Meal Planning Made Easy



This ebook is going to help you...

1. Reduce the overwhelm around mealtime
2. Help you make a plan for meals, that you can repeat weekly, that will help reduce your mental load.
3. Save you time and money
4. Give you a sample menu for a week of meals, a blank menu so you can give it a try, AND a few of my recipes (that you can print out and keep with your family's favorites) to help get you started!

Meal Planning Doesn't Have To Be Complicated

We tend to overcomplicate things don't we. The simple act of choosing meals for the week is not hard, we just don't want to take the time to do it. But sitting down and taking 20 minutes to choose the meals for the week and making a grocery list of the items you need to fulfill that plan can help you free up time, money and space in your brain!

Also, I understand that decision fatigue is VERY real when it comes to deciding on dinner, especially when you wait till dinner time to decide. Getting started on meal planning now will start to build you a list that you can refer back to when making future meal planning lists.

Imagine having all your meal ideas planned so you know exactly what you need to thaw or prepare ahead of time in order to get that meal on the table. You arrive at the time of day to get dinner going and you have everything you need to cook it! No worrying about what to eat or ending up ordering out because you took so long deciding on what to eat.



Let’s Break It Down

Pick a day of the week that works best for you to be able to sit down with your family’s calendar for the following week, your notebook to make a shopping list(or phone or computer to place a pick up order if that’s how you roll 😉) and with wherever you get your recipe ideas from. Make this day a standing date with yourself weekly. Write it down on your calendar as an appointment with yourself.

Look over the next week from your family calendar so you can get a sense of how busy the week will be. This will give you an idea of if you need quick meals, crock pot meals or that you’ll be able to choose a new recipe that may take you a little longer to prepare because you have a free day.
Make the meals work WITH your schedule and not the other way around. This has been the game changer for me. I’m not trying to keep up with the Jones making all the trending dinners…I’m doing what works for ME and MY family in this season of life and that is where the magic is.
Start writing down some meal ideas right in your planner (the printout weekly meal planner works too!), using the information you already gathered about what is happening when.

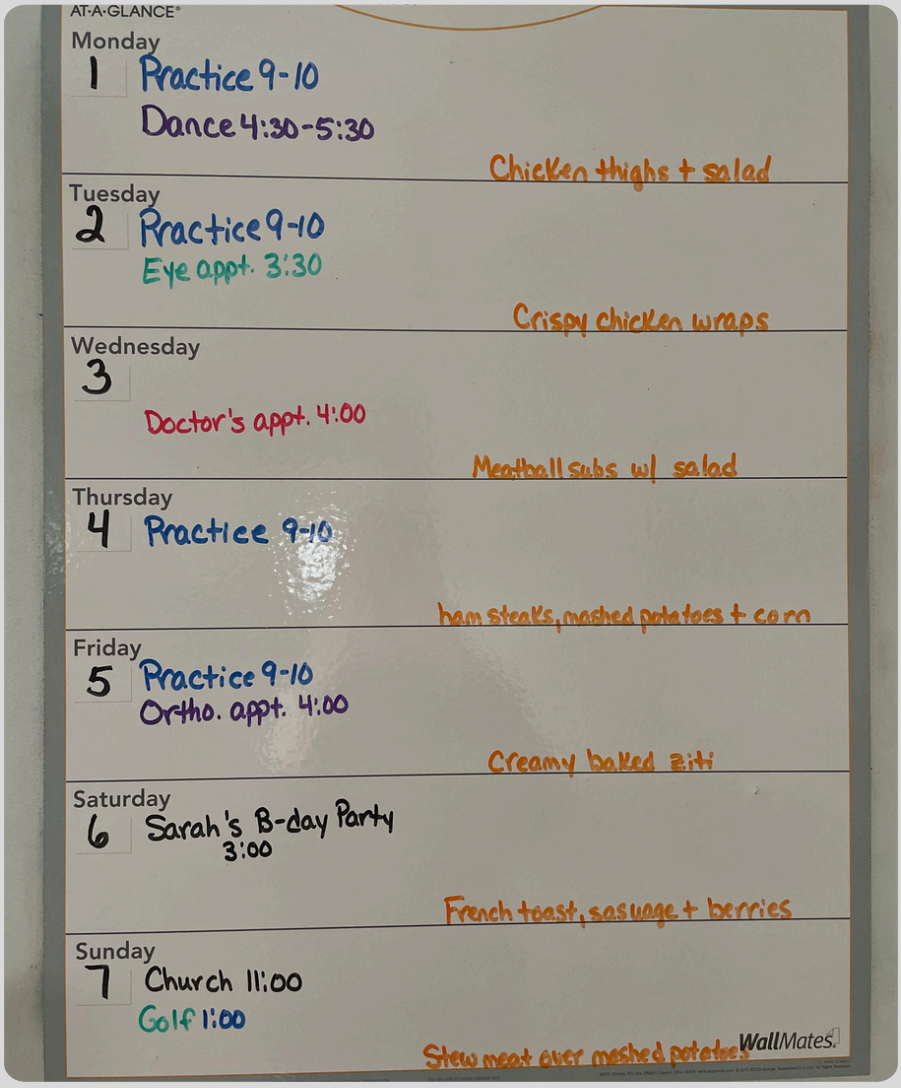
Once you’re done planning your meals for the next week you’re going to make your grocery list. This can be done several ways:
Pen and paper
A note on your phone
Skip the list and go right to the store’s website and place your grocery order online.
Any way you choose is going to get you a list of ingredients that you need to make dinner for the next week so there is no wrong way!

Take that list and go and shop or go pick up your grocery order. This can also be set on the calendar as an appointment with yourself. I often meal plan and then don’t go shopping till a few days later. Make this work for YOU!
Bring it home, put it away, and you’re ready for the week ahead for mealtimes. It’s such a good feeling 🙂

BONUS

Something that I do that REALLY helps me is write out what is for dinner on which day on my wall calendar. It helps me to quickly see in the morning what, if anything, i need to thaw or prepare if I have time ahead. This also has been wonderful for my family because they know what we are having for dinner (and also this wall calendar has who needs to be where when, and its color coded for easy, quick finding of what their obligations are for the day). You can check out my blog post about this calendar **here**

Also, I like writing my meals in my planner because it's easy to look back, but keeping your past weekly meal planners in a folder or binder would be easy too. In times when I'm in a planning rut, I always look through my past meals and that helps get me going. So save those!



WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

Monday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Thursday
Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Notes:

WEEKLY MEAL PLANNER

Monday **Spaghetti with garlic bread**	Tuesday **Taco's**
Wednesday **Angel Chicken**	Thursday **BLT'S with Pasta Salad**
Friday **Homemade Pizza**	Saturday **Haddock with rice pilaf & corn**
Sunday **Hamburger Stroganoff**	Notes: _____ _____ _____ _____

Vicky G's Spaghetti Sauce

INGREDIENTS



1 28oz can of tomato puree
1 28oz can of tomato sauce
1 6 oz can tomato paste
1/2 cup water(use as little or as much as you want)
1/4 cup fresh parmesan cheese
1 tbsp parsley
1 tsp salt
3 tbsp sugar
2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp pepper
1/2 green pepper cut in half and placed in sauce, not cut up
1 stalk celery placed in sauce, not cut up

DIRECTIONS

Combine all ingredients and let simmer all day!

Hamburger Stroganoff

INGREDIENTS



1 lb. hamburger
1/4 cup butter
2 tbsp. flour
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1 can of mushrooms, drained
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 cup sour cream
1 12oz package egg noodles

DIRECTIONS

Add hamburger and onion to the pan, season with salt and pepper, and cook until hamburger is brown. Drain excess fat
Return to pan and add the butter, once melted, add the flour
Add in the soup
Add in sour cream
Add the mushrooms
Heat through and serve over cooked egg noodles

Angel Chicken

INGREDIENTS



2 packages thin sliced chicken breast
1/4 cup butter
1 package dry Italian seasoning dressing mix
1 family size can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup chicken broth
8ozs. cream cheese with onions and chives
1 box penne or ziti pasta

DIRECTIONS

Put all ingredients in the slow cooker except for the pasta
Cook on low for 7-8 hours
When the chicken mixture is done, prepare penne pasta and drain
Place chicken mixture over penne noodles and enjoy