

Weekly *Meal Prep* Planner

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Plan a week of meals in 15 minutes, shop once and cook ahead in about 2 hours. A filled example week shows you how, and blank pages let you plan the next four weeks.

7

days on one meal grid

2 h

prep-day timeline

4

blank weeks to print

How to use this planner

Meal prep works when the plan is simple. Choose meals that share ingredients, shop once, and cook the slow parts on one day. Use the steps below every week.

1 Check your week.

Look at your calendar. Mark busy evenings, meals out and days with leftovers.

2 Fill the meal grid.

Start with dinners, then lunches. Plan 2–3 dinners that make extra for lunch the next day.

3 Check what you have.

Look in the fridge, freezer and pantry. Use what is there first.

4 Write the grocery list.

Go meal by meal. Write each item under its store section.

5 Plan prep day.

Put slow jobs first: oven, grains, stews. Do quick jobs while they cook.

6 Label and store.

Write the food and the date on each container. Eat the oldest first.

What to cook ahead

- **Proteins:** roast chicken, a pot of chili, hard-boiled eggs, baked tofu.
- **Grains:** a big batch of rice, quinoa or pasta.
- **Vegetables:** one tray of roast vegetables, washed salad greens, cut raw vegetables for snacks.
- **Breakfasts:** overnight oats, egg muffins, yogurt cups.
- **Sauces:** one dressing or sauce to change the taste of plain food.

What to cook fresh

- Fish, which is best within a day or two.
- Crispy foods, such as fried eggs or toast.
- Quick stir-fries with vegetables you cut on prep day.

Rule of thumb: cook for 3–4 days at a time. Most cooked food keeps 3–4 days in the fridge. Freeze portions for later in the week.

FILLED EXAMPLE

Example week: one person

This example uses one prep session on Sunday and a short top-up on Wednesday. Tags show what was prepped ahead and what comes from the freezer.

DAY	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
Mon BUSY DAY	Overnight oats with berries PREPPED	Chicken, rice and roast vegetable bowl PREPPED	Turkey chili with rice PREPPED	Apple and peanut butter
Tue GYM	Greek yogurt with granola	Turkey chili LEFTOVER	Sheet-pan salmon, potatoes and green beans	Carrots and hummus PREPPED
Wed TOP-UP PREP	Overnight oats with banana PREPPED	Chicken, rice and roast vegetable bowl PREPPED	Tofu and vegetable stir-fry with rice	Cheese and whole-grain crackers
Thu LATE MEETING	2 egg muffins and toast PREPPED	Tofu stir-fry LEFTOVER	Chicken fajitas with peppers PREPPED	Yogurt cup
Fri OUT AT NIGHT	2 egg muffins and fruit PREPPED	Chili-topped baked potato FREEZER	Dinner out	Trail mix
Sat FLEXIBLE	Pancakes with fruit	Fridge clean-out wraps	Homemade pizza night	Fruit
Sun PREP DAY	Scrambled eggs and toast	Big salad with roast chicken	Roast chicken thighs and vegetables	Popcorn

Why it works: the chicken, rice and roast vegetables cover four meals. The chili covers three, with one portion frozen. The peppers cut on Sunday go into Thursday's fajitas.

Leave gaps: Friday dinner and the weekend stay flexible. A plan with some open meals is easier to keep.

Prep day and grocery list

Sunday prep: about 2 hours

- 0:00** Heat the oven to 425 °F (220 °C). Start the rice.
- 0:05** Cut vegetables for roasting and the fajita peppers.
- 0:15** Chicken thighs on one tray, vegetables on another. Both into the oven.
- 0:20** Start the turkey chili on the stove.
- 0:35** Mix the egg muffins. Make two jars of overnight oats.
- 0:50** Chicken and vegetables out. Check that the chicken is 165 °F (74 °C) inside. Oven to 350 °F (175 °C), egg muffins in for 20 minutes.
- 1:10** Cut carrots for snacks. Wash the salad greens.
- 1:20** Pack two chicken bowls for Monday and Wednesday.
- 1:35** Chili done. Pack two portions for the fridge and one for the freezer.
- 1:45** Label everything with the date. Clean up.

Cool food fast. Put cooked food in the fridge within 2 hours. Use shallow containers so it cools quickly.

Grocery list for the example week

PRODUCE

- ☐ Berries, 1 pint
- ☐ Bananas, 3
- ☐ Apples, 3
- ☐ Bell peppers, 4
- ☐ Onions, 2
- ☐ Broccoli, 1 head
- ☐ Sweet potatoes, 2
- ☐ Potatoes, 3
- ☐ Green beans, 8 oz
- ☐ Carrots, 1 lb
- ☐ Salad greens, 1 bag
- ☐ Garlic, 1 head

DAIRY AND EGGS

- ☐ Eggs, 12
- ☐ Greek yogurt, 32 oz
- ☐ Milk, ½ gallon
- ☐ Shredded cheese, 8 oz

BAKERY

- ☐ Whole-grain bread
- ☐ Pizza dough

MEAT, FISH, TOFU

- ☐ Chicken thighs, 2 lb
- ☐ Ground turkey, 1 lb
- ☐ Salmon fillet, 6 oz
- ☐ Firm tofu, 14 oz

PANTRY

- ☐ Rolled oats
- ☐ Brown rice
- ☐ Canned beans, 2 cans
- ☐ Crushed tomatoes, 28 oz
- ☐ Tortillas, 8
- ☐ Hummus
- ☐ Granola

SNACKS

- ☐ Trail mix
- ☐ Crackers
- ☐ Popcorn kernels

Pantry staples and storage times

Keep these staples at home and most weeks need only fresh food on the grocery list. Tick what you have before you shop.

Pantry staples checklist

GRAINS AND STARCHES ☐ Rice ☐ Rolled oats ☐ Pasta ☐ Quinoa ☐ Whole-grain tortillas	CANS AND JARS ☐ Beans and chickpeas ☐ Crushed tomatoes ☐ Tuna or salmon ☐ Low-sodium broth ☐ Peanut butter	FLAVOR ☐ Olive oil ☐ Soy sauce ☐ Vinegar ☐ Garlic and onions ☐ Chili powder and cumin
FREEZER ☐ Frozen vegetables ☐ Frozen berries ☐ Frozen shrimp or fish ☐ Whole-grain bread	FRIDGE BASICS ☐ Eggs ☐ Greek yogurt ☐ Cheese ☐ Lemons	PREP KIT ☐ Glass containers with lids ☐ Jars for oats ☐ Freezer bags ☐ Marker and labels

How long food keeps

FOOD	FRIDGE, 40 °F (4 °C) OR BELOW	FREEZER, 0 °F (-18 °C)
Raw chicken or ground meat	1–2 days	3–4 months (ground), up to 9 months (pieces)
Cooked chicken, meat or tofu	3–4 days	2–3 months
Cooked fish	3–4 days	2–3 months
Soups, stews and chili	3–4 days	2–3 months
Cooked rice, grains and pasta	3–4 days	1–2 months
Roast vegetables	3–4 days	Not recommended (they go soft)
Egg muffins	3–4 days	1–2 months
Hard-boiled eggs, in the shell	Up to 7 days	Do not freeze
Overnight oats	Up to 3 days	Not recommended
Cut raw vegetables	3–5 days	Blanch first

Times are for best quality and safety in a cold fridge. Freezer times are for quality; frozen food stays safe longer. Reheat leftovers until they are steaming hot, 165 °F (74 °C). When in doubt, throw it out.

DAY	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	SNACKS
Mon				
Tue				
Wed				
Thu				
Fri				
Sat				
Sun				

GROCERY LIST

PRODUCE

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

DAIRY AND EGGS

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

PROTEIN

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

PANTRY AND OTHER

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

PREP LIST

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DAIRY AND EGGS

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PANTRY AND OTHER

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DAIRY AND EGGS

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PROTEIN

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PANTRY AND OTHER

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DAIRY AND EGGS

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PANTRY AND OTHER

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PREP LIST