

WEEKLY MEAL PLAN

Meal Plan 12

A week of healthy, beginner-level meals where each dinner is cooked once and the extra portion becomes a different meal the next day, with a shopping list for every recipe.

8 Chapters

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Generated with Claude

MEAL PLAN 12

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Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 1 · Monday

Today at a glance. Welcome to Cook Once, Eat Twice: you cook a bigger dinner, put the extra portion in the fridge, and turn it into a different meal the next day. No freezer is needed. Tonight's dinner makes **2 portions**, and the second becomes **tomorrow's cold lunch**. Dinner takes about **25 minutes**. Every quantity below is for **one portion** unless the recipe says it makes two, in metric with UK names.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Egg and Tomato Breakfast Wrap

8 minutes | 1 frying pan | 5 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

2	eggs
1	tomato
20 g	baby spinach
1	wholemeal tortilla wrap
1 tsp	olive oil
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Dice the tomato. Beat the eggs with the pepper in a jug.
2. Heat the oil in a small non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Cook the tomato for 1 minute, then pour in the eggs and stir gently for 1 to 2 minutes, until softly scrambled. Fold in the spinach for the last 20 seconds.
3. Warm the wrap in the toaster for 20 seconds, spoon the eggs into the middle, fold in the sides and roll it up. Eat it warm, or wrap it in foil to take with you.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Two eggs give protein that keeps you full all morning, and the tomato and spinach add vitamins. A wholemeal wrap makes it portable, and it is ready in 8 minutes.

SWAPS

A sprinkle of grated cheese in the wrap. Baked beans on the side. Wholemeal toast in place of the wrap.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · VEGETARIAN · TRAVELS WELL

Cheese, Tomato and Cucumber Pitta

5 minutes | No cooking | 4 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1	wholemeal pitta bread
30 g	strong Cheddar, sliced or grated
1	tomato
50 g	cucumber (about 5 cm)
1 tsp	mustard
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Warm the pitta in the toaster for 1 minute, then split it open along one side.
2. Spread the mustard inside. Slice the tomato and cucumber and tuck them in with the cheese and a little pepper.
3. Eat straight away, or wrap it in foil for a packed lunch.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

A light lunch because dinner tonight is the big meal. Strong cheese gives a lot of flavour for a small amount, and the vegetables and wholemeal pitta add fibre.

SWAPS

A handful of spinach. A boiled egg, sliced, for extra protein. A spoonful of houmous in place of the mustard.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · BEEF · ONE POT · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Beef and Orzo Pot with Tomatoes, Courgette and Feta

Prep: 5 minutes | Cooking: about 25 minutes | About 12 minutes of hands-on work | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight, 1 for tomorrow's lunch

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

250 g	lean beef mince (5% fat)
1	onion
2 cloves	garlic
1	large courgette (about 200 g)
1 tin (400 g)	chopped tomatoes
150 g	dried orzo pasta (75 g a portion)
1 cube	reduced-salt beef stock cube
400 ml	hot water for the stock
1 tbsp	tomato purée
1 tsp	dried oregano
1 tsp	olive oil
60 g	feta cheese (30 g for tonight, 30 g for tomorrow)
1 pinch	black pepper

PREP AHEAD (ABOUT 5 MINUTES, ANY TIME THAT DAY)

1. Peel and finely chop the onion and garlic. Cut the courgette into 1 cm cubes. Keep them in a covered container. Keep the raw mince on the **bottom shelf** of the fridge.

AT DINNER TIME (ABOUT 25 MINUTES, 12 OF THEM HANDS-ON)

1. Dissolve the stock cube in 400 ml of boiling water. Heat the oil in a large, deep frying pan or wide saucepan with a lid over a medium-high heat.
2. Add the mince and cook for 5 minutes, breaking it up, until brown all over and no pink is left. Add the onion and courgette and cook for 4 minutes.
3. Stir in the garlic, oregano and tomato purée for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and the hot stock and bring to the boil.

4. Stir in the orzo, turn the heat down to a steady simmer and cook uncovered for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring often so it does not stick, until the orzo is tender and the sauce is thick and creamy. Add a splash of water if it gets too dry. Season with pepper.
5. Spoon half into a bowl and crumble 30 g of the feta over the top. Eat it hot.
6. Spoon the other half into a container and leave it, uncovered, to cool for no more than 1 hour (stirring it once helps). Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch is made from it.

> **KEEPING THE SECOND PORTION SAFE**
>
> Cool the second portion quickly, within 1 hour if you can and no more than 2 hours, then keep it covered in the fridge. Eat it tomorrow, cold or reheated until steaming hot, and throw away anything left after 2 days. Cook the mince right through, with no pink left.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

Orzo cooks in the sauce, so it soaks up all the flavour and the whole dinner is made in one pan. Lean mince, courgette and a whole tin of tomatoes make it protein-rich and full of vegetables, and a little feta adds a salty finish.

SWAPS

A red pepper or a handful of spinach in place of the courgette. Wholewheat pasta shapes in place of the orzo. Chicken mince in place of the beef.

Shopping list for this recipe

> **COMING UP TOMORROW**
>
> Tuesday has peanut butter and banana toast, a cold beef and orzo salad pot made from tonight's leftovers, and a lemon-garlic chicken tray bake that makes two portions. If your chicken is frozen, take it out tonight to defrost in the fridge.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 2 · Tuesday

Today at a glance. Lunch is Monday's second portion turned into a **cold salad pot**, and dinner makes **2 portions**, with the second becoming **tomorrow's soup**. Dinner is one tray with about **10 minutes of work** and 35 minutes in the oven. Quantities are marked for one or two portions on each recipe.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Peanut Butter and Banana Toast

3 minutes | No cooking | 3 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

2 slices	wholemeal bread
1 tbsp	peanut butter, 100% peanuts (about 15 g)
1	ripe banana
1 pinch	ground cinnamon

METHOD

1. Toast the bread. Peel the banana and slice it.
2. Spread the peanut butter over the hot toast so it melts a little, and lay the banana slices on top.
3. Sprinkle over the cinnamon. Eat straight away.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Peanut butter gives protein and healthy fat, the banana gives natural sweetness and potassium, and wholemeal toast adds fibre. It takes 3 minutes and keeps you full until lunch.

SWAPS

Sliced strawberries or apple in place of the banana. A drizzle of honey. Almond butter in place of the peanut butter.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · FROM MONDAY · EATEN COLD

Beef and Orzo Salad Pot

5 minutes | No cooking | From Monday's dinner

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	beef and orzo pot, from Monday's dinner (kept in the fridge)
50 g	cucumber (about 5 cm)
20 g	baby spinach
30 g	feta cheese (the other half of Monday's)
1 tsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)
1 tsp	olive oil

METHOD

1. Take the orzo out of the fridge. It will have thickened, so break it up with a fork and loosen it with the lemon juice and oil.
2. Dice the cucumber, tear the spinach and crumble in the feta.
3. Fold everything into the orzo and eat it cold from the container, or pack it in a box for lunch. Keep it in a bag with a cool pack if you are taking it out, and eat it within 4 hours.

> **EAT IT COLD OR REHEAT IT PROPERLY**
>
> The orzo must have been cooled quickly within 1 to 2 hours on Monday and kept covered in the fridge. Eat it today. If you would rather have it hot, reheat it once until steaming hot all the way through (skip the cucumber and feta until it is hot). Throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

A completely different meal from last night's dinner, with no cooking. The lemon, cucumber and spinach make the rich beef and tomato orzo fresh, and the protein and wholemeal carbohydrates keep you full.

SWAPS

Chopped olives or cherry tomatoes. A spoonful of Greek yoghurt on the side. Fresh mint or parsley if you have any.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · CHICKEN · ONE TRAY · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Lemon-Garlic Chicken Thighs with Potatoes and Green Beans

Prep: 10 minutes | Oven: about 35 minutes | About 10 minutes of hands-on work | Washing up: 1 tray | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight, 1 for tomorrow's soup

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

400 g	boneless, skinless chicken thighs (4 thighs)
400 g	baby new potatoes
200 g	green beans
2 cloves	garlic
1	lemon (zest and juice)
2 tsp	olive oil
1 tsp	dried oregano
1 pinch	black pepper

PREP AHEAD (ABOUT 10 MINUTES, ANY TIME THAT DAY)

1. Peel and crush the garlic. Grate the zest of the lemon into a large bowl, then squeeze in the juice. Stir in the garlic, oil, oregano and pepper. Add the chicken thighs, turn them in the marinade, cover the bowl and put it on the **bottom shelf** of the fridge. Wash your hands, the board and the knife.
2. Halve the potatoes (quarter any big ones, so they are about 3 cm). Trim the tops off the green beans. Keep them in covered containers in the fridge.

AT DINNER TIME (ABOUT 35 MINUTES, 10 OF THEM HANDS-ON)

1. Heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Put the potatoes on a large baking tray and add the chicken with its marinade. Toss and spread in a single layer.
2. Roast for 20 minutes. Take the tray out, turn the chicken and potatoes over, and add the green beans, tossing them in the juices. Roast for another 10 to 12 minutes, until the chicken is golden and white all the way through with no pink, and the potatoes are tender.
3. Put half of the chicken, potatoes and beans (2 thighs, about 200 g of potatoes and 100 g of beans) on a plate and eat it hot.

4. Put the other half in a container and cool it, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch soup is made from it.

> **RAW CHICKEN AND LEFTOVERS**
>
> Keep the marinating chicken on the bottom shelf and cook it the same day. The marinade is cooked on the tray with the chicken, so it is safe, but do not use any left in the bowl as a sauce. Cool the second portion quickly, within 1 to 2 hours, keep it covered in the fridge, and use it tomorrow. Cook it until it is steaming hot when you turn it into soup.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

A whole tray with protein, a starchy vegetable and a green vegetable all together, flavoured with garlic and lemon instead of a sauce. Chicken thighs stay juicy and are cheaper than breasts, and you use only 2 tsp of oil for two portions.

SWAPS

Broccoli or courgette in place of the green beans. Chicken breast in place of the thighs (cook for 5 minutes less). Rosemary or thyme in place of the oregano.

Shopping list for this recipe

> **COMING UP TOMORROW**
>
> Wednesday has a yoghurt bowl, a lemon chicken, potato and green bean soup made from tonight's leftovers, and a roast Mediterranean vegetable and butter bean tray that makes two portions. It is the vegetarian dinner.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 3 · Wednesday

Today at a glance. Wednesday is the **vegetarian dinner**. Lunch turns Tuesday's second portion into a **soup**, and dinner makes **2 portions** on one tray, with the second becoming **tomorrow's soup**. Dinner takes about **30 minutes**, with 10 minutes of prep. Quantities are marked for one or two portions on each recipe.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Greek Yoghurt with Berries and Oats

4 minutes | No cooking | 3 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

150 g	plain Greek-style yoghurt
80 g	frozen mixed berries
30 g	porridge oats
1 tsp	honey (optional)

METHOD

1. Put the berries in a bowl and microwave them for 1 minute, until soft and juicy. (Or leave them out of the freezer for 15 minutes.)
2. Stir the oats into the yoghurt in a bowl and spoon the berries and their juice over the top.
3. Drizzle with the honey if you like. Eat straight away, or leave it for 10 minutes for softer oats.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Berries give vitamins and natural sweetness, Greek yoghurt gives protein, and the oats give fibre. It takes 4 minutes with no pan.

SWAPS

A sliced banana or apple in place of the berries. A spoonful of nuts or seeds on top.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · FROM TUESDAY

Lemon Chicken, Potato and Green Bean Soup

15 minutes | Washing up: 1 pan | From Tuesday's dinner

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	lemon-garlic chicken, potatoes and green beans, from Tuesday's dinner (2 thighs, about 200 g of potatoes, 100 g of beans, kept in the fridge)
½ cube	reduced-salt chicken stock cube
400 ml	hot water for the stock
1 tsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)
1 slice	wholemeal bread, to serve
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Shred the chicken into bite-size pieces with two forks and cut the potatoes and beans into smaller pieces.
2. Dissolve the stock cube in 400 ml of boiling water in a medium saucepan. Add the chicken, potatoes and beans, with any juices left in the container.
3. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes, until everything is steaming hot all the way through. Mash a few of the potatoes against the side of the pan with a fork to thicken the soup.
4. Stir in the lemon juice and pepper, toast the bread and serve with the soup.

> **REHEAT ONCE, UNTIL STEAMING HOT**
>
> The leftover chicken must have been cooled within 1 to 2 hours on Tuesday and kept covered in the fridge. Simmer the soup until it is steaming hot all the way through, and throw away anything you do not eat. Do not reheat it a second time.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

The leftover tray flavours the soup with lemon and garlic, so you need only half a stock cube. It gives protein, vegetables and carbohydrate in one bowl, and it is made from food that would otherwise be waste.

SWAPS

A handful of spinach in the last minute. A little pasta or rice if you want a bigger bowl. Grated Cheddar on the toast.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · VEGETARIAN · ONE TRAY · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Roast Mediterranean Vegetables, Butter Beans and Feta

Prep: 10 minutes | Oven: about 30 minutes | About 10 minutes of hands-on work | Washing up: 1 tray | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight, 1 for tomorrow's soup

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

1	courgette (about 200 g)
1	red pepper
1	small onion
200 g	cherry tomatoes
1 tin (400 g)	butter beans, drained and rinsed
1 tsp	smoked paprika
2 tsp	olive oil
30 g	feta cheese (for tonight's portion)
2 slices	wholemeal bread, to serve (for tonight's portion)
1 pinch	black pepper

PREP AHEAD (ABOUT 10 MINUTES, ANY TIME THAT DAY)

1. Cut the courgette into 2 cm chunks. Cut the pepper in half, remove the seeds and cut it into 2 cm pieces. Peel the onion and cut it into thin wedges. Drain and rinse the butter beans. Keep everything in a covered container in the fridge, with the tomatoes.

AT DINNER TIME (ABOUT 30 MINUTES, 10 OF THEM HANDS-ON)

1. Heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Put the courgette, pepper, onion, tomatoes and butter beans on a large baking tray. Add the oil, paprika and pepper, and toss well. Spread out in a single layer, so that they roast and do not steam.
2. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes, turning once, until the vegetables are soft and charred at the edges, and the tomatoes have burst.
3. Put half the tray on a plate, crumble 30 g of the feta over the top and eat it hot with a slice of bread. (Or toast the bread.)
4. Put the other half, without the feta, in a container and cool it, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch soup is made from it.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

A whole tray of roasted vegetables with butter beans for protein and fibre, and only a little feta for flavour. Roasting makes the vegetables sweet and rich, so it needs very little oil and no meat.

SWAPS

A tin of chickpeas in place of the butter beans. An aubergine in place of the courgette. A handful of spinach stirred in at the end.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP TOMORROW

Thursday has scrambled eggs on toast, a roast vegetable and butter bean soup made from tonight's leftovers, and lean beef sloppy joes that make two portions. Take the mince out of the freezer tonight to defrost in the fridge if it is frozen.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 4 · Thursday

Today at a glance. Thursday is the second of this week's three beef dinners. Lunch turns Wednesday's roast vegetables into a **soup**, and dinner makes **2 portions**, with the second becoming **tomorrow's quesadilla**. Dinner takes about **20 minutes**. Quantities are marked for one or two portions on each recipe.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Scrambled Eggs and Tomato on Toast

8 minutes | 1 frying pan | 4 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

2	eggs
1	tomato
2 slices	wholemeal bread
1 tsp	olive oil
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Dice the tomato. Beat the eggs with the pepper in a jug. Put the bread in the toaster.
2. Heat the oil in a small non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Cook the tomato for 2 minutes, until it starts to break down.
3. Pour in the eggs and stir gently for 1 to 2 minutes, until softly scrambled. Pile onto the toast.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Eggs give protein that keeps you full, and cooking the tomato first makes it sweet and juicy, so the eggs need no sauce. Wholemeal toast adds fibre.

SWAPS

A handful of spinach or a sprinkle of Cheddar. A grilled tomato on the side. Baked beans on the plate.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · VEGETARIAN · FROM WEDNESDAY

Roast Vegetable and Butter Bean Soup

12 minutes | Washing up: 1 pan | From Wednesday's dinner | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	roast Mediterranean vegetables and butter beans, from Wednesday's dinner (kept in the fridge)
½ cube	reduced-salt vegetable stock cube
300 ml	hot water for the stock
1 tsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)
1 slice	wholemeal bread, to serve
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Tip the roast vegetables and beans, with any oil and juices, into a medium saucepan. Dissolve the stock cube in 300 ml of boiling water and pour it over.
2. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 8 minutes, until everything is steaming hot all the way through.
3. Blend with a stick blender until smooth, or mash with a potato masher for a chunky soup. Stir in the lemon juice and pepper.
4. Toast the bread and serve with the soup.

> **REHEAT ONCE, UNTIL STEAMING HOT**
>
> The vegetables must have been cooled within 1 to 2 hours on Wednesday and kept covered in the fridge. Simmer the soup until it is steaming hot all the way through, and throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

The roasted vegetables give the soup a rich, sweet flavour, and the butter beans make it thick and creamy with protein and fibre, with no cream. It turns leftover dinner into a different meal in 12 minutes.

SWAPS

A spoonful of Greek yoghurt swirled on top. A handful of spinach stirred in before blending. A pinch of chilli flakes.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · BEEF · ONE PAN · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Lean Beef Sloppy Joes with Carrot Slaw

Prep: 5 minutes | Cooking: about 20 minutes | About 12 minutes of hands-on work | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight, 1 for tomorrow's lunch

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

250 g	lean beef mince (5% fat)
1	onion
1	red pepper
2 cloves	garlic
2 tbsp	tomato purée
1 tsp	honey
1 tsp	smoked paprika
1 tsp	mustard
200 ml	hot water
1 tsp	olive oil
1	wholemeal bread roll (for tonight)
1	carrot (for the slaw)
1 tbsp	plain Greek-style yoghurt (for the slaw)
1 tsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)

PREP AHEAD (ABOUT 5 MINUTES, ANY TIME THAT DAY)

1. Peel and finely chop the onion and garlic. Cut the pepper in half, remove the seeds and chop it very small. Keep them in a covered container. Keep the raw mince on the **bottom shelf** of the fridge.

AT DINNER TIME (ABOUT 20 MINUTES, 12 OF THEM HANDS-ON)

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the mince and cook for 5 minutes, breaking it up, until brown all over and no pink is left.

2. Add the onion and pepper and cook for 4 minutes, until soft. Stir in the garlic, paprika and tomato purée for 1 minute.
3. Stir in the honey, mustard and hot water. Simmer for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring now and then, until the sauce is thick and glossy and clings to the beef.
4. While it simmers, make the slaw: peel and grate the carrot and stir it with the yoghurt and lemon juice in a bowl.
5. Split and toast the bread roll. Pile half the beef mixture onto the roll and serve with the slaw.
6. Spoon the other half into a container and cool it, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch is made from it.

> **COOLING THE SECOND PORTION AND MINCE SAFETY**
>
> Cook the mince until there is no pink left. Cool the second portion within 1 to 2 hours, keep it covered in the fridge and use it tomorrow. Reheat it once, until steaming hot all the way through.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

Lean mince with onion and pepper in a sauce made from tomato purée, mustard and a little honey, rather than a sugary bottled one. The roll is wholemeal, and the carrot slaw has yoghurt rather than mayonnaise.

SWAPS

A jacket potato in place of the roll. Green cabbage in the slaw. Chicken mince in place of the beef.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP TOMORROW

Friday has porridge with berries, a sloppy joe quesadilla made from tonight's leftovers, and a salmon and sweet potato tray that makes two portions. Take the salmon out of the freezer tonight to defrost in the fridge if it is frozen.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 5 · Friday

Today at a glance. Friday is the **fish day**. Lunch turns Thursday's sloppy joe into a **hot quesadilla**, and dinner makes **2 portions** on one tray, with the second becoming **tomorrow's fishcakes**. Dinner takes about **30 minutes**, with 10 minutes of prep. Quantities are marked for one or two portions on each recipe.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Porridge with Berries

6 minutes | 1 pan or microwave | 3 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

40 g	porridge oats
200 ml	semi-skimmed milk
80 g	frozen mixed berries

METHOD

1. Put the oats and milk in a small saucepan over a medium heat. Stir for 3 to 4 minutes, until thick and creamy. (Or microwave in a large bowl for 2 minutes, stirring halfway.)
2. Put the berries in a bowl and microwave them for 1 minute, until soft and juicy.
3. Spoon the porridge into a bowl and pour the warm berries and their juice over the top.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Oats are rich in fibre that keeps you full for hours, and the berries add sweetness, colour and vitamin C, so there is no need for sugar. It uses just 3 ingredients.

SWAPS

A sliced banana or grated apple in place of the berries. A spoonful of Greek yoghurt or peanut butter stirred in. A pinch of cinnamon.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · FROM THURSDAY

Sloppy Joe Quesadilla

10 minutes | Washing up: 1 frying pan | From Thursday's dinner

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	sloppy joe beef mixture, from Thursday's dinner (kept in the fridge)
1	wholemeal tortilla wrap
30 g	strong Cheddar, grated
20 g	baby spinach
1 splash	water

METHOD

1. Tip the cold beef mixture into a non-stick frying pan with a splash of water. Heat it over a medium heat for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring, until it is bubbling and steaming hot all the way through. Tip it into a bowl and wipe out the pan.
2. Lay the wrap in the pan. Scatter the cheese over one half, then add the hot beef and the spinach, and fold the other half over.
3. Cook over a medium heat for 2 minutes on each side, pressing down, until golden and the cheese has melted. Cut into 3 wedges and eat while hot.

> **REHEAT ONCE, UNTIL STEAMING HOT**
>
> The beef must have been cooled within 1 to 2 hours on Thursday and kept covered in the fridge. Heat it until it is steaming hot all the way through before you fold it into the wrap. Reheat it once only, and throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

Yesterday's sloppy joe becomes a brand new hot lunch in 10 minutes. The wholemeal wrap is cooked in a dry pan with no oil, the cheese is a small amount, and the spinach adds a vegetable.

SWAPS

A spoonful of Greek yoghurt to dip. Sweetcorn or sliced pepper inside. A wholemeal pitta in place of the wrap.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · FISH · ONE TRAY · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Salmon and Sweet Potato Tray with Green Beans

Prep: 10 minutes | Oven: about 30 minutes | About 10 minutes of hands-on work | Washing up: 1 tray | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight, 1 for tomorrow's fishcakes

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

260 g	salmon fillets (2 fillets of about 130 g), skin on or off
400 g	sweet potatoes (2 medium)
200 g	green beans
2 tsp	olive oil
1 tsp	smoked paprika
1 tbsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)
1 pinch	black pepper

PREP AHEAD (ABOUT 10 MINUTES, ANY TIME THAT DAY)

1. Scrub the sweet potatoes and cut them into 2 cm chunks (peel them if you like). Trim the tops off the green beans. Keep them in a covered container in the fridge.
2. Put the salmon on a plate, cover it and put it on the **bottom shelf** of the fridge, to cook within about 6 hours. Wash your hands and the board after handling it.

AT DINNER TIME (ABOUT 30 MINUTES, 10 OF THEM HANDS-ON)

1. Heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Put the sweet potato on a large baking tray with the oil, paprika and pepper, toss and spread in a single layer. Roast for 15 minutes.
2. Take the tray out and push the sweet potato to one side. Add the green beans, and lay the salmon fillets on the tray. Squeeze the lemon juice over the salmon.
3. Roast for 10 to 12 minutes, until the salmon is opaque and flakes easily and the beans are tender.
4. Put one salmon fillet, half the sweet potato and half the beans on a plate and eat it hot.
5. Put the other fillet, sweet potato and beans in a container and cool it, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch is made from it.

> **COOKED FISH AND LEFTOVERS**

Keep the raw salmon on the bottom shelf and cook it the same day. Cool the second portion quickly, within 1 to 2 hours, keep it covered in the fridge and use it tomorrow. Fishcakes made with it must be cooked until steaming hot all the way through.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

Salmon gives protein and omega-3 fats, the sweet potato gives fibre and vitamin A, and the green beans add another vegetable. It all cooks on one tray with just 2 tsp of oil for two portions.

SWAPS

Trout or cod in place of the salmon (cod needs 8 to 10 minutes). Broccoli in place of the green beans. A pinch of chilli flakes.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP TOMORROW

Saturday has an omelette, salmon and sweet potato fishcakes made from tonight's leftovers, and a slow-cooked beef ragu that makes two portions. Take the braising beef out of the freezer tonight to defrost in the fridge if it is frozen. If your pork loin for Sunday is frozen, take that out tonight too.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 6 · Saturday

Today at a glance. Saturday is the last of the week's three beef dinners, and has time for a slow pot. Lunch turns Friday's salmon tray into **fishcakes**, and dinner makes **2 portions**, with the second becoming **tomorrow's baked potato**. Dinner simmers for about 1 hour 45 minutes, with about **15 minutes** of your time. Quantities are marked for one or two portions on each recipe.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Spinach, Mushroom and Cheese Omelette

10 minutes | 1 frying pan | 5 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

2	eggs
60 g	mushrooms
20 g	baby spinach
20 g	strong Cheddar, grated
1 tsp	olive oil
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Wipe and slice the mushrooms. Beat the eggs with the pepper in a jug.
2. Heat the oil in a small non-stick frying pan over a medium-high heat. Cook the mushrooms for 3 minutes, until golden. Add the spinach and cook for 30 seconds, until it wilts. Tip them onto a plate.
3. Turn the heat down to medium. Pour in the eggs and let them set for 1 minute, then gently pull the edges into the middle, letting the runny egg flow to the edges. Cook for 2 minutes, until almost set.
4. Spoon the mushrooms and spinach over one half, add the cheese, and fold the other half over. Slide onto a plate.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

Two eggs give protein, and the mushrooms and spinach make the omelette half vegetables. A little strong cheese gives plenty of flavour.

SWAPS

Tomato or red pepper in place of the mushrooms. Feta in place of the Cheddar. A slice of wholemeal toast on the side.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · FROM FRIDAY

Salmon and Sweet Potato Fishcakes with Salad

20 minutes | Washing up: 1 frying pan | From Friday's dinner

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	salmon fillet, roast sweet potato (about 200 g) and green beans (about 100 g), from Friday's dinner (kept in the fridge)
1	egg
20 g	porridge oats
2 tsp	olive oil
20 g	baby spinach
1	tomato
1 tsp	lemon juice (from a fresh lemon)
1 pinch	black pepper

METHOD

1. Flake the salmon into a bowl, removing any skin and bones. Mash in the sweet potato with a fork, and add the green beans, chopped very small.
2. Add the egg, oats and pepper and mix well. Leave it for 5 minutes so the oats soak up the moisture, then shape the mixture into 3 round cakes about 2 cm thick.
3. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Cook the fishcakes for 4 to 5 minutes on each side, until golden and crisp and steaming hot all the way through. Turn them gently.
4. While they cook, slice the tomato and put it with the spinach on a plate, dressed with the lemon juice. Add the fishcakes to the plate.

> **COOK THEM THROUGH**
>
> The salmon must have been cooled within 1 to 2 hours on Friday and kept covered in the fridge. The fishcakes must be steaming hot in the middle before you eat them, so cut one open to check. Throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

The sweet potato and oats hold the fishcakes together without flour or breadcrumbs, and they are pan-fried in just 2 tsp of oil. They turn Friday's leftover tray into a completely new hot meal.

SWAPS

A spoonful of Greek yoghurt with lemon as a dip. Frozen peas in place of the green beans. Baked in a 200°C oven for 15 minutes instead of frying.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · BEEF · SLOW COOKED · MAKES 2 PORTIONS

Slow-Cooked Beef Ragu with Tagliatelle

Prep: 15 minutes | Simmers: about 1 hour 45 minutes | About 15 minutes of hands-on work | Makes 2 portions: 1 tonight with pasta, 1 for tomorrow's lunch

INGREDIENTS (2 PORTIONS)

300 g	braising or stewing beef (such as chuck or shin), in 2 cm chunks
1	onion
1	carrot
2 cloves	garlic
1 tin (400 g)	chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp	tomato purée
1 tsp	dried oregano
½ cube	reduced-salt beef stock cube
200 ml	hot water for the stock
1 tsp	olive oil
75 g	dried wholewheat tagliatelle (for tonight only)
1 pinch	black pepper

PREP (ABOUT 15 MINUTES)

1. Trim any big pieces of hard fat from the beef and cut it into 2 cm chunks. Peel and finely chop the onion, carrot and garlic.

COOKING (ABOUT 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES, MOSTLY HANDS-OFF)

1. Dissolve the stock cube in 200 ml of boiling water. Heat the oil in a large, heavy pot with a lid over a medium-high heat. Brown the beef in two batches for 3 to 4 minutes, turning, and lift it out onto a plate.
2. Add the onion and carrot to the pot and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic, oregano and tomato purée for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and the hot stock, scraping up anything stuck to the bottom, and return the beef and its juices.

3. Bring to a gentle simmer, cover and cook on a low heat for 1 hour 30 minutes, stirring now and then, until the beef is very tender. Add a splash of water if it gets too dry.
4. Shred the beef into the sauce with two forks, season with pepper and simmer uncovered for 5 minutes, to thicken.
5. Cook the tagliatelle in a pan of boiling water for 10 to 11 minutes, or following the packet. Drain it, toss it with half the ragu in a bowl, and eat it hot.
6. Spoon the other half of the ragu into a container and cool it, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover it and put it in the fridge. Tomorrow's lunch is made from it.

> **KEEPING THE SECOND PORTION SAFE**
>
> Cool the second portion quickly, within 1 to 2 hours, keep it covered in the fridge and use it tomorrow. Reheat it once, until steaming hot all the way through, and throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

A slow-cooked ragu has a deep flavour from the beef, tomatoes and vegetables, with almost no added fat. Wholewheat pasta adds fibre, and the carrot sweetens the sauce, so no sugar is needed.

SWAPS

A stick of celery or a handful of mushrooms with the onion. Wholewheat spaghetti in place of the tagliatelle. A spoonful of grated Cheddar on top.

Shopping list for this recipe

> **COMING UP TOMORROW**
>
> Sunday has cinnamon French toast, a baked potato topped with tonight's leftover ragu, and a roast pork loin that makes 3 portions: one for tonight and two more for the start of next week.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Day 7 · Sunday

Today at a glance. Sunday finishes the week with **one tin to wash** for dinner. Lunch turns Saturday's ragu into a **baked potato**, and dinner is a roast pork loin that makes **3 portions**: one for tonight, and two cold portions for lunches at the start of next week. The oven does most of the work, so it takes about **15 minutes** of your time.

Breakfast

BREAKFAST · VEGETARIAN

Cinnamon French Toast with Banana

12 minutes | 1 frying pan | 5 ingredients | Vegetarian

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

2	eggs
50 ml	semi-skimmed milk
½ tsp	ground cinnamon
2 slices	wholemeal bread
1 tsp	olive oil
1	ripe banana

METHOD

1. Beat the eggs, milk and cinnamon in a shallow dish with a fork. Lay the bread in the dish for 30 seconds on each side, until it soaks up most of the egg.
2. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Fry the bread for 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until golden and set. Pour any egg left in the dish into the pan around the bread and cook it too.
3. Slice the banana. Put the French toast on a plate and lay the banana slices on top.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY START

It tastes like a weekend treat, but it is made with wholemeal bread, eggs and a banana, with no added sugar. The eggs give protein, and the banana sweetens it.

SWAPS

Frozen berries heated for a minute in place of the banana. A spoonful of Greek yoghurt. A drizzle of honey.

Shopping list for this recipe

Lunch

LUNCH · FROM SATURDAY

Ragu Baked Potato with Cheese

15 minutes | Microwave and 1 pan | From Saturday's dinner

INGREDIENTS (1 PORTION)

1 portion	beef ragu, from Saturday's dinner (kept in the fridge)
1	baking potato (about 250 g)
20 g	strong Cheddar, grated
20 g	baby spinach
1 splash	water

METHOD

1. Scrub the potato and prick it all over with a fork. Microwave it on a plate for 5 minutes, turn it over and microwave for another 3 to 4 minutes, until it feels soft when squeezed (use a tea towel, it will be hot).
2. While it cooks, tip the cold ragu into a small saucepan with a splash of water. Heat it over a medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring, until it is bubbling and steaming hot all the way through.
3. Cut the potato open and fluff up the inside with a fork. Put the spinach inside, spoon the hot ragu over the top and scatter with the cheese.

> **REHEAT ONCE, UNTIL STEAMING HOT**
>
> The ragu must have been cooled within 1 to 2 hours on Saturday and kept covered in the fridge. Heat it until it is steaming hot all the way through. Reheat it once only, and throw away anything you do not eat.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY LUNCH

Last night's ragu gets a second life on a baked potato, with the skin giving extra fibre. The spinach is wilted by the heat, and a small amount of cheese melts over the top.

SWAPS

A sweet potato in place of the potato. A spoonful of Greek yoghurt on top. Frozen peas stirred into the ragu as it heats.

Shopping list for this recipe

Dinner

DINNER · PORK · ROAST · MAKES 3 PORTIONS

Roast Pork Loin with Roast Vegetables

Prep: 15 minutes | Oven: about 1 hour 10 minutes | About 15 minutes of hands-on work | Washing up: 1 tin | Makes 3 portions: 1 tonight, 2 for lunches at the start of next week

INGREDIENTS (3 PORTIONS OF PORK; THE VEGETABLES ARE FOR TONIGHT'S PORTION)

- **600 g** boneless pork loin joint, fat trimmed, fully defrosted if frozen
- **1 tsp** honey
- **1 tsp** mustard
- **1 tsp** dried thyme
- **2 tsp** olive oil
- 1 carrot, cut into large chunks (tonight's portion)
- 1 parsnip, cut into large chunks (tonight's portion)
- 150 g potato (1 medium), cut into chunks (tonight's portion)
- 80 g frozen peas (tonight's portion)
- 1 pinch black pepper

PREP (ABOUT 15 MINUTES)

1. Heat the oven to 220°C (200°C fan). Take the pork out of the fridge 20 minutes before cooking and pat it dry with kitchen paper. Trim off any hard fat.
2. Mix the honey, mustard, thyme, 1 tsp of the oil and plenty of pepper in a small bowl and rub it all over the pork. Put it in a roasting tin.
3. Peel the carrot, parsnip and potato and cut them into large chunks (about 4 cm). Toss them with the other 1 tsp of oil and spread them around the pork in the tin.

COOKING (ABOUT 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES, MOSTLY HANDS-OFF)

1. Roast for 20 minutes to brown the pork. Turn the oven down to 180°C (160°C fan) and roast for another 40 to 45 minutes, turning the vegetables once, until the pork is cooked through. A thermometer in the middle should read at least 70°C, and the juices should run clear with no pink.
2. Lift the pork onto a board, cover tightly with foil and rest it for 10 minutes. Keep the vegetables warm in the switched-off oven.

3. Cook the peas in a small pan of boiling water for 3 minutes, or in the microwave. Drain.
4. Slice the pork thinly. Serve one third (about 150 g) with the roast vegetables and peas, with a spoonful of the juices from the tin.
5. Put the other two thirds in two separate containers, with a little of the juices to keep it moist. Cool them, uncovered, for no more than 1 hour. Cover and put them in the fridge.

KEEPING THE LEFTOVER PORK SAFE

Cool the other portions quickly, within 1 to 2 hours, and keep them covered in the fridge. Eat them cold within 2 days (Monday and Tuesday at the latest), with no reheating needed for the sandwich ideas below. Throw away anything left after 2 days. There is no freezer step in this plan.

TWO IDEAS FOR THE LEFTOVER PORK

Monday lunch: spread a wholemeal wrap with a little mustard and a spoonful of Greek yoghurt, add sliced cold pork, spinach and cucumber, and roll it up. Tuesday lunch: make a sandwich of cold pork, sliced eating apple and a few spinach leaves on wholemeal bread. If you want to keep the week as written, swap either for the lunch it replaces.

WHY IT IS A HEALTHY DINNER

Pork loin is one of the leanest roasts, with very little fat once trimmed, and a tiny honey and mustard glaze gives it flavour with no sauce. One joint gives three meals with only about 15 minutes of work.

SWAPS

A boneless chicken breast joint, or a beef topside, in place of the pork. A sweet potato in place of the potato. Broccoli in place of the peas.

Shopping list for this recipe

COMING UP NEXT

Chapter 8 is the combined weekly shopping list, with a cook once, eat twice planner, a prep-ahead schedule, a freeze-and-defrost schedule and a food-safety reminder for the leftovers.

Meal Plan 12: Cook Once, Eat Twice

Chapter 8 · Weekly shopping list

How to use this list. It merges the shopping lists of all 21 recipes from Monday to Sunday, so you can shop once. Amounts are totals for the week, and the last column says where each item is used. Check the cupboard section before you go, because oil, honey, mustard and dried herbs are probably already at home. Every dinner makes 2 portions (Sunday's pork makes 3), and the extra portion becomes the next day's lunch. The planner below shows which dinner feeds which lunch, and each leftover recipe has its own shopping list. Everything else is for one portion. Each recipe page still has its own list.

DOWNLOAD

A plain-text copy of this whole list is here: Weekly shopping list (text file)

The cook once, eat twice planner

Each dinner makes an extra portion that you put in the fridge and turn into the next day's lunch. Cool the extra portion within 1 to 2 hours, keep it covered, and eat it the next day. There is no freezer step in this plan.

DAY	DINNER (COOKED ONCE)	EATEN AGAIN AS
Mon	Beef and orzo pot (2 portions)	Tue lunch: cold beef and orzo salad pot
Tue	Lemon-garlic chicken tray (2 portions)	Wed lunch: lemon chicken, potato and green bean soup
Wed	Roast vegetable and butter bean tray (2 portions)	Thu lunch: roast vegetable and butter bean soup
Thu	Beef sloppy joes (2 portions)	Fri lunch: sloppy joe quesadilla
Fri	Salmon and sweet potato tray (2 portions)	Sat lunch: salmon and sweet potato fishcakes
Sat	Slow-cooked beef ragu (2 portions)	Sun lunch: ragu baked potato

DAY	DINNER (COOKED ONCE)	EATEN AGAIN AS
Sun	Roast pork loin (3 portions)	Mon and Tue lunches next week: cold pork wrap and pork and apple sandwich

Meat and fish

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Lean beef mince (5% fat)	2 packs of 250 g (500 g needed)	Mon 250 g (orzo pot), Thu 250 g (sloppy joes)
Boneless, skinless chicken thighs	4 thighs, about 400 g	Tue (tray bake)
Salmon fillets	2 fillets, about 130 g each, fresh or frozen	Fri (tray, 2 portions)
Braising or stewing beef (chuck or shin)	300 g	Sat (ragu, 2 portions)
Boneless pork loin joint	600 g	Sun (roast, 3 portions)

Fruit and vegetables

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Bananas	2	Tue (toast), Sun (French toast)
Lemons	2	Tue 1 (zest and juice) plus 1 tsp, Wed 1 tsp, Thu 2 tsp (soup 1, slaw 1), Fri 1 tbsp, Sat 1 tsp
Onions	4	Mon 1, Wed 1 (small), Thu 1, Sat 1
Garlic	1 head (8 cloves needed)	Mon 2, Tue 2, Thu 2, Sat 2
Carrots	3	Thu 1 (slaw), Sat 1, Sun 1
Parsnip	1	Sun (roast)
Baby new potatoes	1 pack, 400 g or more	Tue (tray bake, 2 portions)

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Potatoes	1 baking potato (250 g) and 1 medium (150 g)	Sun lunch 250 g, Sun dinner 150 g
Sweet potatoes	2 medium (400 g)	Fri (tray, 2 portions)
Courgettes	2 (one large, one medium)	Mon 1 (large, 200 g), Wed 1
Red peppers	2	Wed 1, Thu 1
Green beans	1 bag, 400 g	Tue 200 g, Fri 200 g
Cherry tomatoes	1 pack, 200 g	Wed (tray)
Medium tomatoes	4	Mon 2 (breakfast, lunch), Thu 1, Sat 1
Cucumber	1 small (100 g needed)	Mon 50 g, Tue 50 g
Mushrooms	1 small pack, at least 60 g	Sat (omelette)
Baby spinach	1 bag, at least 120 g	Mon 20 g, Tue 20 g, Fri 20 g, Sat 40 g, Sun 20 g

Dairy and eggs

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Eggs	1 box of 10 (9 needed)	Mon 2, Thu 2, Sat 3 (omelette 2, fishcakes 1), Sun 2
Plain Greek-style yoghurt	1 tub, 500 g (165 g needed)	Wed 150 g, Thu 15 g (slaw). About 335 g spare
Semi-skimmed milk	1 pint (568 ml, 250 ml needed)	Fri 200 ml, Sun 50 ml
Strong Cheddar cheese	1 small block, about 200 g (100 g needed)	Mon 30 g, Fri 30 g, Sat 20 g, Sun 20 g
Feta cheese	1 pack (90 g needed)	Mon 60 g (30 g dinner, 30 g Tuesday lunch), Wed 30 g

Bread and bakery

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Wholemeal bread	1 loaf (10 slices needed)	Tue 2, Wed 3 (lunch 1, dinner 2), Thu 3 (breakfast 2, lunch 1), Sun 2
Wholemeal tortilla wraps	2 (from a pack)	Mon 1 (breakfast), Fri 1 (quesadilla)
Wholemeal pitta bread	1 (from a pack)	Mon (lunch)
Wholemeal bread roll	1	Thu (sloppy joe)

Frozen

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Mixed berries	1 small bag, at least 160 g	Wed 80 g, Fri 80 g
Peas	1 small bag, at least 80 g	Sun (roast pork)

Tins, jars and bottles

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Chopped tomatoes (400 g tin)	2 tins	Mon (orzo pot), Sat (ragu)
Butter beans (400 g tin)	1 tin	Wed (tray, 2 portions)
Peanut butter, 100% peanuts	1 small jar (15 g needed)	Tue (toast)

Dry goods

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Orzo pasta	1 small pack (150 g needed)	Mon (orzo pot, 2 portions)
Dried wholewheat tagliatelle	1 small pack (75 g needed)	Sat (ragu)

ITEM	BUY	USED IN
Porridge oats	1 bag (90 g needed)	Wed 30 g, Fri 40 g, Sat 20 g (fishcakes)
Reduced-salt beef stock cubes	1 small box (1½ cubes needed)	Mon 1, Sat ½
Reduced-salt chicken stock cubes	1 small box (½ cube needed)	Wed (soup)
Reduced-salt vegetable stock cubes	1 small box (½ cube needed)	Thu (soup)

Cupboard check

You probably have these already. Check the amounts, then add to the trolley whatever has run out.

- **Olive oil**: about 18 tsp (6 tbsp, 90 ml) over the week
- **Tomato purée**: 4 tbsp (Mon, Thu, Sat)
- **Honey**: 3 tsp (Wed optional, Thu, Sun)
- **Mustard**: 3 tsp (Mon, Thu, Sun)
- **Salt and black pepper**: used in most recipes
- **Dried oregano**: 3 tsp (Mon, Tue, Sat)
- **Smoked paprika**: 3 tsp (Wed, Thu, Fri)
- **Dried thyme**: 1 tsp (Sun)
- **Ground cinnamon**: ½ tsp and a pinch (Tue, Sun)

Equipment

- A large baking tray (Tue, Wed, Fri) and a roasting tin (Sun)
- A large, deep frying pan or wide saucepan with a lid (Mon) and a large, heavy pot with a lid (Sat)
- A non-stick frying pan, about 20 cm (most breakfasts, Thu, Fri, Sat)
- A medium saucepan (Wed, Thu, Fri, Sun)

- A microwave and a microwave-safe plate (Sun)
- A stick blender (Thu soup, optional)
- A meat thermometer (optional but useful for the pork)
- Containers with lids for the leftovers: 1 for each of the 7 dinners (2 for Sunday's pork). Label them with the day.

Prep-ahead schedule

Each weekday dinner can be partly prepared in 5 to 10 minutes any time that day, which leaves about 10 minutes of work at dinner time, and the oven or the simmering pan does the rest. Saturday is a slow ragu and Sunday is a pork roast, both with lots of waiting time.

DAY	PREP AHEAD (ANY TIME THAT DAY)	AT DINNER TIME
Mon	Chop the onion, garlic and courgette (5 minutes)	Brown the mince, add the vegetables, tomatoes and stock, cook the orzo in it for 10 to 12 minutes
Tue	Marinate the chicken (bottom shelf), chop the potatoes and beans (10 minutes)	Oven on 220°C, roast the chicken and potatoes, add the beans for the last 10 to 12 minutes
Wed	Chop the vegetables, drain the beans (10 minutes)	Oven on 220°C, roast everything on one tray for 25 to 30 minutes
Thu	Chop the onion, pepper and garlic (5 minutes)	Brown the mince, add the vegetables and sauce, simmer 8 to 10 minutes, make the slaw
Fri	Chop the sweet potato and beans, salmon on the bottom shelf (10 minutes)	Oven on 220°C, roast the sweet potato 15 minutes, add the salmon and beans for 10 to 12 minutes

If you shop once: freeze and defrost

Raw meat and fish should not wait several days in the fridge, so buy them on your shopping day, freeze them at once, and take each one out the evening before you cook it. Defrost on a plate on the bottom shelf of the fridge, never on the worktop. Check the use-by date on the pack: if it falls before the day you need the item, freeze it. Do not refreeze raw meat that has defrosted.

ITEM	COOK ON	TAKE OUT OF THE FREEZER
Beef mince for Monday (freeze on buying)	Mon	Sun evening
Chicken thighs	Tue	Mon evening
Beef mince for Thursday (freeze on buying)	Thu	Wed evening
Salmon fillets	Fri	Thu evening
Braising beef	Sat	Fri evening
Pork loin joint (18 hours or more)	Sun	Fri evening

PREPPING RAW MEAT AND FISH AHEAD

Marinated chicken, mince, salmon and braising beef wait in the fridge on the **bottom shelf**, covered, away from other food. Cook meat the same day (within about 8 hours) and fish within about 6 hours. Never leave prepped raw food on the worktop. Chill any batch portions within 1 to 2 hours of cooking, reheat them once until steaming hot all the way through, and never refreeze food that has been defrosted.

Leftovers: using it all up

- **Sunday's pork:** 2 portions in the fridge for cold lunches on Monday and Tuesday at the start of next week (a pork wrap and a pork and apple sandwich). Throw away any left on Wednesday.
- **Spare yoghurt (about 335 g):** on porridge or fruit, or in a dressing. **Spare Cheddar (about 100 g):** on toast or a jacket potato. **Spare feta:** in a salad within 5 days.
- **Spare eggs (1):** a boiled egg for lunch. **Spare spinach, green beans and mushrooms:** use them in an omelette or soup within 2 days, or freeze them.
- **Spare orzo, tagliatelle and oats:** keep them in the cupboard for next time. **Spare bread and wraps:** freeze the rest of the loaf in slices, and freeze the wraps in a freezer bag.