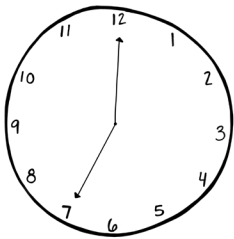


THE ULTIMATE TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE

Food Prepping 101 Guide

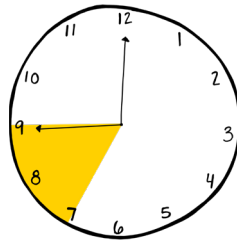
Planning and preparing healthy, delicious meals is the #1 key to success on the challenge (and beyond). Unfortunately, not meal planning is the #1 reason why most challengers fall short of their goals or worse, abandon their healthy habits altogether when the challenge ends.

Can you relate to the following scenario? It's Monday and you haven't prepared your meals for the day.



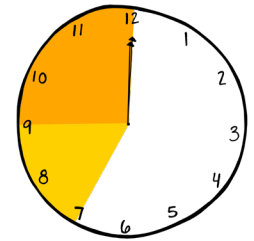
7:00 a.m.

You're running late and grab a pre-packaged breakfast on your way out the door



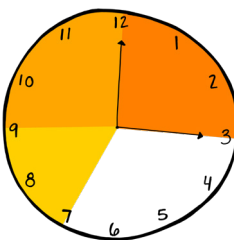
9:00 a.m.

Your co-worker brings donuts to work and since you already started the day on a not-so-healthy foot, you indulge



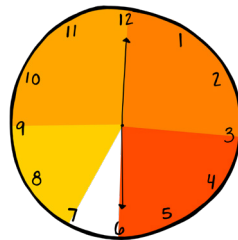
12:00 p.m.

With your blood sugar crashing from eating highly-processed, sugary foods all morning, you opt for the nearest fast-food lunch



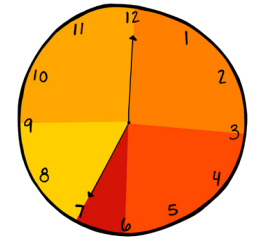
3:00 p.m.

Starving and low on energy, you grab some vending-machine pretzels. (They're fat free, after all!)



6:00 p.m.

Exhausted and cranky, you call for pizza delivery since there's nothing to eat and you don't feel like dealing with anything or anyone!



7:00 p.m.

The feeling of failure sets in and you question whether you'll EVER be able to follow-through on your commitment to lose weight and get healthy. Your self-esteem and self-worth are at an all-time low and you SWEAR tomorrow will be different.

SOUND FAMILIAR? REST ASSURED, YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

GOOD NEWS!

You have it within your control to end the conflict you feel when you want to eat healthy but don't take the steps to follow-through on the promises you made to yourself when you started this challenge. And it starts with making meal prepping a priority, just as you do every other important task in your life.

And we're here to help. We've compiled some easy-to-implement meal-planning strategies to help ensure your success during and after the challenge.

THINK YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO MEAL PREP?

Think again! Yes, life is busy. But if you spend just three hours per week planning and preparing your meals – that's less than 2% of your week – you'll:

- Significantly reduce the amount of time you spend in the kitchen each day cooking and cleaning up!
- Reduce the stress that often accompanies not being prepared or always wondering what to cook and eat!
- Decrease the chance that you'll be tempted by the drive thru; after all, you won't want to waste the food you spent time and money preparing!
- Increase the likelihood that you'll reach your goals
- Eliminate the feelings of low self-worth that come with not following through on the promises you made to yourself when you started the challenge

And, by eating nutritious food that you prepared ahead of time, you'll better control your blood sugar and avoid the mid-afternoon slump that often drives you to the vending machine or nearest energy drink. In short, the few hours you spend in the kitchen one day a week will be the best investment you make in your health. In all candor, it's more important than the time you spend exercising.

There is no right or wrong way to meal prep!

The key is to find what works for you. Experiment with a variety of methods until you find what works long term. The key is to PLAN what you're going to eat, regardless of how you execute the plan. As the saying goes, "if you fail to plan, you plan to fail." Here are some ideas to get you started!



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Plan and prep everything in one day

A large majority of challengers find success making a meal plan, going to the grocery store and preparing their food for the entire week on Sunday (or whatever day of the week works best for you). If you opt for this all-in-one-day-a-week meal planning and prep strategy, we recommend keeping one- to three-day's worth of meals in the refrigerator and freezing the remaining days' meals to preserve the freshness and taste.



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Plan one day, prep meals another day

If planning your meals, going to the grocery store, and preparing a week's worth of meals in one day is too overwhelming or time consuming, plan and shop one day and prepare your meals another day. Or, break the tasks into three days; whatever works for you!



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Plan one day, prep meals two times during the week

If you prefer to break your meal prepping up during the week, do what many challengers do: prepare two- or three-days' worth of meals at one time; two times a week. Here's how it works: on Sunday (or whatever day of the week works best for you), prepare meals for Monday through Wednesday. On Wednesday, prepare meals for Thursday through Saturday. If you want to roast a pan of vegetables for the week and then cook your meat several times during the week, do that. If you prefer to cook all of the meat one time a week and prepare your vegetables fresh each night, do that!



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Mix and match

Another popular option is to cook two or three meals on Sunday (or whatever day of the week works best for you) and then prepare one fresh meal each evening. Here's how it works: Make a breakfast bake and a pot of chili on Sunday for your breakfast and lunch meals and then enjoy freshly-prepared meat and veggies for dinner each night. This works well for people who want to eat freshly-cooked meals but don't want to be in the kitchen 4, 5 or 6 times each day!

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to meal prep!

Regardless of when you prepare your food, be sure to incorporate these strategies.

Make it a lifestyle

When it comes to nutrition, one size does not fit all and the same is true of meal prepping. The key is finding what works for 52 weeks, not just 4, 6, 8 or 12! Don't be overwhelmed by social media posts of perfectly-portioned meals or refrigerators that are stocked with chopped vegetables and pre-cooked meat ready to be assembled into sit-down dinners. Figure out what works for you and stick with it!

Keep it simple

You do not need to spend hours in the kitchen creating culinary masterpieces. Grilled or broiled protein, a mixed green salad with loads of free veggies and a sweet potato combine for a macro-friendly meal that takes just minutes to prepare. The busier your life is, the simpler your meals should be!

Eat foods you like

It's important to eat foods you enjoy, otherwise, you won't stick with it. Add variety to your favorite meals by changing up the spices or adding seasonal fruits and vegetables. It may take a few weeks for your taste buds to adjust to your healthy new eating habits, so experiment until you find flavors you enjoy.

Stick to your staples

There's no shame in eating the same meals again and again, especially if you enjoy them! Find 5 or 10 recipes or meal combinations you enjoy and rotate them based on your cravings and schedule.

Batch cook / prepare one or two meals each week

Breakfast bakes are a common staple in many challengers' homes because they're easy to make and reheat. And, they're good for breakfast, lunch or dinnertime meals. A crockpot of chili is another favorite.

Mason-jar salads are another easy, portable meal that can be prepared to fit your macros. Be sure to layer them correctly to avoid soggy greens. Pinterest or Google will show you how! Add a new veggie every week to keep things fresh (so to speak) and be sure to use challenge-compliant dressing.

Buy pre-washed, pre-cut veggies

While a bit more expensive, pre-cut veggies can save you a lot of time in the kitchen. Another helpful strategy is to wash and chop a week's worth of veggies so that you can easily grab them for salads or recipes.

Pre-portion snacks

Measure nuts, seeds and dried fruit in snack-size bags for easy on-the-go macros. Portioning these foods will also help you avoid overeating them.

Steamer bags

Place fresh vegetables inside a steamer bag, season with dried or fresh herbs and steam according to the package instructions for a fast, delicious side dish that's done in minutes and requires minimal clean up. No oven required.

Freezer bags

Another option is to place fresh or frozen vegetables, a carb, fat (e.g. an oil or approved dressing), and pre-cooked protein in a storage bag that you can easily freeze and reheat in minutes.

Have your groceries delivered

For a fee, you can have someone shop for your groceries and even have them delivered to your house.

Make it a family affair

Involving your kids in planning and preparing meals will teach them healthy habits and increase the likelihood that they'll eat the foods they have a say and hand in preparing. And, you won't feel guilty spending time away from your family because they'll be peeling carrots right alongside you!

Invest in a few kitchen gadgets

An Instapot is a pressure cooker. Pressure cooking is faster than conventional cooking, seals in moisture and allows you to cook frozen foods without thawing.

Crockpots are a great option for cooking in bulk.

Airfryers use hot air to "fry" foods to a golden, crispy finish without adding oil or other fats.

A **food scale** is a must for accurately measuring grams and ounces.

Food prep containers (BPA free) are a great way to store perfectly-portioned, portable meals

Spiralizers make light work of creating vegetable "noodles"

Steamer bags are a convenient way to steam vegetables

Storage bags: snack, quart, and gallon size

Mason jars are ideal for layering salad fixings

If you don't have these tools on hand, it can be a bit pricey to purchase them all at once, so decide which ones will be most beneficial to you during and after the challenge and add to your collection over time. You'll be so glad you invested in them as they'll simplify meal prepping immeasurably. We recommend your first purchase be a food scale.

Be patient

As with everything in life, developing long-lasting meal planning habits takes time. In fact, research shows that it takes anywhere from 21 to 66 days to make or break a habit, depending on how difficult the new routine is.

Some even liken forming a new habit to a jet taking off. At take-off, a jet's engines operate at almost full power and use as much as 25% of their energy. They're also 3 to 5 times less efficient at take-off. As the plane climbs higher, there's less drag and it begins to operate much more efficiently.

Do you see the parallel to meal planning? At first, it's going to consume a lot of time, but as you adopt strategies that work for you, the ride will get smoother and require much less energy. But, you have to get past take-off!

Commit!

Now that you know how simple meal planning and preparation can be, it's time to commit that you'll actually do it! Complete the meal prep pledge card and post it where you'll see it.

If you have any questions or need additional help with meal planning and preparation, please contact your coach.

THE ULTIMATE TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE

I understand that my success depends in large part on my commitment to planning and preparing healthy meals.

I commit to investing time each week meal prepping for the duration of the challenge no matter how crazy my schedule is, or how much I don't want to do it.

NAME _____

DATE _____