers, salt, chicken bouillon, ground pepper



Cover the shrimp and vermicelli with the mixture, seal plate with plastic wrap, then steam for 5 minutes, until shrimp turns orange

Remove plastic wrap, sprinkle on green onions. Pour some hot oil on top of everything, then pour seafood soy sauce on the side of the dish for it to seep below everything



椒盐排骨 (Hella Tender Ribs)

Main: Ribs

Side: Green/red bell peppers, onions minced

Flavor: 味椒盐 (pepper salt mix), baking soda, cooking wine, salt, egg white, corn starch, minced garlic

Marinate ribs in salt, cooking wine, baking soda for 1-2 hours. After, give it a quick rinse to remove excess baking soda, which will give it a bitterness. Baking soda helps lock in moisture for more tenderness.

Add corn starch and egg white, stir vigorously.

Medium oil, small heat, deep fry the ribs until golden. Normally when we deep fry we use high heat to just crisp the outside, since inside is already cooked through some other method. Here we're just cooking with deep fry, so small heat is required for it to cook through. Throw it on after the oil heats up to lock the moisture in. If you throw it on before then, it just soaks in all the oil and sucks out the moisture. You'll know the ribs are done frying when the bone pokes out.

Small oil, small heat stir fry green/red peppers, onion, garlic -> add back in ribs, sprinkle on 味椒盐



干炒牛河 (Beef Chow Fun)

Main: Chow fun

Side: Thinly sliced beef, bean sprouts, chives, red bell pepper strips, onion strips

Flavor: Oil, oyster sauce, 老抽, garlic slices, baking soda, cooking wine, salt, egg yolk, corn starch

上浆 beef with baking soda, cooking wine, egg yolk, salt, corn starch.

Very little oil, medium heat, cook the beef, then remove.

Almost no oil (干炒) low heat add in chow fun -> onion, bean sprouts, garlic -> oyster sauce, 老抽 (decent amount, more than usual. Dark color is good in this and saltiness comes mostly from this, no salt added to dish), chives, pepper strips -> beef



丝瓜木耳炒鱿鱼卷 (Squid Rolls)

Main: Squid

Side: 丝瓜 (luffa), wood ear, red/green bell peppers

Flavor: Oil, salt, chicken bouillon, sugar, GGG slices, corn starch, cooking wine

Cut squid into rectangles, then cut diagonal criss crosses along it like a netted pattern, making sure to not sever all the way through. This will make it curl into the rolls.



The pieces that end up not being rectangular, cut 1/3 finger width strips into it, severing through, but leaving a bit on one end of the whole thing so all the strips are still connected. This will curl into a tentacle-like shape.

Boil very briefly. When it curls up it's cooked.



Peel and soak luffa in water with some salt, soak wood ear in regular water.

Boil luffa and wood ear with some added salt and oil.

Small heat and oil stir fry GGG -> squid, cooking wine, salt, chicken bouillon, sugar -> water + corn starch -> red peppers, wood ear, luffa



菠萝古老肉 (Sweet and Sour Pork)

Main: Pork cubed

Side: Pineapple cubed

Flavor: Oil, salt, sugar cubes, cooking wine, tomato paste, baking soda, white vinegar, corn starch, egg

上浆 pork with salt, cooking wine, baking soda, egg, corn starch. Then cover each piece completely in corn starch and squeeze into a ball.

Small heat lots of oil deep fry the pork until golden. Before taking out, briefly put in the pineapple as well.

Small oil and heat, put in a bit of sugar cubes and tomato paste -> add a bit of water, salt, sugar cubes 1:1 ratio with vinegar -> corn starch + water -> pineapple and pork



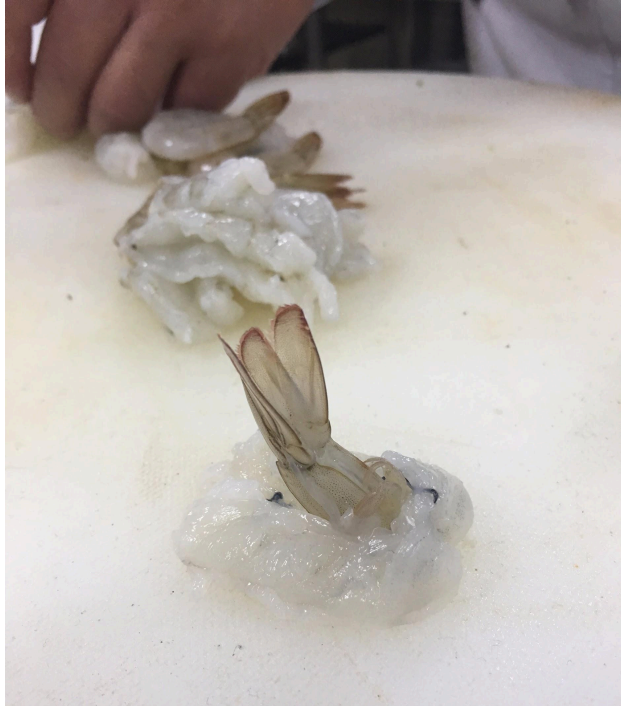
翡翠芝士虾 (Broccoli and Cheese Shrimp)

Main: Shrimp

Side: Broccoli

Flavor: Oil, salt, chicken bouillon, sugar, cooking wine, egg white, corn starch, minced garlic, minced red peppers, parmesan cheese, stock

Remove head of shrimp and peel leaving the fin. Cut along the back a slit through whole thing to remove the intestinal track. Cut deeper all the way through in the middle, then loop the tail through itself.



上浆, but for this one we have to be careful or the shrimp will break apart. Mix all the ingredients together in a separate bowl (egg white, salt, corn starch, cooking wine), then put the shrimp in and mix lightly.



Boil the broccoli briefly with some salt and oil. Place on plate.



Medium heat and oil, put the shrimp in before oil heats up. As soon as the shrimp curls up / turns orange take it out.

Small oil small heat add minced garlic -> stock, cooking wine, salt, chicken bouillon, sugar -> corn starch + water -> shrimp, parmesan cheese -> red peppers. Place on top of broccoli.



Pulled Noodles

Warning: Super technical and difficult to master. Watching the videos is advised, but may still be hard to get the techniques down regardless.

Link to doc:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1veQz9GmopX6wl836xIYIS5P0-d4ByN_-6toGM9fGJW0/edit#

Ping me if you want to learn, we could do a noodle pulling party :)