

fitlicity +foundations

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# MEAL PREP 101

MORE PREP, LESS PROBLEMS

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## more prep, less problems

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What is Meal Prep, and Why Do It?

If a food is in your possession or located in your residence, either you, someone you love (or someone you marginally tolerate) will eventually eat it. - THE FIRST LAW OF NUTRITION

The benefits of Meal Prep could be championed for paragraphs and paragraphs but can easily be summed up with just one sentence: Meal Prep saves time, saves exponentially on expenses (picture me gawking at the price of restaurant-made salads), and makes eating choices that align with your goals, values, and priorities more convenient and accessible than the alternative. It's a nutritional triple threat. What more could you want?

<b>your salad on take-out</b>	<b>your salad on meal prep</b>
	
<b>\$12.75</b>	<b>\$3.49</b>
delivery time: 20 minutes	assembly time: 5 minutes
full for seconds	full for hours

@fitcity

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### What is Meal Prep, and Why Do It?

Meal Prep is not: A one-size-fits-all process that looks the same every week, for every household and person. It also does not necessarily mean prepping, cooking, and portioning every single meal for the week ahead. Unless, of course, that's what you want it to be. What works for one person might not work for another, and that's okay. It also might not look the same from week to week, as schedules or needs can shift or change.

**meal prep is: dedicating a block of time to batch-cook, prepare, or assemble ingredients and/or full meals for the days ahead to make food choices that align with your goals, values, and preferences more accessible and convenient.**

It can be as simple as chopping a bunch of veggies for salads and stirring together a sauce for the week, or as involved as cooking and portioning full recipes. Meal prep should make feeding yourself and your family easier. It gives you a head start on the week, and helps you feel more in control of what you're eating and how you're spending your time.

### What's the Difference: Meal Prep vs. Meal Planning

Meal prep and meal planning are both tactics that make getting nutritious, delicious, and goal-oriented meals on the table easier, but they're not the same thing. Meal Prep is the process of setting aside a block of time to cook, prepare, or assemble ingredients and/or full meals in advance, while Meal Planning asks and answers the question of "What will I eat for [breakfast, lunch, dinner, snack]?" by pre-selecting meals that best fit your anticipated needs and schedule. Often times, the two work best in tandem.



Plan ahead in your Portal!

Ready to prep (and pre-prep)? Let's go!

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### 1. Identify Your Meal Prep Needs

RepEAT after me: The point of Meal Prep is to make mealtimes and food choices more convenient, more accessible, and more palatable! So, what do you need to feel more in line with your goals and to honor your Body-Food Choice Congruence? Think about your struggles. Do you often find yourself rushing out the door and defaulting to a sugar-laden start to the day? Focus on prepping make-ahead eggs or overnight oats for breakfast. Do you want to quit emptying your wallet on empty calories? Looks like lunch is the first thing to try meal prepping. Or maybe the thought of getting dinner on the table after a long day always leads you to grab the takeout menu. Time to tackle that challenge.

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### 2. Determine Your Prep Personality

How and when you Meal Prep is up to you and your lifestyle. And, you don't have to identify with just one personality. Your prep style can change from week to week, or be a bit of everything at once.



#### BATCH PREPSTER

Cooks big-batch cohesive meals like soups, stews, and casseroles from start to finish

Recipe-based

Marathon-style

May pre-portion for storage

Often has a pre-set plan

All that's left to do is reheat and eat!



#### MIX-N-MATCH MAKER

Cooks individual meal components like a pot of grains, roasted vegetables, hard boiled eggs, and chicken thighs

Stores like components together

Components come together in a variety of ways

Some cooking may occur day-of



#### ASSEMBLY-LINE CHEF

Prepares ingredients by chopping, dicing, and slicing in advance

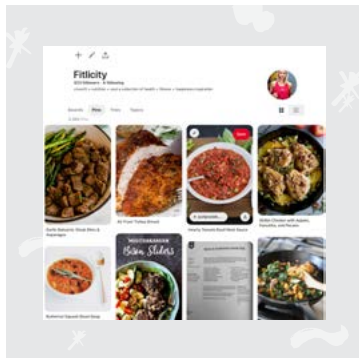
Assembles and portions no-cook meals and snacks

Cooking occurs at mealtime!

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### 2. Cater to Your Needs & Preferences

Based on your needs and personality, decide what dishes or ingredients will you cook, prepare, or assemble to uphold the goal of Meal Prep: to make nutritious, delicious, and goal-oriented food more accessible and convenient than the alternative. Use Instagram, Pinterest, blogs, cookbooks, and even your favorite restaurant dishes for inspiration!



### 💡 healthy hint

Though no one keyword sums up the fitlicityfam philosophy, certain indicators and phrases can narrow down the search such as "healthy," "light," "skinny," paleo, meal prep, real food, "clean eating." Just take these descriptors with a grain of salt (or sugar).

### Prep-Worthy Recipes...

1. **Outline distinct make-ahead moments:** Stick with recipes that can be fully or partially made in advance.
2. **Require prep-work prior to cooking:** Recipes that call for slicing, dicing, and chopping (I'm looking at you, stir-fries!) make great Meal Prep candidates, especially for the Assembly-Line Chef.
3. **Keep well in the fridge or freezer:** It's essential that a dish or ingredients can hold up for at least a few days.
4. **It reheats well:** If it makes tasty leftovers, it's good for Meal Prep

💡 So long, microwave! Palatable rehEATING makes all the difference. Try air frying, broiling, or sautéing.

5. **Are easy to modify and scale up (or down) to meet your needs:** Ask yourself, do I need to add protein, veggies, or fat? Are there any ingredients I can swap?

### Or! Make Mix-and-Match Whole Foods

Sometimes, the best approach is making a few components that can be turned into a variety of meals during the week by adding sauces and spices or swapping side (think: proteins, some starches, and some cooked vegetables that will hold up well in the fridge). This approach gives you flexibility, and is a great option when you don't enjoy repetitive meals.

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3. Make a Prep-Plan

Based on the recipes or meal concepts you've decided on, it's time to come up with a plan. Outline the what, when, and how to determine ways to maximize your time in and out of the kitchen.

what

when

how

paleo chili  
roasted brussels

during Sunday football  
while breaky cooks

Instant Pot  
oven!

4. Let the Prep Begin!

It's just you, some groceries, and your kitchen. Start with a clean sink, counters, and dishwasher. Turn on some great music, a binge-worthy series, or a podcast, and get to work!



Check out my guide to all the appliances you need to make nutritious and delicious meal prep convenient (and fun!)... and those you don't

download

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# meal prep

DISH

SERVING

METHOD

## CHECKLIST

- PLAYLIST
- RECIPES
- CONTAINERS
- CUTTING BOARD
- MESSY BUN
- INGREDIENTS
- MEASURING TOOLS
- UTENSILS

TEMPLATE BY FITLICITY