



Essential Kitchen Toolkit

Back to basics guidelines for preparing convenient, nutritious meals.
Brought to you by the Canned Food Alliance.



With 2009 widely described as the “year of the home cook,” it’s no surprise that we’re all getting reacquainted with our kitchens. However, a Rutgers University study published in the May 2009 issue of *Forum for Family and Consumer Issues* and commissioned by the Canned Food Alliance (CFA), recently found moms want a better grasp of kitchen basics. When given an action plan for healthy meal preparation, grocery shopping, kitchen organization and food storage practices, the study found that moms made positive changes towards providing nourishing, great-tasting family meals.

Recognizing that moms make positive changes when they receive advice on how to prepare and serve easy, quick and healthful meals, the Canned Food Alliance and I teamed up to create this tool box of kitchen basics. With action plans adapted from the tools proven to work with moms in the recent Rutgers study, this Essential Kitchen Toolkit is meant to help busy home cooks revive what they may (or may not!) have learned in their high school home economics class.

On the following pages you will find the ingredients to help make the most chaotic kitchen run smoother, giving you more time to concentrate on the important things - like nurturing your family’s bodies and souls. We’ve included easy-to-read guides for planning and preparing healthful meals, for organizing the kitchen, for navigating the grocery store and even for going green in your kitchen. This Essential Kitchen Toolkit also provides you with a collection of simple recipes, a kitchen glossary and safe food handling and storage tips.

Now that you’re armed with the tools to help you perform kitchen tasks faster and easier, it’s time to put some home economics basics back into your kitchen and your shopping cart.

From my kitchen to yours, enjoy!

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For the Canned Food Alliance



Mealtime.org

Between going to work, taking the kids to practice, walking the dog, picking up the dry cleaning and scheduling in everything else you have to do on any given day, “what’s for dinner” is usually the last thing on your mind — at least at 5 o’clock. When you’re so busy, the take-out menu may look tempting, but consider this: in the time it takes to order and pick up a take-out meal, you can put a delicious, healthful meal on the table — a meal that your whole family can enjoy. All it takes is a little kitchen organization and smart planning.

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Kitchen Organization

Got a Small Kitchen?

Work centers can overlap. For example, food preparation and cleanup centers can share the sink and the same counter space may be used for planning and preparation.

An organized kitchen is the first step to creating healthier, more organized and calmer meals. Well-organized kitchens are set up in work centers that store food and contain the equipment and space needed for tasks performed there.

*Most kitchens have three basic work centers for storing, cooking and serving food and for cleaning up¹.

Work Center	Location	Activities	Items to Store There
Food Storage and Preparation Center	Around the refrigerator-freezer, with cabinets nearby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storing fresh and frozen food Storing nonperishable food Storing leftovers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Foil, plastic wrap, storage containers and bags
Cooking and Serving Center	Around the range and microwave oven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooking food Serving food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pots and pans Cooking tools, such as spatulas, ladles, wooden spoons and tongs Small appliances Potholders and oven mitts Serving bowls and platters
Cleanup Center	Around the sink and dishwasher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washing fresh fruits and vegetables Rinsing and washing dishes, pots, pans and utensils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetable brush, colander, peeler and cutting boards Soaps and detergents Dish towels and dishcloths Other cleaning supplies For convenience, dishes, glassware and eating utensils may be stored here after they are cleaned.

*Above chart from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness* by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010

Other kitchen work centers include:

Planning and Message Center	Counter space, walls and outside the refrigerator surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating menus and shopping lists Clipping or downloading coupons or recipes Posting family messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulletin or dry erase board, tacks or markers Refrigerator magnets Paper, pens and pencils Cookbooks Coupons Computer (optional)
Eating Center	Counter or kitchen table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eating meals and snacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placemats Centerpieces

Simple Steps to Make Your Work Centers Work for You

Kitchen tools and dishes are often stored where they fit, rather than where they are used. Instead, try these tips for organizing each of your kitchen work centers²:

1. Identify the major appliances, small appliances, tools and counter and storage space for each work center.
2. Pick a work center and make sure everything in the center is directly related to the work center's activities. Ask yourself:
 - a. How often do you use everything stored in the work center?
 - b. Can you easily reach all of the work center's equipment?
 - c. Can you quickly find all of the work center's appliances and tools?
 - d. Do you have unneeded doubles of some equipment?
3. Rearrange the storage space so that the items are handy for the work center's activities, especially for the tasks you do most often.

Eliminate Counter Clutter

- Keep counters clear by creating an area where the kids can drop their stuff. Try putting a shelf in the laundry room, a plastic tub in the TV room or a colorful box in the hall.
- Store things in stackable bins, rolling mesh drawer units, shelves and even office paper trays.
- Move seldom used items and appliances (such as a large mixer or blender) off the counter to a closet or basement shelf.
- Hang paper towel racks, knife blocks, coffee mugs, wine glasses, spice racks, can openers and microwave ovens under overhead cabinets.
- Install a decorative shelf for knickknacks.
- Hang a dish towel rack inside a cabinet near the sink.
- Get a plastic container to hold sponges by the sink.

*Above copy adapted from "Development of a Self-Directed Home Kitchen Makeover for Mothers of Young Children," *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues*, by C. Byrd-Bredbenner and J.M. Abbot



Short on space?

- Keep equipment in rolling carts and movable storage bins. Bring them to the work center when you need them.
- Adjust shelf heights to accommodate the work center's equipment.
- Use tiered and expanding shelves that adjust to the width of the cabinet.
- Add a Lazy Susan in cabinets or on the counter to make better use of space in back corners.
- Hang racks on the back of pantry doors to store cans and dry goods.
- Install vertical racks in cabinets to slide baking pans and cutting boards in and out.
- Organize jumbled drawers with drawer dividers.
- Hang more shelves if you have space.



Find kitchen organization items at dollar stores (\$), discount retailers (\$\$) and kitchen and office stores (\$\$\$).

Taming the Food Storage Center

Keeping the food storage center organized can help stamp out mealtime stress. When you know what you have on hand, you can streamline food preparation, eliminate over buying and reduce trips to the supermarket. The following tips can help you organize and perhaps improve the healthfulness of your food supply.

Perk Up the Pantry

Pantry and non-perishable food storage centers often need the most organization. Use this step-by-step guide to give your pantry a makeover³.

Store and Organize:

1. **Arrange foods so that you can see them.** Keeping your food inventory in plain sight can help you make shopping lists, put groceries away efficiently and find items faster⁴.
2. **Designate storage space and group similar foods together.** Stack canned vegetables, fruits, soups, meat and fish grouped by category. Place boxed food items, such as pasta and cereal, as well as cookbooks on shelves with names facing outward for easy reading.
3. **Save space.** Install a door or wall rack for cans and bottles. Use tiered shelf risers so you can see the back row of cans, herbs and spices as easily as those in the front.
4. **Use bins, baskets and drawers.** Place flour, sugar and other bagged items into airtight storage bins making it easy to stack them and keep them fresh longer. Baskets also can keep bags together especially for storing items that don't need to be refrigerated, such as potatoes and onions. Sliding mesh drawer units can keep packets of hot chocolate, dip mixes and tea bags organized and easy to grab.
5. **Make it easy for your family to help.** Label shelves and drawers to show where food is stored so your family can easily help with meal prep and putting away groceries.

Shelving Solutions

Eye-Level Shelves: Store the foods you use most often here.

Lower Shelves: Store heavy containers (flour, dog bones), paper plates, napkins, plastic bags, self-serve snacks for the kids (e.g., cereal, rice cakes) here.

Higher Shelves: Place snacks that require parental approval (e.g., candy, cookies) and foods that are used less often here. Keep foods from getting lost by storing them in bins and posting a list of those items so you know what you have on hand.

*Above copy adapted from "Development of a Self-Directed Home Kitchen Makeover for Mothers of Young Children," *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues*, by C. Byrd-Bredbenner and J.M. Abbot



Not sure what to stock on the pantry shelves?

The [Perfect Pantry Checklist](#) from Mealttime.org shares all the must-have items for quick, wholesome cooking.

Reorganize the Refrigerator and Freezer

Organizing foods by type makes it easy to find what you need and quickly decide what to put on your shopping list. Use the following suggestions to make your refrigerator and freezer work better for you. As you organize, store with safety in mind too (see “Safe Food Storage”).

Refrigerator:

1. **Use door shelves.** Store bottles and jars on door shelves with the labels facing front.
2. **Take advantage of special storage.** Use the special areas in your refrigerator for storing butter/margarine or eggs.
3. **Fill those drawers.** Use drawers to keep fruits, vegetables and meats organized and fresh.
4. **Put ready-to-eat snacks where kids can see and reach them.** That might be washed grapes or apples; sliced carrot or bell pepper sticks; yogurt, milk and cheese cubes; or juice.
5. **Clean out—all the way to the back of the fridge!** Getting rid of food that’s expired or that you won’t use frees up refrigerator space.

Freezer:

1. **Store small packages** in door racks or freezer bins.
2. **Reserve shelves** for larger items and ice trays.
3. **Add plastic bins or expandable shelves** to organize items and better utilize space.
4. **Label.** So food doesn’t “get lost,” use freezer labels or masking tape to identify food you store in plastic containers or freezer bags. Put the storage date on the label too.
5. **Clean out**—again for food safety and quality and to get rid of food you won’t use.

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Safe Food Storage

Proper food storage ensures that your food is safe, fresh and full of its naturally occurring nutrients. Use this guide to help you store food safely and decide what food to keep or toss.

The Deal on Food Dates

Are all of the foods you have on hand at peak quality and safe to eat? The dates on the package will help you decide⁵.

- **“Freshness Date” or “Best if Used By Date”:** This tells you how long a food will be fresh and at top quality if it is stored properly. After that date, the product may still be safe to eat, but may not taste as good. *Foods with freshness dates:* Bread, salad dressing, raisins and cereal. Many canned products have a “for best quality use by” date stamped on the top or bottom of the can. “Expiration” dates are rarely found on canned food.
- **“Sell-By Date”:** This is the last day a food should be sold at the grocery store. Most foods will still be fresh and safe to eat for a week or so after the sell by date. *Foods with sell-by dates:* Cheese, milk, meat and yogurt.
- **“Expiration Date”:** This is the last day a food should be eaten and may not be safe to eat after the date has passed. *Foods with expiration dates:* Baby formula
- **Foods that don’t have dates:** Use a marker or label to indicate when you purchased them.

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Save the Date



- Check dates as you store food.
- Find a product with no date? Label it with the purchase date.
- Place newly purchased items behind existing versions of the same item so older items are used first (first in, first out).
- Codes on canned food are manufacturers’ codes that usually designate the date the product was packaged. Crack the code by visiting [“Reading Can Codes”](http://Mealtime.org) at Mealtime.org.

Shopping for Food Safety

Package dates aren’t the only way to keep your food fresh and safe. Here are some other tips from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Services⁶.

1. **Read the label.** Check package labels for safe-handling instructions, which usually appear on raw meats and eggs, as well as sell-by, use-by and expiration dates.
2. **Inspect the packaging.** Avoid packages with holes, tears, leaks or broken seals. Make sure that refrigerated foods feel cold, that frozen foods are frozen solid (with no signs of thawing and refreezing) and that canned foods are without dents, bulges, rust or leaks.
3. **Bag meat, poultry and seafood.** Put meat, poultry and seafood in a plastic bag to prevent juices from dripping on and cross-contaminating other food in your shopping cart and grocery bags.
4. **Pick up cold food last.** Shop the refrigerated, frozen and deli sections last to help keep food cold until you get it into your refrigerator or freezer.
5. **Take the groceries home.** Avoid making additional stops on your way home from the supermarket. On a warm day you might bring an insulated container in the car to keep food cold until it gets home.





Pantry and Non-Perishable Storage Facts:

Ensure you have appropriate cabinet conditions. Store canned food and other dry goods (most oils, rice, dry herbs, and cereal) in a clean, dry, cool place. Avoid storing pantry items above the stove or refrigerator, under the sink, in a garage or anywhere that may be exposed to high or low temperatures, moisture or chemicals, such as cleaning products.

Seal it up. Transfer open packages and bulk food to tightly covered containers to keep out pests and moisture.

Fridge Storage Facts:

1. **Chill out.** Keep your fridge cold. Temperatures should range from 32°F to 40°F. Keep a refrigerator thermometer inside to check. And keep the door closed, except when you're putting food in and taking it out.
2. **Protect your perishables.** Use foil, plastic wrap, zipper bags and airtight containers to cover and protect food.
3. **Store and thaw raw meat, poultry and fish in plastic bags or containers - not just in the storage package.** Keep them separate and on the lowest shelf to prevent juices from dripping on other foods.
4. **Save some space.** Cold air needs to circulate around the food so make sure your fridge isn't overstuffed or overstacked.
5. **Check the manufacturer's guide for your refrigerator.** Guidelines may differ among models, based on the refrigerator's features.

Freezer Storage Facts:

Keep it cold. Freezer temperatures should be kept at 0°F or lower, if possible. A freezer compartment in a refrigerator may not stay this cold.

Avoid freezer burn. Wrap foods so that they are airtight in heavy freezer paper, sealable freezer bags or covered plastic containers.

Add a label. Label freezer packages with the name of the food and date. Use older foods first.

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Stock Up on Nutrient-Rich Choices

Are all the foods you currently have on hand healthy choices? Check their ingredient and nutrition labels and keep these best bets for healthier choices in mind when stocking your kitchen⁷.

Best Bets

- **Bread** – For more fiber look for breads that show whole grains as the first or second ingredient.
- **Grains** – Go for more whole grains, such as oats, brown rice and whole (not pearl) barley. Buy pastas in several shapes.
- **Cereal** – Grab cereals with at least 2 grams of fiber and less than 2 grams of added sugar per label serving most of the time.
- **Fruit** – Look for canned fruit in water or juice. It is already peeled, cut and shelf stable. Keep dried fruit on hand too.
- **Fruity drinks** – Go for 100% fruit juice.
- **Vegetables** – Keep a variety of canned vegetables and vegetable juice in your pantry. They are already cooked and make simple, healthy additions to recipes. Perishable forms of veggies, both fresh and frozen, are also healthful options; just use them while they're at peak quality.
- **Milk and yogurt** – Reach for mostly low-fat and nonfat milk and yogurt.
- **Cheese** – Look for lower fat cheeses. To get more flavor from less cheese, buy cheese with a stronger flavor.
- **Legumes** – Keep canned legumes (beans) on hand as convenient sources of protein and fiber.
- **Poultry** – Buy canned chicken and turkey, as a ready-to-eat protein source for salads, sandwiches, and more. For perishable options, buy fresh or frozen, skinless chicken and turkey.
- **Meat** – Look for lean cuts (less marbling fat) of fresh or frozen meat.
- **Fish** – Keep canned fish, such as tuna and salmon, on hand as a ready-to-eat protein source for salads and cooked recipes. Buy fresh and frozen (plain, unbreaded) fish to keep in the refrigerator or freezer.
- **Ground meat and turkey sausage** – Select the leanest options. Check the Nutrition Facts; look for lean as a nutrient content claim.
- **Lunch meats** – Choose whole deli meats such as turkey, lean ham and lean roast beef.
- **Oils** – Choose healthy oils, such as olive oil, canola oil, vegetable oil or cooking spray.
- **Sauces and condiments** – To add flavor easily, keep some sauces, dressing and condiments on hand, such as salsa, low sodium soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, raspberry vinegar, light salad dressing, hot sauce, barbecue sauce, Worcestershire sauce, steak sauce and mustard. Be aware that some have more sodium than others; check the label.
- **Herbs and spices** – Get the basics that match your taste preferences, perhaps dried oregano, basil, thyme, rosemary, tarragon, cinnamon, nutmeg, garlic, ginger or chili powder. They provide flavor, without sodium (salt).
- **Desserts** – Go for options with less fat or added sugars, such as angel food cake, pudding made with nonfat milk, ginger snaps, vanilla wafers, frozen, 100% juice pops and sugar-free gelatin to serve with fruit. Look for reduced-fat ice cream.
- **Beverages** – Keep nutrient-rich beverages on hand, such as 100% fruit and vegetable juices. Bottled water, diet soda, tea and coffee are calorie-free options.
- **Snacks** – Choose baked chips, air popped popcorn, rice cakes, pretzels, whole grain crackers dried fruit and nuts.
- **Lunch box picks** – Buy baby carrots, raisins, string cheese, fig bars and easy-open canned fruit.

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Choose Canned



When it comes to kitchen basics, canned foods are as relevant as ever, helping with the preparation of safe, nourishing and affordable meals, with convenience and flavor in mind. Here's why:

Canned goods, sold in “center store,” are often more affordable than frozen or fresh. According to Seattle’s University of Washington Center for Obesity Research, the cost of fruits and vegetables is relatively inexpensive, when measured by their nutrients, rather than their calories⁸. While delivering plenty of nutrition, canned fruits and vegetables can lower the cost of a shopping trip.

Canned foods are nutrient-rich. According to [University of California-Davis](#) research, canned fruits and vegetables, as well as fresh and frozen, all contain important nutrients that contribute to a healthful diet, and fresh isn’t always more nutritious⁹. In fact, canned fruits and vegetables are comparable in nutrition to their cooked fresh and frozen forms, according to a [University of Illinois](#) study¹⁰.

Canned foods are picked and packed at their peak nutrition and flavor quality. While perishable and perhaps more costly, fresh fruits and vegetables lose nutrients during storage. In contrast the nutrients in canned fruits and vegetables are relatively stable until they’re opened, since they aren’t exposed to oxygen during storage¹¹.

Canned foods are convenient and recipe ready. [Canned fruits and vegetables](#) have no inedible peels, leaves, stalks or seeds to trim and discard. Plus, canned foods are [already cooked](#), so they are recipe-ready right from the can.

Canned foods are safe. With the canning process, developed 200 years ago to preserve [food safely](#) and for long periods of time, nutrient-rich foods aren’t perishable, as long as the can remains unopened. The metal food can remains one of the most recyclable, economical and, above all, safe and energy-efficient forms of food distribution and packaging because it enables food sterilization and long-term preservation.

Canned foods are “heroes” for emergency planning. (Hint: Keep a manual can opener nearby.) Packed in a can, fruit, vegetables, beans, tuna, chicken, turkey, and hearty soups and chili are [shelf stable](#) and keep their quality for up to two years. They’re safe even longer, unless the seal is damaged or the can is bulging.

Can-Do in the Kitchen



Canned foods bring nutrition, cost-savings, time-savings, convenience and flavor to the family table. They are an important strategy for managing the kitchen, taking the stress out of mealtime and offering nourishing, flavorful meals. Here are a few can-do tips:

Plan ahead; use the canned foods already in your pantry to add convenience to everyday meals.

They're not just emergency foods. Canned beans, for example, need no precooking; just add them to salads, soups or casseroles. Canned tomato sauces offer convenience for **speed-scratch cooking**. And canned soup with a packaged salad and whole-grain bread makes a nourishing, easy meal.

Check your pantry when you need an unplanned meal.

Instead of ordering out for **pizza**, top a store-bought pizza crust with canned tomato paste, corn, diced tomatoes (drained) and mushrooms, as well as shredded cheese and herbs. Create a **signature soup** by combining two different canned soups, or by adding canned vegetables to a favorite soup or stew. Make a quick tuna or chicken salad sandwich. Combine several canned fruits for an easy side salad.

Combine canned pantry foods with fresh ingredients.

Sweeten a tossed garden salad with canned Mandarin orange segments or peach slices. Top grilled tuna or chicken, or a baked potato with canned salsa. Blend canned fruit with yogurt and juice for a quick **smoothie**.

Add a quick splash of flavor with canned ingredients.

Liven up stews and soups with canned chiles at your level of "fire." Try canned tomatoes with herbs or garlic in **Mexican** and Italian recipes.

Use canned foods creatively.

Brown canned chicken in a non-stick pan before adding it to a recipe to perk up the flavor. Keep a can of fruit in the freezer, then quickly purée in a blender for an easy **sorbet**.

Check Mealtime.org — for countless easy and convenient recipes that use the canned ingredients in your pantry.

Smart Meal Planning, Preparation and Shopping

Preparing quick, healthful meals at home doesn't mean spending hours in the kitchen. It just requires planning ahead, smart shopping and taking advantage of the many nutritious, time-saving options in your supermarket.

Step 1: Plan Ahead

Healthful meals start with having the right ingredients on hand and having a plan for using them. Try these simple tips for fitting good nutrition into your busy schedule.

1. **Be budget-friendly.** Plan menus that fit within your food budget. Quick, nutritious and flavorful meals can be prepared on any budget if you plan well and shop smart.
2. **Consider family needs and preferences.** That includes any food allergies and other special needs as well as, their overall nutrient needs. Check out www.MyPyramid.gov for help with menu planning; it provides daily recommended amounts of foods from all food groups, along with tips and options for meeting the advice.
3. **Use what you have on hand.** Plan meals around the foods you have in your pantry, refrigerator and freezer. Need a recipe to work with the ingredients you have on hand? Check out Mealtime.org and use the search tool to type in the ingredient you're working with.
4. **Consider your kitchen skills and equipment.** Don't have a food processor? Not sure how to julienne food? Make sure you have the skill set and equipment needed for the recipes you want to prepare.
5. **Keep it simple.** Feature one-dish meals like casseroles, stews, pizza and sandwiches. They only require a beverage and maybe a simple side dish to complete the meal.

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Speedy Side Dishes

- Garden salads
- Mixed fruit salad
- Vegetables (plain or with a simple dip)
- Slices of whole grain bread

Nutrient-Rich Desserts

- Scoop of sorbet (Just freeze a can of fruit, then open and purée the fruit inside)
- Light ice cream
- Sliced fruit

Better For You Beverages

- Low fat or fat-free milk
- Chilled water with a slice of fruit or splash of juice
- Vegetable juice
- 100% fruit juice
- Unsweetened tea



Use a Meal Planning Grid

A meal planning grid, like the one below only takes minutes to put together and can save lots of time later. The grid below shows how to combine a menu with a shopping plan. Use the grid to list all the ingredients you need. It also will help you navigate through your kitchen inventory and then the grocery store. Cross off the items you have on hand; what's left goes on your shopping list. Use the grid when you get home to put away food in its proper storage center. Now make your own grid. You can add or remove sections to fit your household and the layout of your local grocery store¹².

*Recipes in the grid can be found in this *Essential Kitchen Toolkit* and on www.mealtime.org.

Day	Recipe	Produce	Dairy	Meat, Poultry, Seafood and Eggs	Canned-Boxed-Bottled	Frozen	Bread/Grain	Other
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuscan-Style Pasta with Cannellini Salad • Suggested sides: Fruit salad, crusty bread, iced tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 cloves garlic • 1/4 lb curly escarole • 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves • 1 bag salad greens 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 box ziti or penne pasta • 1 can (16 oz.) cannellini beans • 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes • Extra-virgin olive oil • 1 can tropical fruit salad 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crusty bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2/3 cup white wine • Salt • Pepper • Iced tea
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pizza-licious Home-Baked Pie (Any leftover is great for lunch.) • Suggested sides: Tomato juice, fruit sorbet (canned fruit that is frozen, then puréed) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese • 1 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Tbsp olive oil • 1 can (8 ounces) zucchini in Italian-style tomato sauce • 3 Tbsp canned tomato paste • 1 can (7 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained • 1 can (8.25 ounces) mixed vegetables • Canned tomato juice • Canned fruit 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 package refrigerated pizza crust
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beefy Potato Volcano • Suggested sides: Garden salad, whole wheat rolls, milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 large baking potatoes • Salad mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 lb. ground turkey or lean ground beef 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tsp vegetable oil • 1 can (8 oz.) peas • 1 can (8 oz.) carrots • 1 can (8 oz.) cut green beans • 1 cup canned, diced tomatoes • 1 can (15 oz.) beef or turkey gravy 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole wheat rolls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tsp dried Italian seasoning • Salad dressing
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pork and Beans Skillet Supper (This recipe serves 6, so if you have a family of 4, save 2 portions for a lunch meal later.) • Suggested sides and dessert: Cabbage slaw, biscuits, milk, chocolate pudding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slaw mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 boneless center-cut pork chops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tsp vegetable oil • 1 can (15 oz.) baked beans • 1 can (7 oz.) corn kernels • Chocolate pudding cups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen biscuits 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tsp brown sugar • Salt • Pepper • 1/2 cup apple juice • 1 tsp apple cider vinegar • Dried thyme • Mayonnaise
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leftovers from Pork and Beans Skillet Supper • Suggested sides: Garden salad, whole grain bread and apple juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salad mix 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple juice 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 loaf whole grain bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light salad dressing



Use a Meal Planning Grid, cont.

Day	Recipe	Produce	Dairy	Meat, Poultry, Seafood and Eggs	Canned-Boxed-Bottled	Frozen	Bread/Grain	Other
Saturday	<p>Salmon Steamed with Tomato, Asparagus and Mushrooms</p> <p>Suggested sides: Italian bread, fruit juice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lemon • 1 tsp finely chopped parsley or dill 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ounces skinned salmon fillet, cut in 1/2-inch thick slices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil • 1 can (15 ounces) extra-long asparagus spears, drained • 1/4 cup canned, sliced mushrooms • 1/4 cup canned, petite-cut, diced tomatoes, • Fruit juice 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian bread 	
Sunday	<p>Caribbean Stir-Fried Shrimp</p> <p>Suggested sides: Garden salad, fruit juice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium onion • 1 clove garlic • Salad mix 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tsp vegetable oil • 1 can (20 oz.) pineapple chunks • 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes • 1/4 cup canned diced, mild green chilies • 1 tsp soy sauce • 3 cups cooked rice • Fruit juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 lb. shrimp 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red pepper flakes • Light salad dressing
Weekday Breakfasts	<p>Breakfast cereal with fruit, and milk or yogurt</p> <p>Suggested sides: Juice, coffee or tea</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bananas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-fat milk • Yogurt 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fruit and fruit juice • Ready-to-eat cereal 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee or tea
Weekend Breakfasts	<p>Waffles</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 can sliced peaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen waffles 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee or tea • Maple syrup
Lunches	<p>Deli sandwich (meat and cheese) with lettuce and tomato</p> <p>Suggested sides: String cheese, yogurt, canned fruit, fruit juice boxes, oatmeal cookie</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yogurt • String cheese • Sliced cheese • Leaf lettuce • Tomato 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sliced deli turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fruit • Fruit juice boxes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-grain bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mustard • Oatmeal cookies
Snacks	<p>Carrots, canned fruit, whole-wheat crackers, rice cakes, raisins, yogurt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby carrots 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned fruit cocktail • Whole wheat crackers • Rice cakes • Raisins 			
Other food items	<p>(See category for item list)</p>							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog food

*Above grid adapted from Food, Nutrition & Wellness by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010 and “Development of a Self-Directed Home Kitchen Makeover for Mothers of Young Children,” *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues*, by C. Byrd-Bredbenner and J.M. Abbot

Step 2: Shop Smart

Smart shopping starts before you set foot inside the grocery store. A successful shopping plan will save you time, money and effort and help you buy what you need for preparing nutritious meals and snacks. Use these tips to help you build a successful shopping list and to navigate through the grocery store.

- 1. Dig for deals.** Before you go, read through store flyers, look for coupons and specials and plan meals around specially priced foods¹³.
- 2. Make a shopping list.** Check your menu and your kitchen inventory, and make a shopping list of items you need. Include the amount and the form, e.g., fresh, frozen, dried, or canned; whole or sliced.
- 3. For efficiency, group your shopping list based on the layout of the store.** Have alternatives in mind in case a food is sold out or too expensive.
- 4. Schedule shopping.** Head to the grocery store when you have time to concentrate on shopping.
- 5. Make sure to eat before you go.** Hungry shoppers will be more tempted to buy items they don't need.
- 6. Check Nutrition Facts on the label.** The Nutrition Facts panel on food packaging is a convenient source of nutrition information for shoppers. Tip: Use the ingredient list, too, which tells what's in the food, in order from most ingredient by weight to least.
- 7. Buy perishables in the right amounts.** Buy only what can be used while they keep their peak of freshness. Some fresh vegetables, like spinach and green beans, lose up to 75 percent of their vitamin C within seven days of harvest, even when kept at the recommended refrigerator temperature¹⁴.

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How to Read Nutrition Facts Label¹⁵

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 **Calories from Fat** 110

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Potassium 700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

CALORIES

The total calories and calories from fat in one serving.

NUTRIENTS

The metric amounts of fats, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, fiber and protein in one label serving. Sometimes other nutrients are included.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS

The % Daily Value of the vitamins and minerals.

% DAILY VALUE

The percentage that one serving provides of the Daily Value for some nutrients. The % Daily Value also helps you judge how much of a nutrient a serving provides. In the 5-20 guide, 5 percent or less is low; 20 percent or more is high.

PERCENT DAILY VALUES EXPLANATION

Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

*Nutrition Facts label information from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness* by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010

Step 3: Get Ready to Cook

Cooking great-tasting healthy meals doesn't require you to know how to make the perfect soufflé or prepare bread from scratch. Instead, just the basic food "know hows" can help you prepare nourishing, flavorful and cost-conscious meals.

- 1. Review your recipe.** Consider what needs to be done first, second and so on. Then write it down. Make sure you have all of the necessary ingredients and equipment. Check the timing and cooking temperatures. (For a list of cooking terms and techniques, refer to "The Kitchen Glossary" on page 26.)
- 2. Wash your hands with warm, soapy water and dry them.** Personal hygiene and kitchen sanitation (clean surfaces, clean equipment, clean towels and clean food) are essential to safe and healthful food.
- 3. Gather your ingredients.** Get all of the ingredients you need from the pantry, fridge and freezer.
- 4. Use savvy shortcuts and substitutions.** Take advantage of time and effort-saving options, such as:
 - Washed and precut salad greens and salad bar ingredients from the store speed up prep time. You can also wash and precut veggies yourself the night before.
 - Canned mixed vegetables save washing and chopping time. Use them in stir-fries, omelets, on pizzas and more!
 - Pureed canned beans make broths thick and creamy and add a boost of fiber.
 - Canned evaporated milk is often a lower-fat substitute for cream.
 - Canned tomatoes (drained) make great salsas.
- 5. Get out the right equipment and know how to use it.** If the equipment isn't correct or used properly, the result may not be quite what you expected. Well-written recipes, like the ones on Mealttime.org, often identify the equipment needed for the recipe. Take inventory of the kitchen equipment you own and learn how to use it. For a list of cooking equipment, refer to "Essential Kitchen Tools" on page 24.



*Above copy adapted from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness* by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010 and "Development of a Self-Directed Home Kitchen Makeover for Mothers of Young Children," *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues*, by C. Byrd-Bredbenner and J.M. Abbot

Step 4: Get Cooking

- 1. Follow the recipe carefully.**
- 2. Check the recipe for pre-prep tasks,** such as chopping onions and do them first. Another option: use ingredients, like canned fruits, vegetables and beans, where the prep work is already done for you.
- 3. Measure properly.** Good food prep depends on good measuring skills. Hints: 1) Techniques differ for liquid and dry ingredients. 2) Nutrition labels on food packages provide amounts. Check the number of label servings per ingredient and the serving size to determine how much the container holds.
- 4. Use proper knife skills and safety measures.** Pick the right knife and know the difference between cutting terms such as “slice” “dice,” and “mince.” In a hurry? Canned fruits and vegetables are already sliced and diced for you.
- 5. Pay attention to time and temperature.** Overcooked food loses appeal and nutrients. Canned ingredients only need reheating. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers are food safety risks and need to be cooked to safe internal temperatures.
- 6. Multitask and save on cleanup time.** Use one-pot meals that dirty less kitchen equipment. Clean up as you go along, for example, while you’re waiting for the oven to heat, or a pot of water to boil. Or, while the lasagna bakes, make the salad and set the table.
- 7. Double batch when you cook.** On days when you have more time, double a recipe and freeze half. On super busy nights you can thaw and pop it in the in the microwave or on the stove to heat up, then serve!

Step 5: Serve a Delicious, Nutritious Meal

- 1. Make mealtime an event.** Clear away clutter, turn off the television and turn on soothing music. Add simple touches like candles, colorful napkins or straws.
- 2. Serve food that looks good on the plate.** Add color with fruit and vegetable varieties. For example, serve green vegetables with canned sweet potatoes or carrots. Top yogurt with canned blueberries or peaches. Toss salads with canned red or black beans.
- 3. Take time to enjoy family meals.** At least several times a week, enjoy meals with your family. The convenience of canned ingredients is a time saver, leaving more time around the family table.

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Step 6: Clean up and store leftovers safely.



Bring Your Family On Board

Involving your family in the kitchen can streamline meal preparation and allows everyone to explore the wonders of food and have some fun along the way. Here are some quick tips to bring your family on board in the kitchen:

Be a role model. Parents have a large influence on their children's food choices, so show your family that you eat and enjoy healthy foods¹⁶.

Make healthy foods easy to find. Give kids plenty of opportunities to find and try healthy foods. It may take eight times or more before kids accept the new food. Let kids decide how much to eat - pressuring them only creates negative feelings.

Invite everyone into the kitchen. Kids learn from watching and doing. Have them set the table, make table decorations, stir the dip or spin the salad. Kids who help in the kitchen are more likely to eat the food being served. Lending a hand also teaches them important skills needed for lifelong healthy cooking and eating.

Save Green and Go Green in the Kitchen*

From switching to energy-efficient light bulbs to using green products, being environmentally friendly in your home can go a long way to protecting the earth. There are plenty of simple ways you can do your part to reduce your impact on the environment – and your pocketbook – in your kitchen.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Waste from product packaging makes up a third or more of the trash people create. It uses up resources, such as fuel used to transport trash, and takes up space in landfills. These easy tips can help you reduce waste¹⁷.

- 1. Less is more.** Prepare the right amount of food and store leftovers safely. Reach for products that have less packaging or buy items in bulk and store them in reusable packaging.
- 2. Buy basic kitchen tools – but not every specialty gadget.** The basic kitchen tools are all you need to prepare a wide variety of delicious, healthful meals.
- 3. Cut back on disposables.** Use refillable water bottles.
- 4. Reuse packaging when possible.** Wash empty plastic containers and jars with soap and water; use them to store leftovers or bulk foods.
- 5. Take your own shopping bags.** Take reusable, paper, plastic or canvas shopping bags with you to the grocery store.
- 6. Reach for recyclables.** Buy items that carry the recycling symbol when shopping. Then be sure to recycle them! Steel food cans boast the highest recycling rate of all food packages in the U.S. They're made of 100% recyclable steel.
- 7. Take part in community efforts.** Get information on your local community recycling program and which items they accept. Cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, glass bottles and jars, plastic bags and bottles and newspapers are often accepted recyclable items.



Conserve Energy, Food and Water

Conservation not only allows you to do your part to protect the environment, it can also help you save money on your utility bills. Follow these simple guidelines to conserve energy, food and water in your kitchen.

- 1. Use appliances efficiently.** Turn them off when you don't need them. Cook in smaller appliances such as slow cookers and microwave ovens. Use smaller pots and pans. Keep refrigerator and oven doors closed.
- 2. Save energy when cooking.** Prepare casseroles and other one-dish meals that let you cook the whole meal in the oven or on the burner at one time. For ease – just open a can or two and mix in canned ingredients.
- 3. Cut down on preheating time.** Preheat the oven just before you need to use it.
- 4. Repair dripping faucets.** One drop per second can waste 700 gallons of water over the course of a year.
- 5. Fill up the dishwasher.** Save water by running the dishwasher only when it is full.
- 6. Turn off the water.** If you have enough in the sink or are not using the water, turn off the faucet.
- 7. Buy only what you need.** Buy only enough food that you can use before it spoils. Proper storage can help you ensure that food stays fresh. Unopened canned foods aren't perishable, as fresh and frozen foods are.
- 8. Prepare properly.** Burned or poorly prepared food can end up in the trash, so plan ahead and follow recipe instructions carefully.
- 9. Use a compost bin.** Add scraps like corn husks and apple cores, then use the compost in your garden.

*Above copy adapted from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness* by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010

Essential Kitchen Tools

Whether you're outfitting a new kitchen or just paring down or updating your kitchen equipment, this list of basic kitchen tools shows what you need to prepare a wide variety of delicious, healthy meals. Hint: You may not need a lot of kitchen gadgets!

Measuring Tools¹⁸:

Liquid measuring cups — Used to measure liquid ingredients. These glass or plastic cups are marked with measurements and have a pouring spout.

Dry measuring cups — Used to measure dry and solid ingredients. A basic set includes 1-cup, 1/2-cup, 1/3-cup and 1/4-cup sizes.

Measuring spoons — Used to measure small amounts of liquid and dry ingredients, such as oils and spices. Basic sets include 1 tablespoon, 1 teaspoon, 1/2 teaspoon and 1/4 teaspoon.



Cutting Tools:

Kitchen shears — Used to cut dried fruits, snip herbs and to trim fat from poultry and meat.

Chef's knife — Used to cut, slice and chop.

Paring knife — Used to pare (remove) skin, and cut and slice fruits and vegetables.

Bread knife — Its serrated edge is used to cut bread, sandwiches and cakes.

Can opener — Used to open cans by cutting through their metal lids.

Cutting boards — Protects the counter while cutting. Buy them in different colors and use one for fruits and vegetables and the other for meat.

Mixing Tools:

Mixing bowl — Used to hold foods as they are mixed. These can be glass, plastic and metal.

Mixing spoons — Used to beat, mix and stir. These can be metal, wooden or plastic.

Silicon or rubber scraper — Used to remove food from spoons, sides of bowls, pans, jars and cans.



Draining Tools:

Colander — Used for draining cooked pasta and washing fresh produce.

Slotted spoons — Used to lift solid food from liquid or sauce and drain away liquid.

Strainer — Used to separate solids and liquids, such as draining canned beans.

Essential Kitchen Tools

Cookware and Bakeware:

Skillet (large, non-stick, 10-12”) — Used to brown and fry foods.

Saucepans or pots (1 large and 1 medium) with lid — Used to heat sauces and cook food, such as rice, pasta and soups, on the cooktop.

Steamer basket — Used to hold food in a saucepan above boiling water. Small holes let the steam pass through to cook food.

Casserole dishes — Used to hold mixed dishes and some desserts while baking.

Baking sheet — Used to hold foods during baking.

Cooling rack — Used to hold hot food as it cools.



Cooking and Baking Tools:

Ladle — Used to transfer liquid, like soup, from a pan to a bowl.

Meat thermometer — Used to measure the internal temperature of meat and poultry.

Tongs — Used to lift or turn hot food.

Turner — Used to lift and turn food such as pancakes and hamburgers.

Pot holders — Used to lift and handle hot cookware and bakeware.

*Above copy adapted from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness* by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010



The Kitchen Glossary

What's the difference between dicing and mincing? Beating and whipping? Recipes use certain terms that each have their own specific meaning. Using the correct technique helps ensure you get the results you expect from the recipe you are preparing.

Cutting Skills¹⁹:

Chop – Cut food into small, irregular pieces using up-and-down motions. Use a knife, food chopper, kitchen shears or food processor.

Cube – Cut food into small 1/2-inch square pieces.

Julienne – Cut into match-like strips.

Cut In – Divide food into pieces with a knife or kitchen shears.

Dice – Cut into small, square pieces that are 1/4-inch (or smaller) per side.

Mince – Cut into very fine pieces using an up-and-down motion. Use a knife, food chopper or food processor with a fine blade.

Peel – Strip off the outside skin or peel, as with oranges. Some foods can be peeled with your fingers. Other foods, such as potatoes, require a hand peeler to remove skin.



Sharpen Your Knife Skills

- Always use a sharp knife and a clean cutting board.
- Hold the knife and food properly. When holding food, place your fingertips under your knuckles and be careful of the thumb holding the food.
- Always cut away from yourself.
- Wash the knife and cutting board with hot, soapy water after each use.



Combining Skills:

Beat – Make a mixture smooth using a brisk over-and-over motion with a spoon or wire whisk, or a rotary motion with an electric or hand mixer.

Cream – Soften fat with a spoon or mixer, either before or while mixing it with another food (usually sugar) to make the mixture soft, smooth and creamy.

Cut In – Distribute solid fat in small pieces evenly through dry ingredients, using a cutting motion with two knives, a fork or a pastry blender.

Fold In – Blend delicate ingredients, such as beaten egg whites or whipped cream, gently using two motions. Use one motion to cut straight down through the mixture and another to turn the mixture up and over. Rotate the bowl about one-quarter and repeat until the whole mixture is lightly blended. Fold carefully with a wooden spoon or rubber scraper so air bubbles do not break and decrease volume.

Knead – Work dough with the hands by repeatedly folding, pressing and turning it.

Mix – Combine ingredients to evenly distribute them.

Stir – Mix ingredients with a spoon using a circular or figure-8 motion to combine them or to distribute heat evenly.

Whip – To beat rapidly with a beater, mixer or wire whisk to incorporate air and increase volume.

Basic Recipe and Food Preparation Terms

Other Recipe Terms:

Drain – Pour off liquid from a food, or place food in a strainer or colander.

Garnish – Decorate food or dish with a small amount of colorful food such as parsley.

Marinate – Let food stand in marinade for a length of time to tenderize it and develop flavor. Marinade is a flavorful liquid such as Italian dressing.

Season – Add ingredients, such as herbs and spices, for more flavor.

Cooking and Heating Terms:

Baking – Cooking food, such as breads, cakes, pies, cookies and similar foods, using dry-heat cooking.

Roasting – Cooking food, such as fish, meat, poultry and some fruits and vegetables, using dry-heat cooking.

Broil – To cook with direct heat from above using the broiler unit in the oven.

Boil – Heating liquid to the point that bubbles constantly rise to the surface and break.

Simmer – Heating liquid to the point that bubbles form slowly and break before they reach the surface.

Steam – Cooking food in steam, usually by placing a steamer basket inside a pan with a small amount of boiling water and covering the pan to keep the steam inside.

Fry – Cooking food in small or large amounts of fat, such as vegetable oil.

Pan-fry – Frying that uses a small amount of fat.

Deep-fry – Cooking food by completely covering it in a large amount of fat.

Sauté – Pan-frying foods, such as onions, to precook them before they are used in a recipe.



Braise – Browning food in a small amount of fat, followed by long, slow moist-heat cooking.

Stir-fry – Frying vegetables, tofu or tender cuts of meat, poultry or fish using a small amount of oil at a high temperature followed by steaming.

Baste – Brush or pour liquid over food, such as turkey, as it cooks.

Blanch – Cook quickly, but not completely, in boiling liquid.

Brown – Cook briefly until the surface turns brown.

Preheat – Heat an appliance before you put food in it.

Reduce – Simmer or boil liquid until it is less than its original volume to concentrate flavor.

Sear – Brown meat's surface quickly with very high heat.

Toast – Brown food by direct heat or in the oven.

*Kitchen Glossary definitions from *Food, Nutrition & Wellness*, by Roberta Duyff, Woodland Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2010

Meals in Minutes

Do the words “What’s for dinner?” ever trigger a panic attack? They don’t have to any longer. The following quick recipes show just how simple meal preparation can be if you have the right kitchen tools and a well-stocked pantry. Each recipe requires minimal prep and cook time, so you can prepare a delicious and healthful meal with record-setting speed.

For hundreds of quick, nutritious recipes for everything from breakfast to dessert visit www.Mealtime.org.



Tuscan-Style Pasta with Cannellini

Pasta is the perfect partner for nutrient-rich vegetables. High in fiber, this Tuscan-style pasta dish is gently tossed with a vegetable trio – fresh escarole and flavorful, canned cannellini beans and tomatoes.

Ingredients

- 1 pound ziti or penne pasta
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 5 large garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/4 pound curly escarole, sliced or 1 small bunch arugula
- 1 can (16 ounces) cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes with juice, undrained
- 2/3 cup dry white wine
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced

Preparation Time: Approximately 15 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Preparation: Cook pasta according to the package directions.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and cook until slightly browned (less than a minute). Add escarole; stirring occasionally until wilted, about 2 minutes. Add beans, tomatoes with their juice and wine. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season to taste with salt and pepper; stir in basil and heat through.

Drain pasta and toss with the sauce.

Servings: 4

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 700; Total fat 16g; Saturated fat 2.5g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 320mg; Total Carbohydrate 110g; Fiber 11g; Protein 22g; Vitamin A 30%DV*; Vitamin C 20%DV; Calcium 10%DV; Iron 40%DV

*Daily Value



Mealtime.org

Meals in Minutes



Caribbean Stir-Fried Shrimp

Stir-fries are speedy, but this one-skillet meal is even faster because all of the vegetables come right out of your pantry. There's no chopping, no peeling and very little cooking. But the ease and convenience don't mean you're sacrificing flavor. The combination of shrimp, canned tomatoes, peppers and pineapple is sweet, tart and dynamic.

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil, divided
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 can (20 ounces) pineapple chunks in juice, drained, and patted dry
- 1 pound frozen, large shrimp, thawed, peeled and cleaned
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1/4 cup canned, diced mild green chilies
- 1 teaspoon soy sauce
- 3 cups hot cooked rice (optional)

Preparation Time: Approximately 5 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 8 minutes

Preparation: Heat a large skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add half the oil and heat until smoking, about 10 seconds. Add the onion and stir-fry until lightly browned, about 1 minute. Add the pineapple and stir fry gently until pineapple browns lightly, about 1 minute. Remove pineapple to a bowl and set aside.

Add remaining oil to the pan. Add shrimp and stir-fry until opaque, about 1 minute. Add garlic and red pepper, if desired, and stir fry for 10 seconds.

Add the tomatoes, chilies, and reserved pineapple and stir-fry until heated through, about 1 minute. Stir in soy sauce and serve over rice, if desired.

Tip: We've kept the spiciness light (the canned chilies are mild) and the pinch of crushed pepper flakes is optional. If you want to add a little more heat, increase the pepper. Or for a completely family friendly version, eliminate the red pepper flakes, and your stir-fry will be as mild as a tropical breeze.

Servings: 6

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 170; Total fat 3g; Saturated fat 0g; Cholesterol 115mg; Sodium 330mg; Carbohydrate 20g; Fiber 2g; Protein 16g; Vitamin A 6%DV*; Vitamin C 40%DV; Calcium 8%DV; Iron 15%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 340; Total fat 9g; Saturated fat 2.5g; Cholesterol 65mg; Sodium 820mg; Carbohydrate 45g; Fiber 7g; Protein 21g; Vitamin A 90%DV*; Vitamin C 50%DV; Calcium 8%DV; Iron 20%DV

*Daily Value

Tip: We know there's nothing new about microwave-baked potatoes, but the technique in this recipe is a little different and gives much fluffier results. The problem with microwaving baking potatoes is that microwave ovens don't really bake — they steam — so the potatoes come out damp and dense instead of light and fluffy. You can quickly and easily get the best of both worlds by simultaneously preheating a conventional oven while the potatoes start cooking in a microwave oven. Then, when both the potatoes and the oven are hot, you place the spuds in the conventional oven, and they finish baking in about 20 minutes. The results are identical to oven-baking, but cooked in about half the time.

Beefy Potato Volcano

Go from pantry to table in 30 minutes. This hearty dish tops a hearty baked potato with a homemade beef stew, made with an assortment of nutrient-rich canned veggies from your pantry.

Ingredients

- 3 large baking potatoes 10 to 12 ounces each, preferably Idaho, washed and dried
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 pound ground turkey or lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
- 1 can (8 ounces) peas, drained
- 1 can (8 ounces) sliced carrots, drained
- 1 can (8 ounces) cut green beans, drained
- 1 cup canned, diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) beef or turkey gravy

Preparation Time: Approximately 5 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 40 minutes

Preparation: Preheat the conventional oven to 450°F. Place the potatoes in a microwave-safe, oven-proof glass baking dish, such as a pie plate, that fits in the microwave oven. Microwave the potatoes at full power for 10 minutes (the amount of time it takes to preheat the oven). Transfer the potatoes to the conventional oven and bake until tender, about 20 minutes.

Ten to 15 minutes before the potatoes are done baking, heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the ground turkey and cook until lightly browned, chopping and turning as needed with a spatula so the turkey browns evenly, about 5 minutes.

Add the seasoning to the skillet, followed by the peas, carrots, green beans, tomatoes and gravy to make the stew. Stir gently to combine and simmer for 5 minutes. Keep warm.

To serve: Cut each potato in half across its equator and set each half, cut-side down on a plate so that it looks like a small mountain. Cut a slit in the top of each potato half and squeeze the sides gently forcing some of the potato to “erupt” from the top. Ladle 1 cup of the stew over each potato to resemble flowing lava; serve immediately.

Servings: 6

Meals in Minutes



Pork and Beans Skillet Supper

Not only is this one-pot dinner fast and easy, it includes 10 minutes of unattended simmering time for setting the table, supervising homework or taking care of other tasks. The chops cook right along with baked beans and corn, and because these vegetables are canned (and therefore already cooked), as soon as the chops are done dinner is served. The recipe also uses a great time-saving technique for browning meat. The trick is that the pork chops are sprinkled with a little brown sugar. Since brown sugar caramelizes easily, it makes the chops brown in record time.

Ingredients

6 boneless, center-cut pork chops, about 3 ounces each
2 teaspoons light brown sugar
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon vegetable oil
1/2 cup apple juice
1 can (15 ounces) baked beans
1 can (7 ounces) corn kernels, drained
1 teaspoon apple-cider vinegar
Pinch dried thyme (optional)

Preparation Time: Approximately 3 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 15 minutes

Preparation: Season the pork chops on both sides with sugar and salt and pepper to taste; set aside.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Brown the chops on both sides, about 2 minutes per side.

Add the apple juice and heat to boiling. Stir in the baked beans, corn, vinegar and thyme, if desired. Stir briefly to combine the liquids in the pan. Simmer until the chops are firm to the touch (an internal temperature of 155°F), about 10 minutes, turning two or three times. Turn off the heat, cover for about five minutes as you finish preparing the meal; pork will come up to 160°F.

When the chops are done remove them to a serving platter. If the bean mixture is too liquid, boil over high heat for a few minutes, until lightly thickened, stirring often. Spoon the beans around the chops and serve.

Servings: 6

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 270; Total fat 10g; Saturated fat 3g; Cholesterol 45mg; Sodium 690mg; Carbohydrate 2g; Fiber 4g; Protein 21g; Vitamin A 0%DV*; Vitamin C 8%DV; Calcium 4%DV; Iron 10%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 240; Total fat 8g; Saturated fat 3g; Cholesterol 10mg; Sodium 720mg; Carbohydrate 31g; Fiber 3g; Protein 11g; Vitamin A 80%DV*; Vitamin C 6%DV; Calcium 20%DV; Iron 10%DV

*Daily Value

Pizza-licious Home-Baked Pie

Forget ordering a pizza. Save yourself time and cash by tossing this tasty, healthy version of your favorite pie into the oven.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil, divided
- 1 package (13.8 ounces) refrigerated pizza crust
- 1 can (8 ounces) zucchini in Italian-style tomato sauce
- 3 tablespoons canned tomato paste
- 6 ounces (about 1 1/2 cups) shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 can (7 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained
- 1 can (8.25 ounces) mixed vegetables, no-salt added, drained
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

Preparation Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 15 minutes

Preparation: Preheat an oven to 425°F. Oil a dark, metal-rimmed 10x15-inch cookie sheet with 1 teaspoon olive oil.

Unroll the crust onto the cookie sheet and press to cover the bottom of the cookie sheet, creating a slightly thicker rim around the edge. Brush another teaspoon of olive oil over the crust and set aside.

Purée the zucchini and the tomato paste in a blender or food processor. Spread over the pizza crust. Top with the shredded mozzarella, mushrooms, mixed vegetables, Parmesan cheese and remaining olive oil.

Bake until crust is browned and topping is bubbling, about 15 minutes. Let the pizza rest for 5 minutes before serving. Cut in 8 pieces.

Servings: 8

Meals in Minutes



Green Salad with Posole and Creamy Cilantro-Lime Vinaigrette

Toss crisp lettuce and other veggies with a velvety vinaigrette made with fiber- and protein-rich creamy cannellini beans, chilies, lime, cilantro and hot-pepper sauce.

Ingredients

For the Creamy Cilantro-Lime Vinaigrette dressing:

- 1 can (about 15 ounces) cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/4 cup canned, diced green chilies
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon hot-pepper sauce
- 1 clove garlic, halved
- Kosher salt, to taste

For the salad:

- 1 bag (9 ounces each) romaine lettuce mix or 1 pound romaine lettuce, cleaned of damaged leaves, cored, washed, and broken in bite-size pieces
- 1 small head radicchio, cored and broken in bite-size pieces
- 36 grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 can (15 ounces) posole (whole hominy), drained and rinsed
- 1 cup shredded carrot
- 3 scallions (green onions), trimmed and sliced
- 1/3 cup canned, sliced ripe olives

Preparation Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 15 minutes

Preparation: To make the dressing purée all of the dressing ingredients in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Toss the romaine, radicchio, tomatoes, posole, carrot, scallions, and olives in a large salad bowl. Toss with the dressing and serve.

Bake until crust is browned and topping is bubbling, about 15 minutes. Let the pizza rest for 5 minutes before serving. Cut in 8 pieces.

Servings: 6

Nutritional Information Per Serving: For Dressing Only: Calories 80; Total fat 2.5g; Saturated fat 0g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 125mg; Carbohydrate 11g; Fiber 3g; Protein 3g; Vitamin A 2%DV*; Vitamin C 6%DV; Folate 12%DV; Calcium 2%DV; Iron 6%DV; Potassium 10%DV

Nutrition Information Per Serving: For Salad with Dressing: Calories 160; Total fat 4.5g; Saturated fat 0.5g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 360mg; Carbohydrate 27g; Fiber 7g; Protein 5g; Vitamin A 120%DV; Vitamin C 35%DV; Folate 32%DV; Calcium 6%DV; Iron 15%DV; Potassium 18%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Open-Face Chicken Bruschetta on Garlic Bread

Like bruschetta as an appetizer? Then you'll love this savory main-course sandwich, prepared with all the traditional flavors and blended with pantry-handly, protein-rich canned chicken.

Ingredients

- 1 can (10 ounces) chicken in water, drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained
- 1/2 cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 regular slices crusty bread
- 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- Basil leaves for garnish

Preparation Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Preparation: Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a medium bowl combine chicken, tomatoes, basil, green onion, 2 tablespoons olive oil, vinaigrette and pepper. Allow flavors to blend for about 15 minutes.

Combine 2 tablespoons olive oil with garlic. Brush olive oil-garlic mixture on both sides of bread. On a baking sheet, toast bread in the oven, about 8 to 10 minutes, until lightly browned and crisp.

To serve, spread chicken mixture over toasted garlic bread. Top with feta cheese and basil leaves.

Servings: 4

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 220; Total fat 6g; Saturated fat 2.5g; Cholesterol 35mg; Sodium 820mg; Carbohydrate 25g; Fiber 2g; Protein 18g; Vitamin A 10%DV*; Vitamin C 25% DV; Folate 20%DV; Calcium 15%DV; Iron 10%DV; Potassium 18%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Sloppy Josés

The slightly sweet, mildly spicy blend of sweet and sour tomato sauce and ground beef takes a south-of-border sojourn, served in these easy, warm Sloppy Josés taco bowls. The sauce couldn't be easier - a can of sauce, a can of beans, a can of Mexican-style corn and cooked ground beef. It's the same high-protein, one-skillet meal kids love, but with a little Mexican twist.

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 pounds lean ground beef or turkey
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) sloppy joe sauce
- 1 cup canned, red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (7 ounces) Mexican-style corn, drained
- 10 (6-inch) corn tortillas, heated according to package directions, kept warm
- 3/4 cup finely shredded lettuce
- 1/2 cup finely diced tomato

Preparation Time: Approximately 2 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 8 minutes

Preparation: Brown ground beef in a large skillet over medium-high heat, chopping and turning often, about 5 minutes, until beef is cooked through. Add the sloppy joe sauce, kidney beans, and corn and heat through, about 3 minutes.

To serve, place a tortilla in a small soup bowl and ladle half cup of the Sloppy José mixture in the center. Top with shredded lettuce and chopped tomato. Makes 10 bowls.

Servings: 10

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 200; Total fat 3.5g; Saturated fat 1.5g; Cholesterol 35mg; Sodium 470mg; Carbohydrate 26g; Fiber 5g; Protein 17g; Vitamin A 15%DV*; Vitamin C 6%DV; Calcium 4%DV; Iron 15%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Salmon Steamed with Tomato, Asparagus and Mushrooms

Prepare this quick seafood dish that's simple, yet satisfying. Steamed salmon, one of the healthiest ways to prepare this flavorful, nutrient-packed fish, along with convenient canned veggies adds a healthy boost without sacrificing time.

Ingredients

2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 can (15 ounces) extra-long asparagus spears, drained
12 ounces skinned salmon fillet, cut in 1/2-inch thick slices
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/4 cup canned, sliced mushrooms, drained
1/4 cup canned, petite-cut, diced tomatoes, drained
Finely grated zest and juice of 1/2 lemon
1 teaspoon finely chopped parsley or dill

Preparation Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 5 minutes

Preparation: Drizzle 1/2 teaspoon olive oil on a microwave-safe dinner plate and arrange asparagus spears in a spoke pattern with tips pointing outward, leaving 1/2-inch clear at the edge of the plate.

Arrange salmon slices in a single layer, slightly overlapping, in the center of the plate. The salmon will cover most of the asparagus stalks. Season with salt and pepper.

Scatter mushrooms, tomatoes and lemon zest over all. Drizzle lemon juice and remaining olive oil over top.

Invert another microwave-safe plate of the same size and carefully place on top, lining up the edges of the two plates exactly. Place in a microwave oven, and cook at full power for 4 minutes. Rest for 1 minute, remove the top plate, scatter the parsley or dill over top and serve immediately.

Servings: 4

Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 155; Total fat 6g; Saturated fat 0g; Cholesterol 55mg; Sodium 370mg; Carbohydrate 4g; Fiber 1g; Protein 23g; Vitamin A 7%DV*; Vitamin C 15%DV; Folate 29%DV; Calcium 2%DV; Iron 4%DV; Potassium 15%DV

*Daily Value

Meals in Minutes



Nutritional Information Per Serving:

Calories 100; Total fat 2.5g; Saturated fat 0g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 380mg; Carbohydrate 14g; Fiber 3g; Protein 5g; Vitamin A 80%DV*; Vitamin C 25%DV; Calcium 4%DV; Iron 10%DV

*Daily Value

Ten Minute-stroni

Combine canned tomatoes, navy beans or chickpeas, carrots and mushrooms to create a hearty stew packed with great taste and plenty of vitamins and minerals. In only 10 minutes you'll have a savory stew that's flavorful, rich and good for you.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon dried savory
- 1/4 teaspoon ground sage
- 1 quart canned, low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup 100% vegetable juice (such as V-8)
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- 1 cup canned, diced tomatoes (no-salt added)
- 1 cup canned navy beans or chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (8 1/4 ounces) sliced carrots, drained
- 1 can (8 1/4 ounces) cut green beans, drained
- 1 can (4 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained
- Parmesan cheese (optional)

Preparation Time: Approximately 5 minutes

Cook Time: Approximately 10 minutes

Preparation: Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until transparent, about 2 minutes. Add garlic, Italian seasoning, savory and sage, and cook 10 seconds. Add broth, vegetable juice, and vinegar and bring to a boil.

Add tomatoes, navy beans, carrots, green beans, and mushrooms; simmer 4 to 5 minutes.

Serve in bowls garnished with freshly grated Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Servings: 8

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