### Minimal Cookbook

Design Notes:

* Every recipe starts a new page
* Find an icon for Gluten Free (GF), Vegan, Dairy Free (DF)
  + Icon for High Protein (maybe 25+)
* Anything H2 should be a new page
* Each Food Category should have a title page with a collage of pictures or a few large ones that make a spread
  + Low Cal Sauces
  + Sides
  + Breakfast
  + Lunch
  + Dinner
  + Dessert
  + Snacks
* Grocery List Template - fill the page, make just a list of categories with lines underneath so they can fill it out.
* Index by Category - This will be the very last thing we do.

### Sections to Add

* ~~Other things that would help is a food scale that measures in scale grams -~~ *~~Added to the bottom of the doc~~* [*~~spenser@joinminimal.com~~*](mailto:spenser@joinminimal.com)
* ~~Recommend getting an Air fryer can really make recipes reduce calories, not necessary~~ *~~- Added to the bottom of the doc~~* [*~~spenser@joinminimal.com~~*](mailto:spenser@joinminimal.com)
* Make a list of pantry & fridge staples to keep on hand to help stay on track?
* Templates:
  + Meal prep planner
  + ~~Meal plan templates~~
  + ~~Example meal plans~~
  + Grocery list template
* Index:
  + Recipes by GF
  + Recipes by Vegan
  + Recipes by Dairy-free
* Icons list:
  + Icon for High Protein (maybe 25+)
* ~~Protein Powder Section:~~

## **LOW CALORIE SAUCES**

### Creamy Honey Sriracha Sauce

**Prep + Cook Time: <5 Minutes**

**Servings: 19 Tbsp**

**Calories: 12 per 1 serving**

**Macros: Per Serving Size**

* **Protein: 0.6g**
* **Fats: 0g**
* **Carbs: 2g**
* **Fiber: 0g**

Ingredients:

* 3/4 Cup Non-fat Greek Yogurt
* 4 Tbsp Sriracha
* 2 Tbsp White Vinegar
* 1 tbsp Honey

Instructions:

* Gather all ingredients into a Blender
* Blend
* Add Water and Vinegar until you have your desired consistency
* Bottle and enjoy (good for 3-5 days in the fridge)

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Can be made ahead and stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Freezing is not recommended as the yogurt-based sauce may separate.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Substitute Greek yogurt with coconut or cashew yogurt and honey with agave.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use a dairy-free yogurt alternative.

### Creamy Garlic Sauce

**Prep + Cook Time: <5 Minutes**

**Servings: 19 Tbsp**

**Calories: 15 per 1 Tbsp**

**Macros:**

**Calories: ~200 cal**

**Protein: ~8g**

**Carbohydrates: ~20g**

* **Fiber: ~5g**
* **Sugar: ~10g (from honey and yogurt)**

**Fat: ~10g**

Ingredients:

* 1/2 cup Non-Fat Greek yogurt, plain (80g)
* 1/2 Medium Avocado (75g)
* 6-8 garlic cloves
* Juice of 1 lemon
* 1 tbsp White vinegar
* 1 tbsp honey (or sweetener of your choice)
* 1/4 tsp Cumin
* Salt to Taste
* (Optional) Fresh Parsley, chopped

Instructions:

* Gather all ingredients into a Blender
* Blend
* Add Water and Vinegar until you have your desired consistency
* Add Fresh Chopped Parsley, and stir
* Bottle and Enjoy (Good for 3-5 days in the Fridge)

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* This sauce can be made in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator for **3-5 days**.
* For best results, stir or shake before each use, as natural separation may occur.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Freezing is **not recommended** due to the yogurt and avocado content, which may cause separation and texture changes when thawed.
* If freezing is necessary, blend again after thawing to restore consistency.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use a plant-based yogurt and replace honey with agave syrup or maple syrup.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use a dairy-free yogurt alternative.

### Imitation In-n-Out Sauce

**Prep + Cook Time: <5 Minutes**

**Servings: ~19 Tbsp**

**Calories: 12 per 1 serving**

**Macros: Per Serving Size**

* **Calories:** ~400 kcal
* **Protein:** ~2g
* **Carbs:** ~30g
* **Fat:** ~30g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup low-fat mayonnaise
* 3 tbsp ketchup
* 1 tbsp mustard
* 1 tbsp white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
* 1 tsp paprika
* 1 tsp onion powder
* 1 tsp garlic powder
* 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)
* Salt and black pepper to taste
* (Optional) ½ finely Diced Yellow Onion
* (Optional: 1-2 Tbsp of Adobe Sauce)

Instructions:

1. **Combine Ingredients:** In a bowl, mix together the Greek yogurt, low-fat mayonnaise, ketchup, Dijon mustard, and vinegar until smooth.
2. **Add Seasonings:** Stir in the paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, and optional cayenne pepper. Mix until all the spices are evenly distributed.
3. **Season to Taste:** Add salt and black pepper to taste. Adjust seasoning if needed.
4. **Chill:** Cover the bowl and refrigerate the sauce for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
5. **Serve:** Use as a dip for fries, a topping for burgers, or a spread for sandwiches.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Mix all dry seasonings in advance.
* Store sauce in an airtight container in the fridge for up to **5 days**.

Freezing Instructions:

* Not recommended, as the yogurt and mayo may separate when thawed.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use vegan mayo and dairy-free yogurt.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt and mayo.

## **The Only 4 Marinades You'll Ever Need**

### BBQ Soy Ginger Marinade

Ingredients

* 6 boneless, skinless, chicken thighs (819g) (Or favorite protein of choice)
* 2 TBS Soy Sauce (30g)
* 2 TBS low sugar BBQ sauce \*I use no sugar Kinder (30g)
* 2 TBS rice vinegar (30g)
* 4 frozen garlic cubes, or minced cloves
* 4 frozen ginger cubes, or 4 tsp minced ginger
* 1/2 TBS brown sugar (7g)
* 1 TBS Sriracha (15g)
* 1/2 cup cup chives, finely chopped (20g)
* Kosher salt and pepper (just before cooking)

Instructions:

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together **soy sauce, BBQ sauce, rice vinegar, brown sugar, Sriracha, garlic, and ginger** until fully combined.
2. Add **finely chopped chives**, stirring well.
3. Place chicken thighs in a resealable bag or container.
4. Pour marinade over the chicken, ensuring it is evenly coated.
5. Seal the bag/container and marinate in the fridge for at least **30 minutes**, preferably **overnight** for deeper flavor.
6. Remove chicken from the marinade and discard any excess.
7. Cook using your preferred method (grill, oven, or pan-sear) until the internal temperature reaches **165°F (75°C)**.
8. Let rest for **5 minutes** before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Chop chives and store in the fridge.
* Mix all liquid ingredients in advance and refrigerate for up to **5 days**.

Freezing Instructions:

* Store marinade in a **sealed freezer bag** for up to **3 months**.
* For best results, freeze **with** chicken and thaw together in the fridge before cooking.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Use tamari or coconut aminos instead of soy sauce.
* **Vegan:** Use this marinade for tofu or tempeh instead of chicken.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Honey Chipotle Chicken Marinade

**Macros (per serving):**

* **Calories: 185**
* **Protein: 25g**
* **Carbs: 3g**
* **Fat: 7g**

**Ingredients**:

* 7.5 oz can of Chipotle Peppers in Adobo Sauce (use 2 chipotle peppers and 2 tbsp of the sauce)
* 1 tbsp white vinegar
* 1 tsp minced garlic
* 1/2 tsp cumin
* 1/2 tsp oregano
* 1 tsp salt
* 1/4 tsp black pepper
* 1/4 cup water (or chicken stock/broth for extra flavor)
* 1.5 lb boneless, skinless chicken thighs
* 1/2 tbsp olive oil

**Instructions**:

1. **Prepare the Sauce:**
   * In a blender or food processor, combine the chipotle peppers, adobo sauce, white vinegar, minced garlic, cumin, oregano, salt, pepper, and water (or chicken stock). Blend until smooth.
2. **Marinate the Chicken:**
   * Place the chicken thighs in a bowl or resealable plastic bag. Pour the blended chipotle mixture over the chicken, ensuring all pieces are coated.
   * Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, or up to 8 hours for deeper flavor.
3. **Sear the Chicken:**
   * Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
   * Heat the olive oil in a large oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat.
   * Add the marinated chicken thighs to the skillet, shaking off any excess marinade (reserve the marinade). Sear the chicken for about 2-3 minutes per side, until lightly browned.
4. **Finish in the Oven:**
   * Pour the reserved marinade into the skillet around the chicken. Transfer the skillet to the preheated oven.
   * Bake for 15-20 minutes, or until the chicken is fully cooked (internal temperature of 165°F).

### Green Goddess Marinade

Ingredients:

* 2 lbs Chicken Breasts or Tenders (896g)
* 1 Large Shallot (40g)
* 6 Cloves Garlic, Minced (or Frozen Cubes)
* ½ Cup Loosely Packed Parsley (20g)
* ½ Cup Loosely Packed Cilantro (20g)
* ¼ Cup Loosely Packed Basil (12g)
* 1 Jalapeño, Seeds Removed (20g)
* 3 Tbsp Non-Fat Greek Yogurt (45g)
* 2 Tbsp Lemon Juice (30g)
* 2 Tbsp Red Wine Vinegar (30g)
* 1 Tbsp Olive Oil (15g)
* 2 Tsp Kosher Salt
* 2 Tsp Cumin
* 2 Tsp Dried Oregano (or a handful of fresh, if available)
* ¼ Tsp Red Pepper Flakes

Instructions:

* Add all of the marinade ingredients to a food processor or blender and process until smooth, Pour over the chicken and let it marinate in the fridge overnight, or leave at room-temp for 30-60 minutes before grilling.

Instructions:

1. Add **shallot, garlic, parsley, cilantro, basil, jalapeño, Greek yogurt, lemon juice, red wine vinegar, olive oil, salt, cumin, oregano, and red pepper flakes** to a food processor or blender.
2. Blend until smooth and well combined.
3. Place chicken breasts or tenders in a resealable bag or container.
4. Pour marinade over the chicken, ensuring all pieces are coated.
5. Seal the bag/container and marinate for at least **30 minutes**, preferably **overnight**.
6. Remove chicken from marinade and discard any excess.
7. Cook using your preferred method (grill, oven, or pan-sear) until the internal temperature reaches **165°F (75°C)**.
8. Let rest for **5 minutes** before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Chop shallot, jalapeño, and herbs in advance.
* Store in the fridge in an airtight container for up to **3 days** before use.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze in an ice cube tray for easy portioning.
* Store frozen marinade cubes in a **sealed freezer bag** for up to **3 months**.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Swap Greek yogurt for a dairy-free version and use this marinade for tofu.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use a dairy-free yogurt alternative.

### **Mediterranean Herb Mayo Based Marinade: Why Mayo? The Underrated Fat & Binding Agent**

### Mayonnaise often gets a bad rap, but at its core, it’s simply a combination of eggs and olive oil—two ingredients that are widely recognized as nutritious and essential in cooking. This emulsion creates a rich, creamy texture that evenly distributes flavors, making it an excellent base for dressings, marinades, and sauces.

### In this Mediterranean-inspired blend, mayo acts as both the fat source and the binding agent, ensuring the garlic, lemon zest, and spices meld together smoothly. Unlike plain olive oil, which can separate from other ingredients, mayo provides a stable consistency, allowing every bite to carry the full depth of flavor. Plus, the fat in mayonnaise helps enhance nutrient absorption, making it a practical and delicious addition to balanced meals.

### 

**Ingredients:**

* 50g mayonnaise (preferably full-fat for richness)
* 4 cloves garlic, grated
* 1 tsp black pepper
* 1 tsp dried oregano
* ½ tsp ground cumin (for warmth)
* ½ tsp smoked paprika (for depth)
* ½ tsp sumac (optional, for citrusy tang)
* Zest of ½ lemon

**Instructions:**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until well combined.
2. Let it sit for at least 10 minutes to allow flavors to meld.
3. Use as a spread, sauce, or dressing base for Mediterranean-inspired dishes.

## **SIDES**

### **Sides: The Secret to a Satisfying Meal**

A great meal isn’t just about the main protein—it’s about how you build your plate. Sides give you the chance to **add volume, texture, and extra nutrients** to your meal without overloading on calories. The key? **Veggies.**

Vegetables are a game-changer when it comes to feeling full and satisfied. They bring fiber, micronutrients, and low-calorie bulk to your meals, making it easier to stay on track with your nutrition goals without feeling deprived. Whether it’s roasted, grilled, or simply seasoned, the right side dish can transform your meal from good to great.

### **Jasmine Rice: The Perfect Carb for Energy & Performance**

Carbs get a bad reputation, but Jasmine rice deserves a spot on your plate. Rice is a **fantastic source of energy**, especially if you’re active. It digests easily, replenishes glycogen stores, and pairs well with protein and fiber for a well-rounded meal. Unlike ultra-processed carbs, rice is a **whole, natural food** that has fueled cultures worldwide for centuries.

And here’s something even more interesting: **cooked and cooled rice actually has fewer digestible calories.** When rice is cooled and reheated, some of the starches transform into **resistant starch**, which behaves more like fiber in the body. This means **slightly fewer absorbed calories and better gut health benefits.** So if you're meal prepping and reheating rice, you're actually getting a small metabolic advantage!

Whether you're loading up on veggies, adding healthy carbs like rice, or balancing it all with lean proteins, this section is here to help you create sides that are **nutritious, satisfying, and easy to incorporate into your routine.**

### Perfect Stove-top Jasmine Rice

**Prep + Cook Time:** 20-25 minutes

**Serving:** 4 servings

**Calories:** ~200-250 cal per serving

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 3g
* **Fats:** 0g
* **Carbs:** 36g
* **Fiber:** 1g

Ingredients:

* 1 Dry cup jasmine rice
* 1 1/2 cups water
* 1/2 tsp salt

Instructions:

1. **Rinse the Rice:** Rinse the jasmine rice under cold water until the water runs clear. This helps remove excess starch and prevents the rice from becoming too sticky. For best results, soak the rice in cold water for 15-30 minutes before cooking.
2. **Prepare the Pot:** In a medium-sized pot, add the rinsed (and soaked, if applicable) jasmine rice, water, and salt. Stir the rice gently to ensure even distribution.
3. **Bring to a Boil:** Place the pot on medium-high heat and bring the water with the rice to a boil. Allow the rice to heat up along with the water, which helps in even cooking.
4. **Simmer:** Once the water reaches a boil, reduce the heat to low, cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid, and let the rice simmer. Do not lift the lid during cooking to ensure even steaming.
5. **Cook and Rest:** Allow the rice to cook undisturbed for 15 minutes. After cooking, remove the pot from heat and let the rice rest, covered, for an additional 10 minutes. This resting period is crucial for perfect, fluffy rice.
6. **Fluff and Serve:** After resting, remove the lid and fluff the rice gently with a fork before serving.

**Optional Step to add Volume:**

* Prepare a bag of cauliflower rice and mix it with your jasmine rice. This adds volume to your meal, letting you eat more without extra calories, while also boosting its overall nutritional value.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Rinse and soak the rice in advance to cut down on cooking time. Store pre-rinsed rice in an airtight container in the fridge for **up to 24 hours**.
* You can also **cook the rice ahead of time** and store it in the fridge for **up to 4 days**.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Cool cooked rice completely before portioning it into **individual freezer bags or airtight containers**.
* To reheat, microwave directly from frozen with a splash of water, or steam for a **fluffy texture**.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Naturally vegan.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Sweet Potato Fries

**Prep + Cook Time:**

**Air Fryer:** 15-20 minutes

**Oven:** 30-40 minutes

**Serving:** 2 servings

**Calories per Serving:** 130 calories

**Macros per Serving:**

**Protein:** 1g

**Fats:** 2.5g

**Carbs:** 30g

**Fiber:** 2g

Ingredients:

* 1-2 large sweet potatoes (300g)
* 1 tbsp olive oil (30g)
  + Optional- 1-2 light sprays of Spray Oil
* 1-2 tsp Smoked paprika (3g)
* 1-2 tsp garlic powder (3g)
* ½-1 tsp onion powder (1g)
* ½-1 tsp ground cumin (1g)
* Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

**Air Fryer Method:**

1. **Prep the Sweet Potatoes:** Wash the sweet potatoes thoroughly. Cut them into thin strips or wedges, about ¼ to ½ inch thick.
2. **Season Generously:** In a large bowl, toss the sweet potato strips with olive oil, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. **Preheat Air Fryer:** Preheat your air fryer to 400°F (200°C) if required by your model.
4. **Cook:** Place the seasoned sweet potato strips in the air fryer basket in a single layer, making sure they are not overcrowded. You may need to cook them in batches. Air fry for 15-20 minutes, shaking the basket halfway through, until the fries are crispy and golden.
5. **Serve:** Remove from the air fryer and let cool slightly before serving. Enjoy!

**Oven Method:**

1. **Prep the Sweet Potatoes:** Wash the sweet potatoes thoroughly. Cut them into thin strips or wedges, about ¼ to ½ inch thick.
2. **Season Generously:** In a large bowl, toss the sweet potato strips with olive oil, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. **Preheat Oven:** Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly grease it.
4. **Arrange:** Spread the seasoned sweet potato strips in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet, ensuring they are not overlapping.
5. **Bake:** Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, flipping the fries halfway through, until they are crispy and golden brown.
6. **Serve:** Remove from the oven and let cool slightly before serving. Enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Peel and slice sweet potatoes into fries ahead of time. Store them in an airtight container in the fridge for up to **2 days**.
* You can also season them in advance and store them in a zip-top bag, ready to cook.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* To freeze, **blanch the sweet potato fries** by boiling them for **2 minutes**, then draining and drying completely.
* Spread fries on a **baking sheet in a single layer** and freeze for **1-2 hours** before transferring to a freezer bag.
* When ready to cook, bake or air fry directly from frozen, adding a few extra minutes to the cooking time.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Naturally vegan.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Roasted Brussel Sprouts

**Prep + Cook Time:**

**Air Fryer:** 15-20 minutes

**Oven:** 25-30 minutes

**Serving:** 4 servings

**Calories Batch:** 127 calories

**Macros per Serving:**

**Protein:** 3g

**Fats:** 9g

**Carbs:** 15g

**Fiber:** 4g

Ingredients:

* 1 lb (450g) Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
* 2 tbsp olive oil (30g)
* 1 tsp garlic powder (3g)
* ½ tsp smoked paprika (1g)
* Salt and pepper to taste
* 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar (15ml) *(optional)*
* 1 tbsp honey (21g) *(optional)*

Instructions:

**Oven Method:**

1. **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly grease it.
2. **Prep the Brussels Sprouts:** Trim the ends of the Brussels sprouts and remove any yellow or damaged leaves. Cut them in half.
3. **Season:** In a large bowl, toss the Brussels sprouts with olive oil, garlic powder, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
4. **Arrange:** Spread the Brussels sprouts in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet, cut side down for maximum caramelization.
5. **Roast:** Roast in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, stirring halfway through, until the Brussels sprouts are golden brown and crispy on the edges.
6. **Optional Glaze:** If using, mix balsamic vinegar and honey together in a small bowl. Drizzle over the roasted Brussels sprouts and toss to coat. Return to the oven for an additional 5 minutes.
7. **Serve:** Remove from the oven and serve warm. Enjoy!

**Air Fryer Method:**

1. **Prep the Brussels Sprouts:** Trim the ends of the Brussels sprouts and remove any yellow or damaged leaves. Cut them in half.
2. **Season:** In a large bowl, toss the Brussels sprouts with olive oil, garlic powder, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. **Preheat Air Fryer:** Preheat your air fryer to 375°F (190°C) if required by your model.
4. **Arrange:** Place the Brussels sprouts in the air fryer basket in a single layer, ensuring they are not overcrowded. You may need to cook in batches.
5. **Cook:** Air fry the Brussels sprouts for 15-20 minutes, shaking the basket halfway through, until they are golden brown and crispy on the edges.
6. **Optional Glaze:** If using, transfer the cooked Brussels sprouts to a large bowl. Mix balsamic vinegar and honey together in a small bowl, then drizzle over the Brussels sprouts and toss to coat.
7. **Serve:** Serve warm and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Trim and halve Brussels sprouts in advance and store in an airtight container for up to **3 days** in the fridge.
* You can also toss them with the oil and seasoning ahead of time to save prep work.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Blanch Brussels sprouts** in boiling water for **3 minutes**, then transfer to an ice bath.
* Once dry, freeze them in a **single layer on a baking sheet** before transferring them to a freezer bag.
* Roast directly from frozen, increasing the cook time by **5-10 minutes**.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use maple syrup instead of honey for the optional glaze.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Crispy Smashed Potato bites

**Prep + Cook Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Serving:** 4 servings (about 16 potato bites)

**Calories:** 150 calories per serving (4 bites)

**Macros Per Serving:**

**Protein:** 3g

**Fats:** 7g

**Carbs:** 20g

**Fiber:** 2g

Ingredients:

* 1 lb (450g) baby potatoes or small Yukon Gold potatoes
* 2 tbsp olive oil (30g)
* 1 tsp garlic powder (3g)
* 1 tsp dried rosemary (1g)
* ½ tsp paprika (1g)
* Salt and pepper to taste
* Fresh parsley (optional, for garnish)

Instructions:

1. **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. **Boil the Potatoes:** Place the potatoes in a large pot of salted water. Bring to a boil and cook for about 10-15 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork. Drain and let cool slightly.
3. **Prep the Potatoes:** Gently smash each potato with the bottom of a glass or a potato masher until they are flattened but still in one piece.
4. **Season the Potatoes:** In a large bowl, toss the smashed potatoes with olive oil, garlic powder, dried rosemary, paprika, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
5. **Arrange on Baking Sheet:** Place the smashed potatoes in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet.
6. **Bake:** Bake in the preheated oven for 20-25 minutes, or until the edges are golden and crispy.
7. **Garnish (Optional):** Remove from the oven and garnish with fresh parsley if desired.
8. **Serve:** Enjoy your crispy smashed potato bites warm as a snack or side dish!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Boil the baby potatoes ahead of time and store them in the fridge for up to **3 days** before smashing and roasting.
* You can also season them in advance and store in an airtight container until ready to bake.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* After boiling, freeze **whole cooked potatoes** on a baking sheet in a **single layer**, then transfer to a freezer-safe bag.
* When ready to eat, thaw slightly, smash, season, and roast as directed.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Naturally vegan.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Smokey "Popcorn" Cauliflower **Prep + Cook Time:** 30-45 minutes

Air Fryer: 15 minutes

Overn: 25 minutes

**Serving:** 4 servings (about 16 potato bites)

**Calories:** ~111 calories per serving (4 bites)

**Macros Per Serving:**

**Protein:** 5g

**Fats:** 7g

**Carbs:** 8g

**Fiber:** 4g

Ingredients:

* 4 cups cauliflower florets (about 580g)
* 2 tbsp olive oil
* 1 tsp smoked paprika
* 1/2 tsp chili powder
* 1/4 tsp cumin
* Salt and pepper to taste
* 1/4 cup nutritional yeast (optional for a cheesy flavor)

Instructions:

**Oven Method:**

1. **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. **Season the Cauliflower:** In a large bowl, toss the cauliflower florets with olive oil, smoked paprika, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. **Bake the Cauliflower:** Spread the seasoned cauliflower evenly on the lined baking sheet. Bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping halfway through, until golden and crispy.
4. **Add Nutritional Yeast:** Sprinkle the nutritional yeast over the hot cauliflower as soon as it comes out of the oven. Toss to coat.
5. **Serve:** Plate and enjoy your smoky, flavorful cauliflower "popcorn."

**Air Fryer Method:**

1. **Preheat the Air Fryer:** Preheat your air fryer to 375°F (190°C).
2. **Season the Cauliflower:** In a large bowl, toss the cauliflower florets with olive oil, smoked paprika, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
3. **Air Fry the Cauliflower:** Place the seasoned cauliflower in the air fryer basket in a single layer. Air fry for 12-15 minutes, shaking the basket halfway through, until the cauliflower is golden and crispy.
4. **Add Nutritional Yeast:** After air frying, sprinkle the nutritional yeast over the cauliflower while it’s still hot. Toss to coat.
5. **Serve:** Plate and enjoy your crispy, smoky cauliflower "popcorn."

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Chop cauliflower into bite-sized florets and store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to **3 days**.
* You can also season the cauliflower ahead of time and store it in a bag for quick cooking.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Blanch cauliflower florets** in boiling water for **3 minutes**, then cool and pat dry before freezing in a single layer.
* Bake or air fry directly from frozen, increasing the cook time by **5 minutes**.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use nutritional yeast for a cheesy flavor instead of dairy-based cheese.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### **Roasted Garlic Parmesan Zucchini Chips**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 20 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** ~200  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 6g
* **Fats:** 17g
* **Carbs:** 6g
* Fiber 1g

Ingredients:

* 1 medium zucchini (150g), sliced into thin rounds
* 1 tbsp olive oil (15g)
* 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese (10g)
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ¼ tsp salt
* ¼ tsp black pepper

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Toss zucchini slices with olive oil, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper.
3. Arrange in a single layer on the baking sheet.
4. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese evenly over the slices.
5. Bake for 15-18 minutes, flipping halfway, until golden and crispy.
6. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Slice the zucchini up to 24 hours in advance and store in an airtight container.
* Mix seasonings together in a small bowl for quick assembly.

Freezing Instructions:

* Not recommended, as zucchini releases too much water when frozen.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Substitute Parmesan with nutritional yeast.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese or nutritional yeast.

### **Balsamic Glazed Roasted Carrots**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 25 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** ~135  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 1g
* **Fats:** 5g
* **Carbs:** 22g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup baby carrots (150g)
* 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar (15ml)
* 1 tsp honey (7g)
* 1 tsp olive oil (5g)
* ¼ tsp salt
* ¼ tsp black pepper

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Toss carrots with balsamic vinegar, honey, olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
3. Arrange in a single layer on a lined baking sheet.
4. Roast for 20-25 minutes, stirring halfway through.
5. Serve warm with extra balsamic drizzle if desired.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Mix the glaze in advance and store in the fridge.
* Carrots can be pre-cut and stored in water.

Freezing Instructions:

* Roast, cool completely, and freeze in an airtight bag for up to 3 months. Reheat in the oven.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Substitute honey with maple syrup.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Spicy Cajun Cauliflower Bites**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 20-30 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** ~145  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 2g
* **Fats:** 15g
* **Carbs:** 5g
* Fiber: 2g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup cauliflower florets (100g)
* 1 tbsp olive oil (15g)
* ½ tsp Cajun seasoning
* ½ tsp smoked paprika
* ¼ tsp garlic powder
* ¼ tsp salt

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Toss cauliflower with oil and seasonings.
3. Spread on a baking sheet and roast for 18-20 minutes, flipping halfway.
4. Serve hot with your favorite dip.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Chop cauliflower and store in an airtight container.
* Mix seasonings in advance for quick prep.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze roasted cauliflower and reheat in an air fryer or oven.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** No modifications needed.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Crispy Green Bean Fries**

**Prep + Cook Time: 20–30 minutes  
 Servings: 1  
 Calories: ~132 kcal**

**Macros:**

* **Protein: 5.5g**
* **Fats: 9.6g**
* **Carbs: 8.7g**
* **Fiber: 4g**

Ingredients:

* 1 cup fresh green beans (100g), trimmed
* 1 tbsp almond flour (7g)
* 1 tbsp grated Parmesan (5g)
* 1 tsp olive oil (5g)
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ¼ tsp paprika
* ¼ tsp salt

Instructions (Oven Method):

1. Preheat oven to **400°F (200°C)** and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Toss green beans with olive oil, then coat with almond flour, Parmesan, and seasonings.
3. Arrange on the baking sheet in a single layer.
4. Bake for **15-18 minutes**, flipping halfway through, until crispy.

Instructions (Air Fryer Method):

1. Toss green beans with olive oil and seasonings.
2. Preheat air fryer to **375°F (190°C)**.
3. Cook for **10-12 minutes**, shaking the basket halfway through.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Pre-trim green beans and store them in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:

* Not recommended—texture will become too soft.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use nutritional yeast instead of Parmesan.
* **Dairy-Free:** Skip Parmesan.

### **Garlic Butter Mushrooms**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~124 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 2.8g
* **Fats:** 11.3g
* **Carbs:** 4.5g
* **Fiber:** 1g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup mushrooms, sliced (100g)
* 1 tbsp butter (14g)
* 2 cloves garlic, minced
* ¼ tsp salt
* ¼ tsp black pepper
* ½ tsp fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

1. Melt butter in a pan over medium heat.
2. Add mushrooms, garlic, salt, and pepper. Sauté for 5-7 minutes.
3. Garnish with parsley and serve warm.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Slice mushrooms and store in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze after cooking and reheat in a skillet.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use dairy-free butter.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free butter.

## **BREAKFAST**

### **Breakfast: The First Step Toward Crushing Your Protein Goals**

You’ve probably heard it before—**“Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.”** And guess what? *They’re absolutely right.* The first meal you eat sets the pace for your energy levels, metabolism, and hunger throughout the day. More importantly, breakfast is a prime opportunity to **jumpstart your protein intake**, helping you stay full, maintain muscle, and curb cravings before lunch.

Breakfast is also just *damn good*. From savory to sweet, there’s no shortage of nutrient-dense, protein-packed options to choose from. In this section, I’ve put together **a mix of quick, grab-and-go meals and heartier options**, so whether you’re rushing out the door or sitting down to enjoy your morning, you’ve got choices.

But before we dive in, let’s take a moment to appreciate one of the simplest, most misunderstood protein sources: **Eggs.**

### **Eggs: The OG Superfood**

Eggs have been through the wringer—one decade they’re villainized for cholesterol, the next they’re hailed as a nutritional powerhouse. So, let’s set the record straight: Eggs are one of the most nutrient-dense, whole-food protein sources on the planet.

For just 70 calories per egg, you get 6 grams of high-quality protein, essential for muscle maintenance, recovery, and keeping you full for hours. They also deliver healthy fats that support brain function, choline (which 90% of people don’t get enough of) for cognitive health, and key micronutrients like vitamin D, selenium, and B12—all crucial for energy levels and immune function.

And remember the cholesterol scare? Research now shows that for most people, dietary cholesterol from eggs does not negatively impact blood cholesterol levels. In fact, a **2018 study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that people who ate 12 eggs per week for three months saw no negative effects on heart health markers. Instead, eggs provide HDL ("good") cholesterol, which plays a role in hormone production and cellular health.**

**Richard D. Fuller et al. (2018). *"Effect of a high-egg diet on cardiovascular risk factors in people with type 2 diabetes: the DIABEGG randomized controlled trial."* American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 107(4), 617-625.**

This study found that consuming **up to 12 eggs per week for three months** had no adverse effects on blood cholesterol, lipids, or other cardiovascular risk factors in individuals with type 2 diabetes. This aligns with other research showing that, for most people, dietary cholesterol from eggs does not significantly impact heart disease risk.

Plus, they’re ridiculously versatile. Scrambled, fried, poached, hard-boiled—eggs fit into almost any diet plan, making them one of the simplest, most effective ways to hit your protein goals.

### **Simple & Flavorful Scrambled Eggs on Sourdough**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~345 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 23g
* **Fats:** 22g
* **Carbs:** 17g
* **Fiber:** 1g

**Ingredients:**

* 3 whole eggs
* 2 egg whites
* 1 tsp olive oil or butter (5g)
* 1 slice sourdough bread (50g)
* Salt & pepper, to taste
* ¼ tsp garlic powder (optional)
* Fresh chives or parsley for garnish

**Instructions:**

1. Heat a non-stick pan over **medium-low** heat and add olive oil or butter.
2. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, egg whites, salt, pepper, and garlic powder.
3. Pour the mixture into the pan, stirring slowly but consistently with a spatula until soft, creamy curds form.
4. Toast your sourdough slice while the eggs cook.
5. Plate the eggs over the toast, top with fresh herbs, and enjoy!

### **High-Protein Iced Coffee ☕💪**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~120 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 20–25g
* **Fats:** 1–2g (varies slightly by protein powder and almond milk brand)
* **Carbs:** 2–3g
* **Fiber:** 0g

#### **Ingredients:**

* **1 cup (240ml) cold brewed coffee** (or chilled espresso) – 5 cal, 0g protein
* **½ cup (120ml) unsweetened almond milk** (or milk of choice) – 15 cal, 0.5g protein
* **1 scoop (22g) vanilla or chocolate whey protein** – ~100 cal, 20-25g protein
* **1 tsp instant coffee (optional for stronger flavor)** – 0 cal, 0g protein
* **½ cup ice cubes**
* **Sweetener of choice (stevia, monk fruit, or sugar-free syrup)** – 0 cal

#### **Instructions:**

1. **Blend:** Add the **coffee, almond milk, protein powder, and optional instant coffee** to a blender. Blend until smooth and frothy.
2. **Pour:** Fill a glass with **ice cubes** and pour the protein coffee mixture over the top.
3. **Stir & Enjoy:** Taste and adjust sweetness if needed.

💡 **Variations:**

* **Mocha Version:** Use **chocolate protein powder** for a rich mocha flavor.
* **Creamier Option:** Swap almond milk for **fairlife milk or oat milk** for a smoother texture.
* **Caramel Boost:** Add a drizzle of **sugar-free caramel syrup**.
* **More Caffeine Kick:** Double up on espresso shots instead of brewed coffee.

### Avocado Egg Salad on Toast

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~420–460 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 23–26g
* **Fats:** 28–32g
* **Carbs:** 22–25g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 3 Hard-Boiled Eggs (150g)
* ½ Medium Avocado (75g)
* 1-2 tsp Fresh Lemon Juice (10g)
* ¼ Cup Low Fat Cottage Cheese
* 1-2 Tbsp Low-Fat Mayo
  + (optional sub) 1 Tbsp Nonfat Greek Yogurt (17g)
* 1 Slice Sourdough Bread
* 1 Pinch Salt + Pepper
* (Sub: Everything But the Bagel Seasoning)

Instructions:

1. **Toast the Bread**: Toast the 2 slices of thin-sliced whole multi-grain bread to your desired crispiness.
2. **Prepare the Mixture**: In a bowl, mash and combine the ½ medium avocado, 3 hard-boiled eggs (chopped), 1 tablespoon of nonfat Greek yogurt, and 1-2 teaspoons of fresh lemon juice.
3. **Season**: Add a pinch of salt and pepper to taste, or use Everything But the Bagel Seasoning as an alternative.
4. **Plate and Enjoy**: Spread the avocado and egg mixture on the toasted bread, plate, and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Hard-boil the eggs in advance and store them **peeled in the fridge** for up to **5 days**.
* Mash the avocado and mix with lemon juice to prevent browning. Store in an airtight container for **1 day**.
* Toast the bread fresh when ready to serve.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—avocado and boiled eggs do not freeze well due to texture changes.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free bread.
* **Vegan:** Substitute eggs with mashed chickpeas.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use a dairy-free yogurt alternative.

### High Protein Overnight Oats

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~390–410 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 35–40g
* **Fats:** 9–10g
* **Carbs:** 32–35g
* **Fiber:** ~8g

Ingredients:

* ½ Cup Old-Fashioned Oats (40g)
* 1 Tbsp Chia Seeds (10g)
* Greek Yogurt (80g)
* 1 Scoop Protein Powder of Your Choice (32g)
* ½ Cup Fat-Free Fairlife Milk (120ml)
* 1-2 tsp Sugar-Free Maple Syrup (20ml)

Instructions:

1. **Prepare the Protein Milk**: In a container, stir together the fat-free Fairlife milk and protein powder until fully combined.
2. **Combine Dry Ingredients**: In a separate container, mix the old-fashioned oats, chia seeds, and the protein milk mixture. Stir until well combined.
3. **Add Toppings**: Top the mixture with Greek yogurt, and if desired, some fruit and sugar-free maple syrup.
4. **Refrigerate**: Cover the container with a lid and refrigerate overnight.
5. **Enjoy**: Enjoy the next morning or whenever you're ready.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Prepare and refrigerate overnight in an airtight container or mason jar for up to **5 days**.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—oats become mushy when thawed.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use certified gluten-free oats.
* **Vegan:** Use plant-based milk, yogurt, and protein powder.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt and milk.

### Hearty Cinnamon Protein Oatmeal

### Cinnamon Vanilla Protein Oatmeal

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~415–435 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 35–38g
* **Fats:** 8–10g
* **Carbs:** 42–45g
* **Fiber:** ~9g

Ingredients:

* ⅓ Cup Rolled Oats (30g)
* Pinch of Salt
* ¾ Cup Water (200ml)
* 1 Scoop Vanilla Protein Powder (32g)
* ½ Cup Non-fat Greek Yogurt (80g)
* ½ Cup Banana (70g)
* ½ Cup Frozen Berries (70g)
* 1 Tbsp Sugar-Free Maple Syrup (15ml)
* 1 Tbsp Chia Seeds (10g)
* 1-2 Tbsp Ground Cinnamon

Instructions:

1. **Prepare the Yogurt and Protein**: In a bowl, mix 1 scoop of vanilla protein powder with ½ cup of non-fat Greek yogurt until smooth. Set aside.
2. **Toast the Oats**: In a small pot, add ⅓ cup of rolled oats and a pinch of salt. Toast over medium heat for about 3 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent burning.
3. **Cook the Oats**: After toasting, add ¾ cup of water to the pot with the oats. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the oats are fully cooked.
4. **Add Chia Seeds and Water**: Stir 1 tablespoon of chia seeds into the oats and let them absorb some of the water for about a minute.
5. **Add Banana and Cinnamon**: Slice ½ cup of banana and add it to the pot. Sprinkle 1-2 tablespoons of ground cinnamon over the oats and stir to combine.
6. **Combine and Serve**: Remove the pot from the heat and mix in the prepared yogurt and protein mixture. Top with ½ cup of frozen berries and drizzle 1 tablespoon of sugar-free maple syrup over the top.
7. **Enjoy**: Serve immediately, mixing everything together if desired.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Pre-mix dry ingredients (oats, protein powder, chia seeds, cinnamon) and store in an airtight container for **up to 2 weeks**.
* Pre-slice bananas and freeze for quick use.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—oatmeal texture changes when frozen and reheated.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use certified gluten-free oats.
* **Vegan:** Use plant-based protein powder and yogurt.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt and plant-based milk.

### Hash Brown Egg Cups

**Prep + Cook Time:** 45–55 minutes  
 **Servings:** 12  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~125–135 kcal

**Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** 10g
* **Fats:** 7.5g
* **Carbs:** 5–6g
* **Fiber:** ~0.75g

Ingredients:

* 8 Large Eggs (400g)
* 4 Slices Cooked Turkey Bacon, Crumbled (56g)
* 2 ½ Cups Shredded Hash Browns (375g)
* ½ tsp Garlic Powder
* ½ tsp Onion Powder
* 1 tsp Salt
* ½ tsp Pepper
* ½ Cup Fairlife Milk (120ml)
* ½ Small Onion, Diced (100g)
* ½ Red Pepper, Diced (100g)
* 1 Cup Reduced-Fat Cheddar Cheese, Shredded (100g)
* 2 tbsp Parsley, Chopped

Instructions:

1. **Preheat Oven**: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a muffin tin with non-stick cooking spray.
2. **Prepare Bacon**: Air fry the turkey bacon until crispy. Remove from the air fryer, let cool, and then roughly chop.
3. **Mix Ingredients**: In a bowl, combine the eggs, crumbled bacon, shredded hash browns, Fairlife milk, diced onion, diced red pepper, shredded cheddar cheese, salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, and chopped parsley. Whisk until everything is thoroughly combined.
4. **Fill Muffin Tin**: Divide the egg mixture evenly among the muffin tin cups, filling each about 2/3 full.
5. **Bake**: Bake for 20 minutes, or until the egg cups are set and cooked through.
6. **Serve and Enjoy**: Allow the egg cups to cool slightly before serving. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Cook bacon, dice vegetables, and pre-mix the egg mixture **up to 24 hours in advance**.
* Assemble the cups and store covered in the fridge before baking.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* After baking, cool completely and freeze in an airtight container for **up to 2 months**.
* To reheat, microwave for **30-60 seconds**, or bake at **350°F (175°C) for 10 minutes**.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Replace eggs with a tofu scramble mixture and use plant-based cheese.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese and milk.

### **Banana Protein Pancakes (Simple & High-Protein)**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~345 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 27g
* **Fats:** 10g
* **Carbs:** 29g
* **Fiber:** ~3g

#### **Ingredients:**

* 1 **ripe banana** (~105 calories, 27g carbs)
* 2 **large eggs** (~140 calories, 12g protein, 10g fat)
* 1 scoop (22g) **vanilla whey protein powder** (~100 calories, 15g protein, 2g carbs)
* **Optional:**
  + ¼ teaspoon **cinnamon** (adds flavor, no significant macros)

#### **Instructions:**

1. **Blend:** Add the banana, eggs, protein powder, and cinnamon to a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth.
2. **Heat:** Preheat a **nonstick pan** over medium-low heat and lightly grease with olive oil spray or butter.
3. **Cook:** Pour **3-4 tablespoons** of batter per pancake into the pan. Cook until bubbles appear and the bottoms are golden brown (1-2 minutes). Flip and cook for another minute.
4. **Repeat:** Continue with the remaining batter.
5. **Serve:** Top with fresh berries, sugar-free syrup, Greek yogurt, or peanut butter if desired.

### **Tweaks & Variations:**

* **Fluffier Pancakes** → Add **½ teaspoon baking powder**
* **Lower Calories** → Use **1 whole egg + 1 egg white** instead of 2 whole eggs
* **More Fiber** → Add **1 tbsp ground flaxseed or chia seeds**
* **Extra Sweetness** → Mix in **½ teaspoon vanilla extract** or a pinch of stevia

**Egg White & Veggie Scramble Wrap**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~230 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 17g
* **Fats:**9g
* **Carbs:** 27g
* **Fiber:** ~4g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup egg whites (120ml)
* ½ cup spinach (15g)
* ¼ cup diced bell peppers (30g)
* ¼ cup diced onions (30g)
* 1 whole-wheat tortilla
* 1 tsp olive oil (5g)

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a pan. Add onions and bell peppers.
2. Pour in egg whites and cook until set.
3. Stir in spinach, then wrap in the tortilla.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Pre-chop veggies.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze fully wrapped in foil; reheat in a skillet.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Use a gluten-free tortilla.
* **Vegan:** Use tofu instead of egg whites.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Almond Butter Banana Chia Pudding**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes (plus chill time)  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~280 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 6g
* **Fats:** 18g
* **Carbs:** 22g
* **Fiber:** 10g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup unsweetened almond milk (120ml)
* 1 tbsp chia seeds (12g)
* 1 tbsp almond butter (16g)
* ½ banana, mashed

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients in a jar.
2. Refrigerate overnight.
3. Stir before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Best prepped overnight.

Freezing Instructions:

* Not recommended.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** No modifications needed.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Protein-Packed Blueberry Muffins**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~230–250 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 20g
* **Fats:** 7g
* **Carbs:** 25g
* **Fiber:** 4g

Ingredients:

* ¼ cup oat flour (30g)
* ½ scoop vanilla protein powder (15g)
* ¼ tsp baking powder
* ¼ tsp cinnamon
* ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk (60ml)
* 1 tbsp Greek yogurt (15g)
* ¼ cup blueberries (40g)
* 1 tsp honey (optional)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Mix dry ingredients in a bowl.
3. Add milk, yogurt, and honey. Stir in blueberries.
4. Pour batter into a muffin cup.
5. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Mix dry ingredients in advance.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze baked muffins for up to 3 months.

Dietary Notes:

* Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free oat flour.
* Vegan: Use plant-based protein and yogurt.
* Dairy-Free: Use dairy-free yogurt.

### **Quinoa Breakfast Bowl**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~380–400 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 10g  
  **Fats:** 20g
* **Carbs:** 40g
* **Fiber:** 9g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup cooked quinoa (80g)
* ½ banana, sliced
* ½ cup almond milk (120ml)
* 1 tbsp chia seeds (12g)
* 1 tbsp almond butter (16g)
* 1 tsp cinnamon

Instructions:

1. Cook quinoa if not already prepared.
2. Warm almond milk and pour over quinoa.
3. Stir in chia seeds and almond butter.
4. Top with banana and cinnamon.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Cook quinoa in advance and store in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze quinoa separately and reheat before serving.

Dietary Notes:

* Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.
* Vegan: No modifications needed.
* Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

## 

## **LUNCH LUNCH: LIGHT OR HEARTY, PROTEIN TAKES PRIORITY**

## Lunch means something different for everyone. Some people love a big midday meal to power them through the workday, while others—myself included—prefer to keep it lighter and save more calories for a satisfying dinner. Then there are those who train after work and need a more substantial lunch to fuel their workout.

## However you like to structure your meals, the key is balance and prioritizing protein. A protein-packed lunch helps maintain steady energy, curb cravings, and support muscle recovery, whether you're gearing up for an afternoon meeting or an evening workout. Research has shown that higher-protein meals not only increase satiety but also help stabilize blood sugar, keeping you from hitting that dreaded afternoon slump (Leidy et al., 2015).

## This section has options for both light and hearty lunches, all built around lean proteins, fiber-rich veggies, and healthy fats—so you can stay full, focused, and fueled for whatever your day brings.

## 

### Yogurt Power Bowl

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5–10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~440–460 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 40–45g
* **Fats:** 14–16g
* **Carbs:** 30–35g
* **Fiber:** 8g

Ingredients:

* 1 ⅓ Cup Non-Fat Greek Yogurt (200g)
* 1 Scoop Protein Powder of Choice (I use 100% Whey)
* 1 Tbsp Chia Seeds (10g)
* 1 Cup Frozen Fruit (140g)
* 1 Serving Sea Salt Dark Chocolate (25g)
* 30 ml Sugar-Free Maple Syrup
* (Sub: 1 tsp Honey)

Instructions:

1. **Mix Yogurt and Protein Powder**: In a bowl, mix the protein powder with the non-fat Greek yogurt until smooth and well combined.
2. **Add Toppings**: Top the yogurt mixture with chia seeds, frozen fruit, and sea salt dark chocolate.
3. **Drizzle and Serve**: Finish with a drizzle of sugar-free maple syrup (or honey as a substitute). Serve immediately and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Mix the yogurt and protein powder ahead of time and store in an airtight container in the fridge for **up to 3 days**.
* Portion out frozen fruit and chia seeds for quick assembly.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—yogurt texture changes when frozen and thawed.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use dairy-free yogurt and plant-based protein powder.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt.

### Hearty Tuna Salad Sandwich

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~480–500 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 42g  
  **Fats:** 24g
* **Carbs:** 28g
* **Fiber:** 7g

**Fiber:** 13g

Ingredients:

* 1 Can White Tuna (113g)
* 1 Tbsp Nonfat Greek Yogurt (17g)
* ¼ Cup Cottage Cheese
* ¼ Cup Celery, Diced
* ¼ Cup Dill Pickle, Diced
* 1 Splash of Dill Juice
* ½ Red Onion, Diced
* ½ Tbsp Lemon Juice
* ½ Medium Avocado (75g)
* (Sub: 1-2 Tbsp Reduced-Fat Mayo)
* 1 Tbsp Dijon Mustard
* Salt + Pepper to taste
* 2 Slices Thin-Sliced Whole Multi-Grain Bread
* 1 Slice Low-Moisture, Part-Skim Mozzarella

Instructions:

1. **Prepare Tuna Salad**: In a bowl, combine the white tuna, nonfat Greek yogurt, celery, dill pickle, red onion, lemon juice, and Dijon mustard. If using, add reduced-fat mayo to taste. Mix well. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. **Chill**: Let the tuna salad stand in the refrigerator until chilled.
3. **Toast Bread**: Lightly toast the slices of whole multi-grain bread.
4. **Assemble and Serve**: Serve the chilled tuna salad on top of the toasted bread. Top with a slice of low-moisture, part-skim mozzarella if desired. Enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Make the tuna salad ahead and store in an airtight container in the fridge for **up to 3 days**.
* Toast bread fresh before serving.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Do not freeze assembled sandwiches**—the texture will be compromised.
* The tuna salad itself can be frozen in a **sealed container for up to 2 months**, but it may need to be re-mixed after thawing due to separation.

**Dietary Notes:**

**Save on calories by simply switching out the bread for Lettuce wraps, or serving this as a salad.**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free bread.
* **Vegan:** Substitute chickpeas for tuna and use vegan yogurt/mayo.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt or mayo.

### Honey Chicken Wrap

**Prep + Cook Time:** 15–20 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~580–600 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 50g
* **Fats:** 30g
* **Carbs:** 28–32g
* **Fiber:** 8–10g

Ingredients:

* 8 oz Boneless, Skinless Chicken Thigh (224g)
  + (Sub) Pre-cooked Shredded Chicken Thigh/Breast
* Taco Seasoning (to taste)
* 1-2 tsp Honey (7-12g)
* ½ Red Onion, Diced (100g)
* ½ Cup Spinach (30g)
* ¾ Cup Reduced-Fat Cheddar Cheese (28g)
* Low-Carb Burrito-Sized Tortilla (70g)

Instructions:

1. **Prep Chicken**: Cut the chicken thighs into bite-sized pieces for faster cooking. In a bowl, mix the chicken with taco seasoning and honey until well coated.
2. **Cook Chicken**: Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the seasoned chicken and cook until browned and fully cooked through.
3. **Prepare Wrap**: Lay the tortilla flat and layer with reduced-fat cheddar cheese, diced red onion, spinach, and cooked chicken.
4. **Wrap and Cook**: Fold the tortilla into a wrap. Air fry or toast the wrap in a skillet until the exterior is crisp and golden.
5. **Serve**: Plate the wrap and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Cook and shred chicken in advance, storing in an airtight container in the fridge for **up to 4 days**.
* Pre-chop onions and spinach for quick assembly.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Assemble and freeze the **wrapped burritos** before toasting.
* Wrap in foil and store in a freezer-safe bag for **up to 3 months**.
* Reheat in an air fryer, oven, or microwave.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use a gluten-free tortilla.
* **Vegan:** Substitute chicken with marinated tofu or chickpeas.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese.

### Turkey Grinder Slaw Wrap

**Prep Time:** ~10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 2 (slaw)  
 **Calories:** ~425–450 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** ~38–40g
* **Fats:** ~20g
* **Carbs:** ~28–32g
* **Fiber:** ~6–8g

Ingredients:

**For Slaw (yields 2 servings):**

* ½ Cup Nonfat Greek Yogurt (80g)
* 3 Slices Pepperoncini Peppers
* 1 ½ Cup Shredded Lettuce (250g)
* ½ Red Onion, Sliced (100g)
* (Sub: Pickled Red Onion, 100g)
* 2 Tbsp Light Mayo (Optional)
* 2 Tbsp Red Wine Vinaigrette (30ml)
* 1 Tbsp Minced Garlic
* 1 Tsp Oregano
* 1 Tsp Red Pepper Flakes
* Salt + Pepper to taste

**For Wrap:**

* 1 Low-Calorie Burrito-Sized Tortilla (70g)
* (Sub: 1 Large Lavash Wrap)
* (Sub: 2 Slices Thin-Sliced Whole Multi-Grain Bread, 52g)
* 5 oz Deli Turkey Meat
* 2 Slices Turkey Bacon
* 1 Serving Low-Moisture, Part-Skim Mozzarella Cheese (28g)
* Sliced Tomato (50g)
* ½ Slaw Mixture

Instructions:

1. **Prepare Slaw**: In a bowl, combine all ingredients for the slaw except the shredded lettuce and sliced onions. Mix until fully combined. Add the lettuce and onions last and mix gently.
2. **Assemble Wrap**: Lay the tortilla flat. In this order, add: deli turkey meat, turkey bacon, mozzarella cheese, sliced tomatoes, and ½ of the slaw mixture. Carefully roll the tortilla into a wrap.
3. **Serve**: Plate, slice, and enjoy!

**Chopped Salad Variation**: You can turn this into a chopped salad by chopping and combining all ingredients together. Serve by itself, or inside a wrap or sandwich!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Prepare the slaw mixture **up to 3 days ahead** and store in an airtight container.
* Keep the tortilla and other ingredients separate until ready to assemble.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Do not freeze slaw**—it will become watery when thawed.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use a gluten-free tortilla or lettuce wrap.
* **Vegan:** Use plant-based turkey slices and vegan cheese.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese and yogurt.

### Chicken “Bacon” Ranch Pasta Salad

**Prep + Cook Time:** ~20–25 minutes  
 **Servings:** 4  
 **Calories per Serving:** ~375–400 kcal

**Macros (Per Serving):**

* **Protein:** ~37g
* **Fats:** ~9g
* **Carbs:** ~35g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* ½ Box of Barilla Protein+ Pasta (196g)
* 8 oz Cooked Chicken Breast
* 2 Slices Turkey Bacon (30g)
* 160g Nonfat Greek Yogurt
* 1 Serving Fat-Free Cheddar Cheese (28g)
* 1 Tsp Dried Dill
* 1 Tsp Dried Parsley
* ½ Tsp Garlic Powder
* ½ Tsp Onion Powder
* ½ Tsp Kosher Salt
  + (Sub: 10g Ranch Seasoning Packet)
* 1-2 Tbsp Water (to thin sauce)
* Juice of ½ Lemon
* ½ Red Onion, Sliced
* ½ Cup Cherry Tomatoes, Halved + Quartered

Instructions:

1. **Prep Ingredients**: Pre-cook the pasta and chicken breast ahead of time to save preparation time. Cook the turkey bacon in an air fryer or oven until crispy. Let the bacon sit for 5 minutes, then dice.
2. **Make Dressing**: In a bowl, mix Greek yogurt, seasoning (dried dill, parsley, garlic powder, onion powder, and kosher salt or ranch seasoning packet if using), water, and lemon juice until you achieve the desired consistency.
3. **Combine Ingredients**: Finely chop the cooked chicken breast. In a large bowl, combine the rinsed and cooked pasta, chopped chicken, diced turkey bacon, sliced red onion, and cherry tomatoes. Add the dressing and toss until well combined.
4. **Serve**: Divide the mixture into 4 equal servings. Top each serving with fat-free cheddar cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. **Enjoy**: Plate and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Cook pasta, chicken, and turkey bacon ahead of time. Store separately in airtight containers in the fridge for **up to 4 days**.
* Mix the dressing ahead and refrigerate for **up to 1 week**.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—pasta and dairy-based dressing do not freeze well.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free pasta.
* **Vegan:** Substitute chickpeas for chicken, plant-based bacon, and dairy-free yogurt.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt and cheese.

### **Teriyaki Chicken Rice Bowl**

**Prep + Cook Time:** ~20 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~360–380 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** ~30g
* **Fats:** ~10g
* **Carbs:** ~35g
* **Fiber:** ~2–3g

Ingredients:

* 4 oz chicken breast, diced (113g)
* ½ cup cooked jasmine rice (100g)
* ½ cup broccoli florets (75g)
* 1 tbsp teriyaki sauce
* 1 tsp sesame oil
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ½ tsp ginger powder

Instructions:

1. Heat sesame oil in a pan over medium heat.
2. Add diced chicken, garlic powder, and ginger powder. Cook until browned.
3. Add teriyaki sauce and cook for another 2 minutes.
4. Serve over rice with steamed broccoli.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Cook rice in advance and store in an airtight container.
* Dice and marinate chicken overnight.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze in a meal-prep container for up to 3 months.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free teriyaki sauce.
* **Vegan:** Replace chicken with tofu.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Spicy Chickpea Avocado Wrap**

**Prep + Cook Time:** ~10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories:** ~375–400 kcal

**Macros:**

* **Protein:** ~9g
* **Fats:** ~20g
* **Carbs:** ~40g
* **Fiber:** ~10g

### **Ingredients:**

* **½ cup chickpeas (100g),** drained and rinsed
* **½ avocado (75g),** mashed
* **1 tbsp hot sauce,** or more to taste (Frank’s RedHot, Sriracha, etc.)
* **1 whole-wheat tortilla**
* **¼ cup shredded lettuce (15g)**
* **¼ tsp garlic powder** (optional, for extra flavor)
* **¼ tsp smoked paprika** (optional, for a deeper smoky spice)
* **Salt and black pepper,** to taste

### **Instructions:**

1. In a bowl, mash the chickpeas and avocado together with a fork until mostly smooth but still a little chunky.
2. Stir in hot sauce, garlic powder, paprika, salt, and black pepper. Mix well.
3. Spread the mixture evenly onto the tortilla.
4. Top with shredded lettuce and any extra toppings you like (see suggestions below).
5. Wrap it up tightly, slice in half, and enjoy!

### **Optional Add-Ons for Extra Flavor & Nutrition:**

* **Extra protein:** Add 2 tbsp hemp seeds or ¼ cup cooked quinoa.
* **More crunch:** Sprinkle in some shredded carrots, diced bell pepper, or sliced cucumbers.
* **Creamy boost:** Add a drizzle of dairy-free yogurt or a teaspoon of tahini.

### **Make-Ahead Instructions:**

* Prepare the chickpea-avocado filling up to **1 day in advance** and store in an airtight container in the fridge.
* Assemble just before eating to prevent the tortilla from getting soggy.

### **Freezing Instructions:**

* Not recommended—avocado doesn’t freeze well, and the texture of mashed chickpeas changes when thawed.

### **Dietary Notes:**

✅ **Gluten-Free:** Use a gluten-free tortilla.  
✅ **Vegan:** No modifications needed.  
✅ **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Hearty High-Protein Lentil Soup**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 40–50 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~4 large bowls  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~320 kcal

**Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~17g
* **Fats:** ~7g
* **Carbs:** ~45g
* **Fiber:** ~14g

### **Ingredients:**

* **1 cup dry lentils (200g),** rinsed
* **1 tbsp olive oil**
* **1 small onion,** diced
* **2 carrots,** diced
* **2 celery stalks,** diced
* **3 cloves garlic,** minced
* **1 tsp smoked paprika**
* **1 tsp ground cumin**
* **½ tsp turmeric**
* **½ tsp dried thyme**
* **1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes**
* **4 cups vegetable broth** (or chicken broth for extra protein)
* **1 cup water**
* **½ tsp salt** (adjust to taste)
* **½ tsp black pepper**
* **1 (15 oz) can chickpeas,** drained and rinsed (extra protein boost)
* **2 cups chopped spinach or kale**
* **Juice of ½ lemon**

#### **Optional Protein Add-Ons:**

* **1 cup cooked quinoa** (+8g protein per serving)
* **1 cup shredded chicken** (+12g protein per serving)
* **1 scoop unflavored collagen peptides or pea protein powder** (+10g protein per serving)

### **Instructions:**

1. **Sauté the veggies:** In a large pot, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, and celery. Cook for 5 minutes until softened.
2. **Add garlic & spices:** Stir in the garlic, smoked paprika, cumin, turmeric, and thyme. Cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
3. **Simmer the soup:** Add the diced tomatoes, lentils, broth, water, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and let simmer for **25 minutes** until lentils are tender.
4. (Optional) **blend it:**

* Use an **immersion blender** and blend about half of the soup while keeping some texture.
* Alternatively, transfer **half the soup** to a blender, blend until smooth, then mix it back in.

1. **Add protein boosters:** Stir in chickpeas and leafy greens. Let cook for another **5 minutes** until greens are wilted.
2. **Finish with lemon:** Remove from heat and squeeze in fresh lemon juice for brightness.
3. **Serve & enjoy!**

### **Make-Ahead & Storage:**

* **Meal Prep:** This soup keeps well and flavors deepen over time.
* **Fridge:** Store in an airtight container for up to **5 days**.
* **Freezer:** Freeze for up to **3 months**.

### **Dietary Notes:**

✅ **Vegan:** Yes, as written.  
✅ **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.  
✅ **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### Shrimp & Avocado Ceviche

**Prep + Cook Time:** ~10 minutes

**Calories:** ~240 kcal  
 **Protein:** ~18g  
 **Fats:** ~15g  
 **Carbs:** ~10g  
 **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 3 oz cooked shrimp, chopped (85g)
* ½ avocado, diced (75g)
* ½ cup diced cucumber (50g)
* ¼ cup diced tomatoes (40g)
* ¼ cup red onion, finely chopped (30g)
* 1 tbsp lime juice (15ml)
* ½ tsp salt

Instructions:  
Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Stir well and let marinate in the fridge for at least 15 minutes before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Chop ingredients in advance and store separately.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—fresh ingredients will lose texture.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.  
Vegan: Substitute shrimp with hearts of palm or chickpeas.  
Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

### High-Protein Turkey & Hummus Pita

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5–10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~350 kcal

* Protein: ~30g
* Fats: ~9g
* Carbs: ~35g
* Fiber: ~7g

Ingredients:

* 1 whole-wheat pita
* 4 oz sliced turkey breast (113g)
* 2 tbsp hummus (30g)
* ½ cup spinach (15g)
* ¼ cup diced cucumbers (30g)

Instructions:  
Spread hummus inside the pita. Add turkey, spinach, and cucumber. Fold and enjoy!

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-slice turkey and store in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—pita will become soggy.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use a gluten-free pita.  
Vegan: Use a plant-based protein substitute.  
Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

## 

## **DINNER**

### **Dinner: The Meal That Brings It All Together**

Dinner is more than just a meal—it’s the perfect opportunity to bring everything together. It’s the time to **hit your protein goals**, **refuel your body**, and **enjoy a satisfying meal without overcomplicating things**. Whether you’re looking for something quick after a long day or a hearty meal to wind down, this section has you covered with **straightforward, high-protein recipes** that won’t require hours in the kitchen.

One of the biggest pitfalls people run into with dinner is **either under-eating protein** or **going too heavy on carbs and fats**, leaving them feeling sluggish instead of satisfied. The recipes in this section are **balanced**, **nutrient-dense**, and designed to give you the fuel you need—whether you’re recovering from a workout, managing weight, or just trying to eat healthier.

You’ll find options that are **flavorful, filling, and practical**—from lean proteins like chicken, fish, and tofu to creative ways to use beans, lentils, and eggs. Plus, most of these meals are **easy to prep ahead** so you’re never stuck scrambling at dinnertime.

No matter your schedule or goals, **these high-protein dinners will help you end your day feeling strong, nourished, and fully satisfied.**

### **Beef & Avocado Bowl**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 20–25 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~480 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~33g
* Fats: ~23g
* Carbs: ~39g
* Fiber: ~7g

#### **Ingred**ients:

* ½ lb (227g) 90/10 lean ground beef
  + You can use 80/20 and drain the grease/fat. 80/20 is much more cost effective!
  + Additionally you can substitute Lean Ground Turkey.
* ½ avocado (75g), sliced or mashed
* ½ cup cooked jasmine rice (100g) (or quinoa for extra fiber)
* 1 tbsp soy sauce or coconut aminos (15ml)
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ½ tsp cumin
* Salt & pepper to taste
* 1 tsp olive oil (5g) for cooking

#### **Instructions:**

1. **Cook the beef:** Heat a skillet over medium-high heat, add olive oil, and cook ground beef with garlic powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until browned (~6-8 minutes).
2. **Sauté veggies:** In the same pan, cook bell peppers and onions until softened (~4-5 minutes).
3. **Assemble:** Place cooked rice in a bowl, top with beef, sautéed veggies, and avocado slices.
4. **Flavor:** Drizzle with soy sauce or coconut aminos.
5. **Enjoy!**

### Smash Burgers

### **Total Calories & Macros**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 15–20 minutes  
 **Servings:** 2 Burgers  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~540 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~38g
* Fats: ~40g
* Carbs: ~7g
* Fiber: ~3g

#### **Ingredients:**

* **Two 3 oz (85 g) balls of 90/10 beef (Ground Turkey works as well)**
* **Salt & Pepper** (to taste)
* **½ onion, thinly sliced**
* **2 tbsp butter**
* **1 slice American cheese**
* **1 Keto bun**
* **Lettuce**
* **Tomato, thinly sliced**
* **Burger Sauce (your choice)**

### **Instructions:**

#### **1. Prepare the Onions**

1. Heat a pan over **medium heat** and melt the **2 tbsp butter**.
2. Add the **thinly sliced onions** and cook, stirring occasionally, until they become soft, golden brown, and caramelized (about 10-15 minutes).
3. Remove from heat and set aside.

#### **2. Toast the Buns**

1. In the same pan or a separate clean skillet, **melt a small amount of butter** over medium heat.
2. Place the **Keto bun** cut-side down in the pan.
3. Toast until golden brown and slightly crispy (about 1-2 minutes). Set aside.

#### **3. Cook the Smash Burgers**

1. Heat a **cast iron skillet or griddle** over **Medium heat** for about 5 minutes.
2. Lightly season the **beef balls** with **salt and pepper**.
3. Before placing the meat, raise the heat to high heat.
4. Place one beef ball onto the hot surface and immediately press it down using a **flat spatula or burger press** with firm even pressure to press it into a thin patty. Hold pressure for about **10 seconds** to ensure maximum crust formation.
5. Repeat with the second beef ball.
6. Let the patties cook undisturbed for **1-2 minutes** until the edges are crispy and deeply browned.
7. Flip each patty and immediately place **a slice of lFat-Free American cheese** on one of them.
8. Let cook for another **30-60 seconds** until fully cooked and cheese is melted.

#### **4. Assemble the Burger**

1. Spread **burger sauce** on the **bottom bun**.
2. Place the **cheese-covered patty** on top.
3. Spread another layer of **burger sauce** on top of the cheese.
4. Stack the second **patty** on top.
5. Add the **caramelized onions**.
6. Layer with **lettuce** and **thinly sliced tomato**.
7. Spread a final layer of **burger sauce** on the **top bun**, then place it on top to complete the burger.

#### **5. Serve & Enjoy**

* Serve immediately with your favorite sides!
* Optionally, pair with a keto-friendly side for the **keto bun version**.

### Herb-Marinated Chicken and Veggie Bake

**Prep + Cook Time:** 35–40 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~350 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~34g
* Fats: ~18g
* Carbs: ~20g
* Fiber: ~6g

Ingredients:

* 2 cups diced chicken breasts (about 12 oz or 340g)
* 2 cups broccoli florets (about 180g)
* 1 cup diced red bell pepper (about 150g)
* 2 cups diced carrots (about 250g)
* 1 cup diced sweet potato (about 150g)

Marinade Ingredients:

* ¼ cup olive oil (60ml)
* ¼ cup red wine vinegar (60ml)
* 2 tbsp spicy mustard (30g)
* 2 tbsp dried oregano (6g)
* Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

**Oven Method:**

1. **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly grease it.
2. **Prep the Vegetables and Chicken:** Dice the chicken breasts, broccoli florets, red bell pepper, carrots, and sweet potato into bite-sized pieces.
3. **Make the Marinade:** In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, red wine vinegar, spicy mustard, oregano, salt, and pepper.
4. **Marinate:** Add the diced chicken and vegetables to the bowl with the marinade. Toss everything to coat evenly. Let it marinate for at least 15 minutes, if time allows.
5. **Arrange on the Baking Sheet:** Spread the marinated chicken and vegetables in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet.
6. **Roast:** Roast in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, stirring halfway through, until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender and slightly caramelized.
7. **Serve:** Remove from the oven and serve warm. Enjoy!

**Air Fryer Method:**

1. **Prep the Vegetables and Chicken:** Dice the chicken breasts, broccoli florets, red bell pepper, carrots, and sweet potato into bite-sized pieces.
2. **Make the Marinade:** In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, red wine vinegar, spicy mustard, oregano, salt, and pepper.
3. **Marinate:** Add the diced chicken and vegetables to the bowl with the marinade. Toss everything to coat evenly. Let it marinate for at least 15 minutes, if time allows.
4. **Preheat Air Fryer:** Preheat your air fryer to 375°F (190°C) if required by your model.
5. **Cook in Batches:** Place the marinated chicken and vegetables in the air fryer basket in a single layer, cooking in batches if necessary. Air fry for 20-25 minutes, shaking the basket or stirring the contents halfway through, until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are tender and crispy.
6. **Serve:** Serve warm and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Dice the chicken and chop all vegetables in advance. Store in airtight containers in the fridge for **up to 3 days**.
* Prepare the marinade ahead of time and store it in the fridge for **up to 1 week**.
* Marinate the chicken and veggies **overnight** for maximum flavor.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Before Cooking:** Marinate the chicken and vegetables, then store them in a freezer-safe bag for **up to 3 months**. Thaw in the fridge overnight before baking.
* **After Cooking:** Store in airtight containers and freeze for **up to 3 months**. Reheat in the oven or air fryer.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Substitute chicken with tofu or chickpeas.
* **Dairy-Free:** Naturally dairy-free.

### Sheet Pan Chicken Fajitas

**Prep + Cook Time:** 35–40 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~380 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~35g
* Fats: ~20g
* Carbs: ~20
* Fiber: ~5g

Ingredients:

* 1 lb Boneless, Skinless Chicken Thighs (454g)
* (Sub: Chicken Breasts)
* 2 Small Yellow Onions (140g)
* 3 Bell Peppers of Any Color (150g)
* 2 Tbsp Olive Oil (25g)
* 1 Lime (67g)
* Low-Calorie Tortillas (40g each)
* ½ Cup Non-Fat Greek Yogurt (120g)
* (Sub: Low-Calorie Sour Cream)
* ¼ Bunch Cilantro (10g)

Seasoning:

* 1 Tbsp Chili Powder (8g)
* ½ Tbsp Paprika (4g)
* ½ tsp Onion Powder (1.5g)
* ¼ tsp Cumin (0.5g)
* ⅛ tsp Cayenne Pepper (0.25g)
* Salt + Pepper to Taste

Instructions:

1. **Preheat Oven**: Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. **Prepare Seasoning**: Mix all of the spices for the fajita seasoning into a bowl. Divide into two portions and set aside.
3. **Marinate Chicken**: In a bowl, combine 1 Tbsp olive oil, one portion of the seasoning mixture, and chicken. Add the juice of half a lime. Let marinate for at least 1 hour.
4. **Prepare Vegetables**: Cut onions and bell peppers into ¼-inch strips. Add vegetables to a large baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with the remaining portion of the seasoning mixture, and toss until coated.
5. **Bake Vegetables**: Bake vegetables in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes.
6. **Cook Chicken (Optional)**: While the vegetables are baking, heat a cast iron or non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Add olive oil.
   * **Sear the Chicken**: Place the chicken thighs in the hot pan, skin side down. Sear for 3-5 minutes until the skin develops a golden-brown crust. Flip the chicken and cook for an additional 1-2 minutes. (Note: It's okay if the chicken isn’t fully cooked at this stage; the goal is to create a brown crust.)
7. **Combine and Bake**: Remove the chicken from the pan and transfer it to the sheet pan with the vegetables. Continue cooking in the oven for an additional 10-15 minutes until the chicken is fully cooked through.
8. **Finish and Serve**: Once done, remove the sheet pan from the oven. Squeeze the juice of the remaining lime over the chicken and vegetables. Let the chicken rest for 5 minutes, then slice it into thin strips.
9. **Assemble**: Serve the chicken and vegetables over low-calorie tortillas and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Slice the chicken, onions, and bell peppers ahead of time and store them in separate containers for **up to 3 days**.
* Mix fajita seasoning in advance.
* Marinate the chicken **overnight** for extra flavor.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Before Cooking:** Store marinated chicken and sliced veggies in a freezer-safe bag for **up to 3 months**. Thaw overnight in the fridge before cooking.
* **After Cooking:** Store cooked fajitas in meal prep containers for **up to 3 months**. Reheat in the oven or stovetop.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free tortillas or serve over rice.
* **Vegan:** Replace chicken with portobello mushrooms, tofu, or jackfruit.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt or sour cream.

### Black Bean Salsa and Chicken Tacos

**Prep + Cook Time:** 30 minutes  
 **Servings:** 6 tacos  
 **Calories (per taco):** ~300 kcal  
 **Macros (per taco):**

* Protein: ~22g
* Fats: ~14g
* Carbs: ~22g
* Fiber: ~6g

Ingredients:

* 1 can (14 oz) Black Beans, rinsed and drained (about 400g)
* ½ Cup Salsa (120g)
* 1-2 tsp Taco Seasoning (5-10g)
* 6 Small Low-Carb Mission Flour Tortillas (approximately 144g)
* 1 Cup Low Fat Shredded Cheese, divided (112g)
* 8 oz Cooked Shredded Chicken (227g)
* ½ Cup Low Moisture, Part-Skim Mozzarella Cheese (56g)
* ½ Cup Sliced Red Onion (70g)

Optional Toppings:

* Green Onions
* Diced Tomatoes
* Cilantro
* Fresh Lime Juice
* Vegan Sour Cream
* Shredded Vegan Cheese
* Black Beans
* Jalapeños (fresh or pickled)
* Salsa

Instructions:

1. **Prepare Bean Mixture**: In a food processor or blender, blend the black beans, salsa, and taco seasoning until the mixture reaches a smooth, refried bean-like consistency.
2. **Assemble Tacos**:
   * Place 1/6th of the black bean mixture on one half of a small low-carb tortilla, spreading it evenly.
   * Add 1/6th of the cooked shredded chicken and top with 1/6th of the mozzarella cheese and sliced red onion.
   * Fold the tortilla in half.
   * Repeat with the remaining tortillas.
3. **Cook Tacos**:
   * In a skillet, heat a little oil or butter over medium heat.
   * Cook each folded tortilla for 1-2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown and crispy.
   * Repeat this process until all tacos are cooked.
4. **Serve**: Serve with your desired toppings and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Prepare and store the black bean salsa **up to 3 days ahead**.
* Cook and shred the chicken ahead of time and store in the fridge for **up to 4 days**.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Before Cooking:** Assemble tacos (without salsa) and wrap them tightly in foil. Freeze for **up to 2 months**. Reheat in the oven or skillet.
* **After Cooking:** Store cooked taco filling separately for **up to 3 months** in an airtight container.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free tortillas.
* **Vegan:** Swap chicken for extra black beans or tofu. Use vegan cheese.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese or omit it.

### High Protein Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese

**Prep + Cook Time:** 30–40 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~470 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~55g
* Fats: ~12g
* Carbs: ~40g
* Fiber: ~5g

Ingredients:

* 1 ½ cups cottage cheese (340g)
* ½ cup fat-free cheddar (56g)
* ¼ cup nutritional yeast (20g)
* ¼ cup buffalo sauce (60g)
* ½ cup low-fat Fairlife milk (120g)
* 24 oz chicken breast, diced (680g)
* 1 tbsp cornstarch (8g)
* 2 tbsp honey (42g)
* 4 tbsp buffalo sauce (60g)
* 8 oz Barilla protein pasta (226g)
* Garlic salt (to taste)
* Onion powder (to taste)

Instructions:

1. **Boil the Pasta:** Start by boiling the Barilla protein pasta according to the package instructions. Once cooked, drain the pasta and set it aside.
2. **Prepare the Cheese Sauce:** In a blender or over medium heat in a pan, mix the cottage cheese, fat-free cheddar, nutritional yeast, buffalo sauce, and low-fat Fairlife milk until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Set aside.
3. **Cook the Chicken:** Dice the chicken breast into bite-sized pieces. In a bowl, combine the chicken with garlic salt, onion powder, and 1 tbsp cornstarch, ensuring the chicken is evenly coated.
4. **Brown the Chicken:** Heat a pan over medium heat and cook the chicken until browned and fully cooked.
5. **Make the Sauce:** Lower the heat, then add 2 tbsp honey and 4 tbsp buffalo sauce to the pan with the chicken. Let the sauce simmer and thicken, coating the chicken pieces.
6. **Combine Pasta and Sauce:** Mix the drained pasta with the prepared cheese sauce until evenly coated.
7. **Assemble the Dish:** Divide the pasta into four servings. Top each serving with the buffalo chicken mixture, chives, and ½ tbsp light ranch if desired.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Cook and dice the chicken **up to 3 days ahead**.
* Prepare the cheese sauce and store in an airtight container in the fridge for **up to 5 days**.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Before Cooking:** Assemble the dish and freeze **before baking** for **up to 3 months**. Bake from frozen or thaw in the fridge before reheating.
* **After Cooking:** Store leftovers in the freezer for **up to 3 months**. Reheat in the oven or stovetop, adding a splash of milk if needed.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free pasta.
* **Vegan:** Swap chicken for tempeh and use dairy-free cheese alternatives.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cottage cheese and cheddar.

### Cauliflower Nachos

**Prep + Cook Time:** 30–40 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~4 bowls  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~380 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~35g
* Fats: ~20g
* Carbs: ~25g
* Fiber: ~8g

Ingredients:

* 1 medium-sized head of cauliflower (580g)
* 2 tbsp olive oil (or light spray of 0 calorie non-stick olive oil)
* 1 tsp taco seasoning
* Salt to taste
* 1 (15 oz) can of low-sodium black beans, drained and rinsed (225g)
* 1/4 cup jalapeños (1 oz)
* 1/2 cup low-fat cheddar cheese (28g)
* 1 diced tomato
* 1 avocado (150g)
* 1/4 cup pickled red onions (1 oz)
* 8 oz cooked shredded chicken
* Fresh cilantro, chopped

Instructions:

1. **Preheat the Oven:**
2. Preheat your oven to 420°F (215°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Chop the cauliflower into thin florets. Toss them with taco seasoning, salt, pepper, and olive oil (or spray) until evenly coated.
4. **Bake the Cauliflower:**
5. Spread the cauliflower florets out on the lined baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes, or until they start to turn golden and crispy.
6. **Add Toppings:**
7. Remove the pan from the oven. Gather the cauliflower florets closely together on the pan and top with black beans, shredded cheddar cheese, cooked chicken, and jalapeños.
8. **Melt the Cheese:**
9. Return the pan to the oven and bake until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 5-7 minutes.
10. **Add Fresh Toppings:**
11. Remove the pan from the oven and top with avocado slices, diced tomato, pickled red onions, cilantro, and your preferred sauce.
12. **Serve:**
13. Plate and enjoy!

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Chop cauliflower **up to 3 days ahead**.
* Prep and store toppings like jalapeños, onions, and tomatoes in airtight containers.

Freezing Instructions:

* **Before Cooking:** Freeze raw seasoned cauliflower for **up to 3 months**. Bake from frozen, adding a few extra minutes to the cooking time.
* **After Cooking:** Not recommended—toppings and cauliflower may become soggy.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use dairy-free cheese or nutritional yeast.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free cheese.

### 

### 2- Ingredient High Protein Dough

**Prep + Cook Time:** 30–40 minutes

**Servings:** ~2 servings

**Calories (per serving):** ~425 kcal

**Macros (per serving):**

* Protein: ~12g
* Fats: ~9g
* Carbs: ~56g
* Fiber: ~6g

Ingredients:

* 1 ½ cups self-rising flour (180g)
* 1 cup non-fat Greek yogurt (240g)
* ¼ tsp salt (1g) *(optional)*
* ¼ tsp garlic powder (1g) *(optional)*
* 1 Tbsp lightly Ground Chia Seeds *(optional)*
* 1 Tbsp Nutritional Yeast *(Option)*

Instructions:

1. **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. **Mix Ingredients:** In a mixing bowl, combine the self-rising flour, Greek yogurt, salt, and garlic powder. Stir until a dough forms.
3. **Knead the Dough:** Transfer the dough to a floured surface. Knead the dough for about 1-2 minutes until it becomes smooth and elastic.
4. **Roll Out the Dough:** Roll out the dough to your desired thickness using a rolling pin. You can make one large pizza crust or divide it into two smaller crusts.
5. **Pre Bake Dough:** Lay your pizza crust on an oven safe surface, and bake the crust for 10-12 mins
6. **Add Toppings:** Remove crust from the oven, then add your sauce + Cheese + Toppings of choice

**Prep Ahead Instructions:**

* Make the dough ahead and store it in the fridge for **up to 3 days**.
* Pre-bake the crust for **10 minutes** and store in the fridge for faster assembly.

**Freezing Instructions:**

* **Before Cooking:** Store rolled-out dough in a freezer-safe bag for **up to 3 months**. Thaw in the fridge before baking.
* **After Cooking:** Freeze pre-baked crusts for **up to 3 months**. Add toppings and bake directly from frozen.

**Dietary Notes:**

* **Gluten-Free:** Use gluten-free self-rising flour.
* **Vegan:** Replace Greek yogurt with dairy-free yogurt.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free yogurt.

### **Turkey Chili**

**Servings**: 4  
 **Calories (per serving)**: ~280 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving)**:

* **Protein**: ~28g
* **Fats**: ~8g
* **Carbs**: ~18g
* **Fiber**: ~6g

Ingredients:

* **1 lb ground turkey** (454g)
* **2 cups canned kidney beans** (200g)
* **2 cups diced tomatoes**
* **1 cup diced bell pepper**
* **1 cup diced onion**
* **2 tsp chili powder**
* **2 tsp cumin**
* **2 tsp garlic powder**
* **2 tsp salt**

Instructions:

1. Brown turkey in a skillet, then transfer to a slow cooker.
2. Add all other ingredients and stir.
3. Cook on low for 4-6 hours.
4. Serve warm with fresh cilantro.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Pre-chop veggies and store in fridge.
* Brown turkey in advance.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze cooked chili for up to 3 months.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use lentils instead of turkey.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Blackened Shrimp Tacos with Mango Salsa**

### **Prep + Cook Time: 20–30 minutes**

**Servings**: 4  
 **Calories (per serving)**: ~220 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving)**:

* **Protein**: ~25g
* **Fats**: ~4g
* **Carbs**: ~20g
* **Fiber**: ~4g

Ingredients:

* 5 oz shrimp (140g)
* ½ tsp blackening seasoning
* 2 small corn tortillas
  + Or low Cal-flour tortillas
* ¼ cup diced mango (40g)
* ¼ cup diced red onion (30g)
* 1 tbsp lime juice

Instructions:

1. Season shrimp and cook in a hot pan.
2. Mix mango, onion, and lime juice.
3. Serve shrimp in tortillas with salsa.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Pre-chop mango salsa.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze cooked shrimp separately.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Use corn tortillas.
* **Vegan:** Substitute shrimp with tofu.
* **Dairy-Free:** No modifications needed.

### **Mediterranean Chicken & Hummus Bowl**

### **Prep + Cook Time: 30 minutes**

**Servings**: 4  
 **Calories (per serving)**: ~480 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving)**:

* **Protein**: ~38g
* **Fats**: ~26g
* **Carbs**: ~31g
* **Fiber**: ~5g

Ingredients:

* 4 oz grilled chicken breast (113g)
* ½ cup cooked Jasmine Rice (100g)
* ½ cup cucumber, diced (50g)
* ¼ cup cherry tomatoes, halved (40g)
* ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese (30g)
* 2 tbsp hummus (30g)
* 1 tbsp olive oil (15g)
* ½ tbsp lemon juice (7ml)
* ¼ tsp salt
* ¼ tsp black pepper

Instructions:  
Cook rice according to package instructions. While rice is cooking, grill or pan-sear the chicken breast over medium-high heat for **4-5 minutes per side** until fully cooked. Dice chicken into bite-sized pieces. Assemble the bowl with rice, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, feta cheese, and hummus. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, then season with salt and black pepper.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Cook rice and grill chicken ahead of time. Store separately in airtight containers in the fridge for up to **4 days**.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze cooked chicken and quinoa in portions for up to **3 months**. Thaw overnight in the fridge before assembling the bowl.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.  
Vegan: Substitute chicken with grilled tofu and use dairy-free feta.  
Dairy-Free: Skip feta or use a dairy-free alternative.

### **Thai Peanut Stir-Fry (Chicken/Tofu)**

### **Prep + Cook Time: 30 minutes**

**Servings**: 4  
 **Calories (per serving)**: ~550 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving)**:

* **Protein**: ~34g
* **Fats**: ~28g
* **Carbs**: ~50g
* **Fiber**: ~7g

Ingredients:

* 4 oz boneless chicken breast or firm tofu (113g)
* ½ cup bell peppers, sliced (50g)
* ½ cup broccoli florets (50g)
* ¼ cup shredded carrots (30g)
* 1 tbsp olive oil (15g)
* 1 tbsp natural peanut butter (16g)
  + Lower Calorie option, 2 Servings of PB2 Powder mix according to instructions
* 1 tbsp soy sauce (or tamari for gluten-free) (15ml)
* ½ tbsp rice vinegar (7ml)
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ½ tsp ginger powder
* ¼ tsp red pepper flakes (optional for spice)
* ½ cup cooked jasmine rice (100g)

Instructions:  
Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. If using chicken, dice it into small pieces and cook for **5-6 minutes** until golden brown. If using tofu, cut it into cubes and cook until crispy, about **4 minutes per side**. Remove from pan and set aside. Add bell peppers, broccoli, and carrots to the pan. Stir-fry for **4-5 minutes** until tender. In a small bowl, mix peanut butter, soy sauce, rice vinegar, garlic powder, ginger powder, and red pepper flakes. Return the cooked chicken or tofu to the pan and pour the sauce over it. Stir everything together and cook for **2 more minutes** until heated through. Serve over jasmine rice.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-chop vegetables and store in an airtight container. Make the peanut sauce in advance and refrigerate.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze the cooked stir-fry (without rice) in portions for up to **3 months**. Thaw overnight and reheat in a skillet.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use tamari instead of soy sauce.  
Vegan: Use tofu instead of chicken.  
Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

Make it your own!

Stir-frying is one of the easiest and most efficient cooking techniques for creating a balanced meal in minimal time. It’s a **fast, high-heat cooking method** that works well with nearly any combination of **protein, vegetables, and sauce**, making it a great way to use up ingredients you already have. Here’s a step-by-step breakdown of how to stir-fry like a pro while keeping it flexible based on what’s in your kitchen.

### **Step 1: Choose Your Protein**

Cooking your protein first ensures that it gets properly browned and cooked through before adding other ingredients.

✅ **Common Protein Options:**

* **Chicken breast/thigh** – Lean, cooks quickly, and pairs well with most sauces.
* **Beef (flank steak, sirloin, or skirt steak)** – Slice thinly against the grain for tenderness.
* **Shrimp** – Cooks in minutes, so add it last.
* **Tofu (firm or extra firm)** – Press out excess moisture for a better texture.
* **Eggs** – Scramble in the pan for extra protein.

💡 **Tip:** Cut proteins into small, bite-sized pieces to ensure they cook quickly and evenly. If using meat, cook it first and set it aside before moving on to veggies.

### **Step 2: Pick Your Vegetables**

Vegetables add color, texture, and nutrients. The key is to **cut them into uniform sizes** so they cook evenly.

✅ **Great Stir-Fry Veggies:**

* **Quick-cooking (add last):** Spinach, bean sprouts, mushrooms, zucchini.
* **Medium-cooking:** Bell peppers, onions, broccoli, carrots, snap peas.
* **Slow-cooking (slice thinly):** Sweet potatoes, eggplant, harder root vegetables.

💡 **Tip:** If using frozen vegetables, don’t thaw them—just add them straight to the pan to avoid excess moisture.

### **Step 3: Build Your Sauce**

A stir-fry sauce ties everything together, adding flavor and moisture. You can use a pre-made sauce or mix up your own with a simple **sweet + salty + acidic + thickener** formula.

✅ **Basic Stir-Fry Sauce Formula:**

* **Salty:** 2 tbsp soy sauce or tamari (for gluten-free)
* **Sweet:** 1 tbsp honey, brown sugar, or maple syrup (optional)
* **Acid:** 1 tbsp rice vinegar or lime juice for brightness
* **Aromatics:** 1-2 tsp garlic and ginger (fresh or powdered)
* **Thickener:** 1 tsp cornstarch mixed with 2 tbsp water (helps create a glossy sauce)

💡 **Customizations:**

* **Spicy?** Add chili flakes, sriracha, or hot sauce.
* **Nutty?** Stir in peanut butter or sesame oil.
* **Savory depth?** Use oyster sauce or hoisin sauce.

### **Step 4: Pick Your Carb Base (Optional but Recommended!)**

A good stir-fry pairs well with a carbohydrate source to make it a complete meal.

✅ **Common Options:**

* **Rice (white, brown, jasmine, or basmati)** – Classic choice, best if pre-cooked.
* **Noodles (rice noodles, ramen, udon, soba)** – Cook separately and toss in at the end.
* **Quinoa or Cauliflower Rice** – Great low-carb alternatives.

💡 **Tip:** If using leftover rice, reheat it in the pan with a splash of water or broth to restore moisture.

## **DESSERT**

We all crave a sweet treat now and then, and honestly? I don’t want to live in a world where I can’t have dessert. The key isn’t avoiding sweets altogether—it’s about **making smarter choices** and getting a little creative. Let’s talk about **your first line of defense against a sweet tooth: frozen fruit.** Having a stash of frozen berries, mango, or banana slices on hand is a game-changer. Whether you eat them on their own, blend them into a protein smoothie, or mix them with Greek yogurt for a high-protein snack, frozen fruit is a **go-to staple** for anyone who loves sweets. It’s naturally sweet, full of fiber, and way more satisfying than reaching for processed junk.

This is also where **protein powder truly shines.** Earlier in the book, we talked about how valuable protein powder is as a convenient, versatile way to hit your protein goals. Well, now it’s time to put it to work in a way that **actually feels like a treat.** From high-protein brownies to protein-packed ice cream, a little imagination (and the right ingredients) can turn dessert into something that not only satisfies your cravings but also supports your goals.

These recipes let you enjoy the flavors and textures you love while still keeping things high in protein, lower in calories, and aligned with your nutrition plan. So, whether you’re a chocolate lover, a peanut butter fanatic, or someone who just needs a post-dinner snack, this section has you covered. Let’s dig in!

### Fruit Based High Protein “Ice Cream”

**Prep + Cook Time**: 5 minutes  
 **Servings**: ~1  
 **Calories (per serving)**: ~225 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving)**:

* **Protein**: ~33g
* **Fats**: ~1.4g
* **Carbs**: ~26g
* **Fiber**: ~0g

### **Ingredients:**

* **1 scoop vanilla/strawberry whey protein powder (25g)**
* **120g frozen strawberries**
* **120g ice**
* **180mL fat-free Fairlife milk**
* **24g low-calorie sweetener (negligible macros)**
* **10g corn starch**
* **Vanilla extract (negligible calories)**
* **Xanthan gum or guar gum (negligible calories)**

Instructions:

* Gather Ingredients into a blender, and blend until desired consistency.
* Let stand for a few minutes.
* (Optional) Place in freezer for additional 20-30 minutes to let it firm up.
* Enjoy!

### Dark Chocolate Raspberry Yogurt Clusters

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10 minutes  
 **Servings:** ~8  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~263 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~11g
* **Fats:** ~16.5g
* **Carbs:** ~20g
* **Fiber:** ~3.5g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup plain Greek yogurt (245g)
* 1 cup fresh raspberries (125g)
* *Optional:* 2 tablespoons honey or maple syrup (42g)
* 2 tablespoons PB2 powder mixed with 1 tablespoon water (12g PB2)
* 2 tablespoons chia seeds (24g)
* 1 cup dark chocolate chips (175g)
* 1 tablespoon coconut oil (14g)
* *Optional:* Toasted coconut flakes for garnish

Instructions:

1. **Prepare Raspberries:** In a small bowl, mash the raspberries until they reach a chunky puree consistency.
2. **Mash Ingredients:** In a mixing bowl, combine the Greek yogurt, mashed raspberries, and sweetener (if using). Mix together until well combined.
3. **Mix in Chia Seeds:** Stir in the chia seeds until thoroughly mixed with the yogurt mixture.
4. **Prepare PB2:** In a separate small bowl, mix the PB2 powder with water to create a peanut butter consistency.
5. **Scoop and Freeze:** Using a spoon, drop scoops of the yogurt mixture onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Top each with a dollop of the PB2 mixture.
6. **First Freeze:** Place the baking sheet in the freezer for 1-2 hours, or until the yogurt clusters are firm and set.
7. **Melt Dark Chocolate:** Melt the dark chocolate chips and coconut oil together in the microwave in 20-30 second intervals, stirring between each interval until smooth.
8. **Dip in Chocolate:** Carefully dip each frozen cluster into the melted dark chocolate mixture, using a spoon to coat. Return clusters to the baking sheet.
9. **Final Freeze:** Place the baking sheet back in the freezer for the chocolate to set. Optionally, garnish with toasted coconut flakes before the final freeze.

### Cottage Cheese Edible Cookie Dough

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10 minutes  
 **Servings:** 4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~390 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~26g
* **Fats:** ~19g
* **Carbs:** ~28g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup Low fat Cottage Cheese (225g)
* 2 Tablespoons Sugar-Free Maple Syrup (30g)
* 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract (5g)
* 1 cup Fine Almond Flour (96g)
* 1 Tablespoon Natural Peanut Butter or Almond Butter (16g) (Sub: PB2 Powder mixed with water)
* ¼ cup Vanilla Protein Powder (30g) (I used Nuzest)
* ½ cup Chocolate Chips (85g)

Instructions:

1. **Mix Wet Ingredients**: In a mixing bowl, combine 1 cup of cottage cheese, 2 tablespoons of sugar-free maple syrup, and 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract. Stir until smooth and well blended.
2. **Add Dry Ingredients**: Gradually fold in 1 cup of fine almond flour and ¼ cup of vanilla protein powder. Mix until all ingredients are evenly incorporated.
3. **Add Nut Butter**: Stir in 1 tablespoon of natural peanut butter or almond butter. If using PB2 powder, mix it with water first to reach a peanut butter-like consistency before adding to the mixture.
4. **Fold in Chocolate Chips**: Gently fold in ½ cup of chocolate chips, ensuring they are distributed throughout the dough.
5. **Chill (Optional)**: If the mixture is too soft, refrigerate for 10-15 minutes to firm it up.
6. **Serve**: Portion into small balls or bars, or enjoy as is. Store any leftovers in the refrigerator.

### Oven Baked Cheese Cake

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~430 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~23g
* **Fats:** ~26g
* **Carbs:** ~35g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

**Fiber:** 2g

Ingredients:

* 1 cup non-fat Greek yogurt (245g)
* 1 egg
* 1 tbsp honey (21g) or low-calorie maple syrup
* 1 tsp vanilla extract (5g)
* A splash of lemon juice (approximately 1 tsp)
* 1 cup almond flour (96g)
* 1 scoop vanilla protein powder (30g)
* 1 cup dark chocolate chips (175g)
* ½ cup blueberries (75g)

Instructions:

1. **Preheat Oven:** Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. **Prepare Wet Ingredients:** In a blender, combine the non-fat Greek yogurt, egg, honey (or low-calorie maple syrup), vanilla extract, and a splash of lemon juice. Blend until smooth.
3. **Mix Dry Ingredients:** In a mixing bowl, combine the almond flour and vanilla protein powder.
4. **Combine Ingredients:** Add the blended wet ingredients to the bowl with the dry ingredients. Stir until well combined.
5. **Prepare Baking Dish:** Lightly grease or line a small baking dish or ramekin (approximately 6-inch square or round) with parchment paper.
6. **Pour Mixture:** Pour the mixture into the prepared dish, spreading it evenly.
7. **Add Blueberries:** Gently fold the blueberries into the mixture, or scatter them on top before baking.
8. **Bake:** Bake in the preheated oven for 25-30 minutes, or until the center is set and the top is slightly golden.
9. **Add Chocolate Chips:** While the cheesecake is still warm, sprinkle the dark chocolate chips on top. The heat will slightly melt them.
10. **Cool and Serve:** Allow the cheesecake bake to cool completely before enjoying. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

### No Bake Fudge Brownies

**Prep + Cook Time:** 10–15 minutes  
 **Servings:** 4  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~400 kcal (with protein powder included)  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~10g (with protein powder included)
* **Fats:** ~30g
* **Carbs:** ~30g
* **Fiber:** ~8g

Ingredients:

* ¾ cup almond butter (192g)
* ¼ cup maple syrup (60g) or a lower-calorie sweetener
* ⅔ cup cocoa powder (60g)
* ½ cup chocolate frosting (122g) or a lighter alternative
* Optional: ½ scoop chocolate protein powder (15g)

Instructions:

1. **Prepare Pan:** Line a square pan (approximately 8x8 inches) with parchment paper and set aside.
2. **Mix Ingredients:** In a large mixing bowl, combine the almond butter, maple syrup (or lower-calorie sweetener), cocoa powder, and optional protein powder. Mix well until fully combined.
3. **Transfer Mixture:** Pour the batter into the lined pan. Press down and smooth out the mixture evenly.
4. **Add Frosting:** Spread the chocolate frosting on top of the batter.
5. **Chill:** Refrigerate the pan for at least 30 minutes to allow the brownies to set.
6. **Slice and Serve:** Remove the brownies from the refrigerator, slice, and serve.

Notes:

* **Including Protein Powder:** Adding 1 scoop of chocolate protein powder will increase the protein content and might slightly thicken the mixture. The ratio of ingredients will remain similar, but you may need to mix well to ensure the protein powder is fully incorporated.
* **Adjustments:** If the mixture becomes too thick with the addition of protein powder, you can slightly adjust by adding a bit more maple syrup or almond butter to maintain the desired consistency.

**Frozen Chocolate Rice Cake surprise**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~350 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~27g
* **Fats:** ~10g
* **Carbs:** ~37g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 2 Rice Cakes
* 88g Plain Greek Yogurt
* 7g of Honey
* 2 tbsp of Powdered Peanut Butter
* 2 tbsp of Milk of Choice (I used fat free Fairlife)
* 1-2 serving melted dark chocolate chips
* Sea Salt
* 1 Scoop Chocolate Protein Powder

Instructions

1. In a bowl mix greek yogurt, Peanut Butter Powder, Protein Powder, Milk, and honey together, .
2. Spread Mixture onto your rice cakes.
3. Top with Melted Dark Chocolate and Sea Salt
4. Place Cakes into freezer for 20-30 minutes, and Enjoy

### **Chocolate Avocado Mousse**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~220 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~10g
* **Fats:** ~14g
* **Carbs:** ~18g
* **Fiber:** ~7g

Ingredients:

* ½ medium avocado
* 1 tbsp cocoa powder
* 1 tbsp honey or maple syrup
* 1 tbsp protein powder
* 2 tbsp almond milk

Instructions:

1. Blend all ingredients until smooth.
2. Chill for 15 minutes before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:

* Store in fridge for up to 2 days.

Freezing Instructions:

* Freeze in an airtight container for up to 3 months.

Dietary Notes:

* **Gluten-Free:** Naturally gluten-free.
* **Vegan:** Use plant-based protein.
* **Dairy-Free:** Use dairy-free protein.

### **Protein-Packed Apple Crisp**

Cook Time: 20 minutes  
Servings: 1  
Calories: 280  
Macros:  
Protein: 15g  
Fats: 8g  
Carbs: 35g

Ingredients:

* 1 medium apple, diced (150g)
* ½ scoop vanilla protein powder (15g)
* ¼ cup rolled oats (25g)
* ½ tsp cinnamon
* 1 tbsp almond butter (16g)

Instructions:  
Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Mix all ingredients in a bowl and transfer to a ramekin. Bake for 18-20 minutes until golden brown.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-chop apples and store in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze before baking and bake straight from frozen.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use certified gluten-free oats.  
Vegan: Use plant-based protein.  
Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

### **Peanut Butter Protein Balls**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1 (3 Balls)  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~350 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~21g
* **Fats:** ~17g
* **Carbs:** ~30g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 2 tbsp peanut butter (32g)
  + 2 Servings PB 2 Powder
* ½ scoop vanilla protein powder (15g)
* 1 tbsp honey
* ¼ cup oats (25g)

Instructions:  
Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Roll into small balls and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Store in the fridge for up to 1 week.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze in an airtight container for up to 3 months.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free oats.  
Vegan: Use plant-based protein and maple syrup.  
Dairy-Free: No modifications needed.

## **SNACKS:**

Snacks can be a game-changer when it comes to meeting your protein goals and keeping your energy up throughout the day—especially when you're balancing bulking or cutting. However, it's important to approach snacking with a bit of caution. While snacks like almonds and other nuts are packed with healthy fats, they can also be calorie-dense and easy to overeat. A handful here and there can quickly add up, and before you know it, you've unknowingly exceeded your calorie goals for the day.

That said, snacks still have their place, especially when you're on a weight loss journey. When I’m saving calories for a bigger, more satisfying dinner, I’ll often rely on small snacks to keep me fueled throughout the day. These snacks give me a much-needed energy boost without derailing my progress. It’s all about balance—choosing snacks that are high in protein and low in unnecessary calories, helping to stave off hunger without pushing your calorie intake overboard.

The key is to make snacks work for you, not against you. Protein-rich snacks are fantastic for promoting satiety and ensuring you're not starving when it’s time for your next meal. Whether it's a protein bar, a hard-boiled egg, or a small serving of Greek yogurt, these options will keep you satisfied and on track without compromising your goals. Keep an eye on portion sizes, choose wisely, and use snacks as a tool to complement your meals—not as a way to "make up" for unhealthy choices.

As you dive into the snack recipes ahead, remember: it's all about balance, awareness, and fueling your body the right way to keep those fitness and nutrition goals moving forward.

### **Greek Yogurt & Berries**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~150 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~15g
* **Fats:** ~3g
* **Carbs:** ~17g
* **Fiber:** ~4g

Ingredients:

* ¾ cup plain Greek yogurt (170g)
* ½ cup mixed berries (75g)
* 1 tsp honey or sugar-free sweetener (optional)

Instructions:  
Spoon Greek yogurt into a bowl, top with mixed berries, and drizzle with honey if using.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-portion yogurt and berries into individual containers.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—yogurt may separate when thawed.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.  
Vegan: Use dairy-free yogurt.  
Dairy-Free: Use dairy-free yogurt.

### **Cottage Cheese & Pineapple**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~120 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~11g
* **Fats:** ~2g
* **Carbs:** ~18g
* **Fiber:** ~2g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese (113g)
* ½ cup diced pineapple (80g)

Instructions:  
Spoon cottage cheese into a bowl and top with pineapple.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-portion into containers for grab-and-go snacks.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—cottage cheese texture may change.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.  
Vegan: Use plant-based cottage cheese.  
Dairy-Free: Use dairy-free cottage cheese.

### **Edamame with Sea Salt**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~120 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~12g
* **Fats:** ~5g
* **Carbs:** ~9g
* **Fiber:** ~4g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup shelled edamame (80g)
* ¼ tsp sea salt

Instructions:  
Steam edamame for **3-5 minutes**, sprinkle with sea salt, and enjoy.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Steam in advance and store in an airtight container.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze raw or cooked edamame for up to **3 months**.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Naturally gluten-free.  
Vegan: Naturally vegan.  
Dairy-Free: Naturally dairy-free.

### **Smoked Salmon & Avocado Rice Cake**

**Prep + Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
 **Servings:** 1  
 **Calories (per serving):** ~220 kcal  
 **Macros (per serving):**

* **Protein:** ~12g
* **Fats:** ~15g
* **Carbs:** ~16g
* **Fiber:** ~6g

Ingredients:

* 1 brown rice cake
* ½ small avocado, mashed
* 2 oz smoked salmon
* ¼ tsp lemon juice

Instructions:  
Spread mashed avocado on rice cake, top with smoked salmon, and drizzle with lemon juice.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-mash avocado and store in an airtight container for up to **2 days**.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—avocado and rice cakes lose texture.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free rice cakes.  
Vegan: Substitute smoked salmon with marinated carrots or tofu.  
Dairy-Free: Naturally dairy-free.

### **Tuna & Whole-Grain Crackers**

Cook Time: 5 minutes  
Servings: 1  
Calories: 210  
Macros:  
Protein: 25g  
Fats: 8g  
Carbs: 20g

Ingredients:

* ½ can tuna, drained
* 5 whole-grain crackers

Instructions:  
Spoon tuna onto crackers and enjoy.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Pre-mix tuna with seasonings in advance and store in the fridge.

Freezing Instructions:  
Not recommended—tuna texture changes when thawed.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use gluten-free crackers.  
Vegan: Use mashed chickpeas instead of tuna.  
Dairy-Free: Naturally dairy-free.

### **Protein Granola Bar**

Cook Time: 10 minutes  
Servings: 1  
Calories: 220  
Macros:  
Protein: 15g  
Fats: 8g  
Carbs: 28g

Ingredients:

* ½ cup rolled oats
* 1 tbsp peanut butter
* ½ scoop protein powder
* 1 tbsp honey

Instructions:  
Mix all ingredients, press into a bar shape, and refrigerate for **10 minutes** before eating.

Prep Ahead Instructions:  
Make in advance and store in the fridge for up to **1 week**.

Freezing Instructions:  
Freeze in an airtight container for up to **3 months**.

Dietary Notes:  
Gluten-Free: Use certified gluten-free oats.  
Vegan: Use plant-based protein powder and maple syrup.  
Dairy-Free: Use dairy-free protein powder.

### **Apple Slices with Almond Butter**

**Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 250  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 6g
* **Fats:** 16g
* **Carbs:** 24g
* **Fiber:** 5g

**Ingredients:**

* 1 medium apple, sliced
* 1 tbsp almond butter
* ½ tsp cinnamon (optional)
* 1 tsp chia seeds (optional, for extra fiber and crunch)

**Instructions:**

1. Slice the apple into thin wedges.
2. Spread almond butter evenly over each slice.
3. Sprinkle with cinnamon and chia seeds, if using.
4. Enjoy immediately!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store pre-sliced apples in an airtight container with a little lemon juice to prevent browning.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended for freezing.

**Dietary Notes:** Gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan-friendly.

### **Roasted Chickpeas**

**Cook Time:** 30 minutes  
**Servings:** 2  
**Calories:** 220 per serving  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 10g
* **Fats:** 6g
* **Carbs:** 30g
* **Fiber:** 8g

**Ingredients:**

* 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
* 1 tbsp olive oil
* ½ tsp salt
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ½ tsp smoked paprika
* ¼ tsp cayenne pepper (optional for spice)

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Pat chickpeas dry with a paper towel.
3. Toss chickpeas with olive oil and spices.
4. Spread evenly on a baking sheet.
5. Roast for 25-30 minutes, shaking halfway through.
6. Let cool slightly before eating.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Can be stored in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended; they lose crispiness.

**Dietary Notes:** Gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan-friendly.

### **Dark Chocolate & Walnuts**

**Cook Time:** 0 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 250  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 5g
* **Fats:** 18g
* **Carbs:** 18g
* **Fiber:** 4g

**Ingredients:**

* 1 oz dark chocolate (70% or higher)
* 10 walnut halves

**Instructions:**

1. Pair chocolate with walnuts and enjoy.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store in portioned snack bags.

**Freezing Instructions:** Can be stored in the freezer for up to 3 months.

**Dietary Notes:** Gluten-free; dairy-free if using vegan chocolate.

### **Avocado & Hard-Boiled Egg Bowl**

**Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 280  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 14g
* **Fats:** 18g
* **Carbs:** 10g
* **Fiber:** 5g

**Ingredients:**

* 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
* ½ small avocado
* ½ tsp lemon juice
* Salt and pepper to taste

**Instructions:**

1. Mash avocado in a bowl with lemon juice.
2. Mix in chopped hard-boiled egg.
3. Season with salt and pepper.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended.

**Dietary Notes:** Gluten-free, dairy-free, keto-friendly.

### **Protein-Packed Greek Yogurt Chocolate Pudding**

**Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 200  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 20g
* **Fats:** 5g
* **Carbs:** 20g
* **Fiber:** 3g

**Ingredients:**

* ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
* 1 tbsp cocoa powder
* 1 tsp vanilla extract
* 1-2 tsp honey or sugar-free sweetener

**Instructions:**

1. Mix all ingredients in a bowl until smooth.
2. Serve immediately or refrigerate.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Can be frozen into popsicle molds for a frozen treat.

**Dietary Notes:** High-protein; can be made dairy-free with plant-based yogurt.

### **Hummus & Veggies**

**Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 200  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 7g
* **Fats:** 10g
* **Carbs:** 22g
* **Fiber:** 6g

**Ingredients:**

* ¼ cup hummus (60g)
* ½ cup cucumber slices (75g)
* ½ cup bell pepper slices (75g)
* ½ cup baby carrots (60g)

**Instructions:**

1. Arrange vegetables on a plate.
2. Serve with hummus for dipping.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store pre-cut veggies in an airtight container for grab-and-go convenience.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended for fresh veggies, but hummus can be frozen for up to 3 months.

**Dietary Notes:** Vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free.

### **Turkey & Cheese Roll-Ups**

**Cook Time:** 5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 180  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 18g
* **Fats:** 9g
* **Carbs:** 4g
* **Fiber:** 0g

**Ingredients:**

* 3 slices deli turkey
* 1 slice low-fat cheese
* 1 tsp Dijon mustard (optional)

**Instructions:**

1. Lay out turkey slices.
2. Spread a thin layer of mustard if desired.
3. Place cheese on top, roll tightly, and enjoy.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended.

**Dietary Notes:** Low-carb, gluten-free.

### **Greek Yogurt & Nut Butter**

**Cook Time:** <5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 230  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 20g
* **Fats:** 9g
* **Carbs:** 15g
* **Fiber:** 1g

**Ingredients:**

* ¾ cup Greek yogurt (170g)
* 1 tbsp almond or peanut butter

**Instructions:**

1. Stir nut butter into Greek yogurt.
2. Enjoy immediately.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store in a small container in the fridge for up to 3 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Can be frozen for up to 1 month.

**Dietary Notes:** High-protein, gluten-free.

### **Mini Tuna Salad Cucumber Bites**

**Cook Time:** 10 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 180  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 20g
* **Fats:** 7g
* **Carbs:** 8g
* **Fiber:** 2g

**Ingredients:**

* ½ can tuna, drained
* 2 tbsp Greek yogurt
* ½ tsp Dijon mustard
* ½ small cucumber, sliced into rounds

**Instructions:**

1. Mix tuna, Greek yogurt, and Dijon mustard.
2. Spoon onto cucumber slices.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Make the tuna salad in advance and store for up to 3 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Not recommended.

**Dietary Notes:** High-protein, low-carb, gluten-free.

### **Crispy Air-Fried Tofu Bites**

**Cook Time:** 15 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 230  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 18g
* **Fats:** 10g
* **Carbs:** 15g
* **Fiber:** 3g

**Ingredients:**

* ½ block extra-firm tofu, pressed & cubed (150g)
* 1 tsp olive oil
* ½ tsp garlic powder
* ½ tsp smoked paprika
* Salt & pepper to taste

**Instructions:**

1. Toss tofu cubes with olive oil and seasonings.
2. Air fry at 375°F (190°C) for 12-15 minutes, shaking halfway through.
3. Enjoy warm or at room temperature.

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Can be prepped and stored in the fridge for up to 3 days.

**Freezing Instructions:** Can be frozen and reheated in an air fryer or oven.

**Dietary Notes:** High-protein, vegan, gluten-free.

### **Greek Yogurt & Pumpkin Seeds**

**Cook Time:** <5 minutes  
**Servings:** 1  
**Calories:** 230  
**Macros:**

* **Protein:** 18g
* **Fats:** 10g
* **Carbs:** 20g
* **Fiber:** 3g

**Ingredients:**

* ¾ cup Greek yogurt (170g)
* 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds

**Instructions:**

1. Stir pumpkin seeds into Greek yogurt.
2. Serve and enjoy!

**Prep Ahead Instructions:** Store in a small container for quick grab-and-go snacking.

**Freezing Instructions:** Can be frozen for up to 1 month.

**Dietary Notes:** High-protein, gluten-free, dairy-free option available with plant-based yogurt.

Thoughts on Meal Prepping:  
Meal prepping is often glorified as the ultimate time-saver for busy people trying to stay on track with their nutrition, and IT DOES totally work, and it’s a great option for those who can adhere to or enjoy the process. But let’s be honest, not everyone thrives under the “perfectly packaged Tupperware” model. I’m certainly not the Type-A personality who loves having every meal neatly portioned out for the week. The idea of eating something that's been prepped and stored for 3-4 days just doesn’t seem all that appetizing to me. That’s why I’ve found a way to make prepping work without feeling like I’m locked into rigid, pre-planned meals. I call it “ingredient prepping,” and it’s all about making steps easier without the stress of perfectly organized meals.

Instead of focusing on perfectly pre-portioned meals, I break it down to prepping key ingredients. This way, I can mix and match throughout the week, keeping things fresh without having to cook everything from scratch every single night.

A typical example of my “ingredient prep” would be to cook a big batch of rice. Rice is an easy carb to cook in bulk, it’s versatile, and it stores well. Whether it’s going in a burrito, a stir-fry, or a bowl, having rice ready to go takes the pressure off during those jam-packed weeknights when I don’t have time to cook a full meal from scratch. All I have to do is pop it in the microwave, saving me 20-30 minutes, and I’m already halfway to dinner.

Another prepping trick I rely on is cooking extra protein. Typically, I’ll batch cook chicken—either shredded or diced—so it’s ready to go for the next few meals. It’s a simple, flexible protein that I can use in various ways: add it to salads, toss it into wraps, or throw it on top of rice.

But even with ingredient prepping, I still take it a step further by “leap-frogging” my meals. I’ll cook extra for dinner one night and save the leftovers for the next day’s lunch or dinner.

### **~~Example Meal Plans: 1. For Fat Loss (Cutting)~~**

* **~~1,500-1,800 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For women or men with lower activity levels or those aiming to lose fat.~~
* **~~1,800-2,200 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For active women or moderately active men looking to cut, or anyone with a smaller body frame or lower maintenance calorie needs.~~

### **~~2. For Maintenance~~**

* **~~2,200-2,400 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For the average woman with moderate activity or the average man who isn’t actively trying to bulk or cut, but maintain weight.~~
* **~~2,400-2,600 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For men with moderate activity or women with higher activity levels aiming to maintain.~~

### **~~3. For Muscle Gain (Bulking)~~**

* **~~2,500-2,800 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For active women or men with moderate training who are in a slight surplus to build muscle.~~
* **~~2,800-3,200 kcal meal plan:~~** ~~For more active men or individuals who are focusing on muscle gain and have higher calorie needs, or those doing intense strength training.~~

## Week Meal Plan (1800 - 2100 Calories/Day) Example

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1EVPTCUqMaMdQ0_w06FNmN0QF9nS8q0rE7GsJGmWTxN4/edit?usp=sharing>

## **Week Meal Plan (1500 - 2000 Calories/Day)**

## 

## **Welcome to The Minimal Cookbook**

Welcome to a cookbook designed not just to fill your plate, but to fuel your body. Whether your goal is to maintain energy throughout your day, support a fitness routine, or build sustainable, healthy eating habits, this collection of recipes will help you make balanced, high-protein meals effortlessly. Each meal, snack, and dessert is crafted with nutrition, flavor, and convenience in mind—because healthy eating should be simple, satisfying, and enjoyable.

About Minimal and the Author

Minimal was founded on the belief that nutrition and fitness should be simple and effective. Too often, people get caught up in fad diets, restrictive meal plans, and misinformation about what they should or shouldn’t eat. At Minimal, we cut through the noise and focus on real, balanced nutrition that fuels both body and mind.

This cookbook was created by Spenser Stokes, a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutrition Coach with over a decade of experience helping people improve their health through practical, science-backed strategies. Spenser understands firsthand the challenges of navigating nutrition in a way that works for everyday life. His goal with this book is to provide delicious, high-protein recipes that make meal prep easy and enjoyable—without overcomplicating the process.

About This Cookbook

This cookbook isn’t just about recipes—it’s about giving you the tools to understand and optimize your nutrition. Whether you’re aiming for weight loss, muscle maintenance, or general well-being, these meals are designed to prioritize protein while keeping fats and carbohydrates in a range that supports your lifestyle.

Each recipe includes:  
✔ Calories and Macros – No need to calculate anything. Every meal comes with its calories, protein, fats, and carbs clearly listed.  
✔ Meal Prep & Freezing Instructions – Whether you're cooking fresh or preparing meals ahead of time, you'll find prep and freezing tips to fit your schedule.  
✔ Balanced Nutrition – Recipes are designed to support muscle retention and fat loss without restrictive dieting.  
✔ Options for All Diets – Many recipes include gluten-free, dairy-free, and plant-based substitutions so you can adjust based on your dietary preferences.

This book is built around real, whole foods, practical cooking methods, and meals that you’ll actually enjoy eating.

Understanding Calories and Macronutrients

Before diving into the recipes, let's cover the basics of how food fuels your body and why protein is a key priority in every recipe.

What is a Calorie?

A calorie is simply a unit of energy. Just as gas powers a car, calories power your body, helping you move, think, and function every day. Everyone has a different daily energy requirement based on metabolism, activity levels, and goals.

Macronutrients: The 3 Essentials

The food we eat is made up of three primary macronutrients (macros) that provide energy in different amounts:

* Protein: 1g = 4 calories
* Carbohydrates: 1g = 4 calories
* Fats: 1g = 9 calories

Each macronutrient plays a unique role in keeping your body functioning at its best.

Why Protein is King

If there’s one macronutrient to prioritize, it’s protein. Protein is essential for:

✔ Building and repairing muscle  
✔ Aiding in recovery  
✔ Keeping you fuller for longer (helps control cravings)  
✔ Supporting fat loss while maintaining lean muscle

A simple rule of thumb for daily protein intake:

0.7-1g of protein per pound of body weight  
*(For example, if you weigh 180 lbs, aim for 125-180g of protein per day.)*

Each recipe in this cookbook prioritizes protein, making it easier to hit your daily goals without overthinking it.

Fats: Essential, Not the Enemy

Fats have been unfairly blamed for weight gain, but they are essential for hormone production, brain function, and nutrient absorption.

Good sources of healthy fats include:

* Avocados
* Nuts and seeds
* Olive oil and coconut oil
* Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, etc.)
* Eggs and dairy products

Healthy fats should make up about 20-35% of your daily calories—but you don’t need to track them as strictly as protein.

Carbs: Fuel, Not the Villain

Despite popular myths, carbs do not make you fat. They are your body’s preferred source of energy, especially for workouts and recovery.

The key is choosing nutrient-dense sources like:

* Whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats, whole wheat bread)
* Fruits and vegetables
* Legumes and beans

Cutting out carbs completely is not sustainable—instead, focus on quality sources and portion control based on your goals.

Fiber: The Unsung Hero

Fiber is critical for digestion, satiety, and gut health.  
There are two types of fiber:

1️⃣ Soluble fiber: Helps control blood sugar & cholesterol *(found in oats, beans, fruits, and veggies).*2️⃣ Insoluble fiber: Promotes digestion & regularity *(found in whole grains, nuts, and leafy greens).*

Recommended Daily Intake:

* Women: 25g/day (under 50), 21g/day (over 50)
* Men: 38g/day (under 50), 30g/day (over 50)

Pro tip: Prioritize high-fiber foods like veggies, legumes, whole grains, and seeds!

How to Find Your Ideal Calorie Intake

Wondering how many calories you should eat daily? Here’s a simple approach:

1️⃣ Find Your Maintenance Calories: Multiply your weight by 14-16 *(depends on your activity level).*2️⃣ To Lose Weight: Subtract 300-500 calories from your maintenance.  
3️⃣ To Build Muscle: Add 200-300 calories to your maintenance.

Example:  
If you weigh 180 lbs and are moderately active, your maintenance is 180 × 15 = 2,700 calories/day.

* For weight loss → Eat 2,200-2,400 calories/day
* For muscle gain → Eat 2,900-3,000 calories/day

Each meal plan in this cookbook is structured to fit within two different calorie windows (1800-2100 & 1500-2000), making it easy to hit your goals with flexibility.

Final Thoughts: Keep It Simple & Sustainable

This cookbook is not about perfection—it’s about creating healthy, sustainable habits. You don’t need to track every calorie meticulously or follow a rigid diet. Instead, focus on consistency, making better food choices, and enjoying the process.

Key Takeaways:  
✔ Prioritize protein  
✔ Eat enough fiber  
✔ Include healthy fats  
✔ Don’t fear carbs  
✔ Stay within your calorie range  
✔ Meal prep to set yourself up for success

This cookbook will help you build a balanced, enjoyable way of eating that fuels your body, supports your goals, and fits your lifestyle.

So, let’s get cooking.

Meet Spenser

Hi, I’m Spenser Stokes, a Certified Personal Trainer & Nutrition Coach with over 10 years of experience helping people simplify fitness and nutrition. My goal is to make eating well simple, sustainable, and effective—without overcomplicating the process.

I’ve been where you are—struggling to balance work, life, and nutrition. Through years of trial and error, research, and coaching, I’ve developed a practical approach that delivers real results.

This cookbook is built on that philosophy. Let’s get started.

## **Helpful Kitchen Tools to Make Healthy Eating Easier**

You don’t need fancy gadgets to eat well, but a few simple tools can make meal prepping/saving calories more convenient and enjoyable. A food scale can help with portion accuracy, and an air fryer offers an easy way to cook crispy, flavorful meals with less oil. These tools aren’t required, but they can be great additions to your kitchen if you’re looking to simplify your routine.

### **Food Scale (Grams & Ounces)**

#### **What is it?**

A digital food scale is a small, easy-to-use device that allows you to **accurately measure your food in grams, ounces, or other units.** This can be especially helpful when tracking your food intake to ensure portion sizes are correct.

#### **Why is it helpful?**

* **Portion Accuracy:** Labels and serving sizes can be misleading. Weighing your food ensures you’re consuming the correct amount of protein, carbs, and fats.
* **Better Macro Tracking:** Many foods list their nutritional information based on weight (e.g., 100g of chicken). Using a scale eliminates guesswork.
* **Prevents Over or Under-Eating:** When eyeballing portion sizes, people often underestimate calories, especially with high-calorie foods like nuts, oils, and grains.
* **Makes Meal Prep Easier:** If you batch cook meals, you can divide portions evenly without guessing.

#### **How to Use a Food Scale:**

1. **Turn it on** and set it to **grams or ounces** (grams are recommended for precision).
2. **Place down bowl/plate onto scale: Use the "tare" function** to subtract the weight of a bowl or plate before adding food.
3. **Weigh ingredients before cooking** for the most accurate tracking. For example, weigh raw chicken breast before cooking rather than after, as cooking removes moisture and alters weight.
4. **Log your food into your tracking app** based on the weight measured.

#### **What to Look for When Purchasing a Food Scale:**

* **Measures in grams and ounces** for flexible tracking.
* **Has a "tare" function** to easily reset the weight.
* **Digital display** for easy reading.
* **Battery-powered or rechargeable** for convenience.
* **Compact size** for easy storage.

### **Air Fryer**

#### **What is it?**

An **air fryer** is a kitchen appliance that uses **rapid air circulation to cook food, producing a crispy texture similar to frying but with significantly less oil.** It’s a great tool for making **healthier versions of traditionally fried foods** and for **quick meal prep** with minimal cleanup.

#### **Why is it helpful?**

* **Cuts down on cooking time:** Most foods cook in half the time compared to baking or roasting in the oven.
* **Reduces oil intake:** Uses **85-90% less oil** than deep frying while still achieving a crispy texture.
* **Easy to use & low maintenance:** Just set the temperature, timer, and shake halfway through.
* **Versatile:** You can cook **chicken, fish, vegetables, potatoes, eggs, tofu, and more** with great results.
* **Better taste with fewer calories:** Helps keep meals crispy and flavorful without excess oil.

#### **How to Use an Air Fryer:**

1. **Preheat the air fryer** (if your model requires it).
2. **Lightly coat food with oil or seasoning** (optional, but helps with crispiness).
3. **Place food in the air fryer basket in a single layer** to allow even cooking.
4. **Set the temperature and timer** according to the food you’re cooking.
5. **Shake or flip food halfway through** for even crisping.
6. **Remove food once cooked** and enjoy a crispy, flavorful meal.

#### **What to Look for When Purchasing an Air Fryer:**

* **Avoid Teflon or Non-Stick Coatings**
  + Many air fryer baskets are coated with **Teflon or similar non-stick materials**, which can release harmful chemicals (PFAs) when heated at high temperatures.
  + Instead, look for **ceramic-coated, stainless steel, or glass basket options** for safer cooking.
* **Watch Out for Plastic Construction**
  + Some air fryers have plastic interiors or parts that can release unwanted chemicals when exposed to high heat.
  + Opt for air fryers with **stainless steel or BPA-free components** to avoid exposure to harmful substances.
* **Size & Capacity**
  + If you're cooking for one or two people, a **3-4 quart air fryer** is a great size.
  + For families or meal prep, a **5-7 quart air fryer** will allow you to cook larger portions.
* **Ease of Cleaning**
  + Look for models with **removable, dishwasher-safe baskets** to simplify cleanup.
* **Temperature & Timer Controls**
  + Adjustable temperature settings (ideally **up to 400°F**) and a **built-in timer** make cooking more precise.

## 

## **Tracking Your Calories & Macros: Our Recommended Apps**

One of the most effective ways to stay on track with your nutrition goals is by tracking your calories and macronutrients. Whether you’re aiming for fat loss, muscle gain, or maintaining a balanced diet, having a tool to help you monitor your intake can make a huge difference.

While tracking every bite isn’t necessary for everyone, having an awareness of what you’re consuming helps build long-term success and makes it easier to make informed food choices.

To make this process as simple as possible, we recommend using a food tracking app.

### Our Top Recommended Apps

FatSecret (Our First Choice)

Best free option

Why we recommend it: FatSecret is a 100 percent free calorie and macro tracker that allows you to log meals, scan barcodes, and track progress without needing a paid subscription. While the name isn’t our favorite, the app provides access to accurate nutrition data at no cost.

* Free to use
* Barcode scanner for easy logging
* Breaks down calories, protein, carbs, and fats for each meal
* Tracks progress over time

Scan the QR code below to download FatSecret:  
*(Insert QR code here that links to the FatSecret download page for iOS & Android.)*

**MyFitnessPal (Alternative Option)**

Great app, but has a paywall

MyFitnessPal also automatically gives calories back for exercise, meaning if you burn 300 calories, it increases your daily calorie allowance by 300. While this might seem logical, it often leads to an unhealthy mindset where exercise is seen as a way to “earn” food, rather than a tool for overall health. It can also make fat loss more difficult, as calorie burn estimates are often inaccurate, leading to overeating. A more effective approach is to set a consistent calorie goal based on your needs and view exercise as a way to improve strength, endurance, and well-being—not just as a way to justify eating more.

Why we recommend it: MyFitnessPal has been a favorite among fitness professionals for years because of its extensive food database and tracking capabilities. However, some features—including barcode scanning—are locked behind a paid subscription, which is why we recommend FatSecret first.

* Large food database
* Syncs with fitness apps and devices
* User-friendly interface
* Some features require a paid upgrade

Scan the QR code below to download MyFitnessPal:  
*(Insert QR code here that links to the MyFitnessPal download page for iOS & Android.)*

How to Use a Calorie Tracking App

1. Download your preferred app (scan the QR code above).
2. Set up your profile – Enter your age, weight, height, and goals (weight loss, muscle gain, maintenance).
3. Input your daily calorie and macro goals – Use the calculator from the previous section to estimate your calorie needs.
4. Log your meals and snacks – Use the barcode scanner or manually enter foods.
5. Track your progress – Review your intake and adjust as needed.

Do you need to track forever?

No, but tracking for a few weeks can help you build awareness and consistency around food choices. Over time, you’ll develop a better understanding of portion sizes, protein intake, and what works best for your goals.

Keep it simple. You don’t need to track everything to the gram. Focus on hitting your protein goal first, then let fats and carbs balance out naturally.

Make adjustments as needed. If you’re not seeing results, check your logs, reassess your intake, and make minor tweaks. Tracking gives you the data you need to adjust intelligently.

By using one of these apps, you’ll take the guesswork out of your nutrition and make hitting your goals easier than ever.

## 

**Protein Powder: More Than Just a Shake**

If you’re serious about **health, fitness, and making sure you get enough protein**, having **protein powder in your pantry is a game changer**. It’s one of the most convenient, versatile, and cost-effective ways to hit your daily protein intake—**but it’s far more than just a shake ingredient**.

Many people think of protein powder as something you just mix with water or milk, shake up, and drink. But in reality, it can be used in **baking, cooking, and as a substitute for other ingredients** to add protein without extra carbs or fats.

## **Quality Matters** Many of the recipes in this collection include protein powder, so it’s worth making it a staple in your grocery shopping. Not all protein powders—or taste preferences—are created equal, so finding the right one may take some trial and error. The quality of the powder you choose will directly affect the taste and texture of your recipes, so opt for one that mixes well and complements the flavors you enjoy. Investing in a high-quality protein powder can make all the difference in both nutrition and enjoyment. Prices for these protein powders vary depending on the brand, type, and size of the container. On average, you can expect to pay between $1.00 to $1.50 per serving for mid- to high-quality protein powders. For example, a 2-pound (approximately 907 grams) container typically costs between $30 to $50, providing about 20 to 30 servings. Purchasing larger containers often reduces the cost per serving.

## **Beyond the Shake: How to Use Protein Powder**

✅ **Baking:** Protein powder works great in recipes like **pancakes, muffins, protein bars, waffles, and even cookies**. By replacing a portion of flour with protein powder, you boost the protein content without sacrificing taste.

✅ **Blended into Foods:** Stir it into **oatmeal, yogurt, or cottage cheese** for an easy protein boost.

✅ **As a Substitute:** You can often **replace flour** in recipes, or even use it as a **binder** in things like meatballs or protein-packed breading for chicken.

✅ **Thickening Agent:** Casein or plant-based proteins work well to **thicken smoothies, puddings, or overnight oats**, making them creamier while adding protein.

✅ **Homemade Protein Ice Cream:** Blend protein powder with frozen bananas or Greek yogurt for a healthier alternative to traditional ice cream.

The key is knowing **which type of protein powder to use** in different situations.

### Types of Protein Powder & When to Use Them

#### 1. Whey Protein (Most Versatile)

✅ **Best for:** Shakes, baking, quick digestion

* Whey protein is the most common and versatile protein powder.
* It’s **fast-digesting**, making it ideal for **post-workout recovery**.
* Works well in **pancakes, muffins, and protein bars** since it mixes smoothly and doesn’t get too thick.

#### 2. Whey Isolate (Leanest Option)

✅ **Best for:** Lactose-sensitive individuals, low-calorie diets, post-workout

* A more refined version of whey with **lower carbs, fat, and lactose**.
* Ideal if you want **pure protein** with minimal extra calories.
* Works the same as regular whey in recipes but tends to be **less creamy** due to lower fat content.

#### 3. Casein Protein (Slow-Digesting)

✅ **Best for:** Thickening recipes, nighttime protein intake

* Digests much **slower** than whey, making it great for **keeping you full longer**.
* Perfect for **protein puddings, overnight oats, or thick shakes** since it creates a **creamier, thicker texture**.
* Works well in baking when you want **a denser consistency**, like brownies or protein cheesecakes.

### Vegan Protein Options

If you’re avoiding dairy, **plant-based proteins** are a great alternative.

🌱 **Pea, Rice, or Hemp Protein**✅ **Best for:** Shakes, baking, thickening

* **Pea protein** is one of the best vegan options, offering a texture similar to whey.
* **Rice protein** is often combined with pea protein for a **more complete amino acid profile**.
* **Hemp protein** is less processed but has a grittier texture, better for blending into **oatmeal or smoothies**.

🔄 **Best Vegan Uses:**

* **Baking:** Works well in pancakes, muffins, and protein bars, but may require more liquid due to higher absorbency.
* **Blending:** Mix into smoothies with fruit, nut butter, or dairy-free milk for a well-balanced meal.
* **Thickening:** Works well for making **creamy dairy-free puddings, protein frostings, or overnight oats**.

### **Tips for Choosing the Right Protein Powder:**

✔ **Look for third-party testing** (to ensure purity and no hidden ingredients)  
✔ **Check the ingredient list** (fewer additives = better quality)  
✔ **Consider digestive sensitivity** (if lactose-intolerant, go for **isolate** or plant-based options)  
✔ **Find a flavor you enjoy** (this will make you actually use it!)

### Final Thoughts

Protein powder isn’t just for gym-goers—it’s a practical staple for anyone looking to **increase protein intake, improve satiety, and enhance overall nutrition**. Whether you’re whipping up a **quick shake, baking high-protein treats, or thickening up a meal**, choosing the **right type of protein** will make all the difference.

## **Grocery List**

### Protein

* Chicken Breast
  + Raw or Pre-cooked
  + **Pro Tip:** Remove the skin and shred a rotisserie chicken for easy week night chicken.
* 93/7 Lean Ground Beef
* Eggs
  + Pre-Hard Boiled to save time
* Reduced Fat Cheese
* Low Moisture, Part Skim Mozzarella Cheese, Shredded
* Canned Tuna
* Whey Protein
  + Protein Isolate Powder (For a lactose free option)
  + Plant Based Protein Powder
* Powdered Peanut Butter
* 0% Non-fat Greek Yogurt
* Low-fat Cottage Cheese
* Fairlife Milk for the best protein option
  + Your Favorite milk source
* Turkey Bacon

### Vegetables

* Sweet Potato
* Bell Peppers
* White Onion
* Red Onion
* Lettuce
* Canned Corn
* Black Beans
* Kidney Beans
* Broccoli
* Frozen Veggies
* Riced Cauliflower

### Carbs

* Tortilla wraps
* Sourdough Bread
* Whole Wheat Bread
  + Low-Calorie Bread
* Protein Pasta
  + (I prefer "Barilla" Brand)
* Long Grain White Rice
  + Bagged/ready to use Microwave Rice is a good substitute
* Frozen Fruit
  + Cherry Berry Blend
  + Strawberries and Banana's
  + Blue Berries
* Chia Seeds
* Flax Seeds
* Granola

### Other

* Light Mayo
* Sriracha
* Mustard
* Relish
* Low sodium Soy Sauce
* Zero Calorie Hot Sauce
* Sugar Free BBQ Sauce
* Sugar Free Maple Syrup
* Cocoa Powder
* Xanthan Gum
* Dark Chocolate
* Garlic
  + Fresh or Jarred