

**How To Use This Guide**

(Note: The titles on this page are color coded to match the next page.)

1. **What’s on the Calendar?** Determine which nights of the week are best for you to cook. (Ex. Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays). If it’s easier to use your phone or digital calendar, feel free to use that, but follow the same steps. To do this, type or write the following events in the calendar.

* Your schedule
* Your family’s schedule
* When you have the most energy
* When your tv shows come on (Hey, those are important too.)

\*Be sure to include appointments or events that you will arrive home too late to get home to get dinner finished in a reasonable time. Remember if you’re not having to go grocery shopping or stressing about what your family will eat, you will have a little more time on your hands.

1. **What’s already working?** Use your family favorites as filler meals throughout the week or month. Does your family love Taco Tuesday or Mac & Cheese Mondays? Don’t give it up! Adding in meals that are already familiar to you and don’t require a lot of thought will make this process a lot easier and decrease the amount of leftovers.
2. **What needs to be done to be ready to cook?** Look at where you placed meals and Maybe you need to defrost the chicken (if you don’t have an Instant Pot). Or let’s let that salmon marinate. Mark these items in your planner or in your calendar on your phone to make sure they get done.
   * Marinate Meats
   * Chop Veggies
   * Defrost Items
   * Add Crockpot Meals Before Bed or Before Work
3. **What days are blank?** These days will be where you prepare your meals! The days don’t have to be entirely empty for you to be able to squeeze a meal in there. Note, this is just a plan and plans change. BUT it’s better to have options ready so you don’t end up heading through that drive thru multiple nights a week.
   * Decide which nights you’ll cook what meal
   * Will you want leftovers?
   * When will you most likely go out to eat/do pick up?

**Tip:** When you finish one month, don’t completely erase the calendar. Keep events that stay the same every month in place and leave the meals that your family enjoyed the most. Both of these steps will give you less days to fill in and less to think about!

Month: \_\_\_\_SAMPLE MONTH FILLED IN\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|  | 1  Meal #1: Chicken & Steak Fajitas | 2  Mom’s Mental Break: Eating Out | 3  Meal #2: Family Favorite Choice 1 | 4  Meal #3: Italian Style Stuffed Bell Peppers | 5  Kitchen Closed: Eating Out | 6  Groceries arrive 2pm-4pm |
| 7  Meal #1: Mozzarella Stuffed Meatballs + Gemelli Pasta + Green Beans | 8  Soccer Practice: Leftovers | 9  Meal #2: Family Favorite Choice 2 | 10  Karate: Leftovers  Marinate chicken in fridge (up to 24 hrs) | 11  Meal #3: Greek Chicken Pitas | 12  Kitchen Closed: Eating Out | 13  Groceries arrive 2pm-4pm  Add Chili ingredients to crockpot before |
| 14  Meal #1: Crockpot Southwest Chicken Chili + Cornbread | 15  Soccer Practice: Leftovers | 16  Meal #2:Italian Pork Loin & Veggies in Instant Pot | 17  Karate: Leftovers  Marinate Salmon (up to 24 hours) | 18  Meal #3: Thai Sweet Chili Salmon + Sweet Potatoes + Broccoli | 19  Kitchen Closed: Eating Out | 20  Eating Out: Soccer Tournament |
| 21  Meal #1: BBQ Sliders + Roasted Potatoes + Salad | 22  Soccer Practice: Leftovers | 23  Meal #2: Honey Ginger Chicken + Brown Rice + Peas | 24  Karate: Leftovers  Marinate meat in fridge | 25  Meal #3: Burrito Bowls | 26  Party at The Johnson’s House | 27  Monthly Freezer Meal Prep |
| 28  Meal #1: Asian Style Beef & Broccoli | 29  Mom’s Mental Break: Eating Out | 30  Meal #2: Whatever You Like Salmon + Quinoa + Roasted Veggies | 31  Karate: Leftovers |  |  |  |

Month: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Sunday Start Date)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
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Month: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Monday Start Date)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
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Week of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ | Monday \_\_\_\_\_ | Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Thursday \_\_\_\_\_ | Friday \_\_\_\_\_ | Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ |
| Note: Double check list of ingredients needed on each day | Note: Double check list of ingredients needed on next day | Note: | Note: Marinate the chicken for tomorrow. | Note: | Note: | Note: Groceries will arrive between 2-4pm |
| Meal:  Returning from Out of Town | Meal:  Honey Garlic Salmon + Brown Rice + Peas | Meal:  Mozzarella Stuffed Meatballs + Gemelli Pasta + Green Beans | Meal:  Leftovers→ Soccer Practice | Meal:  Greek Chicken Pitas | Meal:  Family Dinner Night Out | Meal:  Date Night (kids with sitter) |
| Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed:   * Salmon * Honey * Garlic * Garlic Powder * Red Pepper Flakes * Peas * Brown Rice | Ingredients Needed:   * Diced Tomatoes * Pasta * Ground Turkey * Pesto Sauce * Mozzarella | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed:   * Smoked Paprika * Coriander * Thyme * Pita Bread * Chicken Thighs * Sandwich Works (onions, olives, Romaine Lettuce, etc.) | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: |

Week of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ | Monday \_\_\_\_\_ | Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Thursday \_\_\_\_\_ | Friday \_\_\_\_\_ | Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ |
| Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: |
| Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: |
| Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: |

Week of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Monday \_\_\_\_\_ | Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_ | Thursday \_\_\_\_\_ | Friday \_\_\_\_\_ | Saturday \_\_\_\_\_ | Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ |
| Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: | Note: |
| Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: | Meal: |
| Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: | Ingredients Needed: |



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