

MEALTIME HELPER

MAKING MEALTIME EASY

Soy-Glazed Salmon Hand Rolls (Temaki) - Recipe

Prep time: 20 minutes (plus 10–15 minutes marinating, optional)

Cook time: 8–12 minutes

Total time: 30–40 minutes

Servings: 4 (makes 8–12 hand rolls depending on filling amount)

Ingredients

- 12 oz (340 g) salmon fillet, skin removed and cut into 1/2-inch strips
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce (use low-sodium if preferred)
- 1 tablespoon mirin (or 1 tsp honey + 1 tsp rice vinegar)
- 1 tablespoon sake or dry white wine (optional)
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar or maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon neutral oil (vegetable or canola) for cooking
- 4 sheets nori (dried seaweed), halved lengthwise to make 8 pieces (or quarters for smaller rolls)
- 2 cups cooked sushi rice (short-grain rice), slightly warm — see note for seasoning
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar (for the rice)
- 1 teaspoon sugar and a pinch of salt (for the rice)
- 1 small cucumber, julienned
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots or thinly sliced scallions
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds (toasted)
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise (optional) or Japanese mayo (Kewpie) — for spicy mayo, mix with sriracha to taste
- Pickled ginger, pickled daikon (optional), and lime wedges for serving
- Optional garnish: microgreens, cilantro, or a drizzle of unagi (eel) sauce

Directions

1. **Season the sushi rice:** While rice is warm, gently fold in rice vinegar, sugar, and salt. Cover with a damp cloth to keep warm and slightly sticky.
2. **Make the soy glaze:** In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, mirin, sake (if using), brown sugar, and sesame oil until the sugar dissolves.
3. **Marinate the salmon (optional):** Place salmon strips in the glaze for 10–15 minutes to soak up flavor. If short on time, reserve glaze for pan-glazing later.
4. **Cook the salmon:** Heat neutral oil in a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Remove salmon from marinade (reserve marinade). Sear salmon strips 1–2 minutes per side until just cooked through and lightly caramelized. Avoid overcooking — salmon should remain moist and flake easily.
5. **Glaze the salmon:** Pour the reserved marinade into the hot pan and simmer 1–2 minutes to reduce slightly and gloss the salmon, spooning the reduced glaze over the pieces. Remove from heat. Taste — if very salty, add a small splash of water or a touch more sugar to balance.
6. **Prepare fillings and nori:** Arrange warm sushi rice, glazed salmon, cucumber, avocado, carrots, and mayo/spicy mayo on the work surface. Lightly toast nori halves over a low flame or in a dry skillet for a few seconds if you prefer extra crunch (optional).
7. **Assemble the hand rolls (temaki):** Place one nori half shiny side down in your hand or on a clean surface. With wet fingers, spread a thin, compact strip of rice along one corner of the nori (about 2–3 tablespoons). Add a few pieces of salmon, a slice of avocado, some cucumber juliennes, shredded carrot, and a small drizzle of mayo. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds.
8. **Roll into a cone:** Starting from the corner with the rice, roll the nori into a cone shape, tucking the filling in as you roll. Seal the edge with a little dab of water. Place seam-side down and serve immediately so the nori stays crisp.
9. **Garnish and serve:** Serve hand rolls with pickled ginger, lime wedges, extra glaze or unagi sauce for drizzling, and any extra spicy mayo on the side. Eat immediately — temaki are best fresh.

Tips and variations

- For a quick stove-free option, use pre-cooked or smoked salmon and toss with the glaze warmed briefly in the microwave.
- Add crunch with tempura flakes or crushed roasted peanuts (if no shellfish/tree-nut allergies).
- Make a spicy version by tossing salmon with chili oil or gochujang before glazing.
- To keep nori crisp if serving family-style, set out components buffet-style and assemble at the table.

Enjoy bright, hands-on sushi at home — crispy nori, glossy soy-glazed salmon, and creamy avocado in every bite.