

FREE GUIDE · HEALTHY EATING

The 7-Day Whole-Food *Meal Plan*



A simple, realistic week of real-food meals: the balanced-plate method, smart grocery swaps, a 7-day menu with vegetarian options, a shopping list, and easy meal-prep tips.

21

simple, whole-food meals

1

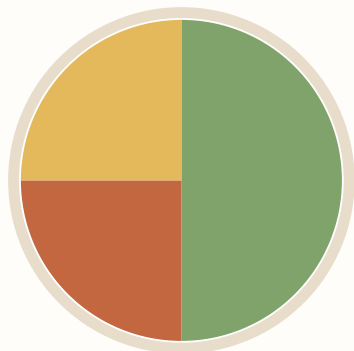
easy balanced-plate method

1 hr

Sunday meal-prep plan

Eat more real food

Whole foods are foods close to how they grow: vegetables, fruit, beans, whole grains, nuts, eggs, fish, and meat. Eating more of them, and fewer heavily processed foods, is one of the simplest ways to eat well.



The balanced-plate method

- **Half the plate: vegetables** and salad, in a variety of colors
 - **A quarter: protein** such as eggs, fish, chicken, beans, lentils, tofu, or paneer
 - **A quarter: whole grains or starchy foods** such as brown rice, oats, whole-wheat roti, or potatoes
- Plus:** a little healthy fat (olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocado) and water to drink

Instead of ...	Try ...
Sugary breakfast cereal	Oats with fruit and nuts
White bread and white rice	Whole-grain bread, brown rice, or millets
Chips and cookies	Fruit, nuts, roasted chana, or yogurt
Sugary drinks and juice	Water, sparkling water with lemon, or unsweetened tea
Processed meats	Eggs, fish, chicken, beans, or lentils

Minimally processed: fine

- ☐ Frozen vegetables and fruit
- ☐ Canned beans and tomatoes
- ☐ Plain yogurt and milk
- ☐ Whole-grain bread and pasta

Heavily processed: eat less

- ☐ Sugary drinks and sweets
- ☐ Packaged snacks and fried foods
- ☐ Instant noodles and ready meals
- ☐ Processed meats

THE PLAN

Your 7-day menu

Simple meals with plenty of leftovers. Vegetarian swaps are shown in brackets. Adjust portions to your appetite and activity level.

Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Mon	Overnight oats with berries and nuts	Big salad with chickpeas, veg, and olive oil dressing	Sheet-pan chicken (or paneer) with roasted vegetables
Tue	Veggie omelet (or besan chilla) with whole-grain toast	Leftover chicken (or paneer) and veg in a wrap	Lentil dal with brown rice and a side salad
Wed	Plain yogurt with fruit and seeds	Leftover dal with roti and cucumber	Salmon (or tofu) with sweet potato and greens
Thu	Overnight oats with banana and peanut butter	Grain bowl: brown rice, beans, veg, and salsa	Vegetable stir-fry with eggs (or tofu) and noodles
Fri	Veggie omelet (or besan chilla)	Leftover stir-fry	Homemade bean chili with a side salad
Sat	Whole-grain toast with avocado and an egg	Leftover chili with brown rice	Chicken (or chana) curry with vegetables and rice
Sun	Poha or upma with vegetables and peanuts	Leftover curry with roti	"Clear the fridge" soup or omelet, then Sunday prep

Snack ideas

- ☐ A piece of fruit with a few nuts
- ☐ Carrot or cucumber sticks with hummus
- ☐ Plain yogurt or a boiled egg
- ☐ Roasted chana or makhana

Drinks

- ☐ Water as your main drink
- ☐ Unsweetened tea or coffee
- ☐ Buttermilk or sparkling water with lemon
- ☐ Limit juice, soda, and alcohol

Six simple meal templates

These flexible "recipes" are more like formulas. Swap in whatever vegetables and proteins you have, which keeps cooking quick and reduces waste.

Overnight oats

5 MIN · SERVES 1

½ cup oats + ½ cup milk or yogurt + 1 tbsp seeds. Refrigerate overnight; top with fruit and nuts.

Veggie omelet

10 MIN · SERVES 1

2 eggs + a handful of chopped vegetables + herbs. Cook in a little oil. Veg option: besan (gram flour) chilla.

Sheet-pan dinner

35 MIN · SERVES 3–4

Chopped vegetables + chicken, paneer, or chickpeas + oil and spices. Roast at 200°C (400°F) until cooked through.

Simple dal

30 MIN · SERVES 4

1 cup lentils + onion, garlic, tomato, and spices + water. Simmer until soft. Serve with rice or roti.

Grain bowl

10 MIN · SERVES 1

Cooked grain + beans or leftover protein + raw or roasted vegetables + a simple dressing or salsa.

Quick stir-fry

20 MIN · SERVES 2–3

Mixed vegetables + eggs, chicken, or tofu + soy sauce, garlic, and ginger. Serve with noodles or rice.

Food safety: cook chicken and other meats until fully cooked through, refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours, and eat them within 3–4 days.

Flavor without much salt

- ☐ Garlic, ginger, and onion
- ☐ Lemon or lime juice
- ☐ Fresh herbs like coriander and mint
- ☐ Spices: cumin, turmeric, chili, pepper

Short on time?

- ☐ Use frozen mixed vegetables
- ☐ Keep canned beans ready
- ☐ Cook double, eat twice
- ☐ Assemble bowls from leftovers

Shopping list & label tips

Tick off what you already have. Shop mostly around the edges of the store, where the fresh foods are, and choose simple foods with short ingredient lists.

Fresh

- ☐ Leafy greens and salad
- ☐ Onions, garlic, ginger
- ☐ Tomatoes, peppers, carrots
- ☐ Cucumber, broccoli
- ☐ Sweet potatoes
- ☐ Bananas, berries, lemons
- ☐ Avocado

Protein

- ☐ Eggs
- ☐ Chicken or paneer
- ☐ Salmon or tofu
- ☐ Plain yogurt
- ☐ Canned chickpeas and beans
- ☐ Dry lentils (dal)
- ☐ Chana

Pantry

- ☐ Rolled oats, poha
- ☐ Brown rice, whole-wheat atta
- ☐ Whole-grain bread, noodles
- ☐ Nuts, seeds, peanut butter
- ☐ Canned tomatoes, salsa
- ☐ Olive oil, spices
- ☐ Soy sauce

Reading food labels in 30 seconds

1. **Ingredients:** listed from most to least. Shorter lists with real foods are usually better
2. **Added sugar:** watch for sugar, syrups, and words ending in "-ose" near the top
3. **Serving size:** check it, because the numbers apply to one serving, not the whole pack
4. **Sodium (salt):** compare similar products and choose the lower one

Eat well on a budget

- ☐ Buy seasonal fruit and vegetables
- ☐ Choose frozen produce; it's just as nutritious
- ☐ Beans, lentils, and eggs are low-cost proteins
- ☐ Buy oats, rice, and dal in bulk
- ☐ Plan meals so nothing goes to waste
- ☐ Compare store brands with name brands

One-hour Sunday prep & habits

An hour of preparation on the weekend makes healthy weekday meals faster than takeout.

Time	Prep task	Done
15 min	Cook a big pot of brown rice or another grain	☐
15 min	Wash and chop vegetables for salads and stir-fries	☐
10 min	Make 2–3 jars of overnight oats	☐
10 min	Boil eggs or cook a batch of dal	☐
10 min	Mix a simple dressing and portion snacks	☐

Habits that help

- ☐ Eat slowly and stop when comfortably full
- ☐ Drink water before reaching for snacks
- ☐ Keep fruit visible and treats out of sight
- ☐ Cook a little extra for tomorrow's lunch

Keep it realistic

- ☐ Aim for progress, not perfection
- ☐ Enjoy treats sometimes, without guilt
- ☐ Repeat meals you like
- ☐ Change one habit at a time

Weekly check-in	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Half-plate vegetables	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water as main drink	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Home-cooked meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

YOUR NEXT STEP

Learn more about food choices

If this week has you curious about which foods to choose and why, here's a popular book you can get delivered. Like any diet book, it shares its authors' own views on nutrition, so read it alongside mainstream advice.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Fat Burning Kitchen

Food-by-food guide

The authors' views on proteins, fats, grains, dairy, sweeteners, and more.

Smart swaps

Suggestions for healthier alternatives to common foods.

Physical book

Offered free, with you paying shipping and handling at the time of writing.

By Mike Geary & Catherine Ebeling

A nutrition specialist and a nutrition researcher.

[See The Fat Burning Kitchen →](#)

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