



# QUICK PLANNING

Winging it will only get you so far but most of the time it doesn't work.

You don't need to prep every single breakfast, lunch and dinner on a Sunday but planning your dinners is the secret to success.

Dinner time is when our brains are most fatigued with decisions, so if that hard work is already done then you will save heaps of time and stress doing this ahead of the week.

Here are 2 of the the easiest ways to plan.

Top tip - Cook once, eat twice. Make a bigger portion of each dinner and have for your lunch the next day, zero lunch prep needed!

## Option 1

This is what I do.

I grab the Woolworth's or Coles magazine and I plan my 5 meals out of that for the week, then I make the shopping list from it. I also have a couple of staple meals. Staple meals are great as you know how to cook them and you know the family like them. They are important to include. You don't have to reinvent the wheel every week.

So I will have 2 staple meals and pick 3 from the mags (or any source of recipes you choose)

I only pick meals that are easy. 5-7 ingredients (I count veggies as one ingredient) and take no longer than 30 minutes.

I have a magnet menu on my fridge and I write the meals there so we can all see what is to come.

## **Option 2**

5 meals, Monday to Friday.

This structure gives you variety and flexibility if needed.

It doesn't have to be in this order, this is an example.

### **Start with picking a protein**

Monday – Veg meal – e.g. Black bean taco's

Tuesday – Chicken – e.g. Chicken pesto pasta

Wednesday – Fish – e.g. Fish wraps

Thursday – Red meat – e.g. Steak stir fry

Friday – Easy – in my house this is eggs and avocado on sourdough, or chicken tenders.

### **Pick a carb**

Rice (packet is fine), pasta, noodles, potato, spaghetti, taco shells or whatever

### **Plants**

Have a least 2 + veggies in there. Frozen, fresh, tinned it all counts

Get these ingredients in.

Have some staples in your cupboard such as your favourite stir fry sauce, olive oil and /or dressings, tinned tomatoes etc

You can then pick a protein you fancy, add a carb, throw in some veggies

You could keep this structure every week and just mix it up.

Example – spaghetti Bolognese -if your red meat is minced beef pick that protein, choose spaghetti as your carb and throw in your veggies

The next week you could have spag Bolognese again but with pasta.

If you do this then you can also do a pick n mix based on what you fancy on the day.

You don't have to have these crazy fancy recipes all ready and food prepped, you just need to know what you are having and have the bits in.

**Tips** – make it even easier and buy microwave rice, 2-minute noodles, frozen fruits and veggies, readymade sauces

Cooking from scratch is always optimal but if the decision between a takeaway and homecooked meal is down to you having to cook a sauce from scratch then having that ready made sauce is a

win from me.

I personally save the longer cooking more complex meals for the weekend.

**Here is what a week looks like for me.**

### **5 quick easy dinner ideas**

#### **Monday – meat free**

Mexican Food

I love it. You can do so much with it, it is quick, easy and healthy.

Here is my regular Monday meal.



#### **Black bean nacho's**

**Serves 2**

**20 minutes**

**500 calories**

**20g of protein**

Tin of black beans – drained and rinsed, mash half of them

Half a red onion chopped

Half a red capsicum

Grated carrot

Grated Zucchini

Corn on the cob

6-8 mushrooms

100g Nacho's

50g of light cheese

Taco mix  
Salsa  
Light sour cream

### **What to do**

Turn the oven on about 100

Split the nachos in 2 bowls and sprinkle on the cheese and pop in the oven for a few minutes

Cook all the veggies and add in the taco mix

Mix in a little water to loosen up the mashed black beans

Pop all the black beans in with the veggies and mix

Add in a couple of table spoons of salsa and heat through

Divide the veg mixture over the 2 bowls, add sour cream and salsa

Delish!

You can use this same mix and have Veggie tacos.

Just swap out the nachos for hard or soft taco shells

You can also make enchiladas with the same mixture, just swap out with soft tortillas

You can also swap out the black beans for extra lean minced beef or chicken.

So many ways!



### **Tuesday - Fish**

#### **High Protein Prawn Gnocchi**

**Serves 2**

**20 minutes**

**425 calories**

**25g of protein**

## Ingredients

200g of prawns

Half a Brown Onion - diced

2 Garlic Clove

Dried Italian Herbs

60g Peas

80g frozen Spinach/fresh baby spinach - chopped

250g Gnocchi

100g Passata

160g Cottage Cheese

60ml (¼ cup) Boiled Gnocchi Water (the starch released in the water will help thicken the sauce)

10g Grated Parmesan

40g Light Cheese

## Method

Place a saucepan over a medium heat, add the onion, garlic and spinach and cook gently and don't over brown (this is also a great time to add your peas to cook through). Season with dried herbs and remove from the heat.

In another saucepan bring water to the boil, add gnocchi and a pinch of salt. Cook until gnocchi begins to float to the top of the saucepan. Remove from water once all have risen. Remember to reserve ¼ cup cooking water.

In a Blender (can be hand whisked) add your passata, gnocchi water and cottage cheese, blend until smooth

Put back the pan with your onions etc onto a low heat and add your peas and gnocchi. Pour over your creamy tomato sauce and stir

Once combined, sprinkle over Cheeses - Serve.



**Wednesday – meat free again**

## **Shakshuka**

**Serves 2**

**15-20 minutes**

**400 calories**

**20g of protein**

### **Ingredients**

1 white onion, sliced

2 red capsicums, sliced

2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes

4 eggs

15g parsley leaves, chopped

Slice of sourdough bread – toasted

### **Method**

Heat the oil a large non-stick frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the onion and bell peppers, stirring constantly, and cook, for 5 minutes or until the onion and pepper have softened.

Add the chopped tomatoes and cook, stirring for a further 5 minutes.

Use a spoon to make 4 large holes in the tomato mixture, then crack an egg into each hole. Reduce the heat to low, and partially cover the pan with a lid. Cook for 10 minutes or until eggs are cooked to your liking. Sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately.



## Thursday – Rump steak stir fry

### Easy Stir Fry

Serves 2

10-15 minutes

500 calories

25-30g of protein

100-125g of rump steak

200g of Singapore noodles

Veggies – my go too's are red onion, mushrooms, Bok choy, red/yellow capsicum

2 eggs

Sauce of choice – I use sweet soy sauce

### Method

Cook protein then set aside

Cook noodle as per pack instructions

Cook all the veggies

Combine it all and pour in the sauce and heat

Fry the eggs and add it on top



Friday – this is also an “easy” meal for me

## **Chicken Tender Salad bowl**

**Serves 2**

**500 calories**

**25g of protein**

4 Chicken tenders

Lettuce of choice – I love an iceberg

Corn on the cob

Cherry tomatoes

Red Capsicum and red onion – sliced

Taco spice

100g of cottage cheese

40g of dressing of choice

### **Method**

Cook your tenders as per instructions

Cook the corn on the cob in the air fryer

Fry the onion and red capsicum in taco spice

Make up the salad with all the ingredients

Divide the dressing over the 2 plates