

MEAL PLANNING

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MEAL PLANNING

A good meal should be nourishing and well cooked with a careful blend of foods and flavours. Our enjoyment of food is used by many factors such as appearance, taste and smell: a tasty meal well presented is more enjoyable than an elaborate but unattractive one.

One of the most important aspects of any good meal is a relaxed happy atmosphere; this help us to enjoy our food and makes a meal a pleasurable occasion. Mealtime is often the only time when the whole family is gathered together and it should be an opportunity for relaxation and casual conversation.

What is meal planning?

Meal planning is the advanced planning of the menu for the next few days, or even the entire month.

Complete meal planning involves planning the meals to be prepared, as well as the items needed to be purchased to prepare them.

A menu is a list of specific foods offered by food establishments to its consumers for a specific period. Planning the menu is the process of listing down these foods which can be served for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snacks. Menu plans may be for one week, three weeks, or even a month.

Planning the menu is important for the following reasons:

- it enables the planner to think ahead and know what to prepare in advance.
- It maximizes the use of available resources like food supplies, fuel, tools, equipment.
- It enables one to predict the expected cost/budget for food.
- It helps anticipate possible problems that may come up based on the menu planned
- It assures varied and interesting meal that would meet the needs and desires of costumers

Goals in Menu Planning

Nutritive Goal- the meals must not only satisfy the palates of costumers but they must be nutritious as well.

Economic Goal- the meals must be planned to meet the meal budget of costumers. It must consider the affordability level of costumers to ensure patronage.

Managerial goal- the meals must be planned according to the material and human resources available. This means that the manager should consider the number of workers, the skills they have, the food supplies, the tools and equipment available, the time for preparation, and the money available for purchase.

Aesthetic goal- the meal should be pleasing, attractive, and satisfying to the costumers. There should be an attractive combination of dishes in terms of color, texture, flavor and temperature. Attractive dishes are certainly inviting to the costumers.

Factors to Consider in Menu Planning

Availability of Foods- a menu is primarily based on what can be bought in the market. The foods in season should be considered. Think of available ingredients as substitutes for those off- season.

Food Habits of Costumers- food managers can make a survey of the vicinity where food establishment is located. The survey can consider the culture of the people living in the vicinity (their customs, traditions, religion and etc.). People will patronize a food establishment where their needs and desires are met, as well as their beliefs and practices are not violated in the food they eat.

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Environmental Conditions- hot and cold seasons should be considered. Specific dishes offered in food establishments should consider the environmental temperatures. Special hot foods can be offered on cold rainy days and vice versa.

Occasions- special occasions like Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries and etc. require special menus.

Amount of Money Available- a food establishment has a definite budget intended for food preparation. Controlling expenses, by operating within a given budget, allows the food manager to predict cost and, at the same time, predict profit

Food budget: before planning any meal, a knowledge of the food budget to be spent must be known.

GUIDELINE TO MEAL PLANNING

A meal should look nice, it should be freshly prepared and served so that it looks its best.

Colours can be added to food e.g. garnishing; it improved its appearance or use. Slice of orange or tomato may also be used to improve its appearance.

A meal should smell good. An appetizing aroma is not only pleasant in itself but it stimulates the flow of digestive juices and makes digestion easier. This is one reason for starting a meal with a good smelling soup.

Meals should take account of the season of the year. In hot weather cold dishes should be provided while in cold weather hot sustaining foods are in

Meals should contain some dietary fibre. Although it cannot be digested, fibre prevents constipation and keeps us healthy.

All meals should provide a reasonable amount of water. Ideally water itself is best although it may be provided in the form of hot beverages or juices.

Meals should be eaten in cheerful and relaxing surroundings.

Meals should be eaten with clean and attractive utensils.

TYPES OF MENU

1. **Table d'hôte:** This is a French word and means food from the hosts' table and it is identified by:

- being a restricted menu
- offering a small number of courses, usually three or four.
- a limited choice within each course.
- a fixed selling price.
- all the dishes being ready at a set time.

SAMPLE OF A TABLE D' HOTE

Table d'hôte

— Starter —

Soup of the Day served with Warm Bread Roll
Cabbage Soup with Toasted Buttered Bread

— Main Course —

table d'hôte

Chicken Brest topped with Mozzarella Cheese and Bacon	\$30.50
Mushroom Ravioli with Tomato sauce and Parmesan	\$31.50
Steamed Smoked Haddock with Poached Egg and Herb Oils	\$35.50

— Dessert —

Bread Pudding with fresh Vanilla Bean Icecream
Hot Pancake with choice of Berry Compote
Waffle with Raspberry Compote and Vanilla Icecream

A la carte: this means a free choice from the card or menu and is identified by:

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- being usually a larger menu than a table d'hôte menu and offering a greater choice.
 - listing under the course headings all of the dishes that may be prepared by the establishment. - all dishes being prepared to order. - each dish being separately priced. - expensive than a table d'hôte menu.

Sample of A La Carte Menu

Breakfast À La Carte

Breakfast Favorites

Two Farm Fresh Eggs	\$14.00
Three Egg Omelette	\$18.00
Poached Eggs Florentine	\$18.00
Pancakes	\$15.00
French Toast	\$15.50
Side Orders (Bacon, Ham, or Sausage)	\$9.00

Cold Selection

Sliced Fruits	\$17.00
Yogurt	\$7.00
Bircher Muesli	\$9.00
Assorted Cereal	\$8.00
Bakers Basket	\$10.50
Toast	\$6.00

Beverages

Chilled Apple Juice	\$5.00
Fresh Squeezed Orange Juice	\$12.00
Coffee	\$5.00
Espresso Coffee	\$5.00

Semi-A La Carte Menu- this type offers different combinations of main dish with accompanying salad and a beverage. The advantage of this kind is that it allows costumers to choose from different kinds of food combinations at a fixed price which would meet the budget of the costumers.

Hospital menus/Institutional menus: It's a form of a menu given to the patient. The day before service the patient ticks his/her preferences. A dietician is usually involved with menu compilation to ensure nothing is given to the patients that would be detrimental to their health.

Budgeting and Shopping Strategies to Meal Management

Prepare a shopping list - group similar foods together to be efficient.

Check cupboards/pantry to avoid duplication.

Familiarize yourself with the store layout.

Comparison shopping - compare unit prices and cost per serving.

Avoid damaged goods and frozen packages.

Check dates on the package.

BUDGETING

A **budget** is defined as a plan or estimate of the amount of money needed for cost of living or to be used for a specific purpose. For example: how much a family spends on all expenses in a month, how much a person plans on spending on a new bed.

BUDGETING AND SHOPPING STRATEGIES TO MEAL MANAGEMENT

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Plan meals around store specials.

Budgeting and Shopping Strategies to Meal Management cont'd

Stick to the list to avoid impulse buying.

Quantity buying can benefit if the item is used frequently.

Take advantage of sales of frequently used items; case lot sales.

Buy foods in season for best prices.

Using a calculator while shopping can help keep track of money spent while shopping.

Read the label

- Compare the Nutrition Facts table on food labels to choose products that contain less fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and sodium.
- Keep in mind that the calories and nutrients listed are for the amount of food found at the top of the Nutrition Facts table.

Limit trans fat

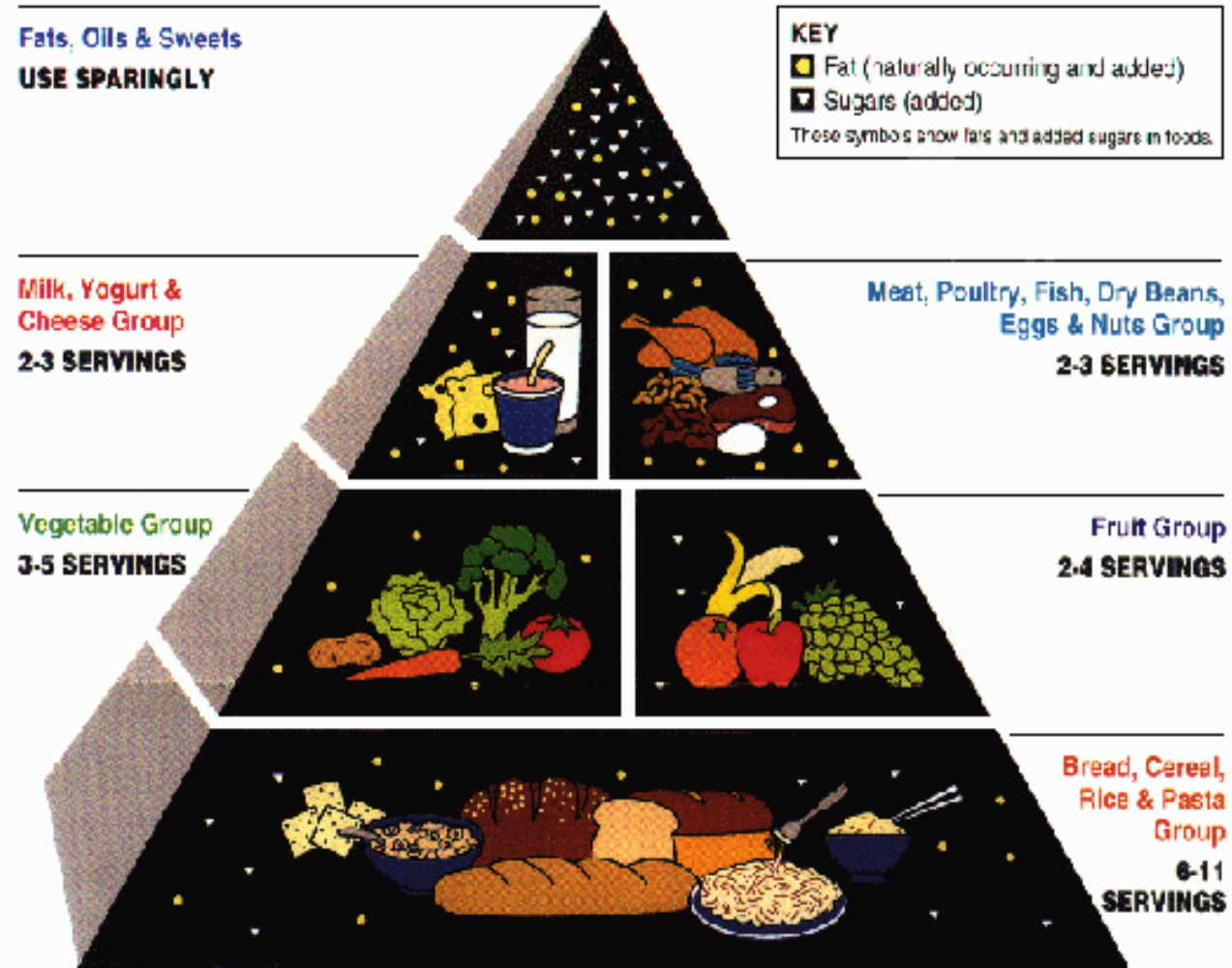
When a Nutrition Facts table is not available, ask for nutrition information to choose foods lower in trans and saturated fats.

Nutrition Facts

Per 0 mL (0 g)

Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 0	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 0 g	0 %
Fibre 0 g	0 %
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 0 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 0 %

The food guide pyramid



How many servings are right for me?

The pyramid shows a range of servings for each major food group.

The number of servings that are right for you depends on how many calories you need, which in turn depends on your age, sex, size and how active you are.

The following calorie level suggestions are based on recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences and on calorie intakes reported by people in national food consumption surveys.

1,600 calories	Right for many sedentary women and some older adults
2,200 calories	Right for most children, teenage girls, active women, and many sedentary men. Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding may need somewhat more.
2,800 calories	Right for teenage boys, many active men, and some very active women.

Recommended food guide servings per day in Canada

<i>Recommended Number of Food Guide Servings per Day</i>									
	Children			Teens		Adults			
Age in Years	2-3	4-8	9-13	14-18		19-50		51+	
Sex	Girls and Boys			Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
<i>Vegetables and Fruit</i>	4	5	6	7	8	7-8	8-10	7	7
<i>Grain Products</i>	3	4	6	6	7	6-7	8	6	7
<i>Milk and Alternatives</i>	2	2	3-4	3-4	3-4	2	2	3	3
<i>Meat and Alternatives</i>	1	1	1-2	2	3	2	3	2	3

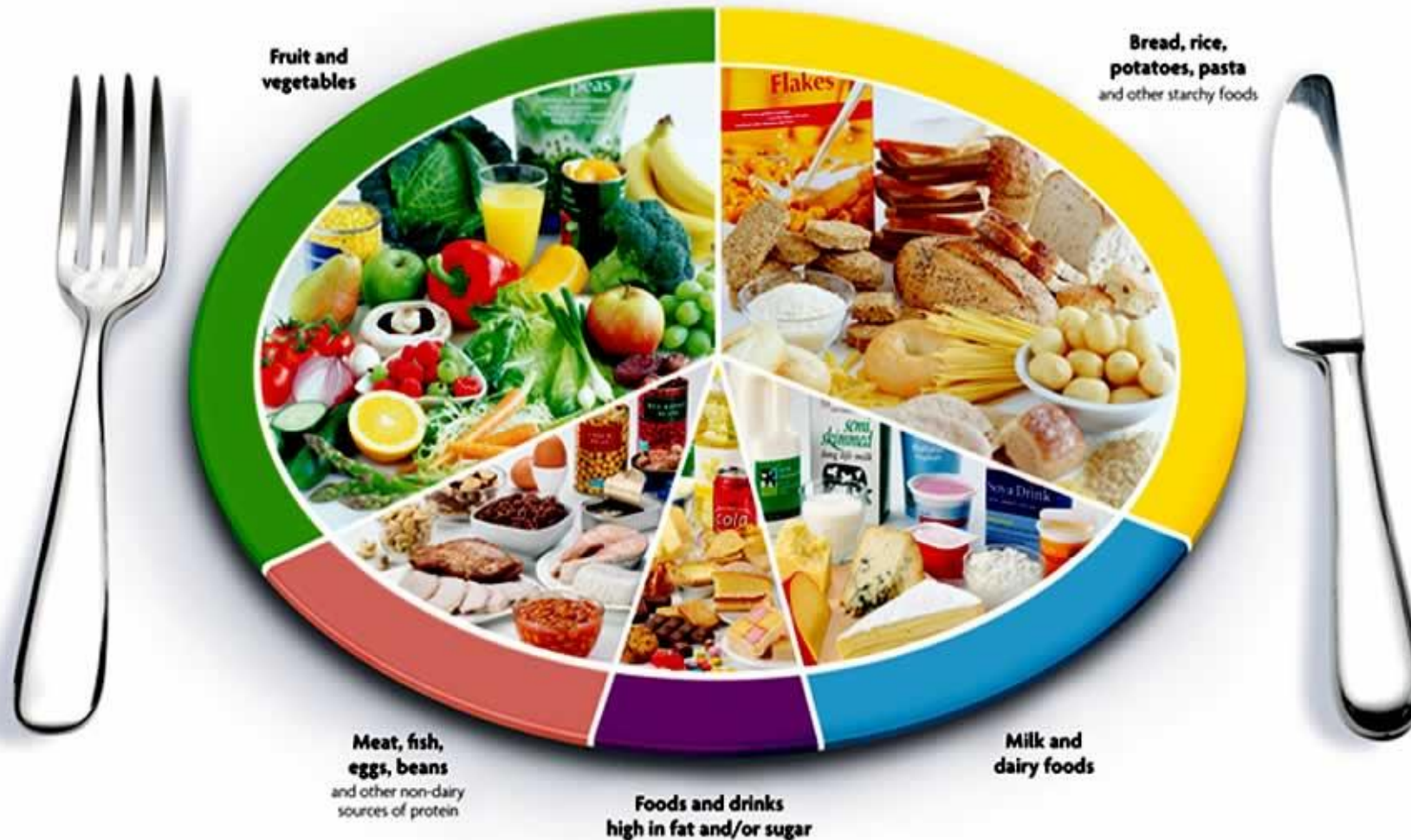
What is one food guide serving?

Look at the examples below...



The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



The eatwell plate

This eating model for the UK promotes:

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- increased consumption of fruit and vegetables and starchy foods;
 - moderate consumption of meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non dairy sources of protein;
 - moderate consumption of milk and dairy foods;
 - small consumption of food containing fat and sugar.

The eatwell plate can be used to achieve healthier menu planning.

FOOD PURCHASING

Purchasing is the process of getting the right product into a facility at the right time and place, plus the amount of goods at the right price and right source.

It is an act of buying. It is a complex activity because it involves a lot of decision making in obtaining the best quality with the least money, time, and energy.

CLASSIFICATION OF FOOD PURCHASE

Perishable food – are food items that have short useful life after they have been received. Items that are liable to spoil or decay. Example: meat, poultry, seafood, fruits, vegetables, butter and eggs.

Staple food – are food items that have longer shelf life-often stored on shelves at room temperature, usually in a storeroom. Ex: groceries and canned goods.

Contract items – are food items usually consumed every day and thus have to be purchased on the basis of a negotiated contract. Example: coffee, milk, oil, ice cream, noodles, breads and etc.

BUYING GUIDELINES

Buy by weight

Buy by count or size

Buy by brands or trade names

Buy foods in season

WISE BUYING OF FOOD

❖ Purchasing Meat: before buying meats, consider the desirable characteristics. Buy only from reliable sources or markets that are regularly inspected, choose meat free from foul odor, check whether the meat is freshly butchered or frozen, choose cuts of meat suitable to the preparation desired and buy exact quantity to be used.

❖ Purchasing Poultry: when buying poultry products, age is an important consideration. Full-grown poultry has a better flavor, young birds are usually tender and contains little fat. Consider the condition of the bird when it was slaughtered. Note any deterioration such as a bad smell or discoloration.

❖ Purchasing Seafood: Fish and other sea foods should be fresh.

❖ Purchasing Fruits and Vegetables: Vegetables should be bought fresh. Green vegetables should be green. Check that they are clean, free from damaging cuts and bruises. Choose fruits in season. Vegetables should no sign of wilting and should be free from dirt.

RECEIVING

Receiving is the point at which food service operation inspects and takes legal ownership and physical possession of items ordered. Its purpose is to ensure that the food and supplies delivered match the established quantity and quality specifications.

STANDARDS FOR RECEIVING

The quantity delivered should be the same as the quantity listed.

The quality of the item delivered should conform to the establishments' standard purchase specifications (SPS).

The prices on the invoice should be the same as those on the quotation list.

All invoices for foods delivered in a given day should be listed by the receiving clerk's daily report for that day.

Completed paperwork should be forwarded to proper personnel.

Food should be moved to the appropriate storage area.

Storage

Proper storage of food immediately after it has been received and checked is an important factor in the prevention and control of loss or waste.

Perishables need to be placed immediately to refrigerated or frozen storage. Staples should be stored in an orderly and systematic arrangement.

Food should be protected from pests, rodents, and insects. Storage should also have a low humidity and proper ventilation to help prevent spoilage.

General Guidelines For Storage

- Wash, Wipe and clean items that needs cleaning
- Check Previously Frozen items, before putting them in the freezer.
- All new products must be dated with month, day, and year when putting deliveries on shelves.
- All food prepared in house must include the name of the food, the date, the time of preparation, and the date by which it must be thrown out.
- Store foods in their specific areas of storage and keep different food items separated.

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- Avoid overcrowding and overstocking of stored food.
 - Access to food store should be restricted to reduce exposure to contamination.
 - Arrange Food supplies using FIFO method: First In, First Out (FIFO). FIFO ensures proper rotation of foods in storage. When foods are received, put the oldest in the front and the newest in the back. Identify package date, preparation date, or date of purchase.

Types of Storage

Frozen Storage: this is used to store foods which needs to be kept frozen at -18°C or colder

Cold storage: this is for foods that must be kept in the refrigerator or cool room below 4°C

Dry storage: dry storage is for dry foods which have a long shelf life and they can be kept at room temperature. Examples are: flour, tea, sugar, canned foods etc.

Can you think of other ways of storing our food?