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An Online Nutrition Practice

Meal Planning *Simplified* in 7 easy steps!

Dinner time.

For some, these two words will invoke a host of negative thoughts and feelings.

You probably don't want to think about this much, but *what about dinner times causes you all the (bad) feels?*

Some possible answers:
- Lack of time
- Don't know what to make
- Not enough confidence in the kitchen
- Don't know where to start
- All the things... and so much more!

We have a solution to your problems!

The good news, dinner time doesn't have to be overwhelming. And, meal planning can make it easier! Effectual Nutrition has THE meal planning tools to help you simplify the process.

Just 7 Simple Steps & It will Get Easier

Even better, after you are set up-the with our 7 Simple Step process, meal planning will get easier every week! So, you may invest a little bit of extra time up front, but you will have HUGE benefits in the future. Bonus, by using this system you will limit last minutes trips to the grocery store, reduce the amount of food you have that goes bad before you have a chance to eat it. And, above all, this will make your life simpler. You're welcome!

So, how do I get started?
Use this workbook to help you make dinner time easier. The following pages will help to guide you in the process. We have even provided you with some ideas to help get the creative juices flowing.

Now, it is time to get started!

Ready - Set - GO!

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Introducing the 7 Easy Steps...

1. **Brainstorm a master list**
   - Write out any meals you like to eat. We've got to some to help you get you started.
   - Ask family members for their favorite meals, entrees, and/or side dishes.
   - New recipes or meals can be added to this list at anytime. So, keep it easily accessible.
   - A few words of caution:
     - This is a a brainstorming activity. That means it is okay to dream here. And, you are not looking for perfect meals. So, don't limit yourself in this step. If someone says they want curried chicken - and you've never made it before - just add it to the list anyway.

2. **Categorize your recipes - Optional**
   - Refer to the brainstorming worksheet for a sample list of recipe categories.

3. **Take stock of the food you already have on hand**
   - Check the fridge, freezer, cabinets, and pantry for any foods you already have in stock. When possible, pay attention to expiration dates .

4. **Plan your week**
   - Bust our your calendar or planner!
     - What type of commitments do you have that will prevent you from eating dinner at home? Which commitments will require a "fast" dinner?
     - For example, karate on Tuesday is at dinner time. So, you will want something right as you get home (Crockpot?). Not a recipe that takes an hour to make.

5. **Pick your meals for the week & plan ahead.**
   - Refer to your stock list - If a food items is going to expire soon, find a recipe on the master list to make with it.
   - This step does *not* require you to pick what meal will be made each day - unless you want to do that.
   - Once you have your meals decided for the week, get a quick shopping list together.

6. **Post the meal plan for everyone to see.**
   - Keep the meal plan in a high traffic area. This way, everyone knows what is in store of the week's meals. And, you can avoid that dreaded questions, "What's for dinner?"

7. **When it's dinner time, refer to your list of meals!**
   - As dinner time nears, make one of the dinners on your list. No need to think about it - the list is right there to help you streamline the process.

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STEP #1: BRAINSTORM A MASTER LIST - Worksheet

Sample Recipe Ideas:

- Fajitas
- BBQ chicken
- Pulled pork sandwiches
- Nachos
- Leftovers
- Chili & cornbread
- Soup & salad
- Eggplant parm & pasta
- Black beans & sweet potato tacos
- Loaded baked potatoes
- Homemade pizza
- Chicken kabobs
- Orange chicken & rice

STEP #2: CATEGORIZE YOUR RECIPES - Sample categories

- Chicken, beef, or pork
- Vegetarian or Meatless Mondays
- Casseroles or Instant Pot
- Taco Tuesday
- Sheet Pan Meals
- Less than 30 minutes
- Ethnic Cuisine
- BBQ/Grilling
- Family Favorites
- Pasta
- Breakfast for Dinner

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STEP #3: TAKE STOCK - Worksheet

Foods to be on the lookout for:

- Fruits or veggies - fresh, frozen, or canned
- Meats, cheese, or dairy products. OR their alternatives, such as beans, legumes, nut, or seeds.
- Dry ingredients - flour, rice, pasta, etc...
- Canned foods - soup, chili, broth, fruits, veggies, or other staple canned foods
- Pantry items - bread, cereal, nut butters, pasta or pizza sauce, etc...

List of foods you have on hand:

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-- SAMPLE --

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Meal Plan week of: June 25, 2019

STEP #4: PLAN YOUR WEEK

Week at a Glance

Sunday	Family Dinner
Monday	Meatless Monday
Tuesday	Karate @ 5pm
Wednesday	Open
Thursday	Volleyball @ 6pm
Friday	Dine Out – FriYAY!
Saturday	BBQ @ Friend's House

STEP #5: PICK MEALS FOR THE WEEK

Meals for the Week

1. Pulled pork sandwiches (fast)
2. Tacos
3. Veggie Kabob Pitas w/ rice
4. Nachos
5. BBQ Chicken – only (Saturday)
6. Leftovers (Tues/Thurs?)
7. Dine out (Friday)

Foods on Hand

- Frozen chicken
- Corn tortillas
- Tortilla chips
- Lettuce (some)
- Sour cream
- Bell Peppers
- BBQ sauce
- Rice

Grocery List

- Pork
- Hamburger buns
- Corn (with sandwiches)
- Head of lettuce
- Taco seasoning
- Cheese
- Black beans (tacos)
- Onion
- Onion
- Zucchini
- Pita bread
- Refried beans
- Salsa
- Tomatoes

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Meal Plan week of: _____

Week at a Glance	Meals for the Week
Sunday	1.
Monday	2.
Tuesday	3.
Wednesday	4.
Thursday	5.
Friday	6.
Saturday	7.

Foods on Hand

Grocery List

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