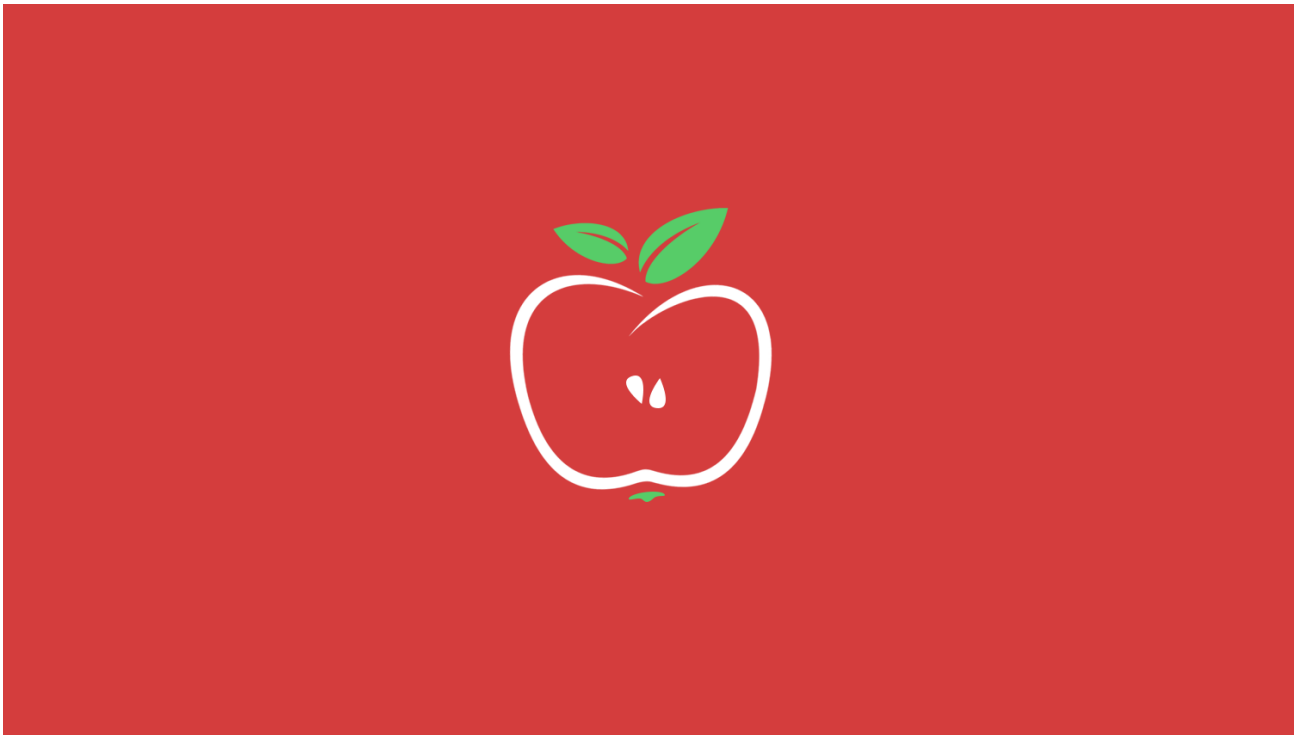
Essential Ingredients for Thai Cooking Checklist

Stock your pantry with a few basic ingredients to create an authentic Thai meal.



- [ ] **Jasmine rice** - This Thai staple, a long-grain rice with a nutty flavor, is a must-have (especially if you have a rice cooker to do the work for you). The rule of thumb is to cook one cup per person.
- [ ] **Sticky rice** - Also known as glutinous rice, this is the other go-to Thai accompaniment. It needs to be steamed as it's prepared; to achieve the perfect consistency and texture when cooking, use a sticky rice pot and steaming basket.
- [ ] **Fish sauce** -Present in countless Thai dishes, this sauce should always be within arm's reach. Look specifically for Thai fish sauce, and buy a small bottle that's high quality to ensure maximum flavor punch. Stick with the most popular brands, such as Golden Boy and Tra Chang, because that's the stock most likely to be rotated often.
- [ ] **Palm sugar** - Used in curries, salads, sweets, and a host of other dishes, this sugar is a must in a Thai kitchen. Avoid substituting it with brown sugar, because you won't achieve the same distinctive taste.
- [ ] **Tamarind paste** - This souring agent is used in drinks, curries, soups, and more. Buy blocks of it if you can—it's tasty stuff that you'll get much use out of when tackling Thai cooking. You can usually hunt it down at Asian or Indian markets or at an upscale supermarket like Whole Foods.
- [ ] **Shrimp paste** - You can pick up this popular Thai ingredient just about anywhere, and it will last for months in the refrigerator. Made from fermented ground shrimp mixed with salt, it adds an extra layer of flavor to many Thai dishes.
- [ ] **Thai chilies** - Look for chilies with the stems intact, and always avoid those with black spots. Dried Thai chilies are used to make curry paste, so they are handy to have around.
- [ ] **Coconut milk** - Put simply, this is what makes curry curry—and you can get it in a can to make your life even easier.
- [ ] **Fresh herbs** - Nearly all Thai recipes revolve around a selection of herbs, from lemongrass to basil leaf to cilantro root. You can get your herbs online, at Asian markets, or at local farmers' markets, depending on what your recipes call for.

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