THE

ULTIMATE MEAL PREPPING GUIDE 101



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WHAT IS A **HEALTHY DIET**

A healthy diet is a cornerstone of overall well-being and plays a crucial role in maintaining optimal health. It encompasses the consumption of nutritious foods that provide essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals while supporting proper bodily functions. In this section, we will delve into the key principles of a healthy diet and guide you towards making informed food choices.

Balance and Moderation:

A healthy diet is all about balance and moderation. It involves incorporating a wide variety of foods from different food groups while being mindful of portion sizes. Balancing your meals ensures that you obtain a diverse range of nutrients necessary for your body's proper functioning. It is essential to include carbohydrates, proteins, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals in your diet while avoiding excessive consumption of any particular food or nutrient.

Whole Foods:

These are considered to be the biggest foundation of a healthy diet. Whole foods include fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and unprocessed or minimally processed foods. Opting for whole foods over processed alternatives promotes better overall health and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Nutrient Density:

Nutrient-dense foods as we discussed under whole foods provide a significant amount of vitamins, minerals, and other beneficial compounds relative to their calorie content. Fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, nuts and seeds are examples of nutrient-dense foods. These choices help ensure that your body receives the essential nutrients it needs without excessive caloric intake.

Hydration:

Water is an essential component of a healthy diet. Staying adequately hydrated supports digestion, nutrient absorption, temperature regulation, and overall bodily functions. The Institute of Medicine suggests aiming for about 8 cups (64 ounces) of water per day, but individual needs may vary based on factors such as activity level and climate.

Mindful Eating:

Practicing mindful eating is a vital aspect of a healthy diet. It involves paying attention to your body's hunger and fullness cues, eating slowly, and savoring each bite. Mindful eating helps you develop a healthier relationship with food, prevent overeating, and cultivate a deeper appreciation for the flavors and textures of the foods you consume.



GRAINS

Grains are a fundamental component of a healthy diet, providing us with essential carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Whole grains, such as whole wheat, oats, quinoa, and brown rice, are particularly beneficial due to their high fiber content and slower digestion rate, which helps regulate blood sugar levels and promotes satiety. When meal prepping, consider including whole grain options as the base for your meals, such as whole grain bread, pasta, or couscous.



FRUIT

Fruits are nature's sweet treats and are packed with vital nutrients, antioxidants, and fiber. They provide essential vitamins and minerals while satisfying your cravings for something naturally sweet. When selecting fruits, opt for a variety of colors to ensure a diverse nutrient profile. Berries, citrus fruits, apples, and bananas are excellent choices for their nutritional content and versatility.



BEANS & LEGUMES

Beans and legumes are plant-based powerhouses that offer a wealth of nutrients, including fiber, protein, complex carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. They are an excellent source of plant-based protein, making them an ideal choice for vegetarians and vegans. Incorporating beans and legumes into your meal prepping routine adds texture, flavour, and versatility to your meals.

VEGETABLES

Vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet, providing a wide range of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants while being low in calories. They offer various health benefits, including improved digestion, reduced risk of chronic diseases, and greater overall health. Include a colourful array of vegetables in your meal prepping to get a diverse range of nutrients.



MEAT, SEAFOOD & POULTRY

Meat, seafood, and poultry are rich sources of high-quality protein, which is crucial for muscle repair, growth, and overall body functioning. Additionally, they provide important vitamins and minerals like iron, zinc, and vitamin B12. Fish, such as salmon, trout, and tuna, are excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which contribute to heart health. Include a variety of lean meats, seafood, and poultry in your meal prepping to ensure a well-rounded diet.











NUTS, SEEDS, OILS & FATS

Nuts, seeds, oils, and fats are vital elements of a healthy diet, providing essential nutrients, flavor, and satiety to meals. In this section, we will explore why these components are needed and how you can incorporate them into your meal prepping routine.

Nuts and seeds are nutrient powerhouses packed with healthy fats, protein, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They offer a range of health benefits, including supporting heart health, reducing inflammation, and promoting healthy brain function. Almonds, walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds, and pumpkin seeds are just a few examples of nutrient-dense options.

Incorporate nuts and seeds into your meal prepping by adding them to salads, yogurt, smoothies, or homemade energy bars. They can also be crushed and used as a coating for proteins or as a topping for roasted vegetables. Remember to enjoy them in moderation as they are calorie-dense.

Healthy oils and fats are essential for the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (such as vitamins A, D, E, and K), providing energy, maintaining healthy skin, and supporting brain function. Opt for unsaturated fats, including monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, as they are considered heart-healthy. Olive oil, avocado oil, coconut oil, and nut oils are great options.

BUILDING THE **PERFECT MEAL**

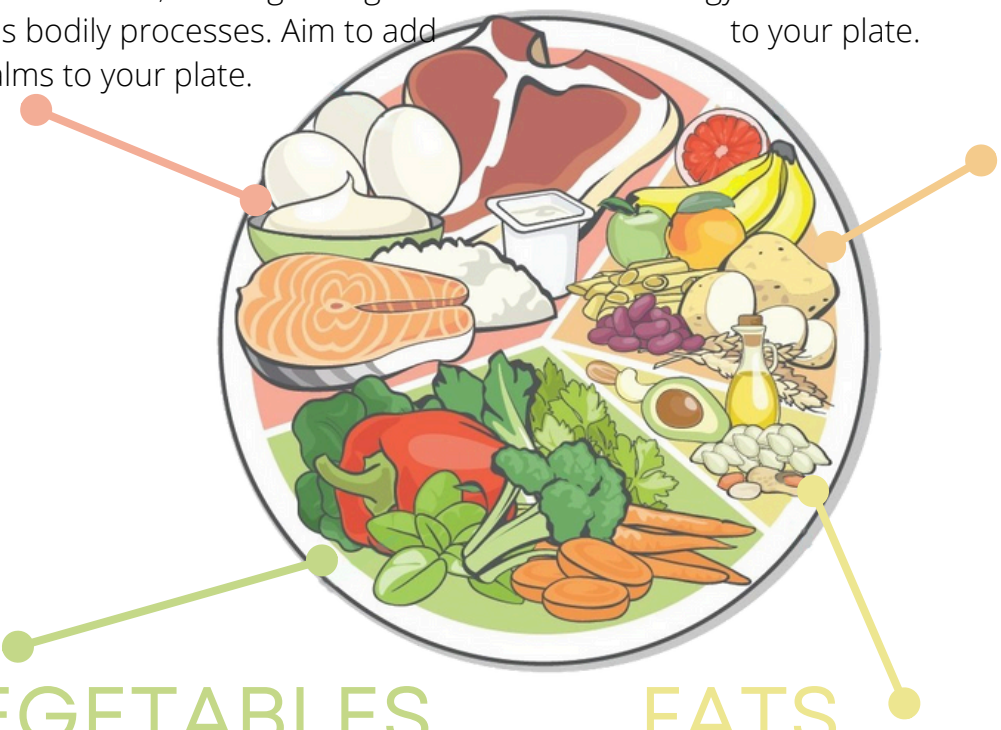
Building a perfect meal involves creating a well-balanced plate that provides the necessary nutrients, flavors, and satisfaction. In this section, we will guide you through the key components to consider when constructing your meals during the meal prepping process.

PROTEIN

Protein is an essential macronutrient that plays a crucial role in building and repairing tissues, supporting immune function, and regulating various bodily processes. Aim to add 1-2 palms to your plate.

CARBS

Complex carbohydrates like whole grains and starchy vegetables provide essential nutrients and sustained energy. Aim to add 1-2 cupped hands to your plate.



VEGETABLES

Vegetables are rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They provide essential nutrients while adding vibrant colors, textures, and flavors to your meals. Aim to add 1-2 fists of vegetables to your plate.

FATS

Healthy fats are important for various bodily functions. Aim to add 1-2 thumbs worth to your plate.

MACRO CHEATSHEET **FOR PROTEIN**

FOOD	CAL	PROTEIN	CARB	FAT	FIBRE
Chicken Breast	165	**31g**	0g	3.6g	0g
Beef Rump Steak	250	**26g**	0g	17g	0g
Beef Mince	250	**20g**	0g	18g	0g
Turkey Mince	189	**19g**	0g	12g	0g
Egg Whites	52	**11g**	0.6g	0.2g	0g
Whole Egg	143	**13g**	1g	10g	0g
Canned Tuna	116	**26g**	0g	0.7g	0g
Snapper	105	**20g**	0g	2g	0g
Greek Yoghurt	59	**10g**	4g	0g	0g
Cottage Cheese	81	**11g**	3g	2g	0g
Pink Lentils	353	**26g**	60g	1.5g	11g
Kidney Beans	127	**8.7g**	22g	0.5g	6.4g
Atlantic Salmon	206	**22g**	0g	13g	0g
Shortcut Bacon	542	**34g**	0.6g	44g	0g
Pork Mince	143	**19g**	0g	7g	0g
Full-Fat Milk	61	**3.3g**	4.8g	3.4g	0g
Edamame	121	**11g**	10g	5g	5g
Whey Protein	408	**76g**	7g	7g	0g
Chicken Thigh	209	**19g**	0g	15g	0g
Soy Beans	147	**12g**	9g	6g	6g

*All amounts are based on 100g
*Please note that these values are approximate and can vary depending on factors such as the specific brand and cooking methods used.

MACRO CHEATSHEET **FOR CARBOHYDRATES**

FOOD	CAL	PROTEIN	CARB	FAT	FIBRE
Sweet Potato	86	1.6g	**20.1g**	0.1g	3g
White Potato	77	2g	**17.5g**	0.1g	2.2g
Brown Rice	111	2.6g	**23.5g**	0.9g	1.8g
White Rice	130	2.4g	**28.7g**	0.2g	0.4g
Quinoa	120	4.4g	**21.3g**	1.9g	2.8g
Wholemeal Pasta	131	5.8g	**24.9g**	1.4g	3.7g
Rolled Oats	379	13.1g	**67.7g**	6.5g	9.4g
Wholemeal Bread	247	10.4g	**47.9g**	2.7g	6.4g
Rice Noodles	96	2.2g	**22.8g**	0.4g	1.6g
Bagel	289	11g	**58.1g**	1.3g	2.5g
Bran	246	15.6g	**64.5g**	3.3g	10.5g
Muesli	441	10.1g	**67.6g**	13.9g	9.6g
Rice Bubbles	381	6g	**85.7g**	0.4g	0.9g
Banana	96	1.1g	**22g**	0.2g	2.6g
Apple	52	0.3g	**14g**	0.2g	2.4g
Grapes	69	0.7g	**17g**	0.2g	0.9g
Pineapple	50	0.5g	**13g**	0.1g	1.4g
Orange	43	0.8g	**9g**	0.2g	2.3g
Honey	304	0.3g	**82.4g**	0g	0.2g
Jam	278	0.2g	**68g**	0.1g	1g

*All amounts are based on 100g
*Please note that these values are approximate and can vary depending on factors such as the specific brand and cooking methods used.

MACRO CHEATSHEET **FOR FATS**

FOOD	CAL	PROTEIN	CARB	FAT	FIBRE
Avocado	160	2g	9g	**15g**	7g
Almonds	579	21g	22g	**49g**	12g
Chia Seeds	486	16g	42g	**31g**	34g
Coconut	354	3.3g	15g	**33g**	9g
Olive Oil	884	0g	0g	**100g**	0g
Walnuts	654	15g	14g	**65g**	7g
Flaxseeds	534	18g	29g	**42g**	27g
Peanut Butter	588	25g	21g	**50g**	7g
Dark Chocolate	604	7.8g	24g	**43g**	11g
Greek Yogurt	97	9.5g	3.5g	**5g**	0g
Macadamia Nuts	718	7.9g	13.8g	**75.8g**	8.6g
Salmon	206	22g	0g	**13g**	0g
Hemp Seeds	553	31.6g	10.9g	**48.8g**	4g
Almond Butter	614	18.6g	19g	**55.5g**	11g
Cashews	553	18.2g	30.2g	**43.9g**	3.3g
Pecans	691	9.2g	13.9g	**71g**	9.6g
Sunflower Seeds	584	20.8g	20g	**51g**	8.6g
Brazil Nuts	656	14.3g	11.7g	**66g**	7.5g
Ghee	900	0g	0g	**100g**	0g
Avocado Oil	884	0g	0g	**100g**	0g

*All amounts are based on 100g
*Please note that these values are approximate and can vary depending on factors such as the specific brand and cooking methods used.

MACRO CHEATSHEET **FOR VEGETABLES**

FOOD	CAL	PROTEIN	CARB	FAT	FIBRE
Broccoli	34	2.8g	6.6g	0.4g	2.6g
Carrots	41	0.9g	9.6g	0.2g	2.8g
Spinach	23	2.9g	3.6g	0.4g	2.2g
Bell peppers	31	1g	6g	0.3g	2.1g
Tomatoes	18	0.9g	3.9g	0.2g	1.2g
Cabbage	25	1.3g	5.8g	0.1g	2.5g
Cauliflower	25	1.9g	5g	0.3g	2g
Green beans	31	1.8g	7.1g	0.2g	3.4g
Kale	49	4.3g	8.8g	0.9g	3.6g
Zucchini	17	1.2g	3.1g	0.3g	1g
Eggplant	25	1g	5.9g	0.2g	3g
Sweet potatoes	86	1.6g	20.1g	0.1g	3g
Brussels sprouts	43	3.4g	8.3g	0.3g	3.8g
Asparagus	20	2.2g	3.7g	0.2g	2g
Celery	16	0.7g	3g	0.2g	1.6g
Cucumbers	15	0.6g	3.6g	0.1g	0.5g
Mushrooms	22	3.1g	3.3g	0.3g	1g
Onions	40	1.1g	9.3g	0.1g	1.7g
Peas	81	5.4g	14.5g	0.4g	5.1g
Corn	96	3.4g	21g	1.5g	2.4g

*All amounts are based on 100g
*Please note that these values are approximate and can vary depending on factors such as the specific brand and cooking methods used.

BEGINNER

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE **TO PORTION SIZING**

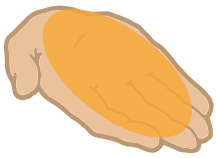
Maintaining a balanced and healthy diet relies on effective portion control. While using measuring tools like scales and cups can be helpful, using your hands as a guide offers a practical and convenient way to estimate portion sizes.



A portion of protein = 1 palm



A portion of vegetables = 1 fist

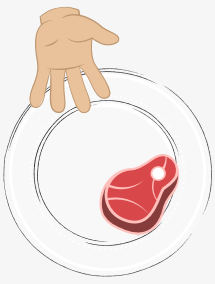
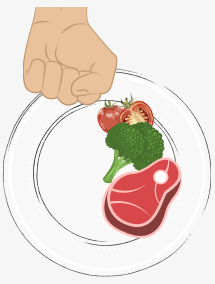


A portion of carbs = 1 cupped hand



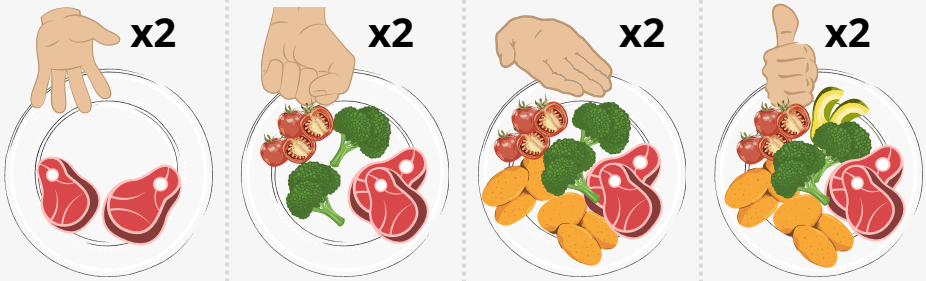
A portion of fats = 1 thumb

For moderately active individuals, consuming 1-2 portions from each food group per meal is generally sufficient for weight maintenance and overall health improvement. However, it's important to note that there is considerable room for variation based on individual needs and preferences. To provide some examples, here are customized plate ideas for three meals per day:

	PROTEIN	VEGTABLES	CARBS	FATS
LOWER ENERGY NEEDS	E.g. meat, fish, eggs, cottage cheese, Greek yoghurt, tofu	E.g. broccoli, lettuce, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, cabbage	E.g. brown rice, potatoes, beans, fruit, bread	E.g. oil, butter, nuts, nut butters, seeds
Minimal activity: No exercise and less than 6000 steps/day				
Based on each meal, 3 times a day				

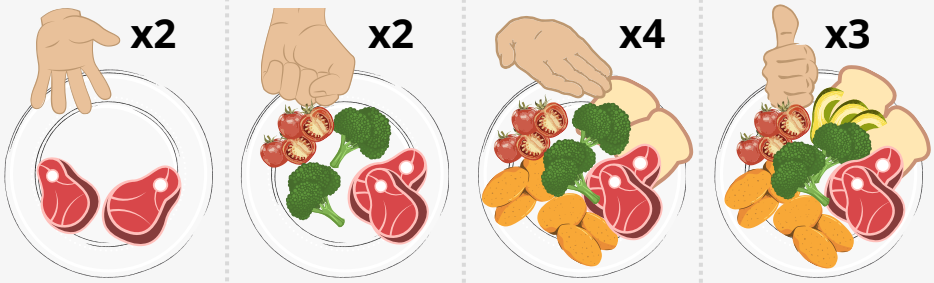
Moderate activity: 3-4 workouts/ week, 6000 - 10,000 steps/day

Based on each meal, 3 times a day



High activity: 6-7 workouts/ week, 10,000 - 15,000 steps/day

Based on each meal, 3 times a day



HIGHER ENERGY NEEDS

* These are just a rough guide and are only to be used as examples as every person requires a different amount of energy/food depending on their body.

IF YOU NEED MORE FOOD ON YOUR PLATE BECAUSE YOU'RE...

- Not feeling satisfied at meals
- Eating fewer meals through the day
- Not getting muscle-gain results

THEN START BY ADDING...

- (+) 1 cupped handful of carbs and/or
- (+) 1 thumb of fat

...to 2-3 meals each day.



IF YOU NEED LESS FOOD ON YOUR PLATE BECAUSE YOU'RE...

- Feeling too full at meals
- Eating more meals through the day
- Not losing the weight you'd like

THEN START BY REMOVING...

- (-) 1 cupped handful of carbs and/or
- (-) 1 thumb of fat

...to 2-3 meals each day.



ADVANCED

CALCULATING YOUR **CALORIE & MACROS**

Determining the precise amount of food (energy) required for individuals to achieve their goals of fat loss, muscle building, or weight maintenance varies from person to person. In the following sections, we will establish the specific quantity that suits your needs.

1 Find Your BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate)

This refers to the minimum amount of energy or calories that the body requires to function properly while at rest. In other words, it is the number of calories needed to maintain basic bodily functions such as breathing, circulation, and organ function.

Male

(10 x ___kg) + (6.25 x ___cm) - (5 x age) + 5 = _____ calories

Female

(10 x ___kg) + (6.25 x ___cm) - (5 x age) - 161 = _____ calories

For example, a male who weighs 70kg, is 170cm in height and is 25 years old would have a BMR of 1642 calories.

2 Find Your TDEE (Total Daily Energy Expenditure)

This refers to the total number of calories that an individual burns in a day, including the calories burned during daily activities and exercise.

TDEE takes into account an individual's Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR), as well as the calories burned through physical activity and the thermic effect of food (the energy required to digest and process food).

- 1.2 Sedentary (Little-no exercise)
- 1.35 Lightly Active (1-3 days of exercise/ week)
- 1.55 Moderately Active (3-5 days of exercise per week)
- 1.75 Very Active (6-7 days of exercise per week)
- 2 Extremely Active (7 days of very hard exercise or physical job)

BMR _____ x Activity Level = _____ calories

For example, a male who has a BMR of 1642 calories and activity level of 1.55 would have a TDEE of 2545 calories.

3 Set Your Goal

Once you have calculated your TDEE, you can set your calorie goal by either subtracting, adding or maintaining calories from your TDEE.

For example, a male who has a TDEE of 2545 calories and wants to aim to lose 500 grams of fat per week would need to set their calories at starting point of 2045 calories.

Work Out Your Macronutrient Amounts

Macronutrients, also known as "macros," are the three essential nutrients that provide energy and are required in large amounts in the human diet.

PROTEIN

Proteins are essential for building and repairing tissues in the body, including muscle, bone, and skin.Proteins provide 4 calories per gram. The amount of protein a person needs can vary depending on their age, sex, weight, physical activity level, and other factors. For example, athletes, bodybuilders, and people who are trying to lose weight or gain muscle may need more protein to support their goals. Recommended intake should be around 1.5-2g per kilogram of body weight.

For example, a person who weighs 70kg, is training consistently and is aiming for fat loss would be ideal to consume 140g of protein daily, which is 560 calories.

FAT

Fats are also a source of energy for the body, but they are also important for many other functions, including hormone production, insulation of organs, and nutrient absorption. fats provide 9 calories per gram. Similar to protein, the recommended daily intake of fat can vary depending on several factors, including age, sex, weight, and physical activity level. The Institute of Medicine suggests that adults should aim to get between 20% and 35% of their daily calorie intake from fat.

For example, for a person following a 2045 calorie diet, they should aim to consume 30% (68g) fat daily, which is 614 calories.

CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates are the primary source of energy for the body and provide 4 calories per gram. The number of carbohydrates needed should make up 45-65% of your diet, otherwise can be made up with the remaining amount of calories after protein and fat has been considered.

For example, for a male following a 2045 calorie diet you do the sum: 2045 calories - (calories from protein 560 + calories from fat 614) = 871 calories (218g) allocated for carbs daily.

PERFECTING YOUR **MEAL PLANNING**

Streamlining your meal planning process can significantly simplify your routine. To help you achieve this, here's a step-by-step guide on how to optimize your meal planning journey:



SET YOUR GOALS

Begin by setting clear goals for your meal prepping efforts. Are you looking to save time during the week? Eat healthier? Stick to a specific dietary plan? By defining your needs, you can tailor your meal prepping approach accordingly. Start by writing out your goals on a piece of paper

Tip: If you went with the more advanced method of calculating your calories and macronutrients, you can include these in your goal writing process.

DETERMINE YOUR MEALS

Consider your schedule and eating habits to determine the number of meals you want to prep in advance. This could include breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks. Start with prepping a few meals initially and gradually increase the number as you become more comfortable with the process.





GET YOUR CONTAINERS

Invest in good-quality food containers that are suitable for meal prepping. Opt for containers that are microwave-safe, leak-proof, and stackable. Having containers of various sizes will allow you to portion meals appropriately and store different types of dishes effectively.

PREPPING SUPPLIES



Dedicate a specific area in your kitchen for your meal prepping activities. Keep your pantry well-stocked with staple ingredients and spices that you frequently use. Organize your meal prepping supplies, such as measuring cups, cutting boards, knives, and other utensils, in a convenient and easily accessible manner.



CREATE A SCHEDULE

Take time each week to plan your meals in advance. Consider your dietary preferences, nutritional needs, and any specific recipes you want to try. Once your meal plan is ready, create a schedule for your meal prepping activities. This can be a designated day or time when you'll dedicate to grocery shopping, cooking, and assembling meals.

UTILISE BATCH COOKING



Batch cooking is a key element of meal prepping. Choose recipes that lend themselves well to batch cooking, such as casseroles, soups, stews, or roasted vegetables. Prepare larger quantities of these dishes, which can be portioned out into individual servings for the week.



FOCUS ON VERSATILITY

Opt for versatile ingredients that can be used in multiple recipes throughout the week. For example, roasted chicken can be incorporated into salads, wraps, or stir-fries. Cook grains like quinoa or brown rice that can be paired with different proteins and vegetables. This approach adds variety to your meals while reducing waste.

Remember, meal prepping is a personal process, and it may take a bit of trial and error to find what works best for you. Stay organized, be flexible, and adapt the process to suit your needs and preferences. With practice, you'll become more efficient and confident in your meal prepping routine.