

MEAL PLANNING FOR HEALTHY FAMILY HARMONY// WEEK FOUR

Learn my system for ongoing prep and planning to have fresh, healthy meals throughout the week!

PRODUCE

Always include your family's favorites in the fruit bowl and vegetable drawer!

- Avocado** 2-4
 - Fresh basil** 1 bunch, 2 recipes
 - Bibb or iceberg lettuce leaves**
 - Green and/or purple cabbage** 1/2 head
 - Carrots** 10-20, 3 recipes
 - Salad mix** 1
 - ↳ See formulas for easy salad making
 - Celery**
 - Cilantro** 3 recipes
 - Cucumber** 4, 2 recipes
 - Garlic** 2 recipes
 - Fresh ginger** 2 recipes
 - Lime** (for juice)
 - Green onions**
 - Onion** 1
 - Red pepper** 1
 - Tomatoes** 2-4
 - Veggies for orange or white puree** (ex: 4 carrots, 1/2 butternut squash, 1-2 zucchini, 1 onion)
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BAKERY

- Crusty Bread 1-2 loaves** 2 recipes
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CANNED / DRY

- Spring roll rice paper wrappers** 10
 - Vinegar** (apple cider or rice vinegar)
 - Sugar**
 - Almond or walnuts** 1 cup
 - Balsamic vinegar**
 - Creamy peanut butter**
 - Peanuts or Sesame seeds** (optional)
 - Macaroni noodles or your choice shape** 2 recipes
 - Brown Rice** 4 recipes
 - Rice Noodles/Rice Vermicelli** 1 bag (optional)
 - Hot sauce**
 - Dark sesame oil**
 - Soy sauce**
 - Peanut butter** 1/2 cup
 - Hoisin sauce** (can sub teriyaki sauce)
 - Canned Tomatoes** 4 small cans or 2 large cans diced or crushed tomatoes
 - Sriracha sauce** or a chile garlic sauce (optional), 2 recipes
 - Oil**
 - Olive Oil**
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HERBS & SPICES

- Dried thyme**
 - Oregano**
 - Basil**
 - Crushed red pepper**
 - Garlic powder**
 - Salt & pepper**
 - Mrs. Dash** or other all purpose seasoning
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DAIRY

- Shredded cheese {cheddar or anything melty}** 3 cups, 2 recipes
 - Extra-firm tofu** 1 package
 - Milk** 3/4 cup
 - Shredded parmesan** 1/2 cup
 - Greek yogurt** or sour cream
 - Mozzarella in brine** 6 ounces (can substitute sliced avocado for vegan version)
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DELI

- Protein** 1 pound (such as ground beef or turkey or crumbled tofu)
 - Cooked shrimp {peeled and sliced}** 20 medium or 1 package tofu, preferably baked tofu but any firm tofu will work
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DINNER RECIPES//WEEK FOUR

Tue/Wed/Thurs dinners are easily packed for Wed/Thur/Fri lunches. Be sure to plan for and purchase items needed for some simple lunches for Mon/Tue. For example, pita and hummus or cheese and crackers or use some of those salad greens.

The accompanying breakfast schedule is full of shelf stable items that can always be used with any weekly dinner menu.

MONDAY

FRESH ROLLS

Ingredients:

10 spring roll rice paper wrappers
1 carrot peeled and julienned (you can peel, but I don't; save leftovers)

1 cucumber julienned (you can peel, but I don't; save leftovers)
1 red pepper julienned (save leftovers)

1/3 cup chopped purple cabbage (optional; chop it all into thin strips and save for leftovers as stir fry)

1 ounce cooked rice noodles/rice vermicelli (optional; this is traditional but I usually skip and just use more veggies)

2 avocados sliced
1 bunch fresh cilantro or mint or basil (chop entire bunch, save leftovers)
lettuce leaves torn into pieces ***save large outer leaves for lettuce wraps later in week***

Protein:
20 medium cooked shrimp (peeled and sliced) or 1 package tofu, (sliced)

optional garnish: peanuts (crushed or finely chopped), crushed red pepper, sesame seeds

brown rice to serve on side

Peanut Sauce

1/2 cup peanut butter
1/4 cup oil (light olive oil or grapeseed oil)

1/8 cup vinegar (apple cider or rice vinegar)

2 Tablespoon hoisin sauce (optional can sub teriyaki sauce)

4 teaspoons soy sauce
1 tsp garlic powder
1 teaspoon Sriracha sauce or a chile garlic sauce (optional, spicy or mild as your family prefers)

1/4 c water to thin for pouring/dipping

Directions:

Peanut Sauce:

Whisk or food process all ingredients except water. Add 1-2 Tablespoons of warm water at a time, until you reach desired thinness.

Pour warm water into a large bowl or 9-inch square or round baking pan. I use a pie pan. Working with one at a time, dip the rice paper wrapper into the warm water for 15-20 seconds (or whatever the package suggests). It should be soft, yet still slightly firm and pliable. Immediately remove from the water and place flat onto a work surface such as a large plastic or ceramic cutting board (not wood).

Fill the rolls; Place the toppings/fillings you desire lengthwise on the wrapper. Do not over-stuff the roll.

Roll everything up tightly. To do so, gently pull up the bottom of the roll and roll over the filling. Then, roll and use your hands to tuck the filling in as you go. It's basically like you're rolling a burrito! Remember, you want a very tight roll. But also remember they tear easily. It's fun and takes practice.

Older kids can wrap their own. Younger kids can eat ingredients separate (no wrapper). Only make what you plan to eat. These do not store well as the rice paper dries out. Save all leftover ingredients separately for other recipes; this is a great beginning of week prep recipe!

Serve brown rice on the side to fill out the meal. Top with veggies and/or garnishes and/or peanut sauce.

TUESDAY

VEGETABLE SOUP

Ingredients:

1 pounds protein such as ground beef or turkey or crumbled tofu

4 cloves garlic minced

1 small yellow onion diced small, about 1 cup

10 medium carrots sliced thin, about 4 cups

6 stalks celery sliced thin, about 2 cups

6 cups water

4 small or 2 large can diced or crushed tomatoes (or both)

2 teaspoons dried oregano

1 teaspoon dried basil

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1 teaspoon salt adjust to taste

1 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 head green cabbage roughly chopped, about 4 cups

Toppings (optional)

shredded cheese
greek yogurt or sour cream

cilantro or parsley

hot sauce
sliced crusty bread or cooked brown rice for serving

Directions

Cook protein in bottom of large pot with a tablespoon of oil and onions and garlic, 8-10 minutes until starting to brown.

Add the carrots, celery, water.
Add diced tomatoes, crushed tomatoes, tomato sauce, spices. Bring to a boil.
Simmer 20 minutes.
Add cabbage.

Simmer 5 more minutes.

Can be frozen in single portions for easy on the go meals.

Serve with any toppings you like.

WEDNESDAY

LETTUCE WRAPS

Ingredients:

Sauce leftover from earlier in week

Filling:

1 (14-ounce) package extra-firm tofu drained and crumbled 1 tablespoon dark sesame oil

6 thinly sliced green onions (about 2/3 cup) divided

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro divided

3 tablespoons lower-sodium soy sauce

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 teaspoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon Sriracha (hot chile sauce such as Huy Fong)

1 cup matchstick-cut cucumbers

1 cup matchstick-cut carrots

2 cups cooked brown rice

8 Bibb or iceberg lettuce leaves

Directions:

To prepare filling, spread crumbled tofu in a single layer on several layers of paper towels; cover with additional paper towels. Let stand 20 minutes, pressing down occasionally. You can skip this step and just cook a little longer, if you are pressed for time.

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add sesame oil to pan; swirl to coat. Add tofu; saute for 5-10 minutes until beginning to brown. Add 1/3 cup green onions and carrots; saute 1 minute, stirring occasionally. Add 2 tablespoons cilantro, soy sauce, ginger, sugar, and Sriracha; saute 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in cucumbers, and remaining green onions.

Spoon 1/4 cup rice into each lettuce leaf. Top with about 1/2 cup tofu mixture; sprinkle with 1 tablespoon cilantro. Serve with sauce.

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THURSDAY

COWBOY MAC AND CHEESE

Ingredients:

1/2 pound macaroni noodles cooked

3/4 cups milk

3/4 cup veggie puree (ex: carrots butternut squash, zucchini, onions)

2 cups shredded cheese (cheddar mozzarella, etc, just needs to melt)

spray oil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375.

Make veggies puree by microwaving veggies and food processing with minimal water, just until pureed. Or food process leftover roasted veggies with minimal water. Moist vegetables like zucchini should ideally be roasted. Onions should always be roasted for water content and flavor. You can roast onions wrapped in foil for 45-60 minutes and then puree them whole.

Mix together milk, cheese and veggie purees.

In a 9-inch baking pan, spray oil, place noodles in and pour sauce over.

Bake at 375 for 30-40 minutes or until bubbly and browned.

You can freeze this and cook from frozen, but it doubles the cooking time. You can also defrost, but this takes 1-2 days in fridge. It holds up well from freezing, though, both before and after cooking.

Prep Notes

1 day before: Can double this recipe and prep cowboy mac and cheese to put in freezer for "pop in the oven ease" later

[Serve with Salad Formula](#)

FRIDAY

PESTO NOODLES

Ingredients:

1 bunch fresh basil great for when you buy a bunch a use just a few leaves for another recipe, such as caprese

2 cloves garlic

1/2 -1 cup olive oil

1/2 -1 cup almond or walnuts

1/2 tsp salt

1/4-1/2 cup shredded parmesan

1 bag noodles

Directions:

Pesto is fun and easy to make. A lot of it can be made to taste or adjusted if you don't have quite the right amount of an ingredient. You can even leave out the cheese for a vegan version.

Roughly chop and remove stems from the basil.

Pulse the nuts in the food processor.

Put all ingredients in the food processor, except olive oil.

Pulse.

Slowly add olive oil and process until fairly smooth. Add enough olive oil to get the consistency you desire.

Remember, once made, it will get thick and harden in the fridge, but be softer and smoother/runnier at room temperature. Fresh pesto only keeps a few days, but can be frozen in smaller portions for later use.

Cook noodles to package directions, toss with pesto and serve warm!

CAPRESE

Great to serve with Pesto Noodles or any other meal this week when you want something fresh.

Ingredients:

2-4 tomatoes

6 ounces mozzarella in brine can substitute sliced avocado for vegan version

12 leaves basil

olive oil

balsamic vinegar

salt and pepper

Directions:

Slice tomatoes and mozzarella (or avocado). You can adjust the thickness of your slices to accommodate exact size/portions of cheese and tomatoes. Cut in a way to get an equal number of slices of each.

Stack or layer, alternating tomatoes and cheese.

Finely dice basil and sprinkle on top just before serving. Drizzle with oil and vinegar and salt and pepper to taste.

NOTES FOR THE WEEKEND