



# MEAL PREPPING

# HEY THERE

and welcome to

## MEAL PREPPING

**This E-book has been designed as your ultimate guide to help you navigate through the world of meal prepping. It's all about learning to choose healthy foods and prepare nutritious, delicious meals that can easily fit into your fast-paced life.**

**In this book, you will find comprehensive information on what constitutes a healthy diet, the fundamental building blocks of nutrition, how to create a perfectly balanced meal, and so much more. There are also valuable tips on meal planning, cooking timelines, and portion control to help you transition to healthier habits seamlessly.**

**Remember, the journey towards health and wellbeing is personal and unique to each individual, as is our relationship with food. You may wish to focus on changing your relationship with food over the next 6 weeks.**

**This book is not a strict rulebook but rather a tool to empower you to make informed choices about your diet and lifestyle. Take the information provided, adapt it to suit your needs, and begin your journey towards healthier eating habits.**



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# Building Blocks of a Healthy Diet- Macro and Micronutrients

The building blocks of a healthy diet are the essential nutrients your body needs to function optimally, these are carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water.



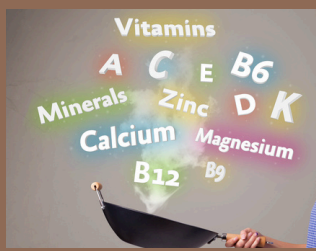
Carbohydrates provide your body with energy, and come in two main types – simple (sugars) and complex (starches and fibre). Choose whole grains and vegetables for your carbs, which provide long-lasting energy. Examples of carbs are fruit, veges, any grains, beans, lentils, potatoes etc.



Proteins are vital for cell growth, repair, and maintenance. High-quality protein sources include lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, protein powder. Protein and carbs together are beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, tempeh.



Fats are a crucial part of your diet and perform various functions, like nutrient absorption and maintaining body temperature. Opt for unsaturated fats (found in avocados, nuts, seeds, and extra virgin olive oil) over saturated and trans fats.



Vitamins and minerals are essential for a wide range of bodily functions such as bone health, wound healing, immune function, and energy production.



Water makes up about 60% of your body weight and is essential for every system in your body.

**Remember to eat protein in every main meal**



# How to Build a Perfectly Balanced Meal

**Building a perfectly balanced meal involves incorporating a variety of nutrient-rich foods from all food groups.**

- ✓ Half your plate with vegetables: These are high in vitamins, minerals, and fibre but low in calories. Include a variety of colors to consume a broad spectrum of nutrients. Include a variety of non-starchy vegetables and starchy vegetables.
- ✓ Quarter (or more) your plate with protein: Include lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, or plant-based sources like legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- ✓ Add healthy fats: Avocado, nuts, seeds, olives, and fatty fish are excellent sources. These fats are crucial for brain health and inflammation reduction.
- ✓ Stay hydrated: Don't forget to drink plenty of water

**Create a balanced plate**

# Calorie and Macronutrient Breakdowns



Understanding Macronutrients involves listing common foods under the categories of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats, detailing their calorie content and their macronutrient breakdown.

For example:

- **CHICKEN BREAST (100g):**
- **Calories: 165Kcal,**
- **Protein: 31g,**
- **Carbohydrates: 0g,**
- **Fat: 3.6g**
  
- **QUINOA (cooked, 1 cup):**
- **Calories: 222Kcal,**
- **Protein: 8.1g,**
- **Carbohydrates: 39.4g,**
- **Fat: 3.6g**
  
- **AVOCADO (1 medium):**
- **Calories: 240Kcal,**
- **Protein: 3g,**
- **Carbohydrates: 13g,**
- **Fat: 22g**

# The Perfect Portion Sizes Using Hands

Using your hands is an easy way to estimate portion sizes:



**Your palm determines your protein portions - 1 palm = 85-115g cooked meat, 2 whole eggs, 1 cup Greek yogurt.**



**Your fist determines your veggie portions - 1 cup non-starchy vegetables**



**Your cupped hand determines your carbohydrate portions (20-30 g) = 1/2 to 2/3 cup (100-130 g) cooked grains / legumes, 1 medium fruit.**



**Your thumb determines your fat portions (7-12 g) = 1 tbsp (14 g) oils, nuts, seeds, nut butter, cheese, etc.**



**Remember, these are general guidelines. Your specific dietary requirements may vary depending on your lifestyle, activity level, and health goals. Always consult with me as a coach and nutrition advisor**

01

**Themes for meal plans:**

To simplify the process, consider assigning a theme to each day of the week like Meatless Mondays, Taco Tuesdays, or Fish Fridays. This will help narrow down your recipe options.

02

**Learn to love leftovers:**

Prepare meals that can be eaten over a couple of days or can be repurposed into a new dish. This saves time and reduces food waste.

03

**Make use of kitchen tools:**

Slow cookers, pressure cookers, and rice cookers can make meal preparation easier and quicker. Baking or roasting can also be a time-saver because you can cook several portions in one go.

04

**Prep components, not just full meals:**

Consider preparing ingredients that can be mixed and matched throughout the week for variety. For example, cook a batch of quinoa, chop some veggies, grill some chicken, and prepare a dressing. These can be quickly combined for a salad, wrap, or grain bowl during the week.

05

**Consider your schedule:**

This point is important! If you have a particularly busy day, plan for a slow cooker meal that can cook while you're away, or consider a leftover night.





A smiling woman in a beige tank top is holding a glass bowl filled with a fresh salad. The salad contains green leafy vegetables, cherry tomatoes, and sesame seeds. She is holding a silver fork in her right hand. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting with a window.

“

**Remember, the goal of meal planning is to make your life easier. Keep it flexible and adapt it to your lifestyle. It's okay if things don't always go according to plan. Meal planning is a tool to assist you, not stress you.**

While the hand method is an easy and convenient way to measure portion sizes, it is important to note that it's only a starting point. Individual energy needs can vary based on factors such as physical activity level, age, sex, weight, and health goals. Therefore, learn to listen to your body's hunger and satiety cues and adjust your portions accordingly.

Another strategy is to practice mindful eating and sitting down at the table to eat your meal. Mindful eating involves paying attention to the experience of eating and drinking, both inside and outside the body. Notice the colors, smells, textures, and tastes of your food, as well as any physical hunger or fullness cues. Eating mindfully can help you enjoy your food more and help regulate portion sizes.

Also, it can be helpful to use smaller plates and bowls. This can trick the brain into thinking you're eating more than you actually are. Fill your plate with vegetables first, then add protein and fats. This helps ensure that you prioritize nutrient-dense foods and helps control the portions of higher calorie foods.





# Meal Prepping

## **Start with a plan:**

Decide on your meals for the week ahead and write them down.

## **Cook in batches:**

Prepare your meals in large quantities to save time during the week.

## **Utilise your freezer:**

Freeze portion-sized meals for future use.



## **Keep it simple:**

Don't overcomplicate your meals. Simple, healthy ingredients make delicious meals.

# Cooking Timeline

## (What You Should Start With)

Efficient Cooking Tip: Begin with the Dishes that Require the Most Time



01

Start with roasting meats or vegetables as these often take the longest.



02

While these are cooking, start on your grains (like rice or quinoa) as they can cook unattended, but don't forget about them!



03

Chop and prep any sides or salads while the grains are cooking, and wash up as you go.



04

Finally, prepare any quick-cooking items like sautéed vegetables or reheating pre-cooked items.

This efficient timeline ensures that all your components will finish around the same time. Store in containers, let them cool, then refrigerate.

# KEEP IT SIMPLE

1. Plan Ahead: Set some time each week to plan your meals and snacks for the upcoming days. Establish a routine, e.g., Saturday afternoons are for meal prep.
2. Set Realistic Goals: Start small and gradually increase your meal prepping efforts as you become more comfortable with the process. e.g., start with meal prepping your breakfast.
3. Choose Nutrient-Dense Foods: Focus on incorporating a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and healthy fats into your meals.
4. Portion Control: Use portion control containers or measuring cups to ensure you're eating appropriate portion sizes.
6. Prep Breakfasts: Prepare breakfast options such as overnight oats, egg muffins, or smoothie packs to grab and go in the mornings.
7. Pre-Cut Produce: Wash, peel, and chop fruits and vegetables ahead of time to make meal prep quicker and easier.
8. Cook in Bulk: Cook large batches of grains, proteins, and vegetables to use in multiple meals throughout the week.
9. Mix and Match Ingredients: Prepare versatile ingredients that can be mixed and matched to create different meals, such as grilled chicken, roasted vegetables, and quinoa.
10. Use Freezer-Friendly Recipes: Prepare freezer-friendly meals like soups, stews, and casseroles that can be portioned out and frozen for later use.
12. Stay Organised: Keep your kitchen organised and stocked with essential ingredients and tools to make meal prepping more efficient.
13. Prep On-the-Go Meals: Pack portable meals like salads in mason jars or bento boxes for easy lunches or snacks on busy days.
14. Be Flexible: Be flexible with your meal plan and willing to adjust based on your schedule, cravings, and dietary preferences.
15. Celebrate Your Success: Celebrate your meal prepping efforts and the positive impact they have on your health, well-being, and busy lifestyle.

By following these tips, you can streamline your meal prepping process and make healthier eating habits more sustainable and enjoyable in the long run.