

Healthy Spread, Little Bread

A practical guide to planning and preparing healthful, budget-friendly family meals

Preplan: *The first step to eating well and spending less*

Check your pantry and freezer to see what's on hand. Incorporate what you have into the plan.

Write out a meal plan for the week. Don't forget to include school lunches and snacks.

Make your grocery list for only the amount of food needed for the meal plan.

Check supermarket circulars for deals on what you need before you shop and to compare prices. Don't buy something just because it's on sale but take advantage of special deals on foods you regularly eat.



Bulk buys: *Fill your pantry with staple items*

Purchase dried beans, peas, and lentils and whole grains like pasta and rice in larger quantities.

Value-size bags of frozen fruits and veggies, and family packs of meat can be bought ahead of time.

Stock up on healthy snacks like nuts and dried fruits to make your own trail mix.

Grow your pantry stash when the foods you eat often are on sale.

Maximize produce: *Nutritious fruits and vegetables won't break the bank*

Veggies frozen at the time of harvest are just as nutritious as the fresh stuff. Buy without added sauces, salt, or sugar.

Buy *no salt added* or *low salt* canned vegetables.

Take advantage of the seasons. Fruits and vegetables are most flavorful when grown locally and don't travel far to your table. In New England, tomatoes, zucchini, and berries are harvested in the summer; and cranberries, pumpkins, and grapes are picked in the fall, to name a few. Plus, you save money.



Five a day! Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and veggies for a well-balanced diet.



Meal prep: *Advance prep eliminates the need to spend money on takeout*

Meals prepared at home tend to be healthier, with less sugar and salt, and more whole ingredients, than fast food.

Portion control is easier with meals prepared in your kitchen.

Batch cook ingredients to use all week. Roast veggies and cook grains, like quinoa and rice, to use as a side dish or

add to salads. Cut raw fruits and vegetables for grab-and-go snacks and make healthy yogurt or bean-based dips.

Almost anything can be prepared in a slow cooker. Use a crockpot to cut down prep and clean up time.

Use reusable containers to refrigerate single servings and freeze leftovers for work.

Repurpose Leftovers: *eliminate food waste and save money*

Double up on your soups and sauces and freeze half. Don't forget to label and date your freezer stock.

Plan weekly meals using the same ingredients to make a variety of foods. Use leftover roasted chicken to make chicken salad or tacos, leftover bean chili on baked potatoes or leftover mashed potatoes for a Shepherd's pie.



Pickle, blanch and freeze, can, or dehydrate extra herbs, fruits, and veggies.



Involve the whole family: *Planning, shopping, and preparing meals can be a fun family activity*

Let everyone have a say in what goes on the menu.

Let the kids help choose the groceries and put them in the cart.

There's a job for all ages during meal prep, from washing the produce to stirring to chopping.

Picky eaters may be more willing to try new things that they helped to pick out and prepare.