



Prep Once, Eat All Week

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No time to prepare healthy meals during the week? Find yourself eating out more often than you'd like or skipping meals altogether because you don't have food in the fridge? Wondering how to make eating real, whole food easier? Batch cooking is your new secret weapon!

What is batch cooking?

Batch cooking is defined as the "process of preparing multiple portions of food at once and storing them for future consumption." This can be done in countless ways, but often it means preparing enough meals for the entire week (or even a [month](#)) in one day. For example, you'd set aside a couple of hours on Sunday (or really whatever day of the week is most convenient for you) to make a large batch of food and then portion it into individual containers and enjoy a week's worth of delicious, whole food meals!

Getting Started

The initial reaction to batch cooking is often one of dread. Who wants to spend their precious free time in the kitchen? However, the couple of hours you'd spend batch cooking are really quite insignificant compared to the 168 hours there are in a week (only 1% of your time each week!). Plus, batch cooking provides a great ROI not only in terms of time but also health and money. Follow along with me for a minute:

- Count up the time you spend cooking every night after work. Easily 30-60 minutes daily, right? That can add up to over 6 hours a week in the kitchen preparing food.
- How often do you swing through a drive-through, call for take-out or dine out because you don't have food in the fridge or anything planned for dinner? And how much extra money did you spend compared to cooking at home?
- How many times do you find yourself thinking "what's for dinner" as you're leaving work?

Who couldn't think of about a hundred things they could do with the **extra 4+ hours** you could save by batch cooking...or the hundreds of dollars back in your pocket by eating out less over the course of a year...and not to mention the satisfaction of knowing **YOU** control the quality and quantity of ingredients you're putting into your body.

Have I sold you on batch cooking yet? I hope so! Visit [THIS BLOG](#) for more batch cooking basics.

You can do it!

Cooking once for the entire week can be very overwhelming at first. Try starting with the meal that you struggle with most then gradually add more days/meals as you get more comfortable with batch cooking and planning ahead.

The concept of batch cooking is very flexible. Find what works best for you and your family. For me, I batch cook my lunches on Sundays and prepare breakfast options a couple times a month to store in the freezer. Then when it

comes to dinner, I do a modified batch cooking approach and cook 2-3 times a week, often preparing and/or cooking dinner the night before to allow for easy reheating and less cook time after work.

What You'll Need:

- Ingredients from the grocery store, farmer's market, etc (shop ONCE for the week if possible)
- PLENTY of air-tight glass containers and jars (this also allows you to safely and easily re-heat food in the containers themselves)
- Snack size plastic or [reusable](#) baggies
- A GOOD knife (chopping is miserable when you don't have proper equipment!)
- Cutting board (wood or plastic)
- Set of mixing bowls
- Several baking pans in various sizes (aluminum or stainless steel; if you're going to bake or roast something, you might as well fill your entire oven while you're at it!)
- Friends and Family! Have meal prep parties, turn on some music to dance and sing along with...enjoy your time in the kitchen and make lasting memories with the ones you love!

Check out this complete list of [Batch Cooking Kitchen Essentials](#).

To help get you started, here are a few of my favorite, go-to recipes ([print the entire collection!](#)). Simply adjust the quantities if you have a larger family or want to make extra to freeze.

Breakfast

- [Breakfast Burritos](#)
- [Egg Muffins](#)
- [Homemade Turkey Sausage](#) (store in pre-portioned, cooked crumbles or patties)
- [Oatmeal Cottage Cheese Pancakes](#)
- [Make Ahead Steel Cut Oats](#)
- [Banana Zucchini Oatmeal Cups](#)
- Boiled eggs served with fruit and/or nuts (stores well in fridge all week!)

With the exception of the boiled eggs, all of the above recipes are freezer-friendly. Make a large batch and individually wrap them to store in the freezer. Then just re-heat when you need a quick breakfast.

Lunch/Dinner

- [Chicken and Tomato Zoodle Pesto](#)* (check out the video above to see this in action!)
- [Egg Roll in a Bowl](#)*
- [Asparagus Sweet Potato Turkey Skillet](#)*
- [Sheet Pan Chicken Dinner](#)*
- [Chicken Salad with Grapes and Walnuts](#) served over mixed greens
- [Slow Cooker Beef Ragu over Spaghetti Squash](#) served with a side salad
- [Clean Eating Chicken and Wild Rice Soup](#) served with a side salad

*easy one pan meals you can cook and enjoy all week!

Snacks

- Pre-portioned homemade trail mix with nuts, seeds, shredded coconut, dried fruits without added sugar, etc
- Pre-portioned plain Greek yogurt
- Pre-portioned fresh cut veggies and fruit
- Pre-portioned guacamole ([homemade](#) or a clean store bought version)
- Pre-portioned hummus ([homemade](#) or a clean store bought version)
- Pre-portioned homemade [Greek yogurt ranch dip](#)
- Individually wrapped real cheese