

Meal Planning

Use this form to plan meals and organize your grocery list.

Planning your meals can help you eat healthier foods, go to the grocery store less often, save time at the store, and save money.

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

Here are some tips from people who have mastered the art of meal prep.

1. Get out your cookbooks or look at recipes online to plan several main meals. Make a list of these menu ideas on a menu planner. Plan some quick meals for busy nights. You also can double some recipes that freeze well. Then you can save half for other busy nights when you don't have time to cook.
2. Check your pantry for all the ingredients called for in recipes. Write down all the ingredients you need to buy. If you notice you are running low on certain basic items, put these on your grocery list too.
3. Now fill in foods that you use to make breakfast, lunches, and snacks, such as eggs, cereals, breads, tuna, milk, and juice. List plenty of fruits and vegetables.
4. Post this list on the refrigerator. Add to it as you run out of foods or think of other things you need.
5. When you go to the store or shop online, use the list—and stick to it. You save money by not making impulse buys. But you don't need to be so rigid that you pass up a good sale item.
6. When you get home, cut out and post the menu planner in your kitchen. You may want to write down page numbers from recipe books or print out online recipes for quick reference. This way, whoever gets home first can start dinner.
7. When the week is over, keep your menus. In a few weeks, you can go back and repeat the meals you liked.

The first few times you do this, it will seem like a fair amount of work. But the rewards are worth it. You'll soon get faster at planning your meals.

Menu planner

Plan your meals for at least 3 days.

	Breakfasts	Lunches	Dinners
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			
Day 4			
Day 5			

Write down any basic food items you need and the ingredients for your meals. Reorganize this list, if needed, to match your grocery store's layout.

Grocery list			
Produce	Bakery and bread	Meat	Milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, dairy
Deli	Frozen foods	Cereals and snacks	Canned foods
Condiments	Baking, oils, seasonings	Pasta, grains, dry beans	Beverages
Other			