

Cultural Daily

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Ten Meal Prep Hacks for Beginners

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It might be the prospect of healthy eating, saving your budget, or just simply recreating those colorful bento boxes that you see in your Instagram feed that got you into meal prep. No matter the reason behind it, you must know it is not easy to prepare food for the entire week in one go and make it worthwhile.

And that is why you need to learn some meal prep hacks that will make a world of difference for your meal prep experience. For one, they will save you time, money, and most importantly, you won't get bored with the same routine. Besides, they will ensure a healthy diet with the least effort on your part. Let's check out some easy meal prep hacks.

1. Invest in Some Good Quality Containers or Mason Jars

When it comes to meal prep, good quality containers or jars are vital for a well-functioning food preserving system. If you have good quality containers you won't have to worry about food getting spoiled. Make sure your containers are-

- Eco friendly
- Easy to wash
- Microwaveable
- Transparent
- Coupled with a measuring label

2. Learn About Nutritional Value

Beginner meal preppers often find it difficult to plan meals that combine all the food groups. If you know about the nutritional value and food groups, it will be easier for you to plan a meal.

For starters, you can prepare two proteins, four vegetables, and one carbohydrate item for the week. Pair them up according to your preference to make a balanced meal. You can also visit [Mealprepify](#) for some simple meal-prep ideas.

3. Keep Your Pantry Well-Stocked

A well-stocked pantry is vital for efficient meal prep. For starters, you can stock some whole grains (rice, cereal, quinoa, oats, pasta), legumes (beans, lentils), oils (olive, coconut, avocado), baking items (flour, corn starch, baking soda, baking powder), butter, dried fruits, canned items (broth,

tomato, artichoke, corn, olive, tuna, chicken) in your pantry. Buy them in bulk so you don't have to buy essentials like oils or grains in every grocery run.

4. **Keep Your Fridge Organized**

It is very frustrating having to rummage through an unorganized fridge for one specific item. Besides, you need to free up a large portion of your freezer and fridge to preserve your prepped foods. Make sure you declutter your fridge every week and throw away the expired items.

5. **Stock up Your Pantry with Spices**

Spices, herbs, and condiments can make a world of difference to the taste of food. As well as turning a bland recipe into an appetizing one, spices can also have a myriad of health benefits. If you don't have a spice collection, make sure you build one. It will make your meal prep journey more flavorful and exciting.

6. **Buy Pre-Cut Veggies**

If you are not fond of chopping or cutting, you should buy pre-cut veggies or [use a meal kit delivery service](#). That way, you will save time in washing, chopping, and freezing. While canned vegetables can also be an alternative for saving time, their mushy taste might not be suitable for everyone.

7. **Process the Produce As Soon As You Get Home from the Store**

Processing might be the last thing you want to do after you haul a large bag of groceries home. However, processing foods right after you get them can save you time when you prep the foods later in the week.

Besides, fresh produce requires immediate processing as it can get spoiled. Take time to wash the vegetables, separate the leaves, chop and dice them, and preserve them accordingly.

8. **Use a Pressure Cooker or a Slow Cooker**

Standing over the stove occasionally stirring the pot can be tiring. Besides, [when you are cooking](#) a large batch of food, it can take a long time. Use a pressure cooker or a slow cooker to get a more hands-off meal prep experience.

9. **Learn to Multitask**

As you will be cooking for the entire week, meal prep day can be hectic. However, you can still save time and effort when you know your way around the kitchen. For instance, you can start first with the slow cooking items. By the time they cook, you can always make other preparations like chopping.

10. **Don't Forget to Label the Containers**

Nothing can be more annoying than not finding the right food container when you are running short of time. However, the simple task of labeling your food containers before freezing them can save you from this. Label all your food items with name and prepping date so you can keep track of whether they are expired.

The Bottom Line

Meal prep is a way of making your life easier, not more complicated. Simplify your recipes and be more efficient while you meal prep. As you start out, focus on being consistent and efficient with the process. While your meal prep might not look anything like the perfect bento boxes from the Internet, you will get there eventually. Follow the above-mentioned tips and try to enjoy the process.

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