



# Meal Plan Without Overwhelm

with Cassie Christopher, MS RDN in partnership with Urban Balance

## Styles of Meal Planning:

1. Theme Nights
  - a. Mediterranean Monday
  - b. Taco Tuesday
  - c. Slow Cooker Wednesday
  - d. Sheet Pan Dinner Thursday
  - e. Pizza (and salad!)
  - f. Soup Saturday
  - g. Stir Fry Sunday
2. Batch Cooking: Cooking entire meals in advance.
  - a. Best resource: [Anti-Inflammatory Meal Prep by Ginger Hultin, MS RDN](#)
  - b. Freezer Meal Prep (many resources online)
    - i. Best resource: [Before Baby by Autumn Hoverter, MS RDN](#)
3. Meal Planning Services: Let someone else do the planning for you.
  - a. [Emeals](#) - Very inexpensive and can export grocery list to Walmart, Kroger or Instacart
    - i. “Clean” eating plan is health-focused.
    - ii. There are many different plans to choose from.
  - b. [Plate Joy](#) - More customizable, can talk to nutritionist.
  - c. [Nourishing Meals](#) – Best for alternative diets or food sensitivities.

## Setting Yourself Up for Success:

- Schedule meal planning: Set time aside to plan out meals and grocery shop
- Don't forget about grocery delivery/pick-up services!
- Consider saving family favorites to a central location (either electronically or in a binder)
- Consider using a rating system (like average # of stars out of 5)

## Use Leftovers Wisely:

- Quantity
- Double, Triple, Quadruple Recipes when you cook
- Freeze
- Freeze leftovers
- Mix it Up
- Use leftovers differently:
  - Rotisserie Chicken can be turned into...
  - Shredded chicken tacos
  - Asian stir fry
  - Chicken salad sandwich



## Easy Meal Prep Ideas:

### Breakfast:

- Slow-Cooker Oatmeal
- Overnight Oats
- Chia Seed Pudding
- Egg Cups

### Lunch/Dinner Assembly Style Meals

Mediterranean: 1-2 cups Chopped Spinach + 2 tbsp kalamata olives + 1 cup canned chickpeas + ½ cup whole wheat pasta + (½ cup) Greek yogurt with dill and lemon squeeze

Mexican: 1-2 cups bagged coleslaw veggies + 2 tbsp avocado + (½-1 cup)refried/black beans or slow-cooked pulled pork + 2 corn tortillas + salsa + squeeze lime

Asian: 1-2 cups Roasted broccoli (or reheated frozen) + palm size rotisserie chicken + 2 tbsp sesame seeds + ½ cup brown rice + 2 tbsp teriyaki sauce (watered down)

Picnic: Canned tuna (pole caught) + ½ small mashed avocado + whole grain crackers + 2 tbsp of raisins + 1-2 cups baby carrots on side

Curry: 2 tbsp Simmer Sauce, watered down to about ¼ cup + ½ cup Frozen or Prepared Brown Rice + 1-2 cups Frozen Veggies + ½-1 cup chopped tofu, rotisserie chicken, or chickpeas

Noodles: ½ cup Pasta Sauce + 2 ounces chickpea/lentil noodles (protein and starch) + 1-2 cups fresh or frozen veggies added in last few minutes of boiling pasta

Winter soup: Chicken sausage + 1-2 cups frozen kale + Italian seasoning + chicken stock + ½-1 cup white beans

### Take Action Now!

1. Set a timer for 15 minutes.
2. Write down 3 meals you know your family likes and don't take too much effort to prepare.
3. Write out the ingredients for these recipes on a list, or pull out your favorite grocery delivery/pick-up app and create your list there.
4. Shop, pick-up or schedule delivery.