



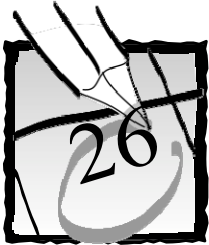
Menu planning 101

The most important step on the path to healthy eating is learning to plan your weekly meals before you make any food purchases. Menu planning can be fun and creative.

Your menu plan should suit your own nutritional needs and tastes. A menu plan can help you use your time, money and energy more wisely. Choose foods that:

- fit your budget
- are easy to prepare
- suit your tastes
- are good for you

Make your meal plan fit your schedule and way of life. It will soon become a welcome routine helping you eat better today, so you can feel better tomorrow.



STEP 1

- Decide which day of the week is the best day for you to do your grocery shopping. Things to think about:
 - Stores are usually less crowded on weekdays, but items on sale may be better stocked on the weekends;
 - Find out which day of the week your store restocks meat, poultry and seafood so you can get it at its freshest.



STEP 2

- The day before grocery day take a moment to clean out your fridge, cupboard and freezer.
- Take note of the items you have on hand that should be used quickly.
- Discard any items that are no longer safe to eat.
- Jot down any items that you will need to restock.



STEP 3

- Relax ... make yourself a soothing hot drink.
- Sit down and browse through the weekly grocery store flyers.
- Note any "loss leaders"; great deals that stores sell at a loss to attract more clients.
- You may want to fit these foods into your menu plan.



STEP 4

- Pull out your favorite recipe books and any new recipe ideas you have been thinking of trying.
- Excite your taste buds and let your creative juices flow!
- Think about meals you used to enjoy, but have gotten out of the habit of eating.



STEP 5

- Grab your menu planner and think of the week ahead.
- Note which day(s) you: - likely be the busiest?
 - will be eating your main meal away from home?
 - could invite a guest over to share a meal?
- Decide which day of the week you would prefer to spend at home cooking up a storm! The day after grocery day is often the best choice.



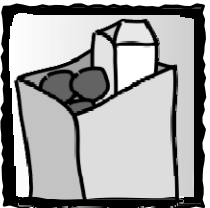
STEP 6

- Plan only your main meal of the day for the next 7 days. Use the Agequake Menu Planner to help you select a wide variety of foods from “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide.”
- Try to include all 4 food groups in your main meals.
- Vary the protein sources at each day’s main meal.
- Select a rainbow of colours, flavours and textures to keep meals interesting and bursting with nutrients.
- Use fresh produce right after grocery shopping day and save canned or processed foods for later in the week.



STEP 7

- Plan to buy all the food you will need for a week in one outing.
- Set up a budget and stick with it



STEP 8

- Once you have finished your menu plan you are ready to make your grocery list!

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