

**Family Mealtime // Meal  
Planning 101**



FAMILY MEALTIME:

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*A key to successful family mealtime is planning. Research has shown that cooking at home is significantly more likely if you already know what you will have for dinner.*

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## **10 Steps to Meal Planning**

1. Set aside time each week for menu planning. The amount of time you need will decrease as you gain practice.
2. Ask your family for ideas of what they would like to eat during the week.
3. Plan your menu around food items you already have in the pantry.
4. Choose a variety of meals including family favorites, budget stretchers, and quick fix meals.
5. Cook once, eat twice.
6. Plan to use your leftovers.
7. Picture USDA's MyPlate as you plan each meal.
8. Have your local store circulars available. Take advantage of those sales!
9. Create a thorough shopping list.
10. Keep it simple! Successful family meals don't have to be gourmet; they just have to be a time together.

Weekly Menu				
Family mealtime is an anchor for the day.	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides essential assistance to help low-income households purchase food for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-221-5989 or visit online at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snaps>. In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this information is prohibited from being retransmitted or disseminated to the public under any circumstances. For more information on accessibility, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov), Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1405 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-0431 or call (800) 795-3012.

**FOODSENSE**  
Utah State University

## Printable Weekly Menu Planner

# Quick Tips

**Tired of planning a menu every week?** Try planning a 2-4 week cycle menu. Choose meals for 2–4 weeks and then repeat once the cycle is over. Change cycle menus with the seasons to take advantage of local produce.

**Bored of the same old meals?** Add some theme nights to your week. Taco Tuesdays, Breakfast for Dinner Thursdays, or Sandwich Saturdays are fun for the whole family. Let the kids choose a theme and then make some table decorations for added entertainment.

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*September is National Family Mealtime month. Each Friday this month we'll be posting on that topic – specifically from the Live Well Utah Cookbook, Family Mealtime Edition. This publication is available for free at your local Extension office, or available digitally here. It features some great tips on the importance of family mealtime and meal planning, plus 21 quick, inexpensive, and nutritious recipes that are*

*sure to please even the pickiest eaters.*