

# Your guide to meal prepping



## What's for dinner?

It's the most dreaded question of every day. To save time, money and make it easier to eat healthy all week long, consider meal prepping.

## What is meal prepping?



Meal prepping involves planning and preparing meals in advance.<sup>1</sup> Choose which method works best for you. You could try:

### Batch cooking

Think chili, soup, egg muffins, burritos or steel-cut oats—items that can be reheated when it's time to eat.

### Preparing all at once

Get parts of meals started ahead of time. Wash and chop vegetables. Cook whole grains like quinoa or farro. Roast a chicken. Make a dressing or sauce. Wash fruit in advance. And multitask: while the chicken is in the oven, roast vegetables on a sheet pan on a lower oven rack.

### Buying pre-prepped ingredients

Save on time by using sliced and diced vegetables, bagged salads, rotisserie chicken, frozen steamable veggies and ready-to-heat, pre-cooked grains.

## Planning your meal prep

Meal prepping starts with a game plan. Think about what you'd like to eat for the week and plan accordingly.

**Determine how much you want to prep.** Which meals do you want to streamline? Do you want to make assembling a healthy dinner go faster? Perhaps you want to prepare lunches that you can grab and go. Start slow so you don't get overwhelmed. Choose one eating occasion (like a snack or lunch) to start with. Or prep for just a few days rather than the whole week.

**Decide what foods you want to make.** What would you like to eat this week? Find your favorite recipes or research new ones.

**Consider what ingredients you have versus need.** To save money, think about what you have in the pantry, like vinegars, soy sauce and spices. Focus on buying just the fresh ingredients, like vegetables and proteins.

**Schedule your meal prep time.** Look at your calendar to plan when to shop for food and prep meals.

## Putting it all together

Don't be overwhelmed by the many ways to meal prep. See what works for you—that's key. Excitement and inspiration will follow. A place to start: Try this excellent recipe for your lunch prep.



## Chopped chicken salad

**Makes: 2 servings | Prep: 10 mins**

Rotisserie chicken is a great way to stretch your dollar. After first using it for dinner, the leftover chicken can be repurposed in many ways, including in this chopped chicken salad.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped chicken
- 2 cups of chopped crunchy vegetables (carrots, celery, onion, mini peppers, cucumbers, radishes, etc.)
- ¼ cup edamame
- ¼ cup chopped pickled, preserved or fermented vegetables (pickles, kim chi, pepperoncini, olives, etc.)
- 2 Tbsp plain low-fat Greek yogurt, light dressing or light mayonnaise

### Nutrition

Serving size: ¼ cup



Calories: 161 | total fat: 4 g | saturated fat: 1 g | sodium: 283 mg | cholesterol: 62 mg  
total carbs: 5 g | fiber: 3 g | sugars: 2 g | protein: 26 g | potassium: 554 mg

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<sup>1</sup><https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/meal-prep/>

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