

MEAL PLANNING with

Food & Whine

PART 1

I used to be a “fly by the seat of your pants” kind of gal when it came to dinners. I rarely decided what to have for dinner until the day we had it. I would look at what we had on hand and what I felt like eating, and then make a decision based on that. Inevitably I didn't have all the ingredients so I'd have to go out and buy things. I found myself making trips to the grocery store almost every day, which was far too often for my liking. So in an effort to save time and hopefully money, I decided to try planning ahead and only making one weekly trip to the grocery store.

Here are some tips if you're new to meal-planning:

- Look at sales flyers and find the best deals, then build your meal plan around those items.
- Use your ingredients in more than one meal in the week. Find ways to use leftovers in your other meals (for example, bake a whole chicken one night, then the next night make chicken quesadillas or chicken soup with the leftovers).
- Look at what you already have on hand at home (especially perishable items) and incorporate them into the meal plan as well.

It takes a bit of time and thought to plan things out, but you only do it once and then it's done for a whole week. I find that I'm not only saving time but also money, because I'm sticking to my list and following the sales more closely now.

HELPFUL SITES

Gojee: Features recipes from food bloggers (like myself!). Just type in ingredients you have on hand and this site will generate recipes in a beautiful slideshow. It's great for finding ideas for your menu.

Grocery Server: Type in your grocery list and this handy site will provide you with the best deals in your area. This is for US residents only (I'm jealous of you Americans!).

How I Plan Meals for the Week: Amber Dusick offers great advice on meal-planning if you're not naturally organized, like me!

I'm an Organizing Junkie: For a great selection of meal plans, check out this site. She does a fabulous Menu Plan Monday link-up with hundreds of participating bloggers.

Meal Planning Mommies: Great tips on meal-planning, family-friendly recipes, and printable menu-plan templates.

Pinterest: A place to catalogue the things you like. I use this site to keep track of any recipes I see on the web that I want to try. Then when I write up my meal plan I can refer to my Pinterest catalogue to help me decide what to make that week. Here's my Pinterest account if you'd like to follow me and see what I'm planning: <http://pinterest.com/megann>

SOS Cuisine: Free personalized meal plans, recipes, and in-depth information on groceries in your area. This includes charts on what produce is in season where you live, and a comparison of prices on various grocery items at different local stores. Canadians are included (yay!).

Super Cook: This site is great if you want to take advantage of the ingredients you already have on hand. Type in items that you have in your kitchen and it will generate a list of recipes for you to try.

MY MEAL PLAN ARCHIVE

WEEK 1:



Tuesday: [Chicken Stir Fry with Noodles](#)

Wednesday: [Homemade Pizza \(ham & pineapple\)](#)

Thursday: [Spaghetti & Meatballs](#)

Friday: [Lentil Sloppy Joes](#)

Saturday: [Potato and Salsa Frittata](#)

Sunday: [Pork Tenderloin With Honey-Glazed Apples](#) and [Balsamic Mashed Yams](#)

Monday: [Sweet & Sour Meatballs](#)

WEEK 2:



Tuesday: [Mexican Lasagna](#)

Wednesday: Slow-Cooked Baked Beans

Thursday: Tuna Melts

Friday: Cheesy Ham & Broccoli Casserole

Saturday: Ham & Vegetable Pizza with Alfredo Sauce

Sunday: Jerk Barbecue Pork Steaks

Monday: French Toast

WEEK 3:



Tuesday: Pulled Pork Sandwiches

Wednesday: Caldo Verde

Thursday: Tortellini and Salad

Friday: Classy Chicken

Saturday: Perogies and Sausage

Sunday: Roast Beef with yorkshire pudding, mashed potatoes and broccoli

Monday: Beef Fajitas

WEEK 4:

Tuesday: Leftover Mashed Potato Gnocchi with Meat Sauce

Wednesday: Spinach Souffle

Thursday: Spaghetti with meat sauce

Friday: Salmon Patties

Saturday: Monte Cristo Sandwiches and Potato Wedges

Sunday: Slow-cooked Ribs

Monday: Lentil and Spinach Curry

WEEK 5:

Tuesday: Pad Thai

Wednesday: Ham & Pineapple Pizza

Thursday: Baked ham and Yam Medallions

Friday: Avocado Scrambled Eggs and Toast

Saturday: Buttermilk Chicken Fingers

Sunday: Lemon-Soy Chicken and Rice

Monday: Minestrone Soup

WEEK 6:



Tuesday: Macaroni and Cheese

Wednesday: Chili

Thursday: Turkey Dinner

Friday: Turkey Lasagna

Saturday: Turkey Soup

Sunday: Gnocchi and Chickpea Skillet Dinner

Monday: Thai Chicken Salad

WEEK 7:

Tuesday: Chicken Satay with Peanut Sauce

Wednesday: Ham and Pineapple Asian Noodles

Thursday: Black Bean and Pepper Quesadilla

Friday: Caramelized Onion and Bacon Pizza

Saturday: Italian Crockpot Meatloaf

Sunday: Meatloaf Sandwiches

Monday: Chicken Fettucine Alfredo

WEEK 8:

Tuesday: Kale, Broccoli & Bacon Rotini

Wednesday: Tortellini Soup

Thursday: Baked Beans and Toast

Friday: Italian Drip Beef

Saturday: Cheesy Mexican Rice and Beans

Sunday: Chicken and Black Bean Enchiladas

Monday: Belgian Beef Stew

WEEK 9:



Tuesday: Oatmeal Pancakes with Blueberry Banana Sauce and Maple Breakfast Sausage

Wednesday: Quinoa Chicken Nuggets and Yam Fries

Thursday: Perogies and Smoked Turkey Sausage

Friday: Homemade Pizza

Saturday: Macaroni and Cheese (using homemade pasta)

Sunday: Roast Chicken and Potatoes

Monday: Chicken Soup and Biscuits

WEEK 10:

Tuesday: [Skillet Lasagna](#)

Wednesday: [Shrimp Stir-Fry](#)

Thursday: [Chicken and Black Bean Enchiladas](#)

Friday: [Turkey Meatball Sliders](#)

Saturday: [Baked Tortellini and Salad](#)

Sunday: [Moroccan Chicken and Rice](#)

Monday: [Sweet Potato Coconut Quinoa Soup](#)

WEEK 11:

Tuesday: [Spinach, Leek and Mushroom Quiche](#)

Wednesday: [Chicken and Spinach Taquitos](#)

Thursday: [Dal with Lentils and Coconut Milk](#)

Friday: [Butternut Squash and Bacon Penne](#)

Saturday: [Thai Meatballs](#)

Sunday: [Mexican Chicken Crockpot Soup](#)

Monday: [Homemade Pizza](#)

WEEK 12:



Tuesday: [Black Bean Tortilla Soup](#)

Wednesday: [Tuna Tetrazzini](#)

Thursday: [Tofu Triangles](#)

Friday: [Quick and Easy Fish Tacos](#)

Saturday: [Fried Rice with Baked Tofu](#)

Sunday: [Slow-Cooker Chicken Tikka Masala](#)

Monday: [Mexican Pizza](#)