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Meal Planning

If you're like most people, evening meal prep is up there with doing laundry. Here's the secret to meal planning: plan just 3 to 5 meals ahead—it's less overwhelming. Your social plans can stay in place, and you can roll with whatever comes up. With prepped meals, you might have leftovers to freeze or save for the next week. Plus, you can keep your options open. These are all good ways to make healthy habits stick.

Your reasons are important

You have a reason why you want to plan your meals. Whether it's to save money, save time, or be healthier, keeping your reason top of mind keeps you inspired and motivated.

Add "spice" to your plan

Blogs, cookbooks, and online sources can help you add "spice" to your plans and discover new combos, hacks, and community. So grab something to sip on, listen to some good music, and start planning your most delicious meal ever.

Why I want to plan meals:

My favorite meals are:

How I can "healthify" these meals:

My go-to cookbooks, blogs, or websites for recipe inspiration:

Ready, Set ...

What's in your plan? It's all up to you!

Here are some tips from those who have meal prep down to a science:

- ✔ **Go on a scavenger hunt.** What ingredients do you have in your cabinets right now? Whole-grain pasta? Tuna? Do an internet search on those ingredients ... you'll be amazed at the recipes you've never thought of before. No extra shopping trips, and you can declutter your space. Double win.
- ✔ **Discover your tastes.** Try themes like: "Taco Tuesdays" or "Italian Fridays." Subscribe to online cooking channels, look to healthy-food blogs, or search your favorite social media outlets for new recipe ideas. And of course, good ol' cookbooks work too.
- ✔ **Time is money.** Search for slow-cooker recipes that you can prep and forget. Or designate one day of the week as your "meal prep" day. Use that day to prepare your food for the week. Then it's grab-and-go until next time.
- ✔ **Recycle menus.** When the week is over, keep your menus. In a few weeks, you can go back and repeat the meals you liked and ditch those you didn't.
- ✔ **Write it down.** When your menu is in place, make a list of all ingredients you need. Whether you use an app or put pen to paper is up to you.
- ✔ **Call for backup.** Invite your friend, roommate, or family member so you all can divide and conquer. Maybe you plan, they shop, or you share recipes so that anyone can cook when it is convenient.



5 Ways It Can Change Your Life:

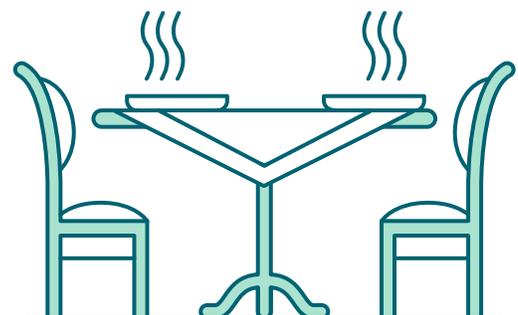
1.
Less stress.

2.
Save money.

3.
Save time.

4.
Healthier weight.

5.
**Never having to ask,
"What's for dinner?"**



My Meals This Week

Meal Idea 1

Meal Idea 2

Meal Idea 3

Meal Idea 4

Meal Idea 5

My Grocery List

Fruits and Vegetables

★ Pick dark leafy veggies when possible—they pack more nutrients.

Grains

★ Enjoy whole-grain alternatives to breads and pastas—they leave you fuller for longer.

Proteins

★ Try lean proteins like lentils, eggs, beans, tofu, chicken breasts, turkey, and salmon.

Dairy

★ Look for low-fat or no-fat dairy items.

Oils and Seasonings

★ Choose heart-healthy oils like olive, canola, or avocado.

Canned Goods

★ Cut the salt—you can't taste it anyway—by trying low-sodium.

Unsweetened Drinks

★ Try sparkling water and green or herbal teas.

Snacks

★ Try nuts, trail mixes, whole-grain crackers, pretzels, or light popcorn.

Frozen

★ Try frozen veggies and fruit which can be just as healthy as fresh and last longer.



Week in Review



What were my favorite meals?

Tips for next week?

What went well?