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Food Prep 101

Dieting is far from easy. However, planning and preparing accordingly will increase your chances of successfully achieving your transformation goal enormously. We never want to get stuck feeling hungry or not knowing what to eat. Most of us make bad food choices when we end up in this position. We reach for the easiest available food source which usually lacks quality nutrition.

This is why we recommend our clients prepare meals in advance. I'll be honest I no longer prepare my meals days in advance. Currently I do not have a transformation goal that makes this necessary. However, my wife and I prepare our weekly meal plan and grocery list. We just do not partition our meals days in advance. When I deem it necessary I will prep on Sundays. This is something I highly recommend.

First of all, **DECIDE WHICH DAY WILL BE YOUR PREP DAY.**

For some of you that have inconsistent work and school schedules. Your prep day may differ from week to week. There is nothing wrong with that as long as you decide beforehand what day you will prep your meals. For many of you that work Monday through Friday we recommend groceries on Saturday and prep being done on Sundays.

When you have your prep day set **PLAN OUT WHAT YOU WILL BE MAKING.**

If you plan accordingly food prep is a fast and easy process but if you fail to plan in advance it can be a long tedious process.

Start by writing what meals you will be eating and how you feel like cooking those meal. Decide on your protein, carb, and vegetable sources. For instance, if I am going to eat 4oz of protein, I will decide on the protein source ex. Beef and then the type of cut ex. Ground beef.

Finally it is time to do some groceries but before you head to the store **MAKE A GROCERY LIST.**

So that you aren't completed befuddled at the store and have no idea what to buy, be prepared by having a list with you of what you'll need. Depending on your list you may have to visit a couple of different stores so be aware of that in advance and make sure you have all the items prior to Sunday.

When your list is prepared **GROCERY SHOP ONLY FOR ITEMS ON YOUR LIST.**

Do not just write down these big items, but check for any seasonings/tools/utensils that you will need. Put it all on a grocery list and only allow yourself to buy these items! You can make or break your diet at a grocery store, if it's not on the list, don't buy it! No, frozen pizza or cookies!

One important aspect of food prep is figuring out your **FOOD STORAGE.**

Do you have enough containers in which to store your meals? Do you want to store your meals in plastic or glass containers? Do you want the containers that have little dividers in them? Do you have containers of different sizes to hold different types of foods? How about little plastic baggies? What about a lunch box/bag that will hold all of your meals (if you have several meals with you each day)? If you'll be out at the store, make sure to pick up some of these items if you don't already have enough at home.

When the groceries and storage items are purchased it is time to find **FIND 2-3 HOURS & GET TO COOKING.**

Find 2-3 hours in order to get all this cooking done. You will have to *make* the time no matter what.

I usually start by cooking my protein. My proteins typically consist of chicken, ground beef and salmon. I sometimes use my stovetop, oven, and slow cooker all at the same time for this process. Next, I move onto my carbs. My carbs typically consist of rice and sweet potatoes, which I cook in a rice cooker and the oven. Both are pretty easy things to cook, which allots time to clean up the protein & get set for the next step, vegetables. For my vegetables that usually consist of broccoli, spinach, kale and asparagus I steam these items. This is a simple process.

If you don't think you have time remember to see if you can be multitasking while something's in the oven? Probably so. In that case, put that item in the oven while you

do your chores around your house. I like to wake up somewhat early on Sunday and right away put chicken breasts and sweet potato in the oven so it's cooking while I get some chores done.

Do your thing and do what works for you. This is YOUR meal prep!

Finally, **PACKAGE IT UP**

When it comes to packaging up these meals, everyone uses a different technique. The most common is to weigh out each meal (protein, carb, and veggie) and place it into its individual container or plastic bag.

Pack, separate, combine, mix—get it into its storage container however you'd like to gather it together. With my lunches, I like to have a protein, a vegetable, and a carb—hence a lot of my chicken, broccoli and sweet potato packs. I like my snacks to be protein-centered, so plain Greek yogurts with fruit.

Meal prep is not the be all end all of dieting. However, it does help many people succeed with their transformation goals. Remember, ***if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.***