



MEAL PLAN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

WEEK
1

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WEEK
2

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WEEK
3

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WEEK
4

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MEAL PLAN

	SAT	SUN	PREP	BATCH COOK
WEEK 1				
WEEK 2				
WEEK 3				
WEEK 4				

Meal Prep Staples

Keep these items in your fridge

Staple veggies- Here I like to always have the basics that my family eats. For us this looks like carrots, cucumbers, bell peppers, celery, onions, lettuce. I like to keep carrots, onions, and lettuce on hand all the time because you can whip up a soup with these three super easily. (Search #soup #souptember on Instagram. So many soups. So little time.)

Staple fruits- again, go with what your family likes and try to always have a few with a longer shelf life like apples, bananas, and grapes so you can save trips to the store. TIP: make sure to eat those short shelf life buggers first to reduce waist and throwing your hard earned money in the trash

Greens and Herbs- I like to have herbs like rosemary and parsley around to freshen salads and soups. Greens are a must for salad prep and heartier greens are great for soups.

Condiments and dips- Hummus, mustard, salsa, guacomole (the packs of these are great to throw in lunches or for afterschool snacks.)

Cheese or non-dairy substitutes you prefer- Cheese sticks, sliced cheese, shredded cheese, and block cheese are all helpers in meal prep.

Nut butters and spreads

Apple cider vinegar- for salads and a nutrition boost in beverages

Meal Prep Staples

Keep these items in your freezer

Frozen veggies

Bulk meats

Prepped foods

Prepared slow cooker ingredients (HUGE time saver right here. Take a few hours and bag up all the ingredients you need for a few different slow cooker dinners. Bag them separately. In the AM, turn on the slow cooker and dump the ingredients from a bag in. Head to Busy Parents Club Easy Family Meals Slow Cooker Section for recipes and ingredients)

Breads and tortillas

Meal Prep Staples

Keep these items in your Pantry

Pastas and rice

Nuts and seeds

Beans

Oats

Flours

Crackers, pretzels

Nuts

Prepping for Snack Time



Bonus: Don't forget to prep snacks!

- Keep fresh fruit and veggies washed and cut for easy access for "starving" children.
- Pre-bag dry snacks so they don't fill up and "spoil their dinner" your mom said that, too, right?
- Make a spot in the fridge for cheese sticks, yogurts, healthy drinks, and the prepped fruit and veggies.
- Prep bentos for snack time. I really like this bc they don't have to really think too much about it and you can keep it healthy-ish.

**If you are meal prepping for the fridge, for the week,
Here's an easy guide to how long everything stays good:**

- Vegetables – 1 week
- Fruits – 1-2 weeks, depending on the fruits
- Cooked chicken, beef, pork, and fish – 3-4 days
- Boiled eggs – up to 1 week TIP: Write the date boiled on the outside of the eggs after cooling.
- Cooked pasta – 3-5 days
- Most cooked foods/leftovers – 3-4 days

Fool-Proof Meal Planning



I am a firm believer that meal prep is absolutely crucial to running a smooth sailing family ship. I have used pretty much the same method of meal planning since my youngest was born (he is turning 8 next week. #imnotcrying) Here goes.

Create Your Menu For The Month

- Grab Your Calendar
- Look at your calendar and find your busiest days. This is where you will put your simplest meals.
- Make each day a "theme" so you simply have to plug specific meals into slots. Here is the one I often use:-
 - Slow cooker meal
 - Take out or eat out
 - Casserole or one dish/pot meal
 - Leftovers
 - Kids choice I like to let kids alternate picking what this will be, once a month- taco night, pizza night, pasta night...
 - Soup
 - Try something new (kid-friendly tip: add 1 new item to two favorites so kids always see something they know they like when they come to the table- this takes the stress out of dinner for parents and kids and makes most experiments kid-friendly meals)

- Now, just fill your meal of choice from your favorite recipes, from the links I send out in the **weekly newsletters**, or from the **Easy Family Dinners Pinterest Board**.

Create Your Grocery List

- You are going to create one weekly grocery list and one monthly grocery list
- Use two pieces of paper to create one monthly list and one weekly list. Your monthly will have all of your pantry and freezer items. Your weekly will have all of your refrigerated items (on the back of your weekly list leave room for random household items you need to grab from the store)
- Fill in your monthly and weekly list with ingredients you need for each recipe. Do this in the kitchen so you can keep track of stuff you are already stocked on and you can leave off of the list (especially in pantry and freezer).

Prep and Batch Cook

- Cut up fruits and veg so they are ready to go for packing lunches and for your recipe ingredients for the week. Don't forget to prep the ingredients you need for your batch cooking for the week. You can further organize your fridge by using clear containers to hold the ingredients for each meal on the days of the week you need to cook them- makes things very grab and go.
- TIP To wash everything: Clear your sink, put a basin in it, and soaked and swirl all your fruits and veg around in it to clean it all at once. Saves SOOO much time.
- Prep and pack lunches for the week. Here you can do what works best for you and your family. I like to make a big salad, and a batch or soup as a go to for a few days lunches. Then have lunch meats, cheese, olives, and cut up fruits and veggies and throw in a dry item from the pantry to pack a quick lunch. Leftovers also make great lunches. When you are batch cooking you may want to set aside a few servings of what you make for a lunch or two.
- Using your meals from your menu planner in the batch cook section, cook your batch cook meals for the week. I like to batch cook two things each week. You can also do an epic batch cook once a month if that works better for your schedule.

MONTHLY MEAL PLANNER

TO SAVE TIME, MONEY, AND EAT HEALTHIER

