



READING

GUIDE TO WRITING YOUR MENU AND SHOPPING LIST

So it is Sunday morning and you have to think about the meals for the next few days and the week ahead (if you haven't already done this the night before). You can do this as a family so everyone gets to contribute. Write the meals up on your menu board. Aim for four or five different meals.

Try and include some meals that you can cook in bulk that will work as leftovers for a second day and for a meal during the week, the extra of which can be put in the freezer for a busy day down the track, when you haven't time to cook.

Write the menu in the top corner of your shopping list, (you would have started this shopping list a few days before), check what you have already have in the fridge and pantry as you write your list.

Step by step, make note of what has to be bought in order to cook the meals for the week, and while you're at it, do a quick tidy up of the pantry and fridge as you go along. You want to make space for the things you are going to bring home from the supermarket and you also want to get rid of anything that's out of date whilst cleaning up. It makes unpacking the groceries when you get home from shopping so much easier.

STEP BY STEP

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| Step 1 | think about the fruit bowl and fruit salad that will be prepped for the early part of the week. |
| Step 2 | note what the salad bar should contain for the first part of the week. |
| Step 3 | think about packed lunches for the family (parents and kids). These packed lunches must be healthy, no packaged sugary muesli bars, snacks or sugary drinks. Packed lunches contain lots of fruit, wholegrain bread, vegetables, salads, eggs etc and water to drink. |
| Step 4 | check your dinner menu for the week and work out what you need whilst checking what you already have in stock that you can use from your pantry and fridge. Write on your shopping list everything that can be bought during this big shop and also make a note of what has to be bought later during the week on a second shopping list. |

Once you have written your shopping list, one of you can go shopping.

The other parent should stay back and tidy the kitchen, empty the dishwasher and tidy the fridge making sure there is space for when the shopping arrives home.

Condense all half-full food containers so you create as much space as possible in the fridge.

When the groceries arrive home, it's time to get started. Put away groceries in the fridge and pantry, but leave out on the kitchen bench the fruit for the fruit salad, the salad ingredients for the salad bar, and the ingredients for that evening's dinner – these are going to be sliced, diced and cooked straight away.

WRITE THE PREP LIST

It is time to prepare for a successful couple of hours of cooking, so before starting the big cook up write a prep list detailing all the tasks that you need to do in the kitchen today. It just makes it easier to multi-task and create momentum. Once a job is done, you can cross it off the list and then move on to the next task.

Let's assume a casserole dish is on the menu for tonight and that you will cook extra so there are leftovers for the next day as well. A chicken curry might be on the menu for Tuesday night so some prep can also be done today for this dish to help you stay ahead of your kitchen prep.

Your prep list might look something like this:

PREP LIST FOR THE BIG COOK UP

Wash and cut the fruit salad (place in dated containers) – watermelon, pineapple, rockmelon, strawberries, grapes

Wash and prep the salad bar (place in dated containers) – lettuce, capsicum, tomato, cucumber

Chop and cook for the salad / deli bar (place in dated containers) – feta pieces (marinate in olive oil and herbs), sliced olives, roasted pumpkin and zucchini

Make a new salad dressing

Dinner prep

- 1 dice beef rump (done yesterday, marinating in fridge)
- 2 dice onion
- 3 mince/chop garlic
- 4 dice celery (for casserole)
- 5 diced carrot (for casserole)
- 6 peel potatoes (for mash)
- 7 peel/cut carrot, beans, broccoli, cauliflower (for steamed vegetables to go with our dinner)

Prep for Tuesday night's curry. Cut chicken thigh slithers, slice onion, dice pumpkin pieces

